

LOCAL GOVERNANCE MAPPING

MAPPING HIGHLIGHTS IN TANINTHARYI REGION



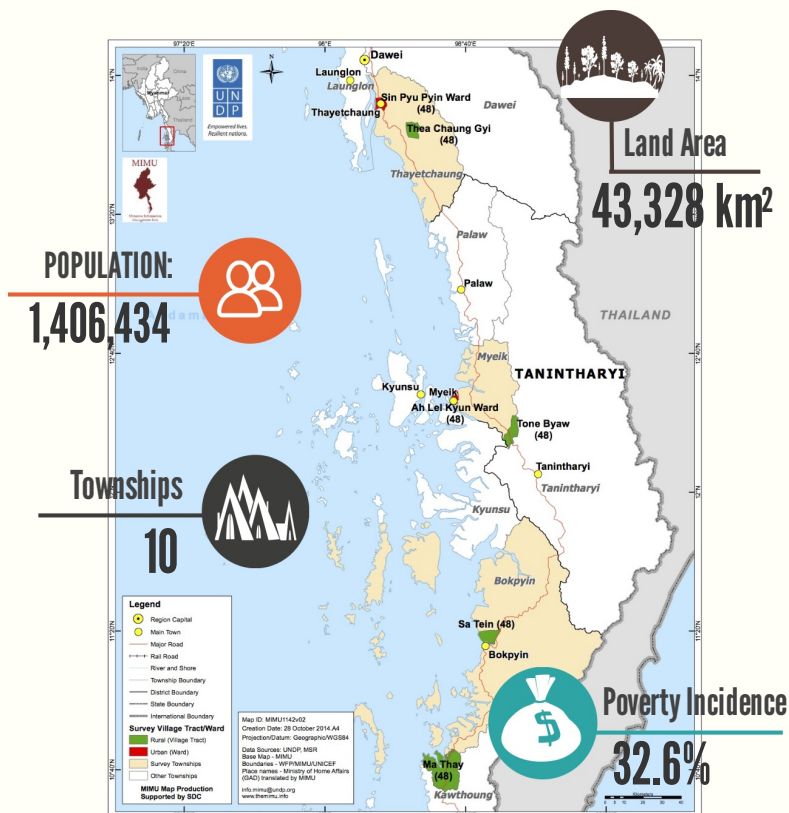
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BACKGROUND

In 2014 a mapping of local governance was carried out in Tanintharyi Region. This mapping forms part of a nation-wide local governance mapping carried out by UNDP together with the General Administration Department, Ministry of Home Affairs. For an overview of the methodology see the Fast Facts: Local Governance Mapping in Myanmar.

In Tanintharyi, the mapping covered Myeik, Thayetchaung and Bokpyin townships, whereby citizens, committee members, civil society representatives, service providers and local administrators were interviewed about local governance and service delivery.

Around 300 citizens and 100 service providers and local administrators shared their experiences and impressions of **development planning and participation**, **access to basic services** (specifically primary education, primary health care and drinking water), and **information transparency and accountability**. This highlight shares some of the key findings, as well as potential entry points for support activities suggested by the stakeholders in Tanintharyi.



Source: MIMU

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Tanintharyi is very rich in natural resources, such as metal and natural gas, and a traditional trading hub. Its economy is based on agriculture, fishery, mining and tourism. The plantations of rubber and palm oil are major sources of employment in the region but also cause serious environmental problems and land grabbing. The incidence of poverty is higher in the region when compared with the national levels.

Tanintharyi is the site of a major economic project of Myanmar: a Special Economic Zone at Dawei (a partnership between Myanmar and Thailand) and a deep-sea port, both with prospects to change the economic conditions of the region completely.



SAFETY

Since independence, the Karen National Union (KNU) and New Mon State Party (NMSP) have operated in Tanintharyi Region. Some parts of the Region continue to feel the repercussions of protracted conflict and land grabbing. Some 70,000 of people live as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and around 6,000 are living in neighboring Thailand as refugees. The signing of a cease-fire agreement between the KNU and the government in 2012 has eased the situation.

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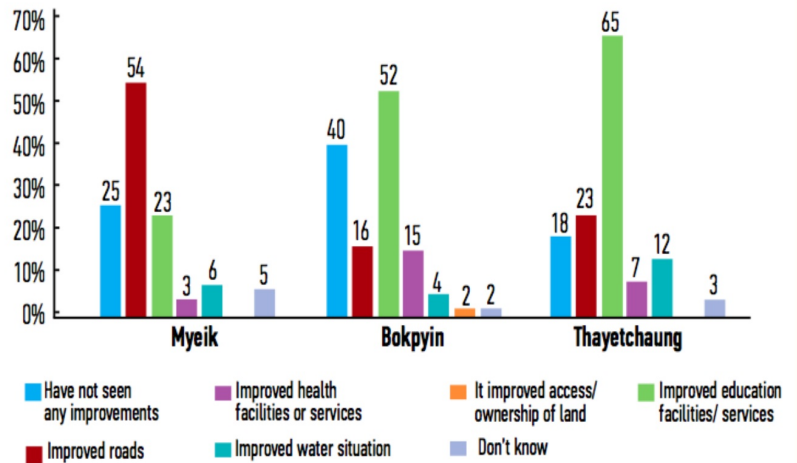
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IMPROVEMENTS SEEN AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

What are the most important improvements your government has made in the last three years?

PERCEIVED IMPROVEMENTS IN TANINTHARYI

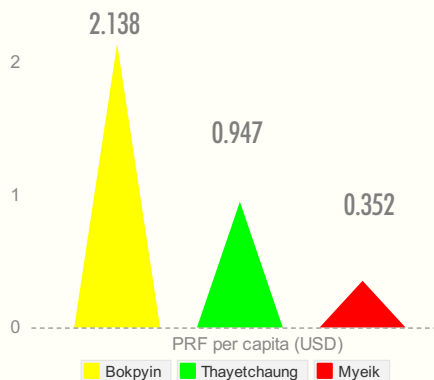
- Education facilities and services- 47%
- Roads - 31%
- Health services - 8%
- Water facilities - 8%



DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND PARTICIPATION



Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF) per township - 100,000 USD
 Constituency Development Fund (CDF) per township - 100,000 USD



Township Management Committee (TMC)

The TMCs in Tanintharyi townships have taken to the role of "township management" in priority setting for local development funds. Thereby the coordinating responsibility of the Township Administrator (TA) is changing. Previously the TA made autonomous decisions, while now he has to reach a consensus on township development decisions with various committees.

Township Municipal Affairs Committee (TMAC)

In the populous township of Myeik, the TMAC takes on a distinctly "executive" character; with members conducting quarterly check for municipal projects, and coordinating the clearing up of debris from a storm, for instance. But some members of TMAC note that their roles are far from clear. One Bokpyin member commented that "(...) we are not sure about what the Department of Municipal Affairs should be doing and what we, as elected members, should be doing in terms of project implementation."

2012-2013 DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN THAYETCHAUNG TOWNSHIP

- 99,200 USD PRF funds distributed for 36 projects
- 100,000 USD CDF funds distributed for 48 projects

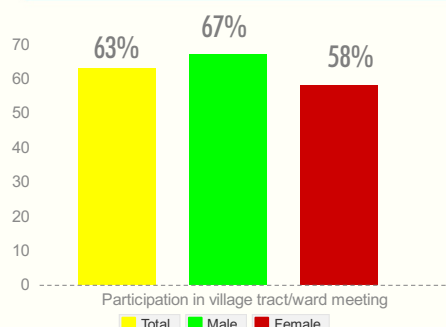
Township Planning and Implementation Committee (TPIC)

The composition of the TPIC, responsible for improving bottom up planning, is flexible in Tanintharyi. In Myeik, the TPIC convenes once a month with representatives from 37 departments and 10 members of the public.



Residents have participated in the construction of dams, roads and bridges as members of committees for project implementation.

- Sa Tein Village Tract, Bokpyin Township



"Despite the fact that half of the community population comprises of women, they are underrepresented at local meetings. More women should be invited by the local authorities."

- Observed by Tanintharyi township-level actors

BASIC SERVICE DELIVERY

Has primary education in your village tract/ward improved over the last three years?

PRIMARY EDUCATION



The majority of Tanintharyi respondents (80%) perceived improvements in education, which are primarily attributed to the building or upgrading of schools (82%) and more teachers (45%).

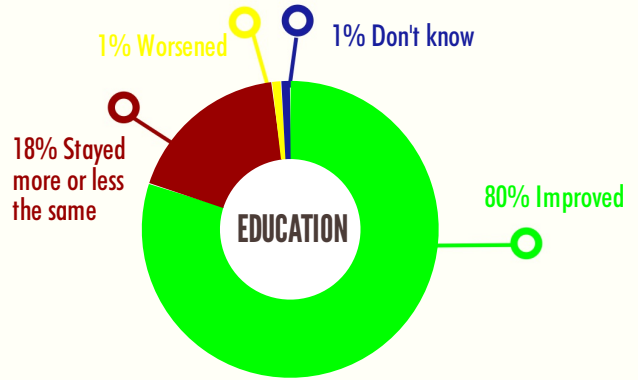


A more consultative approach is deployed in the planning process: The township education staff is now expected to provide more inputs into education planning and costing, and principals and Parent Teacher Associations are being consulted for their ideas and suggestions.

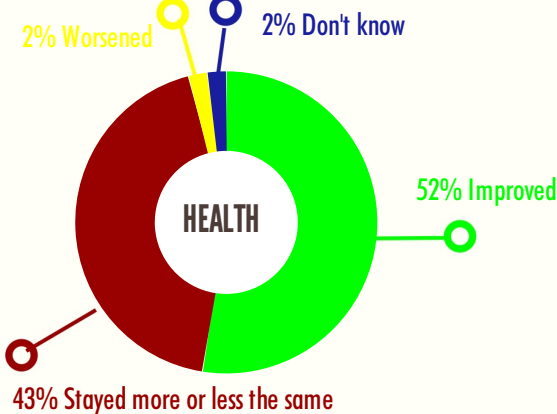


Key challenges:

- Teacher shortages
- A dearth of housing facilities for teachers in the rural area



Has the health service in your village tract/ward improved over the last three years?



HEALTHCARE SERVICE



Half of the respondents perceived improvements (52%) in healthcare services and 45% were satisfied with the quality.



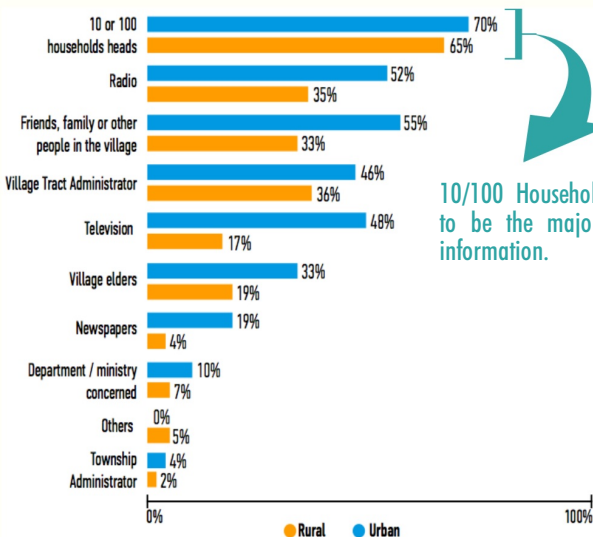
Respondents in Tone Byaw Village Tract, Myeik Township, acknowledged efforts by healthcare staff to mitigate access problems: increase of their visits to villages to share health information, making of emergency home visits, and accompanying patients that need to be taken to hospital.



Only two of six health managers agreed that the concerns and needs of men and women are taken into account.

INFORMATION, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

If there are new laws or directives from the government, how would you usually learn about them?



10/100 Household Heads seem to be the major providers of information.

Perception gap on information provision



All the six VTAs (100%), but 36% of (288) citizens feel the Township Administration is providing them with sufficient information about development projects. This indicates there may be a potential "information disconnect" between the VTA and the 10 Household Heads who usually passes on information from the VTA to citizens.

Role of CSOs in Thayetchaung and Dawei

The voice of CSO is relatively limited in some areas of Tanintharyi. However, in Thayetchaung and Dawei, they have emerged with a strong role to protect the interests of communities vulnerable to commercial development.

ROLE OF VILLAGE TRACT ADMINISTRATOR

	Peace and security	Conflict mediation	Providing information	Involve villagers in decision-making process
Citizens' perspective	50%	44%	8%	18%
VTAs' perspective	100%	83.3%	50%	0%

COMMUNITY DIALOGUE



In the community dialogues, different groups from the community such as women, youth and elders, as well as local service providers and the village tract/ward administrator discussed key issues of local governance and service delivery, and brainstormed on possible solutions they could implement.

In one village tract for example, the headmistress and the VTA suggested they would liaise with the township administration to start upgrading the school, whilst citizens committed to clearing the surroundings of the school and building drains to enhance the water supply. In another community, the ward administration promised to post photocopies of information on a notice board in front of the ward administration office so that all households have better access to the information they need.

REGIONAL LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS

Increasing number of staff should be proposed to the Union Government through the relevant departments. Trainings should be given to the appointed staff to increase their capacity through support from national and international organizations.

Management and administrative training should be provided for the VTAs/WAs and 10/100 Household Heads. In the medium-term, clear rules and procedures should be enacted and some level of supervision over the VTAs and WAs.



In the region level workshops for sharing of interim findings from the mapping in Tanintharyi, government and civil society made recommendations for change.

More women should be posted in key positions. More women should be invited to meetings organized by local authorities.

CONCLUSIONS



Tanintharyi is already showing a predilection towards advancing its interests and identity as a Region vis-à-vis the central government, while ethnic or other cleavages seem to be playing a lesser role.



Both regional and legislative actors engage in some degree of coordination and oversight in disbursement of development funds. Greater consideration for equity (the needs of men and women) may need to be factored into the planning and budgeting process for discretionary funds.



Health services and water appear as the main priorities for the population. Coincidentally or not, these are sectors in which the private sector has a great degree of participation, which can raise concerns about the costs for the population of this privatization.



Credibility of Township level committees would be enhanced by improved accountability mechanism that also account for transparency and wider representation.



For a more detailed Tanintharyi report, please visit:
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