

LOCAL GOVERNANCE MAPPING

MAPPING HIGHLIGHTS IN CHIN STATE



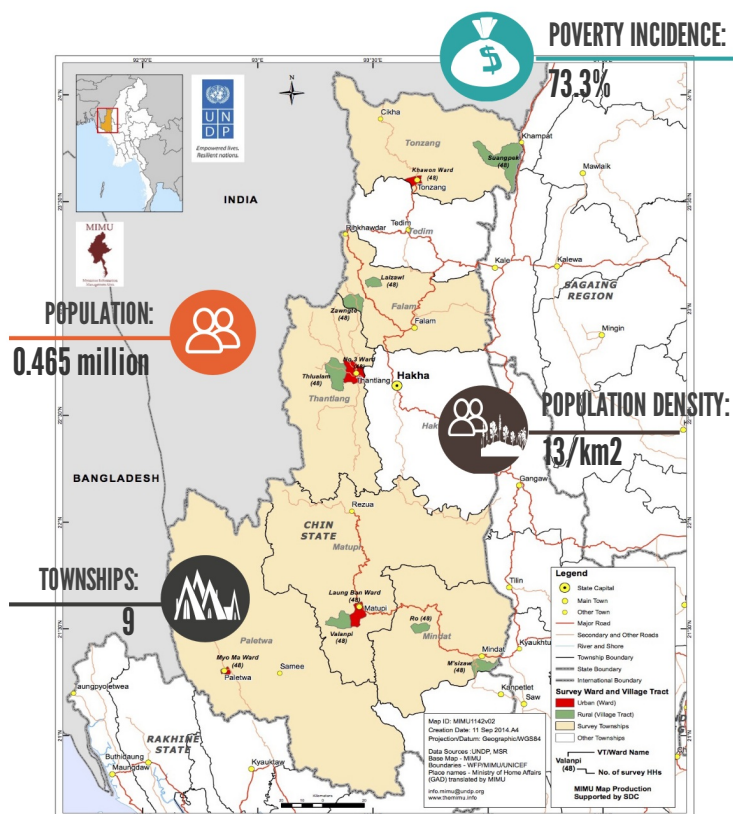
Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

BACKGROUND

In 2013 a mapping of local governance took place in Chin State. This was part of the pilot phase of a nation-wide local governance mapping carried out by UNDP in collaboration with the General Administration Department, Ministry of Home Affairs. For an overview of the methodology see Fast Facts: Local Governance Mapping in Myanmar.

In Chin, the mapping covered Thantlang, Falam, Tonzang, Mindat, Matupi and Paletwa townships, where citizens, committee members, civil society representatives, service providers and local administrators were interviewed about the quality of local governance and service delivery.

Around 600 citizens and 200 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 provision), and **transparency and accountability**. This highlight outlines some of the key findings in Chin.



SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

Chin State is one of the poorest among Myanmar's states/regions, and with an estimated 465,000 people, population-wise the second-smallest. Low population density, challenging mountainous terrain and an underdeveloped infrastructure are all severe barriers for development.

Sharing a long border with India and its western front with Bangladesh, Chin State has a unique demographic composition with six main ethnic groups (Asha, Cho, Khum, Laimi, Mizo and Zomi) and several sub-groups. Chin's population is predominantly Christian.



SAFETY

The ceasefire agreement of 2012 between the Government of Myanmar and the Chin National Front (CNF) has removed what was previously a serious bottleneck for development.

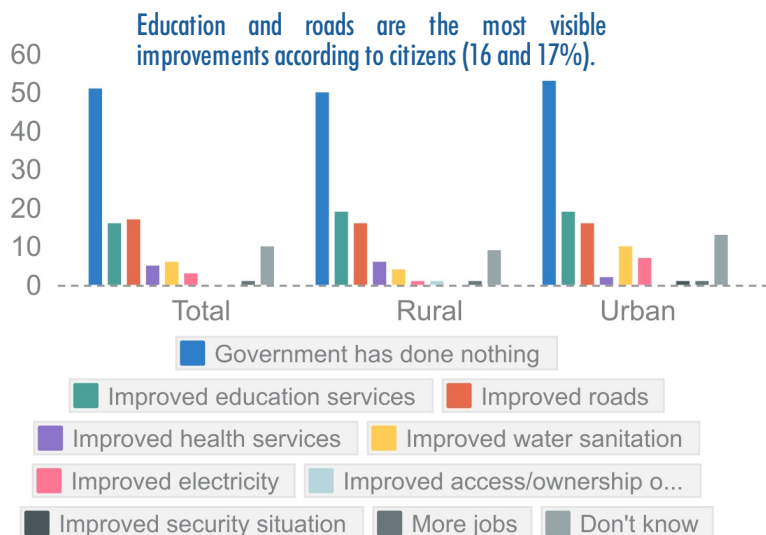
42% of the people interviewed noticed an improvement in the safety situation over the last three years, and 92 generally felt safe in their village tract or ward.

Supported by:



Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.

IMPROVEMENTS SEEN AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL



No or limited access to safe water is the most important problem mentioned by citizens (32%).



DEVELOPMENT PLANNING AND PARTICIPATION

Township Development Funds

At the sub-national level, there are new development funds, and emerging opportunities for local actors, such as Support Committees, Village Tract/Ward Administrators (VT/WAs) and the people, to influence the planning process and decision-making for these funds.

4 development funds in Chin at township level.

Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF)

Constituency Development Fund (CDF)

Rural Development Fund

Border Affairs Fund



Recognising the immense challenges faced by Chin State, the Union Government has allocated Kyats 3 billion under the PRF, triple the amount allocated to most other States and Regions.

General Administration Department (GAD) and the Township Administrator (TA)

The GAD and TA play a steering and coordinating role in township development. The key practice for information-sharing at the township level is the weekly inter-departmental meeting, which takes place in all townships on a regular basis.

TMC Composition

As per the national guidelines, the Township Education Officer (TEO) sits on the TMC while the Township Medical Officer does not (TMO). Yet, in Mindat the TMO is a member of the TMC, as opposed to the TEO.

Role	Position as specified by national guidance	Mindat	Thantlang	Tonzang
Chair	Township Administrator - GAD	✓	✓	✓
Member	Township Police Officer	✓	✓	✓
Member	Township Law Officer	Township Co-operatives Officer	✓	✓
Member	Township Planning Officer	✓	✓	✓
Member	Township Agricultural Office	Township Immigration Officer	✓	✓
Member	Township Education Officer	Township Medical Officer	✓	Secretary, in lieu of Department of Revenue at the township level
Member	Township Municipal Affairs Officer	✓	✓	✓
Secretary	Township Revenue Officer	Y, as member. Township Labour Officer as secretary	✓	Y, as member Township Education Officer as Secretary
Joint Secretary	Deputy Township Administrator - GAD	Y, as member	✓	✓



Township Development Support Committee (TDSC) and Township Municipal Affairs Committee (TMAC)

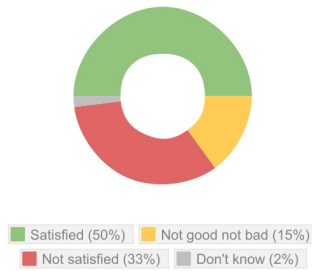


The TA has the obligation to "meet, coordinate and seek advice" from the TDSC and TMAC in assigning township projects. Thereby, the schedule for support committees is fluid and usually takes place on an 'as needed' basis, with the TA inviting relevant members to join as required. Committees can convene up to 2-3 times a day when the State makes urgent requests for proposals or information.

Basic Service Delivery



Percentage of citizens satisfied with health services in the community

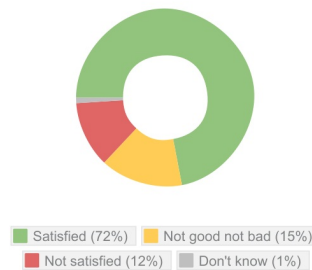


70% percent of the users of public health services said that they always had to pay for medicines in a public health facility while most essential drugs should be provided for free. Of these respondents 78% stated that they never received an explanation from the medical staff as to why they have to pay.

Of 23 interviewed health staff, 15 stated that the Township Medical Officer is undertaking regular supervision and support visits to their health facility.



Percentage of respondents satisfied with education services in the community



Equality of treatment in education services is perceived to be fairly high. 93% of the respondents feel that their child receives the same treatment at schools as other children.

Of 14 school principals interviewed, all mentioned the existence of a Parent Teacher Association at their school. 4 rated the performance of the PTA as 'not good not bad', and 8 as good or very good.

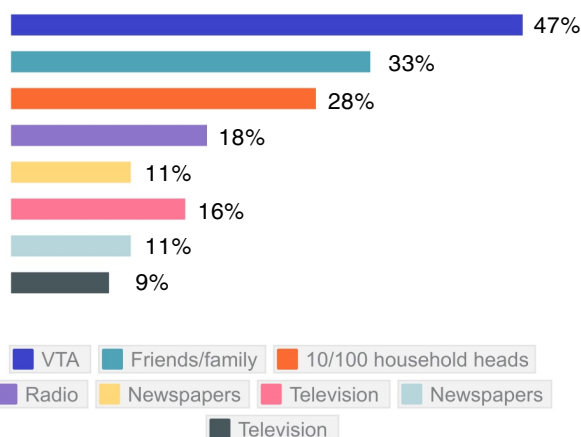
INFORMATION, TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Information flow

In all selected townships, information flow between all stakeholders was raised collectively by government, committee members and civil society members as a top three governance priority.

As a continuation from the past, upward information flows between levels of administration are well established. But there are problems in the information flow from township administrations to communities. 67% of the people felt that the township was not providing them with sufficient information about plans for new projects for the village tract or ward.

The VT/WA emerged as the primary source of government information for people (47%), particularly in rural areas (58%). One third of the respondents (33%) receive news via family and friends.



'Terrain Representatives'

In Thantlang township the Township Administrator has involved nine locally influential volunteers as 'Terrain Representative' to improve communications and promote development. This practice can be extended to other townships.

Grievance redressal

Incidents of complaints including those related to land are relatively infrequent in Chin, and different than in other States and Regions these do not take up the majority of time for administrators and committee members. This is partially due to the existence of traditional dispute resolution mechanisms.



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 and possible improvements for local governance and service delivery.

In one village tract for example, the participants discussed how the community could support further development and where external support was needed. The Village Tract Administrator and committees proposed that villagers could work on development projects for a suitable wage, to which the people agreed. The Village Tract Administrator further suggested that the Agricultural Department should provide agricultural technologies, pesticides and fertilizers to help strengthen food security.

STATE LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS



In the State level workshop in Hakha, where interim findings from the mapping in Chin were presented, government and civil society from the State, township and village tract/ward level made recommendations. These include:



To address the limited involvement of women in administration, develop organisational gender policies and have facilities for mothers with children at their workplace.



To counteract corruption, establish an independent official anti-corruption institutions (Ombudsman).

CONCLUSIONS

It is a challenge for Chin to effectively spend the relatively high amount of development funds. To improve processes for project prioritization and selection, clear roles and responsibilities for committee members should be established.

To address the relatively low levels of women participation in administration and development, support to women to improve their opportunities to apply for and enter administrative roles should be considered, as well as support to women leaders in the community.

Guidance and support should be provided on the role of the Village Tract Administrator, emphasizing their responsibilities in relaying information and facilitating participation.

Specific strategies to overcome barriers in information flow related to Chin's geography should be developed. The concept of 'Terrain Representatives' introduced in Thantlang could serve as an example.

For a more detailed report on Chin please visit:

www.mm.undp.org

UNDP Myanmar
No. 6, Natmauk Road,
Tamwe Township
Yangon 11211,
Myanmar
E-mail:
communications.mm@undp.org
January 2015