

**THE ROLE OF CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS
IN POVERTY REDUCTION IN MYANMAR**

By

MAY THAZIN AUNG

THESIS

Submitted to

KDI School of Public Policy and Management

in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the role of civil society organizations in the poverty reduction development process in Myanmar. This paper mainly focused on the relationship between civil society organizations and government bodies in terms of the implementation of different state programs that related to poverty reduction and rural development programmes. A conducted survey and an in-depth interview with the experts and civil society organizations help us to analyze the level of cooperation between government and civil society organizations, and also the role of civil society in this area.

The study finds out some strength, weakness, opportunities and challenges that come from environmental factors and an unequal allocation of public services; however, through this paper we also learn about some best practices in terms of CSOs and government partnership, which can be used as a catalyst in the improvement of the process. Delightful all these findings and the successful practices of the paper indicates recommendations that can be valuable for government institutions and civil society organizations to improve their cooperation, as well as recommendations for donors.

To my beloved family, who support me strength and courage

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Lists of Acronyms

| | |
|--------|--|
| AD | Agricultural development |
| CSO | Civil Society Organization |
| DRR | Disaster risk reduction |
| FESR | Framework for Economic and Social Reform |
| IHLCS | Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey |
| LI | Livelihood improvement |
| MBERDA | Ministry of Progress of Border Areas, National Races and Development Affairs |
| MNPED | Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development |
| MOAI | Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation |
| MOC | Ministry of Cooperatives |
| MOLFRD | Ministry of Livestock Fisheries and Rural Development |
| MSW | Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement |
| R & D | Research and development |
| VDC | Village Development Committees |

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Myanmar is pursuing the course of democratic political system since 2011. It is making major economic and social reforms in all sectors in an effort to become a developed country. Reducing poverty rate is a priority of Government's development agenda. Rural development and poverty reduction target is enhancing livelihood to be suitable and beneficial of the poor for future. In Myanmar about 76% of the nation population live in rural area and most of them are work in agricultural sector.

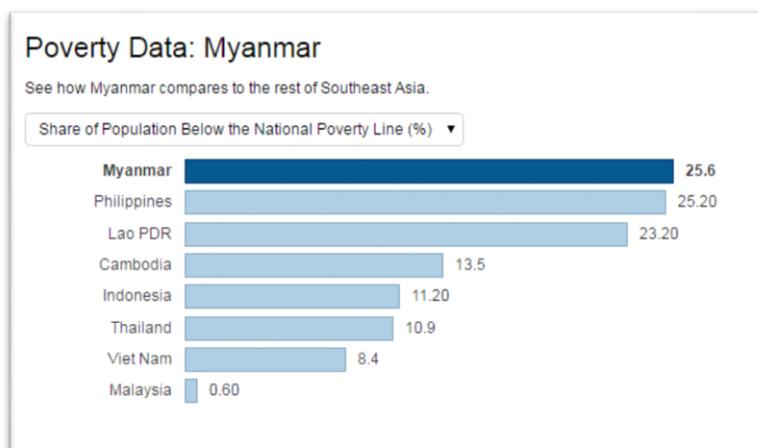
To foster Myanmar democratic initiative, development of context appropriate national strategies and supporting policies is crucially importance in order to attain positive changes. The inclusiveness of all key stakeholders and co-operation in every development policy process is still challenging. In this context, as a representative of citizens, civil society organizations (CSOs) play an increasingly important role and become a facilitator between the duty bearers and rights holders especially in this reform period. In Myanmar, a large number of civil society organizations are providing community development and humanitarian assistance. CSOs are the main players in supporting livelihood sector and people-centered development through broad-based citizen participation. The paper aims to explore the interrelationship between CSOs and poverty alleviation via four dimensions.

From this study we can gauge the changes in Myanmar society after the democratic transition in the first term and what are the key factors and the role of CSOs in livelihoods improvement for community level. These points can help the policy making process as an efficient way to develop strategies that encourage coordination for long-term changes through support to strengthen institutionalization and sustainable development in Myanmar.

1.2 Background information on poverty production work

Myanmar is the largest country in Southeast Asia Region with a population of 51.4 million (National Census, 2014). The country has maintained GDP growth at around 5 percent annually in recent years and has seen improving trends in poverty-related indicators. The country has a lot of natural resources and has tremendous growth potential, but currently Myanmar is one of the poorest countries in Southeast Asia countries with 25.6 % population under poverty line (ADB Outlook, 2016).

Figure 1 Myanmar Poverty Status among Southeast Asia countries



Source: Asian Development Outlook, 2016

According to the Integrated Household Living Conditions Assessment (IHLCA) in 2009-2010, the country has a huge gap between rural and urban area, with 29% poverty in rural and urban poverty at 16%. In addition, human development indicators (HDI) by United Nation Development Program suggesting that poverty reduction has been limited in physically remote areas with very low level to access in basic social services. The country continued as an LDC that has not been able to arrive at its full potential, and equity issues

remain an important concern. So the Government is placing high priority to start a more coherent approach to poverty reduction and development.

New government laid down the Framework for Economic and Social Reform (FESR). The FESR policies emphasizes agro-based industrial development, equitable sharing of resources among the region and the state, promoting local and foreign investment, effective implementation of people-centered development, and poverty reduction. The President invited international and Local Civil Society Organizations including the UN to work together with the government and convened the Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation Central Committee meeting, the “National Level Workshop on Rural Development and Poverty Alleviation” on 20-22 May 2011. The reason being that agricultural sector accounts for a large percentage of GDP and employment in rural. The output of national level workshop reaffirmed the following eight development priorities cover the umbrella of FESR Framework, with a target to reduce the overall poverty rate to 16% by 2014 - 15 because:

- i. Agricultural production
- ii. Livestock and fishery
- iii. Rural productivity and cottage industries
- iv. Micro-saving and credit enterprises
- v. Rural cooperatives
- vi. Rural socio-economy
- vii. Rural energy
- viii. Environmental conservation

Consenting to the national level frame, the United Nations agencies and other funding agencies operating in the country have formulated their agencies programmes and

strategic national framework and encouraged the government to align with international NGOs and local CSOs and operate within those prioritize framework.

1.3 Statement of the issue

Since 1987, Myanmar has been listed on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) as defined by the United Nations (UN). Myanmar has a huge rural-urban gap with landslide differences in poverty levels. Poverty reduction and development has been limited in physically remote areas with lack of chance to access basic public services. In this context, civil society organizations (CSOs) have to make a larger contribution both directly and indirectly to the process of poverty reduction and attainment of other MDG targets (Dr Aisha Ghaus-Pasha, 2004). In 2008, the number of local NGOs and CBOs increased to over 270 registered organizations (ADB, 2015) in the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis. As a representative of citizens, Myanmar's CSOs play an increasingly important role and have become a process facilitator between the duty bearers and rights holders in promoting agriculture, livelihood and people-centered disaster preparedness through broad-based citizen participation. Myanmar's democratic transition has encouraged CSOs to play a central role in enhancing all development sectors through engaging with inclusive and collective citizen voices in every possible decision making and legal reform processes.

Today, Myanmar is an open market economy and operating under a civilian government. Consequently, the national trends, public opinions, and citizen participation are also evolving. However, Myanmar poverty levels remain relatively very high when compared to other South-Eastern Asian countries. Some arguments have emerged on the role of CSOs with many arguing that it has not been effective in the society and development process of the country. This ineffectiveness is attributed to the failure of the international community to

adequately address issues confronting the country's transition to democracy and with some interventions leading to unnecessary negative impacts due to the low levels of serious consideration of the local situation in Myanmar (Herbert, 2014). On the other hand, some scholars explored critical points of aid ineffectiveness by empirical evidence on the relationship between aid and growth of some LDCs' cases all over the world (Doucouliagos&Paldom, 2010). However, there is no proper research or assessment about the particular impact of CSOs implemented programmes in poverty reduction in Myanmar.

For this reason, my study aims to assess the positive or negative effects of Myanmar's local CSOs in poverty alleviation, CSO support to the community, other stakeholder and government backing to CSO, in Myanmar in the present context. My argument is that CSOs can facilitate support by enhancing financial, technical and capacity-building for the socio-economic growth of communities in Myanmar. CSOs contributed to the achievement of the MDG's poverty target indicators in 2015. Among CSOs action programmes, I will focus on assessing whether CSOs implemented three main programmes in the poverty reduction pathway of Myanmar such as livelihood improvement, agriculture development and disaster risk reduction. Furthermore, this study attempts to explore the interrelationship between CSOs' programmes and the level of critical success factors such as participation, trust, sustainability, accountability, communication and cooperation. My study aims at contributing to the thinking on the barriers to allow a more enabling environment for CSOs to carry out their activities.

1.4 Objectives of the thesis

This purpose of the study has three as follows

- To study the existing characteristics, utilization of guidelines and implementation of selected CSOs regarding poverty reduction sector
- To explore the systems' of Civil Service Organizations including strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats
- To examine successes and failures based upon barriers and enabling factors and assess prospects for further strengthening and development process

1.5 Research Questions

The paper will address four main research questions related to CSOs' participation in poverty reduction process.

1. What is the current role of CSOs in socio-economic growth of the community?
2. How Civil Society Organizations' practices effect poverty reduction activities?
3. What are the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats of CSOs' participation in poverty reduction and livelihood improvement process?

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1. Poverty Reduction and CSOs

Progressive reduction and ultimate alleviation of poverty is one of the major mandates for developing countries in their economic transformation story. To foster this initiative, civil society organizations (CSOs) have to make larger contributions both directly and indirectly to the process of poverty reduction and attainment of country development (Ghaus-Pasha, 2004). In Myanmar, CSOs play an increasingly important role especially in the reform period. Thus it is argued that CSOs can facilitate support by enhancing financial, technical, and capacity-building through poverty reduction for the socioeconomic growth of communities and Myanmar could achieve the Millennium Development Goals' poverty target by 2015. By analyzing and knowing the barriers and enabling factors of the effectiveness of CSOs' supportive services, delivering and programs implementation, it is vital to fill the gap and do better in promoting community development and poverty reduction. To study the effectiveness of CSOs in poverty reduction sector, the paper will examine the relevant literature, explain the concepts of CSOs, and analyze the already implemented programs. Among the many CSO programs, the paper will focus on three most important programs

2.2. What is CSO?

There is no clear definition of a civil society organization (CSO) and it includes all types of organizations which are not related with government and business sector. Such organizations are non-governmental organizations (NGOs), faith-based organizations, trusts,

foundations, advocacy and consultation groups as well as national and international non-state associations.¹

Basically Civil Society is composed of variety and diverse network among the civilians.

According to the United Nations (UN), CSOs are the third sector of our society along with the government and business. Anirudh Krishna (n.d.) noted that a fundamental aspect of the operation of CSOs is to play a mediating role between the individual and the state.

Over the last three decades, the increasing size of international aid led to increased number of CSOs. Consequently, CSOs started operating more actively in democratization processes, providing basic needs for the society in case of the government being unable to provide the social net (Rajan & Subramanian, 2008).

Common approaches of CSOs in Myanmar are providing humanitarian assistances, monitoring the government commitment and policy implication, advocating policy execution, promoting well-being of citizens, and participating in democratic transition process.

2.3 Effectiveness of CSOs in Development Process

According to Krishna's (2000) findings, CSOs are important for development. He examined eight different poverty reduction project cases in developing countries across 4 regions – Asia, Europe, Latin America, and Africa. He showed that the key strength of CSO is flexibility and ability to mobilize social capital at the community level and institutional resources at the regional and national levels. Krishna (2000) highlighted the ability of CSOs

¹ Wallace and Lewis (2000) described that NGOs operate within a fairly confined regulatory space, with one or more particular focus on some targeted sector for example poverty reduction, education, child health, etc.

to facilitate all-inclusive **participation, coordination, and interactive communication** of different stakeholders in mutually beneficial ways.

Stiglitz (1998) as well as Kumar and Iisd (2000) proposed sustainable development strategy as a new development paradigm. Kumar and Iisd (2000) stated that the key solution for poverty alleviation is **sustainability** which can overcome five decades of under-achievement in poverty alleviation. He pointed out that the main reason for no improvement in poverty rates over the last 50 years was the implementation of large investment in physical capital and infrastructure by development agencies. This approach was viewed as the way to quicken economic growth and the alleviation of poverty. Kumar and Iisd (2000, p. 2) proposed the conceptual framework of sustainable development based on the transformation idea which argues that “when agencies making objectives have not been accomplished or only limited success was achieved, new means are developed that then become ends themselves and the cycle continues.”

Charnovitz (1997) and Ghaus-Pasha (2004) emphasized that especially CSOs in developing countries need lobbying and negotiation skills to persuade **and effectively communicate** in order to directly engage in good governance processes. Hutter and Mahony (2004) stated that CSOs need to take into account all features of good governance to be effective and provide legitimacy to their work. **Accountability** is the main pillar that makes CSOs focus on results, set clear objectives, develop effective strategies, measure monitoring and reporting on performance as objectively as possible (Banks & Hulme, 2012).

All of the above literature reviews support my argument that CSOs can assist in ameliorating the financial, technical, and capacity-building for communities in Myanmar.

Such factors as accountability, sustainability, participation, communication, and cooperation will be examined in order to assess CSOs helpfulness in my study.

2.4 Types of CSO in Myanmar

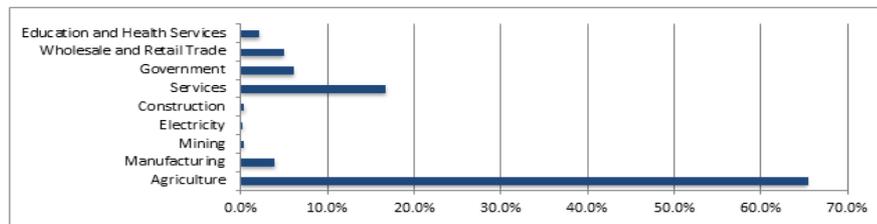
Myanmar traditionally has had many CSOs for religious and social purposes within the communities. Faith-based organizations generally support education, health, and the daily needs of communities. Myanmar's CSOs are divided into three types of organization: Community based Organizations (CBOs), International NGOs, and Local NGOs/Local CSOs. Among all these, CBOs are voluntarily formed informal groups at the village level to assist social and religious activities in their surroundings. Local NGOs originate in cities, townships or at national level and conduct social support services to communities. Sometimes local NGOs are unregistered. International NGOs originate from abroad that focus on long-term development work with international practices(Asian Development Bank, 2014). Local CSOs are dealing and connecting with the communities and CBOs. Thus the paper will attempt to find out the enabling factors and barriers in poverty reduction in Myanmar by targeting **Myanmar's local CSOs.**

2.5. CSO Contribution to Poverty Reduction in Myanmar

Poverty reduction is an important issue in world's development agenda. Myanmar's poverty reduction and development has been limited in geographically remote areas that have lack of access to basic social services due to the rural-urban gap and landslide differences. And also Livelihood sectorial of people has reflected by their rural-urban gaps.

Figure 2. Sectorial employment status

Employment by Sector



Source : International Labour Organization(2015)

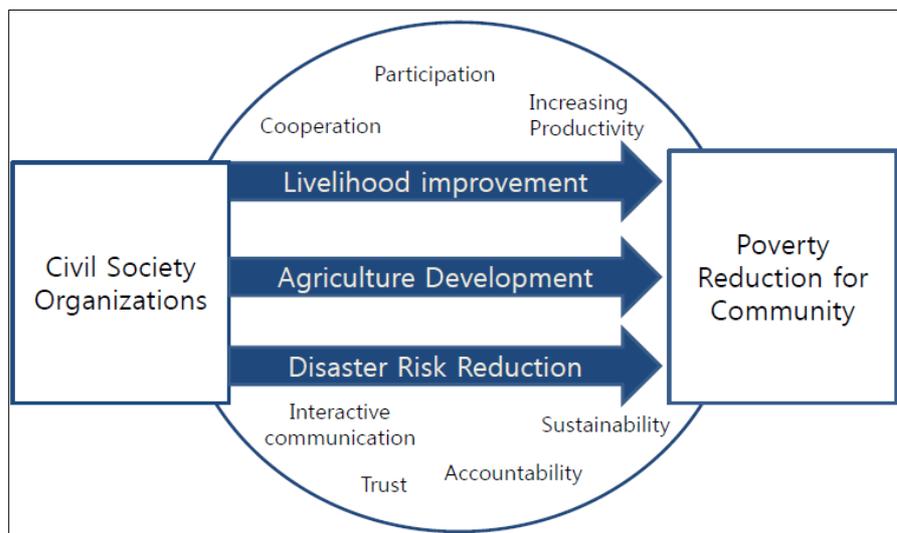
The agricultural sector contributes by 43 percent to the country's GDP and is the main employer for nearly 70 percent of the population (Haggblade et al. 2013 & ILO, 2015). Enhancing livelihood in rural area is expected to improve future rural development and contribute to poverty reduction. Additionally Myanmar is exposed to natural disasters and vulnerable to the effects of climate change, which affects socioeconomic progress. Prone to tropical weather, most of Myanmar frequently endures heavy rainfall-induced flooding and landslides in the hilly regions every year, has a high risk of cyclone, tsunami, etc. during rainy season in the coastal regions, and faces the conventional threats of earthquakes in 12 states of its 14 states and divisions (United Nations Country Team, 2011). Natural disasters greatly affect the income and productivity of society engaged in agribusiness sector. By improving the living standards of the population and developing the agriculture sector as well as keeping in mind the risk of potential natural disasters, are regarded as three main parts in Myanmar's poverty reduction course (Griffiths & Sprg, 2010). Therefore the study focuses on assessing **three main programs** implemented by local CSOs such as **livelihood improvement, agriculture development, and disaster risk reduction** among other poverty reduction related programs in the poverty reduction pathway.

It may be concluded that the relationship between CSOs and poverty reduction lead to effective results (Krishna, 2000; Ghaus-Pasha, 2004; Stiglitz, 1998; Kumar & Iisd, 2000). Yet, in some studies it is argued that this relationship is not effective and different critical factors

are proposed to get better outcomes from CSOs performance (Hutter & Mahony, 2004; Banks & Hulme, 2012). Hence, the paper will argue that CSOs can facilitate support by enhancing financial, technical, and capacity-building for the socioeconomic growth in Myanmar. The study can provide evidence of the relationship between CSOs' effectiveness and the local community participation, sustainability, accountability, communication, and cooperation level in the three main activities of poverty reduction such as promoting livelihoods, agriculture development, and disaster risk reduction as a conceptual framework.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

Figure 3. Conceptual framework



Grounded on the literature reviews, this study is proposed for the conceptual model in figure 1 above which is combining the critical success factors for evaluating the effectiveness of CSOs with the prioritize sectors contribution programmes as the study outline. The study will examine the evidence of the relationship between CSOs' effectiveness and the local community participation, productivity, sustainability, accountability, communication, trust and cooperation level in the three main activities of poverty reduction

such as promoting livelihoods, agriculture development, and disaster risk reduction by using this conceptual framework. Then the study will find out other enabling factors to be better for poverty reduction sector CSOs.

Chapter 3 Research Methods

3.1. Methodology

This study is largely explorative in nature and current role of CSOs. So the study used a quantitative and qualitative research method using primary data and secondary data as mixed research approach (Creswell, John W., 2003). Most of my thesis data relies on empirical evidence. My study used the survey tool to get primary data from CSOs' representatives and secondary data from reports and press releases through literature reviews and case studies about the success and failure stories of Local CSOs in the three main sectors of poverty reduction such as promoting livelihoods, agriculture development and disaster risk reduction. The quantitative data support to identify the nature of projects implementation of CSOs and the status of cooperation and participation between government agencies and CSOs in poverty reduction sector in Myanmar. The qualitative data enabled us to understand at which level and how the CSOs are involved in the implementation of state policy and programs. Moreover, the qualitative data helped us to identify potential successes and challenges of this cooperation.

The SWOT data analyzing method was used to systematically identify the strength, opportunities, weakness and threats covered by positive and negative factors through analyze variables and organization's internal and external environments. SWOT analysis has assisted the organizations can strategically built upon its positive factors – strength and opportunities to eliminate its negative points – weakness and avoid threats factors. The

propose study model is based on the two main constructs –positive and negative. This analysis used the t value of variables as the standardized score getting from the T-test data regression by using of Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) software.

3.2. Data collection

The primary data survey questionnaires are developed from an extensive literature review which examined five critical success factors on the conceptual framework. The survey was composed of total 23 questions and is based on the likert scale method (Likert, Rensis, 1932). Only 5 questions are general and personal information. Some are open type questions for enlightened respondent opinions and discussions for qualitative analysis. Those survey questionnaires help to assess internal and external interactions, cooperation, and participations of positive and negative externalities, and explore the enabling factors by conception of data analysis which can reach the effective projects implementation and to measure the performance accomplishment of CSOs. The quantitative type survey questionnaires are used to rate the variables on five points likert scale (1 - Strongly disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree) for determining and evaluating significant of the variables.

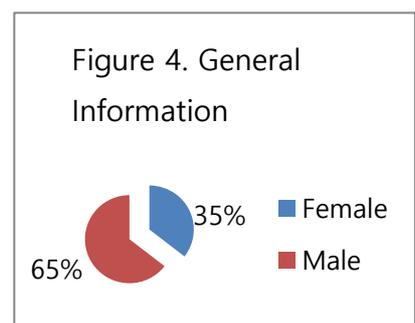
The secondary qualitative data was coming out from some open type questions of survey and secondary data from UNDP, FAO, the Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT), Integrated Household Living Conditions Assessment (IHLCA) by Ministry of National Planning, Department of Rural Development and other related sources. Moreover some **secondary data** from reports and press releases was referred and one **case study** of LIFT fund which are one of the biggest CSOs networking fund group in livelihood improvement and food security sector was highlighted in my research which can provide

evidence to prove the interrelationship between CSOs' effectiveness and the critical success factors' level in the three main activities of poverty reduction such as promoting livelihoods, agriculture development and disaster risk reduction which are related to economic and social poverty indicators.

Chapter 4 Findings and Analysis

4.1 General survey statistics

The total CSOs in Myanmar are over 270 registered organizations reported on their activities across Myanmar in UNDP database – including 91 INGOs, 60 Local NGOs, 38 Border-based Organizations, 16 UN agencies and 8 Red Cross agencies. The sample selection is local CSOs in poverty reduction sector as the focus of study is the role of local civil society organizations. I examined over 30 local organizations (out of more than 35 organizations) who are implementing the targeted three programs. In this survey, 35 questionnaires were distributed to all respondent organizations and 88 % of response rate, 31 respondents have given answers to the questionnaires. The chosen respondents were CSOs representatives or senior staff who worked in livelihood programs from difference organizations. Almost of respondents are male (65%). In addition, qualitative data was collected to examine the consequences of state and CSOs' cooperation in Myanmar, including document analysis, as well as open type questions and interviews with CSOs representatives. The design of survey questionnaires have formed four dimensions based on the different influence factors.



4.2 Descriptive Data Analysis

The descriptive analysis separately observed the four dimensions such as internal environmental factors, inter-governmental and external environmental factors, Roles and Effectiveness of CSOs' work. **By the quantitative survey data**, the ranking of variables are illustrated in the figure1 that is arranged by the descending order of standardized score of each variable. From the standardized t- score ranking, not only the significance of variables but also the distinction of strength, opportunities, weakness, and threats by their positive and negative value can be discerned. The following figure illustrates SWOT analysis value chain factors flow of CSOs.

Table 1. Value Chain Factors of CSOs Management by Quantitative Data Analysis

| | Environmental Factors | | Roles | Effectiveness |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| | Internal | External | | |
| P O S I T I V E | <p>Project prioritization: Organization aims</p> <p>Capabilities Human Resources Communication Capacity in NGO works Technology & Facilities</p> <p>Internal Control system: Project M & E system Internal accountability mechanism External Evaluation by donors</p> | <p>Project prioritization: Government policy Donors' requirement Needs of society</p> <p>Capabilities Access to local authority Cooperate with government institutions</p> <p>Stakeholder cooperation CSOs Local/District level authorities Government institutions</p> <p>Government Supports Coordination works & meetings</p> <p>Active Institutions: MOLFRD</p> | <p>LI activities: Product Loan and microfinance Technical and inputs support for livestock and fishery Vocational and technical training program</p> <p>AD activities Agricultural education programs</p> <p>DRR activities Strengthening VDCs for Community based DRR Upland agriculture and community forestry Awareness rising to community</p> | <p>Coverage FESR framework Programs Environmental conservation</p> <p>Contribute factors Providing capacity building trainings Strengthened Self-Help groups Developing vocational trainings, farmer school program and introducing appropriate technology Consultation services and technology assistance Listening voice of community Encouraging communities resilience by people-centered approaches preparing DRR Providing logistics and financial issues Using more effective and prompt response program Facilitating based on local resources development</p> <p>Output factors Trust building with local community Increasing productivity and income of households Providing better access to social services CSOs can influence to community</p> |
| | N E G A T I V E | <p>Capabilities Financial resources</p> | <p>Project prioritization: Donor Funds</p> <p>Intergovernmental Control System: Collective voice of community for advocacy Watchdogs on government commitments</p> <p>Government Supports Developing and mending legislation as a working group member Effectively decentralizing government procedures Allowing access to information of authorities Supporting legal framework for CSOs Making joint strategic decisions</p> <p>Participating Government guidelines and orders; Informing changes of procedures in ground implementation Participating in decision making process</p> <p>Active Institutions: MOAI MSW Parliament MNPED MOC BERDA Presidential Office</p> | <p>LI activities: Rural cooperatives program Cottage industries and SME development Sustainable Livelihood Program Rural development infrastructure project Income generation and job creation</p> <p>AD activities R & D and Farm Advisory Services Technical and inputs support for agriculture development Knowledge sharing exchange program</p> <p>DRR activities Disaster Risk Management and Social Protection Plans</p> |

From the empirical facts and information collected, variables are analyzed in the **qualitative way** based on the responses of four open discussion questions on successful changes and difficult things in the society affected by the CSOs projects. The other two are the positive and negative facts of the cooperation between CSOs and other stakeholders, and CSOs' role in Myanmar poverty reduction pathway.

Table 2. Value Chain Factors of CSOs Management by Qualitative Data Analysis

| | Environmental Factors | | Roles | Effectiveness |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| | Internal | External | | |
| P O S I T I V E | <p>Project prioritization: Organization aims based on uplifting welfare for society.</p> <p>Capabilities Capacity in NGO works Technology & Facilities (Community Center, Community Forest)</p> <p>Internal Control system: Monitoring field visits Project M & E system External Evaluation by donors</p> | <p>Project prioritization: Needs of society</p> <p>Capabilities Access to local authority Cooperate with government institutions</p> <p>Stakeholder cooperation CSOs Local/District level authorities Local people</p> <p>Government Supports Coordination works & meetings Preparing strategic work plan workshops</p> <p>Active Institutions: Department of Rural Development under MOLFRD</p> | <p>Programs & activities: Vocational and technical training program Participate in consultation meetings and workshops by government institutions Discuss and share idea for local development plan</p> <p>Empowering to establish VDCs and township level local associations for Community based DRR</p> | <p>Coverage FESR framework Programs Rising awareness and knowledge of community in Environmental conservation</p> <p>Output factors Getting local people participation and trust More understanding and transparency between local community and local administration</p> <p>Contribute factors Support for increasing productivity and income of households Facilitate on the progress of better development plan together with all stakeholders</p> |
| N E G A T I V E | <p>Capabilities Financial resources (Core fund and income generation by themselves for organization sustainability)</p> | <p>Project prioritization: Donor Funds transfer delaying</p> <p>Capabilities Difficult to communicate bcoz of weak in communication infrastructure</p> <p>Intergovernmental Control System: Involving in related policy affairs by the representatives of community Watchdogs on government commitments and monitor rule of laws</p> <p>Government Supports Weak in law enforcement by existing law Limit to access information from government institutions Centralization in administrative procedures</p> <p>Participating Government guidelines and orders: Organizing events together with government institutions for promoting accountability</p> <p>Active Institutions: Regional and local institutions need to get updated information and technical know-how under MOAI Unclear mandate of local authorities in township level administration office under Ministry of Home Affairs</p> | <p>Programs & activities: Weak in getting enough money for supporting investment, assistances and infrastructure in agriculture field Weak in R&D for agri fields</p> <p>Involve in land grabbing dispute settlement case as third party organizations</p> <p>Facing resistances of local official staff bcoz they are not getting clear instructions and guidelines for law enforcement</p> <p>Still difficult in CSOs registration case</p> <p>Difficult to get permissions for doing project activities</p> | <p>Contribute factors Technical assistances in line with local conditions Difficult to implement short-term timeframe projects Weak to help in solving fundamental Land issues</p> <p>Output Factors Delaying in emergency responses and in some agriculture projects which are needed to prompt response as the weather condition</p> <p>Difficult to get government institutions 'contributions and supports</p> |

4.2.1 Dimension 1 Internal Environmental Factor

4.2.1.1 Quantitative Data

The quantitative results from the survey of the internal influential environment factors, most of the respondent CSOs significantly agreed that they had prioritized livelihood, agriculture development and disaster risk reduction projects implementation decisions as their organizational objectives and aims. Table 1 states that Gray shading area is negative standardized score variable. It means that financial resources factor was the threat point of CSOs capabilities. The first strength is human resources factor and weak one is technology and related facilities factor of the organizations.

According to the quantitative data of internal control system factors can say CSOs have strongly systematic practices in their organizational controlling system and the accountability status. This is evidence of efficacy efforts to shape their governance system.

Table 3. Internal Environmental Factors of CSOs

| Internal | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | Standardized Score (t score) |
|---|-------|----------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Q6. Drivers of Project Prioritization | | | | |
| Q.6Organization Objectives and Aims | 3.903 | 1.1359 | 0.204 | 4.427* |
| Q8.2 Organizational Capabilities | | | | |
| Q8.2 Human Resources | 3.516 | 0.6768 | 0.1216 | 4.246* |
| Q8.2Information & Communication system | 3.484 | 0.9616 | 0.1727 | 2.802* |
| Q8.2 Capacity for NGO work | 3.419 | 0.886 | 0.1591 | 2.635* |
| Q8.2 Technology and related Facilities | 3.161 | 0.7788 | 0.1399 | 1.153 |
| Q8.2Financial Resources | 2.516 | 1.0605 | 0.1905 | -2.54 |
| Q.20 Internal Control System | | | | |
| Q20 Project M & E system | 3.935 | 0.68 | 0.1221 | 7.66* |
| Q20 Organizational accountability mechanism | 3.935 | 0.892 | 0.1602 | 5.839* |
| Q20 External evaluation by Donors | 3.806 | 0.9099 | 0.1634 | 4.935* |

* denote the statistical significance 10 percent and up levels, respectively.

4.2.1.1 Qualitative Data

As the discussion responses of the open questions, CSOs have setting explicit objectives and aims upon how they can uplift and assist their targeted people. This is the key strong point in project prioritization. Most respondents believe the strength factor of CSOs have capabilities to provide social service and assistances for poverty reduction. For a sample case, CSOs can support technical know-how and facilities to establish community centers for organizing and sharing knowledge among people and community forest for environmental conservation. Another opportunity of CSOs has strong internal control system for monitoring and evaluation of their project often including field visits. The fact that they keeps in touch with grass root community is beneficial for CSOs.

On the other hand, most of the local CSOs do not income generation mechanisms to be sustained and cannot stand on their own accord. There is no longer grantees for organizational sustainability and mostly depend on the donor funds, which are thus the primary threats points for internal factors of CSOs.

4.2.2 Dimension 2 Intergovernmental and External Environmental Factors

4.2.2.1 Quantitative Data

The data results from the survey of the inter-governmental influential environment factors, most of the respondent CSOs significantly agreed that they had capabilities; in accessing local and central administrative authorities and working cooperatively with government institutions. In the cooperation with different stakeholders, respondents have shown strong score implying that they are satisfied about coordinating with each other and also provide neutral score in the satisfaction level of coordinated work with local authorities and government institutions.

According to the negative score in intergovernmental control system, CSOs in poverty reduction sector are weak in involving advocacy and watchdogs on government commitments. It seems CSOs are not in touch with government following of its own policy issues on improving the lives of the poor. Based on the literature background of national institutional context for poverty reduction, the eight responsible institutions put in the questionnaire as no.16 to find out which institutions are actively participate and coordinate in ground level project implementation. At the data responses shown CSOs have closely interactive with the Ministry of Livestock Fisheries and Rural Development and others have significantly weak score.

The findings of survey results on the drivers of CSOs projects prioritization in the external influential environment factors, the respondent significantly agreed that they had influenced by Government policy guidelines, Donors' requirements and society's needs. Only donor fund factor displays negative sign. I included two more questions on mutual government and CSOs support and coordination. The data revealed most of the factors are negative in both sides. Only coordinating works and meeting factors exist in positive sign as the strength and opportunity. This means that both sides need to make more effort in coordinate each other.

Table 4. Intergovernmental and external Environmental Factors of CSOs

| Inter-Organizational | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | Standardized Score (t score) |
|---|-------|----------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Q 8.2 Organizational Capabilities | | | | |
| Q8.2 Access to local and central administrative authorities | 3.806 | 1.0776 | 0.1935 | 4.167* |
| Q8.2 Cooperate with government institutions | 3.355 | 1.3304 | 0.2389 | 1.485 |
| Q13 Stakeholder Cooperation | | | | |
| Q13 Others CSOs | 3.839 | 0.6878 | 0.1235 | 6.789* |
| Q13 Local district level authorities | 3.29 | 1.1603 | 0.2084 | 1.393 |

| | | | | |
|---|-------|--------|--------|---------|
| Q13 Government Institutions | 3 | 1.0328 | 0.1855 | 0 |
| Q.20 Intergovernmental Control System | | | | |
| Q20 Collective voice of community for advocacy | 2.806 | 1.195 | 0.2146 | -0.902 |
| Q20 Watchdogs on government commitments | 2.129 | 1.1759 | 0.2112 | -4.124 |
| Q16 Active Institutions | | | | |
| Q16 Ministry of Livestock Fisheries and Rural Development | 3.129 | 1.6682 | 0.2996 | 0.431 |
| Q16 Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation | 2.839 | 1.5937 | 0.2862 | -0.563 |
| Q16 Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement | 2.774 | 1.3835 | 0.2485 | -0.909 |
| Q16 Parliament | 2.355 | 1.1704 | 0.2102 | -3.069 |
| Q16 Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development | 1.871 | 1.2581 | 0.226 | -4.997 |
| Q16 Ministry of Cooperatives | 1.29 | 0.9379 | 0.1684 | -10.15 |
| Q16 Ministry of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs | 1 | 0.4472 | 0.0803 | -24.9 |
| Q16 PresidentialOffice | 0.871 | 0.4275 | 0.0768 | -27.726 |
| External | | | | |
| Q6. Drivers of Project Prioritization | | | | |
| Q6 Government policy guidelines | 4.097 | 0.9783 | 0.1757 | 6.242* |
| Q6 Donors' requirement | 4.129 | 1.1178 | 0.2008 | 5.624* |
| Q6 Needs of Society | 3.226 | 0.9903 | 0.1779 | 1.27 |
| Q6 Donor Funds | 1.806 | 0.9458 | 0.1699 | -7.026 |
| Q14 Government Supports | | | | |
| Q14 Coordinating works and meetings | 3.065 | 1.2093 | 0.2172 | 0.297 |
| Q14 Developing and amending legislation as a working group member | 2.323 | 1.301 | 0.2337 | -2.899 |
| Q14 Supporting legal framework for CSOs | 2.387 | 1.0223 | 0.1836 | -3.338 |
| Q14 Effectively decentralizing government procedures | 2.194 | 1.1378 | 0.2044 | -3.946 |
| Q14 Allowing access to information of authorities | 2.161 | 1.0359 | 0.1861 | -4.508 |
| Q14 Making joint strategic decisions | 1.935 | 1.2093 | 0.2172 | -4.901 |
| Q15 CSOs participating Government guidelines and orders | | | | |
| Q15 Informing changes of procedures in ground implementation | 2.839 | 1.5077 | 0.2708 | -0.596 |
| Q15 Participating in decision making process | 2.194 | 1.1667 | 0.2096 | -3.848 |

* denote the statistical significance 10 percent and up levels, respectively

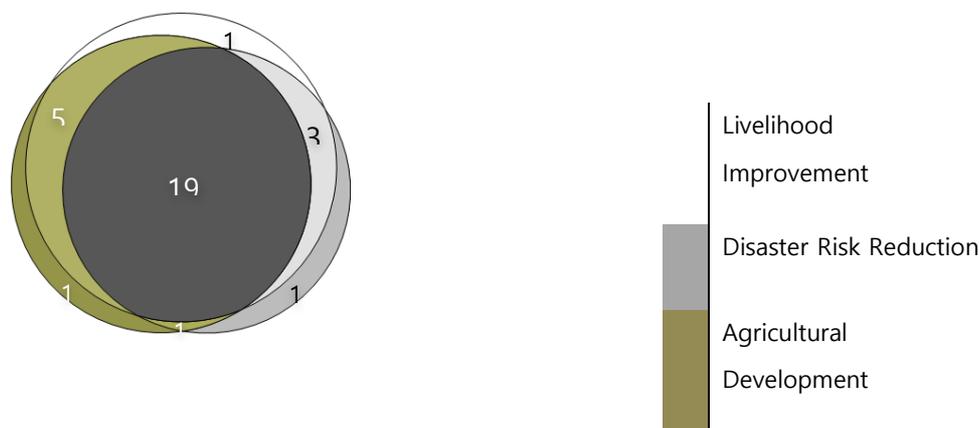
4.2.2.1 Qualitative Data

In the external factors, CSOs are always try to target society needs in their project prioritization as the opportunity factor. Almost all respondents are convinced that the strengths of CSOs is its capabilities to cooperate with stakeholders such as local people, other CSOs, government institutions, local and district level authorities. CSOs supports and participates in government mechanism hold together coordination works & meetings, preparing strategic work plan workshops, organizing events together with government institutions for promoting accountability, endorsing government guidelines and orders.

The feeble point in project prioritization is donor funds. Some donors have an elaborate funding process requiring numerous documents and procedures, thereby delaying transfer of money. The big barrier on CSOs capabilities of communication is weak in telecommunication infrastructure and difficult to get information especially in rural rather than urban areas. This point is also related to government support and contribution factor for development. At the same time, CSOs have limited access information from government institutions, weak in law enforcement by existing law, and the continuing centralization in administrative procedures. Regional and local government institutions need to have updated information and technical know-how. Sometimes township level local administration offices have no clear mandate on the procedures and guidelines. Those factors are external threats to the effectiveness of CSOs working on poverty reduction. CSOs in poverty reduction sector are still weak in involving related policy affairs by the representatives of community, watchdogs on government commitments and monitor rule of laws as intergovernmental Control System.

4.2.3 Dimension 3 Roles of CSOs

4.2.3.1 Quantitative Data



| Implemented Programmes | No. of CSOs | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Livelihood improvement | 28 | 90.32 |
| Disaster risk reduction | 24 | 77.42 |
| Agricultural growth | 26 | 83.87 |
| All programmes | 19 | 61.29 |

Figure 5 Number of CSOs implemented in three main programmes

Regarding the conditions and effect of internal and external environmental factors, CSOs take the roles in performing actions concerned by their role. Figure 1 indicate that over 61 % of CSOs (19 organizations) among total 31 respondents are implementing all of three main programmes in the FESR five-year period. As the quantitative data show very few percent of CSOs are focusing on only one programme. Overlapping areas in the figure describe CSOs which programmes are mostly doing together at the same time. The area of union on the livelihood and agriculture development is larger than other two union areas, and the least is the union area of disaster risk reduction and agricultural development compared with other two. It means that some implementers are not used to agriculture programmes

together with disaster risk reduction. For more information about the activities related under three main programs, one open question developed in questionnaire.

Table 5. Activities of CSOs

| | Livelihood | Agriculture Development | Disaster Risk Management |
|-----------------|--|--|--|
| Positive | Product Loan and microfinance | Agricultural education programs | Strengthening VDCs for Community based DRR |
| | Technical and inputs support for livestock and fishery | | Upland agriculture and community forestry |
| | Vocational and technical training program | | Awareness rising to community |
| Negative | Rural cooperatives program | R & D and Farm Advisory Services | Disaster Risk Management and Social Protection Plans |
| | Cottage industries and SME development | Technical and inputs support for agriculture development | |
| | Sustainable Livelihood Program | Knowledge sharing exchange program | |
| | Rural development infrastructure project | | |
| | Income generation and job creation | | |

The following summary table has sorted by the majority and minority responses of surveyed CSOs. The majority agreed strength and opportunities are in livelihood activities; product loan and microfinance, technical and inputs support for livestock and fishery, vocational and technical training program, in agricultural activities; agricultural education programs and in disaster risk reduction activities; strengthening VDCs for Community based disaster risk reduction, upland agriculture and community forestry, and awareness rising to community. Minority responses in livelihood activities; rural cooperatives program, cottage industries and SME development, sustainable livelihood program, rural development infrastructure project, income generation and job creation, in agricultural activities; R & D and farm advisory services, technical and inputs support for agriculture development,

knowledge sharing exchange programme and in disaster risk reduction activities; disaster risk management and social protection plans as not agree factors.

4.2.3.2. Qualitative Data

CSOs taking role in successful livelihood improvement, agriculture development and disaster risk reduction programs and positive effect to the changes of community by providing technical training program, participating in the consultation meetings and workshops with government institutions, discussing and sharing idea for local development plan to authorities, and empowering to establish VDCs and encouraging township level local associations for community participation in development work.

The weak points showing responses indicate that CSOs could not get enough money for supporting investment, livelihood and agricultural assistance consultation, research and development for increasing productivity, transportation infrastructure for value chain and market expansion. Sometimes CSOs are facing resistances of local official staff in project implementation because they are not getting clear instructions and guidelines for law enforcement. CSOs still facing difficulty to get permissions for doing project activities. Even Association Law already acted and revised by the consultation of all stakeholders, there has been difficulty in registration case. As the role of CSOs present third party organizations in land grabbing dispute settlement case to assist community people rights but still weak involving in legal issue.

4.2.4 Dimension 4 Effectiveness Factors

4.2.4.1 Quantitative Data

There became output and outcome factors by taking CSOs roles and doing activities. Those factors can indicate the efficacy of CSOs. The following table 4 provides the consequently results based on four questions. The first one, how much cover the overall poverty reduction priority programmatic work of FESR. Only the environmental conservation program get positive result but score is quite low, under the 10% significance level and others are almost negative which is nine out of ten.

By way of CSOs' contribution factors, CSOs has high strength in capacity building, technical, vocational trainings and school programs and empower to strengthen self-help groups (community-based groups), consultation services and delivering technologies and assistances, and listening community voice. A low significance scores is found in encouraging communities' resilience by people-centered approaches preparing DRR, providing logistics and financial issues, using effective prompt response program, facilitation based on local resources development. Weakness contribution factors are developing familiar and fast communication ways, distributing agricultural assistance materials, advocating policy issues related to agriculture and livelihood growth, promoting market efficiency and value chain projects, support R & D programs to related projects, and involving social expertise and market development.

The output factors of CSOs are strengths in trust building with local community, providing better social services for relieving state burdens and influencing the community. The negative sign t-score express on the effect of government contributions and performance

in poverty reduction during FESR frame period. It means that CSOs disagree on the effectiveness of government effort on poverty reduction.

Table 6. Effectiveness Factors of CSO works

| Effectiveness | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | Standardized Score (t score) |
|--|-------|----------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Q7 Coverage under FESR frame Program | | | | |
| Q7 Environmental conservation | 3.065 | 1.3889 | 0.2495 | 0.259 |
| Q7 Micro saving and credit enterprises | 2.935 | 1.652 | 0.2967 | -0.217 |
| Q7 Agricultural production and cottage industries | 2.935 | 1.4127 | 0.2537 | -0.254 |
| Q7 Social Recovery | 2.806 | 1.4005 | 0.2515 | -0.769 |
| Q7 Livestock and Fishery | 2.71 | 1.371 | 0.2462 | -1.179 |
| Q7 Rehabilitation community infrastructure and facility | 2.613 | 1.5422 | 0.277 | -1.397 |
| Q7 Rural industry | 2.387 | 1.1454 | 0.2057 | -2.979 |
| Q7 Rural socio-economy | 1.903 | 1.5568 | 0.2796 | -3.922 |
| Q7 Rural Cooperatives | 1.516 | 1.2348 | 0.2218 | -6.691 |
| Q7 Rural energy | 1.226 | 0.9205 | 0.1653 | -10.731 |
| Q 8.1 Contribute factors | | | | |
| Q 8.1 Providing capacity building trainings | 4.258 | 0.9298 | 0.167 | 7.534* |
| Q8.1 Strengthened Self-Help groups | 3.742 | 0.9989 | 0.1794 | 4.135* |
| Q8.1 Developing vocational trainings, farmer school program and introducing appropriate technology | 3.645 | 1.3304 | 0.2389 | 2.7* |
| Q8.1 Consultation services and technology assistance | 3.548 | 1.1787 | 0.2117 | 2.59* |
| Q8.1 Listening voice out of community | 3.452 | 1.2868 | 0.2311 | 1.954* |
| Q8.1 Encouraging communities resilience by people-centered approaches preparing DRR | 3.323 | 1.1658 | 0.2094 | 1.541 |
| Q8.1 Providing logistics and financial issues | 3.323 | 1.4233 | 0.2556 | 1.262 |
| Q8.1 Using more effective and prompt response program | 3.226 | 1.2835 | 0.2305 | 0.98 |
| Q8.1 Facilitating based on local resources development | 3.097 | 1.3989 | 0.2513 | 0.385 |
| Q8.1 Developing familiar and fast communication ways | 2.903 | 1.3749 | 0.2469 | -0.392 |
| Q8.1 Distributing agricultural assistance materials | 2.742 | 1.5485 | 0.2781 | -0.928 |
| Q8.1 Advocating in policy issue related to agriculture and livelihood growth | 2.516 | 1.2877 | 0.2313 | -2.092 |
| Q8.1 Promoting market efficiency and value chain projects | 2.516 | 1.2348 | 0.2218 | -2.182 |
| Q8.1 Support R & D programs to related projects | 2.484 | 1.2615 | 0.2266 | -2.278 |
| Q8.1 Involving social expertise and market development | 2.516 | 1.0605 | 0.1905 | -2.54 |

| | | | | |
|--|-------|--------|--------|--------|
| Q10 Output factors | | | | |
| Q10 Trust building with local community | 4.097 | 1.0118 | 0.1817 | 6.036* |
| Q10 Increasing productivity and income of households | 3.387 | 0.7606 | 0.1366 | 2.834* |
| Q10 Providing better access to social services | 3.355 | 0.7978 | 0.1433 | 2.476* |
| Q10 CSOs can influence to community | 3.29 | 1.0064 | 0.1808 | 1.606 |
| Q19 Effectiveness of government contributions | 2.484 | 0.8896 | 0.1598 | -3.23 |

* denote the statistical significance 10 percent and up levels, respectively

Figure 6. CSOs projects effected area

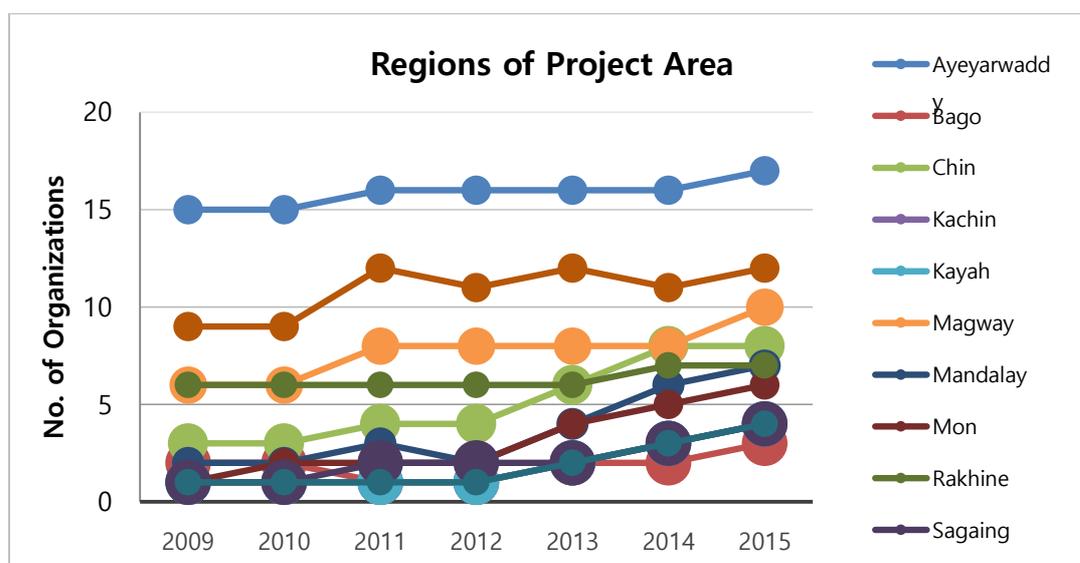
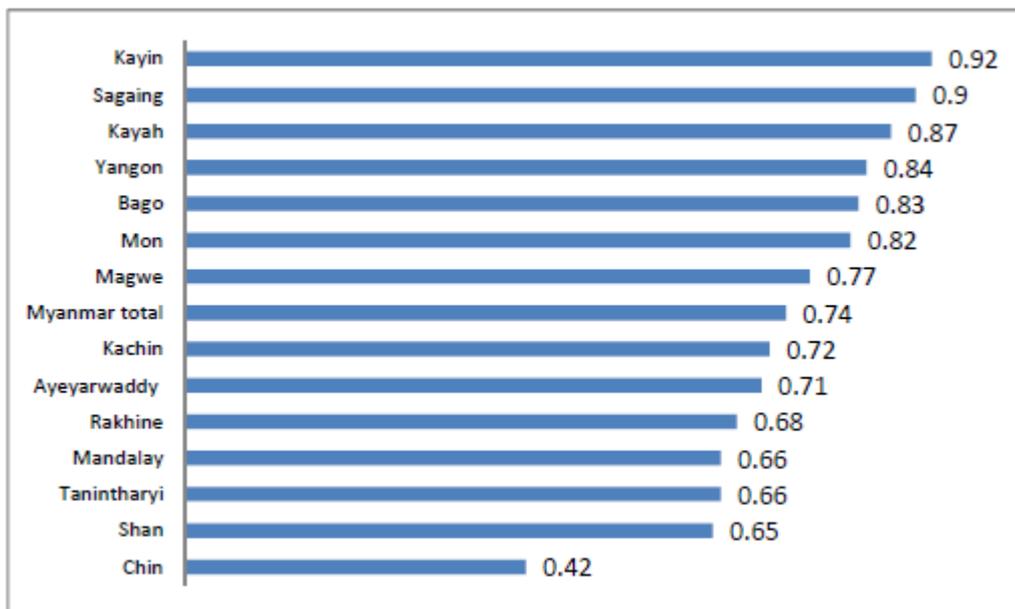


Table 7. Ranking comparison of CSOs projects area and Population

| State/Region | Total projects | Ranking By Project | Population of area | Ranking By population | Difference in rank (absolute value) |
|--------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Ayeyarwaddy | 111 | 1 | 6175123 | 2 | 1 |
| Yangon | 76 | 2 | 7355075 | 1 | 1 |
| Magway | 54 | 3 | 3912711 | 7 | 4 |
| Rakhine | 44 | 4 | 3188963 | 8 | 4 |
| Chin | 36 | 5 | 478690 | 11 | 6 |
| Mandalay | 26 | 6 | 6145588 | 3 | 3 |
| Mon | 22 | 7 | 2050282 | 9 | 2 |
| Sagaing | 15 | 8 | 5320299 | 5 | 3 |
| Bago | 13 | 9 | 4863455 | 6 | 3 |
| Kachin | 13 | 10 | 1689654 | 10 | 0 |
| Kayah | 13 | 11 | 286738 | 12 | 1 |
| Shan | 13 | 12 | 5815384 | 4 | 8 |

The response of question 9 for exploring CSOs projects impact in livelihood of regional development are illustrated as above figure 2. Reach out project area of CSOs are respectively increased during 2011-2015. By saying through this figure, the majority of respondent CSOs are implemented in Ayeyarwaddy, Yangon and Magway regions and the last few organizations are in Bago, Kayah and Shan states. Comparison based on the implemented project and population of the regions shows that a big number of different in rank. It means there have a highest significant gap between needs (represented by population rank) and supports (represented by project rank) in Shan regions. The second big number gap is Chin State.

Figure7. Regional poverty Inertia ranking of Myanmar



Source: UNDP, 2013

In the poverty inertia ranking of Myanmar, Chin state is the lowest poverty rate region and Shan state is second lowest in country assessed by IHLCS, UNDP & MNPED, 2013. According to our survey data comparison show up only a few CSOs are implemented poverty reduction programs in highest needs regions of poverty reduction sector.

4.2.4.2 Qualitative Data

With regards to the effectiveness of CSOs in coverage FESR framework programs, the only positive result is in raising awareness and knowledge of community on environmental conservation. Strength in the contribution factors are supports for increasing productivity and income of households and facilitates the progress of better development plan together with all stakeholders. Output results of CSOs are getting the local people involved, trust, have better understanding and transparency towards local community and local administration.

The negative results about the effectiveness of CSOs are related to the provision technical assistances in line with local conditions, difficult to implement short-term timeframe projects, weak to help in solving fundamental land grabbing issues. In output factors are delaying in emergency responses and some project implementation which are needed to prompt response such as the weather condition. The last and important weak point is difficult to get government institutions 'contributions and supports on time.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

5.1 Summary on findings

5.1.1 Environmental Factors analysis

This study has explored key internal strength and external possibilities of CSOs' projects prioritization intended to meet community needs and address critical socio-economic issues. Other significant external elements affecting CSOs performance is national strategies and government policies; and its implementation according to development partner donors' requirements who in turn are depended upon national government strategies. The financial backing for project implementation is weak for CSOs. Almost all CSOs rely on external financial sources like donors funding and are not self-sufficient. CSOs are not getting any core funding for upgrading their organizational capacity to be more efficient in their jobs and establish income generation program to ensure organizational sustainability. Improving CSOs operational space is at times delayed on account of donor funding issues. Within the dynamic CSOs environment, qualified human resources exists and have a good understanding and technical know-how in development works. Difficulty in communication and getting timely information in rural area due to weak telecommunication infrastructure are a part of external impact elements. CSOs internally use people centric approach to communicate and interact with community. In addition, they try to make contact and cooperate with local/ district level authorities, government institutions and local community. During first democratic government term, CSOs can get the chance to organizing locally and nationally events, coordination workshops & meetings together with government institutions for promoting accountability and preparing strategic development plans.

The weak standpoints of CSOs are in informing changes of procedures in ground implementation and not including in decision making process of government. In the stage of government supports, there have still confused gaps and poorly enforced in existing laws, decentralization in administrative procedures, limited access to information from government institutions, no supportive legal framework for CSOs and not enough space for participating in joint strategic planning and decision making process.

From the accountability perspective, CSOs have internally strong monitoring and evaluating system for their project effectiveness and organizational accountability mechanisms. They also examine how they take responsibility of their actions by external evaluators from the donors' side and development partner agencies. As intergovernmental control system CSOs weak involving in related policy affairs by the representatives of community voice for advocacy and monitoring government commitments and rule of laws related to livelihood, agriculture and rural development.

During last five years, government stated FESR framework and key responsibilities in government agencies to implement poverty reduction. This study reveals that with regards to CSOs cooperation with government agencies, CSOs respondent strongly agree to close cooperation with department of rural development under MOLFRD. Regional and local government institutions need to get updated information and should have clear plans and procedures on their work. There still have gap in sharing information and power in decision making process.

5.1.2 Roles of CSOs analysis

Many livelihood developments oriented CSOs are strongly focused on the technical service delivery, vocational training and providing assistance especially in microfinance and product loan fragments. On the other hand, CSOs are unwell doing supportive activities and logistics infrastructures such as income generation, rural cooperatives, social enterprises and market expansions for SME development.

For agricultural development, many CSOs provide farmer school program introducing appropriate technologies in line with local conditions. CSOs are, though, a bit weak in research and development and farm advisory services because of lack of financial resources for research investments, inputs, infrastructure and technology sharing exchange programme for agriculture sector. For the countrywide, CSOs' disaster risk management and social protection plans are still feeble and vulnerable to local people. However, CSOs can promote upland agriculture, community forest, and awareness against rising disaster related knowledge to community by empowering village development committees and township level local associations for community based disaster risk reduction and environmental conservation. CSOs attempt to contribute deeply and share ideas for local development plans in consultation meetings and workshops by government institutions.

Even though association registration Law are stated as legal framework for CSOs in 2014 and CSOs are implementing projects in line with government policy, but difficulties and challenges are remain to get the required permissions and sometimes face resistance from local official staff who do not receive clear instructions and guidelines to apply existing law and procedures.

5.1.3 Effectiveness Factors analysis

CSOs are positively contributing to a lot of activities. They are providing capacity building, vocational trainings, introducing appropriate technology assistance, providing logistical and financial support for increasing livelihood productivity and income of households, facilitate the progress of better development plan using local resources, strengthened groups encouraging community's resilience by self-help people-centered approaches for local development.

The key poorly effective contributing activities of CSOs are advocating in policy issues related to agriculture and livelihood growth, promoting market efficiency and value chain production and innovative technical assistances in line with local conditions by developing R & D programs to related projects. The main troubling facts of CSOs project is difficulty to implement short-term timeframe projects depended upon external factors which take time because of delayed permission grants by authorities and fund transfers delays by donors. All of the above weakness and threats lead to uncover most rural development FESR framework prioritize programs. By showing quantitative data only hit the target of rising awareness and knowledge of community in Environmental conservation.

The result of CSOs actions was to be providing better access to social services, increasing productivity and income of households. Society was upgraded its living conditions as desired in the poverty reduction goals. At the same time, CSOs can influence community and acquire the trust of the community people. CSOs try to enhance the relationship and cooperation with local and state level authorities. CSOs are more understanding and transparency between local community and administration through the reflection of cooperation works. The respondent CSOs a strongly disagreed on the effectiveness of

government contributions and support on poverty reduction process during the last five years. Majority of them stated that it was difficult to get government institutions 'contributions and supports in CSOs projects operation. The procedures of government institutions are still centralized and regional institutions are needed to wait the decision from the central government. Added to that is the red tapism, CSOs face delays in emergency responses and some agriculture projects which are needed to prompt response as the weather condition.

Nevertheless, reach out project area of CSOs are respectively increased during study focused period. The study wonder needs and offer analysis between population of the regions and CSOs supported projects. The analysis shows a highest significant gap between needs and supports by implemented project. Especially the lowest poverty inertia regions are less reached out area of CSOs poverty reduction programmes.

5.2 Recommendation and implications

On the basis of the defined problems and above data pointed discussions, the following recommendation and initiatives are suggested for the CSOs effectively involving in poverty reduction of Myanmar.

5.2.1 Recommendation to CSOs

CSO plays an effective role on a grassroots level in Myanmar poverty reduction pathway. It has direct access to the beneficiaries that provides a deep insight to the needs and rural Myanmar landscape. So CSOs should emphasize based on needs of regional in line with the poverty level. According to the study findings, poverty reduction programmes of CSOs should more implement on Shan state and chin state as the high rank under poverty line of country.

CSOs should keep going on the strength and opportunities in the capability factors and internal control system of CSOs as mentioned during the findings and discussion section. CSOs internal team exemplifies the organization's effective accountability practices by conducting regular impact assessments. CSOs need to spread monitoring intergovernmental control programmes for more engaging and representing people voices and more feeding poverty reduction related policy process. CSOs should notice to improve relationship among CSOs and other stakeholders especially with government institutions. They should be built information and technologies sharing system among CSOs in each regional area based on mutual understanding and respect each other with all stakeholders. CSOs should find solving problems of community together by effectively forming networking group as the thematic area.

According to the study of Joshi and colleagues (2002) designated that the major constraint is the lack of suitable technologies. Even still weak in R & D programme, CSOs should try to support to be innovative application of appropriate technology that will sustain livelihood and agricultural production. So CSOs should be more effort in R & D programme and also encourage to funding agencies to focus on technology and R & D programme for increasing livelihood and agricultural development.

CSOs should develop more create capacity building plans coordinating with government agencies for supporting to enhance capacity of government staff and share technical know-how. On the other hand, CSOs can get more understanding, cooperating and enhancing trust level with government agencies.

5.2.2 Recommendation to government

Government should use the CSOs strength for efficiency of poverty reduction and rural development plan through consultation with CSOs, government can collect the needs and voice of the people. By doing like that, the government policies and programmes can be more realistic and responsive. Government should develop national policy including prioritize tasks based on the development level of difference needs in different regions as the effective way to engage with CSOs by including regular coordination mechanism and assign public relation focal point of contact to interact with CSOs in each prioritized government institutions for poverty reduction work. Government can structure CSOs supportive regular capacity building plans for enhancing capacity of government staffs and promoting technical knowledge sharing in country.

Government institutions and parliament need to develop an effective information and communication channel to share updated information to public regularly to have mutual

transparency and accountability and to be better operational space for CSOs. And also try to reduce gap in public services and weakness point in transportation and tele-communication infrastructure between rural and urban.

Government should prioritize to review and amend the by-laws, orders, instructions and procedures that are affected the constraint for enabling environment of CSOs. Government is necessary to promote to alive on the existing laws and consistent in law enforcement. In terms of democratic government, decentralization has been acclaimed for its potential benefits for improving efficiency, accountability, and good governance. As the central government's role should stimulate for decentralized system, which the recommendation arising from this study is the need for harmonization in the functions, competencies and sharing power in decisionmaking between central and local. Then Government should pay more chance to participate in decision making process to all stakeholders for upgrading participation level in representation and inclusion of all.

5.2.3 Recommendation to Donors and Funding Agencies

After extensively reviewing the quantitative and qualitative data about the strength and weak point of CSOs, there have two important aspectson the financial supporting case and legal supporting case need to improve from donor side. The first major one is money transfer delaying process that is related to donor agencies procedures and practices. So Donor should apply suitable and flexible procedures and financial process practices.

The recommendations for donors should assist funding not only for implementing project service delivering and to be strengthening of CSOs organizational development but also for innovative technologies and R & D work especially in livelihood and agricultural programmes.

Donors should support advocacy efforts to the government for reviewing and reform supportive legal framework for operational environment of CSOs. Funding agencies should encourage to government for reducing centralized and autocracy on the authoritative procedures by using with donors 'experiences from other countries and expertise. And encourage CSOs capacity building plans with government agencies for supporting to enhance technical and organizational capacity of government staff. That can be bridge for more sharing, understanding and harmonizing between CSOs and government agencies.

5.3 Limitation of the study

Attempts were made to gather reliable and accurate data, and information from the respondents during the field survey. Nevertheless, some limitations of the study are recognized and presented as follows:

1. The study was conducted on CSOs which are implementing programmes in poverty reduction sector. The remaining local CSOs were not included due to time and other resource limitations
2. Sample CSOs was limited, as I shortlisted the number of CSO representatives to be surveyed according to the target population of the study. My findings can throw light on the role and status of the poverty reduction sector's CSOs. It was not possible to cover all CSOs existed in Myanmar.
3. The key difficult conducting the survey methods was that it was time consuming and took effort to getting response for data collection.
4. Some of the sample organizations did not keep all records of their project field activities, reliability, and accuracy of data depends heavily on the CSOs representatives' ability to recall the relevant information.
5. Some respondent miss to answer in some questions. Unfortunately, inconsistencies and memory bias could have crept into the collected information.

5.4 Further Research

Creating enabling environment for CSOs in Myanmar, all stakeholders can bring the voices and needs of the local communities that can be used for betterment policy making and improvement of public services to support of poverty reduction of Myanmar society. Due to the study limitation, the survey collected required data and covers the findings of organizational assessing from selected thematic programmes and conducting survey only to the local organizations. In the future, it should do broader area to collect the data and information from all CSOs from different sectors that will lead to find how better service delivery through performance of CSOs effect on socio-economic growth. Moreover, the study focused period are 2010 – 2015, the investigated results can have the determined ones, which can affirm. Based on the findings of the present research, the suggestions are advanced for the future study of CSOs effectiveness.

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APPENDIX

I. Questionnaire for survey

A. General information

1. Name of the organization _____
2. Foundation year of your Organization _____
3. Number of employed a) full – time staff ____ and b) part –time staff _____

4. **Poverty reduction program** in this study means the programs that help increase households incomes through 1) livelihood improvement; 2) disaster risk reduction; 3) agricultural growth, for overall economic development of the countries.

Please mark ALL programs below that your organization implements in order to develop economic development and poverty reduction.

- (1) Livelihood improvement
- (2) Disaster risk reduction
- (3) Agricultural growth

5. Please describe the main program activities your organization implements in poverty reduction sector.

- a) _____
- b) _____
- c) _____

6. In your opinion, how much influential are the following factors in determining the priority of the projects your organization implement?

| | Not influential at all | | | | Very influential |
|--|------------------------|---|---|---|------------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Government policy guidelines | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| The needs of society | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Organization's Objectives & aims | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Dependence on donors funds | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Donor's requirements on my organization | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Other (please specify other factors) _____ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

B. Poverty reduction and local economic development process

7. How much is your organization getting involved in the following projects in order to reduce the overall poverty rate in Myanmar?

| | Not at all | | | | Very much |
|-------------------------|------------|---|---|---|-----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Agricultural production | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Livestock and fishery | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rural productivity and cottage industries | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Micro-saving and credit enterprises | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Rural cooperatives | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Rural socio-economy | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Rural energy | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Environmental conservation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Rehabilitation-community infrastructure& facility | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Social Recovery | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Other (please specify other projects) _____ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

8. Please tell us how your organizations are involved in the programs implemented.

8.1. How much is your organization contributing to reducing poverty in the society?

| | Not at all |  | | | Very much |
|--|------------|--|---|---|-----------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Providing capacity building trainings | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Providing logistic and financial issues | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Providing consulting services and technology assistance | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Involving social expertise and market development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Implementing related projects to support R & D programs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Advocating in policy issue related to agriculture and livelihood growth | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Distributing agricultural assistance materials | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Facilitating based on local resources development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Promoting market efficiency and value chain projects | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Developing vocational training, farmer school program and introducing appropriate technology, | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Collecting voice out of community | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Empowering to be strengthened Self-Help groups | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Developing familiar and fast communication ways(Not too much procedures) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Using more effective and prompt response program | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Encouraging communities resilience by rising awareness of people-centered approaches to recover, reduce and prevent from disaster risk | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Other (please specify other things) _____ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

8.2. How do you assess your organization's capabilities in the process of poverty reduction programs?

| | Very weak |  | Neutral |  | Very strong |
|--|-----------|--|---------|---|-------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Financial resources | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Capacity of NGOs work | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Human resources | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Technology and related Facilities / | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Cooperation with government institutions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Information and communication system | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Access to local and central administrative authorities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Other (please specify other weakness) _____ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

9. Please describe how many projects your organization implemented during the last seven years.

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 |
|----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Number of projects | | | | | | | |
| Name of regions | | | | | | | |
| Number of household served | | | | | | | |

10. Do you believe your organization contributed to reducing poverty in terms of the following effects?

| | Strongly Disagree | ← | Neutral | → | Strongly Agree |
|--|-------------------|---|---------|---|----------------|
| Increasing productivity and income of households | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Providing better access to social services | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Trust building with local community | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| CSOs' influence in community | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Other (please specify other effects) _____ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

11. Please briefly explain successful changes in community of your projects during 2010 -2015.

12. Please provide your difficulties in projects implementation during 2010 -2015.

C. Collaboration and participation with the government and other agencies

13. Are you satisfied with the cooperation with the following stakeholders?

| | Very unsatisfied | ← | Neutral | → | Very satisfied |
|---|------------------|---|---------|---|----------------|
| Government Institutions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Local/district level authorities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Others CSOs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Other (please specify other stakeholders) _____ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

14. Do you think that local and central government cooperates with and supports CSOs in terms of the following things?

| | Very uncooperative | ← | Neutral | → | Very cooperative |
|---|--------------------|---|---------|---|------------------|
| Allowing access to information of authorities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Coordinating works and meetings | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Developing/ amending legislation, as a working group member | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Supporting legal framework for CSOs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Effectively decentralizing government procedures | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Other (please specify other things) _____ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

15. How often does the organization orders from government institutions for the following things?

| | Never | ← | Sometimes | → | Always |
|--|-------|---|-----------|---|--------|
| Participating in decision making process | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Informing changes of procedures in ground implementation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Other (please specify other orders) _____ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

16. Does your organization work closely with the following governmental institutions?

| | Not at all | ← | → | Very closely | |
|---|------------|---|---|--------------|---|
| Parliament (and its permanent commissions) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Presidential Office | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Ministry of Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Ministry of Cooperatives | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Ministry of Social Welfare Relief and Resettlement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Other (please describe which institutions link with you) _____ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

17. Please mention 3 positive and 3 negative examples of the cooperation between CSOs and government authorities?

| Positive examples | Negative examples |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| _____ _____ | _____ _____ |
| _____ _____ | _____ _____ |
| _____ _____ | _____ _____ |

18. Please recommend 3 main things to improve for a better cooperation between your organization and other CSOs.

D. Accountability and Sustainability

19. If your organization watchdogs to ensure government commitments, policy operation and contribution of poverty focused indicators, do you think there was any progress of the government's performances in poverty reduction during the last five years?

| | | | | |
|-------------------|---|---------|--|----------------|
| Strongly Disagree |  | Neutral |  | Strongly Agree |
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

20. Do you think your organization do each of the following accountability enhancement practices?

| | Not at all |  | | | Very closely |
|---|------------|--|---|---|--------------|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Internal project monitoring and evaluation system of organization | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| External evaluation based on donor's requirement | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Organizational accountability mechanism | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Collecting voice of community to advocate authority | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Watchdogs on government commitments | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Other (please explain your point) _____ | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

21. What do you think about CSOs'role and importance of effective governance and accountability practices in Myanmar poverty reduction pathway?

E. Personal Information

22. Your position in your organization

- Executive director / Chairman
- Secretariat
- Program director
- Program manager
- Project Coordinator
- Other _____

23. Gender

- Male
- Female

Thanks for your participation!

II. List of Surveyed Organizations

| No. | Organization name |
|-----|---|
| 1 | Ecology and Economic Development (Eco-Dev) |
| 2 | Community Aid for Rural Development (CARD) |
| 3 | SweThaHar Social Services |
| 4 | Share Mercy |
| 5 | ThaDar Consortium |
| 6 | Ar Yone Oo Organization |
| 7 | LawKa Alinn Association |
| 8 | Community Development Association |
| 1 | Dear Myanmar Organization |
| 10 | Nan Oo Foundation |
| 11 | Metta Aye Yeik |
| 12 | Mangrove Service Network (MSN) |
| 13 | Phoenix Association |
| 14 | SoePyay Myanmar |
| 15 | Lanthit Foundation |
| 16 | Better Life Organization (BLO) |
| 17 | Yaungchithit Organization |
| 18 | Ratana metta Organization |
| 19 | Swanyee Development foundation |
| 20 | Myanmar Mercy Foundation |
| 21 | Metta Development Foundation |
| 22 | Mingalar Foundation |
| 23 | Alinn Banmaw Local Development Organization |
| 24 | Myitta Sonese Association |
| 25 | Myitta Aye Mya Association |
| 26 | Proximity Design Social Enterprise |
| 27 | Chan Myae Myitta |
| 28 | Action for Social Aids |
| 29 | Link Emergency Aid and Development (LEAD) |
| 30 | Yadanar Ayeyar Organization |
| 31 | Network Action Group |