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Saving livelihoods saves lives

Emergency Agriculture Livelihoods Response in Myanmar

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Background

- 80 % of the population depend on the agriculture sector including **crop, livestock, fisheries, aquaculture, forestry and other natural resources** in Myanmar
- **46 percent of the population** to be **under poverty line** in early 2022 and 85% of poverty is concentrated in rural areas
- Agriculture-dependent households are affected by immense number of shocks including political and economic crises, conflict, COVID-19 pandemic, decreased food production, soaring food prices, increased cost of agriculture inputs, limited access to market, and natural disasters



Background

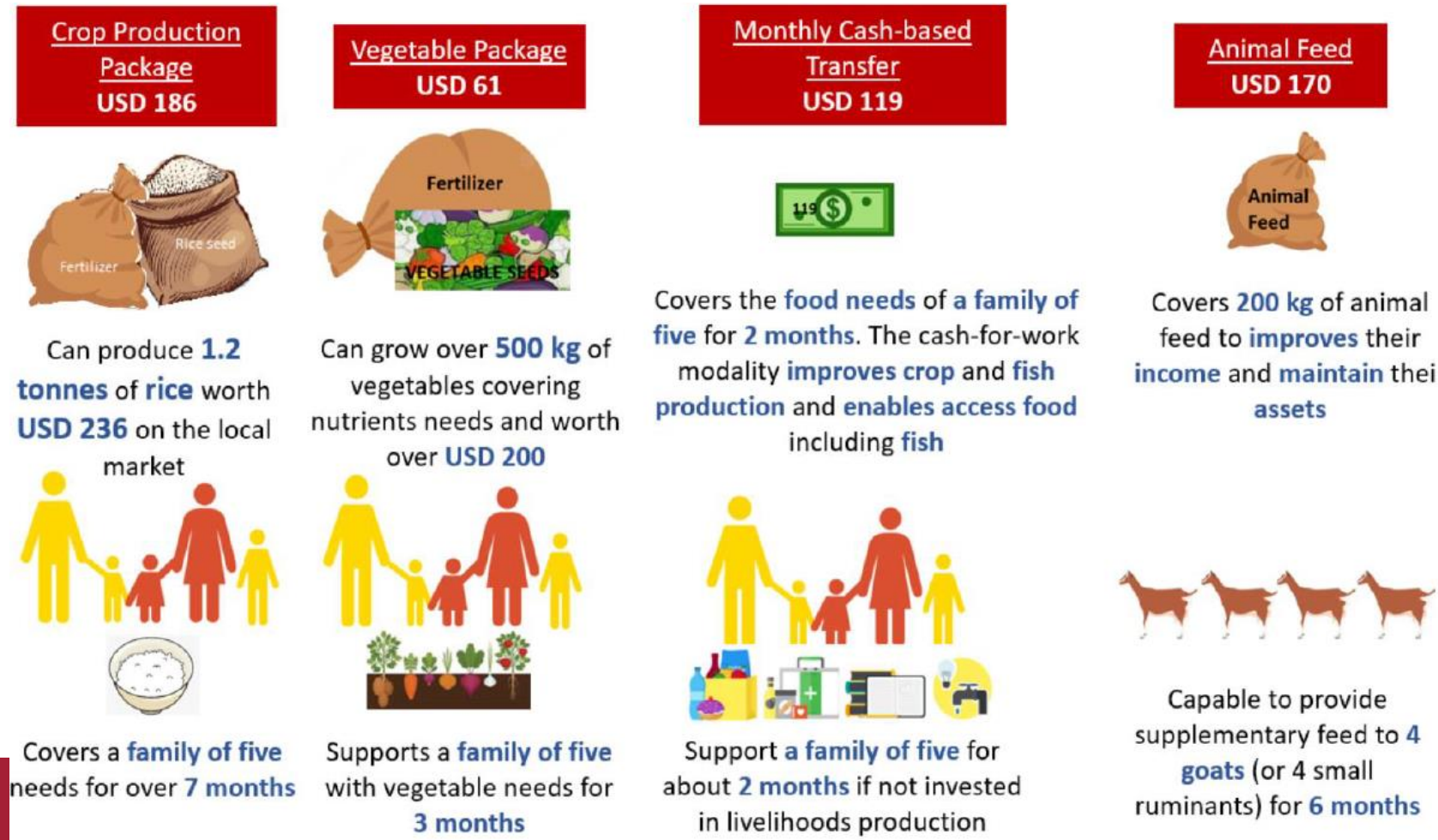
- 13.2 million people in moderate or severe food insecurity of which only 4.1 million targeted under food security response for livelihoods due to funding shortfalls and capacities on the ground
- This year, if nothing is done, FAO estimates that 2.1 million people leaving from agriculture in rural areas, will start adopting coping mechanisms, that deplete their livelihood assets and are more difficult to reverse

Why to invest in agriculture and livelihoods?

- Livelihoods are rural people's **greatest defense against hunger** and malnutrition. Crises undermine rural livelihoods and erode people's capacity to cope with the next shock.
- Protecting livelihoods by providing emergency agricultural assistance from the onset of a crisis is crucial to **save lives**, while enabling people to **produce food now and in the future** and **earn an income**.
- Rapid and efficient response to agricultural threats and emergencies **saves lives, promotes recovery** and **reduces dependency** on food assistance, **increases self-reliance and ensures dignity of affected population**.
- With humanitarian costs soaring, supporting food production before and during crises is a **cost-effective** means to rapidly increase and sustain food availability, while protecting the agriculture-based livelihoods on which the majority of crisis-hit people rely.

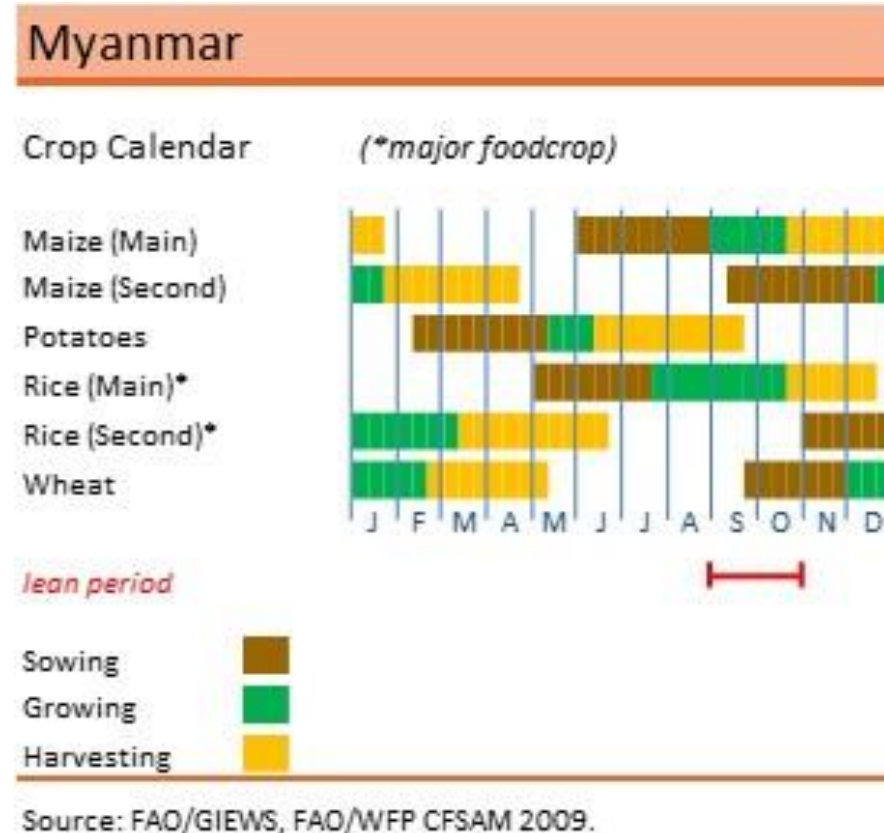
What humanitarian investment in agriculture and livelihoods can achieve

Agriculture is among most cost effective humanitarian interventions




Time sensitive and localized response

- Time sensitive agriculture livelihoods interventions are absolutely indispensable to meaningful humanitarian response.
- Important aspects to consider:
 - Needs
 - Livelihoods (smallholder farmer, pastoralists, fisher folks)
 - Type of beneficiary (IDP, refugee, host community, PLW)
 - Context (conflict, flood, drought etc.)
 - Timing of response and seasonality
 - Agro-ecological zones and local traditions
 - Intervention modality (cash/In-kind/ITF)





Why to invest in agriculture and livelihoods?

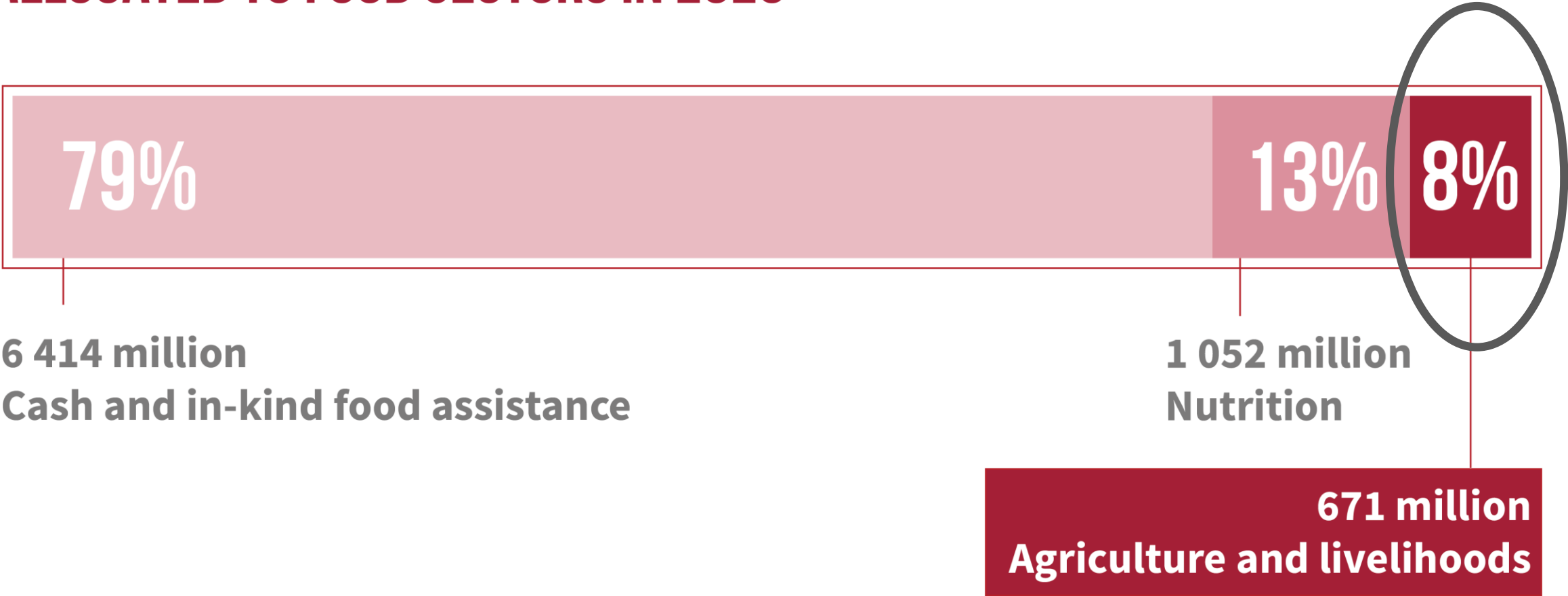
- Agriculture not only is immediate means to stop the hunger but also lays the pathways for resilience building out of crisis.
 - Short term emergency agriculture livelihood support, Medium term recovery and Longer term resilience building
 - If rural livelihoods fail there is huge risk that all food system will collapse
 - Agriculture livelihood support has biggest impact on food security when its combined together with other types of assistance including food assistance.
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Why to invest in agriculture and livelihoods?

- Effective multisector interventions in humanitarian response have biggest impact.
- The importance of agriculture and livelihoods is not always reflected in humanitarian assistance
- Funding for agriculture in emergencies is declining – in 2022 about USD 8.1 Billion for food sector in 55 countries and territories with food crises, but:
 - lowest funding recorded between 2016-2020 despite record levels of acute food insecurity globally
 - Unequal distribution of funds

TOTAL HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE ALLOCATED TO FOOD SECTORS IN 2020





Conclusion

- Global trends shows increase in numbers of people facing acute food insecurity – 193 Million in IPC 3 and above and 12.3 Million people in Myanmar
- The cost of Humanitarian Response is increasing
- There is need to enhance interventions that are ensuring lasting results
- Safeguarding agriculture based livelihoods in only way of avert the catastrophe at unimaginable scale
- Investment in agriculture and livelihood needs to be scaled up



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THANK YOU!

