

## The World Bank

INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT  
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

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Daw Liz Khin Hnin Hlaing  
Coordinator  
IFI Watch Myanmar

Thank you for your detailed letter of April 29, 2014. We welcome your inputs and suggestions regarding the World Bank's development assistance for the Government and people of Myanmar.

### **National Community-Driven Development Project**

We have taken note of the findings and recommendations from your field visit to project sites of the National Community-Driven Development Project (NCDDP) in Kyunsu Township of Tanintharyi Region. Overall, we are pleased with the progress of this Project. Initiating CDD activities in three remote townships in such a short period of time is a significant accomplishment, and required strong collaboration between the Department for Rural Development, state and township authorities, and the international NGOs providing technical assistance to this Project. As a result of these joint efforts, some 300 community infrastructure rehabilitation sub-projects are underway.

In anticipation of implementation challenges in the first year, the number of townships was limited (with more townships being added in years 2 and 3), and sub-project investments were limited in scope and scale to facilitate learning and to allow rapid implementation. We take note of and broadly share your views about the importance of capacity-building of community facilitators and the allocation of adequate time for community engagement processes. These will be areas of priority for strengthening in the coming cycles of the Project in these villages as well as new townships to be added in the coming years.

We also recognize that some capacity gaps may exist in engagement with communities in the first year of Project implementation. This is understandable, given the limited experience with participatory rural development practices in the Government. We expect that the NCDDP will help project staff and local authorities learn to support inclusive bottom-up planning processes. The project will continue to deepen its capacity development in these areas, and we look forward to the support of CSOs in continuing to enhance the Project's people-centered approach.

We note your specific concerns about social conditions in Done Shwe Than Village of Kyunsu Township. While, as you indicate, the Project has not started in this village, we have already brought up this matter together with DRD and Mercy Corps and we will let you know the findings and follow up actions, if necessary.

### **SCD/CPF Consultations**

We also note your concern regarding the process of the Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD). The new timeline for SCD is from February 2014 to August 2014. Initial consultations were conducted on February 26-27, 2014 with four different stakeholder groups: civil society organizations, private sector, development partners, and academics and researchers. Participants

were invited to learn about and discuss the SCD process and contributed their comments on the SCD framework and priority areas for reducing poverty and boosting shared prosperity in Myanmar. The continuation of SCD consultations were conducted during May 16-23, 2014. In Nay Pyi Taw, consultations were conducted with government officials from different ministries. Consultations in Mandalay, Taunggyi, Patheingyi, and Hpa-An had two sessions: with government officials in the morning and CSOs/Private Sector in the afternoon. Another consultation in Yangon (which you also participated) was with CSOs and organizations that work with the urban poor. We are also planning a consultation meeting with members of the Parliament in Nay Pyi Taw.

While recognizing that invites for the initial round of consultations were sent out with fewer than two weeks' notice, for every public consultation thereafter, we make sure to send out invitations and provide background materials both in English and Myanmar language two weeks in advance. We also created a consultation page which provides background information and a calendar of upcoming public consultation meetings. In addition, in each meeting, we make sure to have interpreters (e.g., in Hpa An, we arranged for a Kayin language interpreter). The results of these meetings will be critical inputs to the SCD for Myanmar. The SCD will then form an input towards the preparation of a Country Partnership Framework (CPF). New rounds of consultations will also be undertaken for the preparation of the CPF in July 2014.

#### **Telecommunications Sector Reform**

Regarding the telecommunications sector reform project, we note your concerns regarding consultations. When civil society organizations were consulted on the Project's Environmental and Social Management Framework on November 28, 2013 in Yangon in meetings led by the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT), it was clarified that MCIT would conduct detailed consultations during project implementation once the pilot sites are selected. This is expected to begin in late 2014. It was encouraging to note that during these consultations in November, the ethnic affairs officer from the Nyein Foundation highlighted the need for telecommunications connectivity in rural, border areas of Myanmar.

Please be assured that the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, with World Bank support, will conduct detailed consultations in line with the Project's Environmental and Social Framework during project implementation, consistent with the World Bank's environmental and social safeguard policies and that these consultations will inform the design of the pilot projects.

Again, we appreciate the interest you have taken in the ongoing work of the World Bank in providing development assistance to benefit the people of Myanmar. We look forward to further communication and consultation with you and the organizations you represent.

Sincerely,  
The logo of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (World Bank) is centered. It features a globe with the text 'INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT' around it and 'WORLD BANK' in a blue box across the middle. A blue signature scribble is over the logo.  
Kanthan Shankar

Country Manager  
The World Bank Myanmar