

WORKSHOP REPORT

MYANMAR WORKSHOP ON MONITORING INDICATORS FOR EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION (19-20 OCTOBER, 2015)

I. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE OF THE WORKSHOP

As part of the efforts to manage development cooperation efficiently and effectively, thereby achieving development results for the people of Myanmar, the Government of Myanmar and Development Partners adopted the Nay Pyi Taw Accord for Effective Development Cooperation at the first Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum (MDCF) in 2013. The Nay Pyi Taw Accord is based on the principles agreed globally through the Busan Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) and emphasizes national ownership, transparency and accountability, a focus on results and inclusive partnerships and shared prosperity. Adoption of the Nay Pyi Taw Accord has also resulted in the establishment of the following coordination structures: 1) bi-monthly Government and Development Partners Working Committee meetings; 2) monthly Development Partners Working Committee meetings; 3) quarterly Development Partners Group meetings; and 4) 17 Sector Working Groups (SWG) that are co- led by the Government and the Development Partners along with the annual MDCF and half-yearly Mid-Term Review. Progressively, local civil society organizations and the private sector have also become part of development cooperation discussions.

At the global level, the GPEDC has introduced a set of 10 monitoring indicators to provide the basis for both development partners, partner governments and a range of other development stakeholders to strengthen existing dialogue and coordination mechanisms in support of making progress against agreed commitments and principles of effective development cooperation. The first monitoring round started in 2012 with the participation from 46 countries. The second monitoring round was launched in October 2015 with around 70 countries signing up to join the monitoring exercise. In Myanmar, representatives from the government, civil society organizations and the private sector have expressed an interest to better understand what the 10 GPEDC monitoring indicators are, how monitoring these indicators have benefited other countries, and how Myanmar's existing tools and coordination structures can support monitoring of the GPEDC monitoring indicators, if Myanmar were to participate in the second GPEDC global monitoring round.

Against this background, a Workshop on Monitoring Indicators for Effective Development Cooperation was organized by UNDP in partnership with the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development (MNPED) on 19 and 20 October 2015 in Yangon. The Workshop was designed based on the inputs from

the Myanmar participants who attended the Regional Workshop on GPEDC Monitoring Indicators from 7 to 8 October in Bangkok, as well as through a number of in-country consultations with representatives from the government, international NGOs, local civil society organizations, private sector, and development partners.

Key objectives of the Workshop were:

- 1) To expand awareness of the GPEDC Monitoring Framework amongst a broad range of development stakeholders including Government of Myanmar, development partners, the private sector, civil society organisations and other interested parties; and
- 2) To discuss Myanmar's potential and readiness to adopt some or all of the GPEDC monitoring indicators relevant and appropriate to Myanmar's context, and the benefits and implications of those monitoring indicators.

During consultations informing the design of the Workshop, the originally one-day Workshop was expanded, upon the request from the private sector, to include an additional half-day long training/discussion on the GPEDC monitoring indicator number 3. Engagement and contribution of the private sector to development.

For a detailed Agenda, see *Annex 1. Concept Note and Agenda: Myanmar Workshop on Monitoring Indicators for Effective Development Cooperation*.

II. PARTICIPANTS

Around 50 participants attended the Workshop. Among the reported 34 participants, 53% were from the Government, 23% were from the development partners, 18% were from the private sector, and 6% were from either international NGOs or local civil society organizations.

For more details, see *Annex 2. List of Participants*.

III. OVERVIEW OF DISCUSSIONS AND MAIN OUTCOMES

DAY I - KEY DISCUSSIONS AND MAIN OUTCOMES

[Click here to view the presentations of Day 1](#)

Session 1 – Introduction of Effective Development Cooperation Principles

This Session focused on providing the participants with concrete examples of how Myanmar has already been applying GPEDC principles since the 1st MDCF in 2013.

During these discussions, the importance of multi-stakeholder engagement in development cooperation discussions was emphasized and participants appreciated that the Workshop brought different stakeholders together. In order to understand each stakeholder group better, participants asked for greater transparency in development programmes/projects that are carried out by development partners, INGOs, local NGOs and civil society organizations.

A representative from the Civil Society Forum highlighted that the new Association Law, though not perfect, has helped Myanmar civil society organizations to operate with more freedom. Using the example of the consultative process taken in the lead-up to the adoption of the new Association Law and how this process contributed to the trust-building between the Government and the civil society organizations, the Civil Society Forum representative encouraged continued efforts to build trust among different stakeholder groups.

Session 2 – The What: GPEDC Monitoring Indicators

Participants learned what the GPEDC monitoring indicators are and why they matter to Myanmar. It was emphasized that the GPEDC monitoring indicators are not intended to be used as part of a ranking exercise; they are to help Myanmar start discussions amongst different stakeholders to review what worked and did not in support of achieving effectiveness in development cooperation.

Country cases. Cambodia's case helped participants understand how the GPEDC monitoring indicators could be used as part of a country's monitoring framework. In Cambodia, some of the GPEDC monitoring indicators were adopted and integrated into their Development Cooperation and Partnership Strategy. Vietnam's case showed how the results from their first GPEDC monitoring round benefited the country in enhancing the effectiveness of development cooperation. One of the key findings from the first GPEDC monitoring round were that the types of development cooperation in Vietnam were changing. Since Vietnam became a middle income country, a number of donors have started phasing out to the point where Official Development Assistance (ODA) is no longer the dominant form of development cooperation in Vietnam. The GPEDC monitoring results confirmed that international support to Vietnam was increasingly taking place through forms of technical assistance and direct cooperation with local NGOs. Due to the changes in the types of development cooperation in Vietnam, a representative from Vietnam pointed out that Vietnam needs more qualitative analysis to better understand the effectiveness of such emerging trends and appreciated that the second monitoring round of the GPEDC has strengthened this 'qualitative' aspect in its monitoring methods.

Participants were also interested in knowing what roles civil society organizations played in Cambodia and Vietnam in monitoring aid effectiveness. In Cambodia and Vietnam, understanding civil society organizations' activities was also a challenge. In Cambodia, only half of the 3,000 active NGOs have recorded their project information into the national data base. The Government of Cambodia is currently encouraging NGOs to provide information about their activities through training and knowledge sessions. In Vietnam, while the Government does manage to obtain a good overview of NGOs' activities through the centralized registration process overseen by a dedicated Government department, continuous access to NGOs' up to date information remains as a challenge. It was clarified that collecting more information about NGO activities is not done to restrict NGOs but to gain a better understanding as to how development stakeholders can work better together. Participants recognized that transparency and information sharing are actions that require efforts from all stakeholders: Government, development partners, international NGOs, civil society organizations, and the private sector.

During this Session, participants aimed to internalize the concepts of 'monitoring' and 'effective development cooperation', by discussing what 'monitoring' means in a Myanmar's context. Simply put, participants defined - 'monitoring effective development cooperation' – as: to observe and analyze whether international assistance is making an impact. This exercise helped participants better associate the GPEDC monitoring indicators with them; as expressed by a number of participants, having a workshop focusing on monitoring indicators was a rather new experience in Myanmar.

Session 3 – The How: GPEDC monitoring indicators

This session provided an opportunity for participants to get a detailed overview of the GPEDC monitoring framework in terms of process as well as roles and responsibilities for various actors. Out of the 10 indicators, 8 indicators are monitored at the country level. Typically, a senior official from a Government Department handling aid coordination, acts as a National Coordinator to coordinate and oversee the monitoring process at the country level.

All quantitative data comes from the government and development partners (indicators 1 – results; 5a – annual predictability; 6 – aid on budget; and 9b – use of country PFM and procurement systems). The new indicators 1 – on results, 2 – CSO enabling environment, and 3 – private sector engagement require discussions with relevant stakeholders to inform the qualitative assessment, which is to be led by the government. For the indicators 2 and 3, CSOs, private sector and development partners are requested to designate focal points to engage in the discussions with the government and other stakeholders.

This Session also reviewed how Myanmar’s existing systems (e.g. the Mohinga Aid Information Management System (AIMS) and the Public Finance Management (PFM) System) and processes (e.g. the Sector Working Groups and the annual Myanmar Development Cooperation Forum) could be used to collect data needed to inform various GPEDC monitoring indicators. For example, the GPEDC monitoring indicator number 5 (Development co-operation is more predictable) could be tracked using data provided into the AIMS. Indicator number 9(b) (Use of development country PFM and procurement systems) may be monitorable through the data contained within existing PFM systems. Indicator number 8 (Gender equality and women’s empowerment) could be measured through the existing Sector Working Group.

Country cases. Government of Cambodia used its ODA database to collect data for some of the GPEDC indicators. Government of Vietnam, in the absence of a database, established a survey team to collect data from development partners. In both cases, governments faced challenges in reconciling data from development partners with its own records.

Participants noted that, as the Government of Myanmar is further strengthening its Aid Information Management System, called Mohinga, the GPEDC monitoring indicators would provide useful information to strengthen the quality of data in Mohinga.

During the discussion, a representative from Cambodia Government shared with Myanmar participants three key aspects to consider before adopting the GPEDC monitoring indicators: i) a system should be in place to collect data (i.e. measure only those GPEDC indicators that Myanmar’s data information system can capture); ii) roles and responsibilities should be clearly set out among actors involved; and iii) the mechanism/process to collect and validate data should be thought through before starting the assessment of the GPEDC indicators.

Session 4 – Reflection on Day 1

This Session provided an opportunity for participants to share views within smaller groups on which indicators would be most relevant and appropriate for Myanmar.

All groups recommended that the Government of Myanmar considers measuring indicators 2 (civil society enabling environment) and 3 (private sector engagement), as these indicators would help build mutual trust between the Government and other stakeholders. In addition, some groups showed preference over the qualitative indicators that focus on inclusiveness, gender equality, results and accountability.

Participants suggested that there be more than one focal point from each stakeholder group, mostly in order to represent the diversity of CSOs and private actors (particularly the small and medium size enterprises which do not have an umbrella organization).

Day 1 was concluded with the endorsement of the following outcome statement (see *Annex 3* for the full text):

The participants:

- Conclude that using GPEDC monitoring indicators will make a positive contribution to enhancing development cooperation in Myanmar.
- Welcome that the GPEDC monitoring indicators make use of available data on a global scale, and recommend that Myanmar's monitoring efforts similarly make use of available data, such as the Aid Information Management System, called Mohinga, and ongoing initiatives (such as the CSO Forum, INGO Forum, and the Myanmar Business Forum).
- Recommend that the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, private sector, civil society organisations, and international actors, continue to cooperate closely towards improving the effectiveness of development cooperation in Myanmar, based on the Nay Pyi Taw Accord (adopted in 2013) and following the GPEDC principles.
- Highlight the important role that Myanmar's civil society and private sector can play, alongside the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, in ensuring effective development cooperation.
- Welcome further focused discussions on the GPEDC indicators that are particularly useful and relevant for Myanmar, such as Indicators 1 (Development cooperation focused on results that meet developing countries' priorities), 2 (Civil society operates within an environment which maximizes its engagement in and contribution to development), 3 (Engagement and contribution of the private sector to development), and number 7 (Mutual accountability).

DAY 2 - KEY DISCUSSIONS AND MAIN OUTCOMES

[Click here to view the presentations of Day 2](#)

Session 1 – The “what”: Monitoring indicator for measuring the quality of dialogue between private and public sector

The purpose of the GPEDC indicator number 3 – Engagement and contribution of the private sector to development - is to better understand the nature, structure and sustainability of collaborative processes between public and private sector actors. The indicator focuses on the quality of public-private sector dialogue as a proxy to capture private sector engagement in influencing public policies. This indicator uses data from global surveys (module 1) and in-country assessments (module 2 and 3). In detail, these modules are:

Module 1: Legal and regulatory context for the public private dialogue. Prepared by the UNDP-OECD Joint Support Team in headquarters, using existing global indicators.

Module 2: Country’s readiness to host, create or sustain a dialogue process. Inputs are collected by the public private dialogue (PPD) expert(s) through a qualitative questionnaire.

Module 3: Effectiveness of an existing platform. In-depth assessment, commissioned by the Government, on the quality of a selected public private dialogue platform.

Participants emphasized that, in Myanmar’s context of democratic transition, mindset change - building trust and understanding each other – is the basis for meaningful and constructive dialogue between the public sector and the private sector. Participants exchanged open and frank discussions, showing a strong level of interest in using the GPEDC indicator to strengthen dialogue between the public sector and the private sector.

Session 2 – The “How”: What is the process for monitoring the indicator and how do we begin?

This Session included a presentation on the Myanmar Business Forum and discussed how to encourage the widest possible level of participation if Myanmar were to measure this indicator.

The Myanmar Business Forum, initiated in 2014, is in its infancy but has already enabled the private sector to provide their inputs to national policies and strategies. The Myanmar Business Forum has already established thematic groups and could offer well-structured representations from the private sector in case Myanmar starts conducting a qualitative/in-country survey for module(s) 2 and/or 3 of the GPEDC indicator number 3.

Participants emphasized that the private sector also plays a role in representing the voice of people. In the same context, participants welcomed the GPEDC indicator number 3 (Engagement and contribution of the private sector to development). Participants also pointed out that, if Myanmar starts assessing this indicator, inclusion of a wider range of the private sector stakeholders would be a challenge, especially with the small and medium enterprises.

Day 2 was concluded with the adoption of the following outcome statement (see *Annex 4* for the full text):

The participants:

- Welcome the ongoing dialogue mechanism, titled as Myanmar Business Forum, between government and the private sector.
- Acknowledge that establishing a baseline of the quality of dialogue between government and the private sector, and setting a target for improvement, will be important to further enhancing this mechanism.
- Recognise that the assessment of the GPEDC indicator, the 'quality of public/private dialogue' will include more dialogue processes between government and the private sector.
- In this regard, recommend that further discussions be organized with wider participation from the government departments, private sector and development partners, focusing on the elements of the GPEDC indicator 3 that are relevant to the current context and status of the Myanmar Business Forum.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOING FORWARD

Outcomes of this Workshop will inform the decision of the MNPED whether to participate in the second monitoring round of the GPEDC.

Only 22% of the participants were aware of the GPEDC; however, after the Workshop, 81% of the participants indicated that they feel comfortable in explaining what the GPEDC is and recommend that the Government of Myanmar adopt the GPEDC monitoring indicators. 94% of the participants were interested in further trainings/workshops about the GPEDC monitoring indicators. Some of their proposed topics were: i) monitoring process; ii) monitoring indicator number 1 (country results frameworks) and iii) MoHing (Aid Information Management System).

If the MNPED decides to start assessing the GPEDC monitoring indicators, it will be important to take a gradual step, such as by selecting a few indicators rather than adopting the whole set of 10 indicators. Based on the lessons learned from other countries, three main criteria for the selection of indicators would be: i) relevance and usefulness to Myanmar; ii) availability of existing data and/or mechanisms for data collection; and iii) availability of government capacities for coordination of the monitoring exercise. *Annex 5. Myanmar Version of the GPEDC Monitoring Indicators* will help MNPED facilitate internal discussions on the GPEDC monitoring indicators.

As the global secretariat of the second GPEDC monitoring round, the Joint Support Team (UNDP and OECD) stands ready to provide technical guidance to Myanmar Government's National Coordinator. For indicator number 2, related to the civil society organizations, and indicator number 3, related to the private sector, which require further discussions among the relevant stakeholders, UNDP could provide technical experts who are well-experienced in the respective GPEDC monitoring indicators.

Annexes

Annex 1. Concept Note and Agenda: Myanmar Workshop on Monitoring Indicators for Effective Development Cooperation

Annex 2. List of Participants

Annex 3. Day 1 Outcome Statement

Annex 4. Day 2 Outcome Statement

Annex 5. Myanmar Version of the GPEDC Monitoring Indicators

End of Report.