

**Summary Note: Dialogue Between CSOs in Kachin State and The World Bank Group**  
**19 - 20 August 2016**  
**Myitkyina, Kachin State**

Present

- 50 representatives from member organizations of Kachin State Civil Society Network (KSCN) and some community leaders from Mogaung township.
- World Bank Group (WBG) Country Manager and representatives of the National Community Driven Development Project (CDD) and Energy teams.

Overview

At the request of CSOs in Kachin State, WBG supported a two-day workshop with KSCN and representatives of WBG, particularly from the CDD project which will begin operating in Mogaung Township in Kachin State in late 2016. The objective of the workshop was for WBG to share information about projects in Kachin State, especially CDD, and to learn from Kachin CSOs local knowledge and receive their feedback and recommendations.

*19<sup>th</sup> August:* WBG Country Manager introduced WBG and its [work in Myanmar](#), followed by a presentation on the design and implementation of the [CDD project](#). Questions were fielded throughout and an extensive Q&A followed. The WBG team then left CSOs to discuss in private among themselves and with a national NGO providing technical assistance to CDD in other areas of Myanmar.

*20<sup>th</sup> August:* CSOs spent the morning discussing the CDD project and developing recommendations for WBG. WBG representatives joined in the afternoon to answer further questions and respond to CSOs feedback and recommendations. WBG also briefly presented their work in the [Energy](#), [Education](#) and [Health](#) sectors and responded to questions. In conclusion WBG thanked KSCN for their initiative in coordinating the workshop and both WBG and KSCN representatives committed to future dialogue and consultation.

Recommendations to WBG from KSCN

1. At every level of the project implementation process WBG must ensure adequate time for effective participation and consultation of CSOs. E.g. announcement for EOI Township Technical Assistance was relatively short.
2. In order to increase the participation of the general public, information sharing should be conducted through a variety of methods. When WBG are organizing meetings it is not enough for CSOs to be invited through government or website. There needs to be a direct invitation to CSOs by email, telephone or in person. This can be done via KSCN in Kachin State.
3. It is difficult for local CSOs to incur the initial cost of the project implementation out of their own fund. Such requirements put financial constraints on local CSOs to apply for the CDD Township Technical Assistance (TTA). Therefore, KSCN strongly encourage WBG to seek alternative mean for local CSOs to be able to apply for TTA.
4. The township selection system looks fair but it can be unfair if there are more people from some area who can choose their own township. Township selection process must not solely rely on voting rather the selection process must take other facts; poverty, education, health, etc. into consideration.
5. The CDD block grant is based on population but it would be more effective if focused on individual village needs. E.g. school renovation, can be more expensive than the total grant amount so they need more funds.

6. Technical skills and training should be provided for grievance committee members and third party observers of the CDD project.
7. Operation and maintenance training for infrastructure is also needed for communities.
8. DRD, WBG and CSOs should have quarterly update and feedback meetings in order to ensure checks and balances are in place.
9. CSO coordination meetings should not only be held for CDD but also for all other WBG projects. KSCN can coordinate for meetings between CSOs and WBG's other project.

WBG gratefully acknowledged the recommendations, responded to some in the Q&A (*see annex 1*) and agreed to share them with DRD for further discussion. WBG emphasized that the CDD project is planned to adapt as it evolves and learn from implementation, year on year. For example, the size of the block grant was increased after the first year after the issue was raised by communities.

### **Annex 1 - Key Questions/Comments Raised by CSOs and WBG Responses**

*Questions (Q) or Comments are from CSO representatives, Answers (A) are from WBG representatives.*

#### ***Township Selection Process***

Q: Did the process include the views of people from remote areas? How were they represented?

A: The Department for Rural Development (DRD) reached out to representatives from across the state. However, for those unable to attend the selection process the choice of townships includes five objective criteria by which each township is ranked by all participants: 1. Poverty level, 2. Lack of other projects and external funding 3. Willingness of authorities in the area 4. A minimum level of peace and stability 5. A minimum level of access. This is compared relatively across the state.

Comment: Recommend that an equal amount of representatives from each township are present at the meeting. Otherwise some areas have an advantage.

A: This makes sense and we will share the suggestion with DRD, though it should be balanced by judgment against objective criteria.

Q: I am from Naga area, it is a SAZ, can we work directly with WBG or should we work through Sagaing government or local level DRD? Naga are always excluded; does WB support include Naga? What is selection criteria for areas?

A: WB supports inclusion which means our programs focus on universal access, no one should be left behind. We work with union government and within the administrative structure of the country but we make sure that the services we are supporting go to people where they are. So for you, living in Naga, the authorities in your local areas are the best people to deal with. As WB we also really support fiscal decentralization and want to improve allocation of funding at local level and that formula for transfer reflects needs, especially poverty. Unfortunately at the moment we do not have a specific plan to expand the NCDDP to Naga, however, Naga included in the Sagaing township selection process and the SAZ administrator from Naga was invited to the township selection meeting and had discussions with the Union level DRD.

#### ***Nature of WBG Loan to Government***

Q: Do other communities pay for the communities who receive the loan?

A: No, communities pay nothing, only the government pays back the loan over a long period of time (Government use tax money collected from the community or community's resources).

Q: Are the World Bank staff salary and expense taken from the loan?

A: No, World Bank staff are paid directly by the World Bank's own budget, not from the loan.

### ***Focus on Rural Poverty***

Q: Within urban areas, some areas are poor, is there a World Bank plan for poor in urban areas?

A: CDD project is run by the DRD and DRD's mandate is only for rural areas. We understand that some urban areas are very poor but it is not covered by DRD, it should be included in the overall township development plan.

### ***Building Local Capacity***

Q: Local people have limited capacity for technical position, does the project help to increase their capacity?

A: Staff are hired locally which provides good job opportunities. For more technical positions, if limited in the township, some staff may come from other townships. The NCDDP provides training modules for township staff and committee members including fiduciary, facilitation skills, technical skills based on their role in the project. We have seen locally hired staff moving on to take more responsible positions.

Comment: In conflict affected areas, commercial activities often do not benefit local people, with no use of local labor and purchases from local economy (including food). In the case of logging companies, the only result is deforestation. In order to avoid this, the project should encourage the local community to work and promote their capacity. World Bank brings the funds for local development and the people should receive jobs opportunities as well as funds. Suggest that income should be distributed equally as well. Instead of bringing expertise from other regions, opportunities should be provided to local people.

A: Yes, the project provides jobs for local people according to experience and most of the projects are implemented by local people. Only if local people cannot do technical work is it outsourced, and decision whether to do so is done by the community.

### ***Role of CSOs***

Q: What is the involvement of CSOs in the project?

A: CSOs are involved in township selection process and Multi Stakeholder Reviews and in some areas they help guide program communications with communities. There are more possibilities so if you have other ideas please share them.

### ***Grievance Mechanism***

Q: What are the most common grievances?

A: Over 2,000 grievances were received through different channels such as letters, phone calls, email and social media. Many said thank you or asked clarifying questions. When there is something serious like a suggestion that an official might be corrupt there is a grievance commission which investigates.

### ***CDD in Other Countries***

Q: In Myanmar the project is focused on infrastructure, what is the focus in other countries?

A: The World Bank does a variety of different projects but CDD is the most community focused. In terms of other options for CDD, alongside infrastructure there are a variety of different options. For example, in Laos CDD works on livelihoods and nutrition issues and in the Philippines in conflict areas they have included psychosocial support within the project. The projects develop over time.

### ***Selection of Township Technical Assistance (TTA) Provider***

Q: When the project asks for tender for TTA they only allow 14 days to submit the proposal – is this correct?

A: No, the 14 days is for expressions of interest only, not the whole proposal. The whole proposal takes longer.

Q: What are the quality based selection criteria for TTA provider?

A: The two major criteria are: 1. Past experience in similar community development in Myanmar 2. Budget size of relevant assignment contracts over the past five years.

Q: The call for expression of interest in TTA was advertised in the newspaper with very little time, can the call for Mogaung Township be extended?

A: We really wanted local partners to be working as TTA and we sent the information to several local organizations and asked this to be shared widely. In the end none applied and the deadline has passed. However, DRD is interested in finding other ways to work together to ensure the project can draw on the knowledge and advice of Kachin CSOs and will work with KSCN on this.

Q: Can local CSOs be involved in the selection process of TTA (for instance, Mogaung based CSOs taking part in TTA selection board)?

A: DRD carries out procurement for goods and services for the CDD project using WBG procurement guidelines which include issues like conflict of interest. This means that it may be challenging for organizations which could have interest in or connection with organizations applying to provide assistance to be involved in process. The [procurement guidelines](#) are a public document available on the WBG website.

### ***Relevance to Kachin Situation***

Q: Is the project in Mogaung Township relevant with current situation in Kachin state?

A: It is up to the communities to decide what they want to do so this normally makes it relevant to each community. For the project selection meeting, community members discuss and decide together, drawing also on separate discussions by the women's and men's groups.

### ***Risk Assessment***

Q: For CSOs working in conflict affected areas there are many challenges, can the World Bank share their experience in conflict areas?

A: DRD and the Bank would welcome the opportunity to continue meeting with Kachin CSOs to share experiences on working in conflict-affected areas. Maybe this could be done once implementation at the community level begins in Kachin?

### ***Updating Operations Manual***

Q: What is the process for updating the Operations Manual?

A: Each year after the Multi-Stakeholder Review (MSR) the Operations Manual is updated. DRD does this every year, but only once per year so as not to confuse people. There is also a Union Technical Assistance (TA) team with national and international specialists which support this.

### ***Different Roles of WBG and DRD***

Q: What are the different roles of WBG and DRD? How are they coordinated?

A: The World Bank provides both financial and technical support. In the CDD project we are closely involved and talk to DRD almost every day on all sorts of issues, e.g. environmental and social safeguards, financial, implementation. However, in some areas such as procurement we cannot intervene because of potential conflicts of interest since we review at the final process.

### ***Role of Union Level Technical Assistance (TA)***

Q: What is the role of union level TA? Is it possible that union TA can provide trainings to township DRD and communities? What service do they provide?

A: At the union level DRD has TA support on monitoring & evaluation, financial management, grievance handling, training and procurement. Their work is quite different to the township level.

The training expert for example works with the DRD training team to design and implement a national training curriculum that ensures consistent quality and skills of project staff across all NCDDP townships.

### ***Education Program***

Q: There is also a need for support in higher education – is this available?

A: There is much more which needs to be done. Vocational training and higher education are also needed and we would like to support the full spectrum of needs but resources are limited and sometimes other partners and the Myanmar government are already doing these things. As additional financing is available we will do new things – such as our latest step on teacher mentoring. The WBG [Country Partnership Framework](#) is flexible so we will check midway that our strategy is still the right response. We would be happy to discuss with the new administration about additional support in the education sector but this needs to be demand driven from the Myanmar government.

Comment: WBG education team previously came and explained their support of 60 million USD through government but school headmasters and committees do not know about this. This needs to be shared and communicated in a transparent way.

A: We will ask our education colleagues get in touch and to share with all of you where the program is implemented and which schools have been targeted and to share about the complaint handling mechanism. The resources are handled directly by the school and teachers and committees. The new components of the program will be launched in late 2016 with public township level workshops. Our teams travel across the country and check that transfers are being handled correctly. Biannual [implementation status reports](#) are on WBG website with details including challenges.

### ***Energy Program***

Q: How can we electrify urban areas without electricity?

A: Electricity is provided at the household level. Government provides poles and lines and transformers but then households must pay to connect houses and install a meter box. The average cost is 100,000-200,000 kyat per household which some cannot afford. Therefore, we are in the planning stage for how we can support poorer households. These issues need to be discussed with the new administration. WBG role is to respond to government request. The people's role is to request to the government. The role of CSOs is to be in touch with communities and give voice to their issues.

Q: There is an unequal tariff rate for electricity across the country. In Kachin State, people pay more than some other areas? Why is this?

A: In Kachin State, people pay around 120 kyat per unit. In some other areas of the country it is 300 or 400 per unit, for example in Tanintharyi it is around 300. This is different if it is provided by private companies using generators. The government rate is 35 kyat per unit which is subsidized by 22 kyat per unit. This size of this subsidy is not sustainable for the government if it is to provide universal coverage. So far 70% of the country is not electrified. WBG has supported the electric power department to hire an expert to assess how to manage pricing to support poor people in sustainable way. Government will receive the report next year and assess options.

Q: What about other energy options, what about coal, hydro, nuclear?

A: In our view, Myanmar has the resources to provide its own energy, especially by gas and hydro and also solar. Other countries have other resources. Myanmar does not have good quality coal or nuclear raw material so if it chooses these options it would have to import required inputs. Instead of that path, Myanmar can use its own resources. With hydro and solar energy the environmental and social impact must be considered. How it impacts on people and whether people are supportive

of this method is critical to consider– and if there is support then there should be feasibility studies and so on. The best way is the one with least social and environmental impact.

FAQs for CDD project in Myanmar are available [here](#).