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United Nations Development Programme



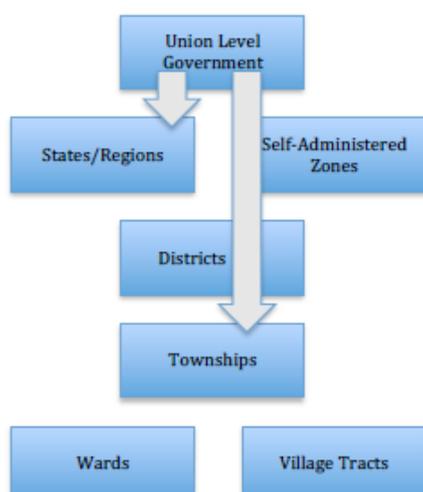
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Local Governance Mapping in Myanmar (2013-2014)

Myanmar is at a historic stage in its development. A new Constitution was adopted in May 2008 and elections were held in November 2010 with by-elections in April 2012. Several steps have been undertaken since, aimed at strengthening governance and social development.

In this process of reform, the President His Excellency U Thein Sein has emphasized the importance of improved performance in public service delivery, good governance and citizen participation. To achieve these goals, more responsibilities and resources towards service delivery and governance are gradually being transferred from the Union government to the state/region and township administrations.

To support this process, UNDP has partnered with the General Administration Department under the Ministry of Home Affairs to conduct a local governance mapping exercise across the country. The purpose of this mapping is to improve the understanding of the current quality of local governance and service delivery at township and lower levels. The mapping is being conducted in a phased manner in all 14 states and regions of Myanmar.



The different levels of government in Myanmar

Mapping Methodology

The methodology for this local governance mapping in Myanmar has been adapted from methodologies successfully applied in various countries around the world, especially those suited to countries where there is a limited availability of reliable data on service delivery and the quality of governance, as is the case in Myanmar.



Interview with a primary school principal in Chin State. Photo: Shipra Suri/UNDP Myanmar

Since there is a lack of reliable basic administrative data in Myanmar, the methodology mainly makes use of qualitative data. The interviews with citizens in selected villages are based on their experiences and perceptions of service delivery, participation and governance. This qualitative methodological approach is in line with the objective of active citizen involvement and is helping to build a new platform for citizen-government dialogue.

In this way, the methodology not only maps but at the same time also raises awareness and encourages first actions at the local level.

A three-step approach

The local governance mapping exercise collects data at three different levels: community, township and state/region level. The process in each state or region starts with a sensitization workshop organized to introduce the objectives of the mapping, explain the methodology, and obtain the necessary buy-in and support from state/region and township level stakeholders.



Citizens Report Card interview in Mon State. Photo: Shipra Suri/UNDP Myanmar

In each state/region, a number of sample townships are selected for the data collection. In the pilot states of Mon and Chin this number was six, but in the subsequent states/regions, three townships have been selected. Within each township, two sample village tracts/wards are selected. The selection of townships, village tracts and wards takes place in close consultation with the state/region governments.

Step 1: Community level mapping

At the community level, three types of interviews are conducted as part of the mapping exercise:

- **Citizen Report Cards** aim to gather information on citizens' perception of and satisfaction with service delivery and local governance. The interviews focus on core elements of local governance like participation, equity and accountability, as well as on the governance dimensions of key services such as primary healthcare, water supply and primary education.
- **Interviews with Frontline Service Providers**, including village tract/ward administrators, teachers, principals, health staff, are conducted to include the views of the government staff who are the primary service providers.
- **Community Dialogues** are conducted in each village tract/ward, where selected groups of citizens and frontline service providers are brought together for a facilitated discussion of the results from the above interviews. The community dialogues aim to validate the collected data, add new information, and initiate a discussion on local development issues, priorities and solutions.

Step 2: Study on Township Governance

To deepen the understanding of the functioning of township administration, background studies are conducted at township level. Available secondary

information in the form of government statistics, policy documents and township profiles is collected and analysed. Semi-structured interviews and Focus Group Discussions are held with key government staff and CSO representatives.

Step 3: State/region level mapping and reflection

The third step involves interviews with key informants on the state/regional level and further collection of relevant secondary data. Finally, the interim findings are presented to key stakeholders for their feedback and reflection.

Pilot in Mon and Chin States

The mapping exercise was initiated in Mon and Chin States, which present two contrasting settings in the country. Chin is sparsely populated, remote and poor, while Mon is dense, accessible and wealthy. The two states also have completely different ethnic compositions. On the basis of the processes in Mon and Chin, the questionnaires, the interview process, and the township level research have been fine-tuned. The findings from Mon and Chin have been shared with the state/region level stakeholders as well as with the Union Government, and are now being published for wider dissemination.

Using the findings from the Local Governance Mapping

On the basis of the data and information collected, UNDP is producing "State of Local Governance" Reports for each state and region. Amongst others, local administrations and development partners can use these reports to design capacity building activities and other interventions to improve local governance. Synthesis reports comparing the results from the different states/regions and identifying entry points for policy reform will also be prepared once all the results are available. Finally, all data, reports and products will be made available online on a web portal.

PHASES OF IMPLEMENTATION

Phase 1: Mon and Chin - completed in January 2014

Phase 2: Kayin, Kayah, Tanintharyi, Bago and Ayeyarwaddy - May – July 2014

Phase 3: Kachin, Magway, Mandalay, Rakhine, Sagaing, Shan and Yangon - July – September 2014

Final analysis and reports available: November 2014

For more information, visit:

www.mm.undp.org/

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