



Supporting Peace through Natural Resource Management in Burma's Ethnic Regions (P-NRM)

Cooperative Agreement No. AID-486-A-13-00003

Year 2, 8th Quarterly Report

Period covered: January-March 2015

Reporting date: 30 April 2015

Submitted by: Mercy Corps in partnership with Ar Yone Oo (AYO) and Karuna Myanmar Social Services (KMSS)

Mercy Corps Myanmar:

Jenny Vaughan, Program Director
No. 87-C Kan Street (U Kun Zaw Avenue)
10 Ward, Hlaing Township
Yangon, Myanmar
Tel: +95 (0)1 524419
Mobile: +95 (0) 95083126
Email: jvaughan@mm.mercycorps.org

Mercy Corps Headquarters:

Jared Rowell, Senior Program Officer
45 SW Ankeny Street
Portland, OR 97204
Tel: 503 896 5000
Email: jrowell@mercycorps.org

I. Introduction

Launched in May 2013, Mercy Corps' *Supporting Peace through Natural Resource Management in Burma's Ethnic Regions (PNRM)*¹ aims to strengthen the capacity of local community, civil society, and government leaders to prevent and resolve natural resource-based conflict. As much as it is a "conflict" program, *PNRM* is also a "governance" program. Focused at the subnational level, the program supports the broader transition and decentralization process by building the capacity of township-level government actors to address community concerns related to development and natural resources, while also building the capacity of civil society to constructively engage with government. Key activities include interest-based negotiation training for local leaders, monitoring of alternative dispute resolution processes, and the implementation of civil society- and government-led projects that address resource-related tensions. Implemented in partnership with two local organizations, Ar Yone Oo (AYO) and Karuna Myanmar Social Services (KMSS), the program has a strong emphasis on building local peacebuilding capacity.

II. Highlights

- Conducted four quarterly exchange meetings for civil society and government leaders trained in interest-based negotiation (IBN), including three intergroup meetings in northern Chin State and one intergroup meeting in southern Shan State.
- Supported CSOs in implementation of natural resource projects.
- Conducted two facilitation trainings for government staff.
- Facilitated one coordination meeting between township government departments and CSOs in southern Shan State.
- Facilitated natural resource management working group meeting in northern Chin State.

¹ Publicly known as the *Inclusive Natural Resource Management Program (INRM)*.

- Conducted 55 meetings with government representatives at the state and township levels.
- Conducted one and a half day learning workshop with local partners as part of the closing-out of the program.

III. Activities

Objective 1: Strengthening the ability of key leaders in Chin and Southern Shan to work across lines of division to resolve natural resource disputes that are fueling tensions. Activities implemented under this objective aim to strengthen the ability of civil society and government leaders to work together to resolve natural resource-related disputes.

Quarterly Exchange Meetings: During the reporting period, the INRM team conducted four quarterly exchange meetings, including three intergroup meetings in Chin State and one intergroup meeting in Shan State.

- In Chin State, Mercy Corps organized the first intergroup quarterly exchange meeting between government and civil society on 5 January in Tedim Township and on 19 January in Tonzang Township. A second intergroup quarterly exchange meeting was organized on 13 March in Tedim Township. During the meetings, participants shared their conflict resolution experiences within small groups as well as with the large group. They reflected on their experiences including the types of disputes, background of the disputes, their role in resolving conflict, the tools they used, how they coordinated with other stakeholders and lesson learnt. Participants found the quarterly exchange meetings very useful for their capacity building and networking. One of the participants mentioned during the meeting that, “Exchange meetings are really good and helpful because facilitators recapped the IBN tools and others participants also shared their experiences.” Another participant mentioned that, “I appreciate the program team for creating space for networking with other actors.”
- In Shan State, the INRM team successfully organized the last intergroup quarterly exchange meeting between government and civil society on 28 February. During this meeting, apart from sharing experiences of conflict resolution throughout this quarter, discussions were focused on the lessons learnt for the program as a whole. Participants made recommendations about negotiation components of the program as well as the overall program implementation. Most of the participants expected to expand this program to other townships in Shan State. One CSO representative reported during the meeting that, “Our organization earned more recognition from the community after we have cooperated with the INRM program not only in the negotiation component but also in other components such as land law campaigning”.

Table 1. Summary of Participants

Date	Title	Location	No. of Participants	No. of Men	No. of Women ²	Type of Participant
Jan 5, 2015	Chin State Quarterly Exchange Meeting	Tedim, Chin State	10	10	0	Government & CSO/Community
Jan 19, 2015	Chin State Quarterly Exchange Meeting	Tonzang, Chin State	18	18	0	Government & CSO/Community
Feb 28, 2015	Shan State Quarterly Exchange Meeting	Taunggyi, Shan State	20	14	6	Government & CSO/Community
Mar 13, 2015	Chin State Quarterly Exchange Meeting	Tedim, Chin State	21	18	3	Government & CSO/Community

² The number of women is low because the negotiation training program targets existing government and civil society leaders, most of whom are men. The women who participate in the program, however, do so actively.

Newsletter: The INRM team produced the fourth edition of the quarterly newsletter, which included discussion points from the quarterly exchange meetings, a dispute resolution case study, INRM program information, and CSO profile according to request per participants.

Case study development: Four more case studies were developed during this quarter.

Dispute resolution monitoring: To date, the program recorded 68 dispute resolution attempts over the life of the program by participating leaders in our dispute resolution monitoring system. To date, participating leaders resolved 54 of the 68 disputes. Most of these disputes concerned natural resources, but leaders are also addressed the other disputes that concerned social, economic, political, and administration issues.

Objective 2: Strengthening the capacity of local organizations to implement projects that address natural resource tensions. Activities implemented under this objective aim to strengthen the technical capacity of INRM local partners AYO and KMSS and support CSO-led initiatives to address natural resource tensions.

Partner sub-grants: Partner sub-grants ended on March 31, 2015.

Partner capacity building: Partner project teams were trained in facilitation skills as part of facilitation training for government staff on 12-13 January in Taunggyi and 11-12 March in Tedim. They learnt more about facilitation and its technique along with new concepts about the community consultation process.

Learning Workshop: As part of closing out the program with partners, Mercy Corps organized a learning workshop with partners KMSS and AYO on 25-26 March 2015. During this one and a half day learning event, the team reviewed the achievements and challenges for each objective to ensure that learning points were captured to inform future programming. Since this program was implemented by a joint team comprised of Mercy Corps and its partner staff members, the strengths and weaknesses of this partnership model was also evaluated.

In addition, each partner completed a self-assessment of their conflict management technical capacity. This self-assessment provides endline data against the baseline conflict management technical capacity assessments each partner conducted in July 2013.

KMSS Conflict Management Technical Capacity Assessment

Indicator	Weight	Baseline Points	Endline Points
Constituencies, networks, & relationships	8	1	7
Experience with conflict management programming	6	1	6
Conflict assessment skills	4	1	4
Interest-based negotiation skills	4	1	3
Facilitation & community mobilization skills	5	4	2

Capacity building of others	2	0	2
Relationships between conflict, NRM, and economic development	7	0	4
Capacity in skills specific to the CMM program	14	1	6
Total Score (out of 50 possible points)	50	9	34
Percentage	-	18%	68%

AYO Conflict Management Technical Capacity Assessment

Indicator	Weight	Baseline Points	Endline Points
Constituencies, networks, & relationships	8	5	6
Experience with conflict management programming	6	1	6
Conflict assessment skills	4	1	4
Interest-based negotiation skills	4	1	3
Facilitation & community mobilization skills	5	3	4
Capacity building of others	2	0	2
Relationships between conflict, NRM, and economic development	7	4	5
Capacity in skills specific to the CMM program	14	5	14
Total Score	50	20	44
Percentage	-	40%	88%

Natural resource projects: The program team worked closely with CSOs funded through the open small cash grant mechanism to implement their projects according to their workplan, as well as deliver the expected outputs and close out successfully. Mercy Corps intends this small grant mechanism not only to provide funding for locally initiated projects that promote the resolution of existing natural resource conflicts or that tangibly address causes of natural resource-based conflict in the community, but also to build the capacity of the implementing CSOs. To achieve this, one program team member was assigned to each CSO to support them throughout the project life cycle. Program team members assisted CSOs in work planning, financial management, and reporting. Currently, CSOs are preparing their final reports, which will include the achievements and challenges of their projects.

Objective 3: Strengthen the ability of local government to implement initiatives that address natural resource tensions. Activities implemented under this objective aim to support government initiatives to address natural resource tensions and to improve communication and coordination with civil society groups concerned with environmental and natural resource issues.

General Coordination Meeting in Shan State: On February 18, the INRM team facilitated a general coordination meeting between civil society organizations, national/international non-governmental organizations, and the relevant government line department in southern Shan State. At the meeting, each department and organization presented their activities and discussed opportunities for cooperation in future activities. Twenty-eight participants from 17 different organizations and two government departments participated in the meeting. Since most of the participants from both government and CSOs saw the usefulness of this meeting, UNDP will continue organizing and facilitating this coordination meeting after the INRM program ends in Shan State at the end of March 2015.

Natural Resource Working Group meeting: This activity follows on the Natural Resource and Regional Development Forum organized by Chin Natural Resource Watch Group with the support of Mercy Corps during July 2014 in Tedim. The team planned to present the findings from this forum to government officials in Tedim and Tonzang Township, provided that government was open to this. As a result, the findings of the forum were submitted to the Tedim Township Administrator with the expectation of organizing a follow up face to face formal or informal meeting to promote for collaborative actions by government and civil society. However, the program team wasn't able to facilitate a face to face meeting due to lack of willingness of government. Recognizing the importance of continuous effort to advocate about natural resource issues to the government, the INRM team organized a meeting with CSOs representatives who are working in natural resource issues in order to discuss next steps. The meeting was conducted on 22 January in Tedim and 10 participants from five different organizations participated. The participants established the Natural Resource Working Group at the end of the meeting. The working group plans to meet regularly to discuss strategies for advocating to government and engaging with government on natural resource issues.

Government meetings: Given the amount of time the INRM team spends meeting with government representatives and the importance of relationship-building with the government to this program, Mercy Corps began tracking the number of meetings the program team conducts with government representatives. From January to March 2015, the INRM team conducted a total of 55 meetings with government representatives, including meetings to plan activities, request approvals, and provide updates on the program.

Facilitation training: The program team conducted two facilitation trainings for government staff, one in Taunggyi on 12-13 January and one in Tedim on 11-12 March. The two-day training covered topics such as what is facilitation, what is community participation, what is community consultation, facilitation tools, types of meetings, role of facilitator, communication, and listening. Twenty-nine government staff participated in the Shan State facilitation training, and 21 participated in the Chin State facilitation training. Most of the participants provided positive feedback about the training regarding both training process and the relevance of the content for their work. One of the participants mentioned, "Finally, I realized how to organize a meeting where participants feel comfortable and can participate." Another shared that, "I will definitely use the techniques from the training in future work."

Table 2. Summary of Participants

Date	Title	Location	No. of Participants	No. of Men	No. of Women ³	Type of Participant
------	-------	----------	---------------------	------------	---------------------------	---------------------

³³ The number of women is low because the negotiation training program targets existing government and civil society leaders, most of whom are men. The women who participate in the program, however, do so actively.

Jan 12-13 2015	Facilitation training	Taunggyi, Shan State	29	16	13	Government
March 11- 12, 2015	Facilitation training	Tedim, Chin State	21	15	6	Government

IV. Upcoming Activities

Upcoming activities for the next quarter include:

- Final Evaluation.
- Interest based negotiation methodology review meeting.
- Presentation of evaluation findings to respective line departments at the Union Level.

V. Challenges

- ***Permission of Government is restricted in Chin State:*** The Tedim Township Administrator, with reference to the minutes of a state level meeting, instructed line departments not to participate in any activities organized by NGOs without the approval of State Government. As a result, the INRM team had to seek permission for every single activity that targeted government participants. This created delays in program implementation and low participation of government actors.
- ***Limited organizational capacity of CSOs:*** CSOs funded through small grant mechanisms are well regarded their technical skills and community mobilization abilities. However, their organizational capacities such as planning and financial management skills are still weak. As a result, the program team needed to provide more support to CSOs in those areas than expected.

Annex A
Outputs Achieved through March 2015

Indicator No.	Indicator	Target	2015			Cumulative LOP
			Jan	Feb	Mar	
Objective 1: Strengthening the ability of key leaders in Chin and Southern Shan to work across lines of division to resolve natural resource disputes that are fueling tensions						
3	# of leaders selected to participate on Natural Resource Leadership Councils. Disaggregate by state, township, and type of stakeholder, age, gender, religion, and ethnicity.	100	0	0	0	163
4	# of USG-assisted facilitated events geared toward strengthening understanding and mitigating conflict between groups. Disaggregate by state, township, and type of event. "Events" include dispute resolution/interest-based negotiation training, inter-group dialogues, and Natural Resource Leadership Council quarterly meetings.	n/a	4	1	2	40
5	# of people attending USG-assisted facilitated events that are geared toward strengthening understanding and mitigating conflict between groups. Disaggregate by state, township, type of stakeholder, age, gender, religion, ethnicity, and type of event. "Events" include dispute resolution training, inter-group dialogues, and quarterly meetings.	200	67	20	42	901
7	# of community natural resource councils formed or strengthened. Disaggregate by state and township.	8	0	0	0	36
8	# of members of community natural resource councils. Disaggregate by state, township, and type of stakeholder, age, gender, religion, and ethnicity.	80	0	0	0	701
9	# of natural resource disputes identified. Disaggregate by state, township, type of conflict, and scale.	n/a	0	0	18	68
12	# of people trained in conflict mitigation/resolution skills with USG assistance. Disaggregate by state, township, and type of stakeholder, age, gender, religion, and ethnicity.	80	0	0	0	139
Objective 2: Strengthening the capacity of local organizations to implement projects that address natural resource tensions.						
16	# of capacity building trainings delivered to program partners. Disaggregate by partner, location, and type of training.	8	1	0	1	15
	# of small cash grants disbursed to CSOs and/or community groups	n/a	0	0	0	21

18	# of natural resource projects implemented. Disaggregate by state, township, type of project, and number, age, gender, religion, and ethnicity of project beneficiaries.	32	0	0	0	46
19	# of people benefitting from natural resource projects. Disaggregate by state, township, type of project, and number, age, gender, religion, and ethnicity of project beneficiaries.	800	0	0	0	1396
20	# of USG-assisted public information campaigns to support peaceful resolution of conflicts. Disaggregate by state, township, type of public information campaign, and number, age, gender, religion, and ethnicity of project beneficiaries. Public information campaigns include outreach and awareness-raising activities focused on natural resource issues, government policies, best practices, etc.	15	0	0	0	45
21	# of people benefitting from USG-assisted public information campaigns to support peaceful resolution of conflicts. Disaggregate by state, township, type of public information campaign, and number, age, gender, religion, and ethnicity of project beneficiaries.	TBD	0	0	0	13,958
23	# of higher-level decision-making and dialogue forums related to peace, natural resources, and development attended by local actors. Disaggregate by state, township, and type of forum.	5	1	1	0	10
24	# of local actors who participate in higher-level decision-making and dialogue forums related to peace, natural resources, and development. Disaggregate by state, township, and type of stakeholder, age, gender, religion, and ethnicity.	20	1	0	0	44
Objective 3: Strengthen the ability of local government to implement initiatives that address natural resource tensions.						
	# of meetings held with government (between our team and the government)	n/a	29	16	10	200
	# of local government officials trained in skills critical for constructive engagement with both communities and civil society. Disaggregate by state, township, and type of stakeholder, age, gender, religion, and ethnicity.	80	22	0	14	36
	# of projects that address natural resource tensions implemented by or in collaboration with local government actors. Disaggregate by state, township, type of project, and number, age, gender, religion, and ethnicity of project beneficiaries.	8	0	1	0	7

	<p># of projects that address natural resource tensions jointly implemented by local government and civil society actors. Disaggregate by state, township, type of project, and number, age, gender, religion, and ethnicity of project beneficiaries.</p>	5	0	0	0	29
--	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---	---	---	---	----