



Empowered Lives
Resilient Nations

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



November 2014

Output Board Report

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

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.

Under Pillar 1 – Local Governance, Output 2 focuses on Civil Society and Media support. The output is in essence about developing bottom-up mechanisms where Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), acting as “organized representatives” for groups of citizens and communities at large, are strengthened in their ability to coordinate and network and present issues, and to understand and identify modalities to collaborate with the government officials at the township and village tracts.

Grounded in the findings of the Local Governance Mapping exercises, UNDP's Civil Society and Media programme seeks to address the deficit in the flow of official public information; i.e. from those that generate information, usually government officials at the township level, to those that are the ultimate users/beneficiaries, mostly citizens in the Township Wards and village tracts. It also seeks to address the need for citizens to become more involved and participate in local level decision making. Because capacities of civil society organizations and citizens for engagement with government and advocacy 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 as individuals and citizens' groups.

As we review the results of 2014 support, UNDP's special strengths can be seen as a *neutral convenor* of multiple groups at local and State/Regional level for discussions on network formation; as a long-term supporter of village-level human development in Myanmar with *continuing ties and access to rural women* and the ability to support their self-reliant development of member organizations to respond to and represent their needs and support their participation in the changing local governance landscape; and as a *trusted partner* of government and CSOs in facilitating multi-stakeholder consultations on local governance, with the potential for further support to innovative experimentation and learning to inform sound policy development.

As we look into 2015, we are mindful of the continued capacity challenges ahead to realize the vision of sustainable human development for all, an enabling environment for peace and democracy to flourish and for all people to realize their basic human rights. The groundwork laid in 2014 with CSO and Media State/Regional Networking, leadership and institutional capacity development of Township level groups of Federated Self-Reliant Groups, and strategic assessments and stakeholder discussions on Township Community Dialogue and Learning as well as Community Broadcast capacities development initiatives, are expected to produce significant results that improve the linkages between communities/CSOs and public officials to improve local governance and service delivery.

2. KEY ACTIVITIES TO DATE

2014 Highlights

**CSO Forums & Networking
Township Community Dialogue & Learning Initiatives**

CSOs in 4 States/Regions (Mon, Shan, Mandalay, and Kayah) have been facilitated to hold CSO Forums involving over 500 CSOs/CBOs and almost 900 people (one-third of whom are women). These Forums have resulted in the establishment or concrete plans for establishment of State/Region level CSO Networks, and have provided an opportunity for 4 State/Region consultations between government and civil society on local development concerns as reflected in the Forum Statements. An additional 2 Forums are planned and to facilitate CSO Networks in Chin (November 2014) and Kayin (January 2015). The networks also provide local CSOs with the opportunity to engage in information sharing and self-assessment on local civil society development needs and CSO roles in supporting civic awareness and local development.

Regular monthly roundtables in Mandalay hosted by UNDP area office have provided a platform for 8 smaller scale government-civil society consultations around thematic issues.

Stakeholder strategic discussions have resulted in identifying key partners and forming steering committee structures for planned Township Community Dialogue and Learning Centers/Initiatives in 3 of the 4 targeted pilot areas.

Rural Communities' (Women's) Capacities for Engagement in Local Development

31 Township Leading Groups (TLGs) representing 22,500 rural villagers, largely women, in approximately 2000 Self Reliant Groups (SRGs) (out of 5000 SRGs originally fostered under UNDP's former HDI Initiative) have voluntarily federated. Of these, 167 have registered as cooperatives. The 31 TLGs have been supported for registration as NGOs at township level, with 4 of the 31 TLGs having received registration to date. TLG leaders have been engaged in leadership training and participatory self-assessment of capacity needs, and have received institutional support grants to better serve their members and link with public officials, the private sector and other CSOs.

Local Media Development

Chin Media Network has been established to share information and develop shared capacity building plans, and relevant training has been initiated. Planning underway for establishment of State/Regional media networks in Mandalay, Shan, and Mon/Kayin/Tanintharyi Southern Myanmar region. Media assessment has identified potential pilots for community broadcast learning experiments and/or related local capacity development for community broadcast content development when licensing is completed.

3. RESULTS REPORTING

Output <i>As per Pro-doc and AWP</i>	Output Indicators	Annual Targets Cumulative 2013-2014	Progress Towards Targets
Output 2: Citizens and communities engaged in local development and monitoring of service delivery	# of consultations with citizens, CBSO and CBOs at Township level on service delivery	At least 1 consultation per targeted township	4 large scale State/Region consultations (Mon, Kayah, Mandalay, Shan) and 8 additional smaller scale roundtable consultations in Mandalay [through LG Mapping exercises, 34 additional consultations supported at township level]
2.1 Township Level Community Centers established and enabled to provide a platform for dialogue and engagement in local development	# of Township Community Centers (TCCs) / Community Media Centers (CMCs) established	At least 6 TCCs/CMCs established	0 TCCs/CMCs established (groundwork completed with stakeholder meetings and steering committees established in 3 of total 6 target areas: Hakha, Mawlamyine, Hpa-An) (1 additional Community Learning Center contracted for construction in Putao for 1 st quarter 2015)
2.2 Strengthened capacities of communities to engage in, monitor and evaluate service delivery (HDI transition program)	% of SRG groups sensitized for registration and or cooperative formation engaging in registration and/or formation of cooperatives	At least 10% of 5000 UNDP supported SRGs in 2013 and additional 10% in 2014 engaged in registration process	Approximately 2000 out of 5000 SRGs have voluntarily engaged in federating. Of these, 167 (8%) have formed cooperatives. All 31 TLGs have engaged in registration process, with 4 (13%) successful completing registration to date.
	% of women with increased status, income, employment	10% of women having benefited from UNDP leadership training have	[data N/A: full data collection on change of status not yet completed;

Civil Society and Media

	<p>opportunities, and responsibilities as a result of UNDP TSP level leadership training</p>	<p>increased status, income, employment opportunities, and responsibilities as a result</p>	<p><i>surveys and data documenting common funds increase and other impacts of leadership training for 92 women involved in TLG leadership training and mentoring support to be collected and reviewed at TLG national workshop in Dec 2014]</i></p>
<p>2.3 Enhanced capacity of local media actors in democratic governance</p>	<p># of Media support initiatives provided by UNDP</p>	<p>Media support initiatives provided in at least 2 states</p>	<p>1 Media support initiative yielding concrete results in Chin state (formation of Chin Media Network and media capacity training provided)</p> <p>(groundwork completed for 3 additional Media networking and support initiatives in Mon/Kayin/Tanintharyi Southern Myanmar region, Mandalay, and Shan)</p> <p>(research and proposal for pilot community broadcast support initiatives developed at township level in 2 states: Mon and Kayin)</p>

4. KEY RESULTS

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

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.

UNDP's Strategy Paper for Township Community Dialogue and Learning Centers/Initiatives attempts to address the key 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 address limited 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 Learning Centers/Initiatives is to support an enabling environment where citizens can benefit from enhanced local level democratic participation and interaction.

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 Putao (Kachin). The initiative will be taken forward through calls for proposals from local organizations as well as on-going technical assistance to enhance dialogue skills of all stakeholders in pilot areas.

In addition, to support CSO/CBO capacities for coordination to participate in the initiatives and governance of the proposed centers, following on 2013 capacity development workshops and CSO mapping and outreach efforts, UNDP has facilitated locally-organized State/Region CSO Forums in 4 areas: Mon, Mandalay, Kayah, and Shan. Forums in Chin and Kayin are also planned for late 2014 and early 2015. These Forums have led to the establishment of State/Region CSO Networks for ongoing information sharing and coordination on capacity development and advocacy.

Women's participation in organizing and participating in the forums and in the on-going Network governing bodies, as well as gender equality issues, were promoted and highlighted in these CSO and Media networking support activities.

Township Community Dialogue and Learning 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.

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 new programme of support under Pillar 1 for village based Self Reliant Groups to federate and form Township Leading Groups (TLGs) has successfully led to establishment of 31 TLGs across 8 States/Regions representing approximately 2000 SRGs and some 22,500 members—largely comprised of rural women.

Following on earlier workshops, UNDP has sensitized and supported the TLGs to apply for NGO registration, resulting in 4 TLGs successfully completed registration to date, with the remaining 27 TLGs awaiting final approval of their registration.

Leadership training for TLGs was conducted in April-May 2014. This workshop also 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. TLG leaders also expressed aspirations toward further strengthening of their federations of SRGs at State/Regional levels and ultimately through a national network.

“Under HDI, UNDP led us, now we lead ourselves.”

- Comment of TLG member

Based on the recommendations of the capacity assessment exercise, UNDP has initiated Institutional Support Grants ranging to the 31 TLGs for November 2014 through December 2015 period to establish their regular office operations, support further capacity development of TLG leaders and member groups, and provide funds for locally generated TLG initiatives for civic awareness raising targeting rural women's interests as well as establishing or enhancing linkages with public officials, private sector and other CSOs. In addition, UNDP will conduct an additional capacity development workshop in late 2014 and expects to contract with a national CSO to provide on-going training and individualized support in 2014 to the TLGs' identified needs in enhancing financial and management skills and other soft skills like dialogue and negotiation. UNDP will also facilitate TLG-led planning toward further State/Regional and national network building.

Finally, 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. It 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.

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

Under this sub output, a media study was conducted in Mon and Kayin States to produce a report with guidance on UNDP’s strategy of engagement of local media in 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 Kawkaireik Township in Kayin State which is included in Telenor’s priority areas for service later this year.



Under the legislation governing community broadcast licensing passed by Parliament, the possibility of selecting pilot areas for community radio as “laboratories” for learning and feedback is recommended to inform by-laws policymaking on licensing and oversight to implement the new legislation. Pilots could explore from a variety of business and technical models, as well as ownership of community broadcasting by nontraditional community organizations for media such as TLGs, or housing the projects within existing community libraries or within envisaged Community Multi-Media Centers associated with Township Community Dialogue and Learning Initiatives. Any such pilots would be carefully prepared to coordinate with IPRD on developing strong governance mechanisms to provide editorial checks and balances and to train pilot participants on conflict-sensitive approaches to journalism.

In the alternative to community broadcasting pilots, the report recommends UNDP support to non-broadcast pilots in sites identified in Mon and Kayin States – particularly Ye and Kawkareik Townships – where community radio could eventually flourish. In this non-broadcast pilot approach, UNDP support could enhance local capacity of CBOs/journalists to develop and distribute “audio” content through alternative channels—such as SMS messaging with automated story linkages by phone, or even low tech distribution through mobile loudspeakers or CDs. The support for local media and CSOs to develop experience with producing “audio” content would facilitate faster uptake of community broadcast licensing opportunities when available.

In addition, similar to UNDP’s approach with fostering State/Regional CSO Networks, with UNDP support and recognition from IPRD, the Chin Media Network involving over 25 different local media organizations has been established to share information and develop shared capacity building plans. Planning is underway for similar local networking in Mandalay, Shan, and Mon/Kayin/Tanintharyi Southern Myanmar region.

5. CROSS-OUTPUT LINKAGES

Activities under this Output are closely tied to the findings and governance self-assessment activities of Output 1’s Local Governance mapping and further plans for local government capacity development, concentrating efforts insofar as possible on the same target geographical areas to develop local government and local civil society/media capacities in step with and through mutual understanding of one another. This Output also works closely with Output 5’s programme on Social Cohesion particularly to collaborate directly on “dialogue” activities as well as to include conflict sensitive analysis of local context in the development and implementation of project activities around Township Community Dialogue and Learning Centers/Initiatives and Community Broadcast pilots/capacity building initiatives.

In addition, Cross-Pillar collaboration with Early Recovery programme in Kachin are expected particularly around planned Recovery and Dialogue Development Platforms. Linkages with Pillar 3’s Outputs on Development Effectiveness, Parliamentary Support, and Rule of Law/Access to Justice outputs are planned to bring key programme partners and beneficiaries together to enhance local CSO, media and community understanding and participation in effective development planning, government activities and oversight, and dialogue practical application exercises and in policy-related learning and recommendations.

6. PARTNERS

Partners for this Output are primarily TLGs as well as leading 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 CSO-and Media-operated pilot initiatives. Likewise, the Output cooperates, coordinates and procures the services of national CSOs and international experts/INGOs specializing in capacity development training, dialogue skills and facilitation, and community broadcast or community media development.

7. BUDGET SNAPSHOT (as of 31 October 2014)

Donors	2014 Original Budget	2014 Revised Budget	Delivery 31/10/14	% Revised Budget	Delivery Projected end 2014	% Revised Budget
TRAC	842,222.00	722,222.00	364,307	50%	702,754.64	97%
Danida	366,384.00	60,148	46,950	78%	60,147.56	100%
Japan	207,630.00	157,630	28,511	18%	157,630.34	100%
PBF	100,000.00	40,000	34,859	87%	40,000.00	100%
	1,516,236.00	980,000.35	474,626.54	48%	960,532.54	98%

8. LESSONS LEARNED/CHALLENGES AND BOTTLENECKS

- Originally planned Community Broadcast initiatives on hold in advance of legislative basis and licensing process established that creates supportive enabling environment → IPRD consider working together with UNDP and TLG/CSO/local Media partners for several pilot community broadcast initiatives as “laboratories” for learning, to inform implementing policy framework
- Need for strong groundwork and investment in trust building, mutual understanding, and capacities of both local township government/committees and of local civil society and media, in order to engage in practical consultation and dialogue activities to support local government-community consultations at township level → confirmation of Union level support for local officials’ and committees’ participation and innovation/experimentation in pilot areas
- CSO networking support requires careful and inclusive consultation and advance information sharing so that CSOs/CBOs at different stages of capacity development and interaction with each other can participate meaningfully in discussion of network-building, and so that the emergent network can be legitimately recognized as representative of member CSOs/CBOs → requires careful UNDP facilitation of transparent and inclusive processes
- Government support and approval on hold for Kayin CSO Forum → confirmation of Union level GAD support
- Completion of registration processes for TLGs moving slowly (only 4/31 TLGs have received registration numbers)

9. LOOKING AHEAD

The below measures are intended to build on the groundwork laid in 2014 with participatory research and formation of strategic planning with selected townships on development of pilot Township Community Dialogue and Learning Centers/Initiatives and pilot Community Broadcasting, as well as fostering of local CSO, TLG/SRG and Media networks, to deliver concrete experience and policy-informing results on the goals of improving the linkage between communities/CSOs and local authorities to improve local governance and service delivery.

We envision partnering with both local CSO and media partners in the pilot areas as well cooperating and coordinating with national CSOs and international experts/INGOs specializing in capacity development training, dialogue skills and facilitation, and community broadcast or community media development. Approximately delivery of \$1 million budget is expected. Practical outreach and inclusion of rural communities and the development of specifically of rural women's participation and leadership is particularly emphasized across activities, particularly through linkages with TLG/SRG members as participants and beneficiaries in the pilot activities.

Close coordination with GAD and IPRD is planned for developing sound multi-stakeholder governance models for CSO-and Media-operated activities in the pilot initiatives. Likewise, outreach to GAD and IPRD as well as other local CSOs/CBOs, Village Tract Administrators, Parliamentarians, and relevant township and village committees is essential for generating experience with practical information and civic awareness campaigns and dialogue activities on local development.

Key Activities Proposed for 2015

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

- 4 Pilot Township Community Dialogue and Learning Initiatives launched
- Related training for township stakeholders on dialogue skills
- 5-7 State/Regional and local CSO Networks supported in on-going networking and coordination activities, sustainability planning, and capacity development
- Document experiences and lessons learned for development and discussion of policy recommendations for up-scaling models

2.2 – Strengthen capacities of communities to engage in, monitor and evaluate public service delivery (HDI Transition Programme)

- With national training partner, strengthen organizational and financial management capacities of Township Leading Groups of SRGs
- With grant support to TLGs, foster networking, outreach and linkage activities
- Provide support for forming regional and national network
- Exposure to best practices internally and externally

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

- Support 2-3 pilots and/or capacity development for community broadcast in selected States (Mon, Kayin, possibly Chin)
- 4 State/regional CSO Media Networks (Chin, Mon/Kayin/Tanintharyi Southern Myanmar region, Shan, Mandalay) fostered and supported
- Related experience and lessons learned documented and reviewed with IPRD, and policy recommendations formulated and discussed
- Support for IPRD capacity development on request