

PRESS RELEASE

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Unbanked smallholder farmers in Myanmar will gain access to sustainable financing solutions through a new partnership between Financial Access Consulting Services and the Smart Agriculture Myanmar (SAM) Programme

Smart Agriculture Myanmar Programme

Financial Access Consulting Services (FACS), as partner of a consortium led by Impact Terra, has won the bid to offer agri-financing solutions for the Smart Agriculture Myanmar (SAM), a 3-year smallholder development and financial inclusion programme. Funding for SAM is provided through the Netherlands Space Office's Geodata for Agriculture and Water (G4AW) Facility, which supports projects in developing countries that convert geodata from satellite imagery into usable insights for farmers about local climate conditions, weather patterns and other hazards. Other SAM Programme partners are Wageningen University & Research, Satelligence, the Myanmar Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock & Irrigation and the Center for Economic and Social Development.

In a country where agriculture equals 25% of GDP, and smallholder farmers make up 95% of all farmers, agriculture is seen as a primary tool for economic development and poverty alleviation. Unfortunately, many farmers experience high rates of crop loss and limited access to finance, a problem the SAM Programme aims to address.

The objective of the SAM Programme is to expand the provision of tailored information to smallholder farmers about crop timing, pest management and irrigation to empower them to improve their farming practices, yields and market access. In addition, the programme will accelerate the delivery of affordable financing to smallholder farmers in a scalable manner. The services will be developed through the combined use of satellite, farmer and other data and will be delivered through Golden Paddy, Impact Terra's mobile and web-based app. The Golden Paddy platform provides daily information about local crop prices, flood and drought warnings, and can connect farmers to financial services. It is actively used by over 200,000 smallholder farmers in Myanmar.

FACS plays a central role in the SAM Programme and will:

- 1) Design and deliver a data-led smallholder credit scoring methodology and tool to support financial institutions in their assessment of the creditworthiness of smallholder farmers.
- 2) Develop and implement a scalable smallholder lending scheme, with selected local financial institutions, which will be tailored to the input and other financing needs of smallholder farmers in Myanmar.
- 3) Provide technical assistance to local financial institutions to develop their smallholder finance knowledge, lending capacity, and risk management capabilities.

Financial Access

FACS is the emerging markets financial advisory services subsidiary of the Financial Access Group. Financial Access (FA) is a financial services firm primarily active in East and West Africa and Southeast Asia, with expertise in agricultural and supply chain finance, and banking operations. FA provides financing and advisory services via operational hubs in Amsterdam, Nairobi, Kampala, Jakarta and Bangkok. FA was taken private from ING Bank via a management buy-out in 2007 and has executed more than 250 advisory mandates in over 40 countries. The impact of FA's activities is socially and environmentally responsible and commercially sustainable.

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