Detailed Gender Analysis Report

Project number: 51242-002
October 2019

MYA: Resilient Community Development Project
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the detailed gender analysis undertaken during the preparation of the Resilient Community Development Project (RCDP) in Myanmar. The project impact (incomes of rural households improved and resilience of communities to climate and disaster risks strengthened) will contribute to the Government’s Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 1, 2 and 13 (SDG 1, SDG 2 and SDG 13). The regions/states of Ayeyarwady, Chin, Sagaing (including the Naga Self-Administrative Zone (NSAZ)) and Tanintharyi have been identified as climate and disaster vulnerable project target areas. The proposed RCDP is categorized as effective gender mainstreaming (EGM) and will involve activities that contribute to gender equity and women’s empowerment. The Transitional Technical Assistance (TRTA) gender and social development consultants together with ADB Senior Social Development Specialist and Department of Rural Development (DRD) personnel undertook participatory assessments in selected areas of the four target regions during April – June 2018. The gender issues of the target populations were analyzed to better understand the context and conditions in selected areas.

Overview of gender issues in project geographical areas. Across the different regions and ethnicities which make up the proposed target communities of RCDP there are similarities regarding the expectations placed on men and women concerning their responsibilities and roles. The identity markers for women are principally their roles as daughter, wife and mother. The roles of men are determined by their obligations as family breadwinners, heads of household and community leaders. Social customs are such that permission-granting authority is transferred from a woman’s parents to her husband when she marries, and men perceive themselves, and are perceived by women, as natural possessors of decision-making authority.

It is usual for men only to attend village meetings and, in communities where women do attend village meetings, they tend to be silent observers who do not participate in the discussions or decisions under consideration. Many women remain reticent of speaking in public. The absence of women in village-level authority structures also stems from cultural norms. The mobility of women is constrained by accepted limitations on where married women can travel alone, which are governed by the husband’s concerns about respectability and safety.

There is a similar gendered division of labor between husbands working outside the home to earn the family’s livelihood, and wives undertaking domestic duties such as cleaning, washing clothes, meal preparation and taking care of children and elderly family members. In addition, women are responsible for cultivating the household plot, raising poultry or pigs, fetching water, and gathering firewood. Husbands occasionally assist with woman-identified work if the woman is ill or in advanced pregnancy. In households which have land, women also work in the fields together with their husbands. For the landless, the most common livelihood arrangement is for the husband to work as a day laborer and the wife to tend the household plot: this is partly driven by the discrepancy between wage rates for men’s and women’s daily labor, which are frequently lower for women by one-third. Despite these norms, rural women also engage in casual labor on construction and road-building when opportunities arise.

The main triggers for household conflict between husbands and wives are insufficient food and money to pay for schooling costs and medical expenses.

Chin state. In northern Chin, a patriarchal clan system exists where customary law places men as law makers, and women are largely excluded from decision-making processes. Chin women are deprived of ownership rights to land, house and other important properties, making them dependent on their male guardians. The elder son usually inherits the land, house and other
important property. If there is no son, the husband’s brothers are next in line for inheritance. A Chin widow is prohibited from inheriting assets from her husband, being merely allowed to continue to live in the family house and manage the property. A childless widow is very vulnerable to being evicted from the family's house. Marriage arrangements are initiated by men through inter-family negotiations, and while in some cases women may be allowed to observe such meetings, they are excluded from deciding on their husband and from deciding on the bride price. The payment of a bride price essentially transfers the bride to her husband’s clan, giving responsibility for guardianship to husbands or relatives in the case of divorce or death respectively. Consequently, a woman may be viewed as her husband’s property, and bestowed a lower status inside the family. A decision to proceed with a divorce, if initiated by the wife, requires the repayment of the bride price to the husband’s family before the divorce can be effective. If a man initiates the divorce, he has to forfeit the bride price he gave to the bride’s family.

While a gendered division of labor remains the norm, with Chin women principally responsible for domestic and childcare work, this scenario is now changing, and they frequently also manage household income and expenditure, although not expenditure related to major investment decisions. Domestic violence is common, together with victim-blaming, and is often associated with alcohol abuse. Section 15(A) of the Chin Special Division Act recognizes the male-dominated local customary law in cases of family law-related issues. Most family problems are, therefore, resolved privately by male elders and relatives of the two parties in dispute, following the local custom.

Naga Self-Administered Zone. The Naga ethnic group is comprised of several tribes and clans in North-west Sagaing Division, and the NSAZ comprises the hill townships of Layshi, Lahe and Nanyon. Patriarchal customary practices and the status of women in Naga society, are very similar to those of Chin tribes. Arranged marriages were common for the Naga in the past although consensual marriage is now more usual. The payment of a bride price by the bridegroom to the bride’s family is still common practice. On marriage, the bride loses her Naga clan title and adopts that of her husband. Family assets are owned by male family members and are passed down to sons. Marriage between maternal cousins is encouraged in Naga groups. Monogamy is the usual practice amongst the Naga, although in some tribes such as the Konyak Naga, polygamy is widely practiced as well as child marriage.

Men are the major decision-makers for the community, and women are traditionally not included in decision-making processes of the clan or community and there is no female village administrator or village head. Women may be unable to speak Burmese, and illiteracy is not uncommon amongst women, particularly amongst the middle-aged. The stereotypical Naga woman is expected to be obedient and humble and her roles and responsibilities are mostly reproductive and within the family. At the same time, Naga women are actively involved in agricultural activities together with their husbands, and they supplement household income by weaving shawls and rearing domestic animals such as pigs and poultry.

Central west Sagaing region. The majority of the population is Bamar, together with some Chin, Shan, Kachin and Naga ethnic groups. Customary laws are followed by ethnic groups for inheritance rights where land is passed down to male family members, but women may inherit family jewelry and furniture. Amongst the Bamar, women’s names are recognized on land use certificates indicating that land is owned equally with their husband. Women are not key community decision-makers, however, nor are they members of village administrations or institutions.
Because of the lack of job opportunities and high levels of household debt, there is significant out-migration of men from the region to work in mining in neighboring States. Wives and children are left behind and become de facto female-headed households. Out-migration also leads to agricultural labor shortages at village-level. Frequently, migrant men establish second families in their new place of residence and out-migrate permanently.

**Tanintharyi region.** The majority of people are ethnic Bamar and the other ethnic groups include Karen, Mon and coastal Moken communities. There is a bride price system in place for marriages and women from wealthy families, property owners, university graduates, government civil servants or teachers command high bride prices. Both men and women have equal inheritance rights to land and property and the latter is shared equally among children. Although there is no barrier to village women attending community meetings, their role as local leaders is generally considered unacceptable by their spouses. There are incidents of domestic violence as a result of alcohol and drug abuse, and arguments concerning household financial problems. Because of the social stigma associated with divorce and separation, especially for children, women mostly remain with abusive spouses and do not separate. Coastal villages rely on fishing resources, while many isolated upland communities rely on subsistence farming. Fishing contributes significantly to the economy in coastal areas of Tanintharyi. Offshore fishing employs men and fish processing work is undertaken by women.

Household debt and lack of employment opportunities are major push factors for out-migration of both husbands and wives. Migration to Thailand is the destination of choice, with couples leaving their children in the care of their elderly parents. Following completion of primary or secondary schooling, both young boys and girls also out-migrate in search of employment. Remittances from family members are a significant contribution to household incomes. The labor shortages caused by out-migration tend to be filled by incoming migrants from other parts of the country to work in the rubber and palm oil plantations. Wage rates for men and women working in palm oil plantations are estimated to be almost equal.

**Ayeyarwady region.** The largest ethnic group in Ayeyarwady is Bamar followed by the Karen (Kayin) and a small ethnic Rakhine group. Marriage is consensual. Women are able to hold land ownership rights and have been able to access affordable credit. Women, however, rarely hold leadership positions or play key roles in important decision-making in Delta region villages, and reportedly prefer men to take the lead in community decision-making. Time constraints caused by household chores and fishery- or agriculture-related work are another reason cited for women’s lack of involvement in community affairs. Women’s participation in village events is usually focused on religious functions, preparing food for social events, and attending Parents Teachers Association meetings at schools.

There is significant out-migration of men and women from Ayeyarwady and a significant number of girls drop out of school after primary education in order to supplement the family income or help with household chores. The incidence of forced child labor is common for shop-work; small industries and in agriculture. Gender-based violence occurs and is reportedly caused by alcohol and drug abuse. Landless villagers depend, in part, on fishing for their livelihood although the activity is not sustainable during monsoon storms. Approximately 30% of landless work as casual day laborers. Both men and women are involved in paddy rice cultivation. Daily wage rates for men and women working in agriculture are, generally, not equal, although reportedly equal for work in aquaculture fisheries.

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1 Bride prices reportedly range from MK5 to 15 million. Anecdotal data collected during RCDP TRTA social analysis.
2 Access to microcredit is significant in the Delta area.
Myanmar’s Constitution guarantees equal rights to all persons before the law and equal legal protection and does not discriminate against any Myanmar citizen on the basis of sex. It does not however, include an effective guarantee of substantive equality. There is a lack of a comprehensive definition of discrimination against women, which encompasses both direct and indirect discrimination in both the public and private spheres in line with Article 1 of the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), to which Myanmar is a signatory. The Constitution also still contains references to women as mothers, which may reinforce the stereotype that women’s primary role is childbearing. In politics, women remain significantly under-represented. Patriarchal attitudes and discriminatory stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society, persist. Women do not occupy commensurate senior levels of economic decision-making, despite their educational attainments.

Some of the most significant barriers to women’s economic empowerment in Myanmar include weak implementation of labor laws; gender norms restricting roles for women; a persistent gender pay gap; restrictions on movement; low levels of formal female employment; and poor representation across economic, social and political institutions.

DRD staff numbers disaggregated by gender, in those regions / townships where RCDP could be implemented indicate that, of the senior-level officers in target townships, only 3 of the 17 senior staff are female. Conversely, there are almost twice as many junior officers who are female (115 women) than male (68 men). At DRD Headquarters level, the gender breakdown of staff is more balanced. At senior level there are 53 males and 44 females. In the regions in particular, senior civil service staff is male-dominated.³

RCDP builds on the Enhancing Rural Livelihood Improvement Project (ERLIP) and the National Community Driven Development Project (NCDDP). Each community infrastructure cycle will last approximately 6-12 months depending on the season, the feasibility and complexity of subprojects and the preparedness of communities to undertake project activities.⁴ For the livelihood interventions, the project will build capacity of communities to engage in livelihood activities and provide a one-off investment to targeted livelihood groups identified from the poorest, most vulnerable 40% of households in participating villages, to intensify or diversify means of livelihood and enhance the impact of infrastructure investments. As with ERLIP, RCDP will use the established community planning processes of the government under the Village Development Plan (VDP) and will strengthen the social preparation and training component applied by ERLIP, including incorporating disaster and climate risk and market and employment opportunities assessments in project operations. At least half of the Village Development Support Committee (VDSC) members must be women. Livelihood interest groups will be encouraged to organize themselves and generate livelihood proposals with the support of livelihood facilitators. Households below the 4th poverty decile will be accorded the opportunity to form their own groups and develop livelihood ideas. Within those households, women, youth and disadvantaged individuals will be targeted to lead livelihood investment activities.⁵


⁴ To ensure that participation and actual construction works are not rushed, a cycle cannot be shorter than 6 months. In inaccessible areas and townships with dispersed population centers, the cycle is expected to last longer because of additional steps to ensure participation.

⁵ While it will be the household that joins the group, women and youth (15-30 years of age) in those households will be specifically targeted to lead the livelihood investments.
A review of the implementation experience of ERLIP, together with findings from the field in proposed RCDP target areas, highlight design considerations for the proposed project. Women’s participation and engagement in the project remains a concern given the culture of patriarchy and exclusion. Separate group meetings for women will therefore be held, supported by women’s leadership and group management training and facilitated, where possible, by female community facilitators (CFs), assuring women of the opportunity to submit proposals (not a special fund or window but an opportunity to prepare and submit a proposal) for both community infrastructure and livelihood components, and applying a pro-active and positive bias to women’s priorities in the community investment prioritization process. To ensure that women’s group meetings are mainly facilitated by women facilitators, the project will, when required and where possible, temporarily shift women facilitators to villages with male facilitators over the period that the women’s groups are meeting. Because of the language barrier in ethnic group areas, which is particularly the case with ethnic women, project staff (especially facilitators) will have to be hired locally, whenever possible.

Under the RCDP at least 40% of unskilled jobs created will be allocated to women for construction work of infrastructure at community level which is funded by the project. All villagers and contractors will receive awareness training on (i) core labor standards; (ii) prevention of child labor; (iii) health, safety and hygiene standards; and (iv) the elimination of sexual harassment in the workplace. Men and women will receive equal pay for equal work.

Livelihood activities in the project will target those population groups that are ranked by their communities as belonging in the lowest four deciles of the village household wealth/vulnerability ranking including vulnerable households and people with disabilities; at least 15% of whom (on average) are expected to be from female-headed households. Livelihood grant beneficiary groups will receive capacity building in financial literacy, group development and management, and entrepreneurship skill development as well as in technical aspects related to their group’s field of investment. TVET training opportunities will also be available for women, funded through their livelihood grant, if not a free service, including in traditional and non-traditional skills, such as welding, electric-wiring, masonry, to upgrade their skills and increase their income-earning opportunities as skilled laborers. TVET training requirements will be identified as part of the village livelihoods analysis and group livelihood prioritization process. Awareness of gender-sensitive climate change adaptation tools will be part of capacity building, as well as awareness of ways of reducing women’s workload.

A Household Methodology (HHM) pilot to improve intra-household gender relations will be implemented in selected areas in the four project target regions involving approximately 4,000 households. The aim will be to create household vision; joint assessment of household economic and social situation, joint participation in livelihood planning and common goals. As in many parts of the world, households are not cohesive units with shared needs, resources, benefits and goals. Rather, women and men in the same household often pursue separate livelihoods and are responsible for different production and consumption activities. Women are frequently less able to make independent economic decisions about their enterprises and the use of income they

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6 The project preparation team visited four regions, 18 townships and 71 villages.
7 Poor and vulnerable households will be identified through the household wealth and vulnerability ranking, as part of the VDP-Participatory Reflection Action (PRA) process (See ERLIP Operational Manual Chapter 2, section 26.7 Wealth Ranking, including Table 5 showing ranking criteria).
8 There are multiple sources of TVET training. As a livelihood strategy, TVET training, if not covered by the training provider (e.g. ADB-EYE) can be financed from the group livelihood grant.
generate. They are usually overburdened with productive work, domestic chores and caring tasks, while men often feel burdened by their responsibility as heads of household. As part of the HHM process, household members realize that inequalities in gender roles and relations can be part of the reason they stay poor. Women and men, as well as youth, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups are empowered to have an equal voice in setting the household vision and equal access to development opportunities, productive assets, decision-making and benefits.

The project is also committed to achieving progress towards 50% women’s representation in leadership positions in community volunteer committees including the VDSC membership.

A mechanism will be established to address reported incidences of sexual harassment in the workplace for project staff and beneficiaries, based on the grievance mechanism model established by NCDDP. Modalities will include locked mail boxes in villages, and a hotline, to resolve improper behavior and misconduct especially towards women. Sexual harassment grievance focal points (female) will be identified at the village, township, and Union level, complaints to ensure that incidents of harassment are handled at the appropriate level.

Staff of the implementing agency (DRD) will receive awareness training in: (i) gender equality; (ii) women in leadership and decision-making roles; (iii) women’s voice and agency; (iv) team building; and, (v) elimination of gender-based violence and sexual harassment, human trafficking and the rights of the child, including refresher training at project mid-term.

The project will recruit an international gender and household methodology consultant and a national gender and social development consultant who will support two DRD gender and social inclusion officers in the implementation of the GESIAP and for implementing awareness training. There will also be Cluster-Township-level SSP gender equality and social inclusion specialists recruited to guide and mentor the DRD cluster township gender and social inclusion officers in their township cluster in gender aspects of RCDP implementation. Gender officers will participate in activities related to the pilot women’s empowerment program (HHM) under the leadership of the MIC gender and HHM Specialist.
I. BRIEF PROJECT BACKGROUND

1. This report presents the detailed gender analysis undertaken during the preparation of the Resilient Community Development Project (RCDP) in Myanmar.

2. The RCDP is a seven-year investment project that aims to improve the living conditions of selected communities and improve their resilience against climate and disaster risks. The project will provide community infrastructure and livelihood support to poor and vulnerable communities to address their most pressing needs and invest in building the capacities of government agencies and communities in resilient community development and disaster risk management.

3. The project impact – ‘incomes of rural households improved and resilience of communities to climate and disaster risks strengthened’, will contribute to the Government’s Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2 and 13 (SDG 1, SDG 2 and SDG 13); the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan; the Rural Development Strategic Framework; the National Framework for Community Disaster Resilience, and the Climate Change Strategy. The project outcome will be 'standard of living and resilience of selected communities improved'.

4. The regions/states of Ayeyarwady, Chin, Sagaing, (including the Naga Self-Administrative Zone (NSAZ)) and Tanintharyi have been identified as climate and disaster vulnerable project target areas.

II. METHOD USED FOR PREPARING THE GENDER ANALYSIS

5. The TRTA gender and social development consultants together with ADB Senior Social Development Specialist and DRD personnel undertook participatory assessments in selected areas of the four target regions during April – June 2018, and the findings are presented in this report. The gender issues of the target populations were analyzed to better understand the context and conditions in selected areas. In addition, the most pressing needs of communities were discussed with male and female beneficiaries in order to elicit their views, opinions and recommendations for livelihood and infrastructure interventions.

6. Information concerning the beneficiary populations in the target areas was collected from:

   (i) secondary data including recent social survey reports and publications;
   (ii) focus groups (both mixed gender and with women separately) with target beneficiaries;
   (iii) interviews with key informants and local village leaders;
   (iv) meetings with key Government officials and department staff at Township level; and
   (v) meetings with DRD officers in Nay Pyi Taw and in regions.

III. MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE GENDER EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION ACTION PLAN (GESIAP)

7. The RCDP GESIAP is consistent with the design and monitoring framework (DMF) and has links to national gender policy contained in the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women. The design features take into account local aspirations as identified by women during participatory consultations. Women expressed the desire to improve their knowledge and capacities, initiate improved livelihood and agricultural production; to participate in planning and
decision-making and to be consulted on infrastructure design related to community-based subprojects to ensure they are user-friendly and take into consideration the needs of local women.

8. The proposed RCDP is categorized as effective gender mainstreaming (EGM) and will involve activities that contribute to gender equity and women’s empowerment.

9. **Output 1: Climate and disaster resilient community infrastructure developed.** There will be substantial civil works related to infrastructure development under Output 1 of the project. The village development support committee (VDSC) will be a mechanism for community input to the planning, survey, design and implementation of that infrastructure. Women will occupy 50% of the leadership positions on the VDSC. Separate meetings will be organized with women, youth and marginalized households, to discuss subproject proposals prior to the village assembly. Subproject selection should have the agreement of the majority of women to avoid male bias.

10. Contractors, where employed, will prioritize and report on the use of local unskilled labor disaggregated by gender.

11. At least 40% of unskilled jobs created will be allocated to women for construction of infrastructure at community level funded by the project. The project will implement a policy of equal pay for equal work for men and women employed under community infrastructure sub-projects. At least 40,000 villagers (25% are women) are expected to report increased skills on construction and maintenance.

12. Villagers and contractors will receive awareness training on core labor standards; the prevention of child labor; health, safety and hygiene standards; and the elimination of sexual harassment from the workplace. Men and women will receive equal pay for equal work. Women who can read and write will also be encouraged to work as record-keepers.

13. **Output 2: Resilient livelihood activities for poor men and women developed.** Livelihood activities in the project will target those families that are ranked by their communities as amongst the poorest / most vulnerable 40% of households in the community. Given the high number of female-headed households in many project townships, about one third of the livelihood beneficiary group will, on average, be women-headed households. Beneficiaries will be encouraged to organize themselves into formalized associations through registering with government authorities. The aim will be to strengthen the sustainability of livelihoods.

14. Training opportunities for women will include financial literacy, group development and management, and entrepreneurship skill development and also in traditional and non-traditional skills, the latter including welding, electric-wiring, masonry, to upgrade their skills and increase their income-earning opportunities as skilled laborers. Awareness of gender-sensitive climate change adaptation tools will also be part of capacity building, as well as awareness of ways of reducing women’s workload.

15. **Household Methodologies** as a pilot approach to improve intra-household gender relations will be implemented in selected areas in the four project target regions with approximately 4,000 households in total. The aim will be to create household vision; joint assessment of household economic and social situation, and joint participation in livelihood planning and common goals.

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10 On average, 23.3% of households in the project townships are women headed, ranging from 12% in Nanyun to 55% in Thayetchaung township.
16. As in many parts of the world, households in the project area are not cohesive units with shared needs, resources, benefits and goals. Rather, women and men in the same household often pursue separate livelihoods and are responsible for different production and consumption activities. Women are frequently less able to make independent economic decisions about their enterprises and the use of income they generate. They are usually overburdened with productive work, domestic chores and caring tasks, while men often feel burdened by their responsibility as heads of household. These inequalities hinder the general motivation of household members and their ability to make productivity gains and the development of good businesses, which adversely affect their ability to achieve food, nutrition and income security.

17. Many efforts to support women’s empowerment focus on strengthening women’s economic opportunities and decision-making capacities in groups or organizations. The same women, however, often remain disempowered at the household level. They lack sufficient voice in determining household priorities and spending patterns, and in addressing their own health care needs.

18. Household methodologies shift the chief focus of interventions from an attention on assets, infrastructure, and value chains to people: especially on who they want to be and what they want to do. These methodologies enable all household members to identify and overcome obstacles and to make the most of the available opportunities in order to improve their lives. In doing so, HHM goes beyond addressing the symptoms of gender inequality, by tackling the underlying social norms, attitudes, behaviors and systems.

19. As part of the HHM process, household members realize that inequalities in gender roles and relations can be part of the reason they stay poor. Hence, a household’s ability to understand the causes of their current situation – and their willingness to act upon the findings – is crucial for unlocking a household’s potential. Women and men, as well as youth, people with disabilities and other vulnerable groups, have an equal voice in setting the household vision and equal access to development opportunities, productive assets, decision-making and benefits.

20. The project will recruit the services of a gender and HHM consultant specialist for 13 person-months over the first 4 project years to provide, inter alia, the HHM training and implementation methodologies. The methodology will be discussed with the project implementing agency (DRD) to best suit the Myanmar context. RCDP in association with the HHM Consultant will map out the best possible implementation methodology for each of the four target areas. HHM implementation will be reviewed at project mid-term, and, if assessed as successful, will be expanded to new RCDP townships and villages.

21. Output 3: Institutional and organizational capacity of communities and government strengthened. A DRD Training Unit will be established in DRD with adapted gender-sensitive training curricula for men and women. Staff of the implementing agency (DRD) will receive awareness training in gender equality; elimination of gender-based violence and sexual harassment, human trafficking and the rights of the child, including refresher training at project mid-term in priority subjects identified during the course of project implementation.

11 There are a few South Asian organizations that have been working on the same principle. ‘Anandi’ based in Gujarat has been instrumental in contextualizing the methodology to suit the sub-continent social and cultural environment. They have also developed a methodology for the facilitation process which is a key issue in the success of the methodology. As their methodology includes intense facilitation at the field level, this might be an added advantage as it will be able to build the skills of the village volunteer and the community to vocalize their needs.

12 Issues addressed will include women in leadership and decision-making roles; women’s voice and agency; team-building; effective information, education, communication (IEC) materials in ethnic languages.
22. The project will strive to ensure gender-balanced participation in all project community capacity development activities. In addition, the project will aim to ensure that, on average at least 50% of community, technical and livelihood facilitators are women. The project is also committed to achieving progress towards achieving 50% women’s representation in leadership positions in community volunteer committees including the VDSC membership by the end of the three-year planning cycle. Public forums held at village tract level are to ensure at least 50% female representatives from each village.

23. A mechanism will be established to address reported incidences of sexual harassment in the workplace for project staff and beneficiaries, based on the grievance mechanism model established by NCDDP. Modalities will include locked mailboxes in villages, and a hotline, to resolve improper behavior and misconduct especially towards women. Sexual harassment grievance focal points (female) will be identified at the village, township, and Union level, complaints to ensure that incidents of harassment are handled at the appropriate level.

24. The RCDP Project Management Unit (PMU)/Project Implementation Units (PIU) are expected to be gender-balanced and the inclusion of at least one woman at senior management level in both the PMO and all PIUs will be actively promoted.

IV. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT IN MYANMAR

A. Gender inequality in global and national context

25. Myanmar has a Gender Inequality Index (GII) value of 0.374, ranking it 80 out of 159 countries in the 2015 index.\(^{13}\) The GII reflects gender-based inequalities in three main dimensions – reproductive health, empowerment, and economic activity, and can be interpreted as the loss in human development due to inequality between female and male achievements in these dimensions. Regarding empowerment, only 13% of parliamentary seats are held by women, even though 27.1% of adult women have reached at least a secondary level of education compared to 20% of their male counterparts. Regarding reproductive health, for every 100,000 live births, 178 women die from pregnancy-related causes; and the adolescent birth rate is 16.5 births per 1,000 women of ages 15-19. Regarding economic activity, female participation in the labor market is 75.1% compared to 81.1% for men.

26. Myanmar’s 2015 Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.556 is below the average of 0.631 for countries in the medium human development group and below the average of 0.720 for countries in East Asia and the Pacific. From East Asia and the Pacific, countries which are close to Myanmar in 2015 HDI rank and to some extent in population size, are Cambodia and Lao People’s Democratic Republic, which have HDIs ranked 145 and 188, respectively (Footnote 13).

27. Between 1990 and 2015, Myanmar’s HDI value has increased from 0.353 to 0.556, an increase of 57.4%. Between 1990 and 2015, Myanmar’s life expectancy at birth also increased by 7.4 years. The mean years of schooling increased by 2.3 years and expected years of schooling increased by 3.2 years. Myanmar’s gross national income (GNI) per capita increased by approximately 563.5% between 1990 and 2015.

V. LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENT

28. The country’s Constitution guarantees equal rights to all persons before the law and equal legal protection (Section 347) and does not discriminate against any Myanmar citizen on the basis of sex (Section 348).

29. It has ratified and endorsed the major international conventions and agreements on gender equality and women’s and children’s rights such as:

(i) the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW);
(ii) the Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime;
(iii) the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children;
(iv) the Convention on the Rights of the Child; and
(v) the Protocol to Combat the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air.

30. Myanmar is also an active member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Committee on Women and the ASEAN Commission on Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women and Children (2010).\(^\text{14}\)

31. The Constitution, however, does not include an effective guarantee of substantive equality, and there is a lack of a comprehensive definition of discrimination against women, which encompasses both direct and indirect discrimination in both the public and private spheres in line with article 1 of the CEDAW Convention. The Constitution also still contains references to women as mothers, which may reinforce the stereotype that women’s primary role is childbearing.

VI. INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

32. In politics, women remain significantly under-represented. The military appoints 25% of unelected seats in the Union Parliament of which only two of the 166 military seats in the Union Parliament were filled by women.\(^\text{15}\) At the state and region level, female MPs constitute 12.5% of elected MPs. In the 2015 elections, Ethnic Affairs Ministers were also elected, who represent an ethnic group in a particular state or region where the ethnic group population is at least 0.1% of the national population. Of the 29 Ethnic Affairs Ministers elected, five were women.

33. Even with recent electoral gains, the proportion of women in the Union Parliament is comparatively low, and less than the 30-40% share which is considered critical for bringing about significant transformation.\(^\text{16}\)


Table 1: Women MPs: a comparison between the outgoing and incoming Parliaments

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<th>Women as % of elected MPs Parliament 2010-2015</th>
<th>Women as % of elected MPs Parliament 2016-2021</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Union Parliament</td>
<td>5.9 %</td>
<td>14.5 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stat/Region Parliaments</td>
<td>3.9 %</td>
<td>12.5 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ethnic Affairs Ministers</td>
<td>0 %</td>
<td>17.2 %</td>
</tr>
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34. Township Administrators are appointed by the General Administrative Department (GAD) of the Ministry of Home Affairs (MoHA). There are currently no female township administrators in Myanmar. In the 2012 elections the position of Village Tract Administrator (VTA) was introduced. VTAs are elected by majority vote. Similarly, 10 and 100 household heads are also elected by majority vote in villages and village tracts. Before the elections, selection committees made up of five village elders are set up to identify suitable election candidates.

35. Women currently make up only 0.3 % of the 16,785 VTAs in Myanmar (i.e. approximately 42 VTAs in total).¹⁷

36. In 2016, CEDAW recommended that Myanmar adopt temporary special measures (i.e. quotas) to guarantee and accelerate the participation of women in political and public life.

VII. WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNANCE

37. In 2018 at Union level, there is only one female minister – Daw Aung San Suu Kyi who holds the position of Minister of Office of the President and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

38. Seven out of 119 State/Region Ministers are currently women as of August 2018.¹⁸ At state/region level there are two female social affairs ministers: the Minister for Social Welfare in Kachin State and the Minister for Social Affairs in Ayeyarwady.¹⁹

VIII. WOMEN’S REPRESENTATION IN GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES AND PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

39. Myanmar has four levels of government administration: (i) national, (ii) region and state, (iii) district and township, and (iv) village tract.

40. Civil service decision-making is generally top-down and male-dominated (footnote 16, pp. 10-11). DRD staffing patterns are described below in Section XXVIII. While more than half of Myanmar’s civil servants are women, they are almost entirely absent from the most senior positions such as Director General and Deputy Director General.²⁰

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¹⁷ Data from 2016 verified in July 2018 by TRTA Social Development Consultants.
¹⁸ MIMU Government list
¹⁹ Data verified in July 2018 by TRTA Social Development Consultants.
²⁰ The TRTA team has been unable to obtain the latest gender-disaggregated data for civil servants in the merged Ministry of Planning and Finance. Women held only 1.5% of the most senior civil service positions such as Director-General or Managing Director (Ref: ADB. 2016. *Gender Equality and Women’s Rights in Myanmar: A Situation Analysis*. Manila. [p. 161]).
41. The civil service continues to designate certain positions suitable only for men and can block applications from women. The Union Civil Service Board, made up of five male members, is responsible for the recruitment of the lowest level of civil service officers and their training. Despite the constitutional guarantees of no discrimination in government employment, vacancies are still listed as male-only positions. This may be due to Article 352 of the Constitution that states: ‘However, nothing in this Section shall prevent appointment of men to the positions that are suitable for men only.’

42. At the subnational level, women’s representation is even worse. There is not a single female township administrator at the local level, anywhere in Myanmar. Township administrators are the key decision makers at that level and are appointed by the GAD of the MoHA.

IX. LEGISLATIVE REFORMS

43. Recent legislative reforms include the Minimum Wage Law of 22 March 2013, which provides that both women and men are entitled, without discrimination, to be paid minimum wages as stipulated by law.

44. The Employment and Skills Development Law of 31 August 2013 provides for the creation of internal job opportunities and the enhancement of disciplines and capabilities of workers without discrimination on the basis of sex. The Social Security Law of 31 August 2012 ensures that women and men enjoy on an equal basis the benefits of new insurances, including the provision of maternity insurance for women.

45. Nevertheless, there is still a lack of clarity on the applicability of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in relation to these reforms.21

46. As mentioned above, despite the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex in the appointment to government posts, the Constitution still provides that ‘nothing shall prevent the appointment of men to the positions that are naturally suitable for men only’.

47. The revision and enactment of several laws which would promote gender equality, however, are still pending such as the Anti-Discrimination bill, the Prevention and Protection of Violence against Women bill, the Penal Code, the Electoral Code and the 1982 Citizenship Law (Footnote 21).

X. STEREOTYPES, HARMFUL PRACTICES, VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, TRAFFICKING

48. Patriarchal attitudes and discriminatory stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and in society, persist in Myanmar. This is also true for educational textbooks which may have an impact on educational choices of girls in particular, and the sharing of family and domestic responsibilities between women and men in the household. Currently there is no effective strategy to eliminate patriarchal attitudes and discriminatory stereotypes, which are partly shaped by religion.

49. In addition, there is a lack of data on child marriages and other harmful practices such as gender-based violence and polygamy. Domestic violence is prevalent although there is a lack of

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information on the legal procedures for issuing protection orders as well as the lack of shelters for women and girls who are victims of violence.

50. It is understood that women and girls, particularly women in rural areas and ethnic group women who are victims of violence, including domestic violence, are reluctant to report cases to the authorities due to fear of reprisals (Footnote 21).

51. The timeframe for the adoption of the bill on the Prevention and Protection of Violence against Women is uncertain, and traditional justice mechanisms persist, which often perpetuate gender-based violence against women, which, inter alia, have ordered marriage between the rapist and the victim.

52. Myanmar has made efforts to combat trafficking by signing memoranda of understanding with China and Thailand. It remains, however, a source country for trafficking in persons, in particular women and girls, for purposes of sexual and labor exploitation. Limited progress has been made to address the root causes of trafficking, such as poverty, illiteracy, lack of job opportunities and domestic violence.

**XI. MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY**

53. Myanmar’s laws related to marriage vary depending on the religious faith of the parties who enter into marriage. In 2015 four ‘Laws on the Protection of Race and Religion’ were adopted, which discriminate against women and girls based on ethnicity and religion:

   (i) The ‘Buddhist Women’s Special Law’ imposes restrictions on Buddhist women who wish to marry outside their faith;
   
   (ii) The ‘Monogamy Law’ imposes penalties for unmarried couples who decide to cohabit, and whose implementation might have a disproportionate negative impact on women;
   
   (iii) The ‘Population Control Healthcare Law’ restricts women’s right to freely choose the number and spacing of children and can be used to further restrict childbirth among certain ethnic groups; and
   
   (iv) Marriage of girls under the age of 14 is legal with parental consent.

54. The CEDAW Committee has urged Myanmar to amend marriage laws in compliance with the CEDAW Convention of which it is a signatory, and to raise the minimum legal age of marriage in order to eliminate child marriage (Footnote 21).

**XII. NATIONAL MACHINERY FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN**

55. The Myanmar National Committee for Women’s Affairs (MNCWA) was established in 2011 and coordinates the national machinery for the advancement of women. It is, however, constrained in its effectiveness by its lack of institutional position as well as limited budgetary and human resources to ensure its effective monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of laws and policies concerning women’s rights (Footnote 21).

56. The National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (NSPAW), whose implementation the MNCWA is mandated to monitor, is also in need of revision in order to adapt it to legal and political changes that have taken place in the country. Effective implementation

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22 CEDAW. 2016. *Concluding observations on the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Myanmar*. Yangon.
plans are absent, and it has been observed that there is a lack of clarity on the cooperation between the MNCWA and the Myanmar Women’s Affairs Federation (MWAF) as well as departmental Gender Units.

XIII. NATIONAL STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (2013–2022)23

57. The Plan addresses areas where equity improvements are needed in relation to women’s livelihoods, participation in the economy, education, health care, violence, women’s leadership, political participation and the peace processes. The Plan complements the National Framework for Economic and Social Reforms and the National Comprehensive Development Plan (2011-2030) by setting out gender equality perspectives. It outlines a set of strategic objectives for the advancement of women with potential to ensure that gender equality and women’s rights are well covered in the country’s reform agenda.

58. The priorities are based on the 12 Priority Areas of the Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW. are as follows:

(i) Improve women’s livelihoods and reduce poverty;
(ii) Ensure women’s and girls’ access to quality formal and non-formal education;
(iii) Protect, promote, and fulfil women’s and girls’ rights to quality, affordable health care, including sexual and reproductive health care;
(iv) Eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls and respond to violence against them;
(v) Ensure women’s right to protection in emergencies and their participation in emergency preparedness, response, disaster, and conflict risk reduction;
(vi) Ensure fairness and equal rights for women in relation to employment, access to credit, resources, assets, and economic benefits;
(vii) Ensure women’s equal participation in decision-making and leadership at all levels of society;
(viii) Establish and strengthen institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, and ensure women’s participation as equal partners in national development strategies and decision-making processes;
(ix) Ensure the protection, promotion, and fulfilment of women’s and girls’ economic, social, cultural, civil, and political rights;
(x) Ensure that the media promotes women’s advancement and raises public awareness about women’s rights and their contribution to society;
(xi) Ensure women’s meaningful participation in managing and safeguarding natural resources, the environment, and adapting to climate change; and
(xii) Promote, protect, and fulfil the rights of the girl child.

59. The plan calls for enabling systems, structures, and practices to carry out the twelve priority areas of the Beijing Platform for Action.

XIV. GENDER ISSUES IN EMPLOYMENT / LABOR / WAGES

60. As mentioned earlier, minimum wages were introduced in Myanmar in 2013. Nevertheless, a wide gender wage gap remains. (Unskilled wage rates in RCDP target areas are described below in Section XXVI). The implementation and monitoring of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value is very limited, and women remain concentrated in the informal employment sector of the economy.

61. There is limited available disaggregated data on cases of sexual harassment in the workplace and any effective measures taken to address it.

62. Maternity leave is not applicable in all sectors of employment and information on women domestic workers is lacking.

63. Myanmar has not ratified the following International Labor Office (ILO) Conventions:
   (i) ILO Convention No. 100 concerning equal remuneration;
   (ii) ILO Convention No. 111 concerning discrimination in respect of employment and occupation; and
   (iii) ILO Convention No. 189 concerning decent work for domestic workers.

64. In recent years there have been legal reforms concerning dispute resolution, leave, factory work and social security although there has been minimal analysis of how these new laws have been implemented, and how they impact on women.24

65. Minimum wage legislation has the potential to increase women’s average earnings but ensuring implementation of the legislation is critical. In 2015, Myanmar’s first minimum wage was set at MK3,600 per day, being raised to MK4,800 in 2017. With few exceptions, the minimum wage applies across all industries and sectors.25 Data on implementation is limited, however, men paid daily wages earn an average of MK4,900 compared to MK3,340 for women.26 Female daily wage workers earn an average wage that is lower than the minimum wage in Myanmar, which is in turn the lowest established minimum wage in South East Asia (Footnote 25).

66. Maternity leave is now enacted in law in Myanmar, however, it is likely that it is accessed by few women. Under the Leave and Holiday Act 1951 (amended 2014), women workers are entitled to maternity leave of 14 weeks; female civil servants are entitled to six months of maternity leave, and fathers have right to 15 days leave after the birth of a child. Women may access a cash benefit during maternity leave in some circumstances under the Social Security Law 2012.27 However, as the vast majority of the female working population are in the informal sector, they are not protected by these laws (Footnote 27). New provisions also require the owners of large factories employing more than 100 women with young children to provide onsite day-care. There

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has been limited data on the application of this law, although anecdotal evidence suggests it is not being implemented.28

67. In 2014 Myanmar imposed a temporary ban on migration for domestic purposes. The ban aimed to protect women from extreme abuses, but the result is that women are now more likely to travel as irregular migrants which limits their protection in the destination country.29 There has been pressure by advocacy groups to lift the ban to help regularize the movement of women (footnote 24). New laws (currently in draft) may have a significant impact on women workers. In particular, legislation to strengthen occupational health and safety could substantially improve working conditions in the female dominated garment sector. The current draft law on sexual and gender-based violence includes provisions to end harassment and violence and work, although in its present form the law is considered too weak to be effective.

XV. WORKING CHILDREN

68. Just over 20% of children aged 15-17 are in employment30 and the majority of these children are no longer in school.31 A large proportion of both boys and girls aged 10-17 years are also working rather than pursuing their education, although some are still attending school as they work, which suggests that their working status is necessitated by household poverty.

69. More boys than girls are employed and tend to be concentrated in unskilled work in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and craft-related work.

70. Evidence suggests that boys are losing out on education due to society and cultural expectations that they will work from a young age. The lack of educational attainment in boys impacts negatively on their skill levels and future earning potential.

71. Currently, there is no effective legislation preventing children from working until they have completed secondary school (Footnote 30). Intervention programs that promote the retention of girls in school would also effectively discourage early child marriage.

XVI. ISSUES IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

72. Female literacy in 2015 was estimated at 86.9% and male literacy at 92.0% for persons aged 15 years and older, although the gap is wider in rural areas (Footnote 30). Gender parity has been achieved at the primary and secondary school levels (Footnote 15). There is, however, a lack of disaggregated data on the educational status of ethnic women and girls, and a lack of information on the impact of age-appropriate education on sexual and reproductive health and rights.32

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31 While the minimum age for child employment in Myanmar varies across industries, most sectors are able to employ children from age 13. Children aged 13–15 are permitted to work up to four hours a day if they have a certificate of fitness (as per the Factories Act 1951), while a 15-year-old child can work as an adult. There is currently no single comprehensive legislation in place to protect working children and ensure occupational health and safety.
32 Including topics such as personal hygiene, menstrual hygiene, child marriage, trafficking and child labor exploitation etc.
73. Almost 12% of women in the working-age population are illiterate, compared to only 7% of men. This places many women at a disadvantage in terms of accessing information related to employment opportunities (Footnote 30).

74. As mentioned above, many boys drop out of school before completing secondary education in order to work. According to the Department of Population, in 2017 only 8.8% of males aged 25 and over had achieved higher than upper secondary level compared with 9.3% of women of the same age (Footnote 30).

75. Education participation in the NSAZ is low, particularly secondary and high school participation, which did not exceed 20% of children in villages visited during the TRTA inception period. Secondary and high school education is only available in townships, and student participation costs about MK400,000 and township accommodation facilities for students are poor. In Chin State almost 15% of children do not have access to primary education and less than half of all children attending primary school in the State actually complete on time. Difficult terrain, extreme weather, long distances, and inadequate electricity and infrastructure are commonly cited as obstacles to universal primary education. This constraint is common to many indigenous people (IP) communities globally and is sometimes overcome through community-owned and managed student accommodation in townships, which provides families the assurance of a safe and culturally adapted township environment.

76. At village level, teacher retention is also a significant constraint that could be at least partially relieved through the provision of satisfactory teacher housing at community level.

77. There are also continuing concerns about retention rates, performance levels of certain categories of children especially in secondary school, and the quality and gender sensitivity of education. The lack of an adequate budget for the education sector which, coupled with discriminatory stereotypes on women’s and girls’ education, limits their access to education, particularly in rural areas. Evidence suggests that there are persistent low literacy levels among women in all states and regions. (Shan State for example has the lowest female literacy rate amongst young women, at 59.4%) particularly in rural areas, and that vocational training available to women is highly feminized and concentrated on sewing and other traditional skills.

78. At tertiary level, it has been highlighted that discriminatory admission criteria persist, which require female students to attain higher academic grades in order to be admitted for certain subjects traditionally male-biased such as engineering, which is not the case for male students (Footnote 22).

79. Nationally more women than men are university graduates and hold post graduate qualifications. There is, however, a disconnect as this reality does not replicate in labor force statistics where women make up a significantly lower percentage, and unemployment rates for women are also higher than for men. Women’s lack of engagement in the labor force supports global research that points to a prevalence of strong patriarchal norms reinforcing men as ‘bread winners’ (Footnote 30).

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33 Smith G. 2018 Briefing Note ‘Development opportunities in the Naga Self Administrative Zone.’ TA-9413 MYA - Resilient Community Development Project, TRTA Consultants (51242-001) - Myanmar

80. As noted earlier, women do not occupy commensurate senior levels of economic decision-making, despite their educational attainments.

**XVII. GENDER ISSUES IN THE PEACE PROCESS**

81. At the recent Panglong Peace Conference held on 17 July 2018 it was agreed that women have the right to participate in political processes and the economy. It was decided that at least 30% female participation should be promoted in every sector of the economy, including in the development of effective policies and their implementation. The NLD women’s committee, however, does not support quotas for women in political parties.

**XVIII. GENDER ISSUES IN SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH**

82. Myanmar has implemented effective programs aimed at preventing mother to child transmission of HIV/AIDS. However, HIV/AIDS remains prevalent, and together with unsafe abortions, have contributed to the increase in the maternal mortality ratio (MMR).

83. Maternal mortality remains above the average for the Southeast Asian region. High MMRs in Myanmar are primarily due to avoidable consequences of complications during pregnancy and at childbirth. The leading direct obstetric cause of maternal deaths in 2010 was postpartum hemorrhage (31%), followed by hypertensive disorders of pregnancy, including eclampsia (11%).

84. Abortion-related causes accounted for almost 10% of maternal deaths. Abortion is permissible when the life of the pregnant woman is in danger, although it is criminalized in cases of rape, incest and severe fetal impairment.

85. Indirect causes of maternal deaths in 2010 included heart disease (45%), malaria (36%), tuberculosis (9%), and chronic obstructive airway disease (9%). Often, symptoms suggestive of anemia are also present. HIV or AIDS can also predispose and/or aggravate pregnancy complications.

86. These causal factors may be addressed through improvements in delivery and antenatal and postnatal care, which require the availability of better-skilled professionals within reach of all women as well as the availability of medicines at an affordable cost. The incidence of infant mortality also remains high at 62 per 1000 live births. Infant mortality in other countries of the region are 6.2 per 1000 live births in Malaysia: 6.2, and 2.2 infant deaths per 1000 live births in Singapore (Footnote 30).

87. Both the infant mortality figures and life expectancy overall suggest that poor health provision is impacting on both men and women. Average life expectancy at birth for women is 9.16 years longer than for men. Men have a life expectancy of 60 years, women, 69 years (Footnote 30).

88. There is reportedly limited access to sexual and reproductive health services and products for women, particularly access to contraceptives. Female adolescents are particularly vulnerable to complications associated with sexual activity and pregnancy because reproductive health

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services are not sensitive to their needs. Unmarried women report difficulties in accessing contraceptive, for example, and have more limited knowledge of the risks associated with sexually transmitted infections. Health professionals may be reluctant to inquire about sexual behavior with unmarried girls and women.

XIX. DISABILITY

89. Just under 5% of the population has some form of disability, and the percentage is higher for women across all categories (mild, moderate and severe) (Footnote 30). A man with a disability, however, is more likely to be employed than a woman.

90. Some States/Regions have much higher rates of disability. Recent Census data showed that Ayeyarwady Region and Chin State, reported disability rates of 7.6% and 7.4%, respectively.

91. Women over 65 years of age are most likely to suffer with age related disability and this group is one of the most marginalized groups in society, with high levels of financial dependency.

XX. FEMALE HEADED HOUSEHOLDS

92. Slightly less than one quarter of households in Myanmar are headed by women. Out of a total of 10,877,832 households enumerated in the 2014 Census, 8,296,535 (76.3%) were male-headed and 2,581,297 (23.7%) were female-headed households (Footnote 30).

93. Household head was defined as the person who makes the decisions regardless of whether she/he works or not. There are slightly more female headed households in urban than in rural areas. Overall the figure increases with age which can be explained by widowhood affecting women significantly more than men. 86% of male heads were economically active compared with only 47.9% of women. This can be explained in part by the fact that 26% of female heads reported having achieved no educational attainment compared with only 14.7% of male heads (footnote 30).

XXI. ACCESS TO SAFE WATER AND SANITATION

94. Sources of drinking-water vary across states and regions. In general, urban areas have better access to improved piped water than rural areas. Only 4.1% of households in Myanmar have piped water into dwellings. The percentage is as high as 31.3% in Chin State, a location where it is common to use bamboo pipes to bring water from protected springs into the dwelling. In Kayah, Tanintharyi and Yangon, percentages of piped water into the dwelling are 10.6%, 11.1% and 11.3%, respectively. From studies, approximately 21% of households in Ayeyarwady Region were not using improved water sources, which was comparable to the national average. About 37% of households in Pantanaw Township were found to not be using improved water sources. In contrast, in several states and regions less than one % of households have piped water into the dwelling. The use of unprotected wells is high in Kayah (23.8%), Kayin (43.9%) and Rakhine (37.2%). In Magway, 10.6% of the population relies on surface water.

95. The practice of treating water for drinking purposes is not universal. It is estimated that water treatment at home is carried out by 34.5% of the population: treatment by using a cloth for filtering is carried out by 76.2 %, boiling by 1.4%, and water filter by 0.6 percent. It is also

37 UN GLAAS. 2014. Myanmar’ UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking Water
estimated that 12.2% of the population does not treat water, and unsafe drinking water coverage is 33.1%.

96. Improved sanitation access overall is estimated to be 77% (84% in urban and 74% in rural areas). The areas with the least coverage are 48% in Rakhine and 68.3% in Northern Shan. In Ayeyarwady Region, 17% do not use improved sanitation and 5% are practicing open defecation (footnote 38). And, 34% of households were not using improved sanitation in Pyapon township of Ayeyarwady (footnote 39). In contrast, 93.8% of people in Yangon have access to improved facilities - 59.8% of the poorest population and 98.2% of the richest population. In both urban and rural areas, most toilet facilities are slab and pit, with 53.5% in urban and 69.8% in rural areas. Of these, 51.8 % are in the richest households, and only 0.2% in the poorest.

**XXII. ACCESS TO ELECTRICITY**

97. Only an estimated quarter of Myanmar’s population currently has access to a regular supply of electricity.\(^{40}\) The country’s per capita electricity consumption remains the lowest among the ASEAN - 10 countries, at 217 kilowatt-hours in 2014 compared with a consumption of around 812 kWh in Indonesia and 2,540 kWh in Thailand.\(^{41}\) The low national average per capita electricity consumption is due to the low electrification rate, low industrial development, and lack of investment.

98. Official sources put the electrification rate at 13%, while other data sources reveal that less than 1% of the country’s population has access to uninterrupted electricity.

99. In rural areas, the national power grid network covers only 7% (4,550 villages) of the country’s 65,000 villages.\(^{42}\) The majority of households (88%) depend on solid fuels, such as wood and rice husks for cooking and heating; while more than two-thirds (70%) of the population still depend on diesel lamps, batteries, or candles for lighting.\(^{43}\)

100. While DRD makes household solar panels available for 60-100 watt lighting, a lack of access to a secured and stable source of electricity poses a significant constraint for rural households wishing to improve livelihoods and process agricultural produce.

**XXIII. CHALLENGES FOR GENDER EQUITY AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT IN MYANMAR**

101. Some of the most significant barriers to women’s economic empowerment in Myanmar include: discriminatory constitutional provisions; weak implementation of labor laws; gender norms restricting roles for women; a persistent gender pay gap; restrictions on movement; low levels of formal employment; and poor representation across economic, social and political institutions.

\(^{40}\) IHLC Surveys indicate that only 38% of households have access to electricity, with significant differences between urban (81.3 %) and rural locations (22.4 %). Access is lowest in Chin State (at 15%), Bago State West (at 13%), Bago State East (at 20%), and Rakhine State (at 23%). UNDP. 2009–2010. *Integrated Households Living Condition Assessment: Poverty Profile*. Yangon. p. 87.


Despite the national sex ratio of 93 males to 100 females, women are under-represented in the political sphere and labor market. The low level of female economic participation (51% compared to 85% of men) is believed to impact negatively on the country’s growth (footnote 30).

Widowhood includes 10% for women and 3% for men, the difference being largely attributed to the lower life expectancy for men. This data points to the vulnerability of this group of women who will need additional support as they age (footnote 30).

**XXIV. GENDER IN SECTORAL CONTEXT – RURAL DEVELOPMENT, LIVELIHOODS, CLIMATE CHANGE**

According to the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology, Myanmar’s climate is changing, with several observable trends over the last six decades. These include an increase in mean temperature, an increase in overall rainfall in most areas with a declining trend in some areas, and the late onset and early termination of the south-west monsoon. Overall there has been an increase in extreme weather events and a rise in sea levels. The floods and landslides of July and August 2015 underline how vulnerable Myanmar’s agricultural sector is to extreme weather. Cyclone Komen made landfall in Myanmar at the end of July 2015 causing extensive flooding to agricultural land, which remained submerged in some areas until September. This caused severe localized losses to the 2015 monsoon season crops, especially paddy, in Chin, Rakhine, Ayeyarwady, Yangon, Sagaing and parts of Bago.

Over 1.4 million acres (527,000 hectares) of farmland were flooded, more than 841,000 acres (341,000 hectares) of crop land was destroyed, and around 242,000 livestock were killed.

Disasters triggered by natural hazards such as floods, tropical cyclones, landslides, and droughts affect a significant share of Myanmar’s population and the country’s economy. The poorer community members are the worst impacted by the disasters. The interaction of natural hazards with socioeconomic vulnerabilities creates considerable disaster risk. For example, women are likely to be more vulnerable to natural hazards—reflecting their limited access to land ownership, finances, training, and information and communication technology. Additionally, climate change is altering the hazard patterns in Myanmar, thereby further increasing disaster risk. It is anticipated that the potential climate change impacts could lead to higher hazard levels for tropical cyclones, floods, and extreme temperature and drought.

**XXV. LAND POLICY**

Until 2012 all land belonged to the State. Under the policy of state ownership, farmers were given the right to cultivate the land but they could not sell, divide or mortgage it. Land use rights (and occupancy right) were legally inheritable, so would pass from one generation to the next. Absentee land ownership was illegal, and if a holding was abandoned for any reason, the Land Committee had the right to transfer it to landless farmers. This policy was abandoned when the Farm Land Law was passed in March 2012. Under this law, existing farmers are, in theory, allowed to mortgage, rent, and exchange or sell their land. There remain however, numerous bureaucratic procedures that complicate the selling and buying of land, and it would appear that few farmers have actually been able to take advantage of the new law. The Vacant, Fallow and Virgin Land Management Law, passed at the same time as the Farm Land Law, allows national

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companies, private investors and others to utilize vacant, fallow and virgin land for agricultural and livestock projects.

108. The 2012 Farmland and the Vacant, Fallow and Virgin Lands Management Act has been criticized for not fully protecting the land rights of smallholders and poor farmers (footnote 14). There is no specific recognition of different and traditional forms of land use in the land law, such as communal tenure practices of some ethnic communities that still operate under customary law in upland and forested areas. Nor do the laws explicitly state the equal right of women to register and inherit land or be granted land-use rights for vacant, fallow, and virgin land for themselves.\footnote{45} A Myanmar National Land Use Policy (NLUP) was published in March 2016.\footnote{46}

A. Gender differences in intra-household rights to land

109. While women retain equal rights under the 2008 Constitution to enter into land tenure contracts and to administer property, there is no guidance on how women can, in practical cases, defend their rights upon divorce or death of their husband.

110. In addition, customary laws that govern matters of succession, inheritance, and marriage among ethnic groups such as the ‘Naga’ do not afford women equal access to, or control over, land. These customs provide men greater economic and decision-making power in family inheritance affairs, thereby allowing husbands or sons to inherit property whilst girls do not enjoy equal inheritance rights.\footnote{47}

B. Gender issues related to land holdings

111. The possession of a land title is an important prerequisite for a farmer investing to improve farm land. A land title is evidence of permanent land-use rights, which can be bought and sold, mortgaged or bequeathed. RCDP interventions may include improving land parcels for increased productivity. Women farmers will participate in capacity building and it is important that land tenure is understood so that investments are secure and that planning for the long term can be undertaken.

112. There is inequality between male- and female-headed households in the size of land holdings. The 2010 Agriculture Census indicated that average area per parcel for male-headed households was 6.5 acres per holding, compared with 5.3 acres per holding for female-headed households. The average number of parcels in the agricultural holdings of female-headed households was only 3.7 parcels, compared with 4.2 for male-headed households. The gap in proportions increased between male- and female-headed households as holding size increased.

113. The Census also found that less than 30% of agricultural land is controlled by smaller farmers and sharecroppers, and almost 69% of farmland is now controlled by 20% of wealthier households.\footnote{48}


\footnote{46}{The Republic of the Union of Myanmar National Land Use Policy. January 2016.}

\footnote{47}{It has been pointed out that ‘ensuring women’s access to, and control over, necessary productive resources like land, is critical to ensure a prolific and healthy future society’. Reference: ‘Linking women and land in Myanmar: Recognising Gender in the National Land Use Policy’ Transnational Institute (2015). \url{www.tni.org}}

114. Landlessness or near-landlessness is increasing especially in the Ayeyarwady delta where more than 20% of households in several villages are landless and engaged in wage-labor. Landlessness is reportedly partly due to land sales following crop failures in recent years. An equal number (20%) of households had landholdings of less than an acre. The subdivision of landholdings over generations has contributed to the reduction in size of smallholdings (footnote 48).

XXVI. AGRICULTURAL LABOR / CASUAL / UNSKILLED WAGE RATES

115. In most regions/states a general shortage of farm labor is currently being reported (footnote 44). Although agricultural labor wages have typically increased by 30-50% compared with 2014 levels to MK 4,000 to MK 5,500 per day for men, and MK 3,000 to MK 4,500 per day for women – it is unclear whether they have kept pace with food inflation. Consequently, there has been extensive movement of labor away from farms to urban areas, or out-migration to neighboring countries, impacting negatively the supply of farm labor and crop productivity. There are, however, reports of laborers returning to the agriculture sector during periods of intense farm activity.

116. The following table illustrates current unskilled wage rates in selected areas based on information collected during the RCDP TRTA Inception period (April – June 2018). Findings show that women’s wage rates are lower than men’s in the majority of areas, except for Northern Sagaing where unskilled wages rates were reportedly the same for men and women.

Table 2: current unskilled wage rates in selected areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region / Township / Village</th>
<th>Daily unskilled wage rate for men</th>
<th>Daily unskilled wage rate for women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sagaing Region: Khamte / Lay Shi / Lian Lai Ha / Ko Kay / Namirup</td>
<td>MK 5,000(^a)</td>
<td>MK 5,000 (equal pay)(^b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayeyarwady Region: Pyapon / Bawathit / Kyeung Kone</td>
<td>MK 7,000</td>
<td>MK 5,000 (approx. 70% of men’s wage)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayeyarwady Region Bogale / Kyeincha / Taik Sein Kone / Thanhtowa</td>
<td>Ranging from MK 5,000 - 10,000</td>
<td>Ranging from MK 4,000 - 8,000 (approx. 80% of men’s wage)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chin State: Hakha / Ruavan / Zoukhua</td>
<td>MK 10,000</td>
<td>MK 6,000 (60% of men’s wage)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chin State: Thantlang / Ku Chah / Tlangru A</td>
<td>Ranging from MK 6,000 - 7,000</td>
<td>MK 5,000 (71- 83% of men’s wage)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chin State: Tedim / Dim La</td>
<td>MK 7,000</td>
<td>MK 5,000 (83 % of men’s wage)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanintharyi Region: Thayetchung Melcal / Kyunk I</td>
<td>MK 7,000 - 6,900</td>
<td>Ranging from MK 6,000 - 5,000 (85 -72 % of men's wage)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanintharyi Region: Lauglon</td>
<td>MK 6,000</td>
<td>MK 5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanintharyi Region: Thayetchaung / Kone Za Kat</td>
<td>MK 8,000</td>
<td>MK 6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanintharyi Region: Yebyu / Kyatkeptpin</td>
<td>MK 6,000</td>
<td>MK 5,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Wage rates in Sagaing Division are MK 5000-6000 for men and MK 3000-3500 for women (reported by NCDDP, October 2018).

As reported to TRTA team by village women in Layshi NSAZ (May 2018).

XXVII. ACCESS TO LIVELIHOOD AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

117. Due to male domination of the agriculture extension service; constraints on women vacating household roles to attend often ill-timed (for women) or distant training courses; the patriarchal decision-making processes in society and the limited number of vocational training opportunities for women, women farmers have more limited access to livelihood and extension services and vocational training, and more male household members received training than female household members. As there are also differences in access to extension services, with 24% of male farmers having access to extension services, compared with 22% of women farmers.

XXVIII. DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (DRD) STAFFING IN TARGET REGIONS OF RCDP – CHIN, SAGAING, AYEYARWADY, TANINTHARYI

118. The following table illustrates DRD staff numbers disaggregated by gender, in those regions / townships where RCDP will be implemented. It can be seen that of the senior-level officers in target townships, only 3 of the 17 senior staff are female. Conversely, there are almost twice as many junior officers who are female (i.e. 115 women) than male (i.e. 68 men). As mentioned earlier (in Section 9), this gender breakdown indicates that civil service decision-making remains male-dominated (footnote 15). While more than half of Myanmar’s civil servants are women, they are in the minority at senior levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State/Region</th>
<th>Townships</th>
<th>Senior Staff Officers</th>
<th>Junior Officers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayeyarwady</td>
<td>Bogale</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Labutta</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pyapon</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chin State</td>
<td>Falam</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hakha</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tedim</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Htamtalan</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sagaing</td>
<td>Kalewa</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naga</td>
<td>Layshi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lahe</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mawlaik</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minkin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


51 According to the 2013 USAID LIFT baseline survey, only 11% of households received any vocational or extension training in agriculture with the largest number of training sessions in the Delta Zone on crop production.
Number of DRD staff in RCDP target project area townships, by gender and position

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State/Region</th>
<th>Townships</th>
<th>Senior Staff officers</th>
<th>Junior Officers</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nany Yun</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phaung Pyin</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanintharyi</td>
<td>Launglon</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thayetchaung</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yebyu</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

XXIX. ACCESS TO CREDIT

119. The Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank (MADB) is a state-owned agency providing credit to rural communities. Until recently MADB had a monopoly on formal lending to farmers, but only gave seasonal loans covering a portion of production costs on a short-term basis. In 2011, the loan size per acre was MK 40,000, and in 2012 it was MK 50,000. For the agricultural year 2013–14, MADB significantly increased its individual loan amount from MK 50,000 to MK 100,000 per acre for paddy and sugar cane, and from MK 10,000 to MK 20,000 per acre for other crops such as sesame and peanut., enabling farmers to take out a maximum loan of MK 1,000,000 for 10 acres. MADB also finances medium-term loans (3 years) for solar salt, tea, coffee and sugar cane production, and loans over 3 years for farm machinery and special projects. Eighty-eight percent of MADB’s loan portfolio is concentrated in paddy farmers. Loan beneficiaries are heads of households (as they hold land entitlement).

120. Collateral to obtain credit is often assessed on a community basis and, in such cases, the whole community can suffer financially as a result of default by one of its members. Those with no collateral are especially disadvantaged (footnote 44).

121. The primary available source of agricultural credit is short-term bank loans with strict collateral requirements. Women are often unable to meet these bank requirements due to lack of property ownership, particularly land. Repayment timetables for loans also tends to oblige farmers to sell crops at the worst period, when prices are lowest. Both the EPS (Economic Policy Statement, 2016) and the FPL (Protecting Rights and Enhancing Economic Welfare of Farmers Law, 2013) identify improving farmer access to credit as a priority for small farmers.

122. According to 2009-2010 IHLC Survey data, more non-poor (i.e. 36%) of people had access to credit, compared with the poor (i.e. 30%). There appeared to be little difference in

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53 There is a significant reduction in the price realized for crops when selling in advance. One study found, for example, that 100 baskets of paddy at harvest time can fetch 250,000 kyats but when sold in advance to traders would only fetch 180,000 kyats, translating to a 38% interest rate for one month. World Bank and Myanmar Development Research (2013), op. cit. Another study has suggested that more flexible credit terms would help break the cycle of indebtedness in Myanmar. D. Dapice (2013) ‘Rice Policy in Myanmar: It’s Getting Complicated’, www.ash.harvard.edu/extension/ash/docs/RicePolicy.pdf last accessed 10 January 2014.

54 The FPL stipulates that loans should be made when capital is needed and paid back when the farm products are traded right after harvest which means farmers receive the lowest prices for their crops.
access to credit for either agricultural or non-agricultural businesses between male- and female-headed households.  

123. The Microfinance Law (2011) and the Microfinance Supervisory Enterprise allow local and foreign investors to establish microfinance institutions (MFI) in the country although recent studies suggest that Microfinance programs have failed to be effective for agricultural lending and are more suited to helping rural households manage debt.

124. Microfinance provided by a variety of institutions, such as banks, cooperatives, the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MOALI) DRD (Evergreen program), non-government organizations (NGOs), and informal lenders, is an important source of finance for people who are poor, especially women. Microfinance has reached about 2.8 million people in Myanmar. In particular, the Pact Global Microfinance Fund (started in 2012) has a loan portfolio close to $70 million (Pact manages more than 84% of the NGO-provided microfinance in Myanmar). Since 1997, Pact’s microfinance operations have reached more than 670,000 individuals, 9% of whom are women, in nearly 7,000 villages.

125. Microfinance compensates only partially for women’s low access to finance. Many formal microfinance services maintain a ceiling on the size of loan available to micro and small producers. This has limited the possibility for any expansion in production. Women entrepreneurs who were interviewed for ADB’s Myanmar gender situation analysis said that their priority was to obtain larger loans for production purposes. With a ceiling on borrowing, women are unable to purchase inputs such as high-quality seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides and are, therefore, constrained from raising the productivity of their land. As women’s micro and small businesses grow, they need financial products and services that go beyond limited microcredit.

126. Those without access to formal credit, or for whom it is insufficient, depend on informal credit at high interest rates. Input suppliers also provide in-kind loans by providing inputs in advance in exchange for purchasing crops at discounted rates after harvest.

XXX. DIVISION OF LABOR IN CROP CULTIVATION

127. There is a gender-based division of labor in crop cultivation, although it may differ according to cropping patterns by state or region. Women perform most tasks related to crop cultivation and normally includes planting, caring, weeding, transplanting, harvesting, threshing, postharvest operations, and marketing. Although some of these tasks are also performed by men, women tend to bear the larger burden. Traditionally, men undertake plowing, land clearing and preparation, seedbed preparation, making bunds, and fencing.

XXXI. DIVISION OF LABOR IN HILLY ZONES AND COASTAL AREAS

128. In hilly and mountainous zones (HMZs) such as the NSAZ and Chin region, in general, men take greater responsibility for decisions concerning cultivation choice, investment costs and

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selection of upland parcels for clearing and land preparation. Men are responsible for felling trees to clear upland forestland for cultivation and women till the soil with hoes once the land is cleared. Tasks such as planting and weeding are also the responsibility of women.

129. In the Delta and/or Coastal zone such as Ayeyarwady and Tanintharyi, much less casual agricultural work was undertaken by women, compared with in the Hilly zones of Chin and Northern Sagaing, although women are active in small-scale fishery processing. For selling farm products and livestock, both men and women decide jointly when and where to sell, although it is usually men who travel to town to negotiate the sale of products.

130. Crop collectors / brokers are in the majority male, although there are also couples who work together as collectors, buying from the farm gate.

XXXII. DIVISION OF LABOR IN SWIDDEN / UPLAND FARMING

131. In Northern Sagaing the Naga are dependent on Swidden (slash and burn) agriculture, producing upland rice, some pulses particularly soybean, mustard (greens), maize, taro, cassava and chili (footnote 33). Emerging cash crops in Chin include elephant foot yam, coffee, tea, citrus and pip fruits, avocado and grapes. Taro and cassava are used for both human and pig feed. Almost all rural Naga households produce Swidden crops, with little cash crop production. Most Swidden systems involve a 2-year cropping period, with the inter-cropping period varying from a barely sustainable 7 years, up to a sustainable level of 20+ years, dependent on population density.

132. Typically, land is cleared by men in January / February, burnt and prepared for planting by men in March / April and planted by women in May / June. Women are responsible for all crop husbandry, harvesting and post-harvest treatment. They are also responsible for livestock feeding and wood and water gathering as well as household management.

133. Crop and livestock yields are low, with upland rice yields typically between 20-40 baskets/acre (1-2 tons/ha).

XXXIII. GENDER AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS OF RCDP AREAS

134. In terms of social conditions, there are close similarities between Chin and the Naga Self-Administrative Zone because of similar patriarchal tribal and customary practices.

135. The two lowland clusters of Ayeyarwady and Central-west Sagaing are also relatively homogeneous both ethnically (Bamar) and culturally with majority Bamar populations.

136. In Tanintharyi, as well as the Bamar there are areas with significant ethnic groups, particularly the Karen (Kayin).

Table 4: Ethnicity, Religion and Language by RCDP clusters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clusters</th>
<th>Main ethnicity</th>
<th>Main religion</th>
<th>Main language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ayeyarwady region and Central-west Sagaing</td>
<td>Bamar</td>
<td>Buddhist</td>
<td>Burmese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clusters</td>
<td>Main ethnicity</td>
<td>Main religion</td>
<td>Main language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chin State and NSAZ in North-east Sagaing</td>
<td>Chin tribes and clans: Naga tribes and clans</td>
<td>Christian (Chin) and Christian-Baptist (Naga)</td>
<td>Chin dialects; Naga dialects, Burmese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanintharyi region</td>
<td>Bamar with significant Karen (Kayin), Mon and coastal Moken ethnic groups</td>
<td>Buddhist and Christian (Anglicans, Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists) (Karen)</td>
<td>Burmese, Karen dialects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**XXXIV. GENDER ISSUES**

137. Across the different regions and ethnicities which make up the target communities of RCDP, there are similarities regarding the expectations placed on men and women concerning their responsibilities and roles. The markers of identity for women are principally their roles as daughter, wife and mother. The roles of men are determined by their obligations as family breadwinners, heads of household and community leaders.

138. **Work roles and responsibilities.** There is a similar gendered division of labor between husbands working outside the home (if the household is landless) to earn the family’s livelihood, and wives undertaking domestic duties such as cleaning, washing clothes, grinding corn, meal preparation and taking care of children and elderly family members. In addition, women are also responsible for raising poultry or pigs, fetching water, and gathering firewood. Working on any household plot is also women’s responsibility. Husbands also occasionally assist with woman-identified work, if the woman is ill, late in pregnancy, very busy, or temporarily absent from the home. Among rural households which have land on which to cultivate crops, women also work in paddy fields, (except in Chin State where this is not the norm). The most common livelihood arrangement is for the husband to work as a day laborer and the wife to tend the household plot: this is partly driven by the discrepancy between wage rates for men’s and women’s daily labor, which are frequently lower for women by one-third. Despite these norms, rural women also engage in casual labor on construction and road-building when opportunities arise across all of the RCDP regions.

139. **Participation in meetings.** As a matter of cultural and social norm across all regions, it is usual for men only to attend village meetings. In communities where women do attend village meetings, they tend to be silent observers who do not participate in the discussions or decisions under consideration. Many women remain reticent of speaking in public. The absence of women in village-level authority structures also stems from cultural norms.

140. **Mobility.** The mobility of women is constrained by accepted limitations on where married women can travel alone which are governed by husband’s concerns about respectability and safety.

141. **Decision-making.** Social custom dictates that permission-granting authority is transferred from a woman’s parents to her husband when she marries, and men perceive themselves, and are perceived by women, as natural possessors of authority for making major household decisions. In most households and communities there is a decision-making hierarchy: men occupy a dominant role for making important decisions about livelihood, family health, education, and civic life. Women play a consultative role in many decisions and most women have full authority over decisions related to daily household consumption and child-rearing.
142. **Household financial management.** In most of the RCDP areas, women are responsible for managing the day-to-day household expenditure. Husbands may hand over what they have earned, or some portion of it, and it is the woman’s job to use it to make ends meet.

143. **Household conflict.** Insufficient food and money are the two main triggers for household conflict. Because gender norms place the responsibility on men to earn money sufficient to maintain a family, poverty aggravates tension between husbands and wives because it is frequently viewed as a failure in a man’s duty to his family. Anxiety about not providing sufficient food for children is a major catalyst for conflict between husband and wife. As with money, providing food is closely linked to perceptions of men’s roles and duties. Although men are principally responsible for providing for the family, women’s role as organizer of the home, shopper, and money manager means that they may receive some blame when food is lacking. When money is scarce, the difficulty in paying school costs becomes an issue of family conflict.

A. **Chin region**

144. There are several Chin tribes such as Asho-Chin, Falam-Chin, Hakha-Chin and Tedim-Chin which speak their own distinct dialects.  

145. In northern Chin, a patriarchal clan system exists where customary law places men as law makers, and women are largely excluded from decision-making processes. Chin women are deprived of ownership rights to land, house and other important properties, making them dependent on their male guardians. The elder son usually inherits the land, house and other important property. If there is no son, the husband’s brothers are next in line for inheritance. A Chin widow is prohibited from inheriting assets from her husband, being merely allowed to continue to live in the family house and manage the property. A childless widow is very vulnerable to being evicted from the family’s house. Marriage arrangements are initiated by men through inter-family negotiations, and while in some cases women may be allowed to observe such meetings, they are excluded from deciding on their husband and from deciding on the bride price. The payment of a bride price essentially transfers the bride to her husband’s clan, giving responsibility for guardianship to husbands or relatives in the case of divorce or death respectively. A decision to proceed with a divorce if initiated by the wife, requires the repayment of the bride price to the husband’s family before the divorce can be effective. If a man initiates the divorce, he has to forfeit the bride price he gave to the bride’s family.

146. While a gendered division of labor remains the norm, with Chin women principally responsible for domestic and childcare work, this scenario is now changing, and they frequently also manage household income and expenditure, although not expenditure related to major investment decisions. Domestic violence is common, together with victim-blaming, and is often associated with alcohol abuse. Section 15(A) of the Chin Special Division Act recognizes the male-dominated local customary law in cases of family law-related issues. Most family problems are, therefore, resolved privately by male elders and relatives of the two parties in dispute, following the local custom.

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B. **Naga Self-Administered Zone**

147. The Naga ethnic group is comprised of several tribes and clans in North-west Sagaing Division, and the Naga Self-Administered Zone comprises the hill towns of Layshi, Lahe and Nanyon.\(^59\)

148. Patriarchal customary practices and the status of women in Naga society, are very similar to those of Chin tribes. Arranged marriages were common for the Naga in the past although consensual marriage is now more usual. The payment of a bride price by the bridegroom to the bride’s family is still common practice. On marriage, the bride loses her Naga clan title and adopts that of her husband. Family assets are owned by male family members and are passed down to sons. Marriage between maternal cousins is encouraged in Naga groups. Monogamy is the usual practice amongst the Naga, although in some tribes such as the Konyak Naga, polygamy is widely practiced as well as child marriage.

149. Men are the major decision-makers for the community, and women are traditionally not included in decision-making processes of the clan or community and there is no female village administrator or village head. Women may be unable to speak Burmese, and illiteracy is not uncommon amongst women, particularly amongst the middle-aged. The stereotypical Naga woman is expected to be obedient and humble and her roles and responsibilities are mostly reproductive and within the family. At the same time, Naga women are actively involved in agricultural activities together with their husbands, and they supplement household income by weaving shawls, and rearing domestic animals such as pigs and poultry.

C. **Central West Sagaing Region**

150. The majority of the population is Bamar, together with some Chin, Shan, Kachin and Naga ethnic groups. Customary laws are followed by ethnic groups for inheritance rights where land is passed down to male family members, but women may inherit family jewelry and furniture. Amongst the Bamar, women’s names are recognized on land use certificates indicating that land is owned equally with their husband and may be inherited. Women are not key community decision-makers nor are they members of village administrations or institutions.

151. Because of the lack of job opportunities and high levels of household debt, there is significant out-migration of men from the region, to work in mining in neighboring States. Wives and children are left behind and become de facto female-headed households. Out-migration also leads to agricultural labor shortages at village-level. Frequently, migrant men establish second families in their new place of residence and out-migrate permanently.

D. **Tanintharyi Region**\(^60\)

152. The majority of people are ethnic Bamar and the other ethnic groups include Karen, Mon and coastal Moken communities. There is a bride price system in place for marriages\(^61\) and women from wealthy families, property owners, university graduates, government civil servants or teachers command high bride prices. Consequently, a woman may be viewed as her husband’s property, and bestowed a lower status inside the family. Both men and women have equal inheritance rights to land and property and property is shared equally among children. Although

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61 Bride prices reportedly range from MK 5 to 15 million. Anecdotal data collected during RCDP TRTA social analysis.
there is no barrier to village women attending community meetings, their role as local leaders is generally considered unacceptable by their spouses. There are incidents of domestic violence as a result of alcohol and drug abuse, and arguments concerning household financial problems. Because of the social stigma associated with divorce and separation especially for children, women mostly remain with abusive spouses and do not separate. Coastal villages rely on fishing resources, while many isolated upland communities rely on subsistence farming. Fishing contributes significantly to the economy in coastal areas of Tanintharyi. Offshore fishing employs men and fish processing work is undertaken by women.

153. Household debt and lack of employment opportunities are major push factors for out-migration of both husbands and wives. Migration to Thailand is the destination of choice, with couples leaving their children in the care of their elderly parents. Following completion of primary or secondary schooling, both young boys and girls also out-migrate in search of employment to support the parents and household. Remittances from youths and family members are a significant contribution to household income. The labor shortages caused by out-migration tend to be filled by incoming migrants from other parts of the country to work in the rubber and palm oil plantations. Wage rates for men and women working in oil palm plantations are estimated to be almost equal.

E. Ayeyarwady Region

154. The largest ethnic group in Ayeyarwady is the Bamar followed by the Karen (Kayin) and a small ethnic Rakhine group. Marriage is consensual. Women are able to hold land ownership rights and have been able to access affordable credit. Women, however, rarely hold leadership positions or play key roles in important decision-making in Delta region villages, and reportedly prefer men to take the lead in community decision-making. Time constraints caused by household chores and fishery- or agriculture-related work are another reason cited for women’s lack of involvement in community affairs. Women’s participation in village events is usually focused on religious functions, preparing food for social events, and attending Parents Teachers Association meetings at schools.

155. There is significant out-migration of men and women from Ayeyarwady and a significant number of girls drop out of school after primary education in order to supplement the family income or help with household chores. The incidence of forced child labor is common for shop-work; small industries and in agriculture. Gender-based violence occurs and is reportedly caused by alcohol and drug abuse. Landless villagers depend, in part on fishing for their livelihood although the activity is not sustainable during monsoon storms. Approximately 30% of landless work as casual day laborers. Both men and women are involved in paddy rice cultivation. Daily wage rates for men and women working in agriculture are, generally, not equal although reportedly equal for work in aquaculture fisheries.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender issue</th>
<th>RCDP Cluster area</th>
<th>RCDP response to gender issue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women are largely excluded from community</td>
<td>Across all areas and particularly</td>
<td>1. The project will provide women with additional leadership, group organization and management skills to better enable them to identify and express their needs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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62 Available access to microcredit is significant in the Delta area.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender issue</th>
<th>RCDP Cluster area</th>
<th>RCDP response to gender issue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| decision-making processes                                                   | in Chin and Naga areas                                                           | 2. Separate fora will be organized for women to prioritize their investment and livelihood needs, and women-identified needs will be favorably weighted in community infrastructure and livelihood prioritization.  
3. Quotas will be established for women’s membership and leadership of project-related committees, and a minimum female participation and quorum set for all community meetings.  
4. Women will be enabled and encouraged to lead investment development, and a minimum quota will be set for women-led livelihood investments. |
| Mobility of rural women is constrained by social norms regarding respectability, and family concerns about safety | Across all areas                                                                 | The project will raise community awareness of women’s right to freedom of movement, gender equality, and prevention of sexual harassment  
2. The important role of women in decision-making, leadership and team building will be highlighted in training programs |
| Some rural women may be illiterate, and ethnic women may not be fluent in the Burmese language, or even be able to speak it | Chin, Naga and ethnic group areas in Tanintharyi                                   | 1. CFs with knowledge of local dialects will provide additional support to illiterate women in villages through oral briefings in ethnic languages to ensure inclusion  
2. Information, education and communication materials will be translated into local languages |
| Women’s priorities and those of disadvantaged groups may be side-lined because of lack of women’s voice and agency | Across all areas                                                                 | 1. Project will ensure effective pro-poor planning through its policy of empowerment of women, youth and disadvantaged groups  
2. There will be close monitoring of livelihood investments to ensure pro-poor actions  
3. The livelihoods projects that are selected will be according to women’s/disadvantaged / youth groups’ priorities |
| Women’s triple work burden of domestic, agricultural and family caretaker responsibilities limits their available time for participating in community meetings | Across all RCDP target areas                                                      | 1. CFs will ensure that village meetings are organized at times which are convenient for women and vulnerable households, and that childcare arrangements are organized in the village during meeting times if necessary |
| Structural discrimination faced by women because of cultural norms, excludes them from having control over land, production technology and capacity development | Across all areas, and particularly in clusters with patriarchal ethnic groups: Chin, Naga | 1. CFs will provide additional support to women to ensure their inclusion in project benefits  
2. A pilot “Household Methodologies” approach to support women within their households will be implemented in selected areas.  
3. The project M&E system will monitor the parameters of a Women’s Agriculture Empowerment Index (WAEI) |
<p>| Women currently receive lower wages for casual labor than men                | Across all areas                                                                  | 1. Women will be guaranteed equal pay for equal work for project-financed community infrastructure projects |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender issue</th>
<th>RCDP Cluster area</th>
<th>RCDP response to gender issue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female-headed households may be risk-averse due to owning fewer resources such as land and capital and having significant household responsibilities</td>
<td>Across all cluster areas</td>
<td>1. Project will build capacity in entrepreneurship skills, and identify appropriate income generating activities, and facilitate linkages to markets which are pro-poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of business confidence amongst women may lead to insufficient cohesion within female livelihood groups</td>
<td>Across all areas and particularly in ethnic groups</td>
<td>1. Women will receive capacity building training in financial management, effective group establishment; governance and membership responsibility for all livelihood group members 2. There will be quotas for women on project-related committees and, where feasible, women will be encouraged to take up positions as bookkeeper, cashier, procurement officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low technical knowledge amongst women for operation and maintenance of water systems which disproportionately increases their workload when systems are non-functioning</td>
<td>Across all areas</td>
<td>1. Project will build capacity of women in technical O&amp;M skills and routine repairs 2. Project will advise on effective village-level operational cost arrangements and fee collection to support project-financed infrastructure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of capacity in production technology amongst women and socially vulnerable groups related to livelihoods activities</td>
<td>Across all areas</td>
<td>1. The project will facilitate improved access to technical advisory services for women and livelihood groups, and groups will be linked to local agri-businesses and markets 2. For landless households (a significant proportion of RCDP population), income-generating activities such as weaving (Chin), food/fishery processing (Tanintharyi, Ayeyarwady) will be linked to local markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household conflict and domestic violence</td>
<td>Across all areas</td>
<td>1. A pilot “Household Methodology” approach will be implemented in selected areas to raise awareness of the main triggers of household tension which lead to violence, and to empower couples to work together.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**XXXV. RCDP GESIAP (GENDER ANALYSIS AND GENDER EQUITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION ACTION PLAN)**

156. The Gender Equity and Social Inclusion Action Plan (GESIAP) of RCDP is attached to this report.

A. **RCDP Approach**

157. RCDP will adopt a community-based development approach in target villages that allows women, youth and other vulnerable groups the opportunity of participating in the process of
problem and needs identification and analysis, followed by a stage of conceptualizing solutions to address the identified needs, and subsequently implementing the identified solutions.

158. It begins with the preparation (or review and updating where already existing) of a DRD VDP. Village tracts will receive grants to finance prioritized community infrastructure subprojects which have been selected and approved by villagers in a village assembly. RCDP will adopt an 'open menu', which is subject to a negative list of activities what cannot be financed. The selection of subprojects will also be guided by a set of criteria to ensure that subprojects contribute to the objective of increased resilience, and are technically feasible, sustainable and particularly benefit women, youth the poor, disadvantaged and vulnerable.

159. **RCDP Community Infrastructure Cycle.** RCDP will finance three equally funded community infrastructure cycles:

   (i) Cycle 1 will finance an infrastructure investment in each project village, subject to technical and economic feasibility review by the community-elected VT Development Support Committee (VTSDC).

   (ii) Cycle 2 funding will be based on a prioritization of village-identified and submitted investments to be decided at VT-level by the VTSDC. Cycle 2 will build on the achievements of the first cycle and use the same community development steps with minor modifications that include: (i) competitive selection or prioritization of village subprojects at the village tract level; and (ii) incentivizing participation of and benefit to women, youth, the poor, disadvantaged and vulnerable by assigning higher weightings for these considerations in the selection of subprojects;

   (iii) Cycle 3 will be performance-based, open to village tracts that have achieved a minimum social and infrastructure quality assessment review (QAR) score. It is estimated that up to 60% of village tracts would be awarded Cycle 3 investment

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63 The VDP is designed to provide a coherent document that captures and expresses: (i) the development vision and aspirations of the village population, the current socio-economic and human development situation, the development potential, and barriers and challenges; and (ii) the development strategy, implementation plan and project activities, budget and financing.

64 For approval of village investment plans, minimum village household and gender participation quotas will be applied.

65 The negative list in similar projects usually includes activities that may be harmful to the environment or IPs such as: weapons, chainsaws, explosives, pesticides, insecticides, herbicides, asbestos, and other potentially dangerous materials and equipment, fishing boats and nets above the government prescribed size and weight, road construction into protected areas, purchase or compensation for land, political and religious activities, rallies, and materials, activities that employ children below the age of 16 years or that unfairly exploit women or men at any age. ERLIP’s negative list expands this and includes subprojects not included in the VDP; that exclude the poor, marginalized or vulnerable population; private goods outside of a supported livelihoods group; production, purchase or use of drugs, alcohol; construction of any new dams or the rehabilitation of dams including structural and/or operational changes; Sub-projects which use water from international waterways, including activities, such as community water supply, small-scale irrigation or pico-hydropower generation facilities, on the mainstream of the Ayeyarwady River or community water supply and small-scale irrigation on or along the Maykha and Malikha tributaries of the Ayeyarwady River; subprojects which involve development of new settlements or expansion of existing settlements in critical habitats; or savings and loan schemes; pipe connection, valves and meters from main distribution point in the village to individual households; operation and maintenance of solar power system; bills / fees for electricity supply to public buildings, community roads and charging stations; cost to connect households, private businesses or religious structures to the main source of electricity. The list will be reviewed and adopted as appropriate for RCDP application.

66 Performance criteria will be clearly defined in the Operations Manual.
B. Link between RCDP and ERLIP

160. ERLIP is a pilot project focusing on the integration of infrastructure and livelihood interventions within a community-based development (CBD) framework. It is being implemented by MoALI and DRD since 2014 and is expected to close in September 2019. The expected impact is ‘improved agricultural productivity and enhanced livelihoods contributing to reduced poverty in the selected regions’, and the expected outcome is ‘improved essential productive rural and social infrastructure in the project-assisted villages to lead to better income opportunities.’

161. **ERLIP’s gender policy** recognizes and respects the rights of women: its stated aim is to increase gender equality and the empowerment of men and women by actively engaging them in activities along the project cycle, and ensuring that women directly benefit from livelihood and infrastructure subprojects implemented with ERLIP support. CFs, technical facilitators (TFs), livelihoods facilitators (LFs) and all community members are to ensure meaningful participation of both men and women throughout the project cycle, including during community monitoring, grievance handling, and social audits. Separate meetings were to be conducted with poor and vulnerable women and men, including women-headed households, the elderly, people living with disabilities as well as landless households, ethnic minorities and households living in remote and isolated households, to allow them to express their respective needs and priorities; identify and prioritize sub-projects, and provide inputs to the VDP.

162. A recent review found that, in general, the participation of rural communities in project infrastructure activities was considered satisfactory. There are, however, identified areas that require attention and should be improved. For example, it was assessed that women should be encouraged to be more active in village activities, and in leadership of committees. In most coastal areas, there is also low participation of elected volunteers for several reasons including heavy workload. The same is observed in villages composed of ethnic groups and island villages.

163. There have also been dropouts from newly-established livelihood groups (3% of total number of livelihood groups). Reasons cited by these households include preference for earning a living as an independent household, and perceived difficulty in undertaking group livelihood activities. Also, the need to ensure their family’s daily subsistence made it difficult especially for those coming from single-headed households, to comply with group procedures (such as regular attendance at group meetings) without risking losing their daily income as casual laborers. Other reasons cited were unexpected changes in family situation such as out-migration for employment, lack of sufficient space or land required for the livelihood activity such as pig pens, and pressures related to religious beliefs. ERLIP will therefore be adjusting its livelihoods guidelines to minimize the number of livelihood group dropouts.

164. **Lessons learned from a review of ERLIP** indicate that, despite its gender policy, the level of empowerment of local women particularly in community decision-making was less than...
optimum, and existing social and cultural norms continued to constrain women from participating effectively in the project’s community development activities. To date, the ERLIP target of 80% subprojects to be selected by women, has not been reached.

165. RCDP will therefore refine ERLIP’s gender policy in order to increase its effectiveness. Wherever possible, women’s group meetings will be facilitated by female CFs and proposals for infrastructure and livelihood subprojects submitted by women’s groups will receive greater weighting. Further details of RCDP design considerations are described below.

166. RCDP builds on ERLIP in other aspects. Each community infrastructure cycle will last approximately 6–12 months depending on the season, the feasibility and complexity of subprojects and the preparedness of communities to undertake project activities. For the livelihood intervention, the project will build capacity of communities to engage in livelihood activities and provide a one-off investment to livelihood groups to intensify or diversify means of livelihood and enhance the impact of infrastructure investments. As with ERLIP, RCDP will use the established community planning processes of the government under the VDP but will strengthen the social preparation and training component applied by ERLIP, including incorporating disaster and climate risk considerations and market and employment opportunities in project operations. The project will also support the consolidation of VDPs at village tract and ultimately at township levels and the incorporation of VDP information in a web-based, searchable database.

167. RCDP will operate at the level of the village and will support the preparation of the Village Development Plans (VDPs) in each project village, if they do not as yet exist. This is preceded by social mobilization and preparation where villages are supported in identifying their most pressing concerns, using various participatory analysis tools (mapping, focus discussions, transects, etc.). This is followed by a process of determining the best solutions, again, through approaches that engage the whole community. Investment grants will finance subprojects prioritized by the villagers and cleared by the VTDSC. A VDSC is organized and trained in each village to support preparation of the VDP and subproject proposals. The VDSC is also responsible for implementing approved subprojects. The VDSC is composed of at least 12 members (18 in ERLIP), elected at large during a village meeting and willing to perform tasks for the project on a voluntary basis.

168. At least half of the VDSC members must be women. Elected members of the VDSC shall choose from among themselves, two co-chairpersons, at least one of who must be a woman. The VDSC will be organized into sub-committees, with two members each, one of whom must be a woman, as follows:

(i) Livelihood Development Sub-committee (LDSC) - 2 members
(ii) Procurement Sub-committee (PSC) - 2 members
(iii) Finance Sub-committee (FSC) - 2 members, with one functioning as treasurer and the other as bookkeeper
(iv) Monitoring Sub-committee (MSC) members
(v) Operation and Maintenance Sub-committee (O&M) - 2 members

70 To ensure that participation and actual construction works are not rushed, a cycle cannot be shorter than 6 months. In inaccessible areas and townships with dispersed population centers, the cycle is expected to last longer because of additional steps to ensure participation.

71 The roles of the VT and VTDSC are discussed in the next section
Lessons Learned and Findings from TRTA Fieldwork. A review of the implementation experience of projects such as ERLIP, NCDDP and LIFT together with findings from the field in proposed RCDP target areas, highlight design considerations for the proposed project.\footref{72}

Since 2010, LIFT (Livelihoods and Food Security Fund) has also sought to address the challenges women face in Myanmar through its livelihoods and food security programs. LIFT’s gender strategy (2015-2018) lays out its objectives with regard to gender equality and women’s empowerment as well as its Theory of Change (ToC). LIFT interventions, related to inclusive value chains are aimed at contributing to LIFT’s gender ToC and include promoting equal pay for equal work in employment created through LIFT’s projects and programs; ensuring that all training related to access and involvement in the agriculture value chain are gender-sensitive; identifying the main constraints to women’s access to different parts of the agricultural value chains and, where possible, setting out steps as to how to address these constraints.

A review of the NCDDP project has also provided a basis for designing the gender policy of RCDP. Together with ethnic groups and women, disabled persons have been encouraged to participate in village planning and committee work and have had a chance to discuss special requirements in terms of infrastructure design with TFs at the subproject design stage where this may significantly affect their access to benefits.

Women’s participation and engagement however, remains a concern, given local cultural practices and the culture of patriarchy and exclusion in ethnic areas. Experience from NCDDP’s work with Pashu women of Bokpyin Township in Tanintharyi region has shown that women in remote communities remain reluctant to participate in meetings.\footref{73} Separate group meetings for women will therefore be held, facilitated by female CFs where possible\footref{74}, assuring women of the opportunity to submit a proposal (not a special fund or window but an opportunity to prepare and submit a proposal) for both community infrastructure and livelihood components, and applying a pro-active and positive bias to women’s priorities in the community investment prioritization process.

Because of the language barrier in ethnic group areas, which is particularly the case with ethnic women, project staff (especially facilitators) will have to be hired locally, whenever possible.

C. Implementation of GESIAP

PMU/MIC Gender Specialists will be responsible for implementing capacity building and preparing training materials in gender equity awareness and gender mainstreaming based on DRD / MOALI gender policy and the country’s National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women for both implementing agency and village authorities, in order to ensure that women are provided every opportunity to participate in activities and decision-making.\footref{75}

Regular meetings will be conducted locally with village women organized by female CFs supported by female staff from DRD, and project gender specialists, to hear their concerns and

\footref{72} The project preparation team visited 4 regions, 18 townships and 71 villages.
\footref{73} Interview with NCCDP Gender Specialist, September 2018.
\footref{74} To ensure that women’s group meetings are mainly facilitated by women facilitators, the project will, when required and where possible, temporarily shift women facilitators to villages with male facilitators over the period that the women’s groups are meeting.
\footref{75} The finalized list of training topics will be included as part of the RCDP Capacity Development Plan.
specific feedback concerning village development activities and training needs. This is because women may be reluctant to speak out in mixed meetings in the presence of men. At the same time, women’s meetings will ensure that the progress of livelihood development activities can be discussed and women can give their feedback. Communities – both men and women will also receive awareness-training in gender equity so that they understand the importance of women’s participation in committees and leadership roles, and in project activities, particularly agricultural training and climate-resilience awareness-raising.

176. National and International Gender Consultants working with the Project Executing Agency in collaboration with the DRD Gender Focal Point and other interested stakeholders will assist in the preparation of capacity building training materials for VTDCs, VDSCs and livelihood groups to ensure that they are gender sensitive and easily understood. A major constraint in ethnic areas might be low female literacy levels, and solutions will need to be discussed with female beneficiaries who face literacy challenges.

177. Training and demonstration activities including enterprise development and financial management will be conducted in locations and times convenient for women, and attention will be paid to providing childcare during training events to ensure that women are able to participate fully in training activities.

178. Gender analysis and identified gender issues will be included in all RCDP’s foundation studies during the life of the project such as baseline, mid-term and final surveys, market studies, value chain assessments and feasibility studies.

179. Project monitoring will track gender-disaggregated indicators throughout RCDP implementation. The project management system will monitor participation in all village development events, capacity building and technical training events and community and committee meetings, at both the implementing agency and community level. The project will ensure that women have equal access to technical information. Participatory monitoring of project impact will be implemented at the mid-term of the project and this will include interviews with women’s focus groups, and project Gender Focal Points and CFs. Household interviews will include adequate representation of female-headed households.

D. Gender and Social Inclusion Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators

180. The project’s impact will be monitored and measured through the use of baseline surveys and follow-up surveys. The follow-up survey will be conducted at the mid-term point and also at project completion. An important part of the monitoring and evaluation activity will be the use of women’s focus groups for obtaining qualitative data, and also individual household interviews for quantitative data collection.

181. Gender disaggregated data will be used for project monitoring particularly regarding activities which are linked to specific GESIAP actions and for which verifiable sources of data for monitoring will be available at subproject level from village committees.

182. Indicators will include:
   (i) Women’s participation in village discussions, village committees and planning for infrastructure and livelihood subprojects;
   (ii) women’s participation in livelihood and agricultural training, demonstrations and extension meetings;
(iii) women’s participation in non-traditional (masonry, carpentry, electrical work etc.) and livelihoods skills training;
(iv) women’s membership in farmers’ producer groups, cooperatives and water users’ groups;
(v) women’s representation on management committees of producer groups, cooperatives, associations and water users’ groups;
(vi) women’s agriculture and livestock income-generating activities in subproject areas including off-farm employment and non-farm income generating activities;
(vii) sources of household income and expenditure in female-headed households;
(viii) level of household debt and use of credit;
(ix) women’s uptake of climate-resilient technologies following training;
(x) female representation and participation in DRD policy working groups;
(xi) women’s representation in Executive Agency (EA), IAs and community facilitation teams; and
(xii) change in men and women’s awareness of gender equity, social inclusion, rights of child, gender-based violence in target populations (following awareness training).

E. Responsibility for GESIAP

183. Overall responsibility for the implementation of the RCDP gender and social inclusion action plan will rest with the DRD of MOALI.

184. International and National Gender and Social Inclusion Specialists will be recruited to provide technical assistance to the EA. The national Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist will work systematically during the Project’s lifetime, while the International Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist will make regular inputs over the course of the project’s lifetime to support the national Specialist.

185. The MOALI Gender Focal Point will also be closely involved in monitoring implementation arrangements for the GESIAP and reporting will be linked to national Gender Policy implementation and monitoring.

186. Gender sensitization training will be provided to all Executing Agency and Implementing Agency staff at the start of the project and also refresher training at the project’s mid-term point.

187. The project M&E system will include indicators for the GESIAP. In addition, the M&E system will monitor WAEI and Women’s Minimum Dietary Diversity (WMDD) scores. All EA reports submitted to ADB will report progress against the project GESIAP. Responsibility for monitoring the progress of the GESIAP and preparing progress reports will be with the RCDP Gender and Social Inclusion Specialists.

F. Budget and human resource (consultants) allocation for implementation of GESIAP

188. The project will recruit both an international gender Specialist specialized in HHM (12 person-months) and a national Gender and Social Inclusion Specialist (61-person months), who will be responsible for implementing awareness training to the implementing agency and project staff in gender equality and other critical issues mentioned above both at the start of the project and at mid-term. They will also be responsible for monitoring and reporting on the progress of the project GESIAP. There will also be Cluster-level-Gender Officers recruited to oversee
gender and social inclusion activities and issues. In addition, the Gender Officers will participate in activities related to the household methodology pilot.