ToGETHER!

Towards Greater Effectiveness and Timeliness in Humanitarian Emergency Response

TIME TO PUT YOURSELF IN OUR SHOES

THE STATE OF LOCALISATION IN MYANMAR

THE STATE OF LOCALISATION SERIES NO. 7

AUTHORS

Sai Syn Hwan, Smruti Patel, Koenraad van Brabant

The research was conducted by Sai Syn Hwam with Smruti Patel and Koenraad van Brabant of the Global Mentoring Initiative (GMI) and written by Koenraad van Brabant.

Sai Syn Hwam's has worked as Regional Coordinator for the Humanitarian Assistance and Resilience Program Facility (HARP-F), UNHCR, and different international NGOs. He is a graduate from the UN University for Peace, and the MIT obtaining a double Master's degree of Peace and Conflict studies.

Koenraad van Brabant is the Co-Director of the Global Mentoring Initiative (GMI), a Swiss-based consultancy. GMI has authored several analyses on localisation and developed the Seven Dimensions Framework for the START Network.

This publication is an edited and shortened version of the research report.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researchers are deeply grateful to each of the individuals who dedicated time and shared their observations, insights, and constructive ideas during demanding times and not always ideal conversation conditions.

TIME TO PUT YOURSELF IN OUR SHOES

THE STATE OF LOCALISATION IN MYANMAR

THE STATE OF LOCALISATION SERIES NO.7

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research was commissioned by the ToGETHER consortium of four German humanitarian NGOs (Caritas Germany, Deutsche Welthungerhilfe, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe and Malteser International). It is part of a series of eight country studies and a comparative analysis with other reports on Bangladesh, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Somalia. The analysis aims at informing the programme's efforts to advance localisation in each country. Furthermore, it contributes to a wider translation into practice of the commitments that international agencies have made to support and reinforce rather than replace national and local crisis responders in their countries.

This research draws on a literature review and interviews with 33 people, coming from a good mix of international and Myanmar agencies. It was undertaken in the midst of a growing concern over COVID-19 infections in Myanmar. For preventative reasons, all interactions therefore took place online. Initially planned kick-off, feedback and validation workshops were not held. While theoretically possible, in practice this requires a strong convening capacity, the ability to get a diverse set of people to come together at the same time, and good internet access for all. These factors were not all in place.

The report first explores the context, with particular attention to the role of the federal government and the legal-political space for civil society. It then maps what could be identified as important localisation-relevant initiatives and localisation conversations. Subsequently, more details are provided on the four dimensions of localisation which were investigated in particular – quality of relationship, finances, capacities, and coordination. Additionally, the cross-cutting issue of gender and localisation is discussed.

Troubled political situation

At the time of this research, Myanmar presented a complex situation. The political space had opened significantly over the past decade, but the influence of the military remained strong. Furthermore, there was only a fragile ceasefire with several armed opposition groups, not peace agreements, and active fighting in some parts of the country. Violent ethnic conflicts are persistent.

Since the military coup in February 2021, the civil society situation has massively deteriorated. Protests against the seizure of power were brutally suppressed. It is difficult to assess which of the research results described in this report are still valid, especially with regard to the space for civil society as a whole.

Well-developed government structures for responding to natural disasters

There is some substantive government policy and coordination capacity for responding to natural disasters, at least in the 'centre' of the country. Public sector capacities to deliver goods and services in a response remain limited, however. National structures for disaster management and relief are highly centralised. The National Disaster Management Committee (NDMC) operates several working committees. At the subnational level Regional or State Disaster Management Bodies are installed.

In future, ASEAN countries are likely to become more important partners for the Government, next to the UN (Humanitarian Country Team (HCT), established in 2010). Already now, the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA-Centre) plays an important role.

Diverse civil society, no overarching Myanmar CSO platform

Myanmar civil society is diverse, with many local associations and organisations. In 2018, over 5000 Myanmar CSOs and 183 INGOs were registered with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) at national ('union') level. In addition, the MoHA reported almost 3000 additional CSOs registered at state or regional level. CSOs come together in different networks, though there are variations in their geographical spread or inclusion. There is no overarching Myanmar CSO platform, comparable to the one for INGOs.

Overall, CSOs are very active, engaged and self-confident, even if resources are limited. For the past decade, there has been quite some legal-administrative space to operate, although ambiguities about the obligation to be registered or not can create complications. Various laws also exist that can be used to clamp down on civil society organisations and activists. After the military coup of 2021, the situation has certainly deteriorated. A thorough assessment is not yet possible.

Inequality between Myanmar organisations possible risk for localisation process

The past decade has seen significant international support for Myanmar civil society, driven by the view that broad-based engagement of Myanmar people, aware of their rights, history and political systems, will contribute to democratisation, inclusion and sustainable peace. Tragically, these hopes have been crushed at least for the time being.

Attention in the localisation process is required for centre-periphery dynamics within networks and the inequality between some well-established, bigger and obviously capable Myanmar organisations, and a large number of medium-sized and smaller ones, with variable levels of experience. There is a risk that unevenly spread localisation support increases inequality and power dynamics among Myanmar organisations. Myanmar CSOs operating only in their own State or Region may feel that big national CSOs unduly intrude on their space.

Decent progress for localisation agenda

Some Myanmar CSO actors were present at the World Humanitarian Summit and have been advocating for localisation for several years. The understanding of the issue across the country is still very variable and absent among many local organisations.

This inquiry reveals that, together with a fair number of impressive examples of 'equitable partnership', there are still many instances of unequal collaborations, with critiques ranging from the 'partners selection' process and unhelpful competition for partners, to disrespectful behaviour.

Unusually favorable fund accessibility, high dependancy on foreign aid

Compared to other countries, Myanmar has quite a number of pooled funds, several of which seek to provide financing to Myanmar CSOs, directly or indirectly. Quite unusual, compared to other countries, is the existence of a few Myanmar non-governmental organisations acting as fund-managers. The financial dependence of Myanmar organisations on international aid is very high, however, creates an existential vulnerability".

Significant capacity shortcomings, different approach to capacity building necessary

The Asian Disaster Preparedness Center published the Myanmar Baseline Assessment Country Report in 2018 which drew on an extensive survey that mainly focused on key local actors in emergency response in Myanmar, including government organisations, local non-government organisations and private sector entities. The report identified several areas of concern and developed five core recommendations, among them training on humanitarian

coordination for stakeholders, the establishment of a national to local comprehensive emergency response database, and enhancement of capacity building for emergency response of all stakeholders.

While capacity building is also according to AHA-Centre a vital issue to advance localisation, this inquiry shows similar problems with capacity support as in other countries. Fragmented, repetitive, sometimes even irrelevant capacity assessments and capacity support initiatives which do not add up to sustained organisational development occur in Myanmar as elsewhere. Training individuals does not automatically translate into organisational strengthening. Organisational development happens through learning in theory but also in practice, and therefore works better with a 'mentoring' rather than a 'training workshop' (only) approach. Furthermore, capacity development should not be separated from the issue of access to finance. Notably, some Myanmar organisations are resource centres for organisational support which in the medium-term is more cost effective than ongoing fragmented efforts by international agencies, and Myanmar CSOs value peer learning opportunities. Puang Ku is such a Myanmar civil society support organisation which provides capacity building to Myanmar CSOs.

Efforts to improve coordination needed

As mentioned above, the ADPC Country Report identified a generally low level of coordination among stakeholders and a need for augmentation of knowledge sharing. With respect to localisation, one has to note the still limited presence of Myanmar CSOs in UN coordination structures, keeping in mind that presence does not automatically mean meaningful participation. The objective of having more Myanmar CSOs participate in coordination mechanisms needs to be reviewed including their perspective: there may be problems of language and familiarity with the acronyms and internal referencing of the international relief sector. But it also requires valuable staff time, that under-resourced organisations may not have to spare. If Myanmar organisations get little benefit from participation, they have no convincing reason to be there. This inquiry also highlights issues of trust among Myanmar participants in these meetings. For women from women-focused organisations, men dominating the meetings may be an additional disincentive.

Gender-related CSOs offer localisation potentials

There are various women leaders in Myanmar civil society, and various women-focused organisations and networks. Smaller women-focused CSOs may still struggle to access funding and they too need to see value for them in attending 'coordination' meetings, before they commit scarce resources to them. The Gender Equality Network is a platform that can significantly advance localisation, if Myanmar organisations are allowed to develop their own agendas, priorities and trajectories to advance to a society with gender equality. Caution must be exercised that international priority agendas, such as gender-based violence, however valid, are not imposed.

Encouraging localisation prospects

As of 2020, the situation in Myanmar shows encouraging prospects for the further advancement of localisation. Reasonable government structures for disaster response, a fairly enabling legal framework for civil society, an unusual degree of accessibility of funds for national and local CSOs, and some notable examples of good practice contribute to a favourable environment for further localisation initiatives.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS

AA	Arakan Army
AADMER	ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response
ADPC	Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre
AMD	Agricultural Mechanization Department
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BRIDGE	Bridging Rural Integrated Development and Grassroots Empowerment
CAFOD	Catholic Agency for Overseas Development
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CCDP	Childhood Care Development Planning
CRS	Corporate Social Responsibility
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
C4C	Charter for Change
DDM	Department of Disaster Management
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DFID	Department of International Development
DoF	Department of Fishery
DoH	Department of Health
DoI	Department of Irrigation
ECHO	European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations
EU	European Union
FPNCC	Federal Political Negotiation and Consultative Committee
GAD	General Administration Department
GEN	Gender Equality Network
GMI	Global Mentoring Initiative
GoM	Government of Myanmar
HARP-F	The Humanitarian Assistance and Resilience Program Facility
HST-NSS	Humanitarian Strategy Team - Northern Shan State
HNF	Htoi Ninghkawng Foundation
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
ICNL	International Centre for Not-for-profit Law
ICR	Indirect Cost Recovery
ICRC	International Committee of Red Cross
ICT	Information and communication technologies
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Agencies

JST	Joint Strategy Team
KIA	Kachin Independence Army
KIO	Kachin Independence Organisation
KNU/KNA	Karen National Union/Army
KNNC	Karenni National College
KBC	Kachin Baptist Convention
KMSS	Karuma Mission Social Solidarity
KWAT	Kachin Women's Association Thailand
LBVD	Livelihoods Breeding and Veterinary Department
LIFT	Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund
LRC	Local Resources Center
LP2	Localization and Partnership Platform
MERLIN	Medical Emergency Relief International
METTA	Metta Development Foundation
MFT	Moving Forward Together
MHF	Myanmar Humanitarian Fund
MIMU	Myanmar Information Management Unit
MNDAA	Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army
MoHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme for Action
NCA	Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement
NDMC	National Disaster Management Committee
NEAR	Network for Empowered Aid Response
NFI	Non-Food Item
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NNGO	National Non-Governmental Organisation
NSSBC	Northern Shan State Baptist Convention
OCA	Operation Centre Amsterdam
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PACE	People's Alliance for Credible Elections
PIANGO	Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
RRD	Relief and Resettlement Department
SCI	Save the Children International
SCG	Sector Coordination Groups
SNGOS	Sub National Non-Governmental Organisation
SSA	Shan State Army
SSKNN	Shan State Kachin National Network
ToGETHER	Towards Greater Effectiveness and Timeliness in Humanitarian Emergency Response

TNLA	Ta-ang National Liberation Army
TYN	Tai Youth Network
TF	Tear Fund
TNF	The Nippon Foundation
TSYU	Ta-ang student and Youth Union
TYO	Tai Youth Organisation
UN	United Nations
UWSA	United Wa State Army
UNFC	United Nationalities Federal Council
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAI	United States Agency for International Development
WNO	Wa National Organisation
WON	Women's Organisation Network
WPHF	Women's Peace & Humanitarian Fund
WPN	Wunpawng Ninghtoi
WPS	Women Peace and Security

1 THE RESEARCH STUDY

1.1 PURPOSE AND KEY QUESTIONS

This research was commissioned by the ToGETHER (Towards Greater Effectiveness and Timeliness in Humanitarian Emergency Response) consortium of four German humanitarian NGOs (Caritas Germany, Deutsche Welthungerhilfe, Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe, and Malteser International). In addition to Myanmar, ToGETHER also runs in Bangladesh, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Somalia. The analysis aims at informing the programme's efforts to advance localisation in each country. Furthermore, it contributes to a wider translation into practice of the commitments that international agencies have made to support and reinforce rather than replace national and local crisis responders in their countries.

The guiding questions for all countries were:

- Which understandings of localisation of humanitarian aid exist among humanitarian actors?
- Which localisation initiatives and programs took place or are taking place in the respective country? Which initiatives and programs provide good practice?
- Where are in-country actors making good progress and what are the most significant challenges in the key areas of the localisation process - namely partnerships, financing, capacity development, coordination and complementarity, and gender?
- What institutional, policy and political dynamics influence these developments?
- What are the most urgent strategic issues and challenges that need to be addressed to realise substantive, transformative change?

1.2 OPPORTUNITY AND CHALLENGES

The questions invite a broad canvas or system perspective on the state of localisation. This provides an opportunity as it takes the localisation conversation beyond the bilateral relationships of an international relief actor and its partner(s). It also considers contextual constraining and enabling factors. Most global research on localisation since the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit has tended to focus on one single aspect (e.g. funding, coordination, gender and localisation, risk management, governmental policy towards international operational presence) (Van Brabant 2020a). There is, to the researchers' knowledge, no significant precedent for a contextual system analysis.

The question where in-country actors are making good progress and where there are significant challenges is hard to answer, when there are hundreds of multilaterals, bilateral, national and local governmental and non-governmental actors. All the more so if their multitude of institutional, policy and political dynamics is to be examined as well. Further, there can be significant contextual differences between sub-national contexts within a country. This is particularly pronounced in Myanmar. This inquiry speaks about an overall situation but has paid some attention to central Myanmar, Rakhine, Kachin, Kayin and to a lesser degree Northern Shan State.

1.3 INTERPRETIVE FRAMEWORKS AND METHODS

A FRAMEWORK

The research looks at localisation as a multi-dimensional issue. In 2017, GMI developed the Seven Dimensions framework of localisation for the Start Network, which emerged from extensive conversations with local and national actors in different countries (Patel & Van Brabant 2017). The framework has been tested and is used, sometimes with adaptations, by several other agencies, networks, or research groups.

RELATIONSHIP QUALITY	*PARTICIPATION REVOLUTION*	*FUNDING & FINANCING*	*CAPACITY*	*COORDINATION MECHANISMS*	*POLICIES AND STANDARDS*	*VISIBILITY AND CREDIT SHARING*
• respectful and equitable • reciprocal transparency and accountability	• deeper participation of at-risk & affected populations	• better quality • greater quantity	• sustainable organisations and collaborative capacities • stop undermining capacities	• national actors greater presence and influence	• national actors can contribute to and influence global and national policy and standards-development, and their application in their contexts	• roles, results and innovations by national actors are given credit and communicated about by international actors

Diagram 1. Seven Dimensions framework of localization

The guiding questions, for this and the other country assessments, focused on four of the seven dimensions: quality of relationship, finance, capacity, coordination, and one cross-cutting issue, gender and localisation.

B METHODS

This report draws on a document review and interviews with key informants. The acquired information is analysed using the Seven Dimensions framework as described above.

Document review: The inquiry started with a literature review. 'Localisation' as a search word may yield some documents from after the World Humanitarian Summit and its Grand Bargain outcome document. But the dimensions of partnership, capacity support for national and local actors, and the latter's access to finance or meaningful participation in coordination structures, have a longer history. The same is true for the support for women's rights and women-focused national and local organisations. That can quickly lead to a substantive amount of literature, including older documents.

Key informant interviews: The whole research, including the country-level inquiry, took place during the global COVID-19 pandemic in the summer of 2020. Even where government regulations did not impose a total lockdown, duty-of-care considerations led to the decision to conduct the inquiry largely or exclusively via online conversations. Originally planned kick-off, feedback and validation workshops were not organised. While theoretically possible online, this assumes a convening power of the national researcher, good quality Internet access of all participants, and the availability of the latter at the same time. One or more of these factors were often absent.

In addition, with increasing violence in central Rakhine and on the border of Chin State and Rakhine, the conditions were not deemed appropriate then to travel to these areas for this sort of inquiry. Not all interlocutors approached for an online interview were available or

responsive. Several international and national aid workers were preoccupied with adaptive management. National researchers, if not well-known names, can also experience they get no response to their requests for an interview, from internationals but also from fellow-citizens in senior positions. Notwithstanding, 33 interviews were conducted, with colleagues from four donors/pooled funds, 10 INGOs, the coordinator of the INGO forum and colleagues from 15 Myanmar organisations.

Structure of the report: In line with the above interpretive framework, the report first explores the context, with particular attention to the role of the federal government and the legal-political space for civil society. It then maps what could be identified as important localisation-relevant initiatives and localisation-conversations. Subsequently, more details are provided on the four dimensions investigated in particular, and on the cross-cutting issue of gender and localisation. The report concludes with a summary of the observations made.

THE CONTEXT

2.1 VULNERABILITIES TO CRISES WITH HUMANITARIAN CONSEQUENCES

Myanmar is prone to various forms of natural disaster, notably cyclones, flooding, and landslides, but also earthquakes, tsunamis and forest fires. The major natural disaster crises in the past 15 years have been Cyclone Nargis in May 2008 and extensive riverine flooding in 2015. Since 2020, as in many other countries affected by COVID-19, pandemics now need to be added. Myanmar is also strongly affected by climate change. A 'Hazard Profile of Myanmar' was created in 2009. Another relevant resource can be the 2018 'Vulnerability in Myanmar' study (HARP-F & MIMU 2018).

Since the Second World War, Myanmar has suffered from continuous violence, notably with ethnic minorities in the various peripheries (see e.g. Thant 2008 for a deeper history) with forms of structural violence also affecting the Bamar during decades of military rule. Natural disasters also take place in violence-affected areas, such as flooding in Kachin and in Southeast Myanmar in 2019 or Cyclone Mora in Rakhine in 2017.

Dynamics of internationalisation and localisation may play out differently in different sub-national contexts. There is far less international relief actor activity in Chin State, for example, than in Kachin State. Northern Shan State for a long time also received comparatively less attention, as did Rakhine State, but that has changed in more recent years.

2.2 INTERNATIONALISATION AND LOCALISATION

The dynamic processes of internationalisation and localisation, and the nature of localisation, is influenced by different contextual factors. Key in this is the role of the Government, which chooses to what degree to develop its own public sector capacities and exercise leadership, and the space and roles it gives to national and local non-governmental actors, and international ones.

Other than important political developments in the past decade, a catalytic moment was undoubtedly Cyclone Nargis in May 2008. Prior to, and in the medium-term aftermath of Cyclone Nargis, self-help groups and CBOs played a major role in responding to disasters. For the first month, the Government blocked access for international aid agencies, including the UN. That changed, particularly due to the diplomacy and peer-pressure of ASEAN. Subsequent research has shown however, how critically important were the initial self-help, and the actions of CBOs and informal networks of citizens and business people (in some remote areas, the Myanmar army also provided support) (South & Harragin 2012). Post-Nargis, many of these evolved into formal CSOs and NGOs. Cyclone Nargis led to an increase in the 'internationalisation' of crisis response within Myanmar. This further increased after a political opening of the country in 2011. The riverine floods and the transition to a new government in 2015 provided further opportunity for Myanmar CSOs to engage more in humanitarian coordination.

Significant violence between identity groups in Rakhine state in 2012 led to sensitive relationships between international relief agencies and government authorities. The subsequent, large scale forced displacement of Rohingya, in the last months of 2017, has rendered the dynamic between the 'international community' and Myanmar authorities much more complex.

2.3 GOVERNMENTAL AND PUBLIC SECTOR DISASTER MANAGEMENT

Following the 2008 Constitution, Myanmar is made up of the single union territory of Nay Pyi Taw, and seven states and seven regions. States have a large ethnic minority population; regions have a majority of ethnic Bamar. States and regions have equal status. Within states/regions there are districts, then townships, with wards in urban areas or village tracts in rural ones. States and regions have a regional state government, but overall Myanmar remains a highly centralized state, with constitutional influence of the armed forces. Only municipal governance structures are nominally fully decentralised. In practice many decisions at township and State-level still defer to or await central level 'guidance'. Armed ethnic opposition groups aspire to a federal structure.

The core of the public service consists of the General Administration Department, which connects the capital to the approximately 16,700 wards and village tracts and supports communication and coordination across different ministries. The GAD sits under the Ministry of Home Affairs.

Myanmar is part of a regional 'Asian Preparedness Partnership'. In that context, the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre in 2018 published a 'baseline assessment' country report. Key elements of the (then) governmental disaster management set up were/are:

- 2012: National Adaptation Programme for Action (NAPA), government plan for climate change adaptation
- 2012-2022: National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women. It includes critical areas aligned with the Beijing Platform for Action. The lead Ministry on women's advancement is that of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.
- July 2013: Disaster Management Law
- 2015: Disaster Management Rule. Both the Law and the Rule have chapters focused on emergency response.
- May 2016: Creation of National Disaster Management Committee (NDMC), chaired by the Vice-President and the Union Minister of Home Affairs. The Union Minister of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement is the Vice-Chair. Many other Ministries are part of the Committee, as well as the armed forces. The NDMC has several working committees (see Asian Disaster Preparedness Center 2018). At the sub-national level, there are the Region or State Disaster Management Bodies, chaired by the respective Chief Ministers. The Myanmar Red Cross Society is an important partner, so too the police and armed forces.

2.4 MYANMAR CIVIL SOCIETY

'Civil society' is more than 'civil society organisations'. It includes NGO-type organisations, community-based associations, associations of professionals, faith centres, producer associations (e.g. farmer cooperatives), labour unions etc. Many of these are registered but not all. Their roles can be protecting and promoting the interests of their members/constituency, providing services and/or engaging power-holders, policy- and decision-makers, notably in government, on policies, laws, procedures, their design, implementation and consequences. Since the political transition that started a decade ago, Myanmar civil society has grown into a multi-facetted but vibrant sector.

Space for civil society: In 2011, civil society undertook a sustained, evidence based, advocacy campaign to revise the very restrictive 1998 Association Registration Law. With assistance from international advisors, the law was successfully revised and adopted in 2014. An application for a Registration Certificate must be submitted to the Union Registration Committee in Naypyidaw, which is chaired by the Minister of Home Affairs. A certificate is valid for 5 years (Asian Disaster Preparedness Center 2018).

The question has been raised whether it is illegal, under Myanmar law, for an international organisation to work with a non-registered local one, as has been claimed (Debarre 2019). Technically, it should not be as the current applicable law leaves registration voluntary, it is not mandatory. Various local authorities, however, are not familiar with the by-laws of 2015, and insist on registration, even if they are not clear about the process. The Local Resource Centre therefore developed guidance. Recently, concerns have arisen that unregistered associations could be used as a loophole for money laundering. Reportedly, Government and civil society people are now sitting together to see how that loophole can be closed.

According to Grizelj, Lidauer and Tun, since the change in government administration in 2010 and the election victory of the National League for Democracy in 2016, there are mixed perceptions about the relationship with various government entities. Many CSOs felt an improvement in their freedom to operate, and increased possibilities to communicate with government, notably through the elected members of parliament. Others, however, felt that, since 2016, it has become more difficult to engage with the executive branch, as this sees itself as the elected representatives of the people (Grizelj et al 2018:7-8). For example, legally, it should take no more than 90 days to apply for registration at Union level and 60 days at State/Region level. In practice, it can take more time, and lack of clarity can persist about what the precise procedure is and what documents to provide.

While the current Association Registration Law creates an enabling space, the Unlawful Associations Act (from 1908) can be used against political activists and staff of organisations from or associated with ethnic minorities in opposition. It has been used e.g. to intimidate Kachin CSOs (South 2018). A 2018 assessment found that a fair number of activists, CSO staff and journalists had been harassed or arrested, not only under the Unlawful Associations Act, but also the Criminal Defamation Law, the Telecommunications Law, the Official Secrets Act and Peaceful Assembly and Peaceful Procession Act. Most of such acts of pressure were initiated by ministries managed by the military, including the Ministry of Home Affairs. Though registration is legally 'voluntary', several state and regional authorities treat it as mandatory. Some also demand prior official permission for events CSOs want to organize. Registration and/or permission to hold events can become difficult when the CSO works on land rights, environmental issues, election monitoring, peace, gender (FHI 360, ICNL & USAID 2019). Recently, the issue again arose over the government authorisation for PACE to monitor the November 2020 elections. First authorisation was denied because PACE is not registered, but eventually it was approved. 'Registration' issues can also arise when a CSO registered in one region wants to initiate work in another region or state.

Nature of civil society: In 2018, over 5000 Myanmar CSOs and 183 INGOs were registered with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA) at national ('union') level. In addition, MoHA reported almost 3000 additional CSOs registered at state or regional level. 'National' CSOs are typically based in Yangon or Mandalay. They tend to have at least 50 paid staff, complemented by volunteers and interns, and better access to information and communications technology (ICT).

A number of local CSOs see themselves as a social component of religious organisations, and are informal, voluntary, community-based associations. This occurs among the different religious denominations. Some are registered, others do not feel the need or prefer to stay out of sight of administrative or political controllers (Grizelj et al 2018). Some want to develop their 'humanitarian expertise', others only want to take part in humanitarian work when there is an emergency in their area of influence. They may, for example, collect donations for displaced people housed in the compound of their church. A good 40% of local CSOs surveyed in 2018 work at the district level, with 20% operating at regional and 13.3% at national level (Asian Disaster Preparedness Center 2018). A particular feature, not to be overlooked, is the strong component of volunteers around CBOs and some CSOs.

The willingness and ability of Myanmar society at large to mount large scale solidarity actions should be taken into account. It manifested itself clearly after cyclone Nargis and currently in the COVID-19 response.

Also worth noting is that some non-state armed groups exercise certain governance functions in the territories they control and have an organised capacity to respond to humanitarian needs. The Kachin Relief and Development Committees are one example.

Civil society networks: The research did not aim to do a comprehensive mapping of civil society networks. Compared to some other countries, however, it is notable that there are many networks and national resource centers. Examples are:

Local NGO networks for emergency preparedness and response

- Myanmar NGO Consortium for Preparedness and Response
- Myanmar Consortium for Disaster Risk Reduction (Asian Disaster Preparedness Center 2018)

Broader CSO collaborative networks are the

- Myanmar NGO Network, which provides local CSOs with information, technology and capacity development assistance.
- Women's Organisation Network (WON), which in 2018 consisted of 27 women Community Based Organisations (CBOs). Formed again after Nargis, it promotes mutual learning and cooperation among women-led groups.
- Gender Equality Network, whose origins go back to the Cyclone Nargis response. It currently has 104 members, of which 49 Myanmar CSOs, 36 INGOs and 19 technical resource persons.
- Local Resource Centre formed also in 2008, with assistance from INGOs. By 2018, it has become a coordinating body for over 600 CSOs with links to over 30 CSO networks.
- Paung Ku, established in 2007 by a consortium of international and local agencies. At that time, it had just one donor and two Yangon-based staff. As of 2017, Paung Ku is an independent, registered local NGO with more than 50 staff members and more than 150 CSO partners, who between them work in every one of Myanmar's 14 States and Divisions. Support to civil society is now coordinated from two Paung Ku offices located in Yangon and Mandalay. In addition, Paung Ku has been funded by Misereor to develop a learning centre in Bago.
- The Myanmar Education Consortium brings together a group of Myanmar CSOs. It is hosted by Save the Children and receives financial support from e.g. Australia, the UK

and Denmark. It provides quality, accredited education to children not yet reached by the national educational system. In situations of protracted displacement, it offers Education in Emergency kits and related training, in areas controlled by the Government or not.

- Myanmar Alliance for Transparency and Accountability.

There are also specialised Myanmar resource centres, such as the Legal Aid Network, Legal Clinic Burma and Free Legal Aid Burma. For a mapping-cum-analysis of Myanmar civil society networks, see Lanjouw, Phuah and Phan (2016).

What currently does not exist is one encompassing national Myanmar CSO platform that could, for example, be a counterpart to the INGO Forum (the number of potential members is hugely different of course). From a deficit-thinking perspective, some international organisations refer to this as a 'problem of fragmentation of Myanmar civil society'. From an appreciative inquiry perspective, there is recognition that Myanmar organisations form multiple networks for different reasons and priorities, and that diversity is an asset and an opportunity. INGOs, too, are globally organised in a multitude of networks.

Myanmar CSO Sustainability Index: Local Resource Centre in 2017, 2018 and 2019 conducted a 'CSO Sustainability Index' assessment. Supported by USAID, the International Centre for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL) and FHI360 such an assessment is periodically conducted in various countries. The 2019 report is not yet published, but the 2018 one found no overall change compared to 2017. However, it gave Myanmar a lower comparative sustainability score than Nepal, Pakistan, Indonesia, Bangladesh and the Philippines (FHI 360, ICNL & USAID 2019). The very high dependency on international funding is one key factor in this.

2.5 INTERNATIONAL AID AGENCIES

A large number of international bilateral and multi-lateral donors and programme operators are present in Myanmar. So too, a large number of INGOs. Founded in 2007, by 2020 the INGO Forum Myanmar has 118 members. Its mission is to improve the coordination, effectiveness and connectedness between humanitarian, development and peace-support work – and to build better partnerships. It also "*represents and advocates for the agreed interests of the members*" in the Humanitarian Country Team and engages with donor-related coordination and consultations, Myanmar Humanitarian Fund Advisory Board, humanitarian coordination meetings, and development sector Coordination Groups (SCGs) and 'non-SCGs'.

Of 22 INGOs which responded to an Asia Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) 2018 capacity assessment, over 90% confirmed emergency response is part of their mandate and role, though INGOs work also on developmental issues related to health, education, rule of law, the environment etc.

3 LOCALISATION INITIATIVES AND CONVERSATION SPACES

3.1 LOCALISATION INITIATIVES

As mentioned in the preamble, many collaborations between international and Myanmar actors can have a 'reinforcement' of national or local actors' component in it, without using the term 'localisation'. Compared to various other countries, there are also various sources of international funding, that are quite accessible to Myanmar agencies. Some of these related to peace and/or development work and will not necessarily frame this as 'localisation'. A programme like the USAID-funded 'Civil Society and Media' project, implemented by FHI360 between 2014-2018, may not frame itself within the context of the localisation policy- and practice-commitment in the Grand Bargain, but contributes to the same collective outcome. The same holds for the European Union Strategy for a Strengthened Partnership with Civil Society in Myanmar (the successor to the 2014-2017 Roadmap – EU Engagement with Civil Society).

While initiatives in the development and peace sectors may seem unrelated to those in the relief sector, many Myanmar CSO actors see this differently: they see a clear connection between 'humanitarian needs' as symptoms of underlying drivers related to inclusive governance, respect for human rights, development and who benefits from it, and positive peace. This is equivalent to what international actors start advocating for under the label of 'triple nexus' of relief/development/peace, which corresponds to Commitment 10 of the Grand Bargain.

Among the initiatives that more explicitly insert themselves under the 'localisation' commitment, this review could identify some. In terms of research, we can include the work by A. South, mostly drawing on Kachin State. A recent publication by Save the Children Sweden and Saferworld explored various existing interactions between international and national/local organisations and/or social groups, through a 'localisation' perspective. This included the RISE project from Save the Children, which it calls 'partial localisation', the Joint Strategy Team and the Durable Peace Partnership Consortium in Kachin, which it considers 'advanced localisation', but which can also be seen as largely 'localisation by default'; the Border Consortium in Thailand, another example of 'advanced localisation', which we can see as 'localisation by design'; and survivor and community-led crisis responses in northeast and northwest Myanmar, enabled by Christian Aid which it calls 'locally-led' and can be another instance of 'localisation by design'. PDi-Kintha also published a comprehensive look at the dynamics between international and local organisations in central Rakhine State (2019). Reportedly, the Humanitarian Advisory Group is conducting some multi-country research on COVID-19 and localisation that includes Myanmar.

Trócaire, one signatory to the Charter for Change, drew on research in Myanmar and the Democratic Republic of Congo (De Geoffroy & Grunewald 2017) to develop its own institutional strategy for localisation (de Jager Meezenbroek 2019). In Myanmar, it is now actively pursuing a transformation in its relationship with partners and invited a 3rd party to periodically critically review that process. Not long ago, together with KMSS, it organised an open, Burmese language, event, on the Grand Bargain and localisation.

Another C4C signatory, DanChurchAid deliberately only works with Myanmar partners in long-term relationships. It adopts supporting roles e.g. around the issue of 'capacities', by inviting various partners to conduct a self-assessment, and creating opportunities for

horizontal learning between Myanmar CSOs with comparable experiences but somewhat different areas of expertise. There is active awareness that Myanmar CSOs which have often been responding to crises for a very long time, well before internationals arrived in the country, have capacities, and that internationals can and must learn from them.

The Acceleration Localisation project, a multi-country consultation and research project run by Action Aid, CAFOD, Tearfund, CARE, Oxfam and Christian Aid, also included Myanmar. Some interviewees, however, commented that it had been far from inclusive. One prominent Myanmar CSO leader therefore dismissed its legitimacy: "*We are ignoring this report*". The apparent intention was/is to propose a national operational plan for localisation (Christian Aid et al 2019a). That has not happened so far.

This inquiry came up with three important findings:

- Research fatigue, especially among Myanmar actors,
- Research findings and recommendations remain largely unused,
- Research is through the lens of the viewer.

> **"There has been so much research on localisation, we invest so much time, we are an object of a lot of research not the subject. We are not involved from the beginning."**
>
> (Director of large Myanmar CSO)

This inquiry also draws attention to the fact that research is not as 'objective' as often imagined. The 'accelerating localisation' research asked participants to indicate which partnership practices they found most conducive and least conducive to localisation, according to a number of capacity strengthening priority areas it had first identified (Christian Aid et al 2019a and Christian Aid et al 2019b). An analytical framework that directly links 'partnership' and 'capacity' does not work very well. It takes 'capacities' as the entry point and, intentionally or unintentionally, seems to have elicited 'capacity' areas that internationals put much emphasis on (e.g. such as project cycle management/MEAL, financial reporting, etc.). This leads to conclusions and recommendations that diverge from those conducted by more 'academic' researchers. In the latter case, Myanmar CSOs seem to challenge the notion of 'capacities' that international agencies hold to a greater extent, criticise its uncoordinated nature and ineffectiveness, or argue that organisational development support should be organic and in line with their societal traditions, rather than force them into becoming copies of INGOs (PDi Kintha 2019). Differences in analysis, and in recommendations (or the interpretation of certain recommendations) can come from different understandings of 'localisation' and what success will look like, and whether the researcher starts from and gives much weight to the perspectives of national/local or international actors.

Comparatively, Myanmar has quite a number of country-level funds that are more accessible to international NGOs. And reportedly, donors are encouraging international agencies to work with partners and have the latter in strong roles. As a result, even some INGOs which globally tend to be direct implementers are considering collaborating with Myanmar organisations.

> **"What we see time and again is that the rhetoric does not match the reality on the ground, all the way through, things like capacity building, coordination, the funding aspect [...]"**
>
> (INGO international staff)

After some years of indifference and resistance, 'localisation' is now said to be more squarely on the collective agenda. ECHO and OCHA (managing the Myanmar Humanitarian Fund) are among those catalysing the policy conversation. However, various interviewees, from Myanmar and international, point out that the issue is more talked about, but the hard work still needs to be done.

3.2 LOCALISATION CONVERSATION SPACES

Active engagement from Myanmar civil society: Several Myanmar civil society organisations were present at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, helping to co-create the Grand Bargain and advocating for localisation.

Limited awareness of relevant references: Though some international and Myanmar actors are familiar with key references such as the 2007 Principles of Partnership, the 2015 Charter for Change or the 2016 Grand Bargain, many are not. This also applies to staff of international agencies who have explicitly signed on to these commitments. Some Myanmar networked organisations disseminate information about the Grand Bargain and explain 'localisation' to a wider set of CSOs and CBOs, but many still have never heard of the Grand Bargain.

The Charter for Change and the INGO Forum: There are various INGO signatories to the Charter for Change (C4C) in Myanmar, and some Myanmar endorsers, notably Airavati; Center for Social Integrity; Spectrum – Sustainable Development Knowledge Network. Although some 80% of the almost 120 members of the INGO Forum work with 'partners', several of which are C4C signatories, it has not been a platform where localisation was actively discussed. A possible nudge in that direction might come from the recent online conversation with Barney Tallack about his report "*The Existential Funding Challenge for Northern INGOs*" with its challenging options "*transform, die well or die badly.*" (2020).

Despite the examples mentioned above of individual INGOs successfully pursuing a transformation of their relationships with local partners, the C4C is not an umbrella that brings signatory INGOs together. Both a donor representative interviewed, and the head of a Myanmar CSO, observed that the active interest of an agency in the localisation agenda depended heavily on the attitude of the senior director. If s/he is interested, so will be the agency, if not then not.

One complicating factor, signaled in the introduction to this report and confirmed by this research, is that many people use the term 'localisation' but interpret it in different ways. It does not translate well into Myanmar languages either. The 'accelerating localisation' consultations in Myanmar indicated that 'localisation' was hard to explain and that many participants understood it as 'involvement of local people and organisations in the humanitarian programmes.' (Christian Aid et al. 2019:10). Such understanding tells us nothing about the nature of that involvement: is it active or passive, is it as 'implementing' partner or as 'decision-making' partner? Different interpretations, however, lead to different outcomes. Not all interpretations and outcomes are in line with the purpose and spirit of the Grand Bargain or C4C. The text box shows Trócaire's understanding, as one – illustrative – example

Trócaire's definition of localisation

"Aid localisation is a collective process involving different stakeholders that aims to return local actors, whether civil society organisations or local public institutions, to the center of the humanitarian system with a greater role in humanitarian response. It can take a number of forms: strengthened and more equal partnerships between international and local actors, increased and 'as direct as possible' funding for local organisations, and a more central role in aid coordination. The long-term aim of localisation is to build the resilience of crisis affected communities by establishing links with development activities." (de Jager Meezenbroek 2019:3).

Noticeable in this understanding is that it is not just about the funding, but considers the quality of partnership, meaningful participation in aid coordination, the resilience of communities vulnerable to or affected by crisis. Important is also the recognition that it must be a 'collective' process. The word 'return' in the definition is significant. 'Localisation' can be seen as the historically natural state of affairs. It only becomes a policy and practice objective after a process of 'internationalisation'. 'Localisation' then is the effort to reduce 'internationalisation' when it is felt to be no longer as justified or even becoming counterproductive.

An emerging Localisation and Partnership Platform: By late 2019, the localisation/partnership conversation in Yangon started crystallising in a series of meetings, when it was realised there was no collective effort to develop a localisation strategy. OCHA has acted as catalyst and convenor. Several meetings took place in November and December 2019 (the latter including national CSOs with presence in the Humanitarian Country Team), and January (with INGOs) and February 2020. An idea of a 'Localisation and Partnership Platform (LP2)' was articulated. It is for now the one multi-stakeholder platform.

By early 2020, the idea was to structure LP2 into three subgroups: one to develop a concept/narrative on and Terms of Reference for the initiative (proposed in December 2019 but still in process in February 2020), led by ECHO and KMSS-Joint Strategy Team (JST), one to map partnerships, with OCHA and Local Resource Centre leading but supported by several others such as the Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU) and a third one focused on 'capacities', to make an inventory of capacity requirements but also existing resources and initiatives. This to be led by HARP and Metta-JST. For the past few months, its activities have been deprioritised because of the COVID-19 challenge.

Evident positive aspects are the collective and strategic character of the initiative, the recognition that this requires a medium-term perspective, and the willingness to have Myanmar CSOs exercise strong leadership.

> **"Many people do not understand the fundamental objective of localisation. Everybody is looking just at the dollar signs. That is what is causing the split." (...) "There is a lot of resistance among the HCT members, especially about 25% funding to CSOs."**
>
> (Myanmar CSO leader)

> **"Localisation of humanitarian action is not the same as localisation of project implementation."**
>
> (Director of large Myanmar CSO)

The interviews conducted for this inquiry revealed a number of issues seen critically by participants coming both from NGOs and INGOs:

> **"Still in the LP2, there is a strong narrative of 'how do we make you guys eligible for our funding and able to handle it without messing up, in other words, how can you become acceptable implementers of our projects."**
>
> (INGO director)

> **"It is very driven by a donor perspective now, with the idea of who are the good partners here that perhaps we can provide funding to directly in future?"**
>
> (Senior INGO figure)

The concerns voiced – limitation to funding and/or project implementation of INGO and donor approach, prevalence of deficit thinking, power imbalances – strikingly match the results from other country surveys.

> **"The international actors do not recognise the informal system. They do not promote local agenda or local interest putting focus on international mechanism. There is a power imbalance, local organisations are marginalised from the system."**
>
> (Director of large Myanmar CSO)

DIMENSIONS OF LOCALISATION

The Seven Dimensions framework is a framework for a detailed assessment of the collaboration between international agencies and national/local CSOs. In addition, the Grand Bargain commitment to a real 'participation revolution', in which crisis-affected people can have a meaningful say in what is designed and decided for their benefit, is referred to. The framework puts the quality of relationship first, not the funding. If the quality of relationship is bad, and levels of distrust high, no significant changes will take place. Variations of the framework, with indicators, have been developed by the Humanitarian Advisory Group and A. Featherstone for NEAR, and by the Humanitarian Advisory Group and PIANGO (2019).

As mentioned above, the guiding questions for this inquiry focus on the quality of relationship ('partnership'), finance, capacity and coordination mechanisms, and on the cross-cutting issue of gender and localisation.

4.1 QUALITY OF RELATIONSHIP

Of the about 118 members of the INGO Forum, some 80% were said to be working with 'partners', though this does not tell us anything about the quality of that collaboration. Given growing donor interest in seeing Myanmar CSOs in meaningful collaborations with INGOs, that approach reportedly is gradually expanding also to those who globally tend to implement directly. Still, challenges remain. The inquiry however also brings out that there can be competition among international agencies for the same 'good' partners. That has happened, for example, in Kayin and central Rakhine State and with the recent rise of active interest among international agencies, in northern Shan State.

A MODALITIES OF COLLABORATION

How a 'partner' is 'chosen' can also be a contentious and trust-breaking issue: A true partnership requires that those participating in it really 'choose' each other. In the relief world, the prevailing practice is that international agencies choose their local partner.

Some of the partner selection criteria used by international agencies are: the Myanmar CSO's geographical access; whether it has a local constituency that is also diverse and includes more marginalized local groups; alignment of mission and vision; experience in the technical areas the international agency is interested in; and its organisational structure (staff member of international organisation).

Perceived 'fake' processes undermine trust: In Rakhine, for example, local CSOs reported they were invited to workshops organised by international agencies supposedly to choose a partner – only to subsequently get the strong feeling that the choice was already predetermined (PDi-Kintha 2019). When an international organisation directly invites a Myanmar CSO to join in a proposal for which the donor wants to see a collaboration with a Myanmar CSO, other CSOs can perceive this as an unfair process. Even the Myanmar CSO thus 'invited' to be part of a joint proposal may well realise this is only done opportunistically, because the donor wants to see a Myanmar agency as part of the proposal. They also notice it when the international agency, in such instance, does not provide details about the funding available and what would be eligible and non-eligible costs, e.g. the ability for the Myanmar CSO to also have a flexible management fee or internal cost recovery (director of CSO).

Several directors of Myanmar CSOs expressed critical views about the lack of transparency

and consistency in these 'partner selection' processes of international agencies. They felt it contributed to negative attitudes, but also discrimination and competition among CSOs in general. Particularly less institutionalised associations were felt to be at a structural disadvantage.

> **"Non-institutionalised local CSOs sarcastically call institutionalised local and national CSOs a 'locally-made international product'."**
>
> (Director of local CSO)

B UNEQUAL RELATIONS ARE NOT 'PARTNERSHIPS'

Several interviewees from Myanmar CSOs argued that though internationals speak about 'partnership', there is no real partnership, and de facto the relationship is more one of sub-contracting.

Interestingly, there appear to be some instances where Myanmar CSOs have rebuffed approaches by international agencies for partnership, because they did not like the terms on which it was presented. Some examples were mentioned from human rights and gender-oriented organisations, but it is likely there are others.

> **"Partnership is a very good model, but you hold the purse and I did the work is not the true essence of respectful partnership, since both parties do not have the same power. When the terms of 'partnership' are set, the implementer's voice is not reflected."**
>
> (Staff of international organisation)

C DISTRUST

Distrust can be an issue in Myanmar, as in other countries. The lack of trust in local organisations has been noted for Kachin several years ago (Benson 2014:50). It continues to be noted several years later: *"International organisations look down on us locals; they want to pay by installments because they don't trust us. [...] INGOs and donor agencies don't seem to trust CSOs and always want to tell us what to do."* (CSO director and prominent Kachin relief worker quoted in South 2018:23). Persistent reciprocal distrust is also an issue in Rakhine state (PDI-Kintha 2019).

> **"I talk about these organisations as 'my partner', but when they talk about us they probably say 'oh, our donor'. I would not automatically assume that there is enough trust for them to call us to task or challenge us on our commitments, for fear they may lose future funding. Only the big and well-established Myanmar CSOs have the confidence and ability to do that."**
>
> (International INGO staff member)

Also, this inquiry shows the persistence of generalised negative narratives about the fiduciary risks among national and local organisations.

D DISRESPECTFUL, EVEN RACIST, BEHAVIOUR

Problems of disrespectful, discriminatory and even racist behaviour by international staff, in INGOs and even UN agencies, come up also in Myanmar. So too, the feeling of being exploited e.g. when local actors are approached for information and help for needs assessments or proposal development, but not credited for it and ignored during the response (De Geoffroy & Grunewald 2017; PDI Kintha 2019 this inquiry). Some international aid workers are aware of this.

> **"There are some CSO staff associated with fraud and corruption when they use organisational funds for personal purposes. It can be a director who manages the cash without proper organisational policies and procedures. Such incidents may have happened to some organisations, but generalising this to all local organisations only fuels distrust between international and Myanmar actors."**
>
> (Staff of INGO)

Other research found that CSOs working in natural hazard contexts tended to be more satisfied about their relationship with INGOs, than those working in conflict-affected areas. Perceived lack of respect and appreciation of their competencies, and the high operating costs of INGOs were some factors contributing to lower satisfaction (Christian Aid et al 2019a).

> **"We sometimes are concerned that local CSOs will not share information, and without their information it is hard for us to move things forward. It is very important to be cautious of our behaviour and attitude towards local partners. The way we behave, the way we talk, has significant positive or negative impacts on the programme. I sometimes see senior staff from international organisations be bossy, behave with an attitude of superiority. They talk localisation but behave very hierarchical, I don't know how they understand localisation?"**
>
> (Senior staff from international organisation)

E LEARN FROM PEACEBUILDING ORGANISATIONS

One senior INGO person felt that humanitarian actors can and should learn from peacebuilders in Myanmar. Many of these seek to support and reinforce Myanmar actors. Constructive relationship building is a core objective of peace work, and relational skills a core competency. They intentionally work on building trust with their Myanmar colleagues.

4.2 FINANCE: ACCESS, QUANTITY AND QUALITY

A ACCESS TO FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Compared to other countries, Myanmar appears to have quite a number of funds, for different core purposes, that are accessible to Myanmar CSOs, also directly. In practice, this may mostly offer opportunities to larger and well-established CSOs, not smaller ones and community-based organisations. The following provides an illustrative overview. It is not meant to be a comprehensive mapping.

The Myanmar Humanitarian Fund

Up to 2013, this pooled fund was known as the Humanitarian Multi-stakeholder Fund. Then it was renamed as the Myanmar Emergency Response Fund, and since 2015 it is known as the Myanmar Humanitarian Fund. It is managed by OCHA. Since 2007, the MHF has mobilized over US$ 63 million. In 2019, the fund allocated US $ 15.5 million. Its fundraising target for 2020 is US $ 27.8 million.[1] Reportedly, it has been fast, responsive, and fairly accessible to Myanmar CSOs, or at least the well resourced, bigger and more developed ones. In 2016, 45% of its funds went, directly or via an intermediary, to national NGOs, compared to 43% to INGOs and 12% to UN agencies (De Geoffroy & Grunewald 2017). In 2019, 57% of allocated funding went to Myanmar CSOs of which 30% directly (No author 2019). Eligibility to

1 Data from: https://www.unocha.org/myanmar/about-mhf

the fund requires passing a complex due diligence process that looks into an organisations' statutes, mission, governance, financial management, programmatic response, coordination, partnerships etc.

Women, Peace and Humanitarian Fund

Constructed as an UN-civil society partnership, it seeks to address structural funding gaps to enable women participation. An explicit objective of this fund is to break the silos between humanitarian, peace, security and development finance. It is currently seeking funding for Myanmar of US 4 million over two years.[2] In Myanmar, it wants to support the participation of women and women groups in the process of democratisation and durable peace and works for greater gender equality and an end to gender-based violence. It supports women CSOs to overcome the obstacles of registration, and freedom of assembly and expression. Its field of action includes community-based social associations, non-governmental organisations and social and political movements, including grassroots organisations and national networks that are women-led. Inspired by Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, it seeks to enable greater effective participation of women in the peace process(es).

The Myanmar Joint Peace Fund is supported by multiple international donors e.g. Australia, Canada, Germany, Switzerland, Norway, Italy, the EU, UK and USAID.[3] Its grant-making criteria do not explicitly exclude Myanmar applicants, can accept a degree of capacity development where relevant, and want at least 15% of a budget allocated to gender-related activities. Its website has a concept note format outline, which is fairly simple, and guidance on risk management and on conflict sensitivity, in English and Burmese.

The UK runs a **Conflict, Stability and Security Fund**, alongside a substantial DFID development programme. It works with the GoM and civil society. Inclusive peace negotiations are one focus, reconciliation and rehabilitation in Rakhine State another (enabling conditions for a voluntary return of the Rohingya in Bangladesh).[4] Its direct grant recipients, however, are all UN or INGO agencies, with the exception of the Centre for Social Integrity which has strong organic roots in Rakhine state, particularly the northern part of the State, and now also works with Rohingya in Bangladesh. It does research, supports peace and conflict resolution, but has also been responding to emergencies.[5]

> *"Enabling grants are specifically for national organisations and recognise that the capacities of humanitarian organisations vary across Myanmar. Enabling grants are designed to ensure that organisations who cannot normally access donor funding, due to issues of capacity or compliance, are supported to deliver a project as well as at the same time building their capacity to access other donor funding in the future.*
>
> *All documents and reporting requirements are kept to a minimum, recognising that this distracts organisation staff from delivering project activities. Additionally, once organisations have identified their capacity building priorities, HARP-F will directly support or provide support through other actors to meet those priorities."*
>
> *(https://www.harpfacility.com/enabling-grant)*

DFID between 2016-2020 runs the **Humanitarian Assistance and Resilience Programme (HARP)** for both natural disasters and conflict-related crises, with a budget of almost £ 109 million over the period. The HARP Facility is a component of DFID's broader HARP. The facility aims to increase effectiveness, quality and coverage of humanitarian assistance

2 Data from: https://wphfund.org/countries/myanmar/
3 Data from: https://www.jointpeacefund.org/en
4 Data from: https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/conflict-stability-and-security-fund-myanmar-programme
5 Data from: https://www.centerforsocialintegrity.org/

through the provision of grants, technical assistance and capacity building. This includes a focus on supporting national organisations and overall sectoral effects to improve the evidence base which will drive better performance within the humanitarian system in Myanmar.[6] It differentiated its grants according to different purposes: for delivery, for rapid response, for capacity building, for innovation, and for enabling organisational development. Target areas are Rakhine, Kachin, Northern Shan and the Southeast, and the grants are directed at local and national organisations.[7]

Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund

LIFT-supported projects are focused on enabling and encouraging constructive exchange between village, township, and state level administration. Most LIFT funding is delivered through village development committees, in close coordination with respective Departments such as the General Administration Department (GAD), Department of Rural Development (DRD), Department of Agriculture (DoA), Department of Irrigation (DoI), Agricultural Mechanization Department (AMD), Department of Fishery (DoF), Livestock Breeding and Veterinary Department (LBVD), Department of Health (DoH), Forest Department, Relief and Resettlement Department (RRD) and Department of Planning. Key support is directed at technical capacity building, as well as training in leadership, socially accountable governance, and responsible private sector practices. Reportedly, LIFT has earmarked 20% of its funds for Myanmar organisations.

The Nippon Foundation Group

Active in Myanmar since 1976, under its broad category of 'human security' the Nippon Foundation Group can fund Myanmar organisations for developmental, humanitarian and peace work. Sectoral and thematic areas of work include health, schools, training for income-generating activities, and agriculture. A special attention group is on people with disabilities.[8] Some of the current partners are the Kachin Baptist Convention, Moving Forward Together, the Karenni National College (KnNC), Mae Tao Clinic and the Rahmonnya Peace Foundation.

British Council

Between 2017 and 2019, it ran the DFID-funded Sone Sie programme, to promote a more inclusive, sustainable and fair governance. It supported processes that brought together locally led coalitions of civil society, the private sector and government, around tangible real-life issues.

The Netherlands Embassy in Myanmar

The Netherlands had a global 'Accountability Fund' that included Myanmar, explicitly accessible only to local CSOs with strong connections to marginalised and hard-to-reach social groups (collaboration with a Dutch INGO was possible). The 2018 envelope for Myanmar was Euro 450.000. Areas of particular interest were gender equality, prevention of gender-based violence and political participation and empowerment of women, but also disability rights, natural resource rights and access to land and water.

B MYANMAR CSO FUND MANAGERS

A key obstacle to meaningful localisation is the need of institutional donors for a grant-multiplier i.e. an entity that they can give a significant envelope of money to and which then

6 Data from: https://www.harpfacility.com/about-us/
7 Data from: https://www.harpfacility.com/our-work/respond-changing-needs/
8 Data from: https://www.nippon-foundation.or.jp/en/what/projects/myanmar

manages its translation into a variety of smaller grants to different organisations. Around the world, this is typically done by UN agencies, private contractors or a consortium of INGOs (e.g. Start Fund). In Myanmar, the Local Resource Centre is one such CSO fund manager.

Local Resource Centre Myanmar

LRC was established in May 2008 in the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis, which was a triggering event for a wider emergence of formal NGOs and CSOs in Myanmar. It registered as a local NGO in May 2012. Its vision is of an empowered and accountable civil society that actively embraces diversity, social inclusiveness and civic responsibility, and works together to bring about change to the lives of vulnerable and marginalized communities in Myanmar. Its mission is to support the holistic development of Myanmar civil society organisations by acting as a catalyst for:

- Strengthening CSO institutional capacity through skill development and targeted information dissemination; this includes training on humanitarian principles, needs assessment and response mechanisms, the protection of local aid workers and fundraising.
- Creating opportunities for CSOs and young people to develop a common voice, and collaborate with each other and with other stakeholders using a rights-based approach.
- Influencing policy development and reform by establishing advocacy platforms that encourage broad-based dialogue using factual information. LRC has also supported CSO participation in clusters.

LRC also has a small grants programme for qualified NGOs. In addition, LRC trains community members on human rights issues, especially in conflict-sensitive areas, with selected community members trained also as paralegals to serve as voluntary 'change agents' in their communities.

Headquartered in Yangon, it has regional offices in Lashio, Mandalay and Mawlamyine. It operates with full-time and project based staff, and volunteers. By 2017, LRC had a network of some 1000 NGO and CSO members, including about 20 thematic networks, many of which provide humanitarian response. The network enables the rapid mobilization and coordination of local organisations when disaster strikes, both to raise funds and provide emergency relief.

(Humanitarian Leadership Academy 2017)

C DONOR SUPPORT FOR LOCALISATION

This inquiry indicates that there is active donor interest now in turning localisation into practice. That requires careful reflection on how donors can promote change and may need to change some of their own practices. Three practical points mentioned were:

- Stop funding direct implementers except for exceptional situations where this is contextually justified. As one international interviewee put it: "By continuing to fund direct implementers, donors are sabotaging their own efforts at localisation."
- Insist and enable that Myanmar CSO partners receive an equal or equal share of the 'management fee' (ICR/NICRA).
- Several conflict situations may currently be low intensity, but they have not been resolved. This is an ideal time to invest in stronger local capacities, with multi-year funding. More multi-year funding constitutes Commitment 7 of the Grand Bargain.

D CSO FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The 2018 Myanmar CSO sustainability review indicates that international Official Development Assistance to Myanmar that year was in the order of US$ 1.3 billion. Even if quite a percentage of that goes to the Government and the UN, an amount eventually comes to

Myanmar CSOs. National level CSOs based in cities benefit most. Some smaller, local CSOs may get some via national CSOs or intermediary support organisations.

The quantity of funding, however, does not equate automatically with quality. All organisations need some flexible (and predictable) income to deal with cash flow fluctuations and invest in their operating systems and organisational development. A deficiency in the Grand Bargain indicators for localisation is that it only considers the quantity (25%) and not the quality of finance. From the perspective of national and local organisations, that makes it a very deficient measuring tool (see Global Mentoring Initiative 2019).

Most 'capacity support' focuses on meeting compliance requirements and technical standards but ignores the question of how CSOs can develop financially sustainable organisations, and thereby also attract and retain 'capacities'. A management fee (ICR/NICRA) as part of a project grant is one source for this. The interviews indicate that this is currently not really acknowledged as an important issue for localisation. "*Few international donors provide funding for institutional costs.*" (FHI 360, ICNL & USAID 2019:20). Myanmar CSOs also do not (yet) realise they have a right to ask for this.

> **"Our finance staff worked together with a long-standing and strong Myanmar partner CSO to co-design a 'cost allocation policy', with enough possible line items that de facto they have flexibility how they allocated part of the budget for organisational support costs. But we haven't done this with all our partners. And it is an issue of ongoing discussion with the finance and admin colleagues in our international headquarters, who want us to keep as much of the money as possible."**
>
> (Senior international staff of INGO)

> *"Any cessation of donor funding would likely result in the shutdown of substantial CSO operations as there are few domestic funding sources available."*
>
> *(FHI 360, ICNL & USAID 2019:19)*

A strategic issue is reducing the dependency on foreign funding which leaves Myanmar civil society very vulnerable. Some of the obvious avenues are: adding income-generating activities, and getting some more funding from government, the private sector and the Myanmar general public. Some Myanmar CSOs are exploring this. For private sector companies, evaluations will have to be made who really owns them and how they make their profit. Income generating activities may work but tend to make only minimal contributions to an overall budget. It is also advisable to develop complementary fundraising on behalf of the collective of CSOs, not only for individual agencies.

International donors provide significant aid funds to the government, which reportedly has a low expenditure rate. Donors can play a role in ensuring that the government spends a percentage of what it receives via CSOs. There are already some examples. This will require CSOs to set strict guidelines to ensure continued independence from government, while collaborating with it where appropriate. Private sector companies, in their MoUs with government, reportedly include a Corporate Social Responsibility (CRS) provision. So far, they mostly spent this individually, and not to and with CSOs. That amounts to uncoordinated and fragmented efforts with missed opportunities for greater impact. Here a case might be made for a collective fund to which the private sector would at least contribute part of their CRS. The Myanmar public on its side is very generous in its giving but tends to give directly to other people or entities, like funeral associations, monks and monasteries with which they have a connection (FHI 360, ICNL & USAID 2019 and interviews).

4.3 CAPACITIES

In Myanmar, local CSOs in the border areas have been responding to many crises long before international relief actors appeared in larger numbers. In the lowlands, Myanmar CSOs mobilised and learned in response to Cyclone Nargis, receiving only capacity support from international actors in the subsequent 12 years. Notwithstanding that significant history of experience, this inquiry shows persistent problems. There is significant frustration among Myanmar CSOs with the 'capacity building' of international agencies.

A EXISTING CAPACITIES ARE NOT ACKNOWLEDGED

International organisations come with predefined capacity assessment checklists. Deficit thinking is a frequent underlying mindset: it is a mindset that focuses on what is not there, rather than what is there. Even if there is verbal recognition, local actors say they do not see that reflected in actual practices. Deep knowledge of contexts, and fluency in local languages are simply not counted as 'capacities' even if they can be vital to a successful action. An 'appreciative inquiry' approach, by contrast, can infuse the interaction with more positive energy. A Myanmar CSO respondent argued that Myanmar CSOs should be more assertive about the capabilities they have.

> **"There is a real lack of focus on existing capacities. There is this ingrained colonial mindset, 'we are the UN, we are a big donor, we are an INGO, we are going to build your capacity.'"**
>
> (International staff of INGO)

"Several informants said that they felt that international staff failed to recognise CSOs' capacities, or their ability to understand and deal with risk and uncertainty on the ground."

(South 2018:39)

Capacity assessments that focus on form (structure, policies, procedures) but miss less tangible capacities may also miss the boat. An organisation that does not have all the forms and formalities, but has high commitment, high trust, and high perceived legitimacy among its stakeholders has a lot of 'capacities'. It offers perhaps greater promise than one that has all the forms and formalities but is low on commitment, has little perceived legitimacy and receives little trust from its surroundings and stakeholders.

B POWER ASYMMETRY IN CAPACITY ASSESSMENTS AND STRENGTHENING ACTIVITIES

ODI research, particularly in the Democratic Republic of Congo has drawn attention to how power dynamics are at play, not only in 'partner selection', but also in 'capacity assessments'. First of all, the assessment is one-way only: no national or local organisation has a chance to assess the capacities of an international one. Secondly, it is solely and exclusively the international organisation that determines which 'capacities' are recognised as relevant and which apparently are not (Barbelet 2019). While not so explicitly stated in Myanmar, the dynamics are clearly present there as well, because it is a structural feature of how the international relief sector operates.

While they recognise the validity of strong organisational management and quality control capacities, the capacities priority for national and local actors, globally and in Myanmar, is

not to be able to meet international actor requirements. It is to have a sustainable and capable organisation that is fit-for-context and can collaborate with other local and national actors to create collective impacts greater than from their individual efforts.

Different priorities, different competencies

"While the international community is guided by deadlines and guidelines, local actors here are caught between frontlines and ethnic lines."

(Myanmar national NGO staff cited by de Geoffroy & Grunewald 2017:1)

Many Myanmar CSOs have been operating in complex contexts for a long time, and various interviewees stressed that international actors (but also Myanmar national staff working in sub-national contexts different from their own) have a lot to learn from them. This is even more the case in those areas where they are not allowed access.

> **"INGO and UN agency staff sit in their compounds, don't understand the local context but say to local actors: we must build your capacity! From the latter's perspective, it is they who need their capacities built by the local CSOs, otherwise they will be ineffective in that particular context. There is a real lack of meaningful awareness of this. Some people will pay lip service to it, but show me when the UN or an INGO has ever asked a local organisation to organise a workshop to build their own capacity?"**
>
> (INGO staff)

C INDIVIDUAL COMPETENCIES AND ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITIES

Much of the 'capacity support' offered in the international relief sector tends to be focused on enhanced knowledge and skills of individual staff members. Some staff members of international organisations recognise that this doesn't add up to 'organisational capacities', but argue that supporting those takes a longer-term commitment, and more than one-off training sessions (Director of INGO). Some expressed a cautionary view, arguing that the capacity of a CSO largely depends on the attitude of the leadership, and whether there is a shared strategic vision about the quality and credibility the organisation wants to achieve in the future, in an evolving context of Myanmar (Staff member of international organisation).

> **"I don't like the term 'capacity building', since the capacity can't be built but gradually develops, possibly in an assisted manner. One-off or stand-alone trainings and workshops on e.g. nutrition or disaster risk reduction do not have long term impact. So it also doesn't translate further in stronger capacities of communities."**
>
> (Director of CSO)

D SUPPLY- AND DEMAND-DRIVEN CAPACITY SUPPORT

The research suggests that much capacity support remains supply driven, rather than responding to a demand from Myanmar CSOs. That may be explained by the fact that the primary purpose of 'capacity support' is to get Myanmar CSOs to the point where they can meet the requirements of the international aid sector, rather than them developing as strong institutions in their own society. Prior 'capacity assessments', in the experience of Myanmar CSOs, have actually no influence on the standard supply package of training offered subsequently. Some indicated a preference for mentoring and accompaniment approaches, also with resource persons with the right skills embedded in their own organisations. DanChurchAid has conducted more of a listening exercise to what Myanmar CSOs say about their capacities

and how they see those strengthened effectively and sustainably. The report is expected to be published later in 2020.

E COMPLIANCE POLICIES: COPIED OR DEVELOPED FROM WITHIN?

A director of a Myanmar CSO shared the experience of developing compliance policies in line with international requirements. An external consultant had been provided to develop those. However, while that box could now be ticked, the organisation was actually not really able to translate these policies into practices fit-for-context, nor to evolve them based on reflected experience. They have remained too dependent on the external consultant. GMI on the other hand works with a few Myanmar CSOs on 'safeguarding', but in an approach that seeks to organically grow the policies from within, also grounding them in critically reflective conversations about socio-cultural practices, norms and values.

There is limited experience with peer learning among Myanmar CSOs and from CSOs in other countries. One INGO interviewed did adopt an approach where it simply provided the material and financial support for Myanmar CSOs to come together for a peer learning experience, without intervening in the content.

F CAPACITY DIVERTED TO UNNECESSARY BURDEN

A capacity issue is the complexity and multiplication of separate reporting formats and systems across different donors. Standardisation would lead to 'less paper, more aid'. Reportedly, Myanmar is a case study for the Grand Bargain commitment to aid harmonization (De Geoffroy & Grunewald 2017). Are donors in Myanmar, and their first grant receivers, turning this commitment into practice? Given the inability or unwillingness of international actors to reduce the overall paper burden, smaller organisations may prefer to remain funded through an international agency if the latter handles the paperwork: "*It reduces the burden of financial compliance and reporting requirements, which diverts energy from activity implementation.*" Although others object to what they see as unjustified burdens, larger Myanmar organisations, which can afford the systems, prefer direct funding and with it the control over the budget and expenditures (Grizelj et al 2018:21).

G UNNECESSARY REPEAT EXERCISES

The assumption of international agencies that they have capacities and local/national actors do not, creates a lot of supply-driven, uncoordinated capacity inputs. This is not good value-for-money and discouraging for Myanmar CSOs. The point is illustrated by the following quote and was also noted by de Geoffroy & Grunewald in 2017.

> **"'Capacity building' can be a very frustrating experience for them, because if they have multiple donors, a lot of it is dictated to them, is redundant, is not particularly relevant to their situation. It is not a collaborative exercise; it is imposed on them by donor requirements or regulations."**
>
> (International staff of INGO)

The same, according to this inquiry, happens with repeat exercises by international relief actors to map 'capacity assessments' and 'capacity building'. Different international actors decide that such assessments or wider mapping needs to be done, and will go ahead, regardless of existing assessments and mappings (a national 'capacity assessment' was published by the Asia Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) in 2018. Summary findings can be found in Annex 2). As Myanmar CSOs must devote time and energy to such repeat exercises, they

become another unnecessary burden, and a distraction from the substantive work they need to do. The LP2 working group on this must be careful not to fall into the same trap.

H LINK ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO ACCESS TO FUNDING

In the 7-dimensions framework, there is a close correlation between the quality of relationship, access to (quality) finance and organisational development. Disconnecting 'capacity support' from 'access to quality funding' is a frequent occurrence globally, and also in Myanmar. It leads to further waste of time, money and motivation for two reasons: if CSOs's whose capacities are 'being developed' have no simultaneous access to funding, they cannot really practice much of what they learn. If they have no medium-term access to quality funding, they may not be able to retain trained and experienced people. De Geoffroy and Grunewald, in their 2017 study, found that some CSOs no longer will accept 'capacity building' if they cannot directly interact with donors and receive a management fee (De Geoffroy & Grunewald 2017).

I CAPACITIES TO RESPOND FAST TO RAPID ONSET CRISES

Capacity development for emergency response that consists only of training and planning, is not enough. Some financial resources need to be made available very fast, stocks of basic items possibly prepositioned, and vendors for different types of goods and services pre-vetted. Local organisations in Myanmar tend to initially respond fast and flexibly to a sudden-onset crisis, without extensive needs assessments, planning and logframes. International agencies are often delayed by their administrative requirements and decision-making procedures. Rigid 'results-based frameworks', with predetermined objectives and time frames, are also unhelpful in still evolving situations (De Geoffroy & Grunewald 2017). That was a key reason for the development of the Start Fund, collectively managed by NGOs, as a mechanism for the very fast release of an initial tranche of money against only essential paperwork (Patel & Van Brabant 2017). Slowly more national and local CSOs are becoming members of the Start Network and therefore can access direct funding. Some larger INGOs also have their own emergency response funds. Examples are Save the Children in Bangladesh and Concern in Pakistan. A limitation of the effectiveness or coverage of an initial response may occur if only their long-standing national partners are able to benefit from such INGO fund. A pooled fund for fast initial emergency response can offer greater potential. In Myanmar, there is no reason why such would not be at least co-managed by Myanmar CSOs – if care is taken to not end up with the few big and well-established ones.

J CAPACITIES TO RESPOND FAST TO RAPID ONSET CRISES

If the strategic purpose and inevitable future situation is that Myanmar actors will and must handle their crises with humanitarian consequences more with their own capacities, then collaborative practices are a key part of this. International relief agencies however project their own internal competition onto Myanmar agencies. As this report shows, unintentionally perhaps, the practices of the international relief sector create or aggravate divisions, hierarchies and dynamics of inclusion and exclusion among Myanmar actors. This undermines their collective bargaining ability with international agencies, but in the longer run weakens their overall societal capabilities. Some Myanmar organisations, as experienced in this research, now do not want to mention which international agencies they work with, get funding and capacity support from, as this becomes a 'commercial' interest. Support for collaborative processes, such as networks (organically created and not as a project of an international organisation), is a meaningful counterbalance.

K NATIONAL CAPACITIES TO SUPPORT CAPACITY SHARING

There are several Myanmar CSOs that provide capacity support to others. Different Myanmar CSO actors are also pointing out to international agencies that they do not want to be turned into copies of INGOs and want the space and opportunity to drive their own collective capacity sharing and development.

For example, Metta established a Center for Development Workers in 2013, which promotes purposeful, ecological and communal living. The centre closely collaborates with local people and organisations and seeks to provide education and training, which relates directly to their wishes and needs. The center provides an opportunity to deepen the understanding of ecological sustainable living systems and to work across physical, environmental, economic, social and emotional boundaries towards survival and change.

Similarly, Ta ang women's organisation established a training centre where they provide 3-10 months courses to women between 18 and 35 years of age, on women's rights, gender, the Myanmar constitution, democracy and other relevant topics. It collaborates with e.g. the Women's League of Burma and other networks and resource persons or organisations. It also invests in preparing volunteers and new staff members to make their contributions to organisations and raise further awareness in their communities.

CASE EXAMPLE: *Paung Ku – Christian Aid partnership and civil society strengthening*

Between 2014 and 2017, Christian Aid and Paung Ku, a Myanmar civil society support organisation, ran an EU-funded '*Strengthening Participation, Accountability and Civil Society Empowerment*' (SPACE) programme. This strengthened an already existing programme through which Paung Ku provided support to some 100 CBOs and CSOs in all 14 states and regions of the country. It apparently took some inspiration from an approach also used by the Three Millennium Development Goal Fund project in consortium with PACT (Grizelj et al 2018). The following table compares the key capacity areas:

PAUNG KU	PACT AND 3 MDGS
• Leadership and decision-making • Systems and resources • Participation, accountability and inclusiveness • Knowledge, skills and learning • Advocacy • Networking	• Mission and strategic planning • Human resource management • Programme management • Financial management • Advocacy • Administrative and logistic support • Fundraising strategy • Monitoring and evaluation

Paung Ku strives for social change and in that context has identified three characteristics of CSOs that are best able to drive positive social change:

1) being able to reflect and use learning to address social injustice;

2) being well organized and effectively manage resources;

3) being capable of expanding their sphere of influence.

The summary of lessons learned, following a final evaluation of the 3-year programme, is worth reproducing (Grizelj et al 2018).[9]

9 From its website https://paungkumyanmar.org/2017/06/12/theory-of-change/

REFLECTIVE ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	• Training is only one element of capacity development. • Organisational development should be integrated into project design. • Patience is a virtue, as building staff capacity requires time. • Build and sustain long-term relationships with partners. • Prioritise mentoring and field visits for partners.
STRENGTHENING FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT	• Internal financial policies should not be driven by donor requirements. • Financial management should not be limited to donor compliance. • Flexibility is essential in managing finances.
BUILDING HORIZONTAL FOUNDATIONS	• Networking facilitates connections, but not necessarily collaboration. • Exchange and learning platforms are useful entry points for collaboration. • Empowering communities requires knowledge dissemination as a first step (followed by support on how to turn new knowledge into action)
ENHANCING VERTICAL INFLUENCE	• Perceived legitimacy of civil society matters for policy engagement. • Evidence-based advocacy is crucial to influence power holders. • Media is an important avenue for civil society to sustain their space.
FUNDING APPROACHES	• Fund the vision, not just the project. • Partner, rather than simply fund. • Duration of funding is more important than the amount. The funding modality should depend on the capacity of the civil society organisation.

Unusual in this approach is the emphasis on 'learning', including 'learning-in-action/learning-through-action', via constant and institutionalized reflection on experience, hence tailored mentoring rather than the roll-out of standardized training packages, and a solid emphasis on collaborative skills. The programme also included a small-grants facility which was used, but disconnected from the capacity development process.

The Joint Strategy Team in Kachin reportedly also wants to develop a 'humanitarian study centre', with courses at introductory, intermediate and senior management level. This would be a public good that all local organisations can benefit from (Martini & Stephen 2020).

> *"Capacity building is really about the reflection process and learning from experience."*
> *(Project manager of Paung Ku, Yangon – quoted in Grizelj et al 2018:9)*

Effective approaches to reinforce national and local capacities therefore start from existing capacities even if they are not easily recognisable in the technical frameworks of internationals, focus on wider organisational development, combine learning in training and workshops with learning through (accompanied) practice (which may require financial resources), are practice oriented for specific cont exts and conditions, and encourage collaborative competencies. This is actually no more than the translation, into another setting, of adult learning principles, taken to the 'learning organisation' level.

4.4 COORDINATION

Regional coordination capacity: Note need should be taken that ASEAN member states enable regional cooperation under the 2005 ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER), and its more operational ASEAN Regional Programme on Disaster Management. The ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA-Centre) is active on disaster monitoring, preparedness and response, and capacity building. It houses the interstate Emergencies Operations Centre and is the operational arm of the ADMER.

Government and UN coordination structure: Here too, the origins of the current set up go back to Cyclone Nargis. The OCHA country office was established in May 2008, in response to Nargis. At the time, a tripartite core group was created of the Government, the UN and

ASEAN, which led the Post-Nargis Joint Assessment and was the authority for the provision of all humanitarian assistance (Asian Disaster Preparedness Center 2018). OCHA works closely with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement on disaster preparedness and response, and serves as secretariat to the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT).

The HCT, established in 2010, is the strategic coordination mechanism to support the GoM. By 2018, its operational response structure consisted of 10 clusters (Asian Disaster Preparedness Center 2018). It connects to the NDMC via the Emergency Operations Centre, hosted by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. The HCT had no local civil society representation until Dec. 2015, after LRC's sustained advocacy. By 2017, four local CSOs were present (Kissy Sumaylo 2017). The four were nominated by international agencies, however, not by their peers (De Geoffroy & Grunewald 2017).

Previous inquiries and the current one confirms that there was a lot of resistance to getting Myanmar CSOs admitted to the HCT, and that those who are in it are still maintaining an attitude of wait and see how much influence they actually have (interview with senior CSO staff).

> *"Getting accepted in the HCT required a lot of advocacy. INGOs were very reluctant as they did not trust the local actors and accused them of leaking things to the government."*
>
> *(De Geoffroy & Grunewald 2017:18)*

Research three years ago found that Myanmar CSOs were not well integrated in the cluster system. Different factors influenced this: they tend to think holistically and not in segregated sectors, do not have the staff time to attend so many meetings, and work closely with state technical departments and municipal institutions, which international coordination mechanisms tend to overlook. There are also language barriers, and ICT and transport challenges (De Geoffroy & Grunewald 2017).

This inquiry, three years later, suggests Myanmar actors are not fully integrated but also not so keen on it. Government officials are not always participating but when they do, CSOs may feel reluctance to share information about displacement and protection issues, as some government officials are ex-military. The same may happen in areas dominated by ethnic minorities, where local CSOs share that identity but the national staff of international organisations are Bamar. This, for example, was reported for the General Coordination meetings for Shan State, which are held in Lashio. Other reasons mentioned were: although internationals do not really know the context well they dominate the meetings; Myanmar CSOs are expected to provide all sorts of information but get little of value in return; the meetings are 'no action, only talk'. There is no point attending for CSOs who only get one or two short-term projects funded such as a distribution of NFI kits. CSOs feel they are only welcomed if they have information and insight to offer, particularly about contexts where internationals are not authorised to go. Yet they also sense the distrust of internationals, that they present biased information about numbers, needs and gaps.

On the whole then, such coordination meetings offer little value to Myanmar actors, in return for their efforts to attend, even more so if they are not based in the town where the meetings take place. More generally, some Myanmar CSO actors feel that international aid contributes to competition and organisational but also interpersonal rivalries and jealousy among CSOs (Paung Sie Facility 2018).

> **"UNHCR leads the coordination for northern Rakhine and OCHA for central Rakhine. It is unclear how they coordinate among themselves. There is unresolved politics and it is hard then for CSOs to trust the functioning of a coordination meeting."**
>
> (Senior staff from international organisation)

Myanmar CSOs are also not blind to competitive dynamics among international agencies.

Also in Rakhine State, still recently, many national organisations are not invited to or attend cluster coordination or working groups. They are not even invited to working groups on CSO collaboration (PDi-Kinitha 2019). Even if a cluster coordinator decides to hold the meetings in various languages, including a local one, that may not be enough to address other disincentives (director of CSO).

On the other hand, some CSO respondents signaled appreciation for the technical learning they get in sectoral coordination meetings. A practice also positively appreciated, is when coordination meetings are scheduled to move between different townships instead of always in the regional capital. The Myanmar Local Resource Centre also organises CSO coordination events at sub-national level. These are full day events, more focused however on broader topics such as development and peace, than on urgent emergency responses. Held in the local language, according to an agenda shaped by Myanmar actors, and with more time, more local CSOs tend to participate.

5

GENDER AND LOCALISATION

Policy-wise, the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (2013-2022) provides a national framework. A key actor for gender and localisation is or can be the Gender Equality Network (GEN) in Myanmar. It currently consists of 49 Myanmar CSOs, 36 INGOs and 19 Technical Resource people. It serves as a resource centre, conducts and publishes research (see e.g. Gender Equality Network 2013 and 2015), engages in advocacy and campaigning and offers capacity support. A current project seeks to engage civil society organisations and local authorities (including members of Regional and State parliaments) for governance and development processes with gender equality. This builds on or complements further actions over many years by peacebuilding organisations, to have greater civil society, and women's, engagement with the ongoing peace and democratization process. The GEN project starts with a capacity assessment, which hopefully avoids the pitfalls identified previously.

Notwithstanding, interviewees from more local women's rights organisations and networks expressed a variety of challenges. Among them are: traditional expectations about women's roles; safety and security concerns when going out to more remote areas for programme work; small numbers of more regularly funded staff making it difficult to conduct a variety of regular activities.

Several commented on the problems they have with the expectation they take part in coordination meetings: they observed that, even if they are present, men on the whole tend to dominate; they simply do not have enough staff available to regularly attend these meetings and having missed some, the lack of continuity gives them less importance; questions why they should attend meetings organised by internationals if no one funds them; and difficulties in understanding the practical meaning of jargon about 'gender equality', 'empowerment', 'intersectionality' etc.

Women commented also on how they find international organisations overly intrusive in how they inquire into the innermost function of their organisation; imposing donor policies and their own; excessively demanding in terms of administration and reporting sometimes beyond donor requirements; and unnecessarily inflexible.

MOVING FORWARD

The international relief system operates according to certain established patterns and practices, with its own power dynamics, incentives and disincentives, and assumptions about the world and itself. There is, therefore, a lot of similarity in how internationalisation plays out in different countries and contexts. Many of the obstacles to return leadership to, or at least share resources and power more equitably with, national and local actors, are structural. Some of the pathways to move forward, therefore, will be quite similar across different contexts, others are Myanmar specific.

Work with a systems-perspective: The Grand Bargain takes a systems-perspective, and so does this inquiry. It calls for systems-change. A systems-perspective looks at the range of actors in a certain environment and how they relate to and interact with each other. A key characteristic of systems is that they want to maintain themselves as they are. They are resistant to change. It takes much combined effort to effect some change. Both in our perspective and in our action, we therefore need to look beyond individual organisations and consider how to affect some deeper structural change.

Broaden information and awareness: The commitments that international actors voluntarily have entered into, and who signed up to which ones, need to be more widely known and understood, in the first place by themselves, but also by Myanmar governmental and non-governmental actors. The Grand Bargain and Charter for Change are short, readable and practical documents, that each contain specific detail of how key commitments will be translated into practice. The Grand Bargain is also very explicit: *"the status quo is not an option"*. Two messages need to accompany their further dissemination, however: While both put emphasis on the responders, international or national/local, the central stakeholders ultimately are crisis-affected people. Commitment 6 of the Grand Bargain, to achieve a participation revolution, is key and, therefore, in GMI's framework, integral part of the approach to localisation. Secondly, the commitment of international actors to more equitably share resources and power does not mean an automatic entitlement for national and local actors. With this comes greater responsibility and accountability. While most change needs to happen on the side of those who hold most power and resources, change is also required on the side of national and local actors.

Clarify the broader vision: The Grand Bargain failed to articulate a vision of what success would look like. Clarification is required what the ultimate vision is? Two different visions may exist: one foresees a situation in which Myanmar agencies, governmental and non-governmental, collectively have the capabilities to lead and largely manage by themselves the responses to humanitarian crises effectively; international financial and technical assistance actors support where needed. Another envisages a situation in which Myanmar actors, governmental and non-governmental, can meet the evolving requirements of international relief actors, who therefore retain power and control. It also becomes a justification for more money for localisation going to international agencies to do more 'capacity-building'. Why would doing more of the same lead to different results? When do national agencies have a graduation ceremony after which they will be treated with respect, as CSOs in the Pacific islands asked?

The first vision is in line with the purpose and spirit of the Grand Bargain, and more suited to a future in which less aid may be available. It is not an argument for poor standards and a disrespect for fundamental humanitarian principles. But it does mean that international actors accept that when national actors develop their capabilities to manage their own chal-

lenges increasingly themselves, they will not meet international standards overnight and may not always copy exactly how the international relief sector does things. It also does not mean that international actors are no longer needed: they bring financial resources and valuable expertise. The key difference lies in a change of roles and attitudes: international actors play more clearly a supporting and reinforcing role and are not the key decision-makers who use Myanmar agencies to implement their plans and programmes. The first vision also implies a different narrative about why national and local actors need to be supported. This cannot be only because they are 'the first responders', or because they have access to and insights in communities that international agencies find hard to reach but like to use for their own purposes. It should be because the vision that national actors (who will remain even if aid volumes decline and international agencies scale down or leave) competently manage their own challenges, is a desirable strategic objective. That is, after all, the situation in aid-providing countries. The ultimate measure of success is the legacy that international actors leave behind, in terms of strong collective capabilities among national and local actors.

Agree on medium-term outcomes: Moving from the current situation to the desired one will take time and requires a deliberate process. A set of medium-term outcomes (2-3 years) can be articulated that all key actors collectively agree to work towards and hold each other accountable for. Examples of what that may look like can be found in the Operational Framework for Localisation adopted by the Federal Ministry of Finance, Budget and National Planning in Nigeria, or the Localisation Framework now in use for Somalia. Specific activities and roles and responsibilities can be determined, as well as progress indicators measured. The outcomes and progress indicators may vary for different Regions and States, and priorities may be established between them.

The LP2 localisation/partnership task force: This may be the space to develop the above, depending on how it handles itself. Comparable working groups or task forces are emerging, more or less in this same period, in other countries: Jordan, Bangladesh, Somalia, etc. Care is required, however, that this task force walks the talk i.e. that national and local actors have equal weight and influence in it. Foundational questions for the design of such task force are: Who is involved in shaping its design? What is its purpose? What is the composition? Who is included and in what capacity? What would make it well-functioning and eventually successful? To whom is it accountable and how? Key attention points are:

- What is its purpose, what would its vision of what success is look like? Initially, the primary objective seemed a better 'mapping' of Myanmar CSOs and who is partnering with whom, what capacity building is being done - and looking for other opportunities for direct funding. Interviewees feel that remains too much a top-down, donor-driven perspective. What is the vision of Myanmar CSOs and how will the LP2 contribute (also) to that?
- Is there a common interpretation of 'localisation'? GMI has identified at least different interpretations of the same term, several of which are not in line with the purpose and spirit of the Grand Bargain and the Charter for Change. A view on localisation that mostly requires change from local actors to better meet the requirements of international actors, who themselves do not change much, confirms the supremacy of international actors. It is more an extension of internationalisation. The Grand Bargain and C4C and previous commitments such as the 2007 Principles of Partnership, are commitments to change from and for international actors.

- Localisation' is a multi-dimensional issue that plays out at different levels. Does LP2 have some frameworks to inform a common understanding and keep the reflection and conversation well structured? Reportedly, too many stakeholders see it only in terms of 'funding' and 'capacity strengthening'. Both are important, but there is more to it than that. It is also about longer term vision, equitable partnership, sharing risks and credit, and sharing power. 'Power over' has to become 'power with'. To be credible, LP2 needs to have honest conversations about power, its responsible use and abuse.
- Discuss power, and its responsible use and abuse. Power inequalities are a key issue in the dynamics between international and national relief actors (and within each as well). The concern for accountability has led to practicing of 'power over', to the detriment of 'power with'. Power with, a collaborative concept that sees sharing power as offering greater rather than less potential, is not an obstacle to accountability.
- How to ensure this has broad reach but is also very inclusive, beyond the handful of big CSOs (METTA, KMSS, Myanmar Red Cross being some of them), and leads to more effective support for many other Myanmar agencies? The 'localisation' policy and practice commitments, correctly, relate primarily to the nature of interaction between international relief actors who came to provide assistance to national and local actors, faced with one or more crisis situations. A little-explored attention point becomes that of the dynamics of power and inclusion/exclusion among national and local actors.
- The inclusion of development and peace actors, or at what point in the process? The question has been asked, and there are obvious arguments pro and against. Arguments against can be that the 'localisation' agenda applies first and foremost to the relief sector, that respect for humanitarian principles is a key consideration, and that too many participants will make the process unwieldy. On the other hand, there is a stronger practice of direct funding and institutional development support in these sectors, and there is learning to be had from how they manage 'risks' and build trust. Furthermore, as mentioned, many Myanmar CSOs may do 'humanitarian work' but do not want to reduce themselves to de-politicised 'humanitarian agencies': alleviating symptoms is important, but the underlying causes need to be resolved. Some have been involved in 'nexus' conversations with international actors years before the World Humanitarian Summit (see also Thomas & VOICE 2019; for an introduction to the 'nexus' see Van Brabant 2020b).
- Be attentive to the quality of listening and conversation in the LP2? Are participants speaking as aid administrators, can they also speak as change makers? Is there deep listening, with open mind and empathy? Are there meaningful conversations that go beyond 'me' and 'you', or 'us' and 'them', but shift to 'how do we – together?' Do exercises where donors, UN agencies, INGO people and Myanmar CSO people step into the shoes of one another, and speak and feel from what they sense is that experience, what constraints that other is subjected to, what that other wants and needs, and how you can help?
- Work with the deeper levels of systems change, as visualised in this graph from FSG, a consultancy group of change agents (Kania, Kramer & Senge 2018). Localisation is not just about policies, practices and resource sharing. It is also about relationships and power dynamics. And underneath that mindsets, beliefs, assumptions, images of self and the other, that shape behaviours.

Bilateral and multilateral aid donors: Donors have a critical role to play. Their control over the financial resources, can be used to set agendas and determines incentives/disincentives.

- Most donors have signed up to the Grand Bargain and many of the Grand Bargain commitments require modifications in donor practices. They need to follow through on their promise.
- Donors must be more activist: they can inquire more deeply into the quality of relationship between their international first receivers and their respective partners, and whether the latter receive the quality of funding they too need and deserve. What happens to the management fee (Internal Cost Recovery) is a key attention point. They can find out whether partnerships and consortia involving Myanmar actors are genuine, or opportunistic constructs because the donor encouraged it?
- Donors can also be much more watchful about 'capacity-building' in proposals. This needs to be treated as a core outcome in its own right: it needs to be clear what success will look like, how it will be evaluated and, critically, what role changes will take place between the two (or more) collaborating agencies, when capacity has successfully been strengthened?
- Donors also need to realise that partnership, access to quality finance and organisational capacities are intrinsically linked – not dimensions that can be handled totally separately.
- Localisation is also not an issue for NGOs/CSOs only. A significant proportion of global humanitarian aid goes to UN agencies. On the occasion of the 75th anniversary of the UN, questions were asked about its core mandate and core roles: should they be increasingly implementers or rather norm promoters, enablers, coordinators, technical assistance providers? Is there coherence in how different UN agencies deal with national/local partners or contractors? Donors need to reflect on whether their engagement with Myanmar CSOs in their development, peacebuilding and governance support is coherent with that in their humanitarian administration? If the international relief actors bring fear and distrust and, unintentionally, increase competition and fragmentation among Myanmar CSOs, or undermine their self-confidence by focusing on the capacities they do not have rather than those they have: how does that serve the wider purpose of an inclusive and cohesive Myanmar, unitary or federal, with strong participatory governance around democratic values?
- Donors need to reflect more deeply on value-for-money: what is value-for-money in the short term may no longer be so in the longer-term. Not really investing in developing a stronger humanitarian action capacity also among Myanmar CSOs, in the medium term implies continued reliance on more expensive international agency expertise and infrastructures. That is a 'risk' that seldom appears in risk matrices.
- Do not shy away from further experimenting with Myanmar fund- or sub-grant managers. There are successful examples (another one is the Manusher Jonno Foundation in Bangladesh). If needed, these can be supported by international advisors and will of course be audited.
- A more nuanced narrative and attitude to risk is also required: A globally heard narrative that national and local actors constitute a higher risk (of fraud and corruption, political partiality etc.) needs to be balanced with greater acknowledgment of the sexual abuse and exploitation, fraud and corruption and toxic organisational cultures that (also) plague international aid organisations. Finally, only focusing on risk and risk control measures without simultaneous efforts to build trust, in the end will lead to a situation where of every US$ 100, US$ 60 is spent on control measures to ensure that the remaining US$ 40 is correctly used. When does the compliance tax become disproportionate? Risk avoid-

ance and risk transfer practices do not help Myanmar: durable peace in Myanmar requires practice in risk sharing and trust building. Are international relief actors modeling this?

Myanmar CSOs: Some Myanmar CSOs may want to specialise in humanitarian response, many others may want to remain multi-mission agencies with strong social welfare, rights protection, development and peace work.

- They can come (further) together to strengthen their collective standards and capabilities. Rather than only being subjected to integrity and competency standards by international actors, they can develop and make public their own standards of integrity and quality, who they see themselves accountable to and how they will realise that accountability. The primary audience for this is the government but especially the people residing in Myanmar and the original donors (individuals and tax payers) who financially support them.
- They can also further reflect on their own complementarities. Not every CSO needs to have expertise on every technical or thematic area. A stronger emphasis on collective capacities for the public good rather than agency-centric competition, can create new ideas about strategic capacity development.
- A collective reflection may also be useful about shared strategies for greater gender equity, and the comparative benefits of women's organisations and gender mainstreaming in other organisations.
- Myanmar CSOs have the right to assess whether international actors are living up to their promises and question them on that. A periodic scorecard exercise, as starting point for a constructive conversation, can be envisaged. They can provide more evidence e.g. in documenting how many due diligence and capacity-assessments they have undergone, what capacity-development offers they have received and who determined them, for which projects they had their core costs covered and/or received a flexible management fee, where an international grant maker cut their proposed salaries or equipment requests etc. They can also help international actors live up to their commitments by coming up with thoughtful proposals on how to turn these commitments into reality. The ability to be propositional gives a stronger bargaining position.

Radically rethink capacity-support: This inquiry points at examples for more cost-effective approaches to capacity-support than the current, heavily fragmented and fairly ineffective ones.

- Change the narrative of capacity-building to 'capacity-sharing' and 'joint learning'.
- Be conscious of unhelpful and counterproductive deficit thinking: focusing on what Myanmar CSOs do not have (and that international think they should have). Come with an appreciative inquiry approach for the capacities they have – even if they do not appear in the formalistic framework of international agencies. Starting from a glass half full generates more positive energy than starting from a glass half empty.
- Given the likely continuation, for several years to come still, of various types of crisis with humanitarian consequences, Myanmar should have and primarily be able to rely on its own centers of excellence for research, and practical training and organisational accompaniment on humanitarian action. These can be in universities or independent centres.
- There is sufficient learning now that organisational accompaniment is more effective than stand-alone training workshops, and that national and local actors value more opportunities for peer learning.

- Organisational development support is a competency. Learn about it (e.g. Ubels, Acquaye-Baddoo & Fowler 2010).

Active participation in coordination spaces outcome: The Global Protection Cluster developed a framework to assess the quality of localisation in its cluster (Nolan & Dozin 2019). This is more widely applicable. It should be borne in mind, however, that national/local actors face two challenges: the ability to be able to be present and when they are, to meaningfully participate. Those can be overcome. More fundamental issues are those of no perceived benefit, dynamics of status and rank, and low trust in other participants. Learn about how local agencies de facto coordinate, and work with them to identify possible limitations or weaknesses, and how these can best be remedied. If they feel the value and own the purpose of 'coordinated' action, they can be propositional about how especially local level coordination can be made more efficient and effective.

Specific interagency collaborations: Within the context of such broader system-wide and strategic approach, individual international agencies and the Myanmar ones they collaborate with, or Myanmar CSOs and the various international agencies that collaborate with them, can review where they currently are with respect to on the four or all seven dimensions of GMI's framework. Inspiration can also be drawn from the framework of the Humanitarian Advisory Group and PIANGO (2019). A tool to examine power dynamics in the collaboration has recently been developed by The Spindle (2020). Once the current relationship is examined, both sides can discuss where they want to be and how they will get there – together.

Domestic funding: In the longer run Myanmar organisations will want to and must reduce their dependency on international aid, which in any case comes with heavy transaction costs. Should the economic impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic affect aid from the traditional donors, or should Myanmar become a 'Middle Income Country' which typically leads to a drastic reduction in development aid, then the run may not be that long. That raises the issue of creating the fiscal incentives and the practical platforms for giving by the general public, philantropists and corporations, as well as Myanmar CSOs learning more about alternative approaches to income generation such as social enterprises, crowdfunding etc. Relevant experience, proof-of-concept and advice may be found more in creative civil society and social entrepreneurship entities in other aid recipient countries, than among UN agencies and INGOs. Organisational communications capabilities of CSOs are important here. Care is required that international organisations (or their nationalised branches) do not use this domestic fundraising for their own financial benefit, once again outcompeting Myanmar CSOs.

Relationships and trust are built through conversations not recommendations: The Seven Dimensions framework puts the quality of relationship first. That resonates with the 2007 Principles of Partnership, another commitment of the international humanitarian actors. The Localisation Framework for Somalia sets as one of the key principles "respect and trust". Where distrust prevails, nothing else will significantly change. Relationship building happens through conversations, before and during collaboration. At times difficult, and therefore courageous, conversations will need to be held to enable responsible but also substantive progress towards greater localisation. Without honest and respectful conversations, recommendations will remain dead letters on paper.

REFERENCES

Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (2018). Myanmar Baseline Assessment Country Report: Programme for strengthening capacity of governments, local humanitarian organisations and the private sector on preparedness for emergency response in Asia. https://app.adpc.net/resources/myanmar-baseline-assessment-report/

Barbelet, V. (2019). Local humanitarian action in the Democratic Republic of Congo: capacity and complementarity. *HPG Working Paper*. London: ODI https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/12626.pdf

Benson, E. & Jaquet, C. (2014). Faith-based Humanitarianism in northern Myanmar. *Forced Migration Review*, n. 48, pp. 48-50 https://www.fmreview.org/sites/fmr/files/FMRdownloads/en/faith/benson-jaquet.pdf

Christian Aid, Tearfund, CARE, ActionAid, CAFOD, Oxfam (2019a). Acceleration Localisation through Partnerships. Recommendations for operational practices that strengthen the leadership of national and local actors in partnership-based humanitarian action in Myanmar. https://www.christianaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-07/accelerating-localisation-research-summary-myanmar.pdf

Christian Aid, Tearfund, CARE, ActionAid, CAFOD, Oxfam (2019b). Acceleration Localisation through Partnerships. Recommendations for operational practices that strengthen the leadership of national and local actors in partnership-based humanitarian action globally. https://www.christianaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-07/accelerating-localisation-research-summary-global.pdf

Debarre, A. (2019). Delivering Healthcare Amid Crisis: The humanitarian response in Myanmar. Washington D.C.: International Peace Institute https://www.ipinst.org/2019/02/humanitarian-response-in-myanmar

De Geoffroy, V. & Grunewald, F. (2017). More than the Money - Localisation in practice. *Tròcaire* https://www.trocaire.org/sites/default/files/resources/policy/more-than-the-money-localisation-in-practice.pdf

De Jager Meezenbroek, F. (2019). Partnership in Practice. Steps to localization, *Tròcaire* https://www.trocaire.org/sites/default/files/resources/policy/partnership_in_practice_-_steps_to_localisation_web.pdf

FHI 360, ICNL & USAID (2019). 2018 Civil Society Organization Sustainability Index for Asia. Washington D.C.: USAID https://www.fhi360.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/resource-csosi-2018-report-asia.pdf

Fortify Rights (2018). "They Block Everything": Avoidable deprivations in humanitarian aid to ethnic civilians displaced by war in Kachin State, Myanmar https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/they-block-everything-avoidable-deprivations-humanitarian-aid-ethnic-civilians

Gender Equality Network (2013). Taking the lead: An assessment of Women's Leadership Training Needs and Training Initiatives in Myanmar. Yangon: The Gender Equality Network https://www.genmyanmar.org/research_and_publications?year=2013

Gender Equality Network (2015). Raising the Curtain: Cultural Norms, Social Practices and Gender Equality in Myanmar. Yangon: The Gender Equality Network https://www.genmyanmar.org/research_and_publications?year=2015

Global Mentoring Initiative (2019). The Finance and Economics of Localisation: Is the 25% a key performance truth?, GMI https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58256bc615d5db852592fe40/t/5d22e9d941ec3a0001199831/1562569188025/The+finance+and+economics+of+localisation+GMI.pdf

Global Mentoring Initiative (2020a). Advancing Localisation through a Localisation Task Force. Design questions & clarity of understanding - a resource note, GMI https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58256bc615d5db852592fe40/t/5f22a61acdc4214a7fc84801/1596106269289/GMI+Localisation+Task+Force+design+tips.pdf

Global Mentoring Initiative (2020b). Contextual Factors that Influence the Degree of Localisation or Internationalisation and, - in case of significant internationalization, the speed and trajectory of localization - Insight 13, GMI https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58256bc615d5db852592fe40/t/5efb56ee4aabcf689a8574b1/1593530094546/GMI+-+Contextual+-factors+influencing+localisation.pdf

Global Mentoring Initiative (2020c). Dimensions of Localisation, GMI https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58256bc615d5db852592fe40/t/5f1e9d7e33dc5444793ca391/1595841921735/GMI+Dimensions+localisation+2020.pdf

Global Mentoring Initiative (2020d). Localisation Bibliography & video links, GMI Resource https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58256bc615d5db852592fe40/t/5e5f469bbde2235655ea85df/1583302303126/GMI+Localisation+Bibliography+2020.pdf

Global Mentoring Initiative (2020e). Value Contributions in Partnerships: Are you having the conversation?, GMI https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58256bc615d5db852592fe40/t/5e5ca60e9d9d61249de86f3d/1583130127005/GMI+on+partnerships+5+Value+adding.pdf

Global Mentoring Initiative (2020f). Why Localisation? Why Now? - Insight 12, GMI https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58256bc615d5db852592fe40/t/5ef5aa174e5e6938e55e921b/1593158168352/GMI+2020+Why+localisation.pdf

Green, D. (2016). How change happens. New York: Oxford Univ Press https://library.oapen.org/bitstream/id/a2d96f5a-5189-4cf8-a876-d44eda71545f/618650.pdf

Grizelj, I., Lidauer, M. & Tun, S. (2018). Civil Society Strengthening in Myanmar: Good practice and lessons learned. Christian Aid & Paung Ku https://www.christianaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/2022-07/civil-society-strengthening-in-myanmar-j49480-may-2018.pdf

HARP-F (2018). Kachin and Northern Shan State Context and Vulnerability Review. https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/kachin-and-northern-shan-state-context-and-vulnerability-review-october-2018

HARP-F & MIMU (2018). Vulnerability in Myanmar: A Secondary Data Review of Needs, Coverage and Gaps http://themimu.info/sites/themimu.info/files/documents/Report_Vulnerability_in_Myanmar_HARP-MIMU_Jun2018_ENG_Print_version.pdf

Jirauni Osborne, J., Ilolahia, S., Flint, J., Henty, P., Less, J., & Sutton, K. (2019). Measuring Localisation: Frameworks and tools. Humanitarian Advisory Group & PIANGO https://humanitarianadvisorygroup.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Measuring-Localisation-Framework-and-Tools-Final_2019.pdf

Kania, J., Kramer, M. & Senge, P. (2018). The Water of System Change. FSG https://www.fsg.org/resource/water_of_systems_change/

Kissy Sumaylo, K. (2017). Civil society driving momentum for locally led humanitarian actions, *in Local humanitarian Action in Practice: case studies and reflections of local humanitarian*, Humanitarian Leadership Academy & British Red Cross, pp 49 – 55 https://reliefweb.int/report/world/local-humanitarian-action-practice-case-studies-and-reflections-local-humanitarian

Lanjouw, S., Phuah, C. & Phan, L. (2016). The Art of Networking: A study of civil society networks in Myanmar. DantDaLun Management and Consulting Services https://themimu.info/sites/themimu.info/files/assessment_file_attachments/A_Study_of_Civil_Society_Networks_in_Myanmar_-_EU_2016.pdf

Maietta, M., Kennedy, E., Rundel, T., Keith, A., Bastin, A. & Watt-Smith, V. (2018). From Voices to Choices - Expanding crisis-affected people's influence over aid decisions: An outlook to 2040. IARAN https://static1.squarespace.com/static/593eb9e7b8a79bc4102fd8aa/t/5be216ff562fa77a941b14eb/1541543685634/Voices2Choices_FINAL-compressed.pdf

Martini, A. & Stephen, M. (2020). Turning the Tables: Insights from locally led humanitarian partnerships in conflict-affected situations. SAFERWORLD & Save the Children Sweden https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/turning_the_tables_report_may_2020.pdf/

Myint-U, T. (2008). The River of Lost Footsteps: A personal history of Burma. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux

No author (2005). Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response, *ASEAN* https://disasterlaw.ifrc.org/sites/default/files/media/disaster_law/2020-08/N112EN.pdf

No author (2007). Principles of Partnership: A Statement of Commitment, Global Humanitarian Platform https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/system/files/2021-12/Principles%20of%20Partnership%20%28by%20Global%20Humanitarian%20Platform%29.pdf

No author (2019). Summary Note on the Meeting with National NGOs

Nolan, A. & Dozin, M. E. (2019). Advancing the localisation agenda in protection coordination groups. Learning Paper, Global Protection Cluster https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/sites/default/files/2022-02/learning_paper-on-localisatoin-screen.pdf

PDi-Kintha (2019). International and National Organisations in Central Rakhine State: Collaboration and perspective https://www.kintha-pdi.org/sites/kintha-pdi.org/files/publication-docs/19-09-30_final_international_and_national_collaboration_report_pdi.pdf

Patel, S. & Van Brabant, K. (2017). The Start Fund, Start Network and Localisation: Current situation and future directions. *Start Network* https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/the-start-fund-start-network-and-localisation-current-situation-and-future-directions/

Paung Sie Facility (2018). Unlocking civil society and peace in Myanmar: Opportunities, obstacles and undercurrents https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/unlocking-civil-society-and-peace-myanmar-opportunities-obstacles-and-undercurrents

Seymour, C. (2019). The Myth of International Protection: War and Survival in Congo. University of California Press https://www.ucpress.edu/book/9780520299849/the-myth-of-international-protection

South, A. & Harragin, S. (2012). Local to Global Protection in Myanmar (Burma), Sudan, South Sudan and Zimbabwe. *HPN Network Paper*, n. 72. London: ODI https://www.cmi.no/file/1538-Local-to-Global-Protection-in-Myanmar-Burma-Sudan-South-Sudan-and-Zimbabwe.pdf

South, A. (2018). Protecting civilians in the Kachin borderlands, Myanmar: key threats and local responses. *HPG Working Paper*. London: ODI https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/12566.pdf

Tallack, B. (2020). The Existential Funding Challenge for Northern INGOs. https://icscentre.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/THE-EXISTENTIAL-FUNDING-CHALLENGE-FOR-NORTHERN-INGOS-002.pdf

Thomas, M. & VOICE (2019). NGO Perspectives on the EU's Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus. *VOICE Report* https://voiceeu.org/publications/ngos-perspectives-on-the-eu-s-humanitarian-development-peace-nexus.pdf

Ubels, J., Acquaye-Baddoo, N. & Fowler, A. (2010). Capacity Development in Practice. London: Earthscan https://issuu.com/localworks/docs/ubels__jan__capacity_development_in

Van Brabant, K. & Patel, S. (2017). Understanding the localisation debate, *Global Mentoring Initiatives* http://a4ep.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/GMI-UNDERSTANDING-THE-LOCALISATION-DEBATE.pdf

Van Brabant, K. & Patel, S. (2018). Localisation in Practice: emerging indicators and practical recommendations, *disasters & emergencies preparedness programme*. London: Start network and GMI https://reliefweb.int/report/world/localisation-practice-emerging-indicators-and-practical-recommendations

Van Brabant, K. (2020a). Localisation: holistic perspectives urgently needed, *Global Mentoring Initiatives* https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58256bc615d5db852592fe40/t/5e96e8689a52bc41b030c523/1586948201429/GMI+Insights+10+Holistic+perspectives+on+localisation.pdf

Van Brabant, K. (2020b). The Humanitarian-Development-Peace & Security Nexus, *Global Mentoring Initiatives & Center on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding (CCDP)* https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58256bc615d5db852592fe40/t/5f90598a050bd23a7f986ba0/1603295626964/Intro+to+the+Nexus.pdf

IMPRINT

© Deutsche Welthungerhilfe e. V.
Friedrich-Ebert-Straße 1
53173 Bonn,
Germany

info@together-for-localisation.org
www.together-for-localisation.org

March 2021

EDITING:
Dr. Claudia Streit

GRAPHIC DESIGN:
Anja Weingarten

COVER PHOTOS:
© CERA

OTHER PUBLICATIONS IN THE STATE OF LOCALISATION SERIES

SERIES NO. 1: The state of localisation – A comparative analysis of the findings of eight country assessments
SERIES NO. 2: We still need to talk – The state of localisation in Bangladesh
SERIES NO. 3: A pending debate – The state of localisation in Colombia
SERIES NO. 4: More than a project – The state of localisation in the Democratic Republic of Congo
SERIES NO. 5: Turning promises into practice – The state of localisation in Ethiopia
SERIES NO. 6: Reinforcing and supporting national and local actors in Indonesia – Where are we now?
SERIES NO. 8: Building resilience – The state of localisation in Pakistan
SERIES NO. 9: Building the ship while sailing it – The state of localisation in Somalia

german
humanitarian
assistance
DEUTSCHE HUMANITÄRE HILFE

TOGETHER PARTNERS