Citizens and communities engaged in local development and monitoring of service delivery (Pillar 1 – Output 2)

Output Board Annual Report 2014

Within the framework of UNDP's Local Governance Pillar (Pillar 1), Output 2 concentrates on improving the linkage between communities and Civil Society Organizations and local authorities to improve local governance and service delivery.

Civil Society and Media

1. CONTEXT

Under Pillar 1 – Local Governance, Output 2 focuses on **Civil Society and Media** support. The effective participation of Civil Society Organizations (as representatives of the people) and the Media (as one of the organizations concerned with transparent, credible and accurate reporting of local news) is an integral element of sustainable human development and local governance. UNDP's overall programme strategy for Myanmar (2013 – 2015) is aligned with the priorities of the Myanmar government and aims to support an enabling environment for development to reach out to all, democracy to flourish and citizens to realize their basic human rights. One of the underlying goals of the UNDP Country Programme is to support the development of a mutually effective partnership between Civil Society Organizations, Media and the Government.

Local governance reforms initiated in 2013 such civil society representation within new township and village committees, the election of Village Tract Administrators, as well as the continued development of local CSOs and independent local/ethnic media, have created new opportunities for citizens' voice and participation in local governance. These changes have so far had limited practical effect on community involvement and confidence in local development planning, public service delivery and peace processes. Output 2 thus complements UNDP's support to government institutional capacities with support to local CSO and media development to foster civic understanding and participation in governance. Because capacities of CSOs, citizens, and local media for engagement with government are overall low and there is also a level of mistrust on both sides that hinders further interaction, emphasis is given both to capacity development and to support for identification or establishment of appropriate means to rebuild these relationships whilst simultaneously growing into their roles in democratic society. Programme interventions are designed to improve the interaction and participation of civil society stakeholders so that local governance processes can take place in an atmosphere of greater inclusion, openness and trust, thus better responding to the interests of Myanmar's people and harnessing their participation.

As highlighted by the Local Governance Mapping and other studies, women's participation in governance and peacebuilding remains extremely low in Myanmar as compared to other countries. This harms women's rights and hinders achievement of Myanmar's broader development and peace goals. Output 2 places special emphasis on empowering rural women's participation in governance, working with the federated Self-Reliant Groups (represented at township level by Township Leading Groups) and increasingly supporting women's leadership development through CSO and Media networks.

Political and legal developments for civil society and media in 2014 reflect progress on some fronts, along with continued challenges. The development of the Association Law with voluntary CSO registration was responsive to CSO concerns, and represents of a trend towards gradually greater government consultation of CSO voice in policymaking. However, local CSO experience in applying for registration under the new law has widely been met by with reluctance of local GAD to act in advance of bylaws for the new law. CSOs' ongoing inability to register generally hinders their efforts for organizational capacity development including access to resources. Other notable trends in freedom of association include improved police approaches toward 'crowd management',

however community complaints and protests – particularly farmers challenging administrative land decisions – continue pervasively across the country and reportedly face a growing atmosphere of local intimidation, imprisonment and sometimes violence. In the media sector, several new legislative frameworks based on freedom of the press have been enacted or are in process of passage by Parliament. At the same time, some high profile Instances of criminal prosecution of journalists as well as the shut-down of selected ethnic media journals for lack of registration have contributed to a public perception of renewed Government content control and chilling of critical press and ethnic media. Overall, large gaps in trust between communities/CSOs/media and government authorities remain. Finally the role of social media and mobile phone connectivity in society, while still small overall, is expected to grow rapidly. This creates new challenges, as well as opportunities, for a public of relatively inexperienced and uncritical media consumers.

There are points of common interest, including government commitment to more inclusive and informed civil society participation, as well as to increasing access to information and promoting ethical development of local media to inform this participation. Likewise the donor and INGO community continue to increase financial and technical resource commitments for the development of civil society and media sectors. However, actual practical opportunities for regular engagement and joint dialogues of civil society or independent media with governments at local level continue to be limited. Increased communications, facilitated interactions and practical application experiences are needed for development of a shared understanding of the roles and means of civil society organizations and independent media engagement with local governance, planning, and peace-building. Likewise, expanded outreach and inclusion efforts especially to women and rural populations present challenges that are critical to overcome for building social accountability and confidence in local-level dividends from the ongoing democratic transition and peace processes.

In 2015 in the context of peace processes and the next election cycle, UNDP will launch Township Community Dialogue and Information (TCDI) pilots and continue to support the evolution of state/region-level CSO and media networks with capacities to bridge between communities and local authorities, the private sector and other development actors, with gender- and conflict- sensitivity and constructive engagement. UNDP will help develop a national network that is of, by and for rural women, and will lead a coordinated civic awareness and capacity development campaign to promote women's leadership and participation in local governance. UNDP will work with IPRD to develop prototypes for community radio operated by and for rural communities and expand access to information for underserved populations. Building from local governance mapping results and social cohesion activities, the specific content supported by activities for dialogue, networking and community media development will focus on developing understanding of local governance committee structures and village tract/ward elections, state/regional parliament elections and their relation to local development, and on peace processes and democratic values of diversity.

2. KEY ACTIVITIES TO DATE

2014 Highlights	
CSO Forums& Networking	During 2014, 5 large scale state/region CSO Forums were held through conventions of local CSOs in Mon, Mandalay, Kayah, Shan, and Chin. Each Forum event itself has represented a public consultation on the concerns of civil society, with results documented in public Forum Statements. Each CSO Forum has led to plans to formalize the state/regional CSO Forum/Network toward the goals of regular information sharing, enhancing the voice of civil

Township Community Dialogue and Information Centers/Initiatives	society in governance and peace processes, and self-assessment on CSO capacity development needs,

At township level, with UNDP support, 2 CSO forums have been convened in Mon State (Bilin and Chaungzone Townships); 2 consultation activities (a CSO forum and a Media Network–State Parliament consultation) were held in Taunggyi, Shan State; and 8 roundtable discussions convened in Mandalay city.

In addition, under Output 1's exercise on Local Governance Mapping, in total 97 consultations with civil society on local governance and public service delivery were held in communities among 48 townships across the 14 states/regions

Building on the CSO forums and Local Governance Mapping consultations, stakeholder strategic discussions in Mawlamyine, Hakha, Hpa-An and Puta-O (Kachin), have resulted in defining objectives and common understanding for CSO-led township community dialogue and information centers/initiatives, identifying key partners and forming steering committees for planned pilot initiatives. In addition, under UNDP's Early Recovery programme, a Recovery and Development Dialogue Platform initiative has been launched in two additional townships in Kachin State (Mansi and Waingmaw).

As part of the township community dialogue and information initiatives, ICT equipment has been procured to provide material support for Hakha and Falam IPRDs to increase government connectivity and public access to internet in those townships. |
| **Rural Communities' (Women's) Capacities for Engagement in Local Development** | 31 Township Leading Groups (TLGs) led by women representing 22,500 rural villagers in Self Reliant Groups (SRGs, originally fostered under UNDP's former HDI Initiative) have launched township-level initiatives and offices to establish linkages with government, private sector actors and other CSOs, for purposes of representing and empowering rural women. UNDP is supporting the TLGs with small institutional support grants and capacity development training and coaching. The SRGs and TLGs have made progress towards longer term sustainability, as evidenced by engagement in registration processes (as cooperatives and as CSO associations), maintained/increased common funds, and initiation of external resource mobilization efforts.

Through the TLGs, women's leadership training was directly delivered to 119 women over two training workshops (with replication training for women at township and community level being supported under the institutional support grants). To date, the first training in March 2014 (for 92 women) resulted in 37% of the participants reporting in their self-assessment, that they had achieved increased status, income, employment opportunities or responsibilities within 6 months as a result of the UNDP training. Additional anecdotal evidence indicates TLGs starting to achieve results through developing previously unimagined and unattempted interactions with local GAD, committees, and parliamentarians.

The 61 TLG leaders at the second training workshop (about half of whom had participated in the earlier training as well) unanimously declared their intention to form a National Network of federated SRGs as a network by and for rural women. |

	Local/ethnic media networking capacity has been developed and networks formed in Chin, Mon and Kayin, and Southern Shan states. Large scale Forums were held to establish/strengthen Chin Journalist/Media Network (77 journalists from 30 media organizations) and Southern Myanmar Journalist Network (112 journalists), and a networking roundtable to establish the Southern Shan Media Network (49 journalists) and linkage activity with Shan State Hluttaw.
Local Media Development	Media assessment in Mon and Kayin has identified potential pilots for community radio learning experiments and/or related local capacity development for community/ethnic radio development. Development of such pilots is being explored between UNDP and IPRD, with support in principle from the Minister of Information.

3. RESULTS REPORTING

| Output 2:

Citizens and communities engaged in local development and monitoring of service delivery

2.1 Township Level Community Centers established and enabled to provide a platform for dialogue and engagement in local development

2.2 Strengthened capacities of communities to engage in, monitor and evaluate service delivery (HDI transition program)

2.3 Enhanced capacity of local media actors in democratic governance | Indicator- 1

TCCs/CMCs established | Targets (year 2014)

– At least 6 TCCs/CMCs established | - *Not achieved:*

- Progress: Preparatory activities completed through development of concept note and stakeholder meetings in Hakha, Mawlamyine, Hpa-An, and Puta-O (Kachin), and multi-stakeholder steering committees established
- Community Learning Center at village level in Puta-O has been designed, but procurement of services for construction is facing delays due to lack of adequate bidders
- Linkages have been made with UNDP Early Recovery 'Recovery and Development Dialogue Platforms' and future activities planned to support increased community/CSO participation (including women's participation); as well as linkages explored with related CSO/donor pilot initiatives at township level by Local Resource Center and planned USAID-funded Information Hubs |
| | Indicator- 2

# of consultations with citizens, CSOs and CBOs at Township level on service delivery | Targets (year 2014)

– At least 1 consultation per targeted township | - *Achieved:*
- 5 large scale State/Regional level consultations (Mon, Kayah, Mandalay, Shan, Chin) held
- 4 township/sub-state CSO forum and consultation activities held (2 in Mon, 2 in Shan), and 8 roundtable consultations held in Mandalay |

			- Under the Local Governance Mapping: 97 community level consultations held among 48 townships across the 14 states/regions
	Indicator- 3 # of Media support initiatives provided by UNDP	Targets (year 2014) - Media support initiatives provided in at least 2 states	- *Achieved:* - 3 Media network formation and capacity development initiatives supported, in Chin, Southern Myanmar region (covering Mon/Kayin/Tanintharyi), and Southern Shan. - Assessment and proposal for pilot community broadcast capacity development developed at township level in 2 states (Mon, Kayin).
	Indicator 04 % of SRG groups sensitized for registrations and or cooperative formation engaging in registration and/or formation of cooperatives	Targets (year 2014) - At least 10% of original 5000 UNDP supported SRGs in 2013 and additional 10% in 2014 engaged in registration process	- *Achieved:* - At least 1016 of the original 5000 SRGs (20.3%) have engaged in registration as cooperatives, with 948 (19%) having already achieved registration. (Dec 2014) - In addition, of the 31 Township leading Groups of SRGs, all 31 (100%) have filed for formal registration as NGOs under the Association Law, with 5 (16.1%) having completed the process and received registration numbers. (Dec 2014)
	Indicator 05 % of women with increased status, income, employment opportunities, and responsibilities as a result of UNDP TSP level leadership training	Targets (year 2014) - 10% of women having benefited from UNDP leadership training have increased status, income, employment opportunities, and responsibilities as a result	- *Achieved.* - 34 of 92women (37%) participating in UNDP Township level leadership training reported increased status, income, employment opportunities and responsibilities as a result within 6 months of the training.

4. KEY RESULTS

2.1 – Township Level Community Centers established and enabled to provide a platform for dialogue and engagement in local development

Township Community Dialogue and Information Centers/Initiatives

Strategic Objectives:

(1) To enhance the quality of citizens' engagement with public officials (and vice versa);

(2) To enhance capacity of CBOs/CSOs to improve knowledge, engagement, networking and advocacy skills;

(3) To improve broader civic awareness of local governance issues, resources and processes;

(4) To increase access to information, particularly for rural communities.

Building on recommendations and interests expressed by government and civil society stakeholders during Local Governance Mapping exercises, activities carried out under this sub-output have focused on strategy development and stakeholder discussions involving public officials, civil society and media at township and State/Region level on developing pilot initiatives for enhancing information sharing and community/CSO engagement in local development.

Strategy Paper. UNDP's Strategy Paper for Township Community Dialogue and Information Centers/ Initiatives seeks to address the challenge of how to support locally-driven efforts to stimulate the quality of local governance and participation. In this regard, it recognizes the need to develop CSO (as well government) capacities for dialogue, facilitate practical exercises in dialogue and information sharing that support mutual trust and confidence between citizens and local public officials, and to enhance civic awareness overall. The long term vision of the Township Community Dialogue and Information Centers/Initiatives is to support an enabling environment where citizens can benefit from enhanced local level democratic participation and interaction.

Stakeholder discussions and steering committees in potential pilot areas. UNDP has supported initial discussions of the initiative with local stakeholder groups consisting of representatives of GAD, IPRD, CSOs/CBOs, and media in four pilot areas: Hahka (Chin), Mawlamyine (Mon), Hpa'An (Kayin) and Puta-O (Kachin). The initiative will be taken forward through calls for proposals from local organizations as well as training to enhance dialogue skills and facilitate dialogue among stakeholders in pilot areas.

CSO capacities for networking. To support CSO and CBO capacities for coordination and information exchange, capacity assessment of civil society development needs, advocacy of CSO and civil society priorities, and to better participate in the initiatives and governance of the proposed centers, following on 2013 capacity development workshops and 2013-2014 CSO mapping and outreach efforts, UNDP has facilitated locally organized large-scale State/Region CSO Forums in 5 areas:

- Mon State CSO Forum, Mawlamyine, 26-27 Jul 2014 (M-185, F-90, total participants 275)-developed Forum Statement. Mon State CSO network formed with representatives from 10 townships and plans for township level CSO forums. The Network's executive body has 29 representatives, of which (only) 3 are women.
- Mandalay Region CSO Forum, Mandalay, 4-5 Aug 2014 (M-106, F-44, total participants 141)-developed forum statement and established Mandalay region 'CSO information center' plans; drafted Action Plan for capacity building. EC formed with follow up meetings. The Mandalay CSO Network's executive committee is composed of 10 men and 6 women.

- Kayah State CSO Forum, Loikaw, 21-23 Aug 2014 (M-130, F-101, total participants 156)-developed two Forum Statements (problem and outcome).
- Shan State CSO Forum, Taunggyi, 17-19 Sep 2014 (M-166, F-101, total participants 267)-developed Forum Statement. Selected Executive Committee members composed of Southern, Northern, and Eastern Shan regions (19 M, 6 F).
- Chin State CSO Forum, Hakha, 20-22 Nov 2014 (total participants 120, representing all 13 townships and subtownships)- developed Forum Statements (governance, peace, and environment issues). Participatory mapping of 107 CSO/CBO profiles collected at Forum, township level representatives selected from 13 townships, with follow up activity to focus on CSO networking at township level.

Shan State CSO Forum

Each State/Regional CSO Forum has led to plans to formalize the CSO Network toward the goal among other things of enhancing voice of civil society, CSOs and CBOs on issues of common concern including government service delivery.

At township level, 2 CSO forums have been convened in Mon State, 2 consultation events (CSO forum and network–State Parliament consultation) held in Shan, and 8 roundtable discussions convened in Mandalay:

- Chaung Zone township CSO Forum, Mon State, 9 Nov 2014 (77 participants from 50 CSOs, 1/ 3 women)
- Bilin township CSO Forum, Mon State, Dec 2014 (165 participants from 120 CSOs, 1/4 women)
- Southern Shan CSO Network meeting, Dec 2014 (M-83, F-48 women, total participants 131). Executive committee members elected were 10 women, 15 men.
- Event to promote interaction Southern Shan Media Network and the Shan State Parliament (12 Dec 2014), which represented the *first* official interaction for 25 Southern Shan state local media organization participants with state Hluttaw including its chairman.
- 8 total roundtable consultations on various thematic issues were held in Mandalay district by UNDP Area office over 2014 among civil society, CSOs, government, private sector and media actors.

The CSO Forums/Networks (along with state/regional Media Networks, described in activity result 2.3 below) are the main entry point for partnership and engagement of civil society in the planned Township Dialogue and Information Centers/Initiatives.

ICT Equipment handover from UNDP to Chin IPRD

"It's difficult to send updated new and information timely in Chin State. But this IT equipment will help more for the government's information flow efficiently… I have said to UNDP and Unicef, please don't support us only with training but also provide some visible material aid. In this regard … I would like to thank UNDP as UNDP is very well known in the world and now is bringing very useful items to us in Chin State… IPRD Hakha and Falam should maintain very well this equipment and use it for effective information and knowledge learning processes."

- Dr. Ba Maung, Social Minister, Chin State Government

Material support for IPRD on ICT. As part of the township community dialogue and information initiatives, ICT equipment has been procured to provide material support for Hakha and Falam IPRDs (Chin State) to increase government connectivity and public access to internet in those townships.

Gender and vulnerable groups. Women's equal participation was promoted in organizing and participating in the CSO Forums and in the on-going CSO Network governing bodies. Actual participation rates in the forums ranged from 1/2 to 1/4, as tracked in the participant numbers above.

Several of the forums explicitly addressed gender equality issues on the agenda and outcome statements: Kayah State CSO Forum featured a plenary session on gender equality (including hindering and enabling factors for gender equality, GBV, and suggestions for gender equality).The Forum outcome statement called on state government departments to recognize the role of CSOs including women, youth and religious organizations and to coordinate with CSOS in implementing policy and services. The Southern Shan CSO Network adopted, as an explicit objective, capacity building for human rights and safety including for women and children; and adopted as the responsibility of the network to assist in conducting awareness-raising for human rights and safety for all including women and children.

Strategic planning around pilot township dialogue and community learning centers has taken into consideration gender as well as rural outreach dimensions, including exploring plans for TLG participation in governance or programme activities of the centers and other considerations of gender equity and inclusion of vulnerable groups in terms of differences in starting points and capacities for participation and access to information. Discussions with stakeholders in government, civil society, and media to date have not explicitly addressed gender issues, however, and this needs to be addressed before beginning implementation in 2015.

South-South Cooperation on Civil Society and Women's Leadership. Civil society representatives from national and local level (including one TLG leader) were supported to participate in the Asia Regional Civil Society Experience Summit in Jakarta in September 2014, and in the UNDP-USAID Asia Regional Conference on Women's Participation in Local Governance in Bangkok in November 2014. Following the workshop, the TLG leader and a State Parliamentarian (both from Ayeyarwady) who participated in the Myanmar delegation together, have now

been in regular contact with each other, with the TLG leader serving as a sounding board for rural women's concerns to State Parliament—a type of interaction that had not previously occurred.

Sub Output 2.2 – Strengthen Capacities of Communities to engage in, monitor and evaluate service delivery

Through the 2012-2013 transition of Human Development Initiative (HDI) Programme, UNDP's support under Pillar 1 for village based Self Reliant Groups (SRGs) to federate and form cluster and Township Leading Groups (TLGs) has successfully led to establishment of 31 women-led TLGs across 8 States/Regions (Kachin, Shan, Kayah, Magway, Ayeyarwady, Mon, Chin, and Rakhine) representing approximately 2000 SRGs and some 22,500 members—primarily rural women.

Women's Leadership Training for TLGS

Women's leadership training for participation in local governance. Through the TLGs, leadership training was delivered to 96 women during March 2014, and to 61 women during December 2014 (approximately half of whom also participated in the first training). The March workshop facilitated participatory self-assessment of capacity needs of the TLGs and formulation of TLG objectives both to serve member SRGs in successfully standing on their own – following the end of formal UNDP support – in continuing to carry out their microfinance functions, as well as serving rural women's interests in accessing information, voicing interests, and participating in local development and local governance decisions. Self-assessment and anecdotal evidence (see inset, next page) indicates that the TLGs are starting to achieve results through developing previously unimagined and unattempted interactions with local GAD, committees, and parliamentarians.

A rapid assessment survey conducted during TLG national workshop in December 2014 indicated that 34 of the total 92 women (37%) who had previously participated in UNDP Township level leadership training reported increased status, income, employment opportunities and responsibilities as a result within 6 months of the training. Relevant evidence they identified as indicators of their 'increased status' included:

- More able to participate in workshop discussions
- More confident on their role in improving women's rights and lives in the community
- More intra-family leadership by the women
- More skills generally in mobilization, leadership, prioritization, transparency
- Experience helping other social organizations / increased relationship in social affairs
- Experience applying mobilization skills to help shutdown SRGs be functioning back
- Some TLGs increased common funding
- Some TLGs increased coordination with government, as demonstrated by success in registering as CSOs
- TLG leader from Mon state was elected to Executive Committee leadership for Mon State CSO Network – seeking a leadership role that she attributes in part to the UNDP leadership training

These anecdotal reports are informing development of relevant factors for measuring impact of program interventions on women's empowerment, along with a standardized system for tracking changes in the quantity and quality of TLG and TLG-facilitated rural community (and rural women's) engagement with local governance.

Institutional Support Grants to 31 TLGs. Based on the recommendations of the capacity assessment exercise, UNDP has initiated Institutional Support Grants ranging to the 31 TLGs to support their establishment of regular office operations, promote locally generated TLG initiatives for civic awareness raising targeting rural women's interests and for establishing or enhancing linkages with public officials, private sector and other CSOs for purposes of representing and empowering rural women. The 31 grants were launched in November 2014 and will continue in the first phase through December 2015. The grants also provide for self-initiated further capacity development of TLG leaders and SRG member groups (including replicating locally the TLG national leadership trainings and other UNDP-supported training such as on social cohesion), and to support the sustainability and smooth operations of SRGs to continue to function in supporting the overall improvement in living standards for their respective member households. In addition, UNDP will continue to support TLG organizational capacity development training and one-on-one coaching, as well as additional rural women's leadership trainings through the TLGs.

Planning for National Network of Rural Women. During the first national training in March 2014, approximately 2/3 of TLG leaders at the training expressed aspirations toward further strengthening of their federations of SRGs at State/Regional levels and ultimately through a national network. After the practical experiences of conceptualizing and initiating their township-level activities, leaders from the 31 TLGs reconvened in December to share experiences and discuss strategies for achieving their goals—recognizing in the process significant commonalities across the states/regions and reinforcing the need and desire for continued networking and exchange for mutual support. The 61 TLG leaders at the second training workshop (about half of whom had participated in the earlier training as well) unanimously declared their intention to form a National Network of federated SRGs, as a network by and for rural women.

Film. UNDP is producing a short film tracing the journey of a number of women leaders involved in TLGs. The aim is to feature the span of their work at the village level for their families, the contribution they make to the local communities and village development, up to more recent engagement at the township level. The film will share their achievements as individuals and as groups, their personal motivations, and their vision for the groups they are engaged in and leading, as well as aspirations for a future engagement at a national level.

Outcome Statement of National Workshop for Township Leading Groups

National workshop for Township Leading Groups was conducted on December 16~18, 2014 at Shwe Ye Mon Hotel in Mandalay. 62 representatives from 31 TLGs who are from Kachin, Chin, Shan, Kayah, Mon, Rakhine states, Magway and Ayeyarwaddy divisions participated in this workshop.

Recognizing that we face common issues, challenges and capacity needs, we are eager to work together to bring our experiences, information and resources for each other. On this state, all participants agreed they want to form National Network for Township Leading Groups.

The proposed objectives of the National Network are:

- *To have the capacity to meet challenges that Township Leading Groups face*
- *To promote rural women Leadership and "voice" in government policymaking, peace processes that may affect rural women*
- *To help Self Reliance Groups as grassroots organizations and Township Leading Groups as one of the Civil Society Organizations gain broader recognition from actors from State/Regional level and National level (Government, Parliaments, Private sector, larger CSOs/NGOs, INGOs, Donors, international)*
- *To become a sustainable support mechanism for Township Leading Groups and to mobilize resources from philanthropists or other donors to support Township Leading Groups for long term sustainability*

The proposed draft constitution is coming out at the last day of workshop as follows:

- *The network is managed by elected leadership and willingly formed as a registered organization at national level*
- *Each township represented on a 31-member Steering Committee, with 11 member organized working committee selected from the 31*
- *Election process should for three-year term*

We will hold a national convention for more people to come together for the formation of National Network. The selected working committee is responsible to organize and invite all participants for the upcoming National Convention in 2015.

Steps toward sustainability. The strategy of supporting federation of SRGs to cluster and township level has contributed to SRGs' long term independent sustainability. The cluster and township level leading groups provide regular guidance for SRGs' management of funds and other issues, helping prevent or restore 'collapsed' SRGs and supporting the growth of others. Building on earlier efforts during 2012-2013 HDI transition period for sensitization of SRGs toward registration, during 2014 the number of SRGs engaged in registration as cooperatives rose from 167 to over 1000, with 948 SRGs (19% of the original 5000 SRGs) reported to have already achieved registration by mid-December 2014. Under the federated SRGs, common funds have been generally maintained or increased. In the words of one TLG member, "Under HDI, UNDP led us. Now we lead ourselves."

The TLGs' role as CSO actors at township level is novel and will require more time to sustain independently. As evidence of some progress developing sustainability, All TLGs receive some (usually quite small) common funds from their member SRGs and cluster groups, which may become a source of support for core expenses for activities to benefit SRG members. The TLGs are participants in state/region-wide CSO Forums/Networks; and with UNDP facilitation, 4 TLGs from Shan State have already initiated external resource mobilization efforts for private donor assistance (applying for GIZ support). In addition, UNDP has sensitized and supported all 31 TLGs (100%) to apply for CSO registration under the Association Law, with 5 of the 31 (16%) having completed the process and received registration numbers by December 2014.

Gender and vulnerable groups. UNDP's support to Township Leading Groups of the SRGs is focused specifically on women participants and women's empowerment, with the potential to make a positive impact on the lives of over 22,500 SRG members (poor rural women who are among the most marginalized women), through support to 31 TLGs to implement self-identified activities for improving women's livelihoods and access to economic opportunities, providing training and education on women's rights, and promoting linkages with government, CSOs and the private sector to facilitate women's involvement in local governance and development.

Sub Output 2.3 – Enhance capacity of local media actors in support of democratic governance

Media as the fourth pillar of governance plays a critical role in governance. Through its penetration and outreach amongst citizens, media has a strong influencing capacity hence the potential to achieve both positive and negative outcomes. Focusing on enhancing the role of local media, UNDP's programme is aimed at improving capacities of media stakeholders (i.e., both journalists and citizens) on handling sensitive matters through media platforms and supporting good governance. The growing use of internet and social media raises possibilities as well as possibly gaps across citizens and communities in underserved areas; there is also added challenge to address how inaccurate reporting can ignite tensions and derail peace and reconciliation processes. This calls for innovative ways to enhance citizens' journalism and community radio alongside accountability of media actors. In targeted states (Chin, Mon/Kayin, and Southern Shan), UNDP also works closely with journalists and media groups to enhance their collective voice as well as provide norm setting, peer to peer mentoring and quality assurance on responsible reporting of news.

Local media landscape assessment in Mon/Kayin. During second quarter 2014, a media study was conducted in limited township areas of Mon and Kayin States to produce a report with guidance on UNDP's strategy of engagement of local media within the Township Community Dialogue and Learning Initiatives (Sub-Output 2.1) and propose pilot support to develop capacity for community broadcasting. The report documents a serious information gap in the townships assessed. Rural people in particular find it hard to get information, and mainstream national media and even journals focusing on Mon and Kayin States rarely cover local issues. Media literacy among CSOs is generally undeveloped, with the exception of Ye Township in Mon State. Despite slow speeds, young people are increasingly turning to mobile-phone-accessed internet for communication with friends as well as information. This is likely to accelerate particularly in Kawkareik Township in Kayin State which is included in Telenor's priority areas for service later this year.

Local media networking capacity and training programmes. Local media mapping was completed in Mon and Kayin States and separately in Chin State, and was initiated in Southern Shan State and Mandalay Region.

Similar to UNDP's approach with fostering State/Regional CSO Networks, local media networking capacity has been developed and networks formed with UNDP support and recognition from IPRD in Chin, Mon/Kayin/Tanintharyi, and Southern Shan:

- Chin Journalist Network Forum, Hakha, 21-27 May 2014 (M-64; F-13, total 77 journalist participants from 30 media organizations).

Chin Media Network Consultation on Media Network Building

- Chin Media Network (CMN) Network Building Workshop, Kalay, 24-26 Sep 2014 (M-33; F-9 ; total 42 participants from 25 media organizations).
- Southern Myanmar Journalist Network (SMJN) Forum, 11-12 Dec 2014 (M-87, F-25; total 112 participants).
- Southern Shan State Media Network Roundtable, 10-11 Dec 2014 (M-36, F-13, total 49 participants). In addition, a linkage event was supported on the day following the roundtable, 12 Dec 2014, between Southern Shan Media Network and Shan State Hluttaw: 25 Shan local media representatives who had never previously interacted official with Hluttaw were facilitated to participate in Hluttaw event and meet with the chairman of state parliament.

UNDP has also facilitated coordination and preparation meetings with the state media networks in Mon, Kayin and Chin to integrate local media initiatives into plans for Township Community Dialogue and Information Center/ initiatives (described under activity 2.1 above).

Locally-initiated requests for support to UNDP for local media training programmes have been discussed with Chin Media Network and with Southern Myanmar Journalist Network, and UNDP has taken note of the capacity development self-identified needs by the emerging networks in Southern Shan and Mandalay as well. The proposed training is under consideration and consultation with UNESCO and INGOs to coordinate donor support.

Supporting piloting of community broadcast in selected states. In the legal context of new legislation governing Public Service Media as well as Community Broadcast licensing being reviewed in Parliament, the possibility of selecting areas with permission for early community radio pilots as "laboratories" for learning and feedback is recommended to inform good governance of the sector including through development of by-laws for licensing as well as oversight mechanisms. Pilots could explore from a variety of business and technical models, as well as ownership of community broadcasting by nontraditional media organizations such as TLGs, or housing the projects within existing community libraries, or the pilot Township Community Dialogue and Information Centers/Initiatives.

In late 2014, following tabling of UNDP interest in exploring cooperation on community radio pilots with IPRD at the November Output Board meeting and subsequent discussion with the Union Minister of Information during the Media Sector Working Group meeting in December, the Minister of Information agreed in principle for IPRD to explore such pilot projects with UNDP for 2015 with a possible focus on ethnic community radio in Mon and Kayin. Any such pilots will be carefully prepared to cooperate with IPRD on effective governance mechanisms for providing editorial checks and balances and (possibly with other INGO partners such as IMS or Deutsche Welle Akademie) to train pilot participants on both the "how to's" of community radio as well as conflict- and gender-sensitive approaches to journalism.

Gender and vulnerable groups. UNDP's mass media assessment report has disaggregated the different access to information of men and women, of different ages and in rural versus urban settings. This information will be used to design community radio pilot strategies with the assessed gender differences in media access/use/content in mind, in order to ensure women's access/inclusion in the pilot management and target audience (e.g., propose that at least one pilot be managed by TLG); and related pilot training is envisioned to support development of community media content that is gender-sensitive (e.g., including avoiding gender stereotypes).

Media networking capacity activities and media training programmes have disaggregated male/female participant counts (as noted above), and have sought the involvement of women journalists- with results of women's participation in the network meetings ranging from 1/4 to less than 1/6 of participants (although this appears to be reflective of the gender proportions for journalists in local media). The programme also promoted the inclusion on agendas of gender perspective/gender equality discussion:

- Chin Journalist Network Forum: The Network explicitly adopted a "gender equality" objective and included gender as topic for further media capacity development.
- Chin Media Network (CMN) Building workshop: The Workshop explicitly discussed and issued a founding statement for the CMN on the need through media to promote gender equality. CMN also adopted a minimum 2 female representatives of the 7-person management board.
- Southern Shan State Media Network roundtable participants took the decision to form the Network's Executive Committee and elected 2 women and 9 men as leadership.

5. CROSS-OUTPUT LINKAGES

Activities under this Output build on the findings and governance self-assessment activities of Output 1's Local Governance mapping and activities for local government capacity development, concentrating efforts insofar as possible on the same target townships and states/regions in same geographical areas to develop local government and local civil society/media capacities in step with and with mutual understanding of one another. This Output also works closely with Output 5's programme on Social Cohesion (and Pillar 3's Rule of Law programme) to collaborate directly on "dialogue" capacity development activities, as well as coordinate on work directed at increasing local media and community information about and communities' active engagement in local peace-building. Conflict sensitive analysis has been explicitly introduced into the development and implementation of project activities including grant-making. In 2015, a coordinated programme across all Outputs under Pillar 1 to promote grassroots women's empowerment and leadership across local governance, civil society/media, entrepreneurship, livelihoods and peace-building work—with entry points from Output 2 focusing

leadership training, mentorship and local action campaigns on target groups of TLG leaders and women leaders within the state/region CSO and Media Networks. These linkages are managed through coordination meetings and information sharing, and are increasingly being formalized through joint Concept Notes and joint TORs.

Other cross-Output collaboration has started with Early Recovery programme in Kachin in regard to dialogue and information center plans in Puta-O and planning for increased civil society mapping and engagement activities to participate in Recovery and Dialogue Development Platforms in Waingmaw and if possible Mansi. 2015 workplan activites around civil society and media in Kachin and in Rakhine are designed in coordinated way to be integrated with Early Recovery frameworks for Development. Linkages are being managed through consolidated area-level workplans for 2015.

Linkages with Pillar 2's programme on DRR and climate change adaptation particularly in the Dry Zone are planned to target capacity building interventions on those issues for state/regional CSO and Media Networks and TLGs. Output 2 activities to support CSO-led consultation and civic awareness will link with Pillar 3's programmes on Public Administration, Development Effectiveness, and Parliamentary Support to support increased civil society consultation on civil service and parliamentary performance and voice in national development planning. Linkages with legal and rights CSOs and civil society leaders engaged by Pillar 3's Rule of Law programme will support technical content and design of activities with TLGs, CSO and Media Networks to increase capacities and raise civic awareness around women's rights and rights and inclusion of PLWHA and PWD, and with Parliamentarians to support activities around responsible elections reporting and women's leadership development. These linkages have been mainstreamed into workplan target areas and activities and are further developed through coordination during specific activity planning.

6. PARTNERS

Partners for this Output are primarily TLGs, local CSOs and Media through the state/regional networks that have been developed, and include GAD and IPRD in oversight and multi-stakeholder governance roles for planned Township Community Dialogue and Information pilot initiatives and Community Radio pilots. The Output directly partners with IPRD on increasing access to media/internet through ICT material support and 2015 opportunities for collaboration on support to expanding public libraries and public digital library service to underserved communities.

Cooperation is also pursued with other UNDP Country Offices and Asia Pacific Regional Centre for SSTC on civil society development, and anticipated in media sector development around media governance and community radio. UNDP and UNESCO are jointly implementing activities involving local media and community engagement under the UN Joint Peace-Building Fund in Mon and Kayin States. Cooperation and coordination with other sister UN Agencies and with INGO and national development partners on civil society capacity development activities (including with UNFPA, USAID and its implementing contractors, INGO forum and Myanmar Civil Society Forum Coordinating Committee), and on media sector development activities (including with UNESCO, IMS, Deutsche Welle Akademie, BNI and others participating in the Media Sector Development Working Group).

The Output also procures the services of national CSOs and international experts/INGOs specializing in capacity development training, dialogue skills and facilitation, and media governance, media ethics and community radio development.

7. 2014 BUDGET SNAPSHOT

Donors	2014 Original Budget (USD)	2014 Revised Budget (USD)	2014 Delivery (USD)	% Revised Budget
TRAC	842,222	722,222	658,259	91%
Danida	366,384	60,148	61,850	103%
Japan	207,630	157,630	135,931	86%
PBF	100,000	40,000	37,433	94%
Total	*1,516,236*	*980,000*	*893,473*	*91.17%*

8. LESSONS LEARNED/CHALLENGES AND BOTTLENECKS

- Media ethics and professionalism continues to be identified by both Media Networks and by Government as a fundamental media development capacity need. In this regard, we see needs not only for increased training and development of the norm-setting role of Media Networks. We also see benefits to increasing quick, reliable access to communications channels between media and Government, CSOs, and state and non-state military actors, to support responsible fact checking.

- From the perspective of ethnic media, state actions to shut down some unlicensed/unregistered media operations are viewed as selective enforcement. Due to continued lack of trust in government, some independent and ethnic media simply resist initiating licensing applications. Increased transparency and alternative compliance measures (such as warnings and compliance assistance in the first instance) may hold potential in establishing a sound regulatory environment for media sector growth.

- Completion of registration processes for TLGs is moving very slowly. State/regional CSO Forums have also highlighted general difficulties for CSOs with receiving registration. Local GAD most often cites the current lack of bylaws as the reason for not responding to CSO registration applications.

- The extremely low levels of women's participation and leadership in governance, peace-building and private sector development, warrants continued and more concentrated direct efforts to start to overcome identified legal, social and economic barriers. There is ample global evidence that advances for women translate into advances for all.

- While communications between UNDP and GAD/IPRD have increased following last Output Board meeting, differences in expectations regarding communications protocols about upcoming programme activities and related Travel Authorization requests still need to be worked out.

- The 2015 context, with peace negotiations, constitutional referendum, and general elections, will likely raise additional practical challenges for programme implementation, and activities in the 2015 work plan should be planned accordingly.

9. LOOKING AHEAD

The work plan for 2015 further develops groundwork laid in 2014 organized around the same structure of three key activity results areas:

2.1 Local CSO network capacities developed and activities initiated for dialogue, community outreach and inclusion, and sustainability

2.2 Rural women's voice and participation in local governance increased through TLGs, with greater inclusion and influence of women in local authority structures, in local/community media, and in the resulting decisions and information produced on local development planning, public service delivery, recovery and peacebuilding. Women's leadership in local governance increased nationally through civic awareness campaign and capacity development partnerships with national/INGOs.

2.3 More informative and responsible local media coverage and increased community access to media

> **Key Results for 2015**
>
> - **State/Region CSO and Media networks sustained and supported for advocacy** with state/region and local governments
> - **CSO-led dialogue and information initiatives supported in 3-4 townships** and **capacities for dialogue developed** for improved interaction, trust and community participation in local governance and peace processes
> - **Women's leadership in governance promoted through TLG activities** across 31 townships **and national network formation,** women's leadership training and media campaign
> - **Local media capacities developed** as responsible information providers (ethics, conflict- and gender-sensitivity training) and **community radio pilots** initiated.

Geographically, activities in each of these results streams will continue to target the same geographical areas, with particular concentration of activities including pilot township dialogue initiatives and pilot community radio initiatives within Mon, Kayin, and Chin States. CSO and media network activities will continue to be supported in the States above as well as in Mandalay Region and Shan State. The programme, in coordination with other Pillar 1 capacity development activities for local governance, livelihoods and social cohesion, will expand support in targeted townships in Kachin and Rakhine States, within unified area Early Recovery frameworks. Finally, TLG activities nationwide overlap with the geographical targets for CSO and media work mentioned above, as well spanning selected townships in Ayeyarwady and Magway.

This year's expected results *continue work* with state/region CSO and media networks as well as federated SRG networks (TLGs) fostered to date, to achieve within targeted geographical areas visible improvements in citizens' lives in line with the Government of Myanmar's governance and peace efforts. In particular, UNDP expects that

trust-building and facilitated dialogue will **increase the quantity and quality of interaction between CSOs/Media with Government and thereby address and reduce tensions around priority issues around information flow, civic awareness and civic engagement, and CSO/media sector development**, which have been publicly identified through, e.g., CSO/Media Forum Statements and Local Governance Mapping. Support to TLG-led activities at township and community/village level is expected to increase rural women's empowerment and engagement activities with government, CSOs and market actors in ways that **impact public and CSO/private sector planning and service delivery to improve women's (and children's) status and opportunities**.

New directions building out from current programme partnership opportunities include **closer cooperation with and support to IPRD** to increase underserved communities' access to information (**community radio pilots initiated, material support e.g. for public libraries/public digital library services**). Likewise, the further upward TLG networking to form a National Network will enable Pillar 1 programmes to come together for a **coordinated women's leadership initiative**, developing a 'pipeline' of women from grassroots civil society to enter leadership roles in local governance and peace-building, and to increase (men's and women's) public awareness and help organize social action to address social and economic barriers to women's leadership.