



Empowered Lives
Resilient Nations

Strengthened institutional capacity of State/Region and Township administrations for area-related participatory development planning, public financial management, and public service delivery (Pillar 1 – Output 1)



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Output Board Report

Under the new Country Programme for Myanmar, UNDP’s interventions will be delivered through 3 main Programme Pillars namely; **Pillar 1** – Local Governance, **Pillar II** - Environment, Climate Change, Energy and DRR Programme, and **Pillar III** – Support to Democratic Governance in Myanmar. Within this broad framework, Output 1 under Pillar 1 concentrates on improving local governance through developing institutional capacity of local administrations on participatory development planning and public financial management to improve service delivery.

Effective Local Level Governance

OUTPUT BOARD REPORT

PREAMBLE

2013 is the first implementation year of the UNDP's Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP), including Output 1 – Pillar 1: Strengthened institutional capacity of State/Region and Township administrations for area-related participatory development planning, public financial management, and public service delivery. Improving local governance and developing township development plans in an inclusive manner is not a one-time capacity building effort as it is more to process-oriented aspect. To make capacity development for good local governance and participatory local development planning comprehensive, it requires sequencing of various steps/activities for different levels (i.e. village/village tract, township, district, state/regional) within the current governance structure of Myanmar. The design of the Output 1 Local Governance includes the following programme components as activity results to be achieved.

Activity Result 1.1: Support for the Local Governance mapping.

Activity Result 1.2: Support for local governance and township planning activities.

Activity Result 1.3: Support for public service deliver through introduction of Township Development Fund by UNCDF.

The objective of UNDP's programme implementation approach/strategy for 2013 in building capacity for promoting good local governance and township planning for service delivery is to lay the common understanding among all government and non-government stakeholders on the topics to be addressed and to seed a foundation of promoting participation and inclusiveness to further develop township plans for service delivery. Based on this approach, Output 1 team designed its implementation plan and activities in close coordination with its government counterparts, Department of General Administration and Mon and Chin State Governments. As per the implementation approach for 2013, progress and results achieved during 2013 for the Output 1 against its AWP is presented in the following sessions.

Activity Result 1.1: Support for Local Governance Mapping

ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN AND RESULTS ACHIEVED

As per the Annual Work Plan (AWP) 2013, the following actions have been accomplished for the Local Governance mapping exercise.

1. Advocacy, sensitization and consultation - A series of consultative meetings and workshops with relevant key government ministries and non-government institutions at the union and state and regional levels was conducted for scoping and feasible methodology and for obtaining consensus to conduct the local governance mapping exercise. Based on the results of these meetings and workshops, methodology and related tools for the Local Governance mapping was developed and finalized and areas (Mon and Chin States) for the pilot phase was identified. The meetings and workshops included.

- a. Consultative meetings with the union level government departments including Office of the President, Department of General Administration from Ministry of Home Affairs, Department of Planning and Central Statistics Organization from Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development, Department of Budget from Ministry of Finance, Department of Educational Planning and Training from Ministry of Education, Department of Health from Ministry of Health, organized meeting with non-government organizations and a research organizations such as Myanmar Development Resources Institute to find information, their opinions, views and suggestions.



b. Consultative meetings with selected state and regional governments and other technical government departments as well as township level administrations and local civil society organizations in Mandalay Region, Mon and Chin States to obtain local inputs, opinions, views and suggestions on concept, methodology and management.

c. Technical workshop in Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development with participation of senior level government ministries and departments, where Deputy Ministers from Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development participated, to get senior level policy clearance on the methodology and implementation plan.



d. Workshops on “Good Local Governance and People Centered Services” at the national (Nay Pyi Taw) and Mon and Chin State levels to inform all government and non-government stakeholders, to share and obtain a broader consensus on the developed methodology and implementation plan for the Local Governance mapping exercise. This workshop also dealt with sharing of international

experiences on promoting local governance including local governance assessments.



2. Governance arrangement - Formation of an Advisory Committee to guide for technical requirements of the Local Governance exercise is one of the key to make sure national ownership of the Local Governance mapping in terms of methodology and findings. This has been initiated and in process for final decision.

3. Implementation status - The first stage of mapping (community/village tract/ ward level) in 6 townships of Mon state (100%) and 2 of Chin state (33% of planned) has been completed. This included household surveys (Citizen Report Card), frontline service provider surveys, and village tract/ ward administrator interviews. Community Dialogues were held in each sample VT/ward and were very well-attended by various stakeholders. Overall, very good support was received from all township administrators, though there were some manageable coordination issues with some government departments to have access to data and information.

The survey has covered a very broad spectrum of settlements across the two states – ranging from remote villages/VTs with no more than 50 or 100 households, to urban wards containing nearly 1000 households. Naturally, their concerns vary significantly, but there has been an eagerness to participate, contribute and share information, across the board. The field survey for the remaining townships in Chin is on-going and the reports for the pilot two states is expected by march 2014.

Salient Findings/ Outcomes/ Impact from the Phase I

1. While the data analysis has not yet been completed for Mon and Chin, several interesting lines of potential capacity-building/ other interventions seem to be emerging. These include, for example:

- a. support to townships and VTs to establish systematic grievance redressal (complaints management and redressal) systems;
- b. establishment of centralized data collection and data management units in each township;
- c. leadership and management training to a core cadre of township officials and village tract administrators; and
- d. capacity-building for civil society to actively participate and interact in development decision-making.

In addition, specific issues pertaining to different communities, VTs and wards are also emerging, which can be shared at a later date.

2. Gender aspect has been incorporated into design of the Local Governance mapping questionnaires and implementation processes to obtain gender dis-aggregated data to see gender equality perspective in local governance and service delivery. While data analysis has been under process, the following key findings have been observed.

- a. There are only few women participation at the decision making level of Township departmental offices. Except some offices such as Audit and Planning Offices in Mon, all other offices are headed by male officers; and
- b. There are only few women Village Tract/Ward Administrators observed in Mon and Chin States.

3. Some outcomes are also visible already. The most important of these is that local stakeholders –

including citizens, civil society (NGO/CBO) representatives, committee members and officials – have for the first time been involved in frank and open discussions about the quality of governance, development, and basic service delivery, in their areas. Capacity of both rights holders and duty-bearers is being strengthened through this exercise. The voices of women and youth are being heard alongside those of the men and elders.

3. This reconfirms the project and UNDP's assertion that the process of the mapping is as important as its results.

Result Achievement

For 2013, it has been targeted to complete 2 State of Local Governance reports for Mon and Chin States. However, as mentioned previously, the first stage of collection (community/village tract/ward level) in 6 townships of Mon state (100%) and 2 of Chin state (33% of planned) has been completed, and thus the result target has been achieved partially. This is mainly attributed by late start of actual implementation in 2013 and to plan the rest of the result target in 2014.

Lessons learnt

Several lessons have emerged from Phase I of the project, which must be taken into account while work planning for Phases II and III.

- Conceptual understanding: Local governance is a new concept to many organizations and individuals in Myanmar, whether from the government or civil society. Decentralization (especially to the township level and below) has not been well codified in the constitution. Concepts such as transparency, accountability and equity are difficult and only slowly becoming acceptable.

- Capacity: There are two types of capacity challenges – the capacities of the states/regions to understand, absorb and support our efforts, and that of the (national) partner institutions to implement a mapping or assessment exercise on local governance. This means that a lot more time

is required to (a) brief government officials at various levels and secure their buy-in; (b) identify the right partners and train them. For the latter, it is imperative that we continue and enhance/ build the capacity of institutions that we have invested in.

- Time frame: The methodology is complex and multi-layered, and needs adequate time for implementation. The first level (Citizen Report Cards and Community Dialogues) took about 1 month in Mon and 6 weeks in Chin state. Township GSAs are expected to take 1-2 days in each township. Enough time must be set aside for analysis, following which State-level GSAs can take place (1-2 days in each State). In addition, before everything begins, a series of meetings and workshops at different levels needs to be organized to brief all key stakeholders about the project and secure their buy-in. Overall, each state will need a minimum of 6-8 weeks from start to finish. More time is needed in states where there is accessibility or access issue (see below).

- Accessibility: The selection of Mon and Chin as pilot states has been very useful as the two states provide an interesting counterpoint to each other – one is wealthy and accessible, while the other is poor and remote. They also have completely different ethnic compositions. So, findings from the two states can be expected to provide a good understanding of the range of different local governance challenges facing the country. However, the remote and inaccessible area (Chin) needed nearly double the time and effort to conduct surveys, with teams that were just getting oriented to the process. For Phase II, it would be wise to choose states/regions where accessibility is good, as well as those which will become less accessible during the rains.

- Access: There have fortunately been few incidents of lack of access to data or respondents in Mon and Chin, except perhaps vis-à-vis health-related data which is usually shared only with express permission of the Township Medical Officer. Overall, access has not been an issue thus far. However, access may be a real issue

particularly in Shan state, especially if some of the townships included lie within Self-Administered Zones; in Kachin; and in Rakhine. In these states, substantial time and effort will need to be invested in mobilizing support of all stakeholders, in order to implement the mapping exercise.

Activity Result 1.2: Support for local governance and township planning activities in Mon and Chin States

ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN AND RESULTS ACHIEVED

1. Local Advocacy, Sensitization and Consultation

- After the national workshop on Good Local Governance and People Centered Services in NPT, similar workshops, but adapted to local level, were organized in Mon (Mawlamyine) and Chin (Hakha) for all government and non-government stakeholders including local CSO and parliamentarians. As key initial results, these workshops aimed to lay a good foundation among these stakeholders on common understanding of good governance, participatory planning, implementation and monitoring for people centered services together with international experiences. These workshops also identified important issues, gaps and ideas of improvement at the current local level governance structure in improving good governance and people centered service delivery.)



2. Study Tour to Learn Contemporary Local Governance Development - A study tour with government representatives from the union and state levels and local CSO was organized. Representatives from the state government and

CSO/media from Mon and Chin States also participated. As key initial results, Cambodia's experience in improving local governance and decentralization is similar as to the democratic development effort of Myanmar. Participants were able to learn the Cambodia's experiences, compare with Myanmar's legal and institutional setting and got some useful ideas for further discussions to improve local governance and decentralization. Through the study tour, encouraging feedbacks have been received from participants that Myanmar's legal and institutional framework for local governance and decentralization should be further improved to support service delivery effectively. These two state representatives have also shared the study tour experiences to their respective local stakeholders in recent state level workshops and received additional inputs for replication in Myanmar.



3. Capacity Building for Participatory Local Planning –

a). In support of a series of capacity building efforts to improve inclusive township planning for people-centered service delivery, Trainings of Trainers (ToT) for village tract administrators and village tract level training resource persons on participatory methods, tools and procedures to develop village tract plans were organized in all selected target 12 townships in Mon and Chin States. This is the pilot initiative of developing local planning capacity at the village tract level to learn lessons and experiences to further replicate



nation-wide in the future. As key initial results, the immediate outcome of the ToT is to develop village tract level development plan in a consultative manner with individual citizens including the poor and most vulnerable, to contribute as sound inputs to develop inclusive township development plans, for which UNDP is supporting capacities in 2014. As an outcome of the ToT, village tract plans for 2015-16 will be ready and submitted to Township Management Committees. Initial feedback from the ToT participants reveals that this type of training should be provided them earlier so that they would have used them in developing 2014-15 plans.

b). As a result of a series of consultative meeting with state governments and the said good local governance workshops, in Mon and Chin States, a two-day coordination workshop was organized in each of Mon (Mawlamyine) and Chin (Hakha) States together with representatives from various township committees including Township Development Supportive Committee. The workshop aimed to obtain inputs from these committee representatives on their roles and functions on the ground for township development, which will be used in developing “Operational Guidelines” for each committee. The guidelines will be helpful to make these committees clear their roles, functions and operational and procedural requirements for smoother coordination. Clear understanding of the committees on their roles and functions is the pre-requisite for development of inclusive township planning. As key initial results, agreed inputs from the committee representatives on clear demarcation of their roles and functions were

obtained and they agreed UNDP to develop “Operational Guidelines” for each township committee to participate in township development efforts.

Result Achievement

As mentioned above, the implementation approach of the Output 1 for 2013 is to lay the foundation for further capacity development for participatory township planning, 2013 implementation of the Activity Result 1.2 has achieved fully the result target for the year 2013.



Lessons learnt

1. Participatory planning is a new approach to all local stakeholders, which is also one of the key policy priorities of the government of Myanmar and thus all local stakeholders were enthusiastic to learn and appreciate the training provided, though it took some time to sensitize them.
2. Government overall planning approach and methodology for local development also plays a key role to design UNDP’s approach and methodology to be synchronized. Currently, at the nascent stage of the government reform, it is required for UNDP to learn more on planning approach of the government.
3. During the workshops and training, UNDP programme designed to include more women participation, it has been observed that only a few women participated, not supporting to gender equality perspective. It is due particularly to: 1).

the traditions and customs of local women to stay behind; and 2). Few women participation at the decision making level both in local government offices and community organizations as recognized by the Local Governance mapping exercise in Mona and Chin States.

Activity Result 1.3: Support for Township Development Fund (UNCDF)

ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN AND RESULTS ACHIEVED

During year 2013, UNCDF focused on strengthening the institutional arrangements and creation of the regulatory basis for implementation of the Township Development Fund (TDF).

1. Sensitization, Consultation and Institutional Assessment for TDF - In April 2013, UNCDF participated in a joint mission with UNDP's local government assessment team followed by another joint mission in May with field visits to Mon and Chin States. Both missions included meetings with government representatives at the Union, State and Region levels, of selected government departments, as well as with representatives at district, township and community levels. Additional interviews were conducted with selected people with an institutional and technical competence in areas of relevance for the UNCDF component.

The key objective of the first mission (April 2013) was to present the signed joint UNDP & UNCDF project document, to engage in meetings and discussion with stakeholders from the government and from different sectors to further understand the existing institutional and contextual environment and to lay out the ground for the implementation of the TDF program. The mission also included meetings with Development Partners (DPs) involved in local governance and decentralization as well as with potential implementing partners. Hence, the mission met with the Asia Foundation, Oxfam, Myanmar Development Research Institute (MDRI), the Department of Economics and Faculty of Law at

Yangon University, local NGO's and several DPs such as DFID, USAID, WB, and SDC.



In Mandalay Region, the mission met with the Speaker of Mandalay Region Hluttaw, the Chief Justice, the Advocate General and the Ministry of Planning and Economics. In Nay Pyi Taw, the mission had meetings with the Director General (DG) at GAD, (Ministry of Home Affairs), the Department of Budget, the DG of Information and Public Relations, the Director of Public Health from Ministry of Health and the Union Civil Service Board. The mission's report examined the roles and responsibilities of the different layers of government, and the public administrative system, as well as the planning and budgeting procedures, particularly at the sub national level.

The key assessments in states of Chin and Mon were carried out during the second joint UNCDF & UNDP mission of May 2013. Identification and defining of pertinent implementation plans for the Local Governance Programme in the states of Chin and Mon was undertaken. This mission also collected detailed information for the design of the TDF and has consulted with Government on further details of the TDF design. This included information needed for the subsequently prepared baseline study of 6 townships in Chin and Mon State respectively, as well as Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to be signed between UNCDF and Government, along with the grant manual and specific guidelines on planning, budgeting and PFM related issues.

A significant landmark in this consultation process was the national conference on good governance

in Nay Pyi Taw in August 2013, where UNCDF contributed during the design and conduct. The conference allowed the participants, including government and non-government officials from subnational national institutions to form a better idea about the importance of fiscal decentralization and the functioning of Local Development Funds through a dialogue with representatives from other countries in the region (Cambodia, Laos and Indonesia).

2. Development of Manual and MOU for TDF Implementation –

a). On the 20th of May 2013, a workshop was held in Nay Pyi Taw to present technical details and the modality of the TDF to key Union level government stakeholders. Representatives from the Ministries of Home Affairs (GAD), Border Affairs, National Planning and Economic Development, and the Ministry of Finance and Revenue participated and actively took part in the discussions following the presentations. Participants expressed a strong interest and support for the modality of the TDF and agreed on further collaboration.

Based on these extensive consultations with government counterpart, UNCDF finalized the TDF Manual, which summarizes the main features of the TDF and explains its functioning. The Manual was thoroughly discussed with stakeholders at the national and subnational levels in a series of workshops and submitted to MoHA in November.

b). UNCDF developed a Memorandum of Understanding on the TDF, which is the primary the legal document defining the TDF implementation and the responsibilities of various actors involved. The MOU was shared with MoHA in November and its finalization is expected in early 2014.

To create an institutional momentum in support of decentralization, UNCDF contributed to the preparation and conduct of a study tour for Myanmar officials to Cambodia. The study tour focused specifically on the experiences of participatory planning at the local level. In addition, UNCDF launched in December a study of fiscal space at the local level. The study is

designed to contribute to the process of fiscal decentralization and further improvement of the TDF. The results of the study are expected in early 2014.

Result Achievement

UNCDF has achieved in 2013 on preparatory work on strengthening the institutional arrangements and creation of the regulatory basis for implementation of the Township Development Fund (TDF).

Lessons learnt

1. Township Development Fund (TDF) modality brings an attention of the local stakeholders. However, as a approach and methodology in terms of development planning and budgeting, there are a lot to do to adjust its methodology to the current government budgeting procedure.