

LOCAL GOVERNANCE MAPPING

MAPPING HIGHLIGHTS IN MANDALAY REGION



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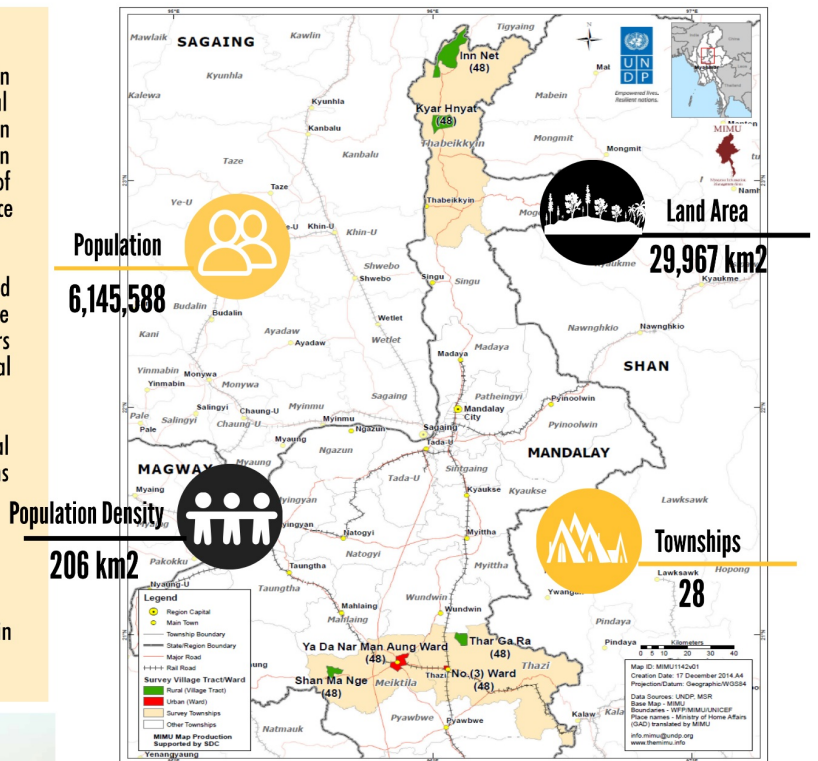
BACKGROUND

In 2014 a mapping of local governance was carried out in Mandalay Region. This forms part of a nation-wide local governance mapping carried out by UNDP in collaboration with the General Administration Department, Ministry of Home Affairs. For an overview of the methodology see the Fast Facts: Local Governance Mapping in Myanmar.

In Mandalay, the mapping covered Meiktila, Thazi and Thabeikkyin townships, whereby citizens, committee members, civil society representatives, service providers and local administrators were interviewed about local governance and service delivery.

Around 300 citizens and 100 service providers and local administrators shared their experiences and impressions of **development planning and participation, access to basic services** (specifically primary education, primary health care and drinking water), and **transparency and accountability**.

This highlight shares some of the key findings in Mandalay.



Source: MIMU

Socio-economic context

Mandalay has always played an important role in the political, economic and cultural history of Myanmar. It is the second most important economic hub in the country, contributing 15% to Myanmar's GDP. The Region is home to 12% of Myanmar's population and despite being one of the economic centres, Mandalay Region's overall poverty incidence was 27% in 2010, above the national average of 26%, indicating a very uneven distribution of economic development.

Mandalay Region has a mixed economy with agricultural production being the primary livelihood source for the majority of its population, combined with industrial production, trade and tourism. With an explosive growth of international tourist arrivals to Myanmar in recent years, Mandalay Region has benefited from the fact that some of its most popular tourist destinations lie in its territory.

Having been relatively stable and rarely affected by natural disasters in the recent past, it's one of the Regions where the government could implement its political and administrative reforms relatively fast and easily during the last few years.

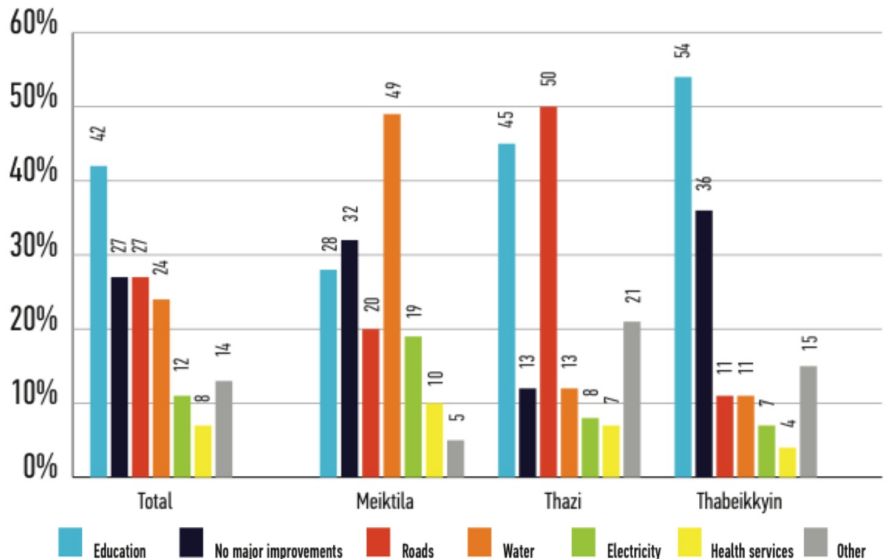
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IMPROVEMENTS SEEN AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

PERCEIVED IMPROVEMENTS IN MANDALAY

Education- 42%
 Roads - 27%
 No major improvements - 27%
 Access to water - 24%



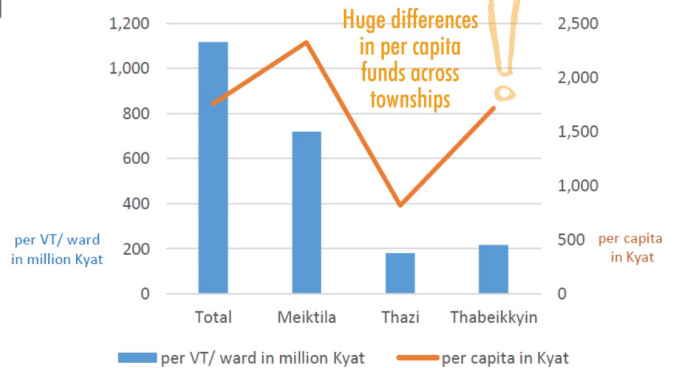
DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND PARTICIPATION

Development Funds (2013/14)

	The Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF) in USD	Constituency Development Fund (CDF) in USD	Rural Development Fund (RDF) in USD
Meiktila	56,000	100,000	563,000
Thazi	80,000	100,000	-
Thabeikkyin	20,000	100,000	98,000



Development Funds in 3 Townships



Township Development Support Committee (TDSC)

Proposals from the TDSC sub committees being discussed in joint VTA/WA-TDSC meetings with TA result in a joint decision about priority projects which are submitted to GAD at Region level for approval.



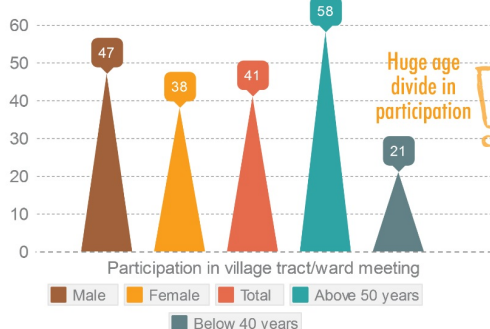
Townships Municipal Affairs Committee (TMAC) and Department of Municipal Affairs (DMA)

The mandate assigned by the new Municipal Law allows the DMA and TMAC to generate its own income and decide how to use it, based on local priorities and revenues. Knowing the estimated budget in advance makes planning and project selection at municipal level easier and more realistic. The TMAC can negotiate priorities with WDSOs and Ward Administrators, which makes it quite a strong actor and enhances the decision-making process. Thus, consultations at ward level have shifted more towards real participation and will motivate citizens to attend meetings, and present and defend their case for a certain project.

Also, the fact that the TMACs have a legal framework that defines their mandate and relationship with the DMA is of great support to the citizen members on the committee. In 2 townships, the TMAC had one women committee member.



While indirectly through the TDSCs various interest group's priorities are fed into the planning process, there is little direct consultation of community members. This is partly the reason why not many citizens are aware of these new consultative bodies.

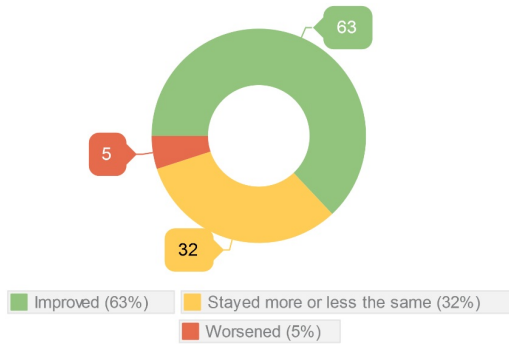


Small steps of change...

The relationship between departments at township and Regional level is changing. In Thabeikkyin Township for example, the TMC, TMAC, elected Hluttaw members and the DRD worked together with the Health Department to secure land for a new hospital as well as to organise water and electricity supply.

BASIC SERVICE DELIVERY

Has primary education in your village tract/ward improved over the last three years?



PRIMARY EDUCATION

👍 The majority of respondents (63%) perceived improvements in education, which are primarily attributed to the building or upgrading of school infrastructure (73%) and changes in the teaching system (46%).

👍 90% of the respondents felt that their child was treated in the same way as all the other children.

⚠️ PTAs were mainly involved in small maintenance works for schools but one PTA was also involved in checking finances and stock of the school.

⚠️ While the responsibilities of the TEO are huge, the ability to respond to urgent problems and to influence planning is very limited, due to the centralised way in which the Ministry of Education is organised, leaving little autonomy.

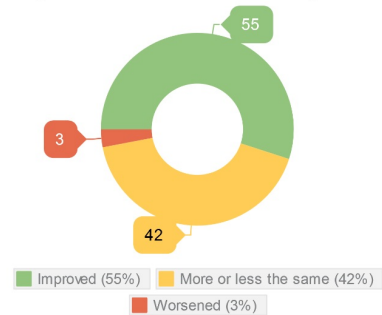
PRIMARY HEALTH CARE

👍 55% of the respondents perceived improvements in healthcare services and 61% were satisfied with the quality.

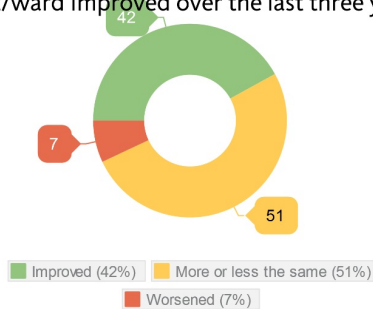
⚠️ 72% said that they always had to pay for medicines in a public health facility, while most medicines (i.e. essential drugs, if in stock) should be provided for free.

⚠️ Direct participation of people in health care planning is still very limited; TMOs or the health facility managers have no resources to respond to the needs and are not able to influence the planning of the Ministry of Health even at the lowest levels.

Has primary health care in your village tract/ward improved over the last three years?



Has the provision of clean drinking water in your village tract/ward improved over the last three years?



WATER PROVISION

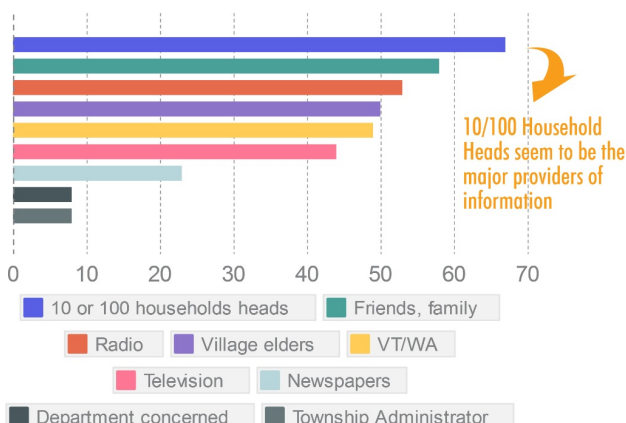
👍 Only 42% of the respondents mentioned that water provision has improved over the last few years. 51% were satisfied with the quality, while 12% found the water quality poor.

⚠️ Access to drinking water came up as a serious problem both during the individual interviews and during the Community Dialogues.

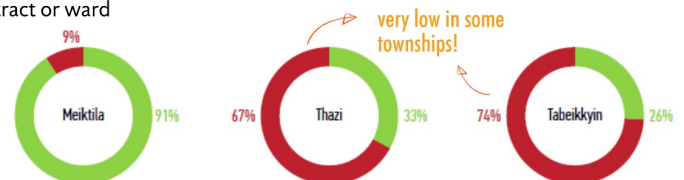
👉 Government appears to become more responsive and access to water has become a priority for allocating resources in the coming year.

INFORMATION, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

If there are new laws or directives from the government, how would you usually learn about them?



Awareness of respondents of government spending money in their village tract or ward



The new Mandalay Municipal Law can potentially create a precedent in establishing new relationships between citizens and local administration. It provides the TMAC with executive responsibilities and a statutory body, which is rather innovative in the Myanmar setting.

Apart from assigning important functions it also means the TMAC can enter into any type of legal transaction. There have already been several cases in which the TMAC successfully started a legal case against contractors who did not adhere to existing building regulations. This new law opens new avenues for improving accountability and service delivery.

COMMUNITY DIALOGUE



In the community dialogues, different groups from the community such as women, youth and elders, as well as local service providers and the village tract/ward administrator, discussed key issues of and possible improvements for local governance and service delivery.

For example, during some sessions, citizens on the one hand and the VTA/WA and government service providers on the other hand tended to blame each other for a lack of consultation. Citizens claimed that meetings were not organised or at the wrong moment (i.e. work hours) or they were not invited. VTA/WAs cited the lack of interest from their community members to come to the meetings. From the discussion, VTA/WAs can learn that they need to think about how they can reach out to their communities better, while citizens also have the duty to engage in consultation and participation opportunities that they are offered.

CONCLUSIONS

A clearer definition of the TDSC's role and mandate and making its advice more binding (similar to the Municipal law applicable for the TMACs) would not only enhance the status of the TDSC but also increase the level of transparency in decision-making.

Direct elections of the citizen/interest group members in support committees would enhance their legitimacy and increase the visibility of these committees, which is critical for their appropriate functioning. This will subsequently create the necessary answerability and accountability link between these representatives and the citizens.

Knowing the estimated budget in advance would make planning and project selection much easier and realistic. It would save a lot of work preparing long lists of project proposals that never get approved and would help to move towards "real" prioritisation – i.e. discussing why one project is more important or urgent than another. It would also avoid frustration among citizens if they don't see any benefits from active participation.

Information is flowing downward from the township administration to the VTA/WAs. But the information flow to citizens from VTA/WAs requires improvement.



For a more detailed report on Mandalay please visit:
www.mm.undp.org

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