



FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM IFI WATCH MYANMAR

I. Community Driven Development (CDD) Project:

a. Major project delay and its negative impact

Even though the township selection was finalized in May 2013, most of the project communities only had their initial CDD project information session in late November 2013. Some are even as late as January 2014. The implementation cannot begin until the fund being transferred to the village-tract account, expected to be completed by the end of March 2014 if all goes as planned. However, the communities are pressured to complete the project by the end of May 2014. That means less than 2 months for actual project implementation. By rushing the process to have all the boxes checked, not only has this caused major stress and anxiety to the communities (some were told there would be negative consequences shall they miss the May deadline), but is also against the people-centered development principle this CDD is trying to achieve.

b. Under-trained and Under-capacity

We found most of the facilitators and township level DRD officers did not have enough training, with practically zero community development experience or basic skills. They have approach the village-tracts under such circumstances (before completing the training) and finished the tasks of proposal prioritization and project selection with often top-down approach and inaccurate information. Many of them responded by using the familiar World Bank phrase of “learning by doing”, however, we do not see that as convenient excuse for the communities to face all the negative consequences if the incapable facilitators and DRD staff are misleading the communities.

c. Lack of Access to Information

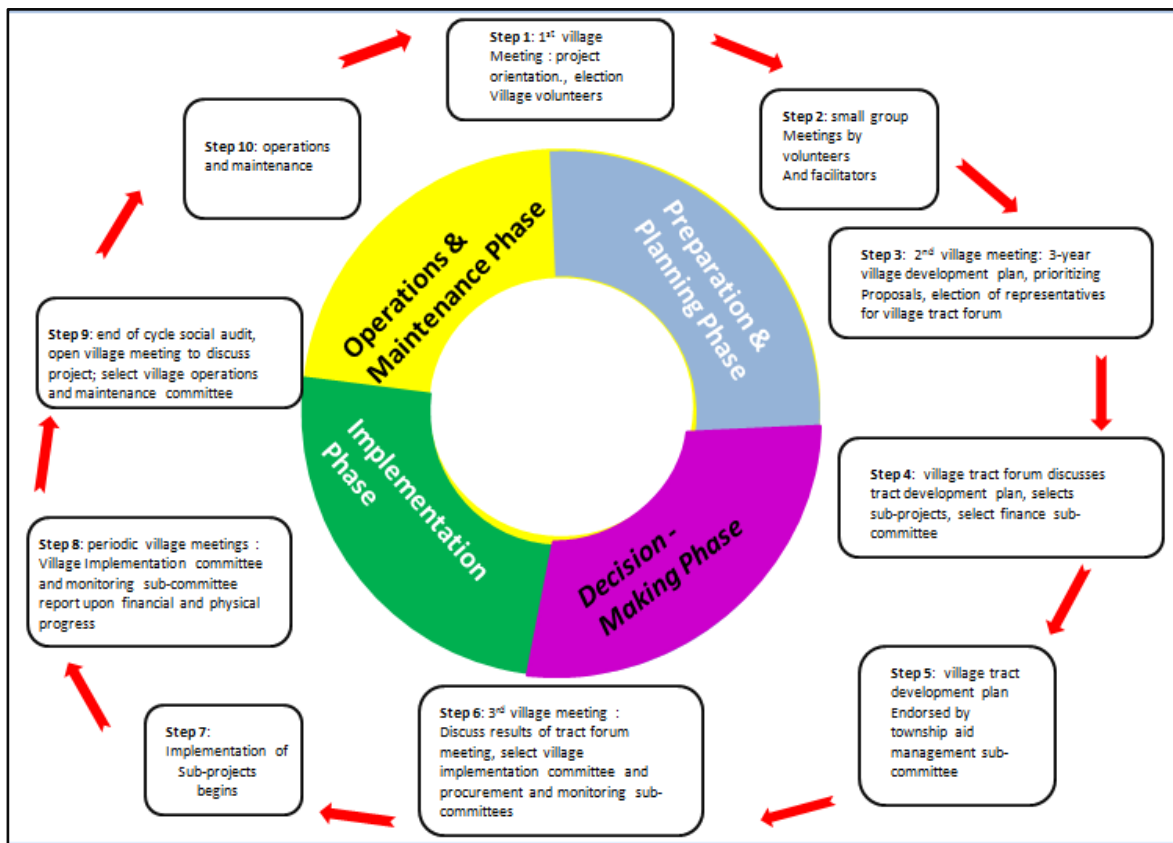
None of the project communities we visited have CDD Operation Manual or any documents regarding CDD except a simple vinyl poster hanging on the community bulletin board, a copy of DVD and 10 copies of pamphlets. While we checked with the facilitators, it turned out they have no access to OM either, and are unaware of the existence of DRD web site, or having difficulty in accessing internet. It is apparently not meeting the minimum standard of WB projects. IFI-Watch has done its best sharing OM and other reference materials out of good will but that cannot replace what needs to be done by the Bank and DRD.

Language barrier is another issue. Facilitators also found themselves not being able to communicate at all with some of the locals (as seen in the case of Karen village in Kyunsu). We have reason to suspect the quality of proposals and projects in these villages.

d. Low Quality Fieldtrip Limited Meaningful and Effective Participation

Many remote village-tracts got only ONE visit that combined the steps 1 to 6 stated of the project cycle, all within 3 hours from information dissemination, volunteers election (some villagers absent from the meetings are “volunteered” by other villagers disregarding their own free will), forming committee members, to choosing project from 10 priority list.

CDD PROJECT CYCLE



The proposals were written and submitted on behalf of the villagers by the facilitators back in the office without presented to the village-tract committee members, which causing trust issue.

The visit from the facilitators was only notified 2 days in advance in most cases. Whoever were not in the village that specific day (out fishing or farming) are essentially excluded from effective participation of the project. Some facilitators blamed it on DRD in NPT office refused releasing fund for multiple trips to save money.

To make the matter worst, most of the meetings were led by with the village authorities and those who had recently retired from the military with typical top-down approach. Many villagers have lost interest and trust and lack of community participatory is found.

e. Human Rights Violation and Security Risks (Kyun Su)

We were informed by one of the natives that there is a serious issue in Done Shwe Than Village, Yae Myit Gyi Village Tract where serious modern-day slavery case is found. The entire village residents are under U Shwe Than’s tight control. The assigned facilitators were repeatedly denied access to this community and are also fear for their lives. They have informed DRD office in NPT about these issues, and they have got no official response. The only verbal response is “keep trying”, which seem ridiculous from the facilitator’s viewpoint.

Does this mean WB and DRD never had any pre-assessments before the townships selection took place?

We were also informed lately that this village and other 5 villages from Kyun Su Township had refused WB’s funding.

f. Staff Retaining Policy:

The INGO staff and the facilitators have no allowances for travel, medical and no insurance cover. They have to have They are in high risk areas and without these plus with low paid salary (200,000 kyats) there is a possibility of staff turnover; which could have negative impact to the communities (as the communities will need to build their relationship and trust over again)

g. Role of CSOs:

In this reform period, WB needs to have a strategy to engage with the experienced civil societies who have broader range of Networks and who are well trusted by the communities; the grass roots CSOs not the GONGOs who agree to everything the authorities say.

The communities do not trust the government and we, the CSOs are the link between the communities and the government. By promoting a culture of tripartite cooperation that includes government, communities and international financial institutions, we could ensure democratic governance of IFI operations in Myanmar to realize inclusive development, economic justice and ecological sustainability.

IFI-Watch Myanmar's recommendation:

IFI Watch Myanmar really do appreciate WB and DRD in taking our request into consideration in the Township selection process of Magway Region. Although Saitoketaya Township stood second in the proposed township selection, it was selected as NCDD Project Township upon the request of the Magway CSOs. Saitoketaya Township is still facing the negative impacts of the dam construction done years back and which needs WB aid more than the first proposed township. Thank you for this and we hope to see more of this in the future in promoting a culture of tripartite cooperation which would lead to success.

I. Consultation:

In order to have effective and meaningful participation; the consultation meetings notice should be given 10 to 15 days in advance. "Consultation with CSOs Guidelines" should be used for these consultation meetings. We need MORE time to digest as WB and their projects are very new for the CSOs.

II. Documents:

WB to show the draft version of documents to stakeholders, INGOs, LNGOs and the wide range of CSOs before submission to the WB Board, in order to know that our voices and suggestions have been integrated into the document.

III. Do no rush:

WB and DRD must take its time to ensure the project is properly executed in the NCDD project townships instead of rushing to finish it at the cost of widening the gap between the communities and authorities (DRD), and losing trust to WB in the future.

IV. Be Proactive and Focus on what's really important:

To have pre – assessment before the project takes place, (to avoid like the slavery case in the project village Done Shwe Than). It can cause serious damage to WB's overall image.

V. Role of CSOs:

- a. Have meaningful engagement with us and to listen to our voices (not to tick the check boxes).
- b. WB has good opportunities to know clearly about the status of Myanmar's CSOs and their networks. Contacting and connecting with the CSOs networks like Paung Ku, Ecodev, Myanmar Alliance for Transparency and Accountability (MATA) and Myanmar Green Network could lead success to WB's projects.
- c. WB has never engaged with the CSOs to explain about the proposed projects or approved projects (instead of asking us to go to the website), to provide a clear plan for further consultations on all

activities conducted by the WB, including timeline, location, consultation materials and guide questions in Myanmar language, English and other relevant local languages – giving early notice that allows groups enough time to prepare and to do it effectively.

VI. Staff Turnover:

To consider about this as this could have a serious negative impact on the communities in building relationships and trust.

Regarding Consultation Meetings with WB:

I. Systematic Country Diagnostics(SCD):

The period for this is only (3) months; February 2014 to April 2014. The first consultation was called at the end of February (26 February 2014) which means only (2) more months for our inputs to the CPF.

With our experiences with CDD, we are rather anxious that WB is again rushing into this. At the first consultation meeting, only (8) CSOs participated. Will a handful of CSOs be considered as meaningful and effective consultation? How can these (8) CSOs representing (7) organizations can give crucial inputs for the (4) year CPF which covers the whole nation? How could we be sure that our inputs would be integrated into the document?

II. Telecommunications Sector Reform (PID - 145534):

Q: When we raised the question which organization& location that had consultation, the answer was that they had not consulted anyone and we were the very first.

INTEGRATED SAFEGUARDS DATA SHEET

APPRAISAL STAGE

Report No.: ISDSA6211

Date ISDS Prepared/Updated: 20-Nov-2013

I. BASIC INFORMATION

1. Basic Project Data

Country: Myanmar

Project ID: P145534

Project Name: MM: Telecommunications Sector Reform (P145534)

Task Team Leader: Tenzin Dolma Norbhu

Estimated Appraisal Date: 02-Dec-2013

Estimated Board Date: 06-Feb-2014

Managing Unit: TWICT Lending

Instrument: Specific Investment Loan

6. Safeguard Policies

Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10 (page 7 of 13)

Since a large part of population in remote areas where extending connectivity to rural areas pilot would be implemented under Component 2 are ethnic minorities, the policy is triggered.

The Ethnic Minorities Planning Framework (EMPF, equivalent of IPPF) has been developed and attached to the Environmental and Social Management Framework.

“Consultation meetings were conducted with organizations representing ethnic minorities during preparation which confirmed their broad support to the project.”

My questions are why was it stated such in the document if it did not take place in reality, and how can we trust the documents on WB's website? Anyone who has seen this document would think that the ethnic minorities do approve this.