

Evaluation of NPA's Civil Society Programme in Myanmar

External Review

David Hale
for Norwegian People's Aid
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Author's note to invited readers:

In June 2018, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) engaged Olive Grove Consulting (OGC) to conduct an external mid-term evaluation of NPA's Civil Society Programme in Myanmar. This evaluation encompassed a reflective assessment of 17 partners supported through this programme.

The purpose of this evaluation was threefold.

1. To evaluate the three-year NORAD and SIDA programmes (2016-2019) which aim to support civil society
2. To identify key lessons and recommendations to inform NPA's global OfD programme to be conducted in 2018
3. To identify key lessons and recommendations for NPA's partners to discuss and consider as part of a reflection workshop

Sincere thanks is extended to staff from all partners interviewed as part of this evaluation. Their patience, diligence and good-humour were all appreciated. The goodwill and assistance of NPA staff was, as ever, in high supply and integral to the efficient delivery of this report.

David Hale, Melbourne, 31 Jul 2018

Abbreviations

ACDD	Action Committee for Democracy Development
AD	Another Development
ALARM	Advancing Life And Regenerating Motherland
CBI	Capacity Building Initiative
CC	Community Centre
CSO	Civil society organisation
EAO	Non state armed group
EQMM	Equality Myanmar
GEN	Gender Equality Network
HDFI	Human Dignity Film Institute
HI	Humanity Institute
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
MATA	Myanmar Alliance for Transparency and Accountability
MCPWC	Myanmar China Pipeline Watch Committee
MFE	Myanmar Fifth Estate
MLAW	Myanmar Legal Aid Network
PK	Paung Ku
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UPC	Union Peace Conference
WCDI	Women Can Do It
YSPS	Yangon School of Political Science

Table of Contents

Abbreviations	3
Executive Summary.....	6
Recommendations	9
Methodology and Context	12
NPA Context	12
Purpose	13
Methodology.....	13
Limitations.....	15
Consultant’s background.....	15
Part One: NPA findings.....	17
Mobilising within NPA’s global mandate	17
Partnerships	20
Strategic framework.....	23
Complementary programming.....	24
Long-term impact.....	27
Part Two: Key partner reflections	29
Relevance	29
Effectiveness	30
Efficiency	31
Sustainability	31
Part Three: NORAD partner insights	35
Part Four: Sida partner insights	38
Annex A. NORAD partner summaries	41
AD.....	41
ALARM.....	43
CBI	46
Equality Myanmar	49
HI/THANKS.....	51
MATA.....	53
MCPWC	56
Paung Ku.....	58
YSPS.....	61
Annex B Sida Partner summaries.....	63
ACDD	63

Akhaya	65
MFE	67
MLAW.....	69
PK Community Center	71
Shalom	73
WCDI	76
Winpeace	78
Appendix C. List of interviewees.....	80
Appendix D. Strategic relevance comparison	82
Appendix E. Terms of reference for evaluation of NPA civil society programmes in Myanmar	87
Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA) in Myanmar	87
Scope and purpose of the evaluation – Civil Society Support Programmes.....	87
Main questions to be answered:	88
Methodology.....	89
Evaluation Team	89
Required qualifications and experience	89
Deliverables.....	89
Timeline.....	89
Budget	90

List of Tables

Table 1 Partners supported under current NORAD and Sida programmes	13
Table 2 Overarching evaluation questions.....	15
Table 3 Macro assessment of mobilisation approaches among selected partners.....	20
Table 4 NPA’s partnership principles	21
Table 5 Comparison of NPA's Global and Myanmar Strategies.....	23
Table 6 Peacebuilding functions of civil society actors.....	26
Table 7. Assessment of whether partners' aim can be measured	33

Executive Summary

This evaluation was conducted from 4 June-26 July 2018. All partners who are currently, or have previously, been funded under Norwegian Peoples' Aid's 244615 or 244709 funding streams were invited to share their experiences with the evaluator.¹ NPA's extensive work beyond this strengthening civil society pillar (which is supported by both NORAD and Sida), was outside the scope of this evaluation. Only one former partner (Human Dignity Film Institute) under this pillar declined to be interviewed for this evaluation due to competing work pressures. 23 key informant interviews were conducted in Yangon with partners from 4-14 June and with NPA staff remotely from 29 June-5 July. A review of key findings was presented to partners for validation and discussion during workshops held in Yangon on 25 and 26 July. During this time, bilateral feedback sessions were also held with 14 of 17 partners originally interviewed as part of this mid-term review.

The purpose of this evaluation was threefold.

1. To conduct a mid-term evaluation of the three-year NORAD and Sida frameworks (2016-2019), under the civil society pillar of NPA's Country Strategy
2. To identify key lessons and recommendations to inform NPA's global OfD programme to be conducted in 2018
3. To identify key lessons and recommendations for NPA's partners to discuss and consider as part of a reflection workshop

At a strategic level, NPA is assessed to be affecting meaningful change towards its overarching objectives, led through an array of effective civil society organisations. NPA Myanmar is a partner above and beyond the financial support it facilitates. NPA has enabled institutional growth for all selected partners and has provided responsive and flexible support from strategic guidance to bridging funding. Critically, it is assessed NPA's work in Myanmar has been driven by the partners it supports. Beyond upholding and furthering its underlying values, NPA is assessed to have flexibly responded to the priorities and approaches deemed most critical, and most suitable by local organisations.

Mobilisation

NPA Myanmar has undoubtedly advanced its mobilising agenda among partners; fostering a culture of collaboration and partnership. NPA was found to have applied a systematic approach to organisational development of partners. Partners did however express a desire for NPA to facilitate even more connection between organisations. Organisations felt that they could learn, resource-share and conduct joint lobbying if there were more opportunities to connect with like-minded partners, particularly in supporting advocacy in the lead up to elections in 2020.

- ✓ NPA may consider ways to actively support membership growth of partners, consistent with NPA's global mandate.

¹ 244615 is the NPA project code for the three-year framework with Sida called: Support to Civil Society towards democratic transition in Myanmar, 2016 – 2019, Sida Contribution – 10160 from 01 Oct 2016 to 30 Sept 2019 and 244709 is the NPA Myanmar part of the global framework NPA has with NORAD from 2016-2019 called GLO-0613 QZA-15/0443. NPA Myanmar entered into this agreement from year two of this framework, in 2017.

- ✓ NPA should help to foster a community of practice amongst its partners – potentially around thematic focus areas such as gender, capacity building or peace.
- ✓ NPA should further promote organisational development as a separate line item within budgets as part of good practice programme design

Partnerships

NPA Myanmar is meaningfully and effectively applying NPA’s global partnership principles across its Sida and NORAD programmes. NPA has been particularly adept to avoid directing or imposing standardised approaches, and remains responsive to partner-led, context specific approaches. Partners expressed appreciation of NPA’s flexibility; including its willingness for partners to test their approaches, to learn from mistakes and to tailor their projects based on needs and evidence. While most partners appreciated NPA’s ‘light touch’, a number expressed an interest in having more engagement with NPA staff.

- ✓ NPA should continue to offer flexible and adaptive support to partners, including assistance with applications, reporting and capacity development
- ✓ NPA should continue to fund partners’ pilot activities that seek to test innovative and ambitious solutions to entrenched challenges
- ✓ NPA should, where appropriate, consider moving partners to longer-term funding agreements (two, three or four years), with funding released annually based on progression reporting and face-to-face reviews.

Complementary programming

NPA’s funding frameworks through NORAD and Sida support the first of three pillars (strengthening civil society) identified in NPA’s Country Strategy. The work of NPA’s partners under this pillar undoubtedly complements the objectives of NPA’s peace related objectives, identified under pillar two of this strategy. Marginalisation, inequality and denial of rights are all key drivers of violent conflict in Myanmar. Focus areas for complementary programming include; human rights advocacy; socialisation to values of peace and democracy; inter-group social cohesion by bringing people together from diverse groups; and facilitation of dialogue on the local and national level.

- ✓ Consider opportunities to strengthen civil society in areas affected by inter-communal tensions and violence.
- ✓ Encourage and fund partners to conduct consultations, training or education sessions that bring together diverse groups (from different states for example) to share experiences and build common understanding.
- ✓ NPA should consider compiling a register of training content (and intended benefits) offered by existing NPA partners, that can be shared and offered to non-state armed groups.

Relevance

Partners’ objectives are, for the most part, highly relevant to NPA’s overarching strategic priorities. The stated objectives of partners such as Paung Ku, Advancing Life And Regenerating Motherland (ALARM), Action Committee for Democracy Development (ACDD)

Myanmar Alliance for Transparency and Accountability, MATA and Equality Myanmar (EQMM) were assessed to have the highest relevance to NPA, particularly in CSO development, prioritisation of human rights, a just distribution of resources and focus on democratisation. Partners have broadly demonstrated a strong ability to adapt to Myanmar's changing political context. Many noted the current political climate has reduced the space for civil society to operate in advocacy, reform and issue-based research. Within this context, partners have effectively evolved their outreach and advocacy to include persuasive participatory and evidence-based research to more effectively connect and engage government. CSOs are however operating in a period of heightened risk. Organisations like MATA and Myanmar China Pipeline Watch Committee (MCPWC) are facing security threats to individuals.

Effectiveness and efficiency

Evaluated partners are largely on track to achieve intended outputs. Shalom, Another Development (AD), MCPWC, Humanity Institute (HI) and Women Can Do It (WCDI) are however the most likely to require extensions to complete planned activities at this stage. While most partners are likely to achieve specified activities, they are less likely to achieve stipulated goals; which generally focus on long-term, structural reform and societal change.

Long-term impact

Having worked in Myanmar since 2004, NPA has partnered with a range of organisations at the forefront of the country's dramatic political, economic and social liberalisation. While democratic practices in Myanmar remain nascent, civil society has played a crucial role in holding government accountable to its constituents. Significantly, NPA's partners have led participatory and inclusive engagement with democratic structures, rarely seen prior to 2015. NPA has also helped partners create space for civil society to engage, grow and voice their concerns to duty holders.

Sustainability

Partners have demonstrated varying degrees of gender and conflict sensitivity in designing and implementing projects. Few organisations, aside from WCDI, Shalom, Winpeace and Akhaya, demonstrated notable achievement towards promoting women's leadership internally. CBI's development of an inclusion policy highlights good practice that should be encouraged where possible among other partners.

Evaluated partners were found to have applied adequate conflict sensitivity within programmes. Such approaches were often the result of learned experience and common sense, more-so than any particularly robust or holistic conflict sensitivity policy. At a minimum, no partners were found to have caused harm through current programmes. Additional support to strengthen these systems would be beneficial for almost all partners.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning capabilities were largely nascent among most evaluated partners. Improvements can, and should, be encouraged across the portfolio. Reporting was found to be adequate for activity tracking, but few organisations demonstrated an effective approach to understanding and measuring the impact of these activities.

- ✓ Encourage partners to develop internal policies that support genuine decision-making power for women.

- ✓ NPA may organise an optional training session for partners on inclusive practices, perhaps led by members of WCDI or Akhaya.
- ✓ NPA should consider training in most significant change evaluation techniques, to assist partners more effectively monitor structural impacts

Recommendations

Priority actions

1. NPA should, where appropriate, consider moving partners to longer-term funding agreements (two, three or four years), with funding released annually based on progression reporting and face-to-face reviews.
2. Tangible examples of good practice gender sensitive approaches should be consolidated and shared with partners.
3. NPA may organise an optional training session for partners on inclusive practices, perhaps led by members of Women Can Do It (WCDI) or Akhaya.
4. Encourage partners to develop internal policies that support genuine decision-making power for women.
5. NPA partners should be encouraged to develop inclusion policies as part of good practice gender sensitive programming.
6. Consider more opportunities to connect partners bilaterally and collectively, including through the establishment of community of practices for thematic issues.
7. NPA should continue to support integrated design and monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) practices as part of ongoing capacity development support.
8. NPA should consider how to foster short-term placements of organisational development (OD) specialists, and opportunities greater peer-peer learning (secondments, staff exchanges or technical lessons learned workshops).
9. NPA should consider hosting a conflict sensitivity workshop to share knowledge and concrete good practices.
10. NPA should consider training in 'most significant change' evaluation techniques, to assist partners more effectively monitor structural impacts.
11. NPA should help to foster a community of practice amongst its partners – potentially around thematic focus areas such as gender, capacity building or peace.
12. NPA should seek to develop the facilitation skills of staff to more effectively engage partners to meet its capacity building objectives.

13. NPA should further promote organisational development as a separate line item within budgets as part of good practice programme design.
14. NPA should offer to visibly support its partners through proactively advocating their agendas among the international community (and feedback discussions to all partners wherever possible).
15. NPA should continue to offer flexible and adaptive support to partners, including assistance with applications, reporting and capacity development.
16. NPA must proactively monitor partners' statements and programmes to ensure NPA's values are being shared and promoted across its funding portfolio.
17. NPA should continue to fund partners' pilot activities that seek to test innovative and ambitious solutions to entrenched challenges.

Secondary actions to consider

18. NPA may encourage and fund partners to conduct consultations, training or education sessions that bring together diverse groups (from different states for example) to share experiences and build common understanding.
19. NPA should seek to foster multiple levels of engagement to help institutionalise partnerships through optional site visits, workshops and social networking opportunities.
20. NPA may consider opportunities to strengthen civil society in areas affected by inter-communal tensions and violence.
21. NPA may encourage and fund partners to undertake inclusion training, particularly for partners' training and workshop facilitators.
22. NPA should seek to foster multiple levels of engagement to help institutionalise partnerships through optional site visits, workshops and social networking opportunities.
23. Consider approaches to increase NPA's influence in Norwegian and international decision-making as part of NPA Myanmar's next country strategy, and transparently communicate efforts to partners.
24. NPA should consider including more explicit objectives around marginalisation and inter-communal violence in NPA's next country strategy.
25. NPA should consider including intended effects – or explicit justifications – for each objective in NPA's next country strategy.

26. Consider a conflict sensitive framework to support partners working on legislative reform; including considering how laws support diversity, decentralisation and promote equality.
27. NPA should seek to advocate for opportunities for partners to contribute to the CSO Forum, national dialogues and Union Peace Conference as facilitators, participants and/or observers.
28. NPA should consider compiling a register of training content (and intended benefits) offered by existing NPA partners, that can be shared and offered to non-state armed groups.
29. NPA may connect partners working on advocacy on similar themes to expand geographic representation and consider and capture diverse voices.
30. NPA should seek to encourage and, where appropriate facilitate, partners focused on research, such as HI, AD or ACDD to present findings on key issues to EAOs.
31. NPA may seek to identify opportunities for partners to utilise advocacy channels that have been established by other partners.

Methodology and Context

NPA Context

Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) is a politically independent membership-based organisation working in Norway and in more than 30 countries around the world. NPA aims to improve people's living conditions and to create societies that are more just and more democratic. NPA has worked in Myanmar since 2004. In Myanmar, NPA has identified three pillars as part of its 2017-19 Country Strategy;

- Civil society participating in the establishment of a stronger democracy
- Peace and reconciliation through fighting marginalisation
- Safer life for civilians living with reduced exposure to risks caused by landmine contamination

NPA's multi-track programme means staff divide time between an array of partners, but also ensures NPA has well-developed logistic and HR structures to adequately service a spectrum of needs. Its ability to facilitate partnerships across its diverse portfolios and lead capacity development in a range of fields are clearly key organisational strengths.

This evaluation has been informed and shaped by NPA's International Strategy 2016-2019, NPA's Principles Programme 2015-2019, NPA Myanmar's Country Strategy 2017-19, NPA's Partnership Policy, and result matrices for the 244615 grant from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the 244709 grant from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)

NORAD partner	Support within current cycle	Sida partner	Support within current cycle
Another Development (AD)	2018	Action Committee for Democracy Development (ACDD)	2017
Advancing Life And Regenerating Motherland (ALARM)	2017-18	Akhaya	2017-18
Capacity Building Initiative (CBI)	2017-18	Human Dignity Film Institute (HDFI)	2017
Equality Myanmar (EQMM)	2017-18	Myanmar Fifth Estate (MFE)	2017-18
Humanity Institute (HI)	2017-18	Myanmar Legal Aid Network (MLAW)	2018

Myanmar Alliance for Transparency and Accountability (MATA)	2017-18	Paung Ku Community Center in Mandalay	2017-18
Myanmar China Pipeline Watch Committee (MCPWC)	2017-18	Shalom	2017-18
Paung Ku (PK)	2017-18	Winpeace	2017
Yangon School of Political Science (YSPS)	2017-18	Women Can Do It (WCDI)	2018

Table 1 Partners supported under current NORAD and Sida programmes

Purpose

The purpose of this evaluation was threefold.

4. To conduct a mid-term evaluation of the three-year NORAD and Sida frameworks (2016-2019), under the civil society pillar of NPA's Country Strategy
5. To identify key lessons and recommendations to inform NPA's global OfD programme to be conducted in 2018
6. To identify key lessons and recommendations for NPA's partners to discuss and consider as part of a reflection workshop

Methodology

23 key informant interviews were conducted with 31 individuals in Yangon from partners between 4-14 June and with NPA staff remotely from 29 June-5 July. All partners who are currently, or have previously, been funded under NPA's 244615 or 244709 funding streams were invited to share their experiences with the evaluator. Only one former partner (HDFI) declined to be interviewed for this evaluation due to competing work pressures. A review of key findings was presented to partners for validation and discussion during workshops held in Yangon on 25 and 26 July. During this time, bilateral feedback sessions were also held with 14 of 17 partners originally interviewed as part of this mid-term review.²

A full list of interviewees is included at [Appendix C](#).

This mid-term evaluation preferred a process evaluation model, to identify challenges, experiences and lessons to inform ongoing implementation. The overarching evaluation questions are included below in Table 2, and were examined within the context of the OECD/DAC evaluation framework.³

² MCPWC, ACDD and Winpeace were unable to attend the workshops

³ OECD. 2009. [Guidelines for Project and Programme Evaluations](#).

Line of inquiry	Key evaluation question
Part One: NPA findings	How is the global mandate of mobilising people and addressing power imbalances carried out in the context of Myanmar? Has the program contributed to more people organising? Has the way they are organising contributed to achieving the results?
	Is NPA following its global partnership-approach? What are some of the strengths, and challenges that the programme is facing in their work with partners in Myanmar? How do partners see NPA’s partnership approach?
	Is the capacity of NPA partners strengthened through NPA’s work? To what extent? How can this be improved? Is this in line with OD framework?
	Is NPA country strategy relevant to the Myanmar context? Is it in line with NPA global strategy? Recommend concrete steps for the next country strategy design (beyond 2019)
	Are the Civil society programmes complementary to the peace related programmes? Could you advise areas for greater convergence?
	Overall, what is the long term impact NPA’s support to civil society in Myanmar (beyond the program duration and/or since the beginning of the partnership)?
Part 2: Partner reflections	Are the civil society projects implemented in a cost efficient way?
	Are the programmatic approaches, and the chosen partners, relevant to the current political context in Myanmar? How do NPA and partners respond to the volatile context in Myanmar?
	Are the partners likely to reach their goals?
	Do the partners have a clearly articulated strategy? To what extent NPA selected partners having a strategy that is relevant to NPA country strategy’s objectives?
Parts 3+4 Partner insights (Sida/NORAD)	To what extent has the projects under Civil Society Programmes achieved the planned results, i.e. outputs and outcomes (including short term, intended and unintended)? Are the aims of the programme relevant and realistic?
	To what extent does the programme pay attention to conflict sensitivity and gender sensitivity? What needs to be improved?

	At what level should/could adjustments be made (design, content, focus, staff training and community awareness)?
	Are each of the programmes' aims measurable? Review and comment on current NPA Myanmar Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) practices and systems. Recommend concrete steps for improvements.

Table 2 Overarching evaluation questions

Project proposals, strategies and interim/final reports of NPA's NORAD and SIDA partners were reviewed to:

1. Establish baselines for project objectives;
2. Inform the context of the evaluation;
3. Identify gaps / areas of inquiry during qualitative review; and
4. Assess OECD/DAC evaluation criteria.

Key informant interviews were guided by the overarching evaluation questions, and utilised reflective leaning approaches. Interviews all lasted between 1.5-3hrs. Interviewees were invited to critically reflect experiences through a 'listening and learning' methodology⁴. Specifically:

- Guiding questions were used but probing or leading statements avoided
- Participant responses guided the conversations
- Conversations were not used to answer a hypothesis
- Conversations followed "Do No Harm" throughout the duration of the process
- Inclusive approaches were prioritised, particularly in hearing the voices of women

Limitations

This mid-term evaluation cannot be regarded as a conclusive assessment of partners. Due to the limited time available for consultations, the evaluation did not interview beneficiaries of any programme, nor were any views external to partnerships formally captured (aside from NPA's). Conclusions have been based on subjective assessments derived from interviews with key leaders of organisations, and desk review as part of the process evaluation methodology.

NPA staff attended two partner consultations (MCPWC and Mandalay Community Centre) to provide translation. Partners indicated they were happy to proceed in this format and NPA staff who attended were not assigned as project officers to those partner organisations. Regardless, it is certainly possible partners may have self-censored in the presence of NPA staff.

Consultant's background

David Hale has worked in government, NGOs and CSOs as a senior peacebuilding analyst, advisor and consultant for nearly ten years. In Myanmar, he was an embedded advisor with the Myanmar Peace Center for over two years during negotiations towards a nationwide ceasefire agreement. He has subsequently worked on issues from youth participation in the peace process to civil society development for the International Rescue Committee, Peace

⁴ Search for Common Ground. 2015. [Listening and Learning](#).

Nexus, the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, the Peace Support Fund and the social enterprise, Harmoneat. As a former manager at the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), Mr Hale has led numerous summative evaluations and program reviews.

Part One: NPA findings

Mobilising within NPA's global mandate

Key evaluation question: [How is the global mandate of mobilising people and addressing power imbalances carried out in the context of Myanmar? Has the program contributed to more people organising? Has the way they are organising contributed to achieving the results?](#)

[Is the capacity of NPA partners strengthened through NPA's work? To what extent? How can this be improved? Is this in line with OD framework?](#)

NPA is committed globally to “mobilising people for democracy and a just distribution of resources”.⁵ NPA has applied this global mandate through capacity development opportunities for partners, promoting democratic practices internally and supporting strategic development. NPA Myanmar has undoubtedly promoted its mobilising focus among partners; fostering a culture of collaboration and partnership.

NPA has applied a systematic approach to organisational development of partners, assessed to as consistent with NPA's OD framework. NPA provides annual training in key financial management, human resource and anti-corruption practices. However, more tailored, needs-based support could further support partners to mobilise in advance of their objectives. In particular, NPA should seek to develop the facilitation skills of staff to more effectively engage partners to meet its capacity building objectives.

“NPA is the one donor that supported us to strengthen our organisation”⁶

NPA has supported and strengthened civil society organisations such as Shalom, Paung Ku, EQMM, WCDI and Capacity Building Initiative, whose work is intended to cascade among communities across Myanmar. Over 5,000 individuals benefited from training and support provided by these five partners alone in 2017. At a micro-level, CBI has trained over 60 CBOs and CSOs in anti-corruption practice developed from NPA's policy. While at a macro-level, Paung Ku provides partnership to over 150 community organisations annually, including through seed funding and reflective learning approaches, modeling NPA's decentralised empowerment principles.

“NPA is not only grant provider, but also very helpful with HR, finance – everything we need”⁷

Partners did however express a desire for NPA to facilitate more connection between organisations. Organisations felt that they could learn, resource-share and conduct joint lobbying if there were more opportunities to connect with like-minded partners, particularly in supporting advocacy in the lead up to elections in 2020. Consistent with NPA's

⁵ NPA. 2016. [Norwegian People's Aid International Strategy 2016–2019.](#)

⁶ MCPWC

⁷ MCPWC

international strategy, NPA Myanmar should seek more opportunities to build alliances and advocate nationally, and internationally.⁸

“Our voice is stronger in partnership”⁹

NPA Myanmar has had few opportunities to support organisations in their work to broaden their grassroots’ base, including recruitment of members. While part of NPA’s global mandate, membership recruitment has not been identified as a priority for NPA among its partners, and indeed, would be a complicated role for an international organisation to play in Myanmar’s current context.

While NPA Myanmar has sought to catalyse and mobilise action through its partners, there is scope – in certain circumstances – for NPA to advocate more directly in support of shared agendas, particularly internationally. This may help affirm and embolden partners, while also furthering messages among stakeholders beyond the reach of local partners.

“[NPA] may need to play a leading role in advocacy, to set an example to partners. Sometimes it is difficult for partners to lead; particularly in the peace process”¹⁰

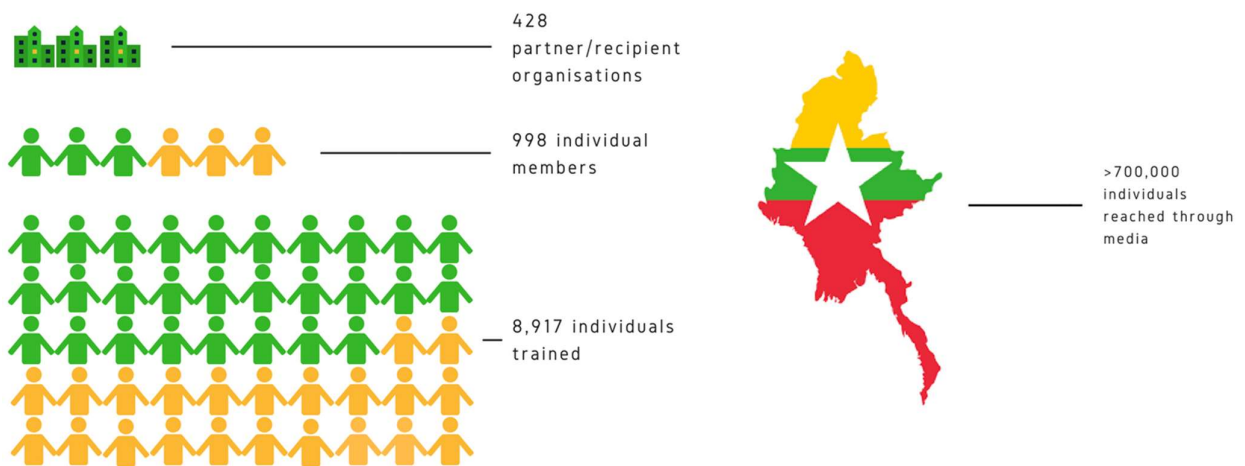
NPA has sought to enhance partners’ structures and internal mechanisms for democratic decision-making, though more work is needed. Most partners, even those with elected or nominal boards, remain hierarchical. However, ALARM’s decentralised programming, WCDI’s member-based power and MATA and MCPWC’s representative structures all provide models that seek to promote democratic decision-making. While most partners have sought to mainstream gender equality across their organisational culture, few could be regarded as best practice egalitarian organisational models.

The mobilisation approaches of NPA’s partners may be broadly categorised into four interconnected approaches; partnerships, alumni networks, training and communications. A summary of mobilisation data from 2017 s included in Figure 1, while a summary of strengths and challenges of each approach (within Myanmar’s specific context) is presented in Table 3.

⁸ NPA. 2016. [Norwegian People’s Aid International Strategy 2016–2019](#)

⁹ ACDD

¹⁰ ALARM



“If our organisation dies, it lives on through other partners, through other communities. For long-term impact, we [Akhaya] can achieve more coverage by working with others, sharing what we have learned and transferring knowledge. It is crucial”¹¹

The diversity of mobilisation approaches reflects the range of challenges partners as seeking to address. Increasingly, ad hoc, online and issue-specific initiatives are complementing and, in some cases, overtaking, more traditional member-based mobilisation. A summary of strengths and challenges of different approaches is included in the table below.

Mobilisation approach	NPA partners (primary approach)	Partners observations of key strengths	Partners observations of key challenges
Organisational network/alliance	MLAW, MCPWC, Winpeace, ACDD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Burden sharing - Wide-reach - Different points of influence - Sharing lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relies on effective secretariat - Can be difficult to coordinate
Membership/alumni	MATA, WCDI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Empowering individual change-makers - Diffuses political risk - Participatory decision-making and advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can be cumbersome in decision-making - Members may become isolated without regular engagement - Increases security risks for individuals
Training networks	CBI, Paung Ku, Shalom, EQMM,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Has potential to multiply awareness and impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires effective and ongoing monitoring to understand impact

¹¹ Akhaya.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Efficient and sustainable when done well - Decentralises skills and experience to empower local solutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cascade effect is not achieved without investment and ongoing support
Communications and advocacy	Akhaya, AD, ALARM, MFE, HDFI, HI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Can challenge attitudes and beliefs at a societal level - Mass mobilisation can be effective to achieve structural reform 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficult to measure to impact - Messages can be diffuse - Requires more coordination than often assumed

Table 3 Macro assessment of mobilisation approaches among selected partners

Recommendations

1. NPA should help to foster a community of practice amongst its partners – potentially around thematic focus areas such as gender, capacity building or peace.
2. NPA should seek to develop the facilitation skills of staff to more effectively engage partners to meet its capacity building objectives.
3. NPA should further promote organisational development as a separate line item within budgets as part of good practice programme design
4. NPA should offer to visibly support its partners through proactive advocating their agendas among the international community (and feedback discussions to all partners wherever possible).

Partnerships

Key evaluation question: [Is NPA following its global partnership-approach? What are some of the strengths, and challenges that the programme is facing in their work with partners in Myanmar? How do partners see NPA's partnership approach?](#)

NPA Myanmar is meaningfully and effectively applying NPA's global partnership principles (Table 4) across its Sida and NORAD programmatic support. NPA has been particularly adept to avoid directing or imposing standardised approaches, and remains responsive to partner-led, context specific approaches. NPA clearly respects organisation's autonomy, and has developed genuine trust with its long-term partners.

NPA's Partnership principle	
1.	NPA practises partnership with organisations that have compatible visions and values.
2.	NPA promotes partnerships based on an active dialogue, mutual trust and accountability, openness, commitment, and respect for each other's autonomy, integrity and identity.
3.	NPA recognises that partnerships are context-specific and must adapt to local conditions with respect to values, economic, social, cultural and political conditions and the strength of civil society.
4.	NPAs focus in the partnership process is on the type of partner organisation and the role it plays in social and political processes. Projects are tools for agreed action within the partnership.
5.	The partnership is subject to dynamic interactions, changes, and external factors, calling for continuous analysis of the context and the relationship.
6.	NPA will respect the partner organisations agendas and their varying contexts, avoiding standardised approaches.
7.	NPA aspires to have a supportive attitude and approach towards its partners, and aims at strengthening their leading role.
8.	NPA acknowledges that varying access to resources and authority may create relationships of inequality between parties, and thereby a traditional donor-recipient relationship. NPA's cooperation with partners aims at reducing such imbalances.

Table 4 NPA's partnership principles

Partners expressed appreciation of NPA's flexibility; specifically its willingness for partners to test their approaches, to learn from mistakes and to tailor their projects based on need and evidence. Several partners also noted their appreciation of NPA's flexible reporting deadlines, and its speed in processing applications.

While most partners appreciated NPA's 'light touch', a number expressed an interest in having more engagement with NPA staff. A small number of partners would have benefited from more engagement to help navigate challenges (low capacity, need for additional donors), while others simply desired more opportunities for trust-building and mutual learning, particularly around strategic development. Those with well established links to NPA praised how valuable their interactions have been.

"NPA is more than a funding partner. We meet a lot. Less meetings on finance, more meetings on strategy, which is good."¹²

¹² Paung Ku

The few problems noted between partners and NPA have generally resulted from personality clashes, rather than institutional or cultural failings. This highlights the need for NPA to engage partners at multiple levels, and not become overly reliant on one individual to exclusively oversee the relationship.

Reflecting NPA's privileged position as a trusted partner, several organisations requested more practical support from NPA in organisational development. While most organisations appreciated NPA-led workshops on financial management, procurement and strategic planning, a number of partners desire, and need, more hands-on capacity development. This may take the form of short-term placements of OD specialists, or facilitating opportunities greater peer-peer learning (secondments or staff exchanges).

Most partners felt NPA approached relationships on an equal playing field, without hierarchy. However, a minority of partners, including one which is no longer funded by NPA, expressed a dissenting opinion. It is assessed that this view reflected an issue-specific misunderstanding, rather than a broader problem of NPA's partnership approach.

NPA is aware some past and present partners' may have expressed views or opinions that are inconsistent with NPA's core values of human rights. NPA has ended partnerships on such concerns, and remains proactive in identifying and addressing ongoing concerns.

Requiring partners to submit yearly funding applications – as directed by donor policies – has also at times created an unequal balance of power in the relationship. While for some, funding has been verbally committed to in principle, most partners expressed some level of anxiety about ongoing levels of financial support. This undermines partners' ability to forward-plan and has, for some, created an inefficient 'start-stop' pattern of implementation.

Recommendations

1. NPA should continue to offer flexible and adaptive support to partners, including assistance with applications, reporting and capacity development.
2. NPA should consider how to foster short-term placements of OD specialists, and opportunities greater peer-peer learning (secondments, staff exchanges or technical lessons learned workshops).
3. NPA must proactively monitor partners' statements and programmes to ensure NPA's values are being shared and promoted across its funding portfolio.
4. NPA should continue to fund partners' pilot activities that seek to test innovative and ambitious solutions to entrenched challenges
5. NPA should continue to offer bridging arrangements where financial partnerships are ending and actively support partners to transition to new funding sources where required

6. NPA should, where appropriate, consider moving partners to longer-term funding agreements (two, three or four years), with funding released annually based on progression reporting and face-to-face reviews.
7. NPA should seek to foster multiple levels of engagement to help institutionalise partnerships through optional site visits, workshops and social networking opportunities.

Strategic framework

Key evaluation question: Is NPA country strategy relevant to the Myanmar context? Is it in line with NPA global strategy? Recommend concrete steps for the next country strategy design (beyond 2019)

NPA Myanmar’s Country Strategy 2017-19 is assessed as largely consistent with NPA’s global strategy, *Partnership for Democratisation 2016-19*. A comparison of strategic priority areas is summarised in the Table below.

Global strategy	Myanmar
Democratisation and just distribution of power and resources	Civil society participating in the establishment of a stronger democracy
	Peace and reconciliation through fighting marginalisation
Humanitarian action and crisis response	
Humanitarian disarmament	Safer life for civilians living with reduced exposure to risks caused by landmine contamination

Table 5 Comparison of NPA’s Global and Myanmar Strategies

In light of Myanmar’s context, NPA’s focus on democratisation, marginalisation and humanitarian disarmament is likely appropriate. Consistent with NPA’s global strategy (priority three), NPA Myanmar has identified the need to “support some partners in humanitarian assistance in case of onset emergency or natural disasters” – though this is within its support of CSOs more broadly. NPA’s global strategic approach is fairly captured in NPA Myanmar’s country strategy.¹³

¹³ NPA’s global approach is:

1. Partners organise people
2. Internal democratic structures and practices enhanced in partner organisations
3. Increased in influence of partner organisations in policy- and decision making at local and national levels
4. Humanitarian action is provided by NPA and its partners in crisis settings.
5. Increased in influence of NPA and its partners in Norwegian and international decision making and policy making

NPA Myanmar's country strategy is largely relevant to the country's current political environment. A focus on addressing structural drivers of conflict and inequality will almost certainly remain central in Myanmar's ongoing transition for the foreseeable future. Recent humanitarian crises in Rakhine and Northern Shan States are not adequately addressed in the current strategy. Moreover, tackling marginalisation to address inter-communal conflict and countering the strengthening nationalistic sentiments may require further focus in subsequent strategies.

NPA's country strategy provides a clear framework for NPA's work, but could consider in greater detail the downstream objectives of its partner support. In future planning, NPA may consider articulating clearer cause and effect intentions to explain priority areas. Explaining clearly why focus areas have been adopted does not, and should not, mean NPA becomes more prescriptive in working with partners. Rather, understanding intended outcomes should help NPA partners contextualise their work within NPA's broader strategy, particularly where it is effectively communicated during partner workshops.

Recommendations

1. Consider approaches to increase NPA's influence in Norwegian and international decision-making as part of NPA Myanmar's next country strategy, and transparently communicate efforts to partners.
2. Consider more explicit objectives around marginalisation and inter-communal violence in NPA's next country strategy.
3. Consider including intended effects – or explicit justifications – for each objective in NPA's next country strategy.

Complementary programming

Key evaluation question: [Are the Civil society programmes complementary to the peace related programmes? Could you advise areas for greater convergence?](#)

NPA's support of civil society programmes undoubtedly complements NPA's peace related objectives. Marginalisation, inequality and denial of rights are all key drivers of violent conflict in Myanmar.¹⁴ Protecting and promoting human rights and supporting democratic structures and practices are fundamental components necessary for Myanmar's conflict transformation.

Some 244615 and 244709 partners such as Shalom (security sector reform), EQMM (inter-faith training) and CBI (peace networks) already have explicit activities aimed at supporting local level conflict prevention and transformation. These programmes aim to build an

¹⁴ The Asia Foundation. 2017. [The Contested Areas of Myanmar: Subnational Conflict, Aid, and Development](#). International Crisis Group. 2016. [Myanmar's Peace Process: Getting to a political dialogue](#).

understanding of peacebuilding approaches, and build capacity of CSOs and local government to address drivers of conflict. The impact these programs have had in contributing to conflict transformation is less clear.

Partners such as CBI and EQMM are working to promote awareness of peace education and human rights through community training programs. The impact of such education programmes is unclear but, if supported strategically, localised peace networks, such as those run by CBI, can provide more tangible outcomes, particularly in supporting inter-communal harmony.

Ongoing legal reform in Myanmar is another area of convergence between NPA's two pillars on democratization and peace building. The political dialogue process in Myanmar aims to address long-standing structural grievances that drive conflict. Concurrently, the NLD government is seeking to revise a raft of existing legislation as part of its reform agenda. Reforming Myanmar's legislative framework to support human rights, equality, decentralisation and reduce state power – as NPA partners such as YSPS, EQMM, MLAW are working to achieve – reduces the gap that will need to be addressed through political dialogue. Indeed, HI has also worked to produce joint policy papers with stakeholders in Kachin State (KSCN) to advocate on key issues such as resource management.

“The foundation of democratic governance in Myanmar occurs at the grass-roots level”¹⁵

NPA-supported programmes promoting government accountability and transparency, particularly in the natural resource sector, have a less obvious, but significant peace dividend. Programmes led by ALARM, MATA, MCPWC and HI are actively working to promote good governance in contested areas, on contested issues. Extractive industries, such as oil, gas and forestry, are emblematic of conflict dynamics. Armed groups often compete for access to, and control of resources, while revenues, where they are publicly generated, are often not disbursed equitably; fuelling tensions.

“If communities are being exploited of land, they will not believe in the peace process”¹⁶

NPA partners that operate networks, such as MATA, MCPWC and ACDD, bring together a diverse range of stakeholders and often achieve indirect peace dividends. Conflicts within these networks can serve as a microcosm of broader state-level divisions, as occurred when MATA members from across the country debated a collective stance on the Rohingya issue. Debating such issues with voices from a plurality of perspectives, can, and has, served to reach common ground within a human rights framework.

“By cooperating with multi-ethnic population, we will rais[e] their voices and ownership and especially strengthen their capacity in management and community leadership.”¹⁷

¹⁵ ALARM

¹⁶ ALARM

¹⁷ MCPWC funding application

NPA has also worked to make EAOs more inclusive, gender-sensitive and effective advocates. NPA has facilitated EAOs to access training from partners, including ALARM, to build the capacity of EAOs as functioning political actors.

The Centre on Conflict and Development Studies has identified seven functions civil society serves in supporting and promoting peacebuilding.¹⁸ The table below assesses these functions against the activities and objectives of NPA’s NORAD and Sida partners.

Approach	Organisations (supported by NPA)
Protection of citizens against violence from all parties	
Monitoring of human rights violations, the implementation of peace agreements, etc	
Advocacy for peace and human rights	MLAW, ALARM, EQMM, YSPS, AD, ACDD, Winpeace, Paung Ku, Shalom, HDFI, MATA, MCPWC, HI
Socialisation to values of peace and democracy as well as to develop the in-group identity of marginalised groups	HDFI, Shalom, Winpeace, CBI, EQMM
Inter-group social cohesion by bringing people together from adversarial groups	MATA, MCPWC, CBI, EQMM
Facilitation of dialogue on the local and national level between all sorts of actors	Shalom, Akhaya, Winpeace, YSPS, ACDD
Service delivery to create entry points for peacebuilding, i.e. for the six above functions	

Table 6 Peacebuilding functions of civil society actors

Recommendations

In order to promote greater convergence between NPA’s civil society and peacebuilding pillars, it is recommended that NPA:

1. Consider opportunities to strengthen civil society in areas affected by inter-communal tensions and violence, or working on these issues. This should particularly focus on countering nationalistic attitudes and promoting positive narratives of diversity.

¹⁸ Thania Paffenholz. 2016. Civil Society and Peacebuilding. Centre on Conflict and Development Studies.

2. Encourage and fund partners to conduct consultations, training or education sessions that bring together diverse groups (from different states for example) to share experiences and build common understanding.
3. Consider a conflict sensitive framework to support partners working on legislative reform; including considering how laws support diversity, decentralisation and promote equality.
4. NPA should seek to advocate for opportunities for partners to contribute to the CSO Forum, national dialogues and Union Peace Conference as facilitators, participants and/or observers.
5. NPA should consider compiling a register of training content (and intended benefits) offered by existing NPA partners, that can be shared and offered to non-state armed groups.
6. NPA may connect partners working on advocacy on similar themes to expand geographic representation and consider and capture diverse voices.
7. Encourage partners focused on research, such as HI, AD or ACDD to present findings on key issues to EAOs.
8. NPA may seek to identify opportunities for partners to utilise advocacy channels that have been established by other partners.

Long-term impact

Key evaluation question: Overall, what is the long term impact NPA's support to civil society in Myanmar (beyond the program duration and/or since the beginning of the partnership)?

Having worked in Myanmar since 2004, NPA has partnered with a range of organisations at the forefront of the country's dramatic political, economic and social liberalisation. Civil society has undoubtedly played a critical role driving and supporting this transformation, aided by the support of long-term partners such as NPA.

While democratic practices in Myanmar remain nascent, civil society has played a crucial role in holding government accountable to its constituents. Research and advocacy led by ALARM, MCPWC, HI and MATA in areas of corruption, wastage and resource exploitation have further held office bearers to account, and supported the ongoing and gradual transition towards improved governance.

Significantly, NPA's partners have led participatory and inclusive engagement with democratic structures, rarely seen prior to 2015. Organisations such as Akhaya, YSPS, MATA, Paung Ku, Nyein (Shalom), ACDD, MLAW and Winpeace have initiated dialogue with government in ways seldom seen prior to the most recent election. While there has been limited meaningful legislative reform resulting from this engagement – aside from the

passage of Myanmar's Legal Aid Law and abolishing provisions of the country's Ward or Village Tract Administration Law – this work has challenged entrenched power imbalances between law-makers and communities. Entrenching these practices, and achieving more substantive reform will remain a critical challenge in the years ahead.

NPA has also helped partners create space for civil society to engage, grow and voice their concerns to duty holders. In the past 12 months, Mandalay's Community Centre has hosted over 300 community vents. Significantly, the Centre has facilitated the establishment of Mandalay's CSO Network. 70-80 organisations have met over 20 times, and the group has had three meetings with government representatives.

NPA has judiciously supported partner interventions at a cross-section of Myanmar's hierarchy. NPA partners have worked effectively in institutionalising democratic norms and protecting and promoting human rights and both grass-roots community level (ACDD, AD, Paung Ku), State/Region-level (MCPWC, HI) and Union-level (ALARM, EQMM, MLAW, Akhaya). NPA should however consider how it can be more strategic in supporting multi-level intervention and, crucially, continue to broaden its geographic reach.

With a focus on long-term social, political and security reform, the impact of partners' work is however piecemeal, with Myanmar's transition far from complete.

“Myanmar's transition is not yet a sapling. It was a seed before, but it still has a long, long way to grow”¹⁹

¹⁹ ALARM

Part Two: Key partner reflections

This section assesses, in broad terms, partner's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability, as they relate to NPA's overarching objectives. Partner-specific assessments against the objectives and outcomes specified by NORAD and Sida are included in Parts Three and Four. The impact of programmes is considered in a broader context of NPA's work within Myanmar – beyond the direct scope of the current NORAD and Sida cycle.

Relevance

Key evaluation question: [Are the programmatic approaches, and the chosen partners, relevant to the current political context in Myanmar? How do NPA and partners respond to the volatile context in Myanmar? Do the partners have a clearly articulated strategy? To what extent NPA selected partners having a strategy that is relevant to NPA country strategy's objectives?](#)

Partners have broadly demonstrated a strong ability to adapt to Myanmar's changing political context. Many noted the current political climate has reduced the space for civil society to operate in advocacy, reform and issue-based research. It was observed that the current Government considers civil society's primary role to be service delivery, rather than a check and balance on power. Paung Ku noted that it is receiving fewer applications for support from democracy and human rights-based organisations, and an increase in training-orientated partners.

The opportunities and space for CSOs to operate effectively are likely to continue to fluctuate alongside Myanmar's uneven transition. The perception that the political climate has turned against civil society in Myanmar possibly inflates the opportunities of previous years. The brief spike in civil society activity and optimism during 2012-14 has perhaps plateaued, rather than dramatically receded.

Within this context, partners have however evolved their outreach and advocacy to effectively connect to government. Many, such as Akhaya, MCPWC, HI, ACDD, AD, MATA and ALARM, have adeptly tailored their advocacy approach to focus more persuasive participatory and evidence-based research.

"Before the country changed. We could point our fingers and shout. We are activists. So we have had to change our advocacy. If we push. They [government] will push back. We have to understand their difficulties to help make change."²⁰

Partners face a dual reality in Myanmar presently. Some elected officials have created more space for civil society to engage with government, but department officials remain, largely, sceptical and fearful of external influence. MLAW, YSPS and ALARM have utilised their personal networks to leverage opportunities to influence government reform and decision-making. While Paung Ku, ACDD, HI and AD have pivoted away from campaigns toward more nuanced advocacy, which has yielded encouraging results.

²⁰ Akhaya

“More surveys. More public voice. They cannot argue with facts.”²¹

Over the past 12 months, the risks for some civil society organisations have increased, particularly those focussed on issues of transparency. Organisations like MATA and MCPWC are facing renewed security threats to individuals. Partners are seeking to work collaboratively with government officials. However, adapting to a point that removes the risk from organisations would often entail compromising on the core purpose of the work being done.

All assessed partners are operating through the direction of some type of strategic plan. Most recently, YSPS and MFE both developed strategic plans in the past 12 months with financial support from NPA. Larger partners such as EQMM, Paung Ku, Shalom and CBI demonstrated a high degree of strategic consideration with robust and reflective frameworks. MLAW maintains an organisational development plan that needs to be updated and redirected more strategically, while the Mandalay Community Centre operates under Paung Ku’s strategic umbrella.

Partners’ objectives are, for the most part, highly relevant to NPA’s overarching strategic priorities. A full assessment of these objectives is included at Annex C. The stated objectives of partners such as Paung Ku, ALARM, ACDD, MATA and EQMM were assessed to have the highest relevance to NPA, particularly in CSO development, prioritisation of human rights, a just distribution of resources and focus on democratisation. However, aside from ALARM and ACDD, no partners meaningfully highlighted the importance of internal democratic processes as a priority.

Effectiveness

Key evaluation question: [Are the partners likely to reach their goals?](#)

Evaluated partners are largely on track to achieve intended outputs. Shalom, AD, MCPWC, HI and WCDI are however the most likely to require extensions to complete planned activities at this stage. Shorter-than expected implementation periods (MCPWC, WCDI, AD, YSPS, HI), trust-building for programmes with State Governments (Shalom, AD) and capacity shortfalls (WCDI, Winpeace, MCPWC) were the most pressing challenges identified.

While partners are likely to achieve specified activities, they are less likely to achieve stipulated goals. While meaningful progress towards stated goals had been made by all partners, program goals identified by partners were often unrealistic within the specific parameters of funded activities. MATA, YSPS, HI, WCDI and MLAW are likely to have the biggest gap between intended goals and actual achievements – almost entirely due to stated goals being too ambitious rather than any significant ineffectiveness of programmes.

²¹ Paung Ku

In light of Myanmar's ever-changing political and security context, many partners are also testing and tailoring approaches. Paung Ku's Community Centre, MFE's Open Hluttaw project and Shalom's training with township and ward administrators are, to varying degrees, experimental. Myanmar's fluid context demands innovation and creative approaches to tackling entrenched challenges. Partners have acknowledged NPA is one of the most flexible donors in Myanmar; willing to support innovation and ongoing learning.

Efficiency

Key evaluation question: [Are the civil society projects implemented in a cost efficient way?](#)

No significant wastage concerns were identified through the course of this evaluation. Evaluation partners are, broadly, implementing programs in a cost efficient manner. Cost efficiency is generally considered by partners as very directly related to the roll-out of activities, rather than how efficiently activities are meeting broader outcomes. At this micro-level, partners were found to indeed be highly consciousness and diligent with NPA's funding. MATA's high administrative overheads (discussed further in [Appendix A](#)), highly repetitive work of CBI and EQMM and delays in Shalom's programming represent the most significant, albeit still minor, exceptions to this assessment.

At a macro level however, it is difficult to assess how efficient partners have been in achieving their strategic priorities. Few partners, aside from Paung Ku and, to a lesser extent EQMM, have demonstrated sufficiently effective monitoring and evaluation process to even assess this level of efficiency. Partners should be supported to consider efficiency in more strategic terms, beginning with integrated design and evaluation processes.

Sustainability

Key evaluation question: [To what extent does the programme pay attention to conflict sensitivity and gender sensitivity? What needs to be improved? At what level should/could adjustments be made \(design, content, focus, staff training and community awareness\)?](#)

[Are each of the programmes' aims measurable? Review and comment on current NPA Myanmar Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning \(MEL\) practices and systems. Recommend concrete steps for improvements.](#)

Gender sensitivity

Partners have demonstrated varying degrees of gender and conflict sensitivity in designing and implementing projects. All partners addressed gender sensitivity in funding applications, though practical steps beyond seeking to promote inclusion and disaggregating attendance data were more limited. WCDI, Akhaya, Shalom, CBI, AD and EQMM all actively sought to identify and train women as facilitators. MATA provides allowances for women with children

to access childcare and fulfil committee and forum obligations; removing an important barrier to increase female participation.

Few organisations, aside from WCDI, Shalom, Winpeace and Akhaya, demonstrated notable achievement towards promoting women’s leadership internally. Some, such as MATA and MLAW maintain quotas for women on their boards, which, while encouraging, cannot in itself foster a culture that enables equality in decision-making power.

The application of genuinely gender inclusive research practices is not prevalent among evaluated partners. Shalom and Akhaya have demonstrated how the use of gender-specific focus groups and women facilitators can encourage meaningful participation, but such practices appear less institutionalised among other partners.

CBI’s development of an inclusion policy highlights good practice that should be encouraged where possible among other partners.

Conflict sensitivity

Evaluated partners were found to have applied adequate conflict sensitivity within programmes. Such approaches were often the result of learned experience and common sense, more-so than any particularly robust or holistic conflict sensitivity policy. At a minimum, no partners were found to have caused harm through current programmes.

All partners have demonstrated a sufficient understanding of the context in which they were operating. However, not all undertook analysis of context and relations as part of their programme design. MLAW and CBI in particular could strengthen their analysis to ensure their work – particularly in Rakhine and Northern Shan States – remains sensitive to potential risks.

NPA’s partners were particularly adept at engaging smaller, local partners in implementing programmes. Coalitions and networks, such as Paung Ku, ACDD, MCPWC and MATA were likely most inclusive of local voices. While new partners, such as AD, also demonstrated an eagerness to work through local partners to ensure programmes were suitably sensitive.

Some partners, particularly ALARM and Shalom, have effectively integrated their programmes to make conflict sensitivity a cross-cutting issue. ALARM, and to a lesser extent MCPWC, use the intersection between natural resources and conflict to inform complementary programming.

Evaluated partners were also found to effectively use participatory research practices to inform advocacy. HI in particular demonstrated good practice in conducting inclusive, participatory research to ensure its advocacy was grounded in conflict sensitive recommendations.

Monitoring and evaluation

MEL capacity varied greatly among evaluated partners. However, improvements can, and should, be encouraged across the portfolio. NPA's largest partners, Shalom and Paung Ku each maintain dedicated MEL expertise, but still lack comprehensive whole-of-project evaluation and learning capabilities.

Objectives were found to be generally measureable across the organisations assessed. A subjective assessment of how quantifiable partners' objectives are is included in the table below.

NORAD partner	Measureable objectives?	Sida partner	Measureable objectives?
Another Development (AD)	Partially	Action Committee for Democracy Development (ACDD)	Partially
Advancing Life And Regenerating Motherland (ALARM)	Partially	Akhaya	Partially
Capacity Building Initiative (CBI)	Largely	Human Dignity Film Institute (HDFI)	Largely
Equality Myanmar (EQMM)	Largely	Myanmar Fifth Estate (MFE)	Largely
Humanity Institute (HI)	Largely	Myanmar Legal Aid Network (MLAW)	Partially
Myanmar Alliance for Transparency and Accountability (MATA)	Partially	Paung Ku Community Center	Fully
Myanmar China Pipeline Watch Committee (MCPWC)	Fully	Shalom	Partially
Paung Ku (PK)	Largely	Winpeace	Partially
Yangon School of Political Science (YSPS)	Fully	Women Can Do It (WCDI)	Partially

Table 7. Assessment of whether partners' aim can be measured

Reporting was found to be adequate for activity tracking, but few organisations demonstrated an effective approach to understanding and measuring the impact of these activities. The use of case studies by Akhaya, Paung Ku and EQMM provide insight through exploring most significant change, but more support is needed to encourage effective reflective practices of impact.

“Now we can only say in general, this many organisations received this type of assistance, we cannot say concrete what was achieved. Now we are thinking about how to stay involved with organisations; mentoring, on-site visits. We can learn to see how our training is helping”²²

Recommendations

1. Encourage partners to develop internal policies that support genuine decision-making power for women.
2. NPA may organise an optional training session for partners on inclusive practices, perhaps led by members of WCDI or Akhaya.
3. NPA may encourage and fund partners to undertake inclusion training, particularly for partners’ training and workshop facilitators.
4. Tangible examples of good practice gender sensitive approaches should be consolidated and shared with partners.
5. NPA partners should be encouraged to develop inclusion policies as part of good practice gender sensitive programming.
6. NPA should consider a conflict sensitivity workshop to share knowledge and concrete good practices.
7. NPA should continue to support integrated design and MEL practices as part of ongoing capacity development support.
8. NPA should consider training in most significant change evaluation techniques, to assist partners more effectively monitor structural impacts.

²² CBI

Part Three: NORAD partner insights

Outcome Civil Society Organisations influence political decision making

NPA's NORAD partners made notable strides in their capacity to meaningfully influence decision-making. Since 2015, partners have played an increasingly important role in Myanmar's ongoing legislative reform process. During the reporting period, ALARM reviewed and provided feedback on 17 pieces of government legislation, policies and frameworks. MATA members directly lobbied government in amending the Myanmar Mining Law and associated bi-law. While YSPS brought together legal experts to consider and recommend reform for eight pieces of draft legislation to the relevant drafting committees.²³

Beyond the review process, selected partners have also been at the forefront of policy development in Myanmar. ALARM drafted Myanmar's Climate Change and Sustainable Development Policies on behalf of the NLD-led administration, while MATA has been centrally involved in the drafting process of the Myanmar's Gemstone and Jade policy.

At a local level, HI's research on budget transparency in three Kachin Townships (Putao, Nogng Mung and Machang Baw), was a significant achievement. Its subsequent publication of findings included a presentation during the Union Anti-Corruption Commission's first public seminar in 2018. HI has applied pressure for the State Government to improve internal practices, though tangible impacts in the short-term remain limited.

Partners have also successfully lobbied the government to prevent potentially damaging policies. ALARM and Paung Ku effectively advocated against allowing the increase of coal use in Myanmar from 3% to 30%, while MCPWC successfully engaged the Ministry of Transport to notify communities when heavy tankers are scheduled to enter harbours (and avoid destruction of small boats and nets).

Outcome 1. Partners mobilise around common issues

MATA and MCPWC both work effectively as member networks and alliances. MATA draws on a member base of 439 individuals, while MCPWC consists of a 26 organisation alliance. Each has been able to utilise its wide-ranging base to effectively campaign on issues of natural resource management, transparency and accountability.

ALARM and Paung Ku are leaders in Myanmar's civil society advocacy and campaigning. 2,955 individuals attended ALARM-led symposiums and seminars. Among others, focus areas included land rights awareness, environmental pollution, community forestry, good governance and climate change.

²³ In 2017 YSPS submitted recommendations on the Myanmar Investment Law – By-law; Occupational Safety and Health Law; Farm Land Law; Vacant, Fallow, and Virgin Land Law; Myanmar Companies Act; Child Rights Law; Land Acquisition Law; and Yangon City Development Act.

EQMM also reached 9,701 people through human rights events and 12,000 people through social media campaigns. EQMM also produced 19 audio-visual productions that were broadcasted weekly on Democratic Voice of Burma Television, who has 12 million daily viewers and 6 million online viewers

Outcome 2. Popular organisations are more effective in organising people who have a common cause

During the reporting period, partners were assessed to have effectively used political training programmes to organise and mobilise individuals. EQMM conducted 82 human rights education and promotion activities in 38 townships, covering all 14 states and regions and trained 1,234 community members about human rights and provided additional workshops or mentoring to 611 of them.

MCPWC delivered rights-based development training and community mobilisation training to around 170 participants in Mandalay Region, Magway Region Rakhine State and Northern Shan State. While CBI conducted two Peace Building and Civic education ToT sessions, in Lashio, Taunggyi, Mawlamyine and Loikaw.

Output 1. Partners have capacity to challenge authorities

MCPWC, MATA, YSPS and Alarm all maintain ongoing advocacy programmes with the Union Government. AD, meanwhile, is working in Karen State and Tanintharyi Region with local partners to develop good practice guidance for local public management.

Output 2: Representative member base in partner organisations increased

No NPA partner identified an explicit focus on membership growth as part of their core objectives, and no significant membership growth was noted as part of this evaluation. MATA and MCPWC each maintained their extensive membership bases as a source for local mobilisation, and representative decision-making. Partners working through, or with, smaller organisations, such as ALARM, CBI, HI and Paung Ku largely sustained levels of engagement through the reporting period.

Output 3: Partners have democratic structures in their organisations

Partners have, broadly, instituted democratic structures within their organisations, though vary in the implementation of truly democratic institutional norms. CBI and YSPS maintain boards though both retain largely hierarchical structures. HI is seeking to establish its board structure, and remains in the formative stages of establishing its democratic structures. EQMM, Paung Ku and ALARM are all led by key individuals, but the latter has significantly more decentralised decision-making and staff empowerment.

As representative networks, MCPWC and MATA clearly maintain the strongest democratic structures of evaluated partners. Each have elected representatives with voting rights, supported by steering committees. However, gender inclusion within these structures is a key area of weakness for all partners.

Output 4: Partners work towards improvement of internal systems

All partners maintain strategic plans which, to varying degrees highlight organisational development priorities. During the reporting period, NPA provided training to all NORAD partners on financial management and anti-corruption practices. NPA also supported HI to hold a strategic planning workshop to improve its internal systems.

Part Four: Sida partner insights

Objective 1: Reform of local governance, increased respect for human rights and increased civic engagement in issues related to democracy and human rights in Myanmar

1.1. Civil Society Actors influence public understanding and respect for Human Rights

During the reporting period, two partners effectively advanced public understanding and respect for human rights in Myanmar. HDFI organised the Human Rights, Human Dignity International Film Festival (HRHDIFF) in Yangon and traveling film festival throughout the country in 2017. 150 movies were submitted to HDFI - out of which 64 films (52 local films & 12 International) were screened in HRHDIFF in 2017. EQMM – while funded under NPA’s Sida framework – conducted 82 human rights education and promotion activities in 38 townships, and trained 1,234 community members about human rights and provided additional workshops or mentoring to 611 of them.

1.2 Civil Society expand the space for freedom of expression and association to voice and address human rights concerns

In the evaluation period to date, NPA’s Sida partners have made limited, but meaningful, progress towards expanding the space for freedom of expression and association. The space for civil society to act as check on power in Myanmar has shrunk since 2015. However, partners have continued to challenge authorities and carve out opportunities where possible.

At a local level, Paung Ku’s Community Center has been highly effective. The Center hosted over community 300 events in the past 12 months, including 60 which were organised by the Center itself. Significantly, the Center has facilitated the establishment of Mandalay’s CSO Network. 70-80 organisations have met over 20 times, and the group has had three meetings with government representatives.

MFE’s Open Hluttaw App and webpage has also created a new space for citizens to voice their concerns. The platform feature representative’s basic data from the Pyithu and Amyotha Hluttaw, as well as data 11/14 Region/State Hluttaws. MFE is working with representatives from three states to use Open Hluttaw to connect constituents with decision-makers.

1.3 Civil Society led civic engagement with local government and ethnic armed groups leads to commitments to change in policies and their implementation

To date, NPA’s Sida partners have had limited effectiveness influencing the policies of local government or ethnic armed organisations. Civil society remains in the formative stages of developing political influence in Myanmar. Indeed, government’s mistrust of civil society has possibly deepened in the past 24 months.

As noted, Paung Ku’s Mandalay Community Center has been effective in bringing together government and civil society to discuss social welfare policy. However no substantive reform has resulted so far. Paung Ku’s Taunggoo Community Center meanwhile organised 13 events

in 2017 to discuss local peacebuilding, and established a complaints mechanisms for issues to be raised with government or EAOs.

1.4 Civil Society influences Ward and Village Tract Administrators to be more participatory in local governance decision making and transparent in management of local development funds

ACDD's Ward Administration and Village Tract Administration reform work brought together a coalition advocacy network, captured perspectives from communities (nine townships) and yielded one of the first ever public hearings in the post-transition Hluttaw. The work clearly promoted democratic cornerstones of consultation and transparency both amongst lawmakers and communities, but did not yield the legislative reform groups had been advocating.

Similarly, Shalom is building the capacity of CSOs and local administrators of the General Administration Department (GAD) with a view to connecting participants through meaningful and sustained dialogue. Training has been delivered to CSOs in Kayah (Demoso), Kayin (Kawkareik) and Yangon, but planned activities with Village and Ward Administrators have only occurred in Kayah State to date.

Objective 2: Women have influence in local governance and the peace process

2.1 Civil society partners influence passage of Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights legislation including the Protection and Prevention of Violence against Women Law in parliament at national level

NPA's support of Akhaya has helped influence the development of the Protection and Prevention of Violence against Women Law. During the evaluation period, Akhaya's mentoring programme for women representatives, alongside its adept research and advocacy campaign, helped it gain unique access and influence in the drafting process. Akhaya conducted 12 workshops with the Department of Social Welfare, and directly engaged the draft law's principle legal advisor to establish a joint working team to support the law's development. Presently however, the draft law has not been progressed to the Hluttaw for debate.

Akhaya more broadly, has led media and public campaigns on women's empowerment and violence against women. Akhaya's burgeoning relationship with government has also seen the Ministry of Health invite Akhaya to train support workers in trials of Women's Support Center in two local hospitals.

2.2 Civil society Partners contribute to increased women's participation in and influence on all levels of the peace process, with the long term goal of 30 percent women's representation and WPS agenda

NPA's primary partner in advancing the WPS agenda, Winpeace, remains in the formative stages of its institutional development. Winpeace's WPS training programme did reach around 350 people and the organisation facilitated an advocacy meeting with nearly 200

Hluttaw representatives in March 2018. Winpeace's overarching effectiveness however, has been hampered by capacity and budgetary constraints during the evaluation period.

Objective 3: To strengthen the organisational sustainability and enhance the capacity of monitoring and evaluation of local civil society partners

3.1. Increased sustainability and enhanced monitoring and evaluation capacity of NPA and civil society partners

NPA has sought to support partners' sustainability and monitoring and evaluation capacity, through small grants (Akhaya) and partner workshops (finance and procurement). More substantive support for partners' monitoring and evaluation capabilities is still needed, and should be an area of focus through 2018-19.

Annex A. NORAD partner summaries

AD

Program objectives	NORAD alignment
To strengthen the state/regional governments and political institutions in public policies making and to assist in the capacity development in public policies making and implementation.	Output 1. Partners have capacity to challenge authorities

Effectiveness

Having commenced its partnership with NPA in May, AD is still in the formative stages of its programme implementation. AD is working in Karen and Tanintharyi with local partners to develop good practice guidance for local public management. AD will look to use this research to challenge and advocate for improved public policy practices.

AD has established partnerships with Dawei Development Association (DDA) and Karen State Civil Society Network (KSCN) as local leads in the project. Planned workshops with local officials, CSOs and political parties will hinge on the support of State Government – which is still to be determined.

With such a short implementation window, AD is however unlikely to achieve its strategic outputs. Longer-term, AD is assessed to be well positioned to affect meaningful impact in governance reform informed by participatory research.

Cross-cutting

As a new project, it is not yet possible to meaningfully assess the extent that AD's programme pays attention to conflict sensitivity and gender sensitivity. Conceptually at least, AD has demonstrated a holistic awareness of good practice gender inclusion practices. This includes supporting the active participation of women as facilitators, rather than just promoting numeric inclusion.

AD is also cognisant of do no harm principles, and is working through local partners to ensure its work is locally owned and sensitive to its specific context. AD is focussing its work in regional capitals (Dawei and Hpa'an) and is seeking to include all stakeholders, including EAOs as consultation partners. AD acknowledges that its research must be inclusive; however applying this principle within such a short timeframe will be challenging to achieve.

AD has developed a comprehensive and measureable theory of change for this project, though its capacity to effectively monitor and report against stated indicators remains to be seen.

Strengths

AD's evidence-base, participatory advocacy is likely to gain traction as state/region governments increasingly seek to implement public policy initiatives (albeit starting from a low interest base). As research specialists, AD is well positioned to develop meaningful tools for stakeholders. Moreover, AD's interest in achieving human behavioural change through creative and visual mediums, creates a point of difference to ensure its products are engaging, digestible and accessible.

Challenges

Four key variables have been identified in AD's implementation. First, the short implementation window will limit its ability to fully meet its intended outputs. Second, AD will need to work to ensure its new partnerships with KSCN and DDA yield expected results. Third, positioning itself as technical research specialists, AD is still trying to upskill its young workforce in advanced qualitative and quantitative techniques. Finally, AD is relying on the strengths of its products to achieve impact but will need to further develop its relationships to meaningfully engage and influence its target audiences.

Recommendations

1. AD should seek to continue to prioritise internal staff development alongside project implementation.
2. AD should seek to partner with established research organisations to burden share and increase its capacity to influence decision-makers.

ALARM

Project objective	NORAD alignment
Improve the natural resource governance in terms of promoting the role of civil society and people participation in sustainable management of forest, land, water resources and biological diversity.	Outcome 2. Popular organisations are more effective in organising people who have a common cause
Create the enabling socio-politico environment for restoring environmental justice while paving toward green growth and green economy.	
Initiate the process of assimilating decentralisation and democratisation for saving vulnerable life and alleviating the poverty.	Output 1. Partners have capacity to challenge authorities

Effectiveness

Despite its sprawling agenda, ALARM appears to have effectively implemented an array of projects and activities, advancing its overarching programme objectives. NPA is one of five donors supporting ALARM's Assimilating Environmental Governance, Integrating Sustainability (AEGIS) programme; with disparate funding centralised in ALARM and dispersed across its activities.

ALARM's programme has made substantive strides to improve natural resource governance, strengthen the capacity of civil society, and actively promote decentralisation to tackle power imbalances. Broadly, ALARM's AEGIS work can be grouped as capacity building, policy guidance, governance development, sector coordination and research. Activity highlights are listed below.

- In 2017, ALARM reviewed and provided feedback on 17 pieces of government legislation, policies and frameworks. During the evaluation period, ALARM drafted Myanmar's Climate Change and Sustainable Development Policies on behalf of the NLD-led administration.
- In 2017, 690 individuals completed ALARM-led capacity development trainings, 70 completed leadership development trainings, while 2,955 individuals attended ALARM-led symposiums and seminars. Among others, focus areas included land rights awareness, environmental pollution, community forestry, good governance and climate change.
- ALARM has led the implementation and strengthening of core natural resource governance mechanisms, Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT), the Forest and Land Reform Program (FLRP), the Participatory Livelihood Innovative Program (PLIP) and the Myanmar's Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI).

- Forestry economic analysis in Kachin State and transparency research highlighting profligacy of Myanmar's five largest state-owned enterprises.
- Successful advocacy against allowing the increase of coal use in Myanmar from 3% to 30%.

Strengths

With a long-established track record in natural resource oversight and governance reform, ALARM has unique credibility and influence. ALARM's connections to key-decision makers is entrenched, and its ability to shape the administration's agenda in these sectors is perhaps unrivalled.

ALARM's activities span Myanmar, and has fostered an array of partnerships and associations crucial for effective large-scale programme implementation and high-level advocacy. ALARM's strategic partnerships, particularly with Paung Ku and MATA, helps enable direct democracy and local activism. Indeed, with its scope and influence, ALARM is able to work effectively in cross-cutting issues, such as gender empowerment and conflict transformation, in ways smaller partners cannot.

ALARM is cognisant of the need to invest in the development of future leaders, both in the community and within its own organisation. ALARM seeks to delegate responsibility across its workforce – encouraging capacity development and internal equality.

Challenges

Despite its current levels of support, ALARM has found donors are less inclined to fund work on natural resource and environmental issues in Myanmar, particularly deforestation. ALARM is concerned that donors are increasingly influenced by commercial considerations, compromising willingness to support action that may adversely affect opportunities.

ALARM is operating in a high-need, low-capacity environment. ALARM has, for example, been asked to streamline NLD's sustainable development policy, but notes few in the administration will actually understand the issues; meaning its impact will be marginal. Capacity development – particularly developing technical expertise – must be supported to enable action in areas where it is most needed.

Cross-cutting

Given the breadth of ALARM's programming, it has not been possible to accurately gauge how effectively gender sensitivity has been applied. In broad terms, ALARM does conduct gender trainings and has worked as an advocate for equality promotion nationally. Participation of ALARM's trainings, workshops and seminars have been almost equally attended by men and women.

ALARM has acknowledged the unique challenge – and opportunity – of the intersection between natural resources and Myanmar's peace process. ALARM applies a do no harm methodology, and actively seeks to promote inclusive, participatory interventions. ALARM

has sought to use its natural resource activities to bring people together. U Win – ALARM’s Executive Director – is working as a facilitator in Myanmar’s UPC environment working group; highlighting the convergence of ALARM’s conflict sensitive work.

It is assessed that ALARM maintains effective monitoring and evaluation processes that contribute to ongoing learning and help shape strategic reform within the organisation. The scale and scope of ALARM’s objectives o however complicate efforts to track activities.

Recommendations

1. NPA discuss advocacy opportunities with ALARM in areas of mutual interest; particularly as it relates to Myanmar’s oil and gas sectors.

CBI

Project objective	NORAD alignment
Build and enhance the governance and organisational capacity of Civil Society Organisations particularly Local Development Organisations and Community Based Organisations to be accountable and transparent	Output 4: Partners work towards improvement of internal systems
Enhance the knowledge and skill on programming, planning and management of programs and projects	Output 1. Partners have capacity to challenge authorities
Enable the CSOs to deal and support with local authorities and government departments on the issues such as corruption, land disputes, peace building and human right violations through existing coordination mechanism at Local and regional levels.	Output 1. Partners have capacity to challenge authorities

Effectiveness

While the strategic impact of CBI's work is difficult to assess, CBI continues to complete activities and meet its core objective targets. Consistent with NORAD's commitment to building CSO capacity to mobilise and act, CBI meets an important need for civil society in areas often isolated from larger Yangon-based partners. In 2017, CBI conducted two Peace Building and Civic education ToT sessions, four strategic planning workshops, four anti-corruption workshops, and six personal development courses in Lashio, Taunggyi, Mawlamyine and Loikaw. CBI also introduced training on forming and maintaining a CBO; including core training in accountability and transparency.

During the project period, CBI also sought to strengthen its peace networks in its project areas and maintain an informal network in Kalay. The peace dividend of these networks likely rests more in the social capital groups foster, rather than explicit peace promotion activities.

As noted in previous evaluations, the downstream effects of CBI's work are largely unknown; how partners are applying their skills to support Myanmar's reform process simply have not been measured.²⁴ Conceptually, building the capacity of civil society, through experienced facilitators will undoubtedly have important outcomes for communities. CBI claims to have strengthened organisations holistically (through skills, policies and procedures) – enabling

²⁴ David Hale. 2017. NPA Partner Evaluation: Deepening the democratization process by strengthening Myanmar's civil society.

institutional growth that benefits communities, “we can see changes in organisations”.²⁵ But without a clear understanding of cause and effect relationships – even with more purposeful targeting of training for CSOs working directly to promote reform priorities – the impact of CBI’s work to strengthen governance outcomes is likely to be tangential.

Strengths

Guided by annual outreach and surveys, CBI’s programmes are largely needs-driven and responsive to community priorities. CBI is also likely to be particularly effective as a vessel in relaying and facilitating good practice HR, anti-corruption and strategic planning practices promoted by NPA.

Challenges

CBI is working to make its training more impactful – a challenge it acknowledges as a priority. In order to entrench and multiply training lessons, CBI must invest more time in follow-up activities, horizon monitoring and progression learning. Doing so requires a heavy time, technical and resource investment; areas CBI does not currently have in excess.

Previous ToT trials lacked follow-through, with trainers returning to Mandalay and Myitkyina without the resources, direction or support required to multiple learnings remotely. CBI is trying to invest in ToT follow-up activities, but these are probably still too under-resourced to achieve intended objectives.

The capacity of CBI’s trainers, while generally acknowledged to be good by NPA staff, is viewed within CBI as an area requiring further work. CBI is seeking to expose its facilitators to regional best practice techniques where possible, though the need for this type of training has not been established as part of this evaluation.

Cross-cutting

CBI is proactively working to improve gender sensitivity across its programs. With the assistance of other donors, CBI has developed an Inclusivity Policy and is seeking to further mainstream gender inclusion across its work – including promotion of additional women as facilitators (currently CBI has 5 male and 7 women working as trainers).

CBI’s approaches to conflict sensitivity is possibly more haphazard. While CBI has long-standing partnerships in local areas, trainers have run sessions in communities without specific contextual knowledge. Peacebuilding training must work within careful do no harm frameworks – areas CBI could strengthen.

CBI also acknowledges more work is required to improve its evaluation and monitoring systems. As noted, CBI does not accurately understand the long-term impact of its work.

²⁵ Interview. 2017. CBI. October 4.

Recommendations

1. CBI should continue to strengthen MEL practices to better understand how participants are utilising their newly acquired skills – and seek to tailor its courses to maximising impacts for communities.
2. CBI should consider increasing its focus and commitment to ToT workshops and support for trainers post-participation.

Equality Myanmar

Project objective	NORAD alignment
To raise awareness of human rights holders and duty bearers through participatory education and human rights events	Outcome 2. Popular organisations are more effective in organising people who have a common cause
To support community and network initiation of human rights based actions through capacity building, network strengthening and sub-granting	Output 4: Partners work towards improvement of internal systems
To promote the adoption of a rights based approach at the government level through advocacy, dialogues and educational efforts	Output 1. Partners have capacity to challenge authorities

Effectiveness

Equality Myanmar (EQMM) continues to support community and network initiation of human-rights based actions by:

1. Conducting 82 human rights education and promotion activities in 38 townships, covering all 14 states and regions
2. Training 1,234 community members about human rights and provided additional workshops or mentoring to 611 of them.
3. Training 48 activists and provided additional mentoring to 36 of them.
4. Training hundreds of MPs about human rights.
5. Reaching 9,701 people through human rights events and 12,000 people through social media campaigns.
6. Distributing 47,096 pieces of IEC materials to 97 organisations and 15 individuals for further dissemination.
7. Producing 19 audio-visual productions that were broadcasted weekly on Democratic Voice of Burma Television, who has 12 million daily viewers and 6 million online viewers

The effectiveness of EQMM's training programmes is difficult to assess. While EQMM almost certainly delivers high-quality rights education, the downstream effect of this work is unclear. There are limited available examples of trainees going on to become human rights champions, affecting change at the local level.

EQMM is increasingly working to mobilise community advocacy to influence decision-making, consistent with NORAD's overarching goal. EQMM has established relationships with a range of law-makers, and has helped coordinate CSO action on the Association Registration Law and Draft Prevention of Violence Against Women legislation.

EQMM has however struggled to publicly advocate on the most sensitive human rights issues in Myanmar, notably the plight of the country's Rohingya community. EQMM recognises the universality of human rights, and reportedly advocates for Rohingya rights privately, but fears legal and security repercussions of more forthright public action.

Strengths

EQMM operates the most extensive human rights training network in Myanmar. The organisation has developed a robust training curriculum built around the Learner Centred Approach, and has well-established networks across the country.

EQMM has positioned itself as a leading voice on human rights in Myanmar. It has public and private influence, particularly amongst the current administration. EQMM is a member of 18 different networks, bringing its influence to bear on behalf of collective action. EQMM has acknowledged that this role needs to be more than symbolic; it needs to conduct analysis and identify how to best to engage and advocate.

Challenges

EQMM maintains a patchwork of donors to fund its intended activities, and is increasingly struggling to meet resource requirements. EQMM's lack of clarity on its funding forecast has reduced its capacity to effectively forward-plan, while its reliance on a host of small grants has increased its administrative overheads. Moreover, NPA's reduced year-on-year funding of EQMM has affected the delivery of EQMM's scheduled programming.

As noted, EQMM faces security challenges. Being one of Myanmar's most prominent human rights' champions has rendered EQMM members a target of legal and death threats. The organisation has highlighted that public advocacy is also not the most effective means of affecting change on such a sensitive issue, though it remains unclear what impact its private activism has achieved.

Cross-cutting

As a rights-based advocate, EQMM is cognisant of good practice gender sensitive programming. EQMM actively promotes women as training facilitators, and disaggregates participation along gender lines. EQMM's seeks to address conflict sensitivities through education and training, with facilitators undergoing annual refresher courses.

EQMM maintains a robust and comprehensive monitoring and evaluation practices; particularly in capturing output-level results. Summaries of all trainings and captured and reported, while case study help provide insight into broader outcomes. However, tangible examples of the impact of EQMM's work – human rights transformation at the local level – requires more focused consideration.

HI/THANKS

Project objective	NORAD alignment
To influence on Kachin State governments in exercising its legislation and regulating laws through non-partisan research findings.	Output 1. Partners have capacity to challenge authorities
To investigate the pressing issues of Kachin State via non-partisan research.	Outcome 2. Popular organisations are more effective in organising people who have a common cause
To advocate the issues of the Kachin State and concerns of the public through the evidence based approach.	Output 1. Partners have capacity to challenge authorities
To create a platform on which the academics and state actors of Kachin State shall exchange their findings so as to consolidate their understanding on Kachin State's issues	Outcome 1. Partners mobilise around common issues
To initiate dynamic discussions among academics, Kachin State MPs and general public that, in turns, encourages the culture of dialogue in finding sound solutions for the betterment of Kachin State	Outcome 1. Partners mobilise around common issues
To strengthen the organisational development of HI	Output 4: Partners work towards improvement of internal systems

Effectiveness

While HI's focus remains spread across its diverse portfolio, HI has been effective in directly challenging abuses of power through its programme with NPA. HI's research on budget transparency in three Kachin Townships (Putao, Nong Mung and Machang Baw), and subsequent publication of findings – including a presentation during the Union Anti-Corruption Commission's first public seminar in 2018 – is a significant advocacy achievement. HI has applied pressure for the State Government to improve internal practices, though tangible impacts in the short-term remain limited.

HI's work on environmental advocacy – in its campaign against hydropower dams along with Ngaw Chang Hka river and gemstone law review - successfully mobilised over 700 people – supporting NORAD Outcome 1.

Strengths

HI's evidence-based approach can be an effective mobilisation platform – particularly when utilised across HI's extensive partnership network. HI's specialisation lies in research, a particular asset when tackling sensitive issues such as accountability and transparency.

HI's members are interlinked with key partners across Kachin State. HI understands how to mobilise locally, and has the support structures in place to do so.

Challenges

While HI has reformed its internal structures, staff attention is still split between its education and think tank wings. Improving internal efficiency and, ideally, developing complementary programming, is a key challenge for the organisation.

HI acknowledges it must also work to improve its connections to the Kachin State Government in order to increase the impact of its work. Establishing functional and pragmatic relations to the state while maintaining credibility and access with community partners is a perpetual challenge for CSOs in conflict affected areas.

Cross-cutting

HI does not apply explicit gender sensitivity approaches to its programmes, beyond involving female researchers and actively engaging women in consultations. HI may consider including a gender power analysis as part of its research to enhance its gender sensitivity capacity.

HI does however have a clear understanding of conflict sensitive approaches to its work in Kachin State. HI conducts consultations with the KIA/KIO and seeks to actively involve non-state groups to participate in workshops and advocacy activities. Navigating these relationships as a non-partisan research entity will however remain an ongoing challenge.

HI is able to effectively measure its activities, but lacks a robust monitoring and evaluation framework to understand its impact. At a base level, HI could benefit from better capturing and articulating change through case studies and personal insights.

Recommendations

1. HI should continue to strengthen and simplify its internal structures.
2. HI may consider including a gender power analysis as part of its research to enhance gender sensitivity.
3. HI should seek to develop its monitoring and evaluation methodology – particularly through case studies and most significant change techniques.

MATA

Project objective	NORAD alignment
There is an improved national resource governance framework in Myanmar, including for revenue sharing	Outcome 1. Partners mobilise around common issues
Information related to natural resource management is openly available and easily accessible	-
Just and sustainable practices are adopted in the management of natural resources in Myanmar	Output 1. Partners have capacity to challenge authorities
Civil society working collaboratively and actively involved in promoting transparency and accountability	Outcome 1. Partners mobilise around common issues

Effectiveness

MATA has made notable contributions as it strives toward transformational change across some of Myanmar's most intractable issues, consistent with NORAD Goal and Outcome 1. MATA members have directly lobbied government in amending the Myanmar Mining Law and associated bi-law, while MATA has been centrally involved in the drafting process of the Myanmar's Gemstone and Jade policy. These contributions include provisions for increased oversight of mining operation and corporate social responsibility activities; ideally promoting accountable practices in Myanmar's extractive industries.

MATA has also used its platform to advocate for the protection and promotion of human rights – including amongst its own members. MATA has released 17 statements on human rights issues, including abuses in Rakhine State, and has been a vocal supporter of universal human rights. MATA also held its second only national forum for all members in November 2017, following allegations members had spread hate-speech. MATA used the opportunity to reinforce its values and code of conduct – a rare step among civil society during the Rohingya crisis.

Strengths

MATA is able to draw on a nation-wide network of over 400 members; giving it significant reach, leverage and expertise. Its governance structure is representative, albeit cumbersome. Positions are elected every three years at the state/region and national level; culminating in the 70-person decision-making National Assembly. Such a large base increases MATA's leverage in its advocating work, while simultaneously spreading risk, reducing the direct burden from any one entity.

MATA has positioned itself as the peak advisory body on natural resources management matters, and is increasingly building a collaborative working relationship with lawmakers. MATA has used successful dialogue on such matters as a platform to work on anti-corruption and state-ownership issues.

Challenges

MATA's engagement on legislative reform has been largely reliant on individual law-makers, rather than transforming institutional practices. Ministries are reportedly resisting engagement civil society, with mistrust still entrenched among bureaucrats and, in some cases, worsening since 2017.

MATA's state and region members have faced increasingly frequent threats and criminal charges over the past 12 months. MATA is concerned for the safety of individual members working to promote transparency and accountability at the local level. The organisation is drawing on core funding to relocate individuals to safety or support lawyers to defend criminal charges.

"Threats and attacks from the military are becoming daily. Its much worse now for members."²⁶

While MATA's technical capacity is growing, the steering committee still has gaps. As with many partners, attracting and retaining experienced staff remains an ongoing challenge. Economic analysis and monitoring evaluation are two prominent areas in need of additional support.

As noted, MATA's representative structure is a cumbersome, and costly investment. While there are certainly dividends to such gatherings, efficiency approaches should be considered.

Cross-cutting

MATA has taken important formative steps to promote gender and conflict sensitivity in its work, though more needs to be done to translate values to approaches. MATA's constitution and values highlight non-discrimination and human rights, and including a 20% quota for women in regional assembly groups (at least one of five members). MATA activities also include allowances for women with at least one child under the age of three to access baby-sitting support, though it is unclear how effectively this policy has been implemented. In 2018, MATA's National Assembly will also discuss opportunities for more focus on gender issues, the first time women's rights has been on MATA's formal agenda.

MATA's decentralised, consultative and representative approach promotes contextualised approaches owned by local partners. MATA's capacity for specific conflict analysis, and ability to monitor and evaluate program impacts is however still formative. MATA has demonstrated a firm grasp of conflict sensitive concepts in its recent approaches to human rights advocacy, however more systemised processes would benefit the steering committee.

²⁶ MATA

MATA's evaluation capacity requires significant investment. MATA's decentralised structure and broad strategic focus means monitoring can be convoluted, and often delayed. Positively, MATA has engaged a monitoring and evaluation advisor to guide this process.

Recommendations

1. While representative, MATA's organisational structure is top-heavy, and expensive. More consideration may be required to meet the benefits of MATA's inclusive approaches with more efficient structures and practices.
2. MATA should seek to develop its monitoring and evaluation processes. Currently, MATA's reporting does not effectively capture the impact of the organisation's work; jeopardising its capacity to learn and improve.
3. MATA should consider revising its risk management policies to more effectively prevent and tackle security threats its members are facing.
4. MATA should establish a funding stream for supporting members facing legal or security threats, rather than using core funding.

MCPWC

Project objective	NORAD alignment
To upgrade organisational performance and contextual knowledge in township working groups and to be more effective in community mobilisation activity.	Output 4: Partners work towards improvement of internal systems
To strengthen the capacity of community leaders so that they understand policies, laws and procedures in oil and gas transport to increase their capacity to conduct more efficient advocacy.	Outcome 2. Popular organisations are more effective in organising people who have a common cause
To influence policy makers to adopt safer, more environmental friendly and socially responsible policies in oil and gas transport.	Output 1. Partners have capacity to challenge authorities

Effectiveness

MCPWC is on track to deliver its suite of capacity-building and advocacy programmes. MCPWC has delivered rights-based development training and community mobilisation training to around 170 participants in Mandalay Region, Magway Region Rakhine State and Northern Shan State. The net impact of this work, as with other training-orientated programmes evaluated, is difficult to assess. No tangible examples of community-action resulting directly from MCPWC trainings were cited in interviews.

MCPWC has however demonstrated greater effectiveness in lobbying government and improving accountability among decision-makers, consistent with NORAD Outcome 1. MCPWC successfully engaged the Ministry of Transport to notify communities when heavy tankers are scheduled to enter harbours (and avoid destruction of small boats and nets). While the government has also accepted MCPWC's recommendation report for ongoing pipeline monitoring – promoting transparency for local communities.

Strengths

As a member-based monitoring and advocacy network, MCPWC is well positioned to mobilise community action to promote local transparency and accountability. MCPWC comprises 26 member CSOs, spread across 21 townships, united in concern around resource management, environmental impact and local governance.

MCPWC maintains a strong network, grounded in representative decision-making. With members represented from Rakhine to Shan States, MCPWC is also a disparate collective of CSOs; serving to build common group among groups traditionally divided along ethnic, religious or political lines.

Challenges

MCPWC notes it is under increasing pressure from local authorities. Approval to conduct activities is proving more difficult to obtain, while MCPWC members are facing additional levels of scrutiny as they conduct their work.

MCPWC's work has also been complicated by perceived funding delays from NPA. While the organisation appreciated NPA's unique support to strengthen its internal processes, the renewal of its funding in 2018 left it with a funding gap of four months, and eight months remaining to implement 12 months of activities.

MCPWC has found it difficult to source relevant expertise to conduct more specialised activities. MCPWC has been funded to review Myanmar's Oil and Gas legislative framework, but has not been able to identify a suitable candidate to complete this work.

Cross-cutting

MCPWC does not have effective approaches to implementing gender sensitive programmes. Currently, there are no women represented on its seven person Steering Committee, while only four of 21 township representatives are women. MCPWC strives to include a minimum of 20% participation of women in training sessions, but does not appear to proactively promote gender equality or meaningful participation.

MCPWC is cognisant of conflict sensitivities in its work, particularly managing the competing interests of its diverse membership base. MCPWC's representative decision-making structure mitigates internal conflict, and builds trust that filters through its coalition members. MCPWC also consults communities prior to workshops being conducted, to better understand local dynamics and ensure its sessions can meet local needs.

MCPWC effectively monitors its activities, but lacks more strategic evaluation and learning practices and processes.

Recommendations

1. MCPWC should identify actions to promote the representation of women within its Steering Committee; promote women's inclusion in training workshops; and promote the active participation of women across its activities.
2. NPA may offer to assist MCPWC advertising for technical support in its planned review of Myanmar's Oil and Gas legislative framework
3. MCPWC should be supported to develop its MEL awareness and systems.

Paung Ku

Program objectives	NORAD alignment
Civil society is capable to organise and use resources effectively: Paung Ku support will enable partners to strengthen their internal structures and systems	Outcome 2. Popular organisations are more effective in organising people who have a common cause
Civil society is capable to analyse and apply learnings to address social injustice: Paung Ku support will enable partners to strengthen their capability to analyse the situation in their communities and to apply their learning so as to act on social injustices, to voice such issues and respond where possible	Outcome 1. Partners mobilise around common issues
Civil society has the space to influence decision-makers: Paung Ku support will enable partners to create spaces, formal or informal, including physical and institutional spaces where their voices can be heard to influence power holders	Output 1. Partners have capacity to challenge authorities

Effectiveness

Paung Ku continues to provide substantive support to strengthening Myanmar’s civil society, consistent with NORAD Outputs 1 and 4. In 2017, Paung Ku supported civil society actors to access 142 learning platforms, provided 195 small grants to 130 different partners, and supported networking and connections between civil society and external partners (donors, INGOs, etc).

Paung Ku has demonstrated how its work has meaningfully supported organisations to be more effective in organising people who have a common cause (NORAD Outcome 1). It has a particular focus on tackling power imbalances with Myanmar across multiple domains; economic, social and political. As one beneficiary noted:

“We have never dreamed such a big conference where more than one hundred Civil Society Organisations are getting together for raising their voices for peaceful coexistence. We have good chat with new friends and we could learn from each other.”²⁷

Cross-cutting

Paung Ku has effectively integrated gender sensitivity across its projects, with the support of a full-time gender advisor. Paung Ku has supported its partners to protect and promote

²⁷Asia Light conference

diversity and equality, including gender equality and this work will be strengthened, with Paung Ku continuing to mentor its partners in identifying, reflecting on and working to redress inequalities and injustice related to all forms of diversity. Gender is mainstreamed across Paung Ku's reporting, but more dedicated analysis could be included to identify lessons for partners.

Paung Ku supports partners in conflict analysis and shares lessons in best practice do no harm approaches. Working through local partners in its support of the peace process has effectively mainstreamed conflict sensitivity across Paung Ku's work.

Paung Ku recognises the need to improve its MEL approaches. Paung Ku is in the process of developing a new Monitoring and Learning Framework to accompany the 2017-2021 Strategic Framework. Paung Ku has tried to incorporate more case studies (most significant change) within its reporting, and focus on outcome-level indicators. However, many Paung Ku lessons are not documented, rather they are ingrained in individuals and institutional memory.

Strengths

Paung Ku has tailored its approach to effectively mentor a myriad of small CSOs across Myanmar. Its reach is substantive, and its methods are considered. Paung Ku uses its position of privilege to empower partners through reflective capacity development and practical financial support.

Paung Ku is able to connect with and support local CSOs at ward and village levels – micro organisations invariably below the threshold for most donors. Such partners are often particularly adept at identifying local need and being able to respond in a conflict sensitive and effective manner.

“Local has the capacity – that’s the starting point. We learn from them always. There is no fixed way to support. Work together to identify what support Paung Ku can provide. Paung Ku complements local work.”²⁸

Challenges

Paung Ku is wholly reliant on its six donor partners, and believes funding for process orientated organisations is becoming more difficult to source. Paung Ku has sought to improve its ability to understand and community the impact it has, but recognises the process is not linear, and can be difficult for donors to justify.

Basic rights have eroded in the past 12 months and the political space for civil society organisations such as Paung Ku to operate has shrunk. Paung Ku lacks political leverage to circumvent this challenge and is concerned by the deepening mistrust between government and civil society. Paung Ku is supporting an ever-smaller percentage of democracy advocacy

²⁸ Paung Ku

groups; with groups more inclined to offer training or services in-line with the government's preference.

The capacity of Paung Ku's partners varies, though the lack of human resources is a constant challenge.

Recommendations

1. Paung Ku requires greater funding certainty to more effectively plan and implement its programmes.

YSPS

Project objective	NORAD alignment
To provide policy recommendations and increase public awareness of current legislative issues	Output 1. Partners have capacity to challenge authorities
To evaluate and inform the public of MPs' responsiveness to our recommendations	Output 1. Partners have capacity to challenge authorities
To promote a human-rights based approach to legislation	Output 1. Partners have capacity to challenge authorities

Effectiveness

YSPS's activities have served a dual outcome that work to promote more democratic and accountable governance. Its technical workshops, panel discussions and legislative recommendations have reportedly seen minor, but significant changes to draft bills, including Vacant, Fallow, and Virgin Land Law that have challenged entrenched power structures. Second, engaging MPs in the process of legislative reform has worked to entrench participatory democratic processes that support representative public policy.

"YSPS is the bridge between the drafting committee and the stakeholders"²⁹

For YSPS, the process of legislative reform is perhaps more significant than the outcomes it has achieved. YSPS has been able to bring together legal experts to consider and recommend reform for eight pieces of draft legislation to the relevant drafting committees.³⁰ Supporting the institutional development of these committees – including applying a gender and human rights lens to the process – is a significant investment. Drafting committees are largely subservient to ministries and Shwe Mann's constitutionally opaque reform committee.

Strengths

YSPS has developed its technical competencies to channel legal expertise into succinct and practical recommendations. YSPS has extensive personal ties to legislators – links that it has leveraged to gain access into legislative reform processes.

²⁹ YSPS

³⁰ In 2017 YSPS submitted recommendations on the Myanmar Investment Law – By-law; Occupational Safety and Health Law; Farm Land Law; Vacant, Fallow, and Virgin Land Law; Myanmar Companies Act; Child Rights Law; Land Acquisition Law; and Yangon City Development Act.

YSPS has learned from the short-comings of its programmes in 2017 – demonstrating a degree of self-reflection and awareness. YSPS understands its remit – strengthening democracy and promoting human rights – and applies these lenses to its work.

Challenges

YSPS faces a ranges of challenges to achieving its stated objectives – many of which reflect the structural shortcomings of the system it is trying to reform. Departments are resistant to outside influence, and often seek to undermine the work of YSPS and others. This influence weighs on elected representatives, who often lack the experience and personal clout to advocate for recommendations proposed by YSPS.

The bill drafting process in Myanmar is unpredictable; complicating YSPS’s involvement. YSPS engages at the draft review stage as it lacks the capacity to engage during the consultation process – meaning recommendations can, and have, been readily dismissed by power-brokers.

YSPS is also heavily centralised and focussed on the legal fraternity in Yangon. YSPS acknowledges it is not an organisation that houses legal expertise – it facilitates recommendations from experts to the Hluttaw. YSPS is therefore beholden to the experience and capacity of the resources it draws upon – which is both a strategic risk, and also expensive.

Cross-cutting

YSPS applies an effective gender lens to its work, as part of its human rights focus. For example, YSPS noted that the draft Farmland Law did not include gender provisions, despite most workers being women. Applying this lens more rigorously, including through its own consultations with women would however be beneficial.

While YSPS understands the conflict sensitivities of legalisation – such as the draft education and higher education bills – it lacks a coherent framework to effectively analyse and provide recommendations through a conflict lens. YSPS applies a human rights framework that goes some way to mitigating this risk, but more consultation with partners or legal experts from ethnic states would support YSPS’s overarching objectives.

As noted, YSPS has demonstrated a notable capacity for self reflection and continuous improvement. While its monitoring and evaluation frameworks are likely to be rudimentary, it is a measure of effectiveness that the organisation has evolved over short timeframe to achieve the level of access it has.

Recommendations

1. YSPS should consider ways to engage individuals from diverse backgrounds to inform its legislative recommendations, particularly as it relates to gender and conflict.

Annex B Sida Partner summaries

ACDD

Project objective	SIDA alignment
To strengthen the local governance.	Objective 1: Reform of local governance, increased respect for human rights and increased civic engagement in issues related to democracy and human rights in Myanmar
To advise the regional/state level government to fully implement the responsibilities of a local government as the rights allowed in the law.	1.3 Civil Society led civic engagement with local government and ethnic armed groups leads to commitments to change in policies and their implementation
To build a CSOs coalition that will commerce for the amendment of the laws promoting CSOs' participation in Development Affairs Committees' Elections Process.	1.2 Civil Society expand the space for freedom of expression and association to voice and address human rights concerns
To release the CSOs' Principles and Policies for the amendments of the laws/by-laws/policies according to the public will.	1.3 Civil Society led civic engagement with local government and ethnic armed groups leads to commitments to change in policies and their implementation

Effectiveness

ACDD had mixed success in its two NPA funded activities. ACDD's Ward Administration and Village Tract Administration reform work brought together a coalition advocacy network, captured perspectives from communities (nine townships) and yielded one of the first ever public hearings in the post-transition Hluttaw. The work clearly promoted democratic cornerstones of consultation and transparency both amongst lawmakers and communities, but did not yield the legislative reform groups had been advocating.

ACDD's oversight of a coalition advocating municipal legislation reform however, was hampered by poor coordination and insufficient follow-up; limiting its effectiveness. While nearly 100 representatives attended a municipal law and policy national workshop, recommendations have not been published in Burmese, and ACDD has lacked resources to further the initiative (the project lacked a dedicated coordinator, responsibility for which fell to ACDD, despite not being resourced to do so).

Strengths

ACDD understands and promotes the power of community action. As an advocacy network, ACDD draws on a diverse coalition of partners to advance its objectives and mobilise action.

ACDD recognises the need for evidence-base research, and has sought to ground its advocacy in participatory approaches.

Challenges

Opportunities for ACDD to present recommendations to decision-makers have increased from a low base, but arise with complications. Time is often limited to present findings, and MPs continue to be sceptical of the role and intentions of civil society.

ACDD has found being a proactive leader in advocacy brings expectations. ACDD successfully built coalitions to further its advocacy work in 2017, but was expected to work as the secretariat in both reform initiatives without adequate resourcing. Without funding to work as a coordinator, some initiatives – such as publishing recommendations to be used as a public resource – have not been completed, and lessons will not be captured.

ACDD is not a registered organisation, complicating its funding and reporting arrangements with other donors.

Cross-cutting

As a core mission, and implementation focus, ACDD actively promotes gender inclusion and participation across its programmes. ACDD disaggregates participation data by sex, and has sought to educate its coalition partners of the importance of gender sensitivity.

ACDD has also demonstrated an awareness of good practice conflict sensitivity in its programming. ACDD partners use political analysis in program design, and applies a community mobilising cyclical model to implement projects to ensure they are locally owned and inclusive of diverse perspectives.

ACDD spoke critically of advocacy organisations that refused to criticise human rights abuses in Rakhine State. ACDD was conscious of the need to work with legitimate human rights' champions, and expressed concerns that some donors are funding partners who have demonstrated weakness or outright disregard for universal human rights.

ACDD's monitoring and evaluation processes are assessed to be broadly effective. ACDD conducts regular fieldtrips to monitor and review partners' activities, maintains a monitoring logframe, and requires members complete MEL guidelines as part of project design. ACDD does however acknowledge that further work could be pursued to strengthen these systems – particularly in understanding strategic impact.

Akhaya

Program objectives	SIDA alignment
Women become advocates on gender policy issues within their political parties	Objective 2: Women have influence in local governance and the peace process
Targeted communities change their perceptions of women in decision-making positions	Objective 2: Women have influence in local governance and the peace process
Laws, policies and practices related to gender issues are debated at the national level and begin to change	Objective 1: Reform of local governance, increased respect for human rights and increased civic engagement in issues related to democracy and human rights in Myanmar
Akhaya has strengthened its organizational capacity, allowing it to be more accountable, collect data and measure progress	Objective 3: To strengthen the organisational sustainability and enhance the capacity of monitoring and evaluation of local civil society partners

Effectiveness

With the support of NPA, Akhaya has made significant strides in advancing women's representation and rights in Myanmar. Akhaya's programme, focussed on mentoring women parliamentarians, building the evidence base for legal reform and, building on these two activities, advocating for the passage Myanmar's Prevention and Protection of Violence Against Women bill (PoVAW).

Akhaya's greatest effectiveness has derived from its informal advocacy. Akhaya has linked community voices to the Attorney Generals' Department to directly inform and lobby for the PoVAW bill. Akhaya has also conducted 12 workshops with the Department of Social Welfare, and directly engaged the draft law's principle legal advisor to establish a joint working team to support the law's development. Presently however, the draft law has not been progressed to the Hluttaw for debate.

Akhaya more broadly, has led media and public campaigns on women's empowerment and violence against women. Akhaya's burgeoning relationship with government has also seen the Ministry of Health invite Akhaya to train support workers in trials of Women's Support Center in two local hospitals.

Strengths

Akhaya's work spans local to national. Its research and advocacy is informed by transformative sex education and victim support programmes in communities. Akhaya

understands the needs of women and girls, because it works directly with women and girls. Akhaya is able to build powerful advocacy narratives, grounded in emotional reality.

Moreover, Akhaya has adeptly tailored its advocacy approach since 2015. The organisation has identified how best to engage the new administration, and how best to argue its message. Akhaya has effectively transformed itself from outside activist, to trusted insider.

“This government doesn’t like activists. They listen to people. So we organise community workshops. We take communities to NPT. We will take their voice.”³¹

Challenges

Akhaya’s has become increasingly reactive, and risks being stretched beyond its current operating capacity. Akhaya, not unreasonably, fears the opportunity cost of turning down projects. While Akhaya is reaping the benefits of its sustained campaigning and advocacy, its growth must be strategic in order to be sustainable.

In light of Akhaya’s workload, staff have been under-supported and over-worked. Akhaya has readily acknowledged this challenge, and has recruited for several new positions, to ease the pressure on its workforce.

Cross-cutting

Akhaya is assessed to maintain good-practice gender sensitive programming. Its activities are inclusive, participatory and led by women. Gender is mainstreamed across its strategic priorities, and has demonstrated an understanding of how gender cuts across issues such as education, health and decision-making.

Akhaya’s programmes exercise do no harm principles, and include a reasonable understanding broader conflict sensitive approaches. Akhaya does understand the unique challenges for ethnic women, and has sought to represent these concerns in its advocacy efforts.

Akhaya is trying, and improving its monitoring and evaluation process. Akhaya holds regular internal meetings and disseminates quarterly reports to partners. While Akhaya has demonstrated an eagerness to understand the effects of activities, it still needs to improve whole-of-project evaluation approaches. This is increasingly important to ensure the organisation’s reactive programming contains to support its long-term priorities.

Recommendations

1. Akhaya should seek to continue to focus on its organisational development, particularly as grows in response to increasing opportunities. Significant, and dedicated support is required to formalise Akhaya’s processes, support staff development and strengthen programme design, monitoring and evaluation.

³¹ Akhaya

MFE

Program objectives	SIDA alignment
Citizens and civil society in the seven states and regions with data available, interact with their relevant MPs more	1.2 Civil Society expand the space for freedom of expression and association to voice and address human rights concerns
Open Hluttaw (OH) has an expanded remit and a more powerful database. A clear and easy path is 'paved' for expanding the data collection and entry agenda to the remaining states and regions.	-
MFE/OH are better able to advocate at the national level, through enhanced relations with key officials and a shift in professional culture.	1.2 Civil Society expand the space for freedom of expression and association to voice and address human rights concerns
MFE has a strategic plan to allow it to move forward with a clear set of medium and long term goals, objectives and activities, and ambitions to grow.	3.1. Increased sustainability and enhanced monitoring and evaluation capacity of NPA and civil society partners

Effectiveness

The development of the Open Hluttaw App and webpage – featuring representative’s basic data from the Pyithu and Amyotha Hluttaw, as well as 11/14 Region/State Hluttaws – has served to strengthen transparency and accountability of Myanmar’s governing structures. Engagement with each platform is increasing and, importantly, MFE is working with partners to bring lawmakers’ awareness to the importance of sharing representation data.

Enabling citizens to connect with representatives – with specific contact details – is foundational in increasing civic engagement in the reform process. MFE’s impact in promoting human rights, and the participation of women in local governance is more tangential. MFE’s work to assist citizens and groups engage with the executive, legislature, judiciary and media will be particularly important as it seeks a more active role in supporting reform processes.

Strengths

MFE acknowledges it must continue to work along a dual track; organisational development and gradual program implementation. MFE is seeking to grow sustainably. Its focus on building relationships with lawmakers is critical to being able to proactively connect citizens to decision-making.

Challenges

MFE's development since 2015 has progressed largely unhindered. Maintaining and growing qualified staff is likely to be an emerging challenge, as it is for most small CSOs in Myanmar. While MFE has yet to encounter notable political resistance or hesitancy to its work, this remains a constant and potentially project-ending risk. MFE will need to remain diligent in maintaining accurate information, and expanding with caution leading into the 2020 elections.

MFE's organisational development remains organic. While MFE has now, with NPA's assistance, developed a three-year strategic plan and HR, procurement and finance policies, the organisation's processes will require additional and ongoing support as it grows.

MFE also must work to coordinate with, and differentiate itself from, similar projects such as Open Myanmar Initiative. MFE has initiated an open data working group, where partners will need to ensure their work continues to complement rather than duplicates others.

Cross-cutting

MFE does not actively apply gender or conflict lens to its work, largely due to the nature of its online activities.

MFE's monitoring and reporting requires improvement. While MFE has developed an effective theory of change, with measureable activities, it lacks capacity to capture and articulate meaningful impact through its programmes.

Recommendations

1. MFE consider how to apply gender and conflict sensitive approaches as it develops the Open Myanmar Initiative. In particular, it should consider how the platform can be used to highlight representational shortcomings for minority constituents, and how power imbalances may be addressed.

MLAW

Organisational objective	SIDA alignment
Improve effectiveness of drafting bill process and good governance and institutions in Myanmar	Objective 1: Reform of local governance, increased respect for human rights and increased civic engagement in issues related to democracy and human rights in Myanmar
To strengthen capacity of legal aid service providers including legal aid service organisations, pro-bono lawyers and paralegals	Objective 1: Reform of local governance, increased respect for human rights and increased civic engagement in issues related to democracy and human rights in Myanmar Objective 3: To strengthen the organisational sustainability and enhance the capacity of monitoring and evaluation of local civil society partners

Effectiveness

With NPA-channel Sida-funding commencing in April, MLAW has had few opportunities to achieve its planned outputs and meet desired outcomes. MLAW continues to pursue its dual track approach to promote justice; through Union-level legal reform, and grass-root legal aid and legal and paralegal training. Lawyer training was held in Sittwe, legal works training was held in Yangon and member and board coordination remains ongoing. MLAW's activities remain relevant and are, with the right support, realistic.

MLAW's activities are increasing the awareness and provision of legal aid in communities. As a result of trainings delivered in local communities, community members and organisations are increasingly seeking out MLAW (often through social media) for support in legal matters.³² MLAW's partners have intervened in two recent land grabbing cases; including board members successfully lobbying district judges in Rakhine State in cases against farmer union members.

MLAW's work to assist in the reform of legislation has slowed. The passage of Myanmar's Legal Aid Law (10/2016) was, despite criticism, MLAW's most significant achievement. As the bill's leading advocate, MLAW played a crucial role in formalising individual's right to legal representation in Myanmar. While MLAW has continued to work with the Chairman of the Legislative Drafting Committee, none of the 19 pieces of legislation MLAW has sought to review in 2017/18 – including three of which that MLAW had provided feedback on – have yet been amended. Changes to the Local Administration Act and developing proposal for a National Bar Council Law are currently the network's core reform priorities.

Strengths

³² At least once per week, according to MLAW.

As a geographically diverse, 17-member network, MLAW relies on mobilising partners to strengthen the rule of law in Myanmar. MLAW is largely decentralised; working through members, and the partners of members. Local members host and organise MLAW's scheduled trainings sessions, which are generally run by MLAW trainers.

Challenges

With a 12-month funding agreement only in-place since April, MLAW has been hampered by funding uncertainty. MLAW remains unsure how to effectively implement its programmes while its long-term future remains, largely a year-to-year proposition.

As noted in previous observations, the appropriateness of MLAW providing technical support of law reform remains an open question. MLAW members are unlikely to be experts in many areas of reform in which they are providing recommendations, and indeed much of this work is only peripherally related to MLAW's core business (legal aid). There is also a risk that MLAW is giving credibility to a consultation process that is still far from transparent, and indeed not enshrined in any formal arrangement that guarantees accountability.³³ More consideration is needed to ensure MLAW's work is indeed strengthening good-practice legislative reform.

Cross-cutting

MLAW is cognisant of good practice gender sensitivity. MLAW invites 50/50 gender inclusion at training sessions, has three women on its board, and supports members focused on legal aid for women – including training for sex workers. MLAW does not, explicitly, apply a gender power analysis in conducting legislative review, though likely frames gender empowerment within its broader human rights lens.

MLAW works through local partners or local CSOs to ensure its trainings sessions are sufficiently sensitive to local dynamics. MLAW largely responds to needs and requests as they arise, rather than seek to impose its agenda on communities. MLAW has not explored how group dynamics, particularly in Rakhine, Shan and Kachin States, may be impacted by external fissures, nor how its programmes may be used to bridge divides.

MLAW's objectives can only be subjectively measured. MLAW has an inherent understanding of needs, but lacks a more systematic analysis of the problems it seeks to address. The two core strands of MLAW's work – legal capacity building and legislative reform – serve to support the organisation's overarching goal (strengthening Rule of Law in Myanmar) and subset objectives, though the organisation is stretched between its dual focus on tactical and strategic reform.

³³ See <http://www.newmandala.org/43354-2/>

PK Community Center

Organisational objective	SIDA alignment
Civil society partners have created space for freedom of expression and contributed to increased understanding of and respect for human rights	1.2 Civil Society expand the space for freedom of expression and association to voice and address human rights concerns

Effectiveness

Mandalay's Community Centre, under the auspice of Paung Ku, has effectively facilitated significant results in civic engagement and support of CSO development, consistent with Sida Objectives. The Centre hosted over community 300 events in the past 12 months, including 60 which were organised by the Centre itself. Significantly, the Centre has facilitated the establishment of Mandalay's CSO Network. 70-80 organisations have met over 20 times, and the group has had three meetings with government representatives. These meetings have, seemingly, establish a direct line of dialogue and, in turn, trust building, on issues of social welfare. The Centre has also been responsive to emerging issues; including hosting workshops on communal violence in the Mandalay Region.

However, the Community Centre in Taungoo closed temporarily and has reportedly struggled to establish its relevance. Unlike the Mandalay Centre, the Taungoo Centre was, reportedly, dominated by one CSO, lacked a collective multipurpose space, and focused on outreach on the peace process.

Strengths

The Mandalay Community Centre met a community need, is responsive to community requirements, and has served to strengthen civil society and deepen its interaction with government. The model developed slowly and systematically. Its popularity and effectiveness speak to the value of its approach.

Challenges

The Mandalay Community Centre is unsustainable without donor funding. Rental costs are high, staff are overworked, and few CSOs can afford a fee-for-service model that could sufficiently cover operating costs. Use of a government donated-venue is, ideally, a long-term solution, but under current circumstances would not be feasible, according to Paung Ku's plans for the centre. Government may impose preconditions on a venue's use, may monitor discussions and – even if they do not – a majority of CSOs would unlikely trust a venue not considered neutral.

The experience in Taungoo highlights the risk of a community centre model. When dominated by a single entity, the space and/or concept may become monopolised and alienate wider civil society. The model relies on effective management, coordination and more than anything, time to learn and respond to local need.

Cross cutting

The Mandalay Community Centre needs more support to more effectively apply gender sensitive approaches. While CSOs agree to be non discriminatory when using the Centre and participation data is disaggregated by sex, the organising committee lacks proactive gender inclusion approaches.

The Centre has, organically, developed a more robust approach to conflict sensitivity. The Centre has a value statement which all CSOs sign to use the space, including universal respect for human rights. Centre staff attend all sessions facilitated by external CSOs, and any found to promote incendiary, racist, sexist or overtly political statements are barred from using the space again. More work could however be done to seek to challenge and transform such attitudes in a systemic approach.

The Mandalay Community Centre's monitoring and evaluation systems are formative. The Centre has demonstrated an ability for self-reflective growth, but needs to build on its quantitative reporting to better understand and explain the impact of its work.

Recommendations

1. Mandalay Community Centre may consider where, and how it could establish a permanent location – potentially through profits of government land sale.
2. Reflective lessons from Paung Ku's experience in the Taungoo must be captured and used to inform planning for any future Community Centres.

Shalom

Program objectives	SIDA alignment
To strengthen the capacity and coordination of key players in local governance of selected townships	1.2 Civil Society expand the space for freedom of expression and association to voice and address human rights concerns
To develop capacity and confidence of civil society to get involved in future security arrangement	1.3 Civil Society led civic engagement with local government and ethnic armed groups leads to commitments to change in policies and their implementation
To ensure successful implementation on Public-Civil Society partnership activities	-
To contribute relevant Policy Options on Security Sector in political dialogue process	1.3 Civil Society led civic engagement with local government and ethnic armed groups leads to commitments to change in policies and their implementation

Effectiveness

Shalom's SECURE project is an interconnected series of pilot activities across three townships, broadly at the mid-point of implementation. Training has been delivered to CSOs in Kayah (Demoso), Kayin (Kawreieik) and Yangon, but planned activities with Village and Ward Administrators have only occurred in Kayah State to date.

Conceptually, Shalom's web of activities is assessed to be reasonably sound, albeit based on a set of assumptions. Human security issues such as trafficking, drugs, gender based violence, must be addressed through a partnership between communities and local administrators. Additionally, this provides a useful entry point for capacity development of both parties.

The SECURE project may indeed help foster increased interactions between CSO and local official participants across the life-cycle of the project. This however, has not been achieved, and indeed, the long-term sustainability of these interactions is far less certain. Shalom is seeking to contribute to transformation change through training and dialogue across 12-18 months. It is likely that Shalom – or an equivalent third party – will need to continue to act as a facilitator and driver of interactions longer-term to at least maintain dialogue on issues of local human security.

SSD training in Yangon appears however to be an outlier activity. While Shalom considers this to be the next step for CSOs after its basic human security training, it seems likely course content will need to be heavily modified to be applicable in ceasefire states.

Strengths

Shalom is able to draw on a vast network of experience and contacts to implement its work. The organisation is grounded in good-practice analysis, self reflection, program design and inclusion approaches.

Challenges

State Government officials have an inherent mistrust of civil society actors, which has been compounded by Shalom's quest for training and engagement to incorporate 'human security'. Security has, historically, been seen as the exclusive domain of the military.

Shalom is also trying to navigate an overlap in GAD training currently being rolled-out by MercyCorps and Action Aid. Moreover, GAD has indicated that it has developed its own training for staff in Kayin. Shalom is therefore having to convince GAD of the utility of external training.

The SECURE project is based on a series of assumptions, that are being tested as Shalom progresses through its programmes implementation. The effectiveness and relevance of its training curriculum remains to be seen, though NPA has expressed concerns that the course is perhaps too theoretical. Such lessons are inevitable as a pilot activity, though Shalom must seek to adapt course content in accordance with participant feedback.

The most significant impact of the SECURE project is likely to lie in the coordination dividend of training and connecting civil society and local officials. Achieving this will, almost certainly, hinge more-so on the willingness and attitudinal transformation of the officials. Access to these key officials, and their willingness to engage will likely remain an ongoing variable.

Cross-cutting

Shalom is applying good practice gender sensitivity in the implementation of its SECURE project. Shalom has a clearly articulated gender inclusion approach, and is actively foster participation at all levels.

Conflict sensitivity is an ongoing challenge however. While Shalom is investing significant time in building relationships with key stakeholders, the programme's focus on CSOs and security is inherently high risk. Shalom will need to continue to work incrementally to develop understanding and acceptance of key concepts, in order to progress the implementation of activities.

Shalom has a well-resourced and experienced M&E unit that supports the organisation's programmes. Shalom has applied its evaluation effectiveness framework in the development of this project. It should be noted however, that the theory of change proposed is assessed to be unrealistic, and difficult to measure. As a pilot activity, Shalom should focus objectives around reflective learnings for continuous improvement, more-so than expecting widespread structural change. Indeed, Shalom's reporting to date on the programme has not adequately captured key MEL reflections.

Recommendations

1. Shalom consider the relevance and applicability of its SSD trial in Yangon to other States/Regions. Shalom may need to consider an additional pilot in Mon in Kayin States to validate lessons in Yangon.
2. Shalom should work closely with Action Aid and Mercy Corps to ensure its capacity development initiative for GAD is complementary and scheduling is de-conflicted
3. Ensure course content is adapted to reflect participant feedback

WCDI

Organisational objective	SIDA alignment
To enhance capacities of women MPs in policy-making and increase participation of women in political parties and parliament	Objective 2: Women have influence in local governance and the peace process
To advocate 30% quota system to be in place in Parliament and political parties	Objective 2: Women have influence in local governance and the peace process
To educate and reduce social barriers and harmful cultural norms in order to promote women's participation in politics and leadership position through printing, broadcasting and campaigning	Objective 2: Women have influence in local governance and the peace process

Effectiveness

WCDI is working directly to promote women to have leadership in local governance. The organisation continues to advocate for a 30% quota in Union and State/Region Hluttaws, while concurrently building the capacity of women to actively participate in positions of leadership.

During the evaluation period, WCDI's "Vote for Women" campaign saw two WCDI alumni elected as State/Region representatives in 2015, while the organisation is increasingly able to access and discuss the need for a 30% with political parties and representatives. Success for WCDI will likely be measured over decades, not years. Currently, only one political party they have engaged, NLD-Shan, claims to have a quota system in place, while discussions with the Women and Children Committee and Saigain Region Hluttaw were formative.

As an alumni network focused on training, advocacy, and collective action, WCDI inherently works through partnership models. WCDI has 85 active alumni – individuals who have completed two rounds of *Women Can Do It* training. These alumni work across 30-40 organisations and political parties, though do not represent these organisations in any official capacity – WCDI alumni gather in an individual capacity. WCDI has historically organised annual events annual retreats for its alumni and seeks to use its campaigns and advocacy to bring a diverse cross-section of women together to work to promote opportunities and rights for all in Myanmar.

Strengths

Empowering local change-makers remains WCDI's single greatest strength. WCDI's alumni network – fostering change-agents across organisations and communities – is a relevant and potentially powerful model of transformation.

WCDI is a leading partner of Myanmar's gender network. The organisation plays a leading role in agenda-setting, and prioritises its collaboration and mobilisation approaches.

Challenges

WCDI has undergone a period of extended upheaval; largely resulting from funding gaps and long-term uncertainty. While WCDI has facilitated positive engagement with lawmakers in NPT and led International Women's Day celebrations with lawmakers in Saigaing, the organisation is maintaining skeleton operations. Its Coordinating Unit has experienced almost complete turnover in the past six months, and remains without a program manager.

"Every year we start again and again from the beginning."³⁴

WCDI's effectiveness relies on funding security. WCDI has been unable to engage partners, forward-plan activities, or invest in its network in light of its uncertainty over long-term funding.

Cross-cutting

WCDI is assessed to effectively apply gender sensitive programming. The organisation actively engages women as a priority, and understands how to enable women's participation in mixed-gender settings. WCDI's internal practices promote gender inclusion, and the organisation's mandate firmly places gender equality at the center of its work.

WCDI's programming has demonstrated less consciousness of conflict sensitivity. However, its programmes are assessed to comply with inherent do no harm principles. WCDI takes time to invest in local partnerships and seeks to understand local contexts.

With high staff turn-over, WCDI's capacity to maintain good-practice monitoring and evaluation has been somewhat reduced. Institutionally, WCDI is effective in reporting activities and links these to broader strategic objectives – centrally around the 30 per cent quota.

Recommendations

1. WCDI should consider opportunities to better connect its network. Participants of introductory training sessions on political party training sessions in Kayin and Saigaing for example do not have any opportunities to connect directly to share experiences and plan activities.

³⁴ WCDI

Winpeace

Organisational objective	SIDA alignment
To improve awareness of UNSC1325 and other related UN resolutions to engage with women peace and security issues to the government and community actors	Objective 2: Women have influence in local governance and the peace process
To enhance the capacity of women organisations in mobilising their constituencies around a WPS agenda to ensure increase of women's participation in the peace process	Objective 2: Women have influence in local governance and the peace process
To enhance the capacity of women organisations in mobilising their constituencies to ensure changes in laws and policies concerning women's human rights, peace and democratic governance, linked WPS agenda to existing policy framework	Objective 1: Reform of local governance, increased respect for human rights and increased civic engagement in issues related to democracy and human rights in Myanmar
To improve the capacity and organisation strength of WIN-Peace so that could carry out its consultation developing process in mobilising women peace builders and peace-makers to support Myanmar peace process	Objective 3: To strengthen the organisational sustainability and enhance the capacity of monitoring and evaluation of local civil society partners

Effectiveness

Winpeace did not meet its target program objectives, which had been designed for a three-year program but interim funding only covered a six-month period. Regardless, Winpeace did achieve notable outcomes across two funding cycles. The organisation was able to lobby Union Hluttaw, largely due to its personal ties to representatives.

Significantly, Winpeace effectively conducted stakeholder engagement in Kayin, Kachin and Shan States, facilitating discussions between CSOs, political parties and government officials. Representatives from each state also presented key issues (displacement, sexual violence and health) to the Department of Social Welfare in NPT in March 2018.

Strengths

The intersection of Winpeace's work – local peacebuilding and women's empowerment – is critical. Winpeace seeks to bring together local capacity building of women, activism and conflict transformation; recognising the interplay between these activities as a key strength.

Winpeace has evolved from a network to an organisation, and can draw on the benefits of each. Winpeace is connected to local partners, but is able to function efficiently as a single entity. Winpeace staff have demonstrated a deep-seated commitment to the organisation's core mission; including covering funding gaps through individual donations.

Challenges

After two funding cycles with NPA, Winpeace's partnership was not renewed in 2018, and remains without a major donor.

Winpeace noted that working with government and MPs is difficult. This challenge is twofold. First, government views CSOs with scepticism, colouring their relations and engagement. Second, government lacks formalised processes for facilitating consultations with CSOs. Meetings are difficult to organise and confirmation often occurs at the last minute.

Winpeace observed that local partners can be challenging. They lack basic technology such as computers, and therefore have to provide handwritten comments. They also require significant assistance to manage finances, with record keeping and reporting capacity low.

Cross-cutting

In light of Winpeace's discontinued partnership with NPA, an assessment of cross-cutting issues was not made for this evaluation.

Appendix C. List of interviewees

Organisation	Interviewees	Position	Date
MLAW	U Kyaw Myint Moe Moe Win	Chairman Program Manager	5 June, 2018
WCDI	Agatha Nu Nu Wint War	Board Member Program Manager	5 June, 2018
Winpeace	Cherry Ohn	Director	6 June, 2018
Akhaya	Htar Htar Su Mon Yu Mon Khaing	Director Program Officer Program Officer	6 June, 2018
ACDD	Thinzar Shunlei Yi	Network Coordinator	7 June, 2018
Mandalay Community Centre	Moe Min Aung		8 June, 2018
Paung Ku	Dr Aung Thant	Program Manager	8 June, 2018
MFE	Soe Lin Htoot	Director	8 June, 2018
Shalom	Lum Ra La Ung Su Su Wai	Program Manager Operations Director	11 June, 2018
MATA	Ye Lin Myint	National Coordinator	11 June, 2018
Equality Myanmar	U Aung Myo Min Juan Miguel Sanchez Marin Darren Moon	Executive Director Deputy Director Development Manager	12 June, 2018
NPA	Carine Jaquet	Programme Manager	12 June, 2018
YSPS	Myo Aung Htwe	Board Member	13 June, 2018
AD	Carol Moet Moet Aye	Executive Director	13 June, 2018
MCPWC	Ye Thein Oo	National Coordinator	13 June, 2018
HI	Hpawdaw Naw Htoi Mung Dan	Executive Director (Acting) Executive Director	13 June, 2018
CBI	U Ngwe Thein	Director	14 June, 2018
ALARM	U Win Myo Thu	Executive Director	14 June, 2018
NPA	Naw Genevieve	Program Officer	29 June, 2018

Organisation	Interviewees	Position	Date
NPA	Lay Kabaw	Senior Program Officer	29 June, 2018
NPA	Hnin Htet Htet Aung	Program Officer	29 June, 2018
NPA	Sai Phong Kam	Senior Program Officer	3 July, 2018
NPA	Chan Myat Thu	Senior Program Officer	5 July, 2018

Appendix D. Strategic relevance comparison

Goal: A peaceful, safer and more democratic society with a just distribution of power and resources				
Partner organisation	NPA strategic pillars			Assessed alignment of partner's strategic objectives to NPA's objectives
	Civil society participating in the establishment of a stronger democracy	Peace and reconciliation through fighting marginalisation	Safer life for civilians living with reduced exposure to risks caused by landmine contamination	
Relevant partner objectives				
ACDD	<p>To develop the civil society organisations</p> <p>To cultivate the culture of human rights and democracy</p>	To foster the long-lasting peace that can guarantee equality and self-determination of ethnic nationalities through substantive political dialogue based on national reconciliation		High
AD	<p>Effective local public policy forum become active and instrumental in local public policy formulation.</p> <p>The regional government personnel, the members of parliaments, and the members of political parties become efficient in public administration and managing public resources and public policy making</p> <p>Changed stereotyping behaviours against women, person with disabled, LGBT</p>			Moderate
CBI	Enhance organisational capacity of CSOs	Safeguarding peace through CSO networks		High

Goal: A peaceful, safer and more democratic society with a just distribution of power and resources				
Partner organisation	NPA strategic pillars			Assessed alignment of partner's strategic objectives to NPA's objectives
	Civil society participating in the establishment of a stronger democracy	Peace and reconciliation through fighting marginalisation	Safer life for civilians living with reduced exposure to risks caused by landmine contamination	
Relevant partner objectives				
HDFI		Promotion of human rights awareness, human dignity and the principles of civil society in Myanmar for all people regardless of their ethnicity, religion or gender through the power of film, and public debate on the important issue the country is facing		High
MLAW	Improved effectiveness of legal processes and institutions in Myanmar Strengthened networking among civil society and legal aid service providers	Increased access to legal aid services for the poor and vulnerable		Moderate
PK	Civil society is capable to organise and use resources effectively Civil society has the space to influence decision makers	Civil society is capable to analyse and apply learnings to address social injustices		High
PK Comm Centre*	Civil society partners have created space for freedom of expression and contributed to increased understanding of and respect for human rights			High

Goal: A peaceful, safer and more democratic society with a just distribution of power and resources				
Partner organisation	NPA strategic pillars			Assessed alignment of partner's strategic objectives to NPA's objectives
	Civil society participating in the establishment of a stronger democracy	Peace and reconciliation through fighting marginalisation	Safer life for civilians living with reduced exposure to risks caused by landmine contamination	
Relevant partner objectives				
Winpeace	To enhance capacity of women's organisations in mobilising their constituencies around a 'Women			Moderate
MFE	Citizens and civil society in the seven states and regions with data available, interact with their relevant MPs more MFE/OH are better able to advocate at the national level, through enhanced relations with key officials and a shift in professional culture.			Moderate
Shalom	To ensure the successful implementation on Public-Civil Society partnership activities	To develop the capacity and confidence of civil society to get involved in future security arrangement To contribute relevant Policy Options on Security Sector in political dialogue process		High

Goal: A peaceful, safer and more democratic society with a just distribution of power and resources				
Partner organisation	NPA strategic pillars			Assessed alignment of partner's strategic objectives to NPA's objectives
	Civil society participating in the establishment of a stronger democracy	Peace and reconciliation through fighting marginalisation	Safer life for civilians living with reduced exposure to risks caused by landmine contamination	
Relevant partner objectives				
EQMM	Government will be more receptive to Civil Society and will act more on civil society input on Human Rights issues Civil society conducts more effective advocacy on human rights issues in Myanmar Promoted knowledge of and respect for human rights in Myanmar through wide dissemination of educational multimedia resources	Increased advocacy activities by Civil Society on pressing human rights issues in Myanmar		High

Goal: A peaceful, safer and more democratic society with a just distribution of power and resources				
Partner organisation	NPA strategic pillars			Assessed alignment of partner's strategic objectives to NPA's objectives
	Civil society participating in the establishment of a stronger democracy	Peace and reconciliation through fighting marginalisation	Safer life for civilians living with reduced exposure to risks caused by landmine contamination	
Relevant partner objectives				
MATA	<p>Advocating for policy and legislative reform to build an improved national resources in Myanmar for issues including revenue sharing</p> <p>Information related to natural resource management is openly available and accessible</p> <p>Civil society is working collaboratively and actively involved in promoting transparency and accountability</p>	<p>Just and sustainable practices are adhered to in the use of Myanmar's natural resources</p>		Moderate
MCPWC	<p>To be a channel to give pressure on the investment project to be transparent and accountability</p> <p>To give pressure on respective stakeholder to produce natural resource management rule and regulations</p>	<p>To map and form the allies who are in same vision and objectives</p>		Moderate

Appendix E. Terms of reference for evaluation of NPA civil society programmes in Myanmar

Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) in Myanmar

Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) is a politically independent membership-based organisation working in Norway and in more than 30 countries around the world. Founded in 1939 as the labour movement's humanitarian solidarity organisation, NPA aims to improve people's living conditions and to create societies that are more just and more democratic. NPA has worked in Myanmar since 2004. The current portfolio consists of three Programmes: Support to civil society (supported by SIDA and NORAD), Support to Peace building and peace process in Myanmar (supported by NMFA) and Support to interim arrangements and local governance in Myanmar (supported by the Norwegian Embassy in Yangon).

Since 2012, NPA has been involved in the peace process with supporting both groups that enter ceasefires with the government as well as civil society actors in the former black areas to engage in the peace process. NPA Myanmar is a political organisation which base the work on analysis of power imbalances in the country, and works with the local partners under the premise that they know their context and priorities the best, while our role is to support and help improve their work through capacity building and strategic discussions.

NPA Myanmar works with local partners. In addition to financial support, NPA provides technical support to partners in order to help them to develop the knowledge and skill sets that they need to support their own agenda. While NPA Myanmar is worrying about the increasing 'NGOisation' and rapid professionalisation of Civil Society partners (at the detriment of political activism), there is a need to better equip partners in developing proposals and reports, but also to ensure programme quality.

Scope and purpose of the evaluation – Civil Society Support Programmes

One of the pillar of NPA's country strategy is '**Civil Society participating in the establishment of a stronger democracy**'. NPA sees it as an objective in itself to help strengthen civil society through adapting to and expanding its new role in Myanmar. NPA works in partnership with Myanmar's civil society, in particular those forces which are seeking to address marginalisation, deepen the democratic processes and structures, and contribute to Myanmar becoming a more efficient, inclusive and accountable democracy.

The different types of civil society in Myanmar can broadly be categorized as 1) thematic networks/coalitions/platforms, 2) ad-hoc mobilisation, 3) community-based groups, 4) civil society groups closely connected to an ethnic armed organisation and finally 5) the NGOs. The NGOs can roughly be divided into two groups: Basic services providers and policy influencers. Some are both, but most have a strong leaning either towards one of the two types.

The evaluation shall particularly evaluate the ongoing three year NORAD and SIDA programmes (2016 – 2019) aiming at civil society support. The evaluation will also feed into an evaluation of NPAs global OfD programme to be conducted in 2018.

In the Norad cooperation agreement the programme has focused on achieving the following outcomes:
Development goal: A peaceful and democratic society with a just distribution of power and resources in Myanmar.

Outcome 1: Civil Society Organisations influence political decision making.

- Intermediate outcome 1: Partners mobilise around common issues.
- Intermediate outcome 2: Popular organisations are more effective in organising people who have a common cause.

In the Sida cooperation agreement, the programme has focused on achieving the following objectives:

Overall Objective: A peaceful and democratic society with a just distribution of power and resources in Myanmar

- Specific Objective 1: Reform of local governance, increased respect for human rights and increased civic engagement in issues related to democracy and human rights in Myanmar
- Specific Objective 2: Women have influence in local governance and the peace process
- Specific Objective 3: To strengthen the organisational sustainability and enhance the capacity of monitoring and evaluation of local civil society partners.

The details of the result frameworks will be shared with the consultant once they have been contracted for the assignment

The evaluation is expected to consider the evaluation criteria sustainability, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and relevance, however the evaluation must focus in particular on the below evaluation questions. The evaluator is expected to give recommendations for improvements of the programme based on the findings.

Main questions to be answered:

Overarching questions

- i. Overall, what is the long term impact NPA's support to civil society in Myanmar (beyond the program duration and/or since the beginning of the partnership)?
- ii. Are the programmatic approaches, and the chosen partners, relevant to the current political context in Myanmar? How do NPA and partners respond to the volatile context in Myanmar?
- iii. Are the partners likely to reach their goals?
- iv. How is the global mandate of mobilizing people and addressing power imbalances carried out in the context of Myanmar? Has the program contributed to more people organising? Has the way they are organising contributed to achieving the results?
- v. Is NPA following its global partnership-approach? What are some of the strengths, and challenges that the programme is facing in their work with partners in Myanmar? How do partner see NPA's partnership approach?
 - i. Is the capacity of NPA partners strengthened through NPA's support? To what extent? How can this be improved? Is this in line with NPA OD framework?
 - ii. Are the civil society projects implemented in a cost efficient way?
 - iii. Do the partners have a clearly articulated strategy? To what extent NPA selected partners having a strategy that is relevant to NPA country strategy's objectives?
 - iv. Is NPA country strategy relevant to the Myanmar context ? Is it in line with NPA global strategy? Recommend concrete steps for the next country strategy design (beyond 2019).
 - v. Are the Civil society programmes complementary to the peace related programmes? Could you advise areas for greater convergence?

Programme specific questions (to be answered specifically for NORAD and SIDA supported grants)

- vi. To what extent has the projects under Civil Society Programmes achieved the planned results, i.e. outputs and outcomes (including short term, intended and unintended)? Are the aims of the programme relevant and realistic?
- vii. To what extent does the programme pay attention to conflict sensitivity and gender-sensitivity? What needs to be improved? At what level should/could adjustments be made (design, content, focus, staff training, and community awareness, etc.)
- viii. Are each of the programmes' aims measurable? Review and comment on current NPA Myanmar Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) practices and systems. Recommend concrete steps for improvements.

Methodology

The consultant team will design the details in the methodology in cooperation with NPA Myanmar. The methodology will take into account the following elements:

- Desk study (partners' project proposals and reports, evaluations and external reports and NPA's country strategy, proposals, annual workplans and reports)
- Interviews, groups interviews with NPA staff, partners, beneficiaries, and other stakeholders.
- Potential field visits to two to three locations
- Feedback of findings to Programme team in Yangon before finalization of report.

The evaluation will have a strong learning aspect and should therefore apply participatory methods that will include NPA staff. The main findings should be presented both to the Yangon Office, but also in multilateral and bilateral feedbacks to partners before the final version of the report is written.

Evaluation Team

The evaluation team/ evaluator will be composed of 1 or 2 external consultant(s) with a team leader who has the overall responsibility for data collection, field studies and the final writing of the evaluation report. One program staff from NPA Myanmar will be appointed as a focal point, and will assist in planning, preparation of partners' visits.

Required qualifications and experience

- More than 5 years' experience in project evaluation
- Knowledge about Myanmar
- Experience of working with civil society/social movements and ways of organizing
- Experience and understanding of partnership and capacity strengthening approaches.
- Conflict- and gender sensitive programming
- Results-based frameworks, systems and indicator development
- Excellent writing skills in English

Deliverables

- A presentation to share initial findings of the consultant team – After a review of documents, interviews and meetings.
- A draft final report with executive summary, clear recommendations to be produced and presented to NPA. The report should have common sections to respond to overarching questions and specific ones for the questions more specifically related to either SIDA or NORAD grants. The executive summary should summarize key findings and recommendations and needs to be submitted as part of the final draft report.
- A presentation of the findings to partners in multilateral and bilateral meetings.
- The final report should not exceed 40 pages, including an executive summary. Details on methodology, list of interviews, etc. can be compiled in an attachment. The report shall be written in English.

Timeline

- Deadline to submit proposal to NPA is **May 25th**
- Data collection in Myanmar completed by **22nd June**
- A draft report is to be submitted to NPA for comments by **July 13th**
- Presentation to partners in multi and bi-lateral meetings by **July 30th**
- A final report, including a section of the main findings and recommendations for further action, is to be submitted to NPA no later than **August 15th**

Estimated number of working days: 25 to 30 – including at least 15 days in Myanmar for data collection, about 7 days for feedback to partners and drafting the report and about 5 days to finalise the report

(homebased work).

Budget

The total proposed budget must be based on the rate submitted to NPA when the proposal to enter in the pool of consultant was submitted.

For consultant(s) based abroad, accommodation and flights will be covered by NPA.

For all consultants, travel and accommodation costs related to field visits will be covered by NPA.