

The World Bank Group in Myanmar is currently in the process of developing a new Country Partnership Framework (CPF), which will cover the period of 2015-2019. The CPF will outline the framework for the World Bank Group's engagement and support in Myanmar. One significant input to the CPF is the Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD). The SCD seeks to identify priorities to end extreme poverty and promote shared prosperity in Myanmar. It draws on many sources of data and information, one of which is the series of consultations the World Bank Group has been undertaking with various stakeholders, including government, civil society, private sector, academe, think tanks, and other development partners. These consultations take place in three rounds, the first of which was completed in early June 2014.

World Bank SCD - CPF Consultations Myanmar Round 1

The first round consisted of a total of 15 consultation meetings, which took place between February 26th and June 4th 2014 in Yangon, Nay Pyi Taw, Ayeyarwaddy Region, Mandalay Region, Shan State and Kayin State. Stakeholders were also invited to submit written recommendations via email, or to the World Bank Group's Myanmar Website or Facebook page.

The objectives of these of consultations were:

- To identify the most critical and pressing issues in ending extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity in Myanmar.
- To bridge information gaps between the World Bank and the stakeholders in Myanmar.
- To validate information collected from study reports

The consultations were attended by a total of **403** people; **134** from the Union Government, **101** from Civil Society Organizations (including Community Based Organizations, National Non-government Organizations, Labor Unions and Political Parties), **93** from Regional, State or Local Government, **28** from Development Partner Organizations, **22** from the private sector, **15** academics and researchers.

Note: A detailed schedule of consultation meetings held during Round 1 can be found in the table below.

The consultations were structured in a manner aimed at achieving genuine exchanges of ideas and recommendations on the design and content of the SCD and CPF.

In accordance with recommendations from civil society groups in Myanmar, invitations were sent out two weeks in advance, along with an information pack, allowing participants to review materials in advance of the meetings. All invitations and materials were sent in English and Myanmar languages, and Myanmar to English translation was available at all events.

At the consultation meetings participants were asked to consider the causes of poverty in Myanmar and the key priorities that the country needs to work on to end poverty.

Comments received from the discussion, and in some cases individual written responses, were summarized and used as input in the development of the Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD).

Note: Links to the summaries of each consultation meeting can be found in the table below.

Highlights of Issues Raised

Agricultural Development was cited by the largest number of stakeholders as the key priority. Within the agricultural sector, participants highlighted the need for resolution of *land* rights issues, and protection for farmers against losing their land. Many emphasized the need for *low interest financing* for farmers, and for the development of more *efficient markets*, citing issues such as access to market, the need to stabilize the prices of basic commodities, the need to reduce the roles of brokers, and to provide farmers with more information in regard to selection of crops. Many also emphasized the need to improve both the quality and quantity of agricultural produce, through *mechanization*, access to *high quality inputs* (seeds and fertilizers) and technical and vocational *training* within the agricultural sector. The need for *infrastructure* development (dams, irrigation systems, storage facilities, accessible factories for preservation of agricultural produce etc) was also referred to by a number of participants.

The **Education** sector was also considered to be a key priority. Within the formal education system the needs that were most often cited were *access to schools*, and *provision of teachers* in rural areas, the need to improve the *curriculum* and standards of *teaching and learning*, the provision of high quality *teaching materials*, and *teacher training*. Many participants also emphasized the need for *non-formal education* programs, including technical and vocational programs and life skills education.

The need to improve *transport connectivity* and provide *electricity* throughout the country, but particularly in rural areas, was often cited as crucial to the development of other sectors and to improving the quality of life in general.

Access to finance (low interest loans and microcredit) was also highlighted as an important need in regard to job creation and the development of SMEs, and improving the quality of life of the urban poor.

Other participants also mentioned *health, peace* and *good governance* as key priorities.

Feedback on the Consultation Process

In many locations meeting participants were asked to complete feedback forms in order to advise the WB team on ways to improve the consultation process. While the vast majority of respondents (99%) stated that they intended to attend the following rounds of WB consultations, that they now had a clear understanding of the goals of the WB in Myanmar (88%), and the process that the WB is following to develop the Country Partnership Framework for Myanmar (85%), only 48 % felt that they had received sufficient information in advance of the consultation.

In response to open ended questions as to how the consultation process could be improved, the following comments were received:

- I would like to see broader participation in the consultations.
- I would like the consultation meetings to be longer.
- I would like to receive more detailed information from the WB.
- I would like consultations to be held more frequently.
- I would like to see improvements in the way the consultations were structured/facilitated.

Efforts to respond to this feedback will be made during the organization of Round 2 of the SCD-CPF Consultations, which will take place in July 2014.

The schedule of Round 1 Consultation Meetings on the SCD-CPF for Myanmar, participant lists and summaries of the stakeholder input is shown in the table below.

Location	Date	Stakeholder Group(s)
Yangon	26 th February	Academics & Researchers
Yangon	26 th February	Civil Society
Yangon	27 th February	Development Partners
Yangon	27 th February	Private Sector
Nay Pyi Taw	16 th May	Union Government
Patheingyi	19 th May	Regional Government
Patheingyi	19 th May	Civil Society
Mandalay	19 th May	Regional Government
Mandalay	19 th May	Civil Society
Taunggyi	21 st May	Regional Government
Taunggyi	21 st May	Civil Society
Hpa An	22 nd May	Regional Government
Hpa An	22 nd May	Civil Society
Yangon (Urban Poverty)	23 rd May	Multi-stakeholder
Nay Pyi Taw	4 th June	Union Government