



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

ANNUAL REPORT **2015**

UNDP Myanmar



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Annual Report

UNDP Myanmar

2015



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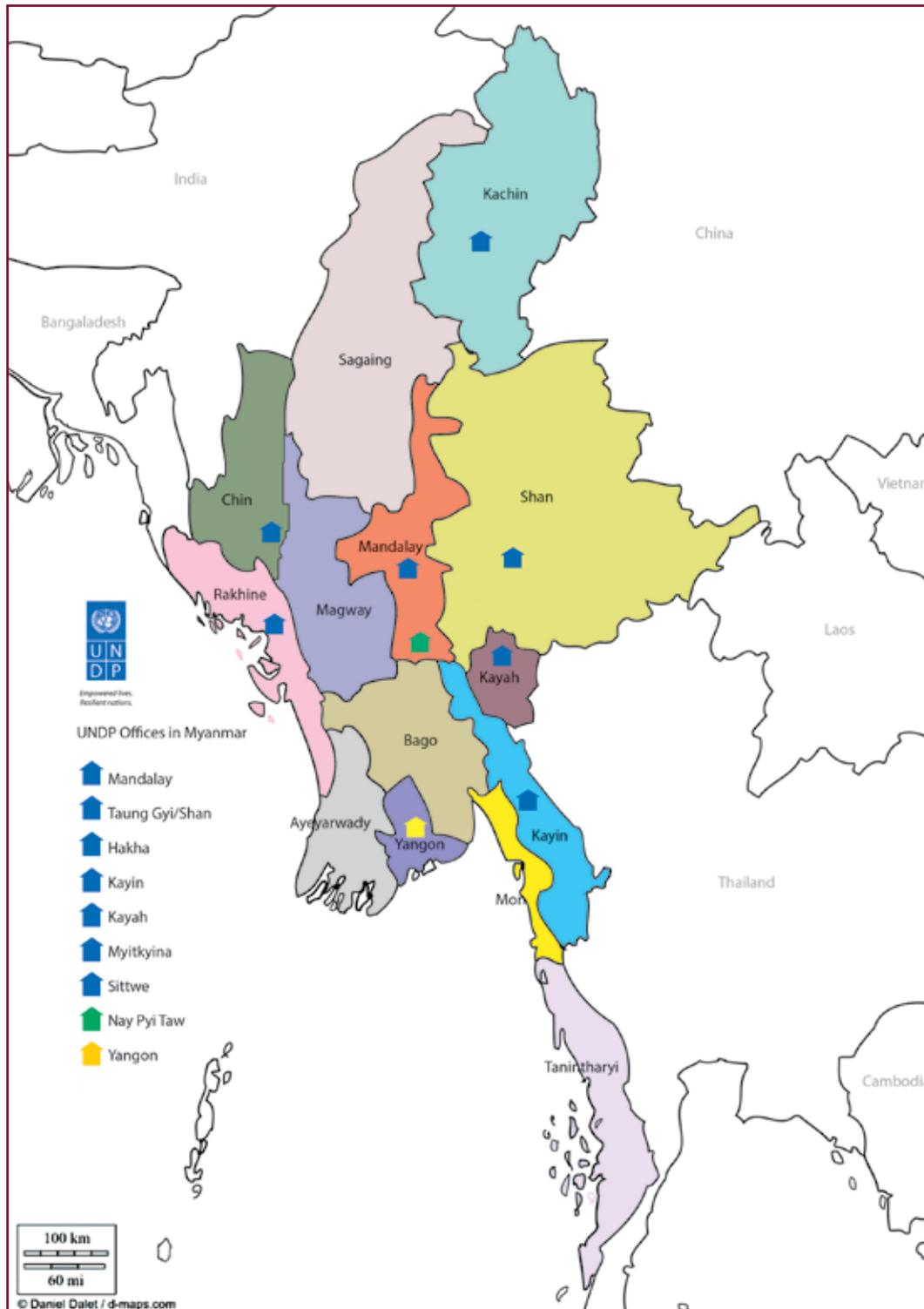
Acronyms

ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CEDAW	Convention to Eliminate all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CBO	Community Based Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DICA	Directorate of Investment and Company Administration
GAD	General Administration Department of the Ministry of Home Affairs
GEF	Global Environment Fund
IDLO	International Development Law Organisation
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
IPU	International Parliamentary Union
LDC	Least Developed Country
LIFT	Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund
OCHA	Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OSS	One Stop Shops
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UCSB	Union Civil Service Board
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNISDR	United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development

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A map of Myanmar showing the location of UNDP offices



Foreword



2015 was a very significant year for Myanmar, marked by two historic milestones: the signing of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) in October which brought the country one step closer to ending one of the world's longest running civil wars; and democratic elections of the national and local parliaments in November resulting in a landslide win by the National League for Democracy (NLD), led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Both events have reinforced the country's democratic transition which began a few years ago.

UNDP has been present in Myanmar since the 1960s. The current country programme 2013-2017 aims to help Myanmar manage a "triple transition": nation-building, including securing sustainable peace with ethnic minorities; state-building, including democratizing and modernizing state institutions; and economic liberalization, moving the country towards a more open, fair, responsible and transparent market system.

In 2015 UNDP's country programme continued to provide support to Myanmar's democratic transition, making specific contributions in the fields of public administration reform, decentralization and improved service delivery. UNDP seized the momentum of the political transition to foster the launch of various institutional reform initiatives and built coalitions among national stakeholders such as national, local governments, civil society and international development partners. UNDP also facilitated South-South knowledge sharing, provided direct policy advice, and helped to establish a knowledge base through a nationwide mapping exercise on the state of local governance in Myanmar.

UNDP's work on parliamentary development also continued in 2015. UNDP forged a strong partnership with the national parliament, and helped build capacities of region and state assemblies as well as those of parliamentary staff and enabled MPs to discharge their legislative, oversight and representative roles more effectively.

The unprecedented floods and landslides that affected Myanmar in July and August of 2015 demonstrated the vulnerability of the country to natural

disasters. UNDP was at the forefront of international support to national stakeholders for an effective transition from relief to recovery after large parts of the country were affected by the floods and landslides. UNDP is the lead agency in the UN system, partnering with the government's Recovery Coordination Centre, for undertaking recovery and rehabilitation needs assessments (including a post-disaster needs assessment). UNDP helped to coordinate activities across ministries, between national and local authorities, in partnership with private sector, civil society and international actors. In addition, UNDP provided direct livelihoods support to thousands of households in Rakhine and Chin States, where the disaster's impact was most severe, and encouraged a "build back better" approach to recovery efforts.

UNDP supported the successful conduct of the 2015 national and local elections (the first multi-party general elections since 1990), with the procurement of over 50,000 solar lamps which allowed transparent vote counting in polling stations without access to electricity including those affected by the floods, and the provision of indelible ink to all polling stations, which addressed concerns about possible double-voting.

2015 was also an important year at the global level, with the adoption by UN Member States of a new Global Agenda for Sustainable Development, including agreement on 17 new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a new agreement on climate change as well as a new agreement on disaster risk reduction. UNDP provided support to the Government of Myanmar to prepare for and participate in all these events.

It is a privilege for UNDP to support the people and government of Myanmar in their quest for more inclusive, just and sustainable development. We are very grateful to all our partners, including our donors, for their very generous support and engagement in UNDP's work.

UNDP stands ready to provide whatever support is required to assist Myanmar's democratic transition and the country's path towards a peaceful and resilient future.

Renata Lok-Dessallien
UNDP Resident Representative

Toily Kurbanov
UNDP Country Director

An Overview of What We Do



UNDP has been present in Myanmar since the 1960s. Our current country programme started in 2013 and will finish in 2017.

The country programme is structured around three outcome areas –Democratic Governance, Local Governance, and Environmental Governance and Disaster Resilience - that are expected to be achieved through the delivery of twelve interdependent outputs. The overarching aim of the programme is to support the democratic transition in Myanmar. UNDP Myanmar has its main office in Yangon, a representation office in Nay Pyi Taw, and field offices in Hakha, Mandalay, Myitkyina, Mawlamyine, Sittwe and Taunggyi. We have a total of 205 staff working across the country.

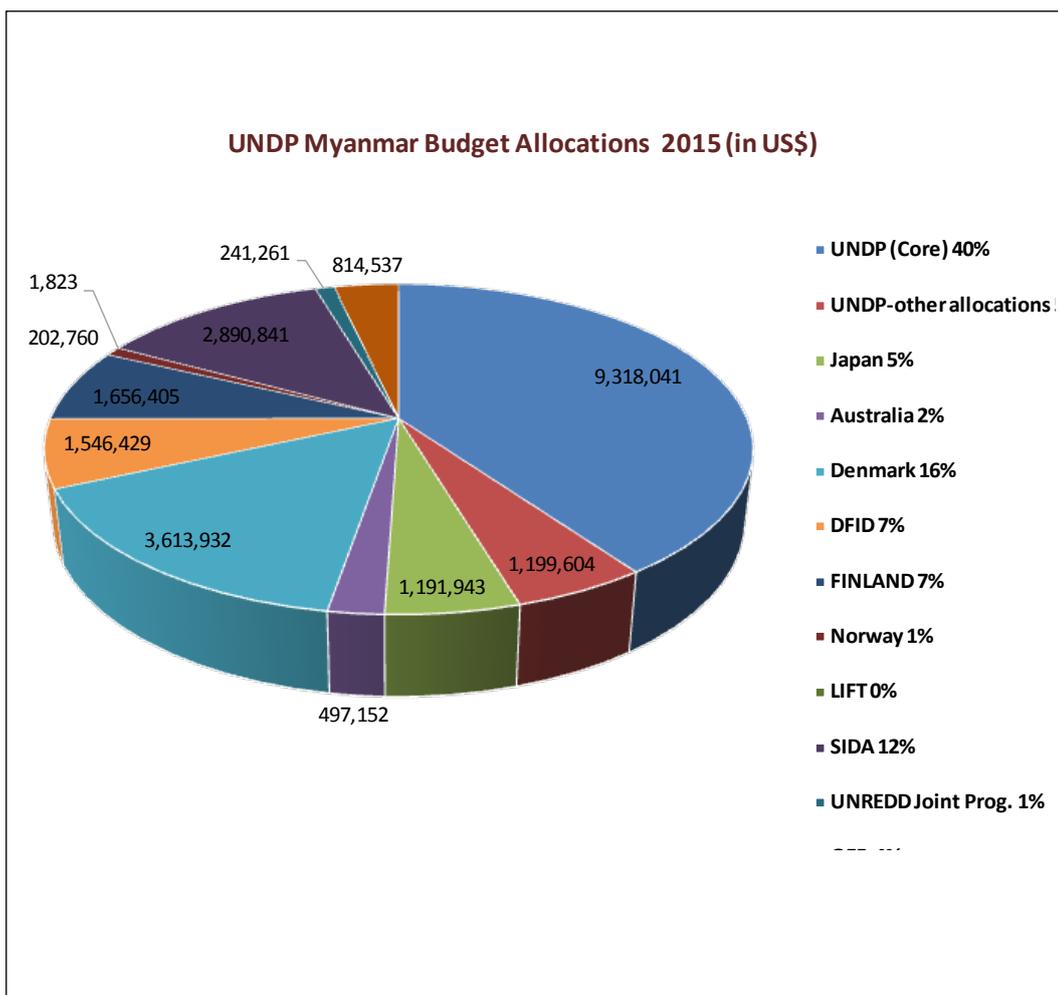
UNDP's country programme in Myanmar takes a rights-based approach to human development. It promotes more inclusive and sustainable development, and reduced poverty and inequality by strengthening democratic decision-making at national, region/state and township levels. In all our work UNDP ensures that men, women and civil society are empowered to understand and advocate for their rights and public services which respond to their needs; that communities are resilient, with the ability to deal with economic, disaster and conflict shocks, and environmental degradation; that communities and institutions are able to better resolve conflicts, bridge differences and build trust; and that key government and public institutions have processes, laws and systems that are better able to reflect and respond to the needs of poor and vulnerable people.

Through the work of our programme throughout Myanmar, we aim to help create more inclusive and equitable government services and facilities; a strengthened enabling environment for the private sector and an increase in employment and livelihood opportunities for men and women across the country.

Sustainable development in Myanmar can only be achieved through more effective democratic decision-making and service delivery, and must be accompanied by genuine and lasting peace, and a recognition that all development decisions need to be informed by responsible environmental management considerations and a need to build stronger disaster resilience capacity.

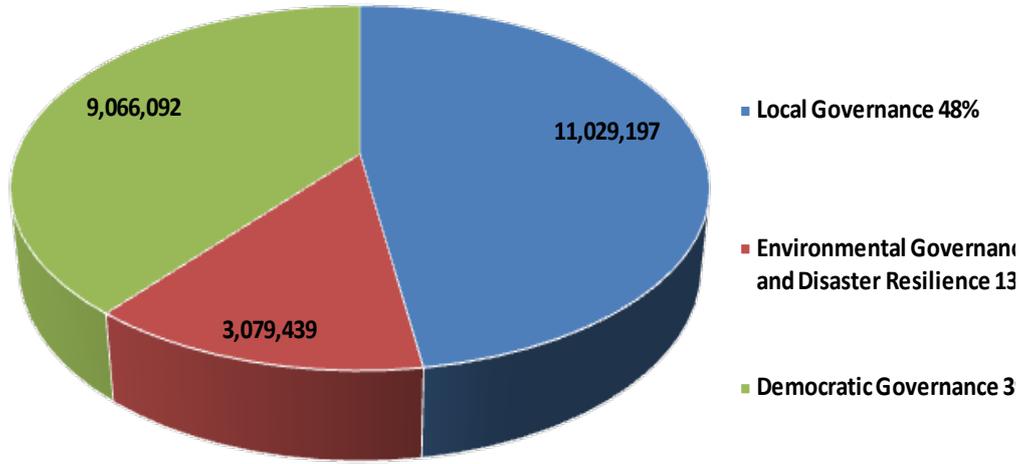
In the implementation of its country programme, UNDP enjoys close relationships with different stakeholders including ministries and departments at Union, State and Region levels, Union and State/Region Parliaments, civil society, media, academia, the private sector, development partners as well as members of the UN family.

A number of development partners provide generous funding for the country programme, while UNDP's core resources are used as seed funding to kick start programmes, pilot new approaches, demonstrate initial results and help attract additional funding from donor partners.



The overall budget for UNDP in Myanmar for 2015 was US \$23,1 million. Over 45% (US\$10,5 million) was provided by UNDP resources. The Governments of Australia, Denmark, Finland, Japan, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom provided the remaining funding together with the Global Environment Facility (GEF), UN Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN REDD) Joint Programme and the Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT). We are grateful to all our donors/development partners for their support.

UNDP Myanmar Funding 2015 by Areas of Work (in US\$)



The Democratic Governance Programme



Context

2015 was a historical year for Myanmar, with the first democratic general elections that saw the victory of the National League for Democracy (NLD), the first non-military party to rule the country in decades. The elections were key to the country's democratic transition process, particularly as they took place peacefully, and saw the acceptance by the ruling Union Solidarity and Development Party of its results.

While challenges remain, such as necessary revisions to Myanmar's legal framework for elections, including the number of seats directly elected to the parliament (25% are appointed by the military), and legal and practical restrictions on the right to vote and the right to stand for election, independent observers assessed the elections as credible and well administered.

Following the elections, a new parliament was inaugurated in January 2016, with the new executive set to take office in April 2016.

2015 also saw progress on the Peace Process front, with a Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement signed on 15 October 2015 between the Myanmar government and eight ethnic organizations. While several key groups including the Kachin Independence Army, the Shan State Army, and the United Wa State Army did not sign and fighting is still ongoing in areas under their control, this represents a milestone in the Peace Process.

The government continued taking forward political, social and economic, and administrative reforms.

The parliament, one of the youngest in the world, is working at overcoming its capacity gaps by showing leadership in developing its human and administrative resources in line with international best practices, enabling it to perform its mandate in law-making, oversight and representation.

The World Justice Project Rule of Law Index for 2015 shows improvements in the 'constraints the legislature poses on government power', and a survey by UNDP confirmed that MPs became more comfortable performing their check and balance role. While the elections returned few previously serving MPs at the Union level, with development partner support, the Parliament is now well prepared to facilitate the arrival of new MPs in early 2016 and for them to take up their new duties.

There are indications of progress in a number of governance areas relating to improved public management, financial management and national statistics. The executive was ambitious in pursuing administrative reform initiatives, making good use of relatively well functioning coordination structures, although comprehensive reforms were not carried out.

In the area of Public Administration Reform, the executive has been pursuing ambitious initiatives. The administration led the development of a National Strategic Framework for Administrative Reform, through a process involving over 300 stakeholders from multiple institutions, and increasing awareness within the bureaucracy, and providing a solid foundation for discussions to move ahead in 2016 in accordance with a new government agenda in this area.

In the justice sector, both the Union Attorney General's Office and the Supreme Court of the Union are in a better position to discuss and develop an overall justice sector reform strategy. The development of the Union Attorney General's Office Strategic Plan is an indication of the improved planning capacity within the institution, and greater willingness to explore meaningful justice sector reform.

The Plan makes specific reference to international standards, rule of law and human rights, and sets priority actions around upholding fair trial standards and expanding legal assistance. Individual reforms have made a difference to the rule of law and human rights, as demonstrated by the slight increase in Myanmar's Rule of Law Index score, showing improvement in due process of law, non-use of violent redress for disputes, and independence of the judiciary. However, coordinated efforts will be critical to resolving the greatest challenges.

UNDP Myanmar's Democratic Governance Programme (2013-2017) supports Myanmar's transition towards greater democratic governance and the promotion of human rights. As a result of UNDP's support, previously closed and limited reform processes have opened up across institutions and to international stakeholders, and are now fully owned and led by national partners. UNDP's particular contribution has mainly been in changing attitudes. For example in justice sector institutions, UNDP has raised awareness of due process, encouraged justice actors to discuss justice issues affecting vulnerable groups including women, and facilitated dialogues with the public.

Since 2013, UNDP's contributions have enhanced in scope and focus, moving from initial sensitization and relationship building, to strategic level guidance on issues central to reforms, such as reform strategy development, national data collection and analysis, and development of sustainable approaches to training and learning for civil servants. UNDP has seen improvements in terms of greater responsiveness, participation, and use of evidence base in policy and law making.

There are four main areas of work:

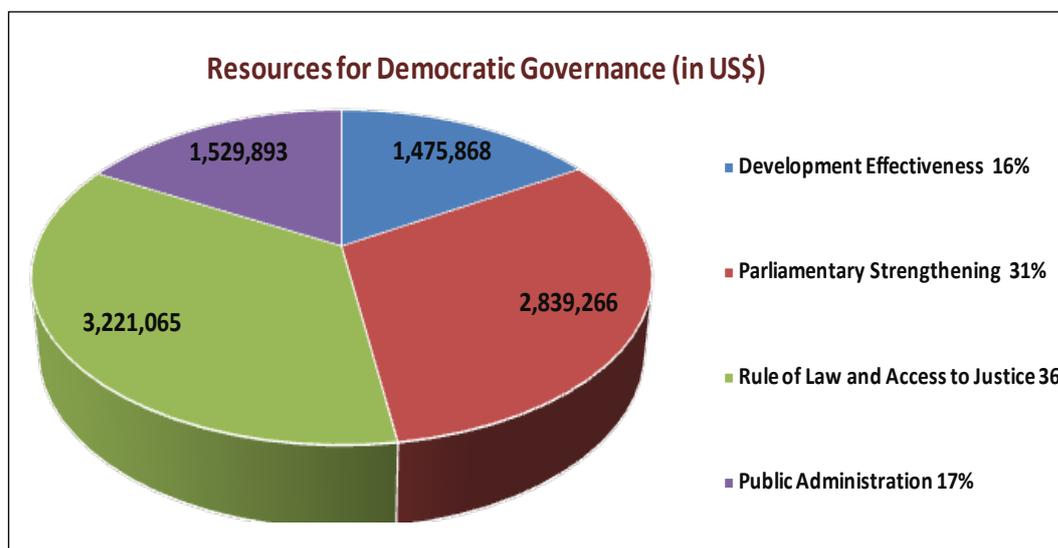
- Development effectiveness;
- Parliamentary strengthening;
- Rule of law and access to justice; and
- Public administration.

Partners

The Democratic Governance Programme partnered with the following stakeholders:

- *Government:* Ministry of Planning (Foreign Economic Relations Department, Planning Department, Central Statistics Organization); Ministry of Education; Ministry of Health; Union Civil Service Board (UCSB) (Central Institute of Civil Service, Civil Service Selection and Training); Ministry of Home Affairs (General Administration Department, Myanmar Police Force); Office of the Union Attorney General; Office of the Supreme Court of the Union; Constitutional Tribunal; Parliaments (Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, Pyithu Hluttaw, Amyotha Hluttaw, State and Region Hluttaws).
- *Other partners:* Inter-Parliamentary Union, IDLO, BABSEA CLE, and Universities in Myanmar.
- *Funding partners:* the Governments of Australia, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. The programme was also funded with UNDP resources.

The Democratic Governance Programme had a total 2015 budget of US \$ 9,066,092.



Key Achievements

Development Effectiveness

UNDP worked to enhance development effectiveness through improved statistics, planning and development cooperation, to contribute to the promotion of more open and responsive governance and human rights principles.

UNDP improved the capacity of the Ministry of Planning to collect evidence that can be used to drive policy development. In 2015, UNDP supported the government to complete the Myanmar Business Survey, the first-ever comprehensive official survey of Myanmar's private sector with a methodology that follows international best practice for structural business statistics. More than 400 government staff members participated in and received training, improving Ministry capacity for survey design, training of survey staff, economic statistical classifications, and survey enumeration/administration. This prepared them to undertake further survey work in 2016.

UNDP's support to the Vice-President-led Least Developed Country (LDC) Graduation Committee showcases the greater willingness to consider and use data such as this to inform policy making: after reviewing a report on the means to improve data collection on development results (and taking steps to implement the recommendations, including establishing focal points for the transmission of data to UN agencies), the Committee requested a UNDP report analyzing the advantages and disadvantages of graduation from LDC status, to feed into their policy development. The report helped the Committee produce the Master Plan for graduation from LDC status. Other countries in the region (e.g. Lao PDR) are benefiting from Myanmar's experience, producing similar reports to inform their policies, and a similar approach could be taken in support of decision making regarding the Sustainable Development Goals.

UNDP contributed to changing government's attitudes towards partnering with civil society to achieve development goals. In 2013, civil society was not invited to participate in development cooperation dialogues. By 2015 not only was civil society invited to participate, but Myanmar was the first country globally to discuss assessing the quality of public-private dialogue (a Global Partnership for Effective Development Corporation, GPEDC indicator), jointly between government and the private sector.

Parliamentary Strengthening

UNDP worked to strengthen the parliament drive institutional capacity development, ensuring that MPs can fulfil their law-making, oversight and representation responsibilities in line with parliamentary procedure and with access to key services.

The 1st Myanmar Parliament has seen marked progress in terms of strengthening its institutional capacity to fulfil its constitutional responsibilities on legislation, oversight and representation. This progress has been supported by organizational strategic planning, institutional capacity building and change management, helping to strengthen key services, (such as training, ICT and research) and the capacity of staff to support MPs in carrying out their duties. In 2015, UNDP continued to support strengthening the Myanmar Parliament by implementing priority activities identified in the Strategic Plan under the leadership of the Parliamentary administration.

Strategic development plans and workplans have been established by the Parliament in key areas such as committee development, ICT, research, and the Learning Centre (the in-house training institution first developed by UNDP and the Parliament and officially launched in March 2015) which identify priority needs. As part of implementation of the committee development plan, specialists from parliaments in Australia, Denmark and UK supported committee staff to develop statements of committee support services, a handbook for committee staff, and organizational structures and job descriptions. They helped six committees prepare for and hold 'mock inquiries' which will improve processes for consultation and use of evidence.

How to strengthen and improve services available to MPs has been a key objective in preparing the transition to the 2nd Myanmar Parliament. Based on support from UNDP, the Parliament prepared for the orientation and induction of MPs for the 2nd Myanmar Parliament. A Handbook and Guidebook for MPs for each house of the Myanmar Parliament was completed, including detailed arrangements for the election of the Speakers and Deputy Speakers, election of Vice Presidents and the President, establishment of Committees as well as approval of Ministers. "Statement of Services" for each Department of the Parliament Offices to guide new members in what services are available was prepared to be included in the information package provided to all MPs of the 2nd Myanmar Parliament.

The parliamentary work under UNDP's programme is implemented jointly with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

Rule of law and access to justice

UNDP worked with the Union Attorney General's Office, the Office of the Supreme Court of the Union, the police and other justice actors, enabling them to drive improvements to rule of law and human rights, and increase people's legal awareness and access to justice.

Justice institutions have accumulated good experience in reform planning and strategizing, and are now both better able, and more willing, to take steps towards sector wide coordination and planning. The Union Attorney General's Office (UAGO) Strategic Plan (2015) notes that the UAGO will be proactive in sector-wide justice sector reform development, and includes clear objectives, actions, and indicators for increasing justice sector coordination and the development of a justice sector reform strategy. This is all the more significant given the high level of leadership and ownership within the Office for the plan, from Union to State and Region level. The planning teams responsible for leading Strategic Plan development, especially in the Union Attorney General's Office which took a consultative approach to Plan formulation, can use their experience in the development of a coordinated justice sector strategy.

There is some limited evidence within justice institutions of willingness to promote human rights as part of justice sector reform. The Union Attorney General's Office Strategic Plan contains commitments for greater rights protection in the conduct of prosecutions and legislative development. Ethics and fairness are common elements in both the UAGO and OSCU plans, and UNDP and the ICJ supported the OSCU to develop a draft code for judicial ethics. Neither the UAGO nor the OSCU Strategic Plans contain specific provisions for gender and women's rights as important underpinnings for the achievement of rule of law, although justice actor's participation the drafting of the legal aid law, the prevention of violence against women law, and the child law, could indicate a willingness to improve access to justice for the poor, including women, and is a step in the right direction.



"All people must be equal before the law. Rule of law is not just for lawyers and judges, it is for the whole country. Only when we have rule of law can we enjoy peace of mind and security,"

***Daw Aung San Suu Kyi,
Chairperson, Pyithu Hluttaw,
Chair of the Coordinating
Body for the Rule of Law
Centres.***



"I am very pleased to rejoin the team and the project because I want to help develop Myanmar as much as I can. Our country is just starting to become a democracy and I hope the Rule of Law Centres will play an important part in the process. I look forward to using the knowledge and training skills I learned in the pilot project and the examples of different countries and experiences to the benefit of Myanmar."

U Thant Tin Maung,
Training Coordinator, Rule of Law
Centre, Mandalay.

UNDP continued to promote legal awareness and public engagement, including through the Rule of Law Centres project that established four training centres across the country (Mandalay, Taunggyi, Myitkyina, Yangon), and through Clinical Legal Education in universities. UNDP held regular roundtables with justice actors, law practitioners and members of the public: discussion topics included sexual and gender-based violence and domestic violence. These were complemented by a micro-capital grant to Legal Clinic Myanmar who provided legal assistance services in Mandalay Region for victims of sexual and gender based violence, and by dialogue trainings provided to justice actors and civil society jointly. Justice actors have shown increasing willingness to enhance their understanding of justice issues on the ground, for example, engaging in UNDP's highly sensitive study on how people access justice in the formal and informal systems in Rakhine. This will better enable them to understand and promote rights protections, including for women, in future laws and reform strategies.

Public Administration

UNDP supported the Myanmar government to identify and implement potential reforms which can promote democratic governance and improved service delivery.

UNDP supported the Government of the Union of Myanmar and national partners to advance the Public Administration Reform agenda through more inclusive multi-stakeholder policy development processes. The process for the development of a National Strategic Framework for Administrative Reform (NSFAR) illustrated the administration's greater willingness to seek a wider range of inputs in reform policy development and a stronger political buy-in in support of the reform. In May 2015, UNDP supported the Administrative Reform

Coordinating Committee to lead a consultation with 395 people from 36 ministries, parliaments (Union and States and Regions), academia and civil society on reform progress across government. The resulting report fed directly into the drafting (by the same committee) of a National Strategic Framework for Administrative Reform. For UNDP, the workshop was a means to expose and generate interest from a range of stakeholders across and outside of government in reforms, ensuring that the wide scope of administrative reform challenges and opportunities can be captured. Discussions pinpointed key target areas for reform and emphasized the importance of enhancing performance, increasing accountability, combating corruption, instating more equality across the civil service and reducing discrimination under all its forms.

On the civil service development front, UNDP provided technical assistance to the Union Civil Service Board (UCSB) in leading a 'Perception Survey on Ethics, Meritocracy and Equal Opportunities in the Myanmar Civil Service', which covered a sample of more than 2,000 civil service staff at all levels of the administration and from different geographic areas. The survey allowed UNDP and the UCSB to analyse the legislative and regulatory frameworks, systems and procedures, and most importantly civil servants' knowledge, behaviors and ideas about ethics, professionalism, meritocracy and equality in the Myanmar Civil Service. This study would allow national partners to engage in civil service reform based on an independent diagnostic of current practices and behaviour, and could inform action plans. The perception survey was coupled with capacity development initiatives that raised awareness and promoted principles of democratic governance. This helped civil servants identify ways to enhance the efficiency of the civil service and support it to become more demand-driven and people oriented.

The role of women in the reform process, and particularly in providing women equal opportunities to accessing leadership and decision making positions in the Civil service, was emphasized through policy papers presented and discussed with Government. UNDP provided technical support to the re-establishment of Permanent Secretaries in the Civil Service, and used this platform to promote gender equality and women's leadership role in socio-economic and sustainable development. UNDP further supported the gender equality agenda through the creation of a "Gender Pool of Experts" from government, civil society and academia, who were provided with the tools and improved confidence to advocate for gender sensitive policy making and to mainstream gender in their day-to-day work. The pool has already been called upon by several NGOs and UN Agencies to support their awareness activities on gender mainstreaming.

UNDP Support to Myanmar Elections

In November 2015, Myanmar held its first multi-party general elections since 1990. The credible conduct and outcome of the elections (as assessed by the UN Secretary General and international observers) marked a significant strengthening of the democratic process in Myanmar. In addition to strengthened political legitimacy for reforms going forward, the credible conduct of the elections led to increases in public interest in democracy and political engagement (IFES, 2016).

Together with the Union Election Commission and other partners, UNDP worked to support peaceful, tranquil and credible elections in Myanmar this year. The elections took place in a calm atmosphere, largely without violence, and 85% of people felt the integrity of the 2015 elections was better than the 2010 elections (in which the opposition National League for Democracy did not participate) (IFES, 2016).

UNDP's procurement of indelible ink (ink applied to voter's little fingers, up to the cuticle, after voting, that does not wash off, and is easily identified by polling station officials) contributed to the credibility of the elections by rectifying concerns that weaknesses in the voter list would enable double voting. The ink became a powerful symbol for the elections on social media. UNDP also procured more than 51,000 solar lamps to polling stations which had an unreliable electricity supply, ensuring transparent vote counting after dark in areas where there was no electricity.

The project is grateful to the governments of Japan, Norway, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom for financial support to UNDP's election support.

The Local Governance Programme



Context

Myanmar's transition and reform processes have been continuing in 2015. Specific steps have been taken to improve policy coherence for decentralization and public administration reform and to strengthen service orientation of the local administration. An Administrative Reform Coordination Committee (ARCC) was formed in the first quarter of the year with the objective to improve coordination among union level ministries and state/region governments through the formulation of a Framework for Administrative Reforms and further decentralization.

The adoption of the framework can be seen as an important step to approach governance reform from a more holistic angle. The government has also shown a commitment to enhance transparency and efficiency and to improve the way citizens access public administrative services. During the year the Government established in fast succession 316 One Stop Shops to serve as centers in which a number of government departments provide public (mainly administrative) services under one roof. The OSS centers aim to bring government services closer to people and enhance local coordination. While it will take more time, guidance, training and technical fine-tuning to make them fully operational, and to get people to have full use of the facilities, the initiative also gives an important opportunity to test out new ways of government coordination and of working together across departments, and allows for learning by doing to improve public service delivery and accountability.

2015 has seen changes in the landscape for civil society–government relations, with the overall space for Civil Society engagement broadening. Civil society stakeholders are increasingly working with, influencing, and coordinating activities with the government at the village, village tract (urban ward), township, state, region, and national levels. The civil society also played an active role in the election process raising awareness, contributing to the consultation on the regulatory framework, and observing the election-day proceedings. Despite the increased space and freedom for NGOs and CSOs to operate, challenges continue to exist in relation to representativeness, availability of platforms for engagement, capacities and resources.

The peace process made progress as well as faced obstacles in 2015. A pivotal moment of the year was the signing of the nationwide ceasefire agreement in October between the Government and eight ethnic armed groups, while the negotiations about inclusion of more or all groups could not be resolved. Nevertheless, the signing gives further impetus and space for more focused social cohesion and peacebuilding work to bring concrete peace dividends to the community level, rebuild trust and interaction, frame joint agendas and identify first do-ables regarding convergence of administrative systems. It also calls for more investment in capacities of local actors whether government, former combatants or civil society for constructive engagement in building social cohesion.

UNDP Myanmar's Local Governance Programme seeks to support Myanmar's ongoing reform process through results and interventions that improve local service provision, enhance bottom-up planning, increase social accountability, strengthen social cohesion, dialogue and peace building capacities.

There are four main areas of work:

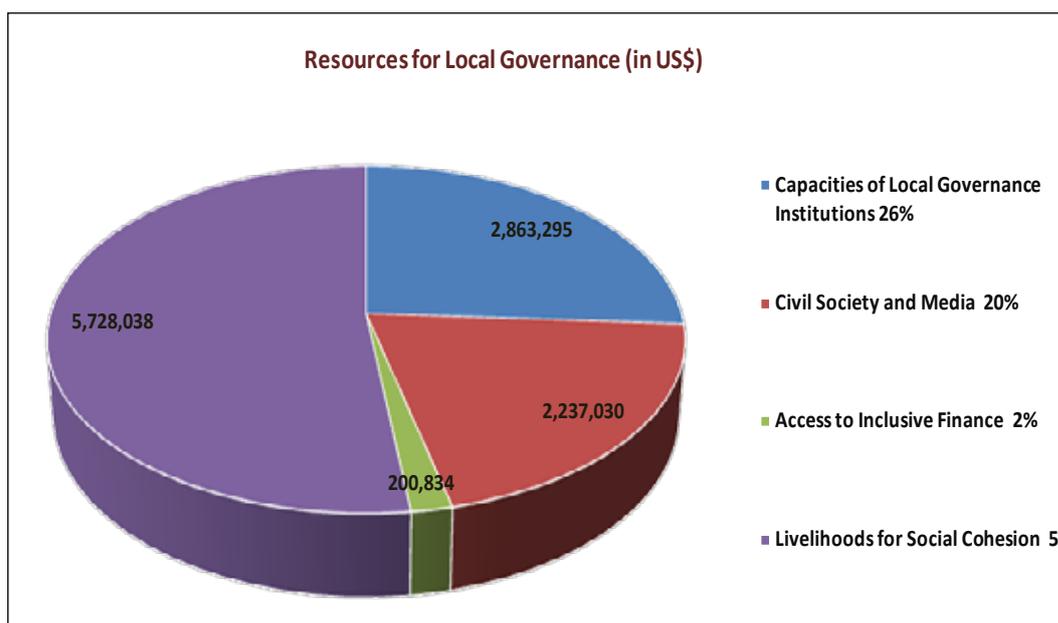
- Strengthening the institutional capacity of state /region government and local administrations;
- Strengthening civic engagement for social accountability, peacebuilding and human rights;
- Fostering access to inclusive finance; and
- Social cohesion, peacebuilding capacity development, community resilience and recovery

Partners of the Local Governance Program

The Local Governance Program partnered with the following stakeholders:

- *Government:* Ministry of Home Affairs; Ministry of Information; Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Cooperatives; Ministry of Border Affairs; Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development, Union Civil Service Board, State and Region Government representatives in Rakhine, Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Shan, Chin, Mon, Bago, Sagaing, Tanintharyi, Magway, Mandalay, Ayeyarwaddy and Yangon;
- *Civil Society:* 7 statewide CSO networks, 3 ethnic Media networks; May Doe Kabar National Network for Rural Women and 31 Township CSOs as partners in strengthening citizens, communities and CSOs role in local governance and for monitoring service delivery; 6 state-based CSO partners on social cohesion competencies.
- *Development/funding partners:* Government of Japan, Government of Denmark, Government of Sweden; UNDP Regional Innovation Fund; UN Peace Building Fund; and
- *UN agencies:* UNCDF (financial inclusion agenda); UNESCO (media training)

The total budget of the Local Governance Program in 2015 was US\$ \$11,029,197.



Key Achievements

Strengthening the Interface between Citizens, Civil Society and Government

An important aspect of UNDP's local governance work is building social accountability of local institutions by strengthening the civic knowledge, collective organizing and engagement capacities of citizens, communities and CSOs, and increasing their access to information about local government and public service delivery. This requires investing in the nascent civil society sector in Myanmar and supporting the opening of the civic space and channels for information and trust-building with government, particularly in rural areas and the ethnic states. In 2015, our work contributed to increased local civil society networking and collective organizing capacities in ethnic states and poor rural communities, greater citizen knowledge of civic and political rights and the peace process, and expanded opportunities for civic participation in local governance. Within these efforts, rural women, often from poor backgrounds, were empowered to better understand and advocate for rights and public services which respond to their needs. The work was done through registering village collective federations as women-led, women-focused local CSOs and further federating as a national network.

In 2015 UNDP facilitated CSOs to complete a locally-driven establishment of state-wide CSO Network associations in 7 states/regions - Chin, Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Mon, and Shan States, as well as Mandalay region. These Networks are

operating as representative associations of CSOs, with membership ranging from 20 CSOs in Kayin to over 200 CSOs in Shan State, and a total collective membership of almost 600. The Networks are providing platforms for coordination and information-sharing among CSOs, as well as focal points for engagement with local administrations and state/region parliaments. The establishment of the CSO Networks has helped strengthen the engagement and coordination of civil society organizations with the Government's implementation of development and governance programs. Most notably, UNDP supported all 7 state CSO networks as well as Chin and Shan Media Networks to work with the Union Election Commission state sub-commissions to build CSO capacities for voter education campaign and to coordinate CSO planning for comprehensive outreach in a multitude of languages across diverse ethnic communities state-wide.

The Networks have also engaged in the peace process and organized state and regional civil society peace forums in the South-East, with specific focus on the participation of women and youth in peace processes. UNDP additionally supported on demand basis local ethnic media development through establishment or strengthening of Chin Media Network, Shan State Media Network, and Southern Myanmar Journalist Network (Mon, Kayin, Tanintharyi). These ethnic state media networks, comprising over 200 members, collectively aim to contribute to protecting journalist freedom of expression, advancing media access to government information, promoting journalistic professionalism and increased multi-lingual reporting on local governance and development issues.

To encourage women's participating in local governance, UNDP continued to support a network of 2000 women's village collectives (called self-reliance



"Our May Doe Kabar National Network has been established with some objectives. They are to respond to the current needs and long-term aspirations of rural women; to promote the role and leadership skills of rural women in public sectors; to contribute more effectively to the local development as a CSO with a commitment to gender equality; and to build linkages with national and international organizations to mobilize resources necessary for the sustainable development of the network.

Our vision is to build a National Network that receives the recognition of the whole country and that can be relied upon by the community."

Daw Cho Aye,
*Chairperson of the Board of Directors,
May Doe Kabar (Myanmar Rural
Women's Network).*



“People feel comfortable coming here as this looks different from other government offices. They know that we can answer their questions, and provide multiple services under one roof. For example, when someone comes looking for a job seekers card, they also need police clearance and a birth certificate. They can get these two documents from the counters at the one stop shop and get their job seekers card immediately,”

Daw Khin,
monitor at the Insein One Stop Shop in the outskirts of Yangon.

groups or SRGs) representing over 22,000 rural women across Ayeyarwaddy, Chin, Kachin, Kayah, Magway, Mon, Rakhine and Shan. The SRGs had during 2013-2014 federated up to township-level in 31 townships and in 2015 UNDP supported the township groups to register as local CSOs and expand their activities into areas such as improving education and health care services, raising community awareness on gender based violence and anti-trafficking, and representing village women’s interests with local authorities, private sector actors and other development partners.

The groups have achieved significant increase in local social recognition indicting their potential to engage effectively in local governance processes, as well as to strengthen the services to their members, the village-based SRGs. Furthermore, in 2015 the federation of 31 townships groups were supported to realize their aspiration to formally establish a National Network becoming the first membership organization in Myanmar for grassroots rural women. The National Network of Rural Women, called May Doe Kabar, was launched in October and pledges itself to be and become a voice to the needs and

aspirations of rural women, to strive that women’s voices are taken into account in local and national policy making; to advocate gender equality and women’s participation in leadership and decision making, and to provide a long-term strategy for rural women’s empowerment through promotion of self-reliance groups and the sustaining of existing village and township-level groups.

The National Network of Rural Women has been strengthened by the use of cutting edge innovation and the development of iWomen, a mobile app to inspire women in Myanmar. The iWomen app seeks to stir, foster self-belief, and channel peer support for rural women to become leaders in their communities and it is the centrepiece of a peer support structure connecting the 22,000 women involved in SRGs from 2,000 villages across the country. The development of the app received support from the UNDP Innovation Fund facility.

Strengthened institutional capacity of State/Region and Township administrations for inclusive service delivery and participatory planning

UNDP's local governance work in Myanmar aims to enhance the institutional and organizational capacity of state/region governments and district, township and village tract/ward administrations in the areas of local development planning and responsive, efficient and inclusive public service delivery.

UNDP activities contributed to increased sub-national governance capacity through the completion and sharing of the first nationwide baseline on the quality of local governance. 14 detailed State of Local Governance reports have been published, disseminated and discussed at union and state/region level. Workshops in all states and regions, for a total of 2357 participants were held in 2015 to disseminate and discuss the findings. The state/region workshops were complemented by a national Good Governance Forum which brought together over 300 participants (national and international) to discuss and take forward the results of the mapping. The reports are widely used by government, training institutes and development partners contributing to an informed discourse on local governance in the country.

The findings of the mapping relating to challenges in coordination amongst government departments, limited access to information and weak transparency and accountability contributed to the Government's decision to establish One-Stop-Shop (OSS). The objective of the OSS is to improve public service delivery, through better coordination, transparency and information sharing at the local level. One Stop Shops are service centers in which different government departments provide public (mainly administrative) services under one roof. UNDP supported the Myanmar OSS establishment by facilitating a study tour for high level government officials of the President's office and MoHA and selected members of the township committees to Mongolia and Vietnam to examine One Stop Shop design and operations and to learn through South South cooperation.

Shortly after return the Government initiated the roll out of One Stop Shops in 72 districts capitals and a few months later also at the township level. By the end of 2015, there were 316 OSS established. UNDP is continuing its technical assistance by carrying out a service process mapping of selected services in a number of OSS to help respective line ministries and their departments to streamline services to become more effective and efficient. UNDP is also engaged in developing training material for OSS managers, public awareness material and the development of a performance management tool. This work is done in close collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA) and the Union level inter-ministerial OSS Implementing Working Committee.

The local governance work also enhances the role and participation of women in governance processes. Women in Myanmar continue to be severely underrepresented at all levels of public and political life, and female leaders face significant barriers

of overcoming restrictive social norms, lack of personal confidence and lack of role models. The challenge is exemplified by the fact that in 2015 only 42 out of 16,785 or 0.25% of the village tract/ward administrators (VT/WAs) were women. UNDP carried out research to document the role of women in local leadership roles in Myanmar and launched a report in September exploring the leadership experiences of female VTAs. A film commissioned by UNDP on the topic was aired nationwide by MRTV. Furthermore, UNDP facilitated jointly with the General Administration Department (GAD) of MOHA, a leadership workshop for the all female VTAs and other local Myanmar women leaders as a platform for learning, exchange and peer support. This work aims to build a cadre of female leaders at the local level to influence other women to engage in local development and take up local leadership positions.

Strengthening Access to Inclusive Finance

Strengthening access to inclusive finance from a policy and institutional angle is a key element within an overall strategy to enhance livelihoods, business opportunities and job creation.

In 2015 UNDP, in collaboration with UNCDF as the technical lead organization, played a role in facilitating the completion and adoption by the Cabinet of the first National Financial Inclusion Roadmap as a follow through to the Making Access Possible (MAP) baseline study in 2014. An action plan for implementation of the roadmap was developed and an inter-ministerial steering committee put in place to oversee and monitor progress in implementation indicating strong national ownership of the roadmap. The Steering Committee has been technically assisted by UNCDF/UNDP and this support will continue in 2016 through the placing of a technical advisor in the Ministry of Finance. As part of UNCDF's Expanding Financial Access programme UNCDF takes the technical lead in supporting the implementation process of priority areas of the Roadmap, the establishment of a Market Development Facility through which a facility to provide funds for the microfinance sector in local currency will be established, to support the development of a viable ecosystem for digital financial services and capacity building for cooperatives.

In order to foster the microfinance sector, UNCDF with funding from LIFT, brought three regional viable microfinance institutions to Myanmar to establish them as market leaders as part of the MicroLead programme, who reached out to 40,000 clients by December 2015. A year-long study on financial diaries was finalized giving insights on financial behavior of Myanmar households.

As a follow up to an Institutional Capacity Assessment commissioned by UNDP in 2014 in cooperation with the Small Scale Industries Department of Ministry of Cooperatives which recommended that the 100-year old Saunders Weaving School in Mandalay Region be transformed into a National Weaving Center of Excellence, UNDP has in 2015 developed a project implementation strategy and a project document to serve as implementation reference to the government.

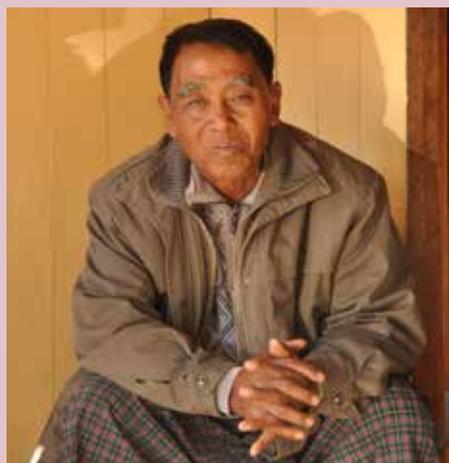
The Centre is proposed to serve as the country's core place for modern and up-to-date skills development methods in textiles and weaving with the aim to produce graduates of substantial capacity ready to enter various areas of the textile sector.

Livelihoods, Early Recovery and Social Cohesion Community recovery and cohesion

UNDP's Livelihoods and Social Cohesion Program in 2015 targeted ceasefire and high-poverty areas in Rakhine, Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Shan, Chin and Mon. UNDP uses livelihoods as an entry-point to improve community social cohesion and supports capacities for social cohesion and peacebuilding of government, non-state actors (NSAs) and civil society organizations (CSOs).

During the year, UNDP provided assistance to 17 flood affected communities in two townships (Mrauk-U and Kyauktaw) in Rakhine State, with early recovery assistance emphasizing income-generation, community infrastructure construction/rehabilitation and inter-community trust-building. The community roads benefit 23,107 people (12,012 women) in the target areas. UNDP also constructed 2 large units of infrastructure, one in Rakhine (Ye Chan Pyin Bridge) and one in Kachin (PaLaNa Road) improving road access for further 6,012 people (of whom 3,123 are women). A total of 15,886 person-days were created from cash-for-work schemes (9,243 person-days for women) through construction activities in Rakhine and Kachin.

In Kachin, UNDP provided capital grants to 177 resettlement households (600 men and 441 women) which were used to support livestock raising businesses, micro- and small enterprises, Livestock Extension Worker Training and vocational trainings for self-employment. In addition, 58 people (37 women and 21 men)



"After the two-week-long monsoon, the road that connects our village and other villages to Hakha City was destroyed by a landslide. It was the worst landslide during my 62-years. The only road we have was totally destroyed so that we were not able to go to Hakha City to buy and sell farm and wood products after the disaster. A week later, the UNDP Hakha team came to our village; and consulted with villagers to repair the destroyed road. I was part of the more than 400 villagers who took part in a cash-for-work road renovation project. It was a big help during the difficult time because we had no jobs after the disaster. Now, villagers from our village, as well as communities from neighboring villages can use this road,"

U Hrang Lian Khuai from Loklung village in Hakha Township, Chin State.

received training to improve their social cohesion competencies in order to act as local resource persons and reinforcing the already existing bonds with various institutions in the region. As an initial result of the activities at the village level in PaLaNa, UNDP observed a 50 % increase in the number of persons reporting having “more than five occasions” for interacting with a member of a different village as well as an 82% increase of persons reporting perceptions of increased unity of people from different communities. Also, 51% of those having benefited from vocational skills development and entrepreneurship support both in Rakhine and in Kachin reported increased income one year after the training, and at least 80% of beneficiaries reported increased interaction with other communities. In 2015 the livelihoods interventions benefitted from a review of UNDP’s poverty targeting tools (poverty score card) by making it more responsive to the variations of local contexts.

During 2015, UNDP also launched a pilot initiative to promote affordable innovative technologies to 100 rural communities in Mon, Kayin and Shan states in partnership with MercyCorps and Kopernik. Based on a market-based distribution strategy and voucher program, UNDP developed 40 sales agents (65% women) to market renewable and energy efficient technologies in the target communities among others via 100 tech fairs organized in the target villages. This work has resulted in a cadre of young entrepreneurs and will continue in 2016.

Capacities for Social Cohesion

In partnership with Search for Common Ground (SFCG), UNDP is implementing an initiative aiming at strengthening social cohesion competencies with Government institutions, Non-State Actors and CSOs in six states. The initiative has developed a framework and training module on social cohesion to be translated into Myanmar and ethnic languages, to both increase social cohesion competencies among stakeholders at the local level as well as to use the training as platform for increasing levels of trust between local stakeholders.

An initial a training of trainers (ToT) on social cohesion was conducted for 157 CSO staffs (49% women). Based on the performance of the participants, 43 trainers (22 are women) were selected to receive an Advanced ToT to act as Lead Trainer in their respective townships. UNDP also partnered with INK Strategy to strengthen the facilitation of the abovementioned training topics through innovative visualization techniques provided to 143 CSO trainers and partners. During 2015 UNDP across its social cohesion and rule of law work also initiated a capacity-development program to strengthen dialogue and facilitation for addressing social cohesion and conflict-sensitivity issues benefitting 193 senior government officials (30.5% women) from MoHA, Myanmar Police and Ministry of Border Affairs.

Using South-South cooperation and to promote gender sensitive approaches to peacebuilding in Myanmar, the programme conducted a National Workshop

on 'Strengthening Women's Leadership and Participation in Social Cohesion and Peace Building through South-South and Triangular Cooperation between Myanmar and Indonesia for 46 representatives (50% women) from Government Ministries and CSO organizations. Based on experience sharing between Myanmar and Indonesian participants, a draft action-plan was developed. This initiative was complemented by a series of workshops on 'Women, Peace and Security' in Kachin State with 3 workshops conducted in Myitkyina, Bhamo and Maijayan Townships with participation of 119 people (89% women). A set of draft recommendations were formulated on the participation of women in the ongoing peace process in Kachin State. UNDP also contributed to increasing women's participation in peacebuilding, by supporting the N-Peace awardee of Myanmar women peace-builder for the 2015 N-Peace Award.

Early Recovery

Following the recent flooding and land slide in 12 states and regions in Myanmar, UNDP strengthened the coordination role of the Early Recovery Network. UNDP facilitated coordination workshops and meetings at the Union level as well as in Yangon to technically support government-led recovery planning processes by engaging the government ministries, UN agencies, NGOs, CSOs, development partners and private sectors in consultation workshops and meetings.

In 2015 UNDP continued to convene regular dialogue platforms for early recovery for a wide range of ministries and early recovery agencies in Rakhine and Kachin and Yangon. As a result there is increasing recognition of early recovery as a cross cutting element within humanitarian operations.

Our Support to Myanmar in Response of the Floods and Landslides

UNDP initiated a three-fold approach in response to the floods and landslides that affected 12 out of the 14 States and Regions of Myanmar in July-August:

- i. Community-based recovery initiatives for the restoration livelihoods and access to basic services through cash for work scheme in Chin State and Rakhine: In Chin State, the cash for work scheme benefitted 6300 people in Hakha through debris removal from paddy fields and school paths, improving paddy field drainage and clearing fish ponds. The project allowed villagers to progressively resume their livelihoods and provided them an opportunity to receive income when life seemed to have stood still in the immediate aftermath of floods and landslides. Farmers were also supported with resources for poultry and pig rearing to help them resume income-generation activities.
- ii. Support to the National Disaster Management Centre (NDMC) in leading and managing the recovery process: This included assisting the government in (a) determining disaster recovery and reconstruction needs along with partners, (b) conceptualizing and operationalizing the Recovery Coordination Center and (c) supporting the analysis of data collected in order to determine needs and develop a recovery framework.

UNDP supported the set up of the Recovery Coordination Center, which was established to ensure that recovery is undertaken effectively in a manner that is inclusive, builds back better and that recovery assistance is delivered in a timely manner to the affected communities. The key functions of the RCC are to facilitate transition from relief to recovery working in with the Emergency Operations Centre and, to this end, to coordinate, plan, implement and monitor recovery programs. The RCC provides data management support and all the other technical assistance to the NDMC and Recovery Coordination Committee and is a key resource center for all the recovery activities in the country. The RCC fulfils the role of a repository of all information systems and reports and a virtual facility through which the government disseminates information on recovery through a web-enabled platform. UNDP deployed two dedicated Information Management Officers to support recovery efforts by the government and partners.

- iii. In its capacity as lead for Early Recovery, UNDP coordinated inter-agency recovery actions through the Early Recovery Network.

The Environmental Governance and Disaster Resilience Programme



Context

The series of political, social and economic reform process initiated by the Government over the past few years resulted in a favorable environment for economic growth driven by foreign direct investments. The positive impact has also brought new challenges for conserving Myanmar's environment and natural resources as well as for protecting lives and livelihoods from increasing disaster risks resulted from un-planned growth.

Myanmar has a high degree of exposure and vulnerability to multiple natural hazards and risks associated with climate change. Devastating floods hit 12 out of 14 states and Chin State, one of the poorest, was affected by landslides during July and August 2015. Subsequently, the country has been experiencing the impacts of strongest ever recorded El Nino, an extreme climate event emanating from the Pacific which has widespread global impacts.

Realizing the need to better manage the increasing environmental risks brought along with economic growth and to protect and sustain development gains from climate and disaster risks, the Government of Myanmar as part of the reforms undertook number of important initiatives to update the legal and policy frameworks to protect the environment and to mitigate risks arising from climate change and disasters. These include the Environmental Conservation Law (2012) and its rules (2014), Disaster Management Law (2013) and its rules (2015), REDD+ Roadmap for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (2013), Environmental Impact Assessment Procedures (2015), National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2015) which aims to address climate change, rural poverty, while conserving biodiversity and sustaining vital ecosystem services.

Additionally, the Government is developing the National Environmental Policy, Strategic Framework and Master Plan, Climate Change Strategy, National Awareness Strategy on Disaster Management, Disaster Reduction Youth Volunteers strategy and the establishment of a National Disaster Management Training Center to build long term human resources to enhance resilience through development.

Through the Environmental Governance and Disaster Resilience Programme, UNDP aims to strengthen capacities at national, sub-national and community level to manage and utilize natural resources in a sustainable way, and to enhance resilience and adaptive capacity to deal with climate variability and long-term climate change impacts and to reduce the associated risks due to natural hazards.

There are two main areas of work:

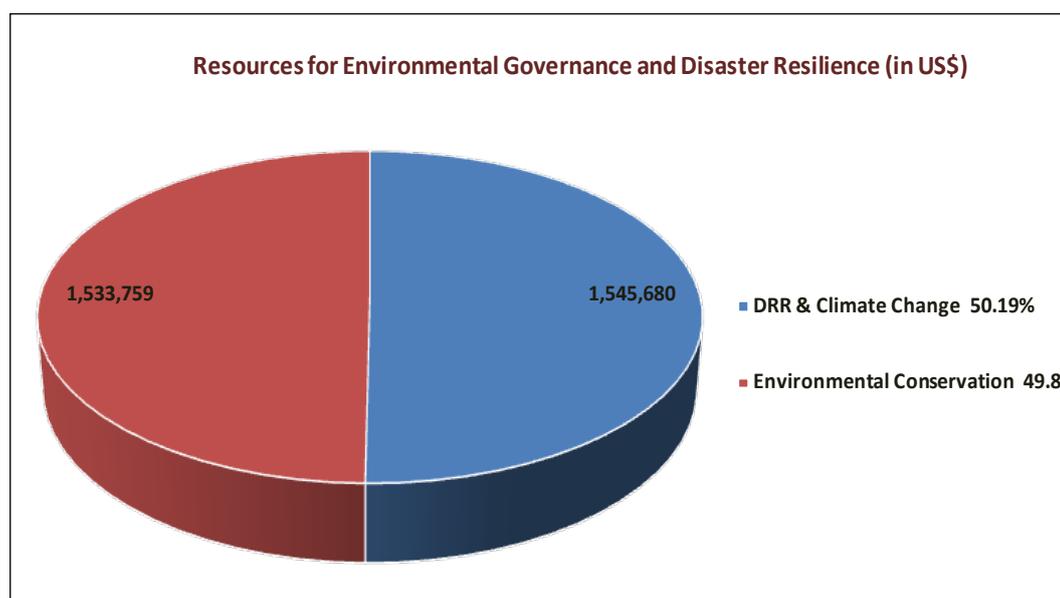
- Disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation; and
- Environmental governance and natural resource management.

Partners of the Environmental Governance and Disaster Resilience Programme

The Environmental Governance and Disaster Resilience programme partnered with the following stakeholders:

- *Government:* Ministry of Environment Conservation and Forestry, Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement; Ministry of Mines; Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development; Ministry of Transport; Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development; Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation; and Shan State Government;
- *Civil Society:* Inntha Literature, Culture and Regional Development Associations, Myanmar Forest Association and Professional Research Consultancy
- *Funding partners:* Government of Norway; Global Environment Fund (GEF); USAID,
- *International Organizations:* Wildlife Conservation Society
- *UN agencies:* UNESCO, UNEP, FAO, UNICEF, UN-Volunteers and UN-Habitat
- *Other partners:* The Disaster Risk Reduction working group (comprising 62 member agencies from the UN, international and local NGOs) and Myanmar Consortium for Capacity Development on Disaster Management.

The Environmental Governance and Disaster Resilience Programme had a total budget of US \$ 3,079,439.



Key Achievements Environmental Governance and Disaster Resilience Programme

Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation

The Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change Adaptation component of UNDP Country Programme is supporting the Government in strengthening its policy and institutional capacity to address disaster risk and climate change and also meet the obligations under the regional and international frameworks.

UNDP along with its partners supported the formulation of Disaster Management Rules (2015) and disseminated them nation-wide to sensitise the policy and decision makers. In order to undertake risk informed development, it is currently strengthening the institutional capacity to build and analyze disaster risk information database (Myanmar Disaster Damage and Loss Database) and application of risk information in development planning in Rakhine State. To build systematic national and local level human resources for risk reduction, UNDP is collaborating with its partners to support the National Disaster Management Training Center in Hinthada Township. UNDP is supporting the development of a National Awareness Strategy for Disaster Management to enhance knowledge and awareness on disaster risk in collaboration with range of stakeholders and is also strengthening local level capacities through the formulation of a Disaster Reduction Youth Volunteers Strategy. In the Dry Zone of Myanmar, UNDP launched a four year programme to strengthen the community's capacity to adapt and respond to climate change through better climate risk information.

To fulfill its regional and global commitments, UNDP is providing technical support for the formulation of ASEAN Disaster Recovery Reference Guide to help ASEAN Member States to prepare and deliver timely, effective recovery programmes. In addition, UNDP along with its partners supported Myanmar in the formulation of a new global framework for disaster risk reduction, known as the Sendai Framework for Action on DRR (2015-2030).

Environmental Governance and Natural Resource Management

Under the area of natural resource management, UNDP is supporting the government to enhance institutional and communities' capacity for environmental conservation and the use of natural resources.

UNDP provided technical support to the Government in developing the National Environmental Policy which will serve as a guiding policy framework to incorporate environmental conservation in relevant sectors, that is, to mainstream environment policy into national planning, sectoral policies and law to ensure sustainable development of the country.

UNDP, in collaboration with UNESCO, provided its support to the Government of Myanmar to ensure that Inle Lake was inscribed as Myanmar's first UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. UNDP provided its technical assistance to Shan State Government and Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry in developing a Terms of Reference for the Inle Lake Authority and the formation of Inle Lake Authority to promote a coordinated and integrated response to the multiple challenges emerging from different sectors in and around the Inle Lake and to ensure the sustainability of Inle Lake and its watershed area. UNDP also provided its technical assistance to Ministry of Environmental Conservation and Forestry to develop a five-year action plan for Inle Lake Conservation (2015-16 to 2019-20). UNDP supported Community-based Organizations from the Inle Lake area with technical knowledge and skills trainings on environmental conservation so as to manage and implement environmental conservation activities and to directly coordinate with relevant line departments and development organizations for planning and implementing eco-friendly activities. Altogether 8 Community Forestry Certificates were issued by Forest Department to Forest User Groups so that the communities are able to manage forest resources.



"I am not used to being a part of a group like this, where men and women work together. I have learnt many things and personally I have built my confidence and gained public speaking skills,"

Monge Kho,
20, one of the women in the Nar Tike village group participating in a REDD + Readiness project.

With the support of UNDP, 8 local CSOs and 45 youth groups in Naga Area gained knowledge and skills on participatory forest management, benefit distribution system and anti-corruption concept in REDD+ and rights of indigenous people. With technical assistance from UNDP, national level REDD+ stakeholder network, comprising of relevant line agencies, NGOs/CSOs and indigenous people was established and now is linked with township/regional level networks, in which CSOs including the 8 CSOs and 45 youth groups from Naga Area participate.

With the support of UNDP-UNEP Poverty Environment Initiative programme, a negotiation reference document for international investment treaties was developed and endorsed by the Directorate of Investment and Company Administration. Similarly, a financial model was developed with Ministry of Mines to assess mining investment proposals for economic feasibility including revenue for environmental management and social development.



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