

## Building Resilience, Equity and Opportunity in Myanmar: The Role of Social Protection

### Social protection for disaster risk management: Opportunities for Myanmar<sup>1</sup>

**Social protection** can help build people's social and economic resilience against disasters in Myanmar. Regular cash transfers, including public works programs, can help smooth consumption, build and maintain assets, and develop human capital to better cope with natural hazards. Disaster risk management (DRM) systems can be linked to social protection programs to trigger a safety net response in times of emergencies. Community-driven development (CDD) programs could provide a useful platform for social protection programming to respond to disasters and build long term resilience in Myanmar.



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## 1. Background

**Myanmar suffers from disaster losses every year caused by a range of hazards that have high immediate and long-lasting impacts on people, livelihoods, the local and national economy, and the government budget.** Its coastal regions are exposed to cyclones, storm surges, and tsunamis, while major parts of the country are at risk from earthquakes and fires. Rainfall-induced flooding is a recurring event across the country, and some parts of the country are exposed to landslides and droughts (GoM, 2012a).<sup>2</sup> In the past 25 years, Myanmar has suffered 32 disaster events (seismic activity, epidemic, flood, landslides, and storms) affecting more than 4 million people and causing USD 4.7 billion in damages.<sup>3</sup> Cyclone Nargis was the worst natural disaster in the history of Myanmar, generating a total loss of 21 percent of the country's 2007 gross domestic product (GDP) (ASEAN, 2008). Annual expected losses are approximately USD 184.8 million, equivalent to 0.9 percent of the country's GDP in 2008. The government spends USD 10-20 million on road rehabilitation after floods and landslides every year.<sup>4</sup>

**Disasters disproportionately affect the poor (particularly women, children, the elderly, people with disabilities, migrants, and marginalized groups).** These groups often live in places more exposed to hazard risks, partly because of environmental degradation from over exploitation of land, and have less ability to cope with and recover from disasters. Rural households with higher incomes have a higher ability to diversify livelihood activities to reduce risks, while informal safety nets on which the poor depend (such as borrowing food) become stretched when shocks affect the whole community. Environmental degradation and recurrent disasters exacerbate people's vulnerability. Experiences in Cyclone Nargis demonstrate that pre-existing environmental degradation in the Ayeyarwaddy Delta in turn led to increased vulnerability to disasters. The cyclone resulted in further environmental damage and increased exposure to flooding owing to erosion and destroyed embankments, jeopardizing sustainable livelihoods. Nargis severely damaged the ability of communities to recover on their own; they lost their productive assets, which further exacerbated problems such as malnutrition and food insecurity, keeping them in a cycle of poverty (UNEP, 2009). Recovery since Nargis has been slow and investments in long-term development activities towards rebuilding livelihoods and resilience have been insufficient. Cash transfer (CT) programs, implemented by development partners and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as part of the response, were well received but were only for a short duration (World Bank, 2014).

**With a focus on social assistance, this Note investigates the role social protection can play in increasing the capacity of poor and vulnerable households to cope with and reduce hazard risk in Myanmar and in developing resilient households and communities.** This Note is timely as it can more explicitly explore the conceptual links between social protection and disaster risk management (DRM) described in the 2014 Myanmar Social Protection Strategic Plan (SPSP) as well as providing input into the current development of the Rural Development Strategic Framework (RDSF) implementation plan and the National Disaster Management (NDM) Law's rules and regulations.

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2. See Annex 1 for hazard risks in different geographical areas of Myanmar.

3. Emergency Events Database (EM-DAT): <http://www.emdat.be>

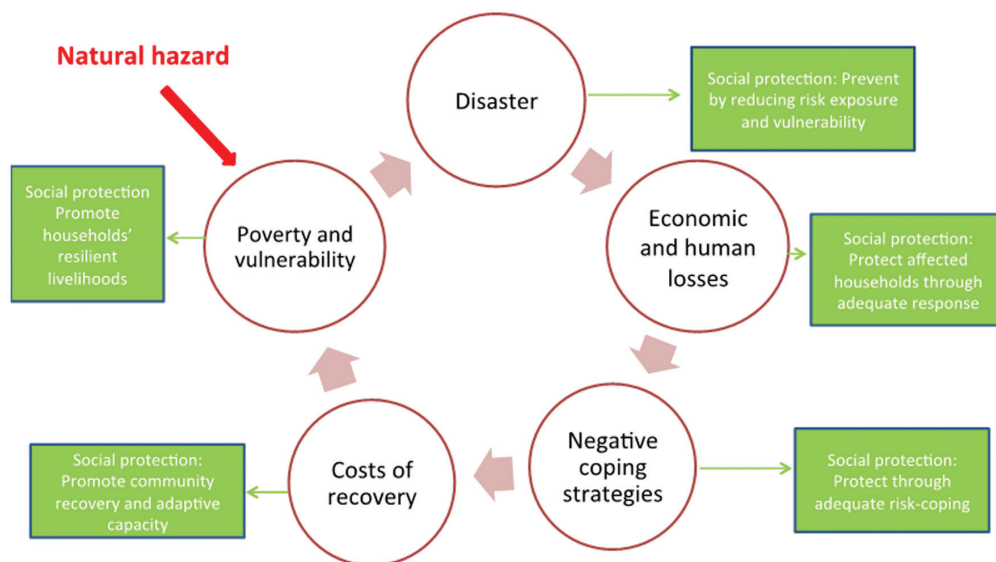
4. World Bank calculations, Disaster Risk Reduction Mission, 2014.

## 2. Overview: the role of social protection in disaster risk management

**Social protection has an important role to play in DRM. Hazards become disasters when people have limited ability to withstand and cope, with poverty a lead cause.** DRM is a systematic process of using legal and policy frameworks and skills and capacities to design and implement strategies and policies to reduce the adverse impacts of natural hazards and the possibility of disaster. This includes disaster risk reduction (DRR) and increasing household and community resilience, as well as disaster preparedness, response, and recovery practices.<sup>5</sup>

**Social protection comprises policies, programs, and delivery systems that help individuals and societies manage risk and volatility and protect them from poverty and destitution, through instruments that improve resilience, equity, and opportunity.**<sup>6</sup> It offers a holistic approach to disasters that can help break the negative cycle of impact in the short, medium, and long term. Social protection can complement efforts to develop long-term household economic and social resilience, reduce disaster risk, and help households cope with and recover from disasters (see Figure 1). By reducing vulnerability, it can also contribute to reducing hazard impacts on the local and national economy.

**Figure 1: Disaster risk cycle and the role of social protection**



**Source:** Developed by Mariana Infante-Villarreal and Inge Stokkel, derived from content in Burton (2012).

5. Adapted from the DRM definitions of the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) (<http://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/terminology>) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) ([https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/special-reports/srex/SREX-Annex\\_Glossary.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/special-reports/srex/SREX-Annex_Glossary.pdf)).

6. From World Bank definition of social protection (World Bank, 2012a).

### 3. Lessons from international experience

The international experiences discussed here demonstrate that building social protection programs and delivery mechanisms could help Myanmar better protect its people against disasters (through risk reduction, preparedness and rapid response) and build long-term social and economic resilience. This can be achieved by building on existing platforms (such as CDD) and through effective coordination between the different government stakeholders.

#### 3.1 Policy, coordination, and financing

The program examples in the next section ('Social protection programs to assist in DRM') demonstrate that coordination between the social protection and DRM sectors can help reduce the impact of natural hazards. Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Program (PSNP) is linked to DRM systems such as hazard risk mapping and early warning systems (EWSs), which has helped with early response and reduced, even avoided, disaster losses. In Indonesia, the existing PNPM network of facilitators and volunteers has enabled local governments to quickly assess community needs and rehabilitate infrastructure. In the Philippines, the existing network of implementers of the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (Pantawid Pamilya) conditional cash transfer (CCT) program and coordination systems between all levels of government have enabled quick response.

**Social protection programs can provide a common platform for pooling development partner (DP) funds to respond to disaster.** This is demonstrated by PSNP, where the Risk Financing Mechanism (RFM) ensured financial commitments from donors were put in place before any crises occurred. In 2008, in response to increasing food prices and the failure of the belg rains, the government used the RFM to provide additional transfers to 4.43 million existing PSNP beneficiaries and 1.5 million individuals who had not previously participated but who has been negatively affected by the crisis. The RFM was again used in 2009 to provide additional transfers to 6.4 million PSNP participants (World Bank, 2012b). In the Philippines, the government used Pantawid Pamilya to channel donor funding for emergency response efforts when Cyclone Haiyan hit.

#### 3.2 Social protection programs to assist in DRM

**Social transfer programs can provide multi-year and predictable assistance that can help people accumulate assets to buffer disaster losses and can reduce the long-term economic impact of disasters.**

Ethiopia's PSNP is an example of how an ad hoc emergency response can be transformed into a **comprehensive, sustainable, and scalable social protection and DRM program** that is closely linked to an EWS. The reforms have helped reduce response time from eight to two months and reduced the need for emergency response and human losses.

The PSNP consists of cash-for-work projects to improve environmental assets (60 percent of projects in soil and water conservation); unconditional food/cash transfers for the poorest 10 percent; an insurance-for-work scheme in a particularly disaster-prone area; a contingency budget to respond to sudden emergency needs; and the RFM for use when the contingency fund is insufficient. PSNP provides long-term support to chronically food-insecure rural households to help them cope with shocks, reduce disaster risk through asset creation and rehabilitation of their natural environment, and build household resilience. The financing mechanisms allow the program to scale up to also provide assistance to risk-prone households when necessary. PSNP's long-term support has helped reverse the trend of deteriorating livelihoods despite climatic shocks. Timely and predictable assistance has enabled households to manage risk more effectively and avoid negative coping strategies and food insecurity.

### Box 1: Why CDD platforms are useful in disasters

- a. Social funds operate at community level and can respond to local needs, use local knowledge, and be scaled up as early response measures against hazard.
- b. Social funds are decentralized, which makes them flexible to adapt programs to meet local needs (including target group and transfer size).
- c. Social funds have a focus on community capacity-building, which is essential for building effective management of and response to natural hazards.
- d. They can respond immediately to shock or provide longer-term support, hence complementing the need to bridge the short-medium-long-term approach to disaster management that is frequently absent.
- e. Monitoring and evaluation systems are built into social funds.

*Source: Pelham et al. (2006).*

In other countries also, cash transfers are increasingly being used as part of disaster responses. In the Philippines, the government with donor assistance **scaled up its existing Pantawid Pamilya CCT** program and used the same delivery mechanisms to channel food and cash transfers to affected household in the program and to identify households for cash-for-work (CFW) and cash-for-asset-rebuilding. The program was modified to make unconditional transfers available to help support disaster-affected families.

In Pakistan, the government established a **new CT** program when the 2010 floods affected one-third of the country and nearly 10 percent of the population. The Floods Emergency CT Program provided unconditional cash transfers (UCTs) to flood-affected families to promote early recovery and to jump-start the economy.

**Social protection instruments for DRM and response have also been used as part of community-driven development (CDD) programs.**<sup>7</sup> As they are already established in government systems, CDD programs can rapidly access and disburse resources at scale to affected areas, even when financed externally by donors (Pelham, 2006). For example, following the Pakistan earthquake, the Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund was able to set up disaster relief centers and provide support in

7. See Note on 'Social protection delivery through community-driven development platforms: International experience and key considerations for Myanmar' for further information on the opportunities and constraints of social protection implementation through CDD.

2,000 communities within one day, and USD 220 million in CTs was delivered to households (ibid.).<sup>8</sup> Indonesia's PNPM Mandiri CDD program was used to provide UCTs to the poorest and most-affected households as part of response and recovery efforts after the 2004 tsunami in Aceh and other disaster events between 2005 and 2010. The CDD program accelerated community economic recovery, with funds spent locally to purchase replacement goods. It also provided employment opportunities through clearing rubble and rebuilding community infrastructure in CFW programs<sup>9</sup> (Annex 3 presents more information on PNPM).

**All examples discussed above included a CFW component. CFW is a common social protection instrument used for DRR and recovery. Cash/food-for-work (C/FFW) programs help build and diversify assets and livelihoods by providing an income during the lean season.** The assets built can help reduce disaster risk.<sup>10</sup> A review of all cash responses following the 2004 tsunami showed there were significant benefits from CFW projects for the rehabilitation of communities as well as for psychosocial recovery. Cash was used for food and non-food needs but also for paying off debts and livelihood recovery. CFW projects did not have an inflationary effect on local food prices and labor markets were generally not disrupted. CFW was found to have a positive impact on traditional systems of community support. A weakness inherent in the design of CFW projects is that they exclude households with little or no labor capacity; complementary support for labor-poor households has been provided in some contexts (e.g. Ethiopia's PSNP) (Adams, 2007).

### 3.3 Delivery systems

**The examples above demonstrate that having basic social protection systems in place before disaster strikes can reduce emergency response time and disaster losses.** Existing delivery mechanisms can help scale up (Ethiopia, Philippines) or introduce new programs (Pakistan, Indonesia).

#### Identification and payment systems

**Existing identification and payment mechanisms help reach many people quickly when disaster strikes.** In the Philippines, the database of the National Household Targeting System for Poverty Reduction (NHTS-PR) was used to disburse cash and food quickly and helped with identifying households that could be enrolled for a range of rehabilitation programs, such as CFW and cash-for-asset-rebuilding. In Pakistan, it was possible to disburse cash quickly (with 97 percent of households able to withdraw cash within 48 hours). There were sufficient human resources on the ground and a national poverty registry and a debit card payment system were already in place.

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8. Further information on regional use of social funds is available at the World Bank: <http://go.worldbank.org/HBZ7191990>

9. Other disasters included the North Sumatra and Aceh earthquake in March 2005, the Java earthquake in May 2006, the Java tsunami in July 2006; and the Mount Merapi eruption in October 2010 (ADB, n.d.).

10. Hazard-proof infrastructure could include strengthening embankments, roads, bridges, or gullies, but also health clinics or classrooms. Land conservation and rehabilitation work could include tree planting (or mangrove planting to protect coastal areas), bunds, area catchments, and small irrigation.

### Targeting

**In the aftermath of a disaster, poor and non-poor households require assistance.** A risk is that many non-poor but risk-prone households are not included in often poverty-targeted transfer programs.<sup>11</sup> Reaching all affected households can be achieved by scaling up existing programs to cover all affected households. The PSNP demonstrates that, with appropriate, pre-committed financing models in place, it is possible to scale up to also include risk-prone households. PNPM in Indonesia raised the grant ceilings and allocated more funding to affected communities, including for UCTs to the poorest and most affected households. New villages entered the program as they were also affected by the tsunami. In the Philippines, Pantawid Pamilya was expanded to include disaster-affected households that were not previously included. Programs were scaled down again and became more targeted to the poorest and most affected households in the recovery phase.

**Where programs are not yet in place, systems can be developed.** As demonstrated by the Pakistan program, no existing mechanism was in place to reach flood-affected households. In the first phase, households were geographically targeted; in the second, the program was scaled down and targeted to households based on a housing damage indicator. The beneficiary list was then checked against the national poverty database to exclude the well-off (Johnson, 2012).

### System flexibility

**Flexibility is crucial for effective disaster response through social protection programs.** In Ethiopia's PSNP, this flexibility to quickly expand and contract its program is already built in, with contingency plans in place. PNPM modified its operations manual to accelerate planning and widen the menu of projects to respond to emergency.<sup>12</sup> The usual participatory social analysis approach also allowed for faster damage and loss assessments. Coordination and administration systems were strengthened through additional staffing to handle the scaling-up of operations.

## 4. Current SP and DRM policy and program initiatives in Myanmar

### 4.1 Policy, coordination, and financing

#### DRM and social protection legal and policy framework

**Myanmar has taken serious steps towards reducing the impact of natural hazards, including through the development of legal and policy frameworks.** With the government's responsibility to protect its people there is an increasing acknowledgement that social protection can play a role in DRM as part of long-term development programs. Table 1 summarizes social protection and DRM linkages in relevant government documents. Building resilience and long-term protection against natural hazards is a common theme that provides opportunities for integrating social protection instruments in DRM activities and vice versa.

11. In many low- and middle-income countries, the poverty line is set low to reduce the cost of poverty reduction programmes.

12. The declaration of a state of emergency now triggers these new procedures.



**Table 1: Social protection references and linkages in DRM legal and policy frameworks**

Legal/policy framework	Social protection–DRM linkages	Integrating social protection in DRM
NDM Law (2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One objective is to ‘provide health, education, social and livelihood programs in order to bring about better living conditions for disaster victims’</li> <li>• Cash assistance is mentioned as one of the potential rehabilitation and reconstruction activities</li> <li>• It calls for measures to provide long-term protection against natural disasters</li> <li>• Priority should be given to protect children, older people, people with disabilities and women (especially pregnant women and mothers)</li> </ul>	The Law does not specify how long-term risk should be reduced and resilience built, nor how vulnerable groups should be prioritized. Rules and regulations are in development, and this is an opportunity to include a more coherent strategy of piloting relevant social protection programs linked to using available delivery platforms (such as CDD)
Myanmar Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction (MAPDRR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The objective is to make Myanmar safer and more resilient against natural hazards, in order to protect lives, livelihoods, and developmental gains, in line with the global Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA) and the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER)</li> <li>• The plan outlines a range of interventions and includes the provision of public works programs (PWP) to increase livelihoods in vulnerable areas and to strengthen the preparedness and resilience of communities</li> </ul>	MAPDRR will be updated in 2015, following endorsement of the Sendai global framework for DRR. This also provides opportunities to include social protection investments. This could include PWPs to build hazard-resilient infrastructure or a sustainable CT program that increases human development and livelihood diversification
Myanmar National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It identifies priority activities for Myanmar to adapt to climate change impacts by building/enhancing resilience of vulnerable communities. These activities focus on key climate infrastructure and livelihood diversification</li> </ul>	PWPs, long-term CTs to help promote livelihood diversification
RDSF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One of its missions is the mitigation of natural disasters and creation of resilient communities</li> <li>• It mentions the role of social protection in reducing socio-political and ecological risks and livelihood vulnerability</li> <li>• It calls for poverty reduction measures, effective EWSs, skills development training, and community savings and insurance schemes</li> </ul>	The implementation plan could detail how social protection instruments could assist in building disaster resilience. An opportunity could be to include social protection measures in the Department of Rural Development’s (DRD’s) CDD program

**In December 2014 the government endorsed which complements the DRM and rural development policies in building resilience against shocks by addressing the social and economic vulnerabilities of the poor and vulnerable.** Myanmar's vision for social protection is of an inclusive, equitable, and sustainable system. It aims to improve ‘livelihoods of poor families and communities before disasters arise, by smoothing consumption over the year to address seasonal or weather-related nutrition shortfalls, by building the capacity to deliver cash benefits where needed, and by

supporting public employment programs that mitigate community risks to disasters' (GoM, 2014: 16). It calls for integrated DRM and social protection programming to increase local capacity to cope and recover from shocks and potential disasters. It suggests PWPs to contribute to environmental conservation, build disaster-proof infrastructure, and increase the resilience of communities to disasters (GoM, 2014).

**The Relief and Resettlement Department (RRD), with support from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), is in the early stages of developing a national framework for community disaster resilience.** The framework will provide a common understanding on strengthening community disaster resilience in Myanmar and set the national direction in this regard. Social protection could be part of this framework. RRD has also taken steps towards pre-disaster recovery planning as part of Myanmar's commitments under the AADMER work program. In addition, RRD is developing the ASEAN Recovery Planning Reference Guide with support from the UN Development Programme (UNDP). Social protection could be linked and incorporated into the recovery planning framework of the government.

#### **DRM institutional arrangements and links with social protection arrangements (See Annex 2)**

**The National Natural Disaster Preparedness Central Committee (NNDPCC), under the chairmanship of the second vice-president, was established in 2013 and replaced the Myanmar Disaster Preparedness Agency.** Its task is to ensure disaster preparedness and to promote coordination and quick and effective disaster relief and response activities. It has 36 members, including 19 union ministers and all state and region chief ministers. Under the NNDPCC sits the National Natural Disaster Preparedness Management Working Committee (NNDPMWC), chaired by the union minister of social welfare, relief and resettlement, which supervises the implementation of disaster management activities and coordinates any activities of the NNDPCC (GoM, 2013b). Ten working committees support the NNDPMWC.

**NDM Law calls for the formation of a National Natural Disaster Management Committee (NNDMC) to be chaired by a vice president and be responsible for all aspects of disaster management.** An inter-ministerial working committee will be in place to implement decisions by the NNDMC. It is as yet uncertain whether the NNDMC will supersede the NNDPCC after the NDM Law rules and regulations have been finalized. Funding for the NNDMC would come out of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MSWRR) budget.

**Disaster preparedness working committees also exist in regions and states and at district, township, and village tract level.** They each have subcommittees (the number and nature varies among regions and states) to implement the activities of the working committee (GoM, 2012a). The role of the state and region working committees (chaired by the chief minister) is to monitor potential and imminent disasters, implement responses, ensure systemic provision of food and relief items and rehabilitation materials to victims, and manage the state/region natural disaster management fund (GoM, 2013a). Responsibilities would need to come with adequate decentralized budgets.

**The roles and responsibilities of all relevant ministries for disaster preparedness, response, and rehabilitation are outlined in the 2009 Standing Order on Natural Disaster Management in Myanmar.** MSWRR coordinates disaster response and preparedness and the Ministry of Home Affairs facilitates communications at subnational level. The Department for Hydrology and Meteorology

rology is responsible for EWSs. MSWRR in collaboration with other government agencies and DPs and civil society organizations will update the Standing Order once the rules of the NDM Law have been approved.

**A range of government agencies are implementing or developing social protection programs, such as the Ministries of Health, Education, Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development, Social Welfare, Finance, and Labor and the Social Security Board.** The Department of Social Welfare of MSWRR is responsible for coordinating social protection. The minister of social welfare chairs the Social Protection and DRR Sector Working Group to ensure effective coordination at the sector level and to promote development effectiveness in Myanmar. Under the Sector Working Group sit the Social Protection and DRR Sub-Sector Working Groups. To date, there are no linkages between the two sub-groups.

**Having the coordination function of social protection and DRM under one ministry provides an opportunity for a coordinated approach to disaster preparedness and response, as well as building long-term household economic and social resilience against hazards.** On the other hand, with both DRM and social protection being cross-sectoral issues, there is a risk that cross-ministerial coordination and cooperation will not be effective. While all social protection programs, implemented by a range of ministries, can contribute to household resilience, including in times of disasters, the DRD and MSWRR programs provide the most logical platforms for incorporating DRM elements. At present, the Ministry of Home Affairs (through the General Administration Department) has the widespread presence on the ground and provides the link to community and township levels. Effective coordination will require ministries/departments to be encouraged to operate outside their sectoral silos, build technical capacity, and provide financial resources for disaster management and social protection at both national and subnational level. Further decentralization and strong political support are required to effectively implement the different policies.

## DRM financing

**A national contingency fund of approximately USD 116 million (MMK 100 billion) is managed by the President's Office.** The RRD HFA Progress Report mentions that the RRD budget allocation (USD 2.9 million in 2012-2013) and the Fire Services Department's budget (USD 14.3 million in 2012-2013) could also be considered a budget for DRR and emergency response.<sup>13</sup> While it is challenging to capture all DRR budget and expenditure, RRD reports that the combined disaster management funds represent 0.85 percent of the national budget (RRD, 2012). States and regions also receive an annual budget allocation for development projects based on priority needs, with investment in DRR and emergency response at the discretion of the state/region government. There is no clear budget for recovery activities at township level in the current union budget, or for risk assessments at national and regional level.

**Current disaster funds are insufficient to cover recurrent losses and the government remains exposed to more extreme events, relying entirely on international donor assistance for response, relief, and recovery.** For the Cyclone Nargis response, a quarter of funds were public funds, with the rest funded from bilateral and multilateral contributions. There is, however, no

13. 1.7 percent of RRD's budget goes to DRR, which includes awareness-raising, capacity-building and strengthening policy and institutional capacities, and inter-agency and regional cooperation for DRR; 61 percent is for response efforts.

mechanism in place for pooling resources through common platforms, such as the PSNP RFM in Ethiopia, through which donors can (pre-)commit funds. Public assets are largely uninsured, and there is no strategy or policy framework in place to actively manage the financial impact of natural disasters. A better understanding of the underlying risks and a comprehensive strategy with appropriate disaster risk financing and insurance products could help increase the ability of national and subnational governments to respond quickly, and would enable timely access and effective use of reconstruction and recovery funding. DPs and the private sector have had early discussions with the government on risk financing options in Myanmar. An RFM would also offer the opportunity to rapidly finance the implementation of a pre-planned early response social protection program.

## 4.2 Social protection programs to assist in DRM

**Myanmar has undertaken positive steps to increase social protection provision, which provides opportunities to develop sustainable and adequate measures to help protect its most vulnerable people against hazards.** The RRD HFA Progress Report acknowledges that, to date, ‘considerations on resilience of risk prone households and communities to natural and man-made disasters in the schemes are not enough’ (RRD, 2012: 24). While the government has coordinated emergency operations, it has limited experience in implementing CT programs and C/FFW programs. RRD has provided cash grants to families that have lost family members in disasters (MMK 100,000 (USD 100) for an adult and MMK 50,000 (USD 50) for a child under 12 years old). The government also provided cash assistance to disaster-affected populations after the Magwe flash floods, when cash was delivered to flood-affected households through officials.<sup>14</sup>

**CDD programs are potential platforms to incorporate social protection measures in Myanmar to contribute to building resilience and DRM.** The DRD has two community funds worth exploring as possible avenues for social protection for DRM at scale: the Mya Sein Yaung (MSY; also known as Evergreen Village Development Project) (2014-2016) and the National Community Driven Development Project (NCDDP) (2012-2019).<sup>15</sup> While neither of these has incorporated explicit social protection schemes in its operations at the present time, both have improving resilience of rural livelihoods to disasters within their objectives.

**The MSY has the objective of reducing poverty in rural areas by creating job opportunities, achieving food security, increasing productivity, and improving the resilience of rural livelihoods to disasters.** The project provides loans to villages for village-level revolving funds. Projects that can be financed include solar energy, livestock-rearing, fishery and farming, agricultural business, and other businesses.

14. The government ran emergency operations to thousands of disaster-affected people after Cyclone Nargis in 2008, Cyclone Giri in 2011, the Tarlay earthquake in 2011, and the Magwe flash floods in 2011, involving a wide range of departments and DPs. On 23 October 2011, the vice-president and president visited temporary camps in affected areas and provided assistance in cash and in kind worth USD 273,000 and USD 250,425, respectively. See <http://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/providing-food-and-shelter-flood-victims-should-be-top-priority-vice-president-dr-sai>. See Note on ‘The experience of cash transfers in Myanmar’ for further information on CTs in Myanmar.

15. Further information on these schemes can be found in the Note on ‘Social protection delivery through community-driven development platforms’.

**The NCDDP<sup>16</sup> has the objective of delivering key infrastructure and services through community-block grants.** The program also aims to build government's capacity to respond promptly and effectively to crises or emergencies. An emergency contingency response component allows for rapid reallocation of grants to provide preparedness and rapid response to disaster as needed. During the first implementation cycle in three townships, the NCDDP financed 357 projects aimed at increasing access to and use of basic infrastructure and services, including rehabilitating and expanding school buildings, health centers, water supplies, roads, footpaths, jetties, and bridges. These CDD platforms could be used to build basic hazard-resilient community infrastructure through labor-intensive PWPs, which will also provide an income for food-insecure households.

**Further analysis is required of both programs to see if these decentralized planning and financing systems could be used for social protection delivery to assist the most vulnerable people in the community and to be scaled up as part of rapid disaster response efforts.**

**DP activities focus largely on national and community DRR capacity-building, community education on DRM, and community-based DRR activities (through community grants).** Social protection programs could complement these efforts by building household resilience. The Tat Lan program is a disaster community recovery program that builds on emergency response and contributes to equitably and sustainably improving the livelihoods of Cyclone Giri-affected communities. It includes social protection instruments such as CFW and a pilot maternity CT. DRM could have been more explicitly considered in the program to increase communities' capacity to cope with future shocks (e.g. apply 'build back better' principles in CFW projects).

**The Building Resilience against Climate Extremes and Disasters program aims to build community resilience to climate extremes.<sup>17</sup>** The objective is to enhance adaptive capacity and support individuals, households, and groups to better protect their assets and access financial services. CTs are not included in this program.

**Several DPs have implemented C/FFW programs<sup>18</sup> after Cyclone Nargis and some are still ongoing.** While these programs were initiated as part of recovery efforts to contribute to community and household resilience, DRR can be more explicitly mainstreamed. For example, it will be worthwhile to explore options for applying the standards for (re)-building hazard-proof infrastructure as part of C/FFW programs in hazard-prone areas. This does not seem to be standard practice at the moment.

**The World Food Programme (WFP) through its cooperating partners (Save the Children (SC) and CARE International) implemented a cash-for-food pilot in Yangon division, where markets were functioning, four weeks after Cyclone Nargis hit.** SC supported 63,000 beneficiaries in five townships, in communities where at least 50 percent of the homes were completely or partially damaged. The weekly UCT covered the cost of a basic food basket. Lessons from this short pilot were a) set up systems and structures in advance of emergencies to enable rapid response; b) assess the

16. The NCDDP is a USD86.3 million program, supported by the World Bank, that will cover 640 village tracts in 15 townships (one in each state/region), with a gradual rollout that started in Chin state, Tanintharyi division, and Shan state.

17. The project is funded by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and led by Plan International, with the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), BBC Media, ActionAid, World Vision, and the Myanmar Environment Institute as implementing partners.

18. See the Note on 'The experience of public works programs in Myanmar' for further details on CFW programs in Myanmar.

need of beneficiaries and respond with appropriate programs; and c) ensure funding follows program purpose, rather than program implementation being constrained by funding limitations (Rees, n.d.).

### 4.3 Delivery systems

**The international examples demonstrate that existing social protection identification, enrollment, and payment systems can assist in more effective disaster management.** In Myanmar, these social protection and DRM mechanisms require significant investments and integration to enable maximum impact of social protection programs in DRM.

#### Poverty and vulnerability data for identification

**Comprehensive poverty and vulnerability data collection in Myanmar could be strengthened to ensure the effective identification of the poor and vulnerable.** While the Census will provide new data, additional mapping at all levels is required to anticipate the negative impacts of disasters in different parts of the country and on different population groups, including the poor. This includes comprehensive hazard risk and poverty vulnerability mapping at national scale. Multi Hazard Risk Assessments have been conducted in Rakhine state and Delta region.<sup>19</sup> The Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development with support from WFP has conducted food security assessments in the Dry Zone; in Bago, Yangon, and Ayeyarwaddy regions; and in Shan, Kachin, and Chin states and Sagaing region with the intention being to cover the whole country.<sup>20</sup> The assessments inform food security patterns across Myanmar and provide estimated poverty levels. They can support the design of poverty alleviation strategies and programs for different livelihood groups.

**RRD has taken critical steps to improve the systemic collection of data on disaster losses and damages.** Supported by UNDP and the UN Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), it is currently creating a database to capture losses and damages from past disasters and put in place systems to continue data recording. This will result in the Myanmar Disaster Loss and Damage Database, Desinventar. A comprehensive database will help us better understand disaster risk and contribute to more targeted action at national and subnational levels.<sup>21</sup>

19. The assessment was funded by UNDP and implemented by the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center and the Myanmar Engineering Society.

20. Food security was assessed based on the availability of food, access to food (income levels, diets, and hunger levels), utilization (access to water), and stability factors (food gap, coping mechanisms). The results are available here: <http://www.fsinmyanmar.net/publications/itemlist/category/5-food-security-and-nutrition>

21. <http://www.mm.undp.org/content/myanmar/en/home/presscenter/articles/2014/10/07/new-database-to-help-myanmar-better-assess-loss-and-damage-risks-from-disasters/>



### Targeting

**When disaster strikes, all people in the area will be affected to some degree and assistance can be geographically targeted.** This was the lesson from WFP's CT pilot following Cyclone Nargis, which required poverty targeting owing to limited financial resources but found most people needed support. In the medium- to long-term recovery phase targeting is more feasible and can be applied, if required, to the households who need it most to support livelihood recovery and resilience-building.

**Poverty, vulnerability, and hazard mapping can help with targeting social protection initiatives that assist with resilience-building.** In addition, EWSs can help with geographical targeting efforts by providing accurate predictions of where a natural hazard will occur and enable early response. Current cyclone and flooding EWSs in Myanmar do not generate sufficient data to be able to accurately predict the precise geographical impact of incoming weather systems. There is also potential to improve information and communication systems to provide effective early warning information to local communities and relevant national-level agencies for a quick response to potential hazards (ASEAN, 2008).

### Payment systems

**Myanmar has not yet developed a system through which cash could be delivered to households at scale in a safe and transparent manner.** With the expansion of the financial and telecom sectors and associated regulatory frameworks, opportunities will arise to establish mechanisms to transfer benefits to households nationwide. These mechanisms can then also be used to reach disaster-affected households quickly as part of disaster response efforts.

## 5. Conclusions and considerations for social protection for DRM

**Investments in disaster prevention, preparation, early intervention, and long-term resilience-building, including through social protection, has economic benefits for the country.** Social protection can play a role in better risk coping during response and early recovery, reducing disaster risk, and building household resilience in Myanmar. Building household resilience against hazards could be more mainstreamed into DRM and social protection programming to reduce natural hazard exposure and vulnerability. The following policy, program, and delivery system considerations emerge:

## 5.1 Policy, institutional arrangement, and financing considerations

- With the development of the **RDSF** and the **SPSP**, which establish the role households transfers can play in DRM, the government can more specifically consider what social transfer investments and implementation arrangements are most effective, feasible, and appropriate to help build community and household economic and social resilience against disasters in a coordinated way.
- **NDM Law rules and regulations:** The rules and regulations that are currently being drafted could specifically outline how special vulnerable groups in Myanmar will be supported and protected against natural hazards, including through social transfers that provide a regular and predictable income to manage risks and shocks and help diversify their livelihoods.
- The forthcoming **Community Resilience Framework** will help guide future investment in community-based resilience programs and could consider including social protection instruments as part of the framework.
- **Behavioral change:** Better coordination and institutional arrangements can help facilitate the establishment of a prevention rather than response culture in DRM. However, this is possible only with political will. It also requires a shift of focus by government and DPs from donor assistance and public appeals for disaster relief to publicizing situations where disasters are avoided through early intervention. Donors play an important role in communicating that unacceptable impacts of natural disasters can be avoided.
- **Disaster risk financing and insurance:** An assessment of disaster-related contingent liabilities can guide the development of a comprehensive disaster risk financing and insurance strategy. International practice shows such a strategy can help governments address their financial and fiscal risks and guide strategic investments in prevention, preparation, and recovery from the impacts of disasters. The assessment and strategy should be complemented by capacity-building. In the medium to long term, the Ministry of Finance could look at ways to establish a system for risk layering, which uses different financing instruments for different-level interventions. A well-designed system helps the government meet urgent post-disaster funding needs without resorting to major budget reallocations or external borrowing. Myanmar can also further explore opportunities through ASEAN for greater cooperation at regional level on DRM, including on regional disaster risk pooling/financing and EWSs.
- **Institutional arrangements:** Clarification on communication and coordination structures between the different DRM committees and agencies is necessary to make sure the structure is effective. Overlap of responsibilities needs to be minimized and relevant committees need true authority to deliver on their mandate. In addition, with its presence on the ground and its responsibility for disaster response, it could be worthwhile to engage the Ministry of Home Affairs in more specific social protection discussions, particularly around the feasibility of identification and implementation arrangements of social transfer programs.
- **Ministerial cooperation:** Cooperation between relevant ministries/departments should be promoted not only at senior and policy level but also at implementation level. For example, social protection, poverty reduction, and disaster management are all trying to achieve the



common goal of reducing vulnerability. Tackling underlying vulnerabilities of households and communities requires a multi-disciplinary approach.

## 5.2 Program considerations

### Cash transfers (including public works)

- The use of **CTs can be increased as part of disaster response**, where appropriate, to increase the purchasing power of households and enable quicker recovery and reduced long-term economic impact of disasters on households and communities. This can be done in combination with in-kind transfers in early recovery and be scaled up as local markets are recovering.
- CTs delivered by government to date have been ad hoc. Establishing **predetermined processes** and procedures for how the government can provide cash assistance to disaster-affected households can accelerate assistance and increase transparency and accountability towards people and increase the social contract with the people of Myanmar.
- In the long term, Myanmar could consider integrating social protection and DRM through the design of a CT program that is a **flexible and scalable program** that can be activated by EWS triggers to reduce the economic impact of disasters on households. The program should be linked not only to the EWS but also to an identification or management information system to reach more people quickly when needed. Designs should have a plan in place on how it will be funded (e.g. through contingency funds or an RFM), how to scale up a program (in coverage, benefit level, and/or type of assistance), which departments will be involved, how communication will flow, and how payment systems would work. This approach can also enable harmonization of DP funding in times of disaster.
- **Public works** have proven to be an effective approach to risk mitigation and to helping rehabilitate community assets, while also contributing to household recovery. Existing DP-led C/FFW programs could increase their focus on DRR, particularly in hazard-prone areas. This should also include investigating the feasibility of constructing hazard-proof infrastructure through labor-intensive PWPs. An understanding of the hazard risk in the community will help define how public works activities can help reduce hazards and prevent disasters. Alternative support would be useful to assist labor-poor households.

### Community-driven development platforms

- **Community ownership** for disaster recovery should be encouraged through community planning and reconstruction. Communities know their own vulnerabilities and are best placed to identify solutions. Social protection can complement community efforts by increasing household economic recovery.

- Options could be explored to use **existing systems or programs** for social protection to assist in rapid disaster response. Two such programs could be the MSY or the NCDDP implemented by the DRD. Both these have systems in place to channel funding from national to local levels that could be an effective approach to accelerate sustainable recovery efforts after disasters.
- The **CDD approach** could also provide a platform for the incorporation of social protection components to build long-term resilience.<sup>22</sup> The opportunity to integrate, for example, a labor-intensive public works component with a DRM focus in existing CDD programs should be further explored.

### Insurance

**Weather index-based insurance:** Over 70 percent of the population is rural. (Subsidized) Agricultural insurance mechanisms could be explored to reduce disaster risk for subsistence farmers. This would, however, not assist the high proportion of landless households (between 25 and 50 percent of the population) and the most vulnerable households in Myanmar. Other risk-based insurance schemes could be considered as a response to risks identified in multi-hazard risk assessments.

### Delivery system considerations

- Investments in **delivery mechanisms**, such as beneficiary identification, geographical targeting, and payment systems, are crucial to advance the social protection agenda, let alone to enable effective linkages with DRM systems such as EWSs. Early responses, including through social protection instruments, can be triggered by an effective EWS, which will reduce avoidable losses (a dollar invested in early warning systems can save USD 2-14 of avoided losses (Rogers and Tsirkunov, 2010)).
- **Data collection:** Increased investments are needed for systematic data collection on vulnerability and poverty that can complement and be overlaid with geographic hazard risk and catastrophic risk modeling. Understanding the vulnerabilities and risks of different population groups will help maximize the DRM impact of social protection interventions.
- **Private sector partnerships:** The private sector could play an important role in DRM and social protection program implementation. For example, mobile phone technology can be used to send CT payments, as well as to send early warning or DRM education messages. The private sector can also play a key role in risk financing and insurance of public or household assets.

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22. See Note on 'Social protection delivery through community-driven development platforms' for more information on this.

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## Annex 1:

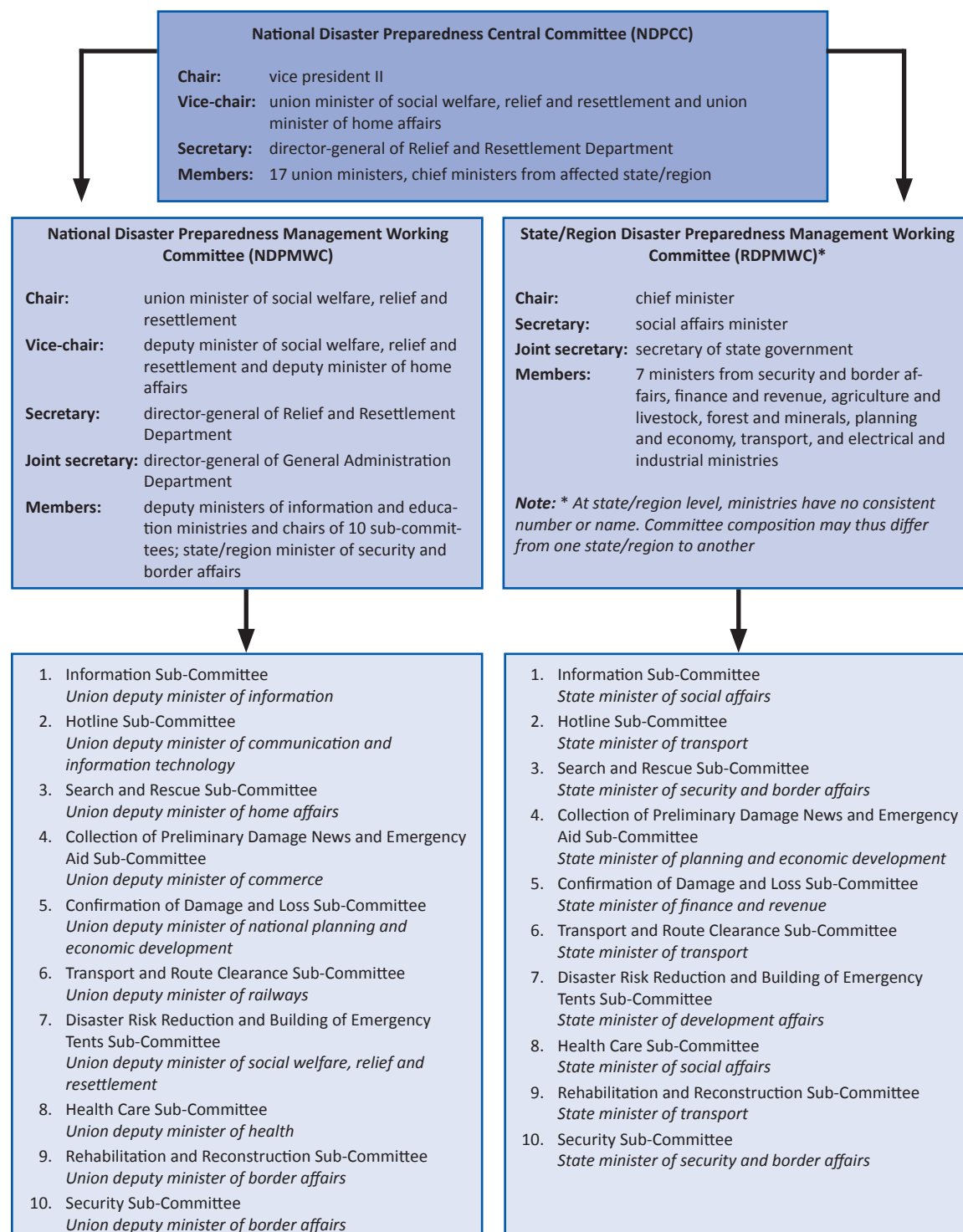
# Geographical vulnerability to extreme weather events in Myanmar

Extreme weather event	Vulnerable areas and regions/states
<b>Drought</b>	Central Dry Zone – Sagaing, Mandalay, and Magwe regions, particularly agricultural land in these areas
<b>Cyclones/strong winds</b>	Coastal regions – Rakhine, Ayeyarwaddy, and Yangon regions/states
<b>Intense rain</b>	Tanintharyi, Yangon, Rakhine, Ayeyarwaddy, and Mon states/regions. These areas have the longest exposure to the south-west monsoon flow. Lower Myanmar as well as north-western areas will also be affected
<b>Floods/storm surges</b>	All lowland and flat regions as well as rivers and associated valleys and basins. Areas in close proximity to the Ayeyarwaddy, Chindwin, Sittaung, and Thanlwin river systems and coastal areas are particularly at risk of storm surges, hydrological floods, flash floods, and river bank overflow associated with snow-melt
<b>Extreme high temperatures</b>	Relatively flat regions in the central Dry Zone, e.g. Mandalay and Magwe
<b>Sea level rises</b>	Coastal zones, especially areas interspersed with tidal waterways, e.g. the Ayeyarwaddy Delta. In certain areas, it is thought that low-lying coastal areas may face permanent inundation

Source: GoM (2012b).

## Annex 2:

# Management and coordination of disaster preparedness in Myanmar



Source: HCT (2014).

### Annex 3:

## International examples of social protection programs for DRM

Type of function	Function	Ethiopia PSNP	Philippines Panta-wid Pamilya	Pakistan CDCP	Indonesia PNPM Mandiri
<b>Policy development and financing</b>	Policy development, legal framework, and coordination	The Productive Safety Net Program provides cash and food transfers to prevent long-term consequences of short-term food inaccessibility; encourage households to engage in production and investment; and promote market development by increasing household purchasing power	Social assistance and human development program to break intergenerational poverty cycle, managed by Department of Social Welfare and Development in partnership with the Departments of Education, Health, and Interior and Local Government and in coordination with local government units	Floods emergency cash transfer program agreement between federal and provincial governments. This CT has been included as a model for early recovery in the National Disaster Response Action Plan approved by the prime minister	Legal basis for this Community Empowerment Poverty Alleviation Development Program: Act 22 of 1999 with Act 32 of 2004 on regional government; Government Regulations 72 and 73 of 2005 concerning village government; and Presidential Regulation 54 of 2005 on Poverty Alleviation Coordination Team
	Budgeting and financial management	Ministry of Finance and Economic Development oversees financial management and disburses funds to relevant ministries and regions	Operating budget is PHP15.4 billion in 2015	Federal and provincial governments	Funds flow direct from National Treasury Office to community accounts at sub-district level. Donor contributions are administered through PNPM Support Facility
	Sources of funding	Government budget with contributions from WFP, Canada, Netherlands, European Union, Ireland, Sweden, US, UK, Denmark, and World Bank	Government budget with some funding from ADB, World Bank, and Australia	Phase 1: co-financed by federal and provincial governments Phase 2: government with World Bank, UK Department for International Development (DFID), USAID, Italy	2011: USD1.5 billion, most of which funded by national and local governments, and some donor funding

Type of function	Function	Ethiopia PSNP	Philippines Panta-wid Pamilya	Pakistan CDCP	Indonesia PNPM Mandiri
Program design	Design and implementation standards, including social protection and DRM elements	Ministry of Agriculture's Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Sector managed program, along with regional governments. The Early Warning and Response Directorate is responsible for the EWS that informs the PSNP RFM and for the transport and monitoring of grain	Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) National Project Management Office (NPMO) and sub-national offices managed day-to-day operations. The management information system (MIS) was used to transfer UCTs to beneficiaries in affected households; the database was expanded and used to target other recovery activities such as CFW	Early recovery UCTs for flood-affected households with design and implementation determined in federal-provincial agreements	Projects are planned and determined by the community. PNPM systems were used to channel funds to disaster-affected communities, including for UCTs to the poorest and most affected households
	Roll-out and scale-up processes	Covers 8 regions, 319 districts, and more than 7.6 million beneficiaries. Fully scalable to meet transient food insecurity. Access to 20% additional resources as contingency fund to expand coverage or extend duration	The CCT operates in all 17 regions, covering 79 provinces, 143 cities, and 1,484 municipalities. The program covers 4.4 million households	Phase 1: cash disbursed to 1.69 million families within 6 months Phase 2: at least 1 million households	In 2009, PNPM was rolled out in 33 provinces, 465 districts, 6,408 sub-districts, and 80,000 villages
	Eligibility criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Geographical targeting: food-insecure, drought-prone districts</li> <li>Community-based targeting: households that have more than a 3-month annual food gap; households that have suddenly become vulnerable as a result of loss of assets</li> </ul>	Residents of poorest municipalities, based on 2003 small area estimates. Households that live at or below the provincial poverty line; that have children 0-18 and/or have pregnant women at the time of assessment; that agree to meet the conditions	Households with flood damaged houses plus disabled and female-headed households	Geographical targeting of districts with high poverty; low level of basic services and fiscal capacity; and disadvantaged villages



Type of function	Function	Ethiopia PSNP	Philippines Panta-wid Pamilya	Pakistan CDCP	Indonesia PNPM Mandiri
Delivery sub-systems	Beneficiary identification	Geographical and community-based targeting facilitated by Community Food Security Task Force (CFSTF)	Beneficiaries targeted through the NHTS-PR	Phase 1: geographical targeted to affected areas and using biometric verification of identity Phase 2: household identification using housing damage indicator and through the national poverty database to exclude the well off	Typically no individual households targeted. When PNPM systems were used for UCTs after disasters, the poorest and most disaster-affected households were targeted through community targeting processes
	Enrolment and compliance (for CCTs)	Annual targeting before start of program and retargeting after 3 months	Conditions are attendance of health check-ups and assisted birth for pregnant women and children aged 0-5; deworming of children 6-14; 85% school attendance; and attendance of family development sessions	Enrolled using computerized national identity card with biometric identification at Watan Card Facilitation Centers (WCFCs)	N/A
	Asset creation (for PWP)	Public works are planned using participatory watershed planning approach and follow environmental and social guidelines	N/A	N/A	Community social mapping and participatory planning with support from PNPM facilitators
	Payments and transactions	Monthly food and/or cash, up to 6 months/year (9 months in pastoral areas) OR unconditional cash/food for labor-poor households. Median payments to households are around USD 200 per household over 5 years (about 10-40% of annual basic food needs). Payments are made through cashiers in key locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health grant: PHP 500 household/month</li> <li>Education grant: PHP 300 child/month for 10 months (maximum 3 children per household are covered)</li> <li>Payments are made through the Land Bank or Glob G-Cash remittance transactions and rural banks</li> </ul>	3x PKR 20,000 (approximately USD 123) 3 months apart through debit Watan card after biometric verification. The debit card can be used at point of sales withdrawal machines at the WCFC and at any ATM	Funds flow from the collective sub-district accounts to village committees for project implementation. The money is sent in tranches of 40-40-20%. An activity financial management team, consisting of village residents, handles the collective account. Disbursement at village level requires sign-off by government officials, minimum 4 signatories on bank accounts

Type of function	Function	Ethiopia PSNP	Philippines Panta-wid Pamilya	Pakistan CDCP	Indonesia PNPM Mandiri
	Grievance and redress mechanisms (GRMs)	Independent ward appeal committees manage grievances and they are brought to the ward council if necessary or elevated higher	Complaint reporting mechanisms include text hot line using the DSWD SMS platform, email, and social media. The GRM is part of the MIS and captures, resolves, and analyzes grievances from beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries	Appeals can be registered at the WCFC by presenting a valid computerized national ID card. Recommendations are provided by the district administration for final approval by provincial level. Changes are then made in the MIS	Complaints are handled by the PNPM facilitator and elevated to PNPM Complaints Handling Units from sub-district government up, managed by PNPM Oversight Committee
	Management information systems (MISs)	There is no comprehensive MIS in place yet. PSNP also has district-level computerized payroll systems for cash/food distributions	A comprehensive MIS is managed by NPMO and includes household information, registration, updates, compliance verification system, payments, and GRM	National Poverty Registry managed by National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA)	PNPM Oversight Committee, Coordinating Ministry for Social Affairs, manages the MIS
	Monitoring	Monitoring conducted and recorded manually through single system for the Food Security Program (includes PSNP). An information center within the Food Security Coordination Directorate collects real-time data from sample districts on status of transfers and food prices	Monitoring and evaluation consists of regular supervision by DSWD and the World Bank and biannual spot checks by a third-party	MIS managed by NADRA will provide targeting, enrolment, payment, grievance redress, and funds flow information. Quarterly donor supervision missions; third party spot checks and audits	Full village meetings to account for funds used and physical progress. Financial audits conducted by the Financial and Development Supervisory Agency and the Regional Supervisory Agency. Also government and independent monitoring
	Evaluation	Regional household surveys and community-level impact evaluations conducted every two years, in addition to independent reviews, surveys and evaluations	Quantitative Impact Evaluation by DSWD and qualitative studies	Impact evaluation commissioned by donors	Independent evaluations; PNPM Support Facility
	Communication, outreach, and/or community mobilization	The CFSTF manages community mobilization for planning exercises. Program information is posted across the community	Municipal focal points manage communications and outreach. Each group of beneficiaries selects a parent leader as representative to communicate to the focal point	By NADRA through SMS, website, WCFCs, district administration, media, local authorities, and NGOs/ community-based organizations	PNPM facilitators at village level, village notice boards

**Sources:** Ethiopia – ILO (n.d.), World Bank and GFDRR (2013); Philippines – <http://pantawid.dswd.gov.ph/>; Pakistan – <http://cdcp.nadra.gov.pk/introduction.jsp>; Indonesia – ADB (n.d.), PNPM (n.d.), Sumarto (2015), Villar (2013).



*'Social protection for disaster risk management: Opportunities for Myanmar' is the sixth note in the series Building Resilience, Equity and Opportunity in Myanmar: the Role of Social Protection. All notes are available at [www.worldbank.org/myanmar](http://www.worldbank.org/myanmar).*

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7. Strengthening social security provision in Myanmar
8. Institutional landscape for implementation and financing of social protection programs: Towards effective service delivery in Myanmar
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