

Howe Sustainable Pte Ltd

Registration: 351 FC

Final Report on

Preparation and Piloting of a Process to Ensure the Right to Free, Prior, Informed and
Consent is Respected and the design of a Grievance Redress Mechanism

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Introduction

“Indigenous peoples” and “forest-dependent communities” are essential to the success of REDD+ given that the majority of the world’s remaining forests in developing countries are located where they live, often within their ancestral and customary lands, and where in most cases they have for centuries played a historical and cultural role in the sustainable management of these forests with relative success, especially in the case of indigenous peoples. Inadequate mechanisms for effective participation of indigenous peoples and forest-dependent communities in land use decisions could seriously compromise the delivery of both local and global benefits and the long-term sustainability of REDD+ⁱ. A key component in effective stakeholder engagement with an opportunity to self-identification process is Free, Prior and Informed Consent (‘FPIC’). An effective and comprehensive FPIC process provides evidence and assurance that the interests of the stakeholders have been accounted for and are free from external influences.

Consistent with international human rights instruments and other treaty obligations, potentially impacted indigenous peoples and other forest-dependent communities have the right to participate in and consent to, or withhold consent from, a proposed action. In order to fulfil commitment of REDD+ program in Myanmar to apply FPIC, the practical application of this process requires thorough considerations and take few steps before actual implementation. The Myanmar REDD+ Readiness Roadmap was prepared in 2013 and includes the component on “Stakeholder Consultation and Participation”. Creating guidelines on how FPIC process should be conducted specific to Myanmar and Piloting of FPIC guidelines are among the requirements identified in Myanmar REDD+ Roadmap. Within REDD+ Myanmar Programme, a task force was established to ensure the realization of FPIC principles amongst other responsibilities.

The Preparation and Piloting of a Process to Ensure the Right to Free, Prior, Informed and Consent is Respected and the design of a Grievance Redress Mechanism’ (‘The Project’) was undertaken in 9 communities of Mon state. The Project has been executed according to the following guidelines:

- ‘Guidelines on Free, Prior and Informed Consent’, (UN REDD Programme, 2013): ‘Guidelines for Stakeholder Engagement in Policies and Programmes for Sustainable Forest Management and REDD+’ (REDD+ Myanmar, 2016),
- The Forest Department (MONREC) FPIC guidelines (2019).

1. Project Overview

1.1. Understanding of Free Prior Informed Consent

1.1.1. Legal Framework

International Conventions, Declarations, Standards and Policies

The rights of Indigenous Peoples are addressed in various standards and policies. State-level guidelines comprise the 1989 International Labour Organization ('ILO') Convention No. 169, (Indigenous and Tribal Peoples) (ILO Convention No 169) and the United Nation's Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

In contrary to the ILO Convention No. 169 and the UNDRIP, the International Finance Corporation's (IFC) Performance Standards, especially Standard 7 on Indigenous People and Standard 8 on cultural heritage, target businesses rather than states. Other relevant standards include the World Bank (WB) Safeguard Policy on Indigenous People and the 2009 Asian Development Bank (ADB) Safeguard Policy Statement on Indigenous Peoples. There exist more standards and guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' rights specific to sectors.ⁱⁱ

The UNDRIP is the most comprehensive international instrument on the rights of Indigenous People which constitutes a universal framework of minimum standards to protect Indigenous Peoples. The IFC Environmental and Social Performance Standards define businesses responsibilities for managing of their environmental and social risks. The Standard 7 on Indigenous People and Standard 8 on Cultural Heritage are the most relevant Standards in the context of Indigenous People. One of the objectives of IFC Performance Standard 7 has the objective to ensure FPIC and further specifies IFC's definition and application of FPIC for project-related activities.

The World Bank Safeguard Policy on Indigenous People requires project developers financed by the World Bank to engage in a process of FPIC for their projects. The Safeguard Policy further specifies the social assessment the borrower should follow in order to ensure an engagement in FPIC. Furthermore, the WB requires a detailed report which also states how the concept of FPIC was realized and which information the project developer has to disclose to Indigenous People to follow FPIC.

The 2009 ADB Safeguard Policy Statement on Indigenous Peoples acknowledged the UNDRIP and the concept of FPIC. The Policy incorporates FPIC and it is described how the Policy intends to involve the concept of FPIC.

Myanmar Legislation

The Myanmar Government was one of the 144 state governments which voted in favour of the UNDRIP. The Government supported self-determination and the rights "referred to activities which did not impair the territorial integrity or political unity of States" (UN, 2007). However, the Myanmar Government also states that it "would seek to implement it with flexibility".

Despite the mention of FPIC in some government documents, the Myanmar law displays gaps in the recognition of Indigenous Peoples' rights and FPIC. According to the IHRB, MCRB and DIHR (2016), the term Indigenous Peoples is not recognized by Myanmar's law, policy or practice. The 2008 Constitution mentions the existence of national races and grants them certain rights, such as cultural and traditional development but also states that actions affecting Indigenous People shall only be conducted with their agreement. However, there is no specific definition of national races.

The following laws are particularly relevant for Indigenous Peoples' rights and FPIC:

- 2015 Protection of the Rights of National Races Law
- 1992 Forest Laws
- Myanmar's Environmental Impact Assessment Procedure
- National Land Use Policy

Out of these laws and policies, only the National Land Use Policy mentions FPIC but does not further specify how to apply the concept of FPIC. The National Land Use Policy further recognizes communal and customary land use which is widely used in Myanmar. In addition, the Policy refers to FPIC but does not make a special mention towards Indigenous People.

The 2015 Protection of the Rights of National Races Law does not mention FPIC principles. Article 5 of the Law requires that communities must receive complete and precise information on projects within their area before the project is implemented. Nevertheless, the Law is incomplete and does not fully align with the concept of FPIC (MCRB, 2016). Even though the 2015 Protection of the Rights of National Races Law addresses "national races" and therefore presumably Indigenous People, indigenous groups were not consulted in the drafting process of the law.

Myanmar's Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Procedure defines Indigenous People as 'people with a social or cultural identity distinct from the dominant or mainstream society, which makes them vulnerable to being disadvantaged in the processes of development'. The Procedure requires projects to adhere with the international good practices on Involuntary Resettlement and Indigenous People mentioning the Standards of the WB and the ADB as an example of such.

FPIC in REDD+

UN REDD+ Programme has developed Guidelines on Free, Prior and Informed Consent directed not only towards Indigenous Peoples but also towards "forest-dependent communities". The term "forest-dependent communities" covers all communities that are not covered by the UN-REDD's definition of Indigenous People but depends on the forest for their livelihoods. UNDP REDD+ Guidelines on FPIC uses the term 'rights-holders' which refers to the indigenous people and forest-dependent communities. The objective of the UN-REDD Guideline "is to outline a normative, policy and operational framework for UN-REDD Programme partner countries to seek FPIC". The UN REDD+ Programme does not only

provide an overarching definition of the concept of FPIC but also of the individual elements of FPIC (see Table 1).

FPIC Elements	Explanation
Free	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Free refers to a consent given voluntarily and absent of “coercion, intimidation or manipulation.”• Free refers to a process that is self-directed by the community from whom consent is being sought, unencumbered by coercion, expectations or timelines that are externally imposed.
Prior	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prior means “consent is sought sufficiently in advance of any authorization or commencement of activities.”• Prior refers to a period of time in advance of an activity or process when consent should be sought, as well as the period between when consent is sought and when consent is given or withheld. Prior means at the “early stages of a development or investment plan, not only when the need arises to obtain approval from the community.”
Informed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Informed refers mainly to the nature of the engagement and type of information that should be provided prior to seeking consent and also as part of the ongoing consent process.
Consent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consent refers to the collective decision made by the rights-holders and reached through the customary decision-making processes of the affected peoples or communities.• Consent must be sought and granted or withheld according to the unique formal or informal political-administrative dynamic of each community.

Table 1. Definition of the individual elements of FPIC

The UN REDD+ Programme further outlines the requirements of UN REDD Programme Partner Countries to ensure provisions for the application of FPIC are considered and incorporated into the National REDD+ process. The Guideline on FPIC provides the indicative steps for developing national FPIC guidelines consist of the following points:

- Identify the relevant principles for the guidelines;
- Identify any existing processes for consultation and consent concerning relevant stakeholders’ land and land use planning or natural resource development, and analyze the strengths and weaknesses of these processes;
- Develop the first draft of FPIC guidelines;
- Field test the draft FPIC guidelines at a pilot site;
- Independently evaluate the field test;
- Amend the draft FPIC guidelines, as necessary;
- Consider how the FPIC guidelines could be formalized.

Following these steps, REDD+ in Myanmar conducted a consultation with various stakeholders to develop ‘Guidance for the development and piloting of an FPIC process in

Myanmar'. Key findings of the consultation have outlined the basic principles and practical guidance for the project, which include:

1. National level policies rely on higher-level approval processes and sub-national policies and measures require local consultations.
2. Local actions that correspond with the 11 categories in the UN-REDD guidance document will require FPIC. These categories are:

CHECKLIST FOR APPRAISING WHETHER AN ACTIVITY WILL REQUIRE FPIC	Yes/No
1. Will the activity involve the relocation/resettlement/removal of an indigenous population from their lands?	
2. Will the activity involve the taking, confiscation, removal or damage of cultural, intellectual, religious and/or spiritual property from indigenous peoples / forest-dependent community?	
3. Will the activity adopt or implement any legislative or administrative measures that will affect the rights, lands, territories and/or resources of indigenous peoples / forest-dependent community (e.g. in connection with the development, utilization or exploitation of mineral, water or other resources)?	
4. Will the activity involve mining and oil and/or gas operations (extraction of subsurface resources) on the lands/territories of indigenous peoples / forest-dependent community?	
5. Will the activity involve logging on the lands/territories of indigenous peoples / forest-dependent community?	
6. Will the activity involve the development of agro-industrial plantations on the lands/territories of indigenous peoples / forest-dependent community?	
7. Will the activity involve any decisions that will affect the status of indigenous peoples' / forest-dependent community's rights to their lands/territories or resources?	
8. Will the activity involve the accessing of traditional knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities?	
9. Will the activity involve making commercial use of natural and/or cultural resources on lands subject to traditional ownership and/or under customary use by indigenous peoples / forest-dependent community?	
10. Will the activity involve decisions regarding benefit-sharing arrangements, when benefits are derived from the lands/territories/resources of indigenous peoples / forest-dependent community?	
11. Will the activity have an impact on the continuance of the relationship of the indigenous peoples/forest dependent community with their land or their culture?	

Figure 1. Checklist for appraising whether an activity will require FPIC

3. The unit for the implementation is Village Tract. It should provide a good balance between being local but not too numerous. Meetings at the village tract should be followed up by the meeting in the village
4. There should be self-determination of the representatives. Villages have their own structure which should be accounted for. Religious leaders are often playing a big role.
5. Gender equality is essential to the project and stakeholder engagement should be gender-responsive.
6. Process, timeline and decision-making structures should be publicly available
7. All community members are free to participate regardless of gender, age or standing
8. An FPIC process should be initiated well in advance before the proposed action is planned to begin
9. FPIC activities and results should be publicly available
10. Information should be provided in the local languages where feasible
11. Information should be balanced and explain not only benefits but also possible risks

12. There should be continuing access to information; this is necessary both in case new information becomes available as well as to allow stakeholders to revisit information
13. There should be a written record of the result of the FPIC process within each unit: one copy should be retained by the FPIC team and another one by the representative of the community
14. Consent, if provided (or withheld), should remain valid unless new information becomes available or otherwise for a period defined in the written record

One of the elements of effective FPIC process is an establishment of Grievance Redress Mechanism ('GRM') which would address concerns promptly and fairly. The consultation also provided some key points to consider for the functioning of the GRM:

- Deal with grievances at lowest level possible: communities usually have an effective mechanism for grievances although there still needs to be a mechanism for recording the grievance and the result;
- The GRM needs to be able to deal objectively with grievances involving parties with different power levels
- The GRM needs to work and report promptly
- The GRM needs to be continually available but cannot be costly.

2.2. Project Objectives

The Project sought to define a technically and culturally appropriate approach to conduct Free Prior Informed Consent.

The main objectives of the assignment were to:

- Develop a stakeholder engagement plan based on stakeholder mapping and analysis for Village Tract;
- Pilot the socially inclusive and gender responsive process of Free Prior Informed Consent with established Grievance Redress Mechanism;
- Identify key insights and lessons to improve approaches for FPIC and GRM.

As a result of the pilot, the baseline recommendations for National level FPIC for National REDD+ Strategy in Myanmar ('NRS') will be developed.

2.3. Scope of the Project

The Project took place in Mon state, specifically in three Townships:

- Paung Township
- Thanbyuzayat Township and
- Ye Township

According to the guidelines produced at the Consultation in Nay Pi Taw in March 2019, the implementation unit for the pilot was established to be - village tract. The initial target for the pilot was estimated to be 12 village tracts.

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In order to develop the recommendations which can be applicable across different parts of Myanmar, key criteria of the village tract, which in one way or the other, might impact the approach were determined as:

- ✓ Ecosystem. Terrestrial forest or mangrove forest
- ✓ Type of governance. Union Government control (full government control); Mixed-control (Union government has control over the area, but leaders of Ethnic Organizations has influence on the decisions within the area) or Ethnic Armed Organization control area (solely under control of EAO, Union government officials doesn't have the power);
- ✓ Accessibility. Accessible or less accessible – how easy to access the area by car or whether the access changes depending on the season.

The criteria above were taken into consideration in finalizing the village tracts for the pilot project.

The results of the Project's preparation phase which involved stakeholder engagement activities (further explained in Section 4), concluded that for the assigned Project areas, 6 Sub-national Policies and Measures were applicable. These include the following:

- **S9.** Establish gender-responsive forestry and agricultural/ agro-forestry extension services in rural and upland areas;
- **S10:** Expand the number and area of community forests and support the development of Community Forest Enterprises;
- **S11:** Implement incentivized community co-managed monitoring and other forms of independent monitoring programmes;
- **S15:** Promote alternative livelihoods for farmers who might otherwise encroach into forested land;
- **S16:** Promote farmers' and forest users' associations, equitably for women and men, in order to raise rural incomes;
- **S21:** Within the context of the work of the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC), engage with Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs) to develop cooperation on sustainable forest management

2.4. Methodology of the Project

The Project was implemented using different methods and approaches.

1. **The literature review:** Involved an analysis of the requirements of different standards and their accompanying guidance documents for FPIC. This was further supplemented by reviewing categories of literature that provided recommendations and guidance on the interpretation and implementation of FPIC. This included but not limited to international human rights standards, requirements of International Financial Institutions, third party schemes and their accompanying guidance procedures and protocols, reports on implementation or pilot of FPIC in other countries for REDD+.

2. **Desktop research** of the pilot area to collect background information on indigenous and non-indigenous communities/villages, whether these overlap, socio-cultural information that looks into customary practices around decision making, role of women, if there are existing/underlying conflicts. In addition, reviewed and analyse sub-national PaMs in the context of selected VT and presented a summary.

3. **Field visits** to pilot area to verify and fill in gaps from the desktop review through Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FGD). As a result, compiled and assessed specific social information and cultural constructs, norms and practices whilst engaging with different stakeholder groups. Field visits enabled the team to identify key stakeholders; assess institutional capacity of key stakeholders to engage in REDD+ activities as per NRS; access the capacity of existing Civil Society Organizations ('CSOs) or Community-Based Organizations present in the area.

4. **Developing and implementing FPIC** process through a stakeholder engagement plan in order to achieve the following:

- Identify key stakeholders that are affected, and/or able to influence the Project and its activities;
- Identify the most effective methods and structures through which to disseminate project information, and to ensure regular, accessible, transparent and appropriate consultation;
- Build mutually respectful, beneficial and lasting relationships with stakeholders;
- Develop stakeholder engagement plans with the focus on FPIC process that provides stakeholders with an opportunity to influence project planning and design;
- Define roles and responsibilities for the implementation of the SEP.

5. Establishment of a Grievance Redress Mechanism: The design of previously proposed GRM for Myanmar REDD+ Programme has been used as a baseline for FPIC process.

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan ('SEP') will help to manage and facilitate engagement through the various stages of the Project's phases outlined in the next chapter.

3. Pilot of Free Prior Informed Consent

3.1. Pilot preparation

3.1.1. Finalize the scope

For the purpose of finalizing the areas for the Project and confirming potentially affected communities influenced by the implementation of REDD+ program, consultation meetings were held with different authorities in Mawlamyine on the 16th of May 2019.

The first meeting was organized with the Forest Department and one of the political parties of Mon state - New Mon State Party. The purpose of this meeting was to:

- Inform stakeholders of the Project, its objectives and timeline;

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- Understand the level of interest to participate, engage and support;
- Help to identify the areas in Mon State to reflect the criteria of ecosystem, governance and accessibility.

The Director of Forest Department and forest officers helped to identify 12 Village Tracts matching the proposed criteria. They had also provided input regarding thought drivers applicable in the selected areas and provided an overview of past and current activities undertaken by the department.

In order to understand how FPIC can be executed in different parts of Myanmar, it is important to understand how the process should be organized in the areas with different levels of influence and authority. In Mon State, as certain areas are governed by New Mon State Party ('NMSP') it is an important step in the project preparation stage and for the overall success of the project to organize a meeting with NMSP to gain their support and cooperation. Another objective for the meeting was to establish village tracts which suite the criteria of the pilot.

The party agreed to support the project and allowed the project team to have access to the areas under NMSP's control. The coordinator from NMSP was appointed to help to coordinate the process. In addition, the party had proposed 6 locations for the project - 3 villages under NMSP control and 2 village tracts under mixed-control.

Information received from both parties was cross-checked though desktop review and analysed based on the following factors:

- Suitability for the criteria;
- Drivers of deforestation;
- Security of the area;
- Time and resources.

As a result of this analysis, 11 Village Tracts were selected to conduct the pilot of FPIC and GRM reflecting the following criteria:

Criteria 1:	Union Government Control		Mixed control		EAO-only control	
Criteria 2:	Accessible	Less accessible	Accessible	Less accessible	Accessible	Less accessible
Criteria 3:						
Mangrove	2	-	2	-	-	-
Terrestrial	2	2	-	2	1	-

Table 2. Criteria for selection of village tracts

Key Challenges:

- The Forest Department meeting was not attended by all Forest staff officers from Mon state. In particular, the Forest Staff Officer of Ye Township was absent. This resulted in a lack of information provided on the situation with the forest in this area;

- Knowledge level on REDD+ of the different participants from the Forest Department and NMSP were different as some of them were not familiar with REDD+ programme or had never attended trainings organized by the programme. Additional time was spent providing an overview of the REDD+ concept together with the complex process of FPIC;
- Lack of on—the-ground information and exact data on forest areas resulted in insufficient information being provided;
- Forest Department and NMSP had different perceptions and understanding of the division of power in different areas which made it challenging to build initial engagement in certain locations;
- Decisions made by NMSP took longer than expected as it involved seniors of the party to agree and make collective decisions.

3.1.2. Data Collection

The primary desktop review was conducted to primarily understand community livelihood, governance structure, as well as cultural and traditional practices. Altogether this resulted in establishing a community profile and baseline map of stakeholders. A key challenge experienced was the lack of information available online.

Following this, a field survey was conducted to collect on-ground data related to community stakeholders. Types of stakeholders identified to engage in the data collection process included but not limited to Forest Department staff, Civil Society Organizations ('CSOs') and Community-Based Organizations ('CBOs'). The first field visit to the identified Village Tracts was organized between 17th of June till 4th of July.

The primary objectives of the visit were to:

- Introduce the project to the communities at the village tract;
- Verify and confirm previously gathered information with regards to existing ecosystems, governance and accessibility;
- Understand what are the underlining causes of deforestation in the area in order to define relevant Policies and Measures;
- Identify rights-holders (indigenous people and forest-dependent communities) and their socio-economic profile;
- Compile and assess specific social and cultural constructs, norms and practices, decision-making process and authorities engaging with different stakeholder groups;
- Assess institutional capacity of key stakeholders to engage in REDD+ activities;
- Identify supporting organizations – CSOs/CBOs and assess their capacity to participate in the Project.

Data collection took place in all 11 Village tracts using different approaches and tools, such as:

1. Key Informant Interviews with Forest Department staff, Village Tract Administrators and CSO/CBO representatives;
2. Focus Group discussions for both men and women's groups.

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A full list of activities is conveyed below.

Date	Location	Activity	Position/ participant	Type of	Number of participants (male/female)	
17-Jun-19	Thanbyuzayat Township	Semi-structured interview with Forest Department	Staff officer, Deputy Range Officer		2	
18-Jun-19	Mawlamyine	Key Informant interview with CSO	Mon Youth Progressing Organization		2	1
18-Jun-19	Thanbyuzayat	Key Informant interview with CBO	Tree Lover Group		3	
19-Jun-19	An Nin Village Tract	Key Informant Interview with Village Tract Administrator	Village Tract Administrator		1	
19-Jun-19	An Nin Village Tract	Focus Group Discussion with representatives of Villages	Village Representatives		15	10
20-Jun-19	Ye Township	Semi-structured interview with Forest Department	Township Forest Officer		1	
21-Jun-19	Ye Township	Key Informant interview with CSO	Green Mon Land Association		3	
24-Jun-19	An Din Village Tract	Key Informant Interview with Village Tract Administrator	Village Tract Administrator		1	
24-Jun-19	An Din Village Tract	Focus Group Discussion with representatives of Villages	Village Representatives, Household leaders		9	1
22-Jun-19	Ka Byar Village Tract	Key Informant Interview with Village Tract Administrator	Village Tract Administrator		1	
23-Jun-19	Ka Byar Village Tract	Focus Group Discussion with representatives of Villages	Village Representatives, Household leaders		7	
22-Jun-19	Ka Lawt Village Tract	Key Informant Interview with Village Tract Administrator	Village Tract Administrator		1	
26-Jun-19	Ka Lawt Village Tract	Focus Group Discussion with representatives of Villages	Village Representatives, Household leaders		7	
25-Jun-19	Kyauk Mi Chaung Village Tract	Key Informant Interview with Village Tract Administrator	Village Tract Administrator		1	
25-Jun-19	Kyauk Mi Chaung Village Tract	Focus Group Discussion with representatives of Villages	Village Representatives, Household leaders		14	
25-Jun-19	Ka York Pi Village Tract	Key Informant Interview with Village Tract Administrator	Village Tract Administrator		1	
25-Jun-19	Ka York Pi Village Tract	Focus Group Discussion with representatives of Villages	Village leaders, Members of CBO, and Villagers		8	10
25-Jun-19	Pa Nga Village Tract	Key Informant Interview with Village Tract Administrator	Village Tract Administrator		1	
26-Jun-19	Pa Nga Village Tract	Focus Group Discussion with representatives of Villages	Village leaders, Members of CBO, and Villagers		9	8
27-Jun-19	Tha Htone District	Semi-structured interview with Forest Department	Forest ranger		1	
28-Jun-19	Paung Township	Semi-structured interview with Forest Department	Forest Staff officer, Forest ranger		2	
28-Jun-19	Paung Township	Key Informant Interview with CSO	CSO - Youth Conversation Club			2
29-Jun-19	Tha Pyay Kone Village Tract	Key Informant Interview with Village Tract Administrator	Village Tract Administrator		1	
29-Jun-19	Tha Pyay Kone	Focus Group Discussion with	Village leaders, Members		10	11

	Village Tract	representatives of Villages	of CBO, and Villagers		
30-Jun-19	Paung Township	Key Informant Interview with CSO	CSO - Green Development Network		1
01-Jul-19	Sin Ywar Village Tract	Key Informant Interview with Village Tract Administrator	Village Tract Administrator	1	
01-Jul-19	Sin Ywar Village Tract	Focus Group Discussion with representatives of Villages	Village leaders, Members of CBO, and Villagers	12	6
01-Jul-19	Ohn Ta Pin Village Tract	Key Informant Interview with Village Tract Administrator	Village Tract Administrator	1	
02-Jul-19	Htan Pin Chaung Gyi Village Tract	Key Informant Interview with Village Tract Administrator	Village Tract Administrator	1	
02-Jul-19	Htan Pin Chaung Gyi Village Tract	Focus Group Discussion with representatives of Villages	Village leaders, Members of CBO, and Villagers	11	9

Table 3. List of Stakeholder Engagement activities

This field visit enabled the team to collect various data sets from key stakeholders and address the objectives of the project. An overview of these findings is presented in the Appendix 1.

The analysis of the received data demonstrated that out of 11 village tracts, two village tracts – Ka Byar and An Nin – did not have forest cover due to deforestation. Hence it was decided not to proceed with implementation of the Project in these 2 locations.

In addition, the survey team conducted interviews with local Civil Society and Community Based Organizations ('CBO') residing in the Project area. In total, seven organizations were interviewed. The presence of Community Based groups were mainly observed in the areas under mixed-control due to high involvement of youth, specifically in An Din and Pa Nga village tracts. These organizations' main focus are on preserving cultural and linguistic heritage, building peace and community development activities. A Majority of these groups did not have strong organizational structures and therefore could not be classified as organizations. Civil Society Organizations were identified in Mawlamyine town. These organizations had previous experience working on different projects and specifically familiar with facilitation processes.

As a result, the selection of Village Tracts demonstrating different factors, drivers, unit of implementation and relevant PaMs to seek consent included the following:

Village Tract	Township	Number of Villages	Governance	Accessibility	Ecosystem	Drivers	Unit	PAMs
An Din	Ye	6	Mixed-control	Accessible	Mangrove	Small-scale agriculture Mining	Village Tract	S9 S10 S16 S21
Ka Lawt	Ye	1	Union	Accessible	Terrestrial	Illegal logging	Village	S11 S15
Kyauk Mi Khaung	Ye	7	EAO	Less Accessible	Terrestrial	Small scale agriculture	3 Villages	S9 S10 S16 S21

Ka Yoke Pi	Thanbyu-zayat	2	Union	Less Accessible	Mangrove	Conservation	Village Tract	S9 S10
Pa Nge	Thanbyu-zayat	2	Mixed-control	Accessible	Mangrove	Conservation	Village Tract	S9 S10
Htan Pin Chanung Gyi	Paung	3	Union	Less Accessible	Mangrove	Small – scale agriculture	Village Tract	S9 S10 S16
Tha Pyay Kone	Paung	3	Union	Accessible	Mangrove	Small - scale agriculture	Village Tract	S9 S10 S15 S16
Sin Ywar	Paung	3	Union	Less Accessible	Terrestrial	Small – scale agriculture Mining	Village Tract	S9 S10 S16
Ohn Ta Pin	Paung	6	Union	Accessible	Terrestrial	Small – scale agriculture Mining	Village Tract	S9 S10 S16

Table 4. Scope of Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Challenges associated with the data collection process:

- In order to conduct the project, the information on the upcoming field visits were shared with the office of Forest Department at the State level to inform the necessary authorities. However, in the case of Ye township this was not sufficient. The Government Administrative Department requested that they should be informed directly by the implementation team. This situation might have been triggered by the fact that Ye township has areas beyond Union Government control and any activities conducted in this area are closely monitored;
- Data collection at the village tract level introduced certain limitations:
 - Although the efforts were put into making the process inclusive and accessible for all, it was difficult to control who would be able and willing to attend the village tract level meeting;
 - A lack of information can affect the principles of FPIC and ability to identify key stakeholders;
 - Level of participation depends on the relationship of Village Tract Administrator with village leaders and other members of a community.
- Not all villages in the village tract possess the same criteria, in particular level of governance. For example, Kyauk Mi Khaung village tract consist of 7 villages. It was initially sought that all the villages were under NMSP control. As a result of data collection, it was discovered that 4 villages were under Union Government control and 3 under EAO control. As the meeting was organized in the main village of village tract, which is under Union Government control, people from the villages under NMSP area did not attend the village tract level consultation;
- During the data gathering it was observed that the participation level was not very high and the information flow within the village tract was challenging. This could happen due to few reasons: attitude of the Village Tract Administrator towards the Project; relationship between Village Tract Administrator and villagers; logistics – villages located further from the main village in the village tract. This could potentially impact a

principle of FPIC – access to the information. Some villages were represented by 1 or 2 people which resulted in insufficient information being provided;

- Women representation was very low in An Din, Kyauk Mi Chaung and Ka Lawt village tracts.

3.1.3. Stakeholders Engagement Plan (SEP)

Before the pilot of the FPIC process continued, the development of socially inclusive and gender responsive Stakeholder Engagement Plans took place to ensure all stakeholders would have access to information encouraging the right to participate throughout the process.

The primary goal of stakeholder engagement was to analyse received information and identify key stakeholders, improve the information flow of REDD+ to reflect transparency and create accessibility and opportunities for communities to voice their concerns and opinions that may influence project decisions.

The development of a Stakeholder Engagement Plan included the following:

1. Stakeholder analysis and mapping, including the identification of primary, secondary and tertiary stakeholders;
2. Development of a stakeholder engagement plan that is inclusive, responsive and culturally appropriate to key stakeholders;
3. Establishment of a grievance/feedback mechanism to receive and address prompt resolution of stakeholders' concerns and complaints regarding the program's activities; and
4. Incorporation of key stakeholder feedback to modify the engagement plan and influence program's activities.

According to UN-REDD Programmeⁱⁱⁱ, stakeholders are defined as “those groups that have a stake/interest/right in the forest and those that will be affected either negatively or positively by REDD+ activities”. The initial step in the SEP was to identify what type of stakeholders exist in the project area. Stakeholders identified to participate in the proposed engagement activities had met one of the following criteria:

- Were Indigenous people or forest-dependent communities – rights-holders – who would potentially be impacted by the Project;
- Had an interest in the Project; or
- Could provide commentary on issues and concerns related to the Project.

Identified stakeholders were categorised by their legitimacy and impact that the Project could have on each of the key stakeholders identified. The primary purpose of the engagement was to allow for stakeholders to participate in the decision-making process of the project. Taking into account that a key aspect of this project was to pilot the FPIC process and GRM mechanism, Policies and Measures would not be implemented at this stage, the process focused on building an understanding on:

- Locally-appropriate FPIC;
- Rights-holders' views and perceptions towards suggested PaMs;
- Areas of improvement of the PaMs;
- Specific terms of consent or berries for the consent to be given;
- Appropriate ways to document a consent.

Given the difference in community characteristics identified across each village tract, the following considerations and factors had been identified in Stakeholder Engagement plans.

1) Governance

Village Tracts in the Project area had different governance systems impacting and influencing approaches and techniques required for stakeholder engagement approaches. The following opportunities and challenges were considered when engaging with communities in these areas.

Administration	Challenges	Opportunities
Union Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication/ information flow within forest department was weak • GAD approval was required to conduct the project • Low community interest and participation in the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to engage with VTA • Clear decision-making and conflict resolution mechanism • More accurate socio-economic and forest related data available • Forest department maintain working relationship with VTA and community
Mixed-Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project implementation required approval of both parties • VTA didn't have full power • Decision-making required involvement of both parties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided an opportunity to understand how both parties can work together • Active civil society participation • Communities were more aware of environmental issues
EAO Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict-sensitive area required an additional sense-check of vocabulary • Absence of socio-economic and forest-related data • Safety concern • EAO representative was required to accompany project team • Forest rangers didn't have authority and couldn't access forest area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick approval process • Open for engagement and collaboration • High participation of communities

Table 5. Challenges and Opportunities

These significant differences led to the necessity of creating 3 different stakeholder engagement plans reflecting government-controlled areas, mixed controlled areas and EAO controlled areas.

2) Building trust and awareness

It was apparent that a strong community cohesion existed across village tracts given the social cultural history of the area, presence of EAOs, and use of Mon language. Taking this

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into consideration, leveraging existing community assets and structures was thought to be beneficial to share information, build trust, and encourage alignment with the project. The initial consultation and analysis had identified the following community structures to consider in each Village Tract.

CSO - Mon Youth Progressive Organization	Villages of Kyauk Mi Kyaung
Village Representatives from Youth Volunteer Network	Pa Nga, Kay Yoke Pi
CSO - Youth Conversation Club	Villages of Htan Pin Chaung Gyi, Sin Ywar, Tha Pya Kone, Ohn Ta Pin
CBO - Youth Development Group	Villages of An Din

It should be made clear that village representatives identified in Pa Nga and Kay Yoke Pi were well respected and active people in the community interested in protecting the natural environment.

These structures were part of the implementation process and served as project support facilitators/grievance officers. The suggested roles and responsibilities of the project support facilitators were:

- Support HS team during awareness raising and information sharing at the village level;
- Led stakeholder engagement activities required for the implementation of the SEP in their relevant areas of responsibility by conducting village level meetings described;
- Document and report stakeholder engagement activities in their relevant areas of responsibility;
- Were a focal person when Howe Sustainable team was not in the field by providing additional information requested by communities;
- Collect and document grievances and report to Howe Sustainable for proposed resolution;
- Attend public consultation meetings with HS team in the assigned Village Tracts.

3) Gender Inclusivity

Information collected suggested that women did not generally actively participate in community meetings. In addition, key groups led by women were not generally found. Taking this into consideration the following strategy was applied:

- The village tract administrators and village leaders were encouraged to invite women representatives to the meetings;
- Women participation in discussion were encouraged by conducting separate Focus Group Discussions;
- The time of the meeting was chosen to be most suitable for women – between 10am-12pm or 2pm to 4pm.

4) Language & Culture

The preferred language spoken in a number of villages was Mon Language. Observations in the field indicated a strong culture sense of belonging and connection to Mon traditions and language. As a result, communication strategy and material were sensitive to this factor and Mon language was used as much as possible.

It was anticipated that to gain a good understanding of REDD+ and proposed Policies and Measures, the stakeholders would require multiple consultations before the decision process could be initiated.

As a result, the stakeholder engagement plan included the following key steps:

1. Build capacity of selected project support facilitators to support project activities
2. Village tract consultation – awareness raising and information sharing at the village level
3. Introduction to the Grievance Redress Mechanism concept, design, and process
4. Village tract consultation to initiate monitoring and evaluation and obtain feedback and consent from targeted VTs

1.1.4. Grievance Redress Mechanism

The complexity of issues associated with implementation of FPIC and subsequently – PaMs - required an establishment of Grievance Redress Mechanism which would allow to receive and facilitate resolution of queries and grievances from affected communities and key stakeholders.

National REDD+ GRM was used as a reference in the development of GRM for pilot. According to the assessment of the primary data collection and village tract level consultations, the GRM design was developed for the village tract level during the pilot implementation. The basic structure of the design was the same for the union-controlled area, the mixed controlled area and EAO controlled area. The only difference between each governance area was the working body. The suggested process of the GRM reflected the basic practices and decision-making procedures within each village setting.

In the pilot implementation, four approaches were proposed to test to understand and identify the most effective way for collecting and receiving grievances.

These were:

- Managing GRM by working with township representative CSO as a grievance officer to liaise and facilitate at village tract level for all village tracts per township;
- Managing GRM by working with village tract representative CBO as grievance officer to liaise and facilitate at each village tract level;
- Managing GRM by working with village tract representatives as grievance officer to liaise and facilitate at each village tract level;
- Managing GRM directly by Howe Sustainable (during the pilot) as grievance officer to liaise and facilitate at village tract level

The reporting system for the grievances was amended in the process and functioning based on the feedback from the village tract level consultations. The community choose to report using three approaches.

- A) Via grievance form

B) Via telephone

C) Via Grievance officer face to face

For Approach A, the community could use the grievance form directly and send it to the grievance officer or grievance office directly. In Approach B, the community can call the grievance officer to report a grievance if they are not comfortable with writing. The community can also meet face to face with the grievance officer to explain about the grievance and report it as a third method.

The following GRM design was piloted:

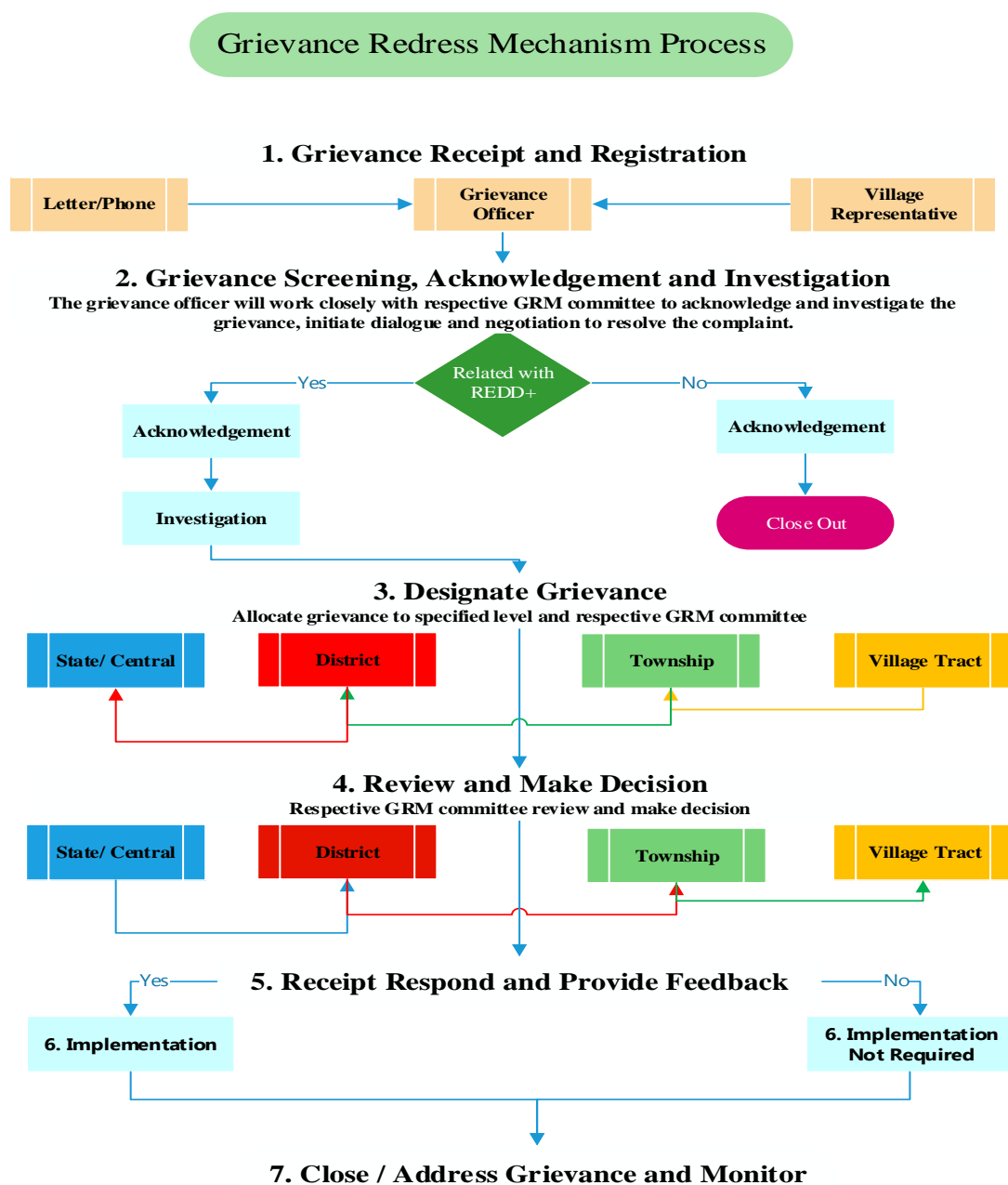


Figure 2. Grievance Redress Mechanism Process for Redd+ Pilot Project

Key roles and responsibilities of GRM process:

Grievance Officer: The representative CSO group, were considered as grievance officers. They coordinated, collected, received and registered grievances as well as facilitated the process to ensure effective and inclusive decision-making. They supported the registration of grievance and investigation. They also reported directly to Howe Sustainable during the process.

Village Representative: In each village, one person was assigned as a village representative to help the villagers send the concerns to the grievance officer. Their main responsibility was to collect concerns from the villagers through letter or phone and provide to the grievance officer.

1.1.5. Communication strategy

To achieve an effective stakeholder engagement and smooth implementation, the communication strategy was developed and used the tools across all phases of the Project described in the table below.

Tools	Description
Training materials	Presentation materials were prepared in order to build capacity of project support facilitators. The information included climate change, REDD+, PaMs, FPIC, and GRM; facilitation skills, approach, and tools. Clear understanding of the key steps of project implementation, roles and responsibilities of project support facilitators, reporting requirements was developed.
Approval letters	Approval letters were prepared in Myanmar language and reflect the requirements of UNDP communication protocols and procedures. The letters were sent at each step of the Project to inform relevant authorities.
Presentation Handouts	Handouts were prepared and provided an overview of any presentations communicated during meetings, consultations. Easy and relatable language was used staying away from excessive technical jargon, ensuring the use of visual methods of communication.
PaMs information on pamphlet and vinyl	Pamphlets were developed in Burmese and Mon languages and distributed during consultations at the village tract and village meetings. The pamphlet provided the description of the proposed policy, associated benefits and potential risks. Certain amount of copies was distributed at the village tract level meetings. The same information was presented on vinyl during the meetings and public consultations.
REDD+ pamphlet	REDD+ pamphlets developed in Burmese and Mon languages. It was distributed during the village tract or village level meetings. The pamphlet provided the description of the REDD+ programme in Myanmar. It was distributed at the village tract level meetings
Loud speaker announcements	Loud speaker announcement is a common way of information dissemination in the villages. It was used by village tract administrator to make announcements and provide information related to the Project as well as promote the schedule for SEP meetings and public consultation.
Project Information Leaflet (PIL)	A PIL was developed in Burmese and Mon languages and distributed during consultation meetings. The PIL provided a description of the proposed Project, the engagement programme and schedule, contact details of project support facilitators and Howe Sustainable, and information on the grievance mechanism. The PIL was placed in each village tract next to Village Tract Administrator office to inform about the project which was available at any point of time

Grievance Form	The form to record and track grievances as well as resolution status. Community or Project support facilitators would record grievances they receive into this form.
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Table 6. Communication tools

3.2. Training of FPIC support staff

A two-day capacity building training on REDD+, FPIC and GRM was provided to project support facilitators - selected CSOs, village representatives - and forest rangers from three townships.

The key objectives of the training were:

- To build the capacity of the CSOs, village representatives and forest rangers on REDD+ and PaMs, FPIC and GRM.
- To train how to conduct village level awareness raising as well as learn how to operate the GRM, information on GRM to villagers and how to collect grievances
- To provide training to understand and practice the GRM reporting system.

The following table summarizes the list of the attendees.

Representatives CSOs/Village	Male	Female	Responsible Village Tract and Township
Rahmonya Peace Foundation (CSO)	1	1	Kyauk Mi Chaung, Ye
Kayokepi VT village representatives		2	Kayokepi, Thanbyuzayat
Pa Nga VT village representative	2		Pa Nga, Thanbyuzayat
Youth Conversation Club (CSO)		2	Tha Pyay Kone VT, Htan Pin Chaung Gyi VT, Sin Ywar VT, Oh Ta Pin VT in Paung.
Forest Ranger	3		Ye, Thanbyuzayat and Paung
Total	11		

Table7. List of training attendees

Youth Conversation Club from Paung and Rahmonya Peace Foundation were among the selected CSOs to conduct village level awareness raising in the villages of Paung and Kyauk Mi Chaung VT located Ye. Two village representatives were selected to conduct the village level awareness raising for Pa Nga and Ka Yoke Pi villages. Forest rangers were also invited to attend the meeting to build up their understanding of the project and provide support during the consultation and GRM where necessary. Community Based Organization from An Din was also invited to participate in the training but was not able to join.

The training delivered an overview of the Project, REDD+, FPIC and GRM, Policies and Measures piloted in the project, associated indicators and GRM reporting system, roles and responsibilities of each representative group. According to the pre-assessment test, 50% of participants had low knowledge on REDD+, FPIC and GRM. Following the training session, participants improved their understanding by 19%.

Challenges of the training process:

- Climate change, REDD+, PaMs, FPIC and GRM are complex subjects and might be difficult to understand. It also depends on the level of basic knowledge. The results of the training demonstrated that more time should be allocated to better grasp the subjects;
- The level of knowledge among the participants (CSOs, forest rangers, and village representatives) varied creating an additional barrier to delivering information and key messages in the most effective way.
- Invitations were sent to the Forest Rangers who were carrying out duties specifically in the pilot area and who would be directly involved in the implementation. Unfortunately, not all forest rangers joined the training. Training of Trainers of Township Forest Officers and Forest rangers should be organized going forward;
- It became evident that working with CSOs proved more effective than working together with village representatives.
- There is a lack of CBOs at the village tract level which are well organized and have previous experience and knowledgeable in facilitation. As a result, more efforts should be allocated towards capacity building for the effective support of the project
- Obtaining the buy in of selected CBOs can be difficult especially when they had not previously participated in consultations.

3.3. Village Tract Consultation: Awareness Raising

The Pilot process of FPIC commenced during the Village Tract level Consultations with identified stakeholders took place from 28th of August to 6th of September 2019 with the intention of achieving the following:

- Share information regarding the project, including introduction of the concept of Free, Prior, Informed Consent, key goals, objectives and estimated timeline
- Raise awareness on the climate change, REDD+ program including understanding potential benefits and challenges associated with the Policies and Measures relevant to the Village Tract
- Discuss and agree with community representatives on the culturally-appropriate FPIC, including who should represent and make a decision, how the decision should be made (open or secret voting)
- Explain the Grievance Redress Mechanism process and have an input on the process
- Identify the grievances of each PaMs and categorise the grievances as well as the stakeholders who provided the grievance
- Introduce project support facilitators

Each consultation included an introduction of the above-mentioned subjects through visual materials, verbal explanations and discussions. In order to foster involvement and participation, focus group discussions were conducted with both male and female groups to learn about their level of understanding concerning information shared and obtain feedback and constructive comments on the proposed GRM design.

Key findings of the consultation are provided below:

	Village Tract	Number of participants		Observations
		Male	Female	
1	An Din	6	2	Village tract consultation was not conducted because the key decision maker of the community requested additional information on FPIC and REDD+ before the consultation could take place. The identified CBO was reluctant to support REDD+ and FPIC given their lack of information on the program. Meetings with village tract administrator, village leader, monks and youth group took place.
2	Ka Lawt	11	17	Village tract administrator did not inform village representatives. As a result, additional efforts were made to follow up and prepare a second consultation. Communities were able to easily understand climate change due to flooding that occurred in the area; rising temperatures each year has encouraged villagers to start considering forest conservation. Concerning PaM15 the village suggested to have garden plantations as an alternative livelihood. A suggestion was made to consult farmers prior to implementation of required extension services A suggestion was made to consult farmers prior to implementation of required extension services.
3	Kyauk Mi Khaung	26	13	Coordination took place directly with the NMSP and CSO recommended by the NSMP People were interested in conservation of the forest however there's not a lot of vacant land available. High interest in technology assistance, providing machinery, capacity building on techniques of forest protection.
4	Ka Yoke Pi	67	29	The villagers thought that the proposed PaMs were relevant for the village. There is mangrove forest they would like to protect. Frequent meetings in the process of implementing PaMs are expected. Participants expressed a wish to have consultations at the village level so it will be accessible to everyone.
5	Pa Nge	13	2	Youth is very active in this VT and have a stronger influence than the VT administrator The concern was raised regarding the effectiveness of REDD+ implementation, however the villagers were willing to support the advocacy of the project. The information sharing should be a step-by-step approach and use video support. The villagers would like to be consulted on extension services and alternative livelihood. The communities would be more interested in the activities if they could see the benefits There is mangrove along the coast which some members of the community are interested to protect. There is a particular concern on PaM10 as community forest requires collaboration and there were different opinions observed as some people couldn't see the long-term benefits.
6	Htan Pin Chanung Gyi	16	9	People were interested to know the exact project implementation time One of the villages does not have access to electricity and they depend on the mangrove forest for the fuel wood. The community understands that the mangrove is important for disaster prevention. It was suggested that the sense of community ownership and benefit sharing can encourage the villagers to participate. The concerns were raised regarding benefit sharing if PaM10 is implemented. FD is in the process of creating reserved mangrove forest in the VT and the rest of the land would be distributed for agricultural purposes.
7	Tha Pyay Kone	12	24	Collaboration among villagers is essential for REDD+ implementation. Verbal explanation of PaMs made it easier for villagers to understand some of the explanations on the pamphlets Fisherman from the village close to the mangrove area are interested in CF but there is an opposition from farmers' group – this conflict was already present before the implementation
8	Sin Ywar	13	0	Majority of the community is Karen although people understand the Burmese language. The

				<p>representative of CSO could speak Karen language and was providing translation when it was necessary.</p> <p>Community expressed that having one consultation was not sufficient to effectively understand the proposed activities.</p> <p>Community Forest is already established in the area and there was an interest in the support of CFUG</p>
9	Ohn Ta Pin	8	11	<p>The community was aware of the need of environmental conservation because of the rock mining in the area that has caused environmental damages</p> <p>For REDD+ implementation communities expressed that the land for replantation would be required including seedlings/ plants; knowledge of technology; collaboration between the forestry and the villagers; proper law enforcement to the people who violate the law, even if it is the companies.</p>

Table 8. Key findings of the consultation

Challenges of the consultation process:

- The legacy of previous projects created certain barriers for implementation. This issue was most pressing in An Din village tract. The communities had previously encountered negative experience of the consultations during the coal plant project implementation. The consultations which were held during that project was later treated as 'license to operate'. Hence, the community requested an additional information sharing session before the consultation could be conducted. The meeting with influential figures from youth group and monk was conducted in order to explain and emphasize the objectives of the Project.
- As it was anticipated, it was difficult for the communities to understand the complexity of REDD+ and proposed policies and measures from the first consultation. Some of the communities expressed a wish to have multiple consultations and more time to process the information.
- The outcomes of proposed PaMs are targeted to bring benefits to the environment and the country overall in the long-run. The implementation of the program might bring benefits which are not tangible or doesn't target specific individual. Thus, some people found it difficult to understand and relate to REDD+
- The communities were very interested in the timeline of REDD+ implementation. As this was unknown during the Project implementation, that might have an impact on the level of participation.
- Village tract administrator did not inform village representatives. As a result, additional efforts were made to follow up and prepare a second consultation.
- Working closely with village tract administrators was very important although in some cases (Ka Lawt) not always effective as they were reluctant to organize the meeting and the team had to make additional efforts to ensure the consultation would take place.
- It was discovered that the administrative structure of the area in NMSP controlled area was different to the Union control area. This was particularly evident in Kyauk Mi Khaung village tract.
- In Kyauk Mi Khaung, NMSP was present in the consultation process which resulted in high participation but could possibly lead to introduce bias in case they are also present during decision-making process

- In Tha Pyay Kone village tract, communities from different villages have different opinions on establishing Community Forest which could potentially lead to disagreement during the consultation for the decision making.

3.3.1. Organize project awareness sessions at the village level

In order to ensure effective pilot of FPIC process, Project's awareness sessions at the village level were held in each village ensuring information on the project and intended objectives were available and clearly communicated.

The purpose of awareness sessions was to:

- Share information regarding the project, including introduction of the concept of Free, Prior, Informed Consent, key goals, objectives and estimated timeline
- Explain climate change, REDD+ program including understanding potential benefits and challenges associated with the Policies and Measures relevant to the village
- Explain the Grievance Redress Mechanism process and obtaining feedback on the process

Project support facilitators were introduced in each village tract during the village tract meeting to make sure the community were aware of their roles and responsibilities. It was initially programmed to conduct these sessions over a period of 2 weeks: from 7th September and 21st of September. As there were challenges in the organization, this period was extended till 30th of September.

As mentioned previously, CBO group from An Din village tract cancelled their participation few days prior the training, thus there were no village awareness sessions in An Din village tract. Ka Lawt village tract consist of only 1 village, hence there was no need of organizing an additional session.

The list of the sessions is presented below:

	Village Tract	Village	Number of participants		Project Support Facilitator
			Male	Female	
1	Pa Nga	Pa Nga (Ywar Ma)	31	7	Village Representatives
2		Pa Nga (Old)	13	2	Howe Sustainable
3	Ka York Pi	Ka York Pi	67	29	Howe Sustainable
4		Win Pa Tote	20	12	Village Representatives
5	Kyauk Mi Chaung	Wei Zin	17	28	Rahmonnya Peace Foundation
6		Wei Paung	16	1	Rahmonnya Pace Foundation
7		Pha Lai	14	12	Rahmonnya Pace Foundation
8	Sin Ywar	Sin Ywar	8	7	Youth Conversation Club
9		Shan Kone	10	12	Youth Conversation Club
10		Htan Ywar	11	38	Youth Conversation Club
11	Ohn Ta Pin	Taung Phyu Su	10	36	Youth Conversation Club
12		Ywar Kalay	8	12	Youth Conversation Club
13		Ohn Ta Pin	6	7	Youth Conversation Club
14		A Lel Ywar	8	18	Youth Conversation Club
15		Kawt Kan	6	33	Youth Conversation Club
16		Pat Tan	11	11	Youth Conversation Club

17	Htan Pin Chaung Gyi	Htan Pin Chaung Gyi	NA	NA	No village level Consultation
18		Htan Pin Chaung Lay	NA	NA	
19		Bi Laung	6	22	
20	Tha Pyay Kone	Tha Pyay Kone	7	18	Youth Conversation Club
21		Khin Tan	13	18	Youth Conversation Club
22		Kar Tae	14	28	Youth Conversation Club

*Table 9. List of village level meetings***Key findings and challenges of awareness sessions at the village level:**

- Administrator of Htan Pin Chaung Gyi did not provide approval to proceed with awareness sessions in all of the villages. This occurred due to his lack of understanding of the objectives of the program which was discovered during the 2nd village tract consultation. He thought the Project would try to impact current plans in the village tract. This was understood during the 2nd consultation: there was a vacant land in the village tract available; Forest Department had initially proposed to convert all the land into reserved mangrove forest; General Administration Department decided to allocate only 350 acres to Reserved Forest and the rest of the land to keep for agricultural land; the land was already distributed among villagers to use it for farming;
- The rainy season made it difficult to access some of the villages;
- Within NMSP controlled areas, there was no mobile connection making it challenging to organise meetings and collect grievances. Despite having internet connection in one of the villages it is suggested to utilise posters and appoint a contact person;
- The participation of women was higher at the village level in comparison to village tract level. This is primarily due to the presence of village leaders at the village tract level consultations;
- Level of reporting and communication among village representatives are lower in comparisons to members of CSOs.

3.4. Village Tract Consultation: Record of Decision**3.4.1. Consultation**

Before the Project continued, stakeholders had a duration of one month to become familiar with Policies and Measures, discuss it within communities, raise their concerns or questions. Additionally, to avoid religious holidays, the second consultation was conducted between 23rd to 29th of October 2019.

The main objectives were to:

- Understand concerns and suggestions of the communities on PaMs and FPIC process and provide feedback;
- Build understanding on the specific terms of consent or reasons for withholding a consent, areas of improvement of the PaMs;
- Facilitate decision-making if community representatives are ready to make a decision;
- Record consent or berries of the consent in culturally-appropriated way; and
- Evaluate the Grievance Redress Mechanism

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Taking into account the information gathered during previous consultations, village leaders and primary stakeholders were invited to the second consultation to make a decision. However as per the principals of FPIC, the process was free to everyone to participate. Given the presence of conflicts within few village tracts, it was suggested to provide an option to right-holders to make decisions for the village tract or separately for each village.

Record of provision or withholding of consent document was prepared to record the results of the voting, please refer to Appendix 2. The document consists of the summary of the process and the results for each PaM separately. Appendix 1 of the document consists of the list of voters (for open voting) and Appendix 2 consists of details related to consent or withholding of consent. The document was signed by the chosen representative and witnessed by at least 2 people. The copy of the record of the decision was provided to the village tract.

Two options of the voting procedure were encouraged:

- **Open voting.** Each participant's opinion would be expressed openly and recorded in the Record of provision or withholding of consent document. Each voter would be asked to express an opinion and place their signature. Whether the consent is given or withheld would be decided by the majority of the votes. The results of the voting would be provided on the cover page of the document, signed by village tract representative and witnessed by at least 2 people;
- **Ballot.** Each participant would express an opinion on the piece of paper for each of the policies secretly; the total amount of votes would be counted, announced and recorded in the record of provision or withholding of consent document which would be signed by village tract representatives and witnessed by at least two people.

Each consultation commenced with an overview of the Project, specifically emphasizing on the FPIC process as a way for the communities to express their opinions. In the process of the project, local people tend to build certain expectations towards the project and conducting decision making process with voting, bring these expectations even higher. In order to avoid creating these expectations, HS team were emphasizing that the Project has the pilot nature which wouldn't necessary result in the implementation.

The consultation included the following steps:

- Addressing and providing feedback to the received grievances from the village tract;
- Brief overview of the information presented during previous consultation, including REDD+ and proposed policies and measures, overview of FPIC process;
- Consultation on the readiness of the community to make a decision, whether the voting should be open or secret, whether the villages in the village tract would like to make a communal decision or separately;
- Voting and record of decision;
- Focus Group Discussions to understand the views and opinions of the FPIC process overall, and Grievance Redress Mechanism.

Results of the voting are presented below:

**Note: Non-consent column for PaM 9, 10, 15,16 was excluded as there was 'No' votes provided.*

Village Tract Name	Village Name	Number of Villages	Number of Attendants		Voting					
			Male	Female	PaM 9	PaM 10	PaM 15	PaM 16	PaM 21	
					Consent	Consent	Consent	Consent	Consent	Non-consent
Ka Yoke Pi	Ka Yoke Pi	3	8	10	18	18	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Htaung Ke		1	2	3	3	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Annwar		1	4	5	5	NA	NA	NA	NA
Pa Nga	Pa Nga	2	13	2	13	13	NA	NA	NA	NA
Ka Lawt	Ka Lawt	1	8	24	30	30	NA	NA	NA	NA
An Din	An Din	6	9	7	16	16	NA	16	15	1
Sin Ywar	Sin Ywar	3	15	16	28	28	NA	28	NA	NA
	Htan Ywar		2	0	2	2	NA	2	NA	NA
	Shan Kone		4	0	3	3	NA	3	NA	NA
Ohn Ta Pin	Ohn Ta Pin	6	9	2	11	11	NA	11	NA	NA
	Hpet Tan		3	0	3	3	NA	3	NA	NA
	Ywar Kalay		3	1	4	4	NA	4	NA	NA
	Ah Lel Ywar		4	5	9	9	NA	9	NA	NA
	Taung Thu Su		2	2	4	4	NA	4	NA	NA
Tha Pyay Kone	Tha Pyay Kone	3	13	15	28	28	28	28	NA	NA
	Kar Te		7	2	9	9	9	9	NA	NA
	Khin Tan		2	0	2	2	2	2	NA	NA
Htan Pin Chanung Gyi	Htan Pin Chanung Gyi	3	15	0	15	15	15	15	NA	NA
	Htan Pin Chanung Lay		11	0	11	11	11	11	NA	NA
	Bai Laung		1	4	4	4	4	4	NA	NA

Table 10. Results of the consent

Key findings and challenges of the step:

- All policies were positively accepted in all communities. The only negative vote was given to the policy 21 in An Din village tract. This might be due to the fact the village tract is under mixed-control and this policy involves the collaboration of all parties on forest management.
- It was surprising to see that even with the presence of internal conflict in Tha Pyay Kone everyone provided consent. This might be due to the following reasons.
 - During the organization of the consultation, a GAD official made a call to the village tract administrator of the village tract. It can be assumed that perhaps he expressed his opinion towards the policies, which could have impacted the decision of the rights-holders.

- The pilot nature of the project could have influenced the decisions of villagers as the decision taken wouldn't make an impact on their lives at this time.
- Villagers were convinced by the benefits of the program and agreed to it.
- Due to the events in Ye Township between NMSP and neighbouring EAO – KNU – consultation in Kyauk Mi Cheaung was cancelled. NMSP representatives contacted HS team and informed that due to the conflict, they restricted access to the area. As a result, CSOs working in the area were not willing to conduct the consent consultation.
- Liaising with some of the village tract administrators or village representatives were not very effective as a result requiring additional resources and placing added pressure on the field team to organize the meeting and encourage participation.
- Lower participation was noticed from the villages located further away from the main village in the village tract where the consultations were conducted due to the need to travel to the meeting site;
- Higher rates of women participating were found in Ka York Pi, Sin Ywar, Ka Lawt;
- All villages chose to make decisions through open voting which at the same time might have influenced the voting results.

3.4.2. Evaluation

As part of this step, Focus Group Discussions were organized to evaluate and obtain communities' feedback on FPIC process conducted in the Project. Questions on PaMs were also raised to understand communities' perception and opinions on proposed PaMs. A total of 55 villagers participated in focus group discussions of which 42% were women.

Focus group discussions were held with both men and women groups. Questions asked were separated into three categories;

- FPIC Process
- Proposed PaMs
- Grievance Mechanism and Associated Process (presented in section 3.5.2)

Questions on Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC):

A1. Were you aware of the REDD+ consultations going on in your village tract?

All but one village tract confirmed that they were aware of REDD+ consultations. Participants from Andin were not represented on the day. Most participants indicated their awareness as a result of the first consultation. Example of statements from both men and women's groups.

Responses from Men's groups

We are aware of the REDD+ consultation, as we participated in the previous consultation. We were aware of the REDD+ consultation because we participated in the first consultation and through CSO
--

Responses from Women's Groups

We participated in previous consultations and aware the REDD+ from joining the previous consultation provided by CSOs

Similar to the men's group, all women who participated in the FGDs confirmed they were aware of the REDD+ consultations. However, women from An Din confirmed they did not know consultations had taken place. Possible explanations are listed below.

- Initial consultations held at Andin only took place at the village tract level with key village persons including but not limited to An Din Youth Group, village monk, and village administrator. Engagement with this group and other villagers led to understanding the villager's difficulty with trusting outsiders. Poor consultations held by a coal company has led to Andin's poor experience with consultation, free prior informed consent and transparency.
- These women may have been busy with other duties during the initial consultation or information received was not shared with women in the village.
- Despite not having participated in the first consultation, the 3 respondents, were still able to access information from the village youth group concerning the final consultation.

These responses highlight that in order for the whole community to be aware of the consultation, sharing information at the village level information is essential for the whole community to be informed. Moreover, understanding the legacy issue/ past conflict of the targeted area is important to identify whether extra steps or more additional consultations are required to build trust and encourage participation.

A2. Did you participate in the consultations at your own free will?

During the discussion participants were asked if they had freely participated in consultations throughout the project. All participants, men and women, confirmed that they participated freely. This indicates two key points:

1. The Village Admin and initial villagers that participated in consultation at the village tract effectively disseminated information.
2. Participation indicates high level of interest in REDD+ and access to information.

A3. Did you think the information provided to you on PaMs was sufficient to make a decision? If Not, what would help you to make your decision to be more informed?

Almost all participants confirmed information provided was sufficient to make a decision for PaMs, Respondents from Andin stated additional sessions were required to understand the information conveyed.

A4. Did you know whom to contact if you need more information?

It is evident that all participants, except those from Andin, were able to identify a contact person should they have questions or concerns regarding the project. Village tracts such as Pa Nga and Ka Yoke Pi were able to recite the contact number of the contact person. Participants stated they were able to remember the contact person and contact details from

the poster available in their village. In particular representatives from Ka Yoke Pi confirmed this.

Women's groups from Andin and Sin Ywar were not able to provide details of the contact person. Key reasons provided included that their village is located in a remote area and they are usually working in their gardens and therefore not in touch with key activities in the village. As for Andin, given the previous reasons identified, representatives confirmed that they have not joined previous consultations. Furthermore, a representative was not appointed to go to the village level.

These responses highlight that the introducing the CSO/Village tract representatives at the first village level consultation is a good way to introduce the contact person and information at the beginning. At the same time equally important to ensure follow up with the representatives traveling to the village level. The development of a poster describing project profile and conveying the contact numbers proved a useful tool to convey and confirm information. In addition, the placement of the poster at the village level proved to be important and useful.

However, villages located in remote areas were unable to access the information. Additional time and processes would need to be in place to ensure remote villages are able to access information given their location and working schedules.

A5. Was the information communicated in an easy and understandable way? Was it in an appropriate language?

Based on the respondents from all village tracts, both men and women, indicated that the information was communicated in an easy and understandable way. The use of real-life situations such as the recent flood, as well as simple examples helped the villagers develop a better understanding. A representative from Pa Nga mentioned that the use of Mon language directly would be more effective for them. A female representative from the same village tract suggested slowing down the explanations in order to facilitate understanding.

It can be observed that for the village tracts with a majority of Mon ethnic, An Din, Pa Nga and Ka Yoke Pi, the direct usage of Mon language proved effective when sharing information. It was also confirmed that that Burmese language was suitable to use in village tracts such as Paung. However, for village tracts Sin Ywar where the majority are Karen, the Karen language should be considered.

Example of Responses

- The information was communicated in easy and understandable way and language used was appropriate
- I think directly explaining in Mon language is more effective.
- The information was communicated in easy way but still had a need. Please explain slowly as if it is fast, it is hard to catch up.

A6. What do you think of the pamphlets and cartoons used to communicate the PaMs? Do you have any suggestions for improvements?

During the 1st consultation, Howe Sustainable shared information on climate change and REDD+, the FPIC process and GRM process, proposed PaMs. In addition, developing materials through the use of vinyl, handouts, and pamphlets incorporating cartoons. Both Burmese language and Mon language were used across materials developed. VT level consultations were delivered in Burmese with Mon translation and village level consultations were delivered in relevant languages provided by the CSO and VT representatives. All respondents agreed that the pamphlets and cartoons used to communicate were good enough for them. No further suggestions were given to improve or change the content.

Based on the respondents, it can be analyzed that the level of information and the delivery style of the information are sufficient. The frequency of the information sharing sessions can differ for specific village tracts depending on the situation. Ethnic languages such as Mon and Karen languages should be used when the majority of people speak and prefer this language.

A7. Do you think you were given enough time to make a decision? If not, how much time would you like to have to make your decision?

According to the responses, except from Andin, all the respondents, both men and women, thought that they were given enough time to make a decision. Women in Andin thought that there should have been more time provided. At least 3 days should be provided to make a decision when considering the PaMs. Even though the cartoons were helpful, understanding the PaMs require additional time.

Between the 1st VT consultation and 2nd VT consultation, approximately 1 month was for the community make sense of, gauge the information provided, and engage in discussion among each other. During this time, village representatives and CSOs conducted village level consultations to ensure information was transferred and accessible. Based on the feedback, the time between both consultations is considered important and much needed for the villagers to think and provide consent. A period of 1 month seems to be adequate given this is a pilot project.

A8. What do you think about the decision-making (consent) process organized today? Do you have any suggestions on how the process can be improved?

All respondents apart from those from Andin, felt, the decision process was adequate with no further suggestions. The Men's group from Ka Yoke Pi felt that the process was transparent.

Response from Ka Yoke Pi

Today decision-making (consent) process was good and transparency, no more suggestions.

The women group in Tha Pyay Kone were happy that they could provide their consent. Only Andin could not provide a comment as they felt like they didn't have enough time to think about it. Based on their response, it can be highlighted that communities preferred the voting system used on that day to convey their consent. A possible reason may have been the transparency encouraged.

A9. What would make you change your mind? (in case you said no, to provide a consent? In case you said yes, withhold the consent?)

Men's Group Overall Response

We won't change our mind for consent of PAMs because it they look beneficial for their village.

If the process changes from how it has been explained, we will consider changing the consent.

Nothing can change our mind for consent of PAMs.

We think these PaMs are good. So we will not change.

If the REDD+ activities protect the environment, conserve forests, our agreement will remain the same.

Our consent of PAMs will change depend on condition of the activities.

We do not change the mind for consent of PAMs as it is beneficial for the village.

Women's Group Overall Response

We don't think we will change

We will not change because these are beneficial for the village

Their consent of PAMs will depend on time and conditions.

We will not change because these are beneficial for the village

If the activities become different than proposed and become harmful to the environment, we will change our consent

According to the responses, representatives from Ka Yoke Pi, Ka Lawt, Sin Ywar and Htan Pin Chaung Gyi said they were less likely to change their minds as they understood the benefits for their village tracts. Representatives from An Din and Tha Pyay Kone felt differently. Their response indicates that if the situation changes in their village or within the projects then their consent could change. The village teacher in Ohn Ta Pin mentioned that if activities implemented are not the same as proposed, or if they became harmful to the environment, they would reconsider their consent.

When comparing the responses between men and women, men seemed more decisive with their decisions and clear about their consent. However, there seems to be an understanding that consent is dependent on how the PaMs are rolled out. In addition, the benefits it may bring to each village. According to the representative's responses, consent was not influenced by their participation. Having observed this, ensuring villages understand the

PaMs, the objective, and implementation will be important as this could affect their participation and perception of the project and REDD+ moving forward.

A10. When REDD+ implementation begins, how would you like the information to be shared and by whom?

Responses from the village tracts vary. Men and women groups from Ka Yoke Pi, Ka Lawt, Sin Ywar, Ohn Ta Pin and Htan Pin Chaung Gyi prefer information to be received via their village administrator. This could be an indicator that there is a positive relationship between the village representatives and village administrator. Whereas village tracts from Pa Nga and Ta Pyay Kone identified the CSO as their preferred mode of communication. In particular, Tha Pyay Kone, representatives are afraid that information will not be shared with them if it via their village administrator. For Andin, a local representative was identified to share information. Due to legacy issues with the mining company, they tend to trust their local representatives more.

A11. When REDD+ implementation begins, how do you think the decision-making process should be organized?

Men's Group Response

We think it is better to give us the consent form, give time for us to discuss again amongst each other and respond later.

We like today decision-making process applied and expect the same process and approach when REDD+ implementation begins.

We prefer today decision-making process where consent is collected individually and expect the same process and approach when REDD+ implementation begins.

Women's Group Response

It will be good to have 2/3 days to think for the consent.

Before getting consent, we think it is better to engage with the community even more, rather than telling which PaMs is suitable for us, it is better to assess and identify their needs and wants, what the beneficial PaMs activities could be firstly, inform about the process of those activities and collaborate with the local communities on the process.

We like the decision-making process that has been used to collect their consent. We want the program to use the same process when the actual implementation begins.

Except from An Din and Ka Yoke Pi, both men and women, were satisfied with the decision-making process that has been piloted for the consent. More specifically, Ka Yoke Pi, stated additional time should be provided to accommodate discussion among their village representatives. An Din, in particular, suggested that consent should be carried out after the project has engaged and discussed with the community. They also suggested that identification of PaMs should be the result of a needs assessment conducted with community members.

Overall, open voting seems to have worked for the village representatives. However, responses and consent provided could be the result of peer pressure. For example, agreeing on open voting and providing consent during open voting.

B. Questions on Policies and Measures (PaMs)**B1. Do you have any suggestions for implementation of PaMs proposed in your village tract?**

There were no more suggestions by the respondents on PaMs. The women's group in Andin mentioned that they could not provide suggestions as they did not have enough time to review the information.

B2. Do you think any other measures can improve forest management and help to support forest conservation in your village tract?

Responses from men's groups	
Ka Yoke Pi	My concern is there are few vacant land available for conservation. Most have applied for Form 7 or owned by private groups.
Pa Nga	We don't know about this question, as we have never done forest management properly.
Ka Lawt	Collaboration with local community is important to improve forest management
Sin Ywar	We think that any other measures can improve forest management and help to support forest conservation in their village tract
Ohn Ta Pin	We don't know about this.
Tha Pyay Kone	We don't know much about the FD's activities so we don't know what to say on forest management.
Htan Pin Chaung Gyi	We don't know.
Responses from women's groups	
Ka Yoke Pi	We don't know much about forest management.
Pa Nga	We don't know much about forest management
Ka Lawt	We don't know much about forest management
Andin	We don't know much about forest management
Sin Ywar	We don't know much about forest management
Ohn Ta Pin	We don't know much about forest management
Tha Pyay Kone	We don't know much about forest management
Htan Pin Chaung Gyi	We don't know much about forest management

Based on the responses received a majority of men and women did not what they can do to improve forest management and forest conversation. In Ka Lawt, some men mentioned that collaboration between villagers and FD can be one measure for protection of forest. Whereas in Tha Pyay Kone, the representative mentioned that they didn't know FD activities very well.

There can be possible reason that they villagers could not give much suggestion on forest management because they are not familiar with the activities of forest department and thus, they could not see how they could provide input. Therefore, in future activities for

forest management or conservation, participatory approaches such as resource mapping, capacity mapping with the villagers should be conducted to help them better understand how they can contribute.

3.5. Grievance Redress Mechanism

3.5.1. Grievance Mechanism in practice

The pilot of the Grievance Redress Mechanism was initiated during the village tract consultation. HS team explained the process, received feedback for the proposed design and introduced the CSOs and Village representatives who would be focal persons for the next steps.

The main objectives of the GRM pilot was to achieve the following:

- Obtain feedback from communities on the proposed design
- Understand existing decision-making process
- Test the usage and design of GRM related forms such as grievance receipt, registration, screening and acknowledgment.

Following the initial introduction of the GRM, appointed CSOs and village representatives initiated the introduction of the GRM at the village level. Grievances received during these meetings were recorded whilst other grievances were received via phone. A Viber group was set up to ensure timely communication with appointed field representatives ensuring updates were provided on a daily basis and reports prepared on a weekly basis.

During this period, a total of 48 grievance forms were received. All the grievances were reviewed and analysed whether they are related to REDD+. The analysis indicated that only 29 (60%) grievances concerned the program.

All Grievances vs Related to REDD+ grievances

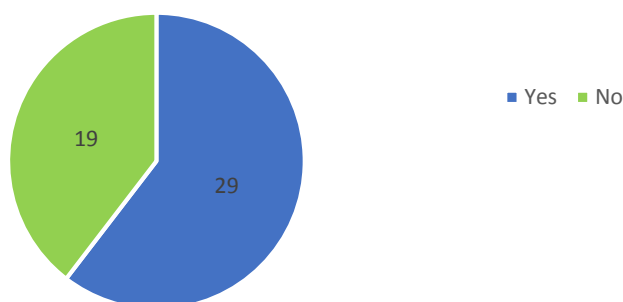


Figure 3. All Grievances vs Related to REDD+ grievances

These 29 grievances received were reviewed and categorized to reflect the following:

REDD+ Implementation	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestions for the program • Request for village participation • Interest to participate in the implementation
Community Forest	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expression of interest in the community forest • Questions concerning benefit • Issues related to conflict of interest in some village tracts
Land Management	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions or suggestions raised on distribution of farmland, forest land • Finding a balance to serve those two purposes with effective planning
Livelihood	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for alternative livelihood
Training & Awareness	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of deforestation • Protection of the environment • Sustainable farming practices • REDD+

Table 11. Categories of grievances

Categories of received grievances

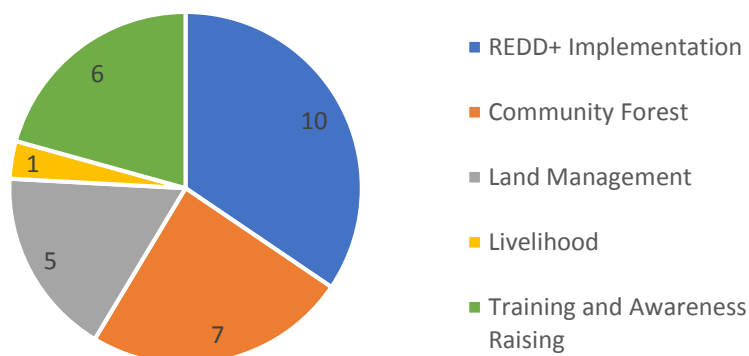


Figure 4. Categories of grievances

AS the GRM is a new concept and mechanism for the communities, it is possible that villagers used this platform as a means to voice their concerns, suggestions, and feedback on a number of issues influencing and or impacting their community.

Among those 29 grievances, only 4 were classified as concerns whereas the rest were categorised as requests, suggestions and/or positive feedback. Three of concerns were related to the land management planning – forest vs farmland. One request was addressed towards FPIC process where communities would like to have consultations on the village level in order to be able to participate freely. List of all grievances can be found in Annex 3.

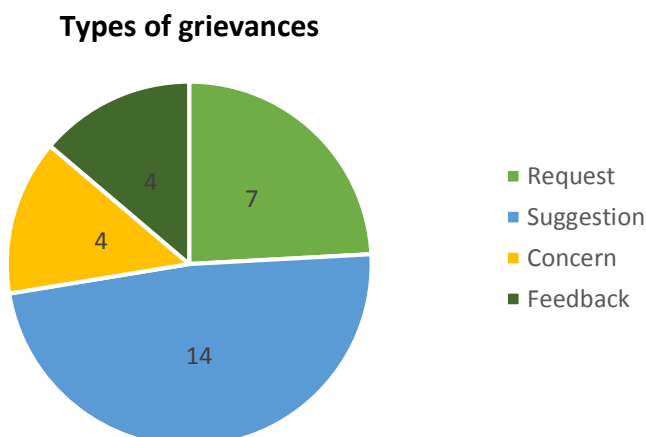


Figure 5. Types of grievances

The largest number of grievances was received in the following communities.

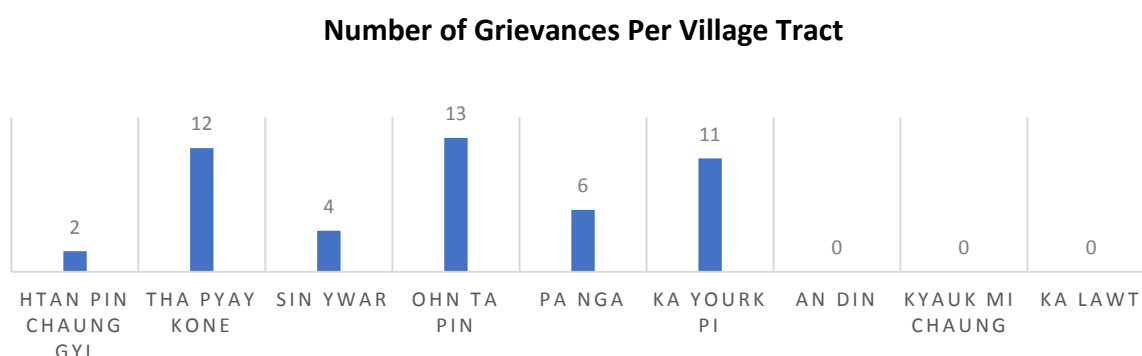


Figure 6. Number of Grievances Per Village Tract

As seen in the graph, Ka Lawt, An Din and Kyauk Mi Chaung village tracts did not file any grievances. This could happen for various reasons. In An Din village tract, there was no village tract level consultation except of key people of the village tract and as a result, communities were not aware of the mechanism. In Ka Lawt, the village representative was appointed who was supposed to pass grievances to grievance officer – Howe Sustainable in this case. Absence of mobile connection in Kyauk Mi Chaung introduced a barrier for smooth operation of GRM and also the fact that the team visited the village tract only for the first time.

The grievances were submitted by both women and men. The records demonstrate that 3 out of 8 grievances were submitted by women (or 38%). This can be explained due to the observed gender-inequality during the consultation meetings. Although, during awareness raising sessions, participation of women was much higher than in the village tract consultations.

Men vs Women participation in GRM

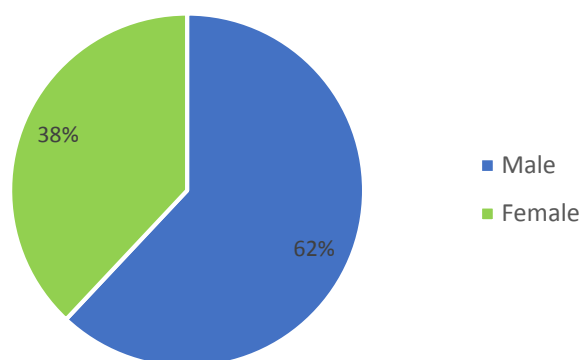


Figure 7. Men vs Women participation in GRM

Due to the project's timeline and pilot nature of the Project, no committees were formed to address the grievances. All the grievances were reviewed by UNDP REDD+ Technical Advisor and feedback was provided during the 2nd Consultation of the Project.

3.5.2. Evaluation of Grievance Redress Mechanism

During final consultation at the village tract level, Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews were organized to evaluate and get communities' feedback on GRM. A total of 55 villagers participated in focus group discussions of which 42% were women.

3.5.2.1. Focus Group Discussion Results:

Questions on Grievance Redress Mechanism

C1. Were you aware of the GRM (feedback process) pilot conducted in your village tract?

All respondents, except An Din, were aware of the GRM process piloted within their village tract. As the GRM was introduced at both village tract and village level, all if not most villagers should be aware of the implementation phase that took place.

C2. Did you know how to send a complaint/suggestion? If Yes, please describe. If 'No' Why not?

Men's group overall response

They know about that complaints or suggestion can send via village representative.
We know about that complaints or suggestion can send through village rep to CSO member.
We know about that complaints or suggestion can send via village representative.
We know about that complaints or suggestion and can send via CSO. We have also sent complaints

Women's group overall response

Yes, we know representative are locals from our village.
 We know about that complaints or suggestion can be sent via the village representative.
 No we didn't as we didn't attend previous consultation but we do now.
 We know about that complaints or suggestion and can send via the village representative.

The respondents from Ohn Ta Pin, Htan Pin Chaung Gyi, Tha Pyay Kone, Ka Yoke Pi and Pa Nga are aware of how to send a complaint or suggestion via the identified CSO and or village representative. Aside from An Din, two female participants from Sin Ywar were aware of the GRM pilot but unaware of how to lodge a complaint.

C3. Do you think this GRM process is clear and easy to use? If Yes, please describe why. If No, why not?

Responses from men's groups	
Ka Yoke Pi	The GRM process is clear and easy to use because village representative are local people.
Pa Nga	The GRM process is clear and easy to use because CSO member are local people. We already sent complaints.
Ka Lawt	I know we can send the complaints through the village administrator, but I can't say if the mechanism is easy to use as I have not filed any complaints
Sin Ywar	The GRM process is clear and easy to use because we can complain in the village.
Ohn Ta Pin	I have sent the complaint. It was easy to do.
Tha Pyay Kone	The GRM process is clear and easy to use because the village representative is our local people. We already sent complaints.
Htan Pin Chaung	The GRM process is clear and easy to use because the village representative is our local people.
Responses from women's groups	
Ka Yoke Pi	The GRM process is clear and easy to use because the village representative is our local people.
Pa Nga	The GRM process is clear and easy to use because CSO members are local people.
Ka Lawt	The process is clear as explained.
Sin Ywar	The GRM process is clear and easy to use because we can complain in the village.
Ohn Ta Pin	It was easy to do as we also have the CSO representative for our village.
Tha Pyay Kone	The GRM process is clear and easy to use because village representative is our local people. We already sent complaints.
Htan Pin Chaung	The GRM process is clear and easy to use because village representative is our local people.

It is evident that for both men and women groups, the GRM process is clear. A key factor to the mechanism seems to be the integration of local people and CSOs. This element has influenced and shaped the acceptance of the mechanism as well as usability. Since representatives are required to lodge a complaint via a village representative, CSO, or village admin, ability to communicate in a language that is familiar is important.

Further encouragement to use of mechanism, will require the GRM to be implemented at a village level.

C4. Which channel do you prefer to use to register the complaint and why?

Responses from men's groups	
Ka Yoke Pi	We preferred to use via letter and directly send to representative for complaints. We like working with both CSO or village representative who is a grievance officer.
Pa Nga	We preferred to use via letter and phone, and directly send to representative for complaint. We want the suggestion box to be placed at village administrator office. We like working with CSO as a grievance officer.
Ka Lawt	We preferred to use via phone and directly call the representative for a complaint. We like working with local representatives instead of CSO as a grievance officer. The suggestion box can be placed at village administrator office.
Andin	No Men
Sin Ywar	We like to send the complaints directly. If there is a suggestion box, we want it to be in the village administrator office. We like working with CSO as grievance officer.
Ohn Ta Pin	We prefer to use via letter and directly send to representative for complaint. We like working with CSO as a grievance officer. We want the suggestion box to located in the VT admin office.
Tha Pyay Kone	We prefer to use via letter and directly send to representative for complaint. We want the suggestion box to be located in the village tract admin office. We like working with CSO as a grievance officer.
Htan Pin Chaung	We preferred to use via letter and directly send to representative for complaint. We want to have the suggestion box located in the village central junction. We also like working with the CSO as the grievance officer.
Responses from women's groups	
Ka Yoke Pi	We preferred to use via letter and directly send to representatives to lodge complaints. We like working with both CSO or the village representative who is a grievance officer.
Pa Nga	We preferred to use via letter and phone, and directly send to representative for complaint. We want the suggestion box to be placed at village administrator office. We like working with CSO as a grievance officer.
Ka Lawt	We preferred to use via phone and directly call to representative for complaint. We like working with local representatives instead of CSO as a grievance officer. The suggestion box can be placed at village administrator office.
Andin	We liked all channels and directly sending the complaints to representatives. Want the suggestion box to be located in the village tract admin office. We like working with CSO as a grievance officer.
Sin Ywar	We like to send the complaints directly. If there is a suggestion box, we want it to be in the village administrator office. We like working with CSO as grievance officer.
Ohn Ta Pin	We prefer to use via letter and directly send to representative for complaint. We like working with CSO as a grievance officer. We want the suggestion box to be located in the VT admin office.
Tha Pyay Kone	We prefer to communicate via letter and directly send to the representative. Want the suggestion box to be located in the village tract admin office. We like working with CSO as a grievance officer.
Htan Pin Chaung	We preferred to use via letter and directly send to representative for complaint. Want to locate the suggestion box in village central junction. We like working with CSO as a grievance officer.

Responses indicate that a majority of the village tracts prefer lodging grievances via a letter and directly to the appointed CSO and or VT representative. Furthermore, respondents suggested that suggestion boxes should be located in the admin office. It assumed that this would help with the legitimacy of the complaints. All respondents confirm that they are satisfied with the appointed grievance officers.

C5. Do you agree with the proposed steps of decision-making in the grievance resolution? (VT level, township level, district level) If No, why not? What would you change?

All participants, both men and women, agree with the proposed steps of decision-making associated with the GRM. The proposed steps are aligned with the existing administration structures evident across the village tracts. Participants agreed that complaints should be first addressed at a village tract level, followed by township level and then district level.

C6. What do you think about the GRM committee; how should it be established and, and who should be part of it in future?

Overall Response

In GRM committee should be established village admin, village elderly, and leaders, made up of 3 or 5 members.

In GRM committee should be established village admin, CSO and local people.

In GRM committee should be established village admin and village elderly people and CSO.

In GRM committee should be established with educated people, village elderly and leaders.

In GRM committee should be established Admin, young educated persons, and those who can actually work.

Across a majority of the village tracts, the village admin was identified as a key member of the committee. Other members included the presence of a CSO, village elderly, youth groups, and educated members of the village. The identification of representatives signifies the importance of each type of person for the responding representative. Ohn Ta Pin and Htan Pin Chaung Gyi were the only representatives to mention the need to ensure gender equality. Across the discussions, representatives clarified the importance of having at least 3-5 representatives to make up the GRM committee.

C7. Do you have any complaints/suggestions on key performance indicators (KPIs)? What are they?

Concerning the KPIs, village representatives indicated they had no complaints or further suggestions for improvement. However, as the GRM process did not include a close out stage, it is possible that villagers have not fully experienced the grievance process. In addition, suggestions received via the grievance log indicate that responses should be provided quicker than what has been currently experienced. It is expected that once the GRM is fully implemented, monitoring and evaluation periods will allow villagers to review and revise KPIs accordingly.

C8. What is your overall satisfaction with GRM process? Please rate from 1 to 5, where 1 – very unsatisfied, and 5 – very satisfied

Overall Response from Village Tracts

Ka Yoke Pi	Rating of the satisfaction of GRM process is 5.
Pa Nga	Rating of the satisfaction of GRM process is 4
Ka Lawt	Rating of the satisfaction of GRM process is 4.
Andin	Rating of the satisfaction of GRM process is 3.
Sin Ywar	Rating of the satisfaction of GRM process is 4.
Ohn Ta Pin	Rating of the satisfaction of GRM process is 4
Tha Pyay Kone	Rating of the satisfaction of GRM process is 5.
Htan Pin Chaung	Rating of the satisfaction of GRM process is 5.

On average, the village representatives have rated their satisfaction as a 4. This indicates that the village tracts have accepted the mechanism and satisfied with the process. In particular, satisfied with how to use the mechanism and how to access the mechanism. In addition, representatives felt the collaboration with CSO and local representatives who know the context and the language of the communities helped the communities to better understand the process. Overall the decision-making process reflects the existing one that has been socially approved and people feel inclusive as they were able to use it.

For An Din, the village representatives could not clearly state their level of satisfaction, as they were not fully aware of the mechanism. However, after learning more about the mechanism they felt the GRM, was a good system based on the participatory approach it encouraged including but not limited to the access to communicate and provide concerns.

The following were additional suggestions for the overall project.

Do you have any other suggestion or questions?

Men and Women	
Ka Yoke Pi	No More Suggestion
Pa Nga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We want awareness and vocational trainings from REDD+. We want to know when the project will begin.
Ka Lawt	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It would be nice if the mining can be banned here. It's good to have plants. It protects the environment.
Andin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We want you to take more time and build the trust with local people. Then we want you to become involved in the forest conservation activities collaborating with local people.

Sin Ywar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No More Suggestion
Ohn Ta Pin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is only a pilot project and not a real project so we cannot provide suggestions. If the project will implemented that we can provide suggestions.
Tha Pyay Kone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No More Suggestion.
Htan Pin Chaung Gyi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We would like to request to provide the bridge over the creek on the way to mangrove. Thankful for consultation about the UN REDD+, FPIC, PAMs and GRM.

3.5.2.2. Findings and Analysis on KII Results of Each Question Per Village Tract

Key Informant Interviews were conducted across 8 village tracts in 3 townships to primarily understand the effectiveness of the grievance redress mechanism. Questions on GRM were also raised to understand communities' perception and opinions on proposed GRM. A total of 46 respondents across 8 village tracts participated in key informant interviews. At least 36% of respondents were female.

Q.1 Were you aware of the GRM feedback process pilot conducted in your village tract?

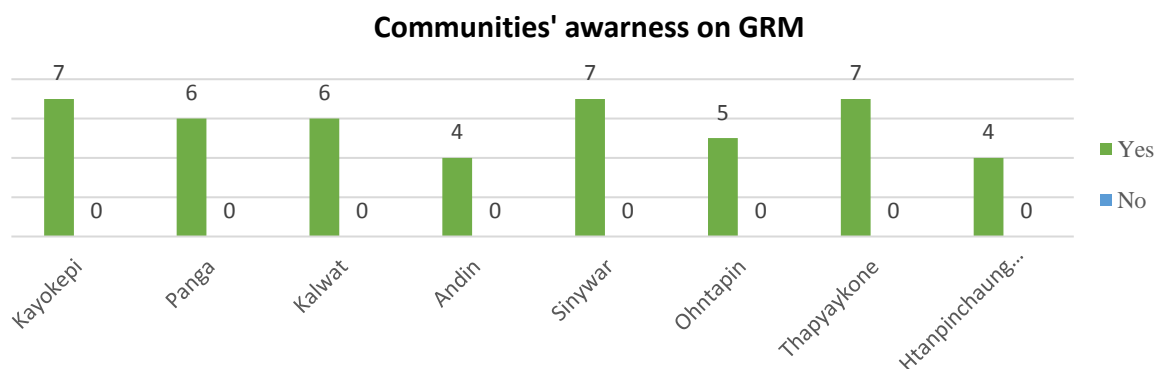


Figure 8. Communities' awareness on Grievance Redress Mechanism

	Ka Yoke Pi		Pa Nga		Ka Lwat		An Din		Sin Ywar		Ohn Ta Pin		Tha Pyay Kone		Htanpin chaunggyi	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Male	3	0	4	0	3	0	3	0	6	0	3	0	5	0	2	0
Female	4	0	2	0	3	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	2	0

Table 12. Communities' awareness on Grievance Redress Mechanism

Results indicate that 100% of respondents interviewed are aware of the GRM process piloted in their village tracts. This indicates information provided during the consultation was clear and successfully communicated. Materials used during the initial consultation included handouts, illustrations, and examples of GRM reports conveying indicators and data sets. In addition, the training of CSOs and village tract representatives to help

disseminate information proved to be effective as they acted as an immediate source of information.

Q.2 Was the mechanism accessible to you?

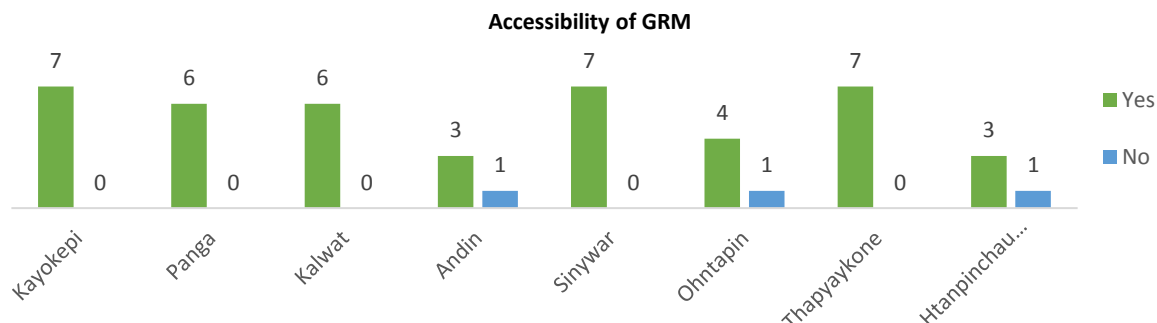


Figure 9. Accessibility of GRM

	Kayokepi		Panga		Kalwat		Andin		Sinywar		Ohntapin		Thapyaykone		Htanpin chaunggyi	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Male	3	0	4	0	3	0	3	0	6	0	2	1	5	0	1	1
Female	4	0	2	0	3	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	2	0	2	0

Table 13. Accessibility of GRM

At least 93% of respondents confirmed they had access to the GRM. A key success factor were the appointed CSOs and village representatives tasked with conducting consultations at the village level and collecting grievances during the meetings held with communities.

In Ka York Pi and Pa Nga, respondents indicated that they were able access village representatives to provide their grievance and grievance letter following the consultation. For villages with CSO representatives in Paung Township, respondents confirmed their satisfaction with calling the CSO and providing their grievances by phone.

However, 1 respondent from An Din, Htan Pin Chaung Gyi and Ohn Ta Pin stated they did not feel the mechanism was accessible enough. Primary reasons for each village are listed below:

Village	Stated Reason
Andin	Consultation was only held at the village tract level. No representatives were appointed the task of collecting grievances. It is possible that the respondent did not attend the initial consultation.
Htan Pin Chaungyi	Consultation was only held at the village tract level. A CSO representative was appointed to provide information and collect grievances at a VT level. Certain parts of the village is difficult to access and phone network is poor.
Ohn Ta Pin	Consultations were held at the village level but the respondent was not present at the initial consultation. The respondent currently resides in the rubber forest making it challenging for him to access

	the GRM.
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Q.3 Do you think the GRM process was clear and easy to use?

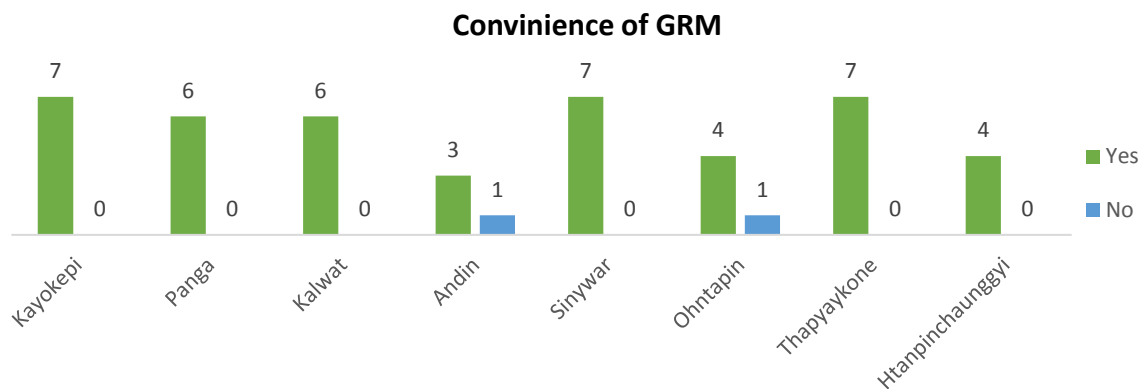


Figure 10. Convenience of GRM

	Kayokepi		Panga		Kalwat		Andin		Sinywar		Ohntapin		Thapyaykone		Htanpinchaunggyi	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Male	3	0	4	0	3	0	3	0	6	0	2	1	5	0	2	0
Female	4	0	2	0	3	0	0	1	1	0	2	0	2	0	2	0

Table 14. Convenience of GRM

The GRM process is clear and easy to use for 94% of respondents.

Key reasons stated by respondents include the following:

- Effectiveness of consultations held at the village level. Respondents indicated consultations helped to improve their understanding of the GRM and the associated process.
- Identification of village tract representatives. Respondents felt it was important and convenient to have a local representative based in their village tract. This ensured direct accessibility and encouraged face-to-face conversation.
- Identification of CSO representatives. Respondents in Sin Ywar and Tha Pyay Kone felt it was convenient to have CSO appointed to collect grievances as they could directly contact them and lodge their complaints.

A respondent from Andin and Ohn Ta Pin, considered the process unclear affecting their ability and experience of using the mechanism.

Q.4 Did you have any complaint about the FPIC process, REDD+ and PaMs?

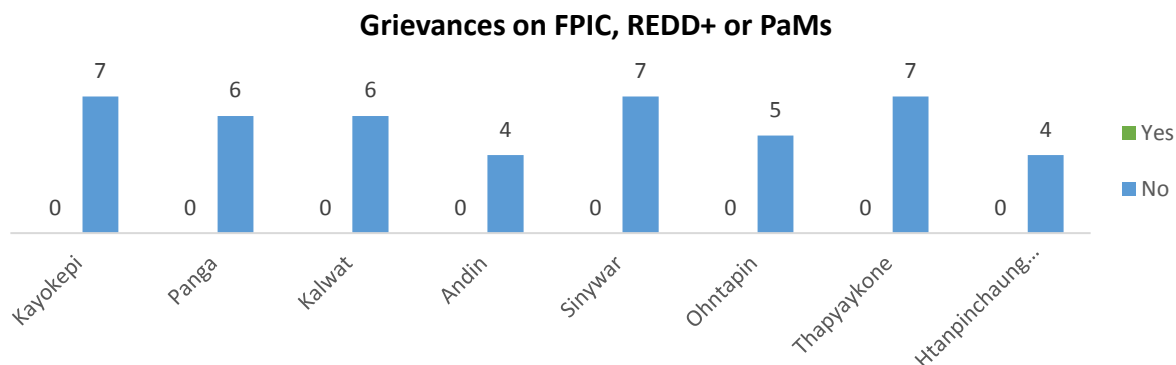


Figure 11. Grievances on FPIC Process, REDD+ and PaMs

	Kayokepi		Panga		Kalwat		Andin		Sinywar		Ohntapin		Thapyaykone		Htanpinchaunggyi	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Male	0	3	0	4	0	3	0	3	0	6	0	3	0	5	0	2
Female	0	4	0	2	0	3	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	2

Table 15. Grievances on FPIC Process, REDD+ and PaMs

All respondents stated they did not have any complaints associated with the FPIC process, REDD+ or PaMs.

Grievances received so far have been primarily associated with social issues evident in the village. This includes but not limited to land usage and compensation. The results received from this question indicate villages understand REDD+ and the associated consultation process and management systems. Refer to Appendix 3 for an overview of grievances received.

Q.5 Did you know how to file your grievance?

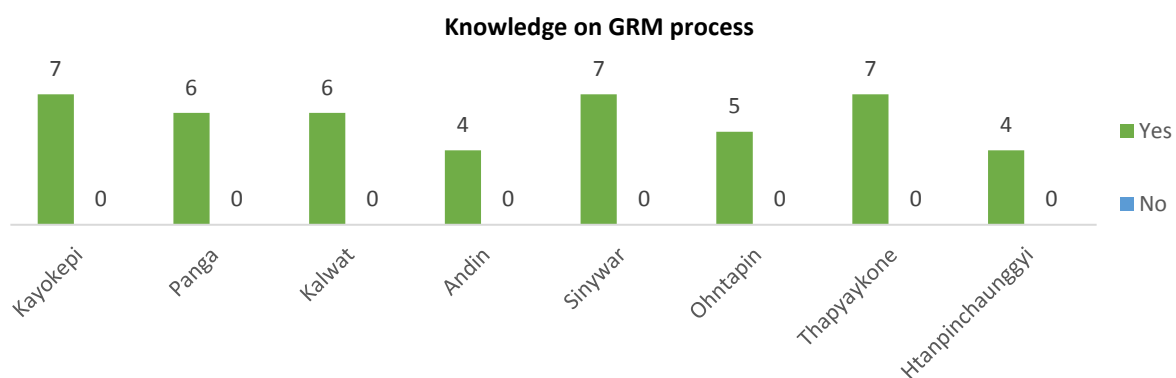


Figure 12. Knowledge on GRM process

	Kayokepi	Panga	Kalwat	Andin	Sinywar	Ohntapin	Thapyaykone	Htanpinchaunggyi
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	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Male	3	0	4	0	3	0	3	0	6	0	3	0	5	0	2	0
Female	4	0	2	0	3	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	2	0

Table 16. Knowledge on GRM process

All respondents (100%) knew how to file a grievance. In particular, respondents stated they lodged grievances via phone, letter, or directly to the appointed village or CSO representatives. Previous questions indicate that the core challenge with the GRM is accessing the mechanism. Questions 5 confirms that all respondents understand and are aware of how file a grievance.

Q.6 Did you file a complaint?

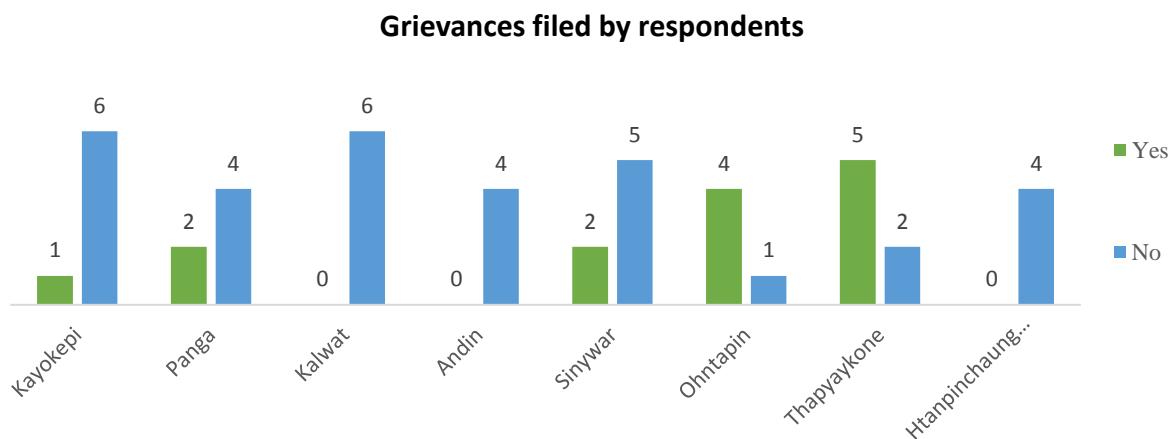


Figure 13. Grievances filed by respondents

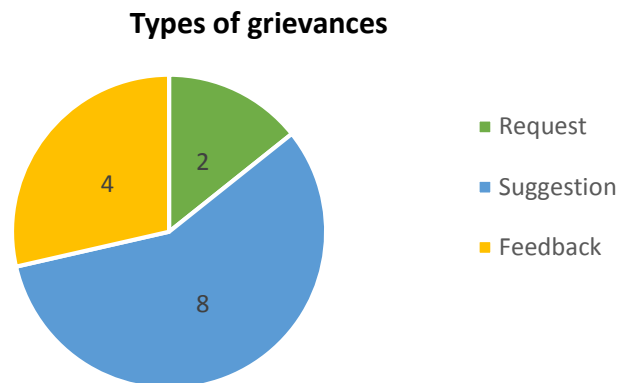
	Kayokepi		Panga		Kalwat		Andin		Sinywar		Ohntapin		Thapyaykone		Htanpin chaunggyi	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Male	1	2	2	2	0	3	0	3	2	4	2	1	4	1	0	2
Female	0	4	0	2	0	3	0	1	0	1	2	0	1	1	0	2

Table 17. Grievances filed by respondents

Only 30% of the interviewed respondents had previously filed grievances. A number of these grievances were actually questions and suggestions related to previous incidents that had occurred in the villages prior to the consultation.

Types of suggestions and questions received are outlined below:

- Grievances associated with the recent flood;
- Requests for livelihood support
- Types of extension services to protect forest areas



Examples of grievances are provided below, all grievances received in the project can be found in Annex 3.

Examples of Grievances Filed	Types of Grievance
In our region, some of our local people are a bit worried about PaMs (10) as our livelihood depends on the forest. Concerning with the above statement, if you are planning the project, we need to do discussion together how to collaborate.	Suggestion
We have an understanding that the mangroves which are growing here for the past 15 years protect us from the natural disasters. Our region is highly dependent on the mangroves for our living and as it is very close to the sea. In continuation to the subject presented above, I would like to suggest to have strong system for the conservation of the mangroves on the ground.	Suggestion
We have caused deforestation before in our village. We would want REDD+ to give training and raise awareness about deforestation at our village. We look forward for the collaboration of REDD+ and local community in the long run.	Feedback
Within the last seven years, there was the white mangroves (VICENNIA OFFICINALIS), and nipa palm grown on the bank of the beach of the Tha Pyay Kone village tract. The villagers would like to turn this area into the farmland. I would like to suggest that the above statement will support the job employment and the economic growth that will help the welfare of households.	Suggestion

Table 18. Examples of Grievances received

Q.7 Did you receive feedback for your complaint?

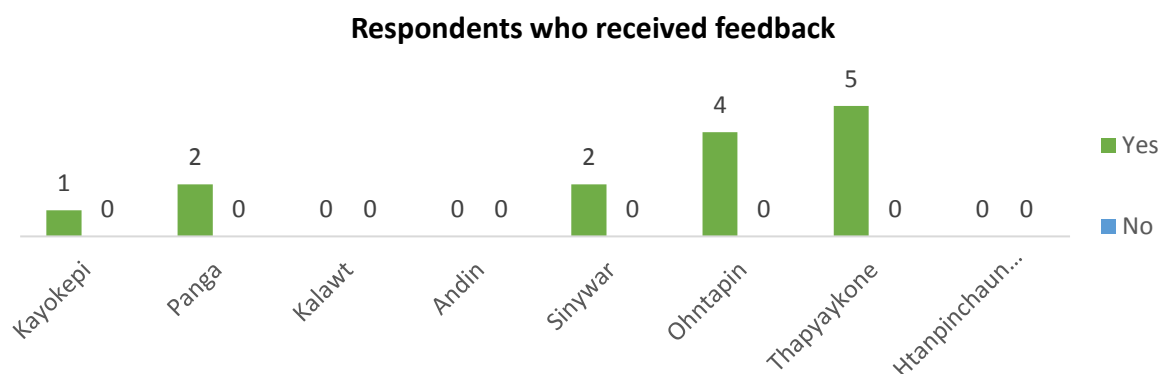


Figure 14. Respondents who received feedback

	Kayokepi		Panga		Kalwat		Andin		Sinywar		Ohntapin		Thapyaykone		Htanpin chaunggyi	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Male	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	4	0	0	0
Female	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0

Table 19. Respondents who received feedback

All 14 grievances received from respondents were reviewed and acknowledgement provided including and feedback.

Q.7.1 Are you satisfied with the way you received the feedback?

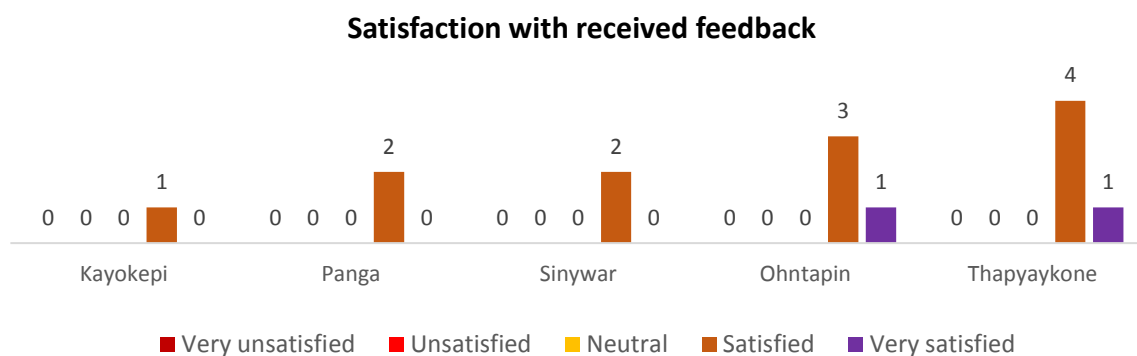


Figure 15. Satisfaction with received feedback

	Kayokepi		Panga		Sinywar		Ohntapin		Thapyay kone	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Very unsatisfied	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unsatisfied	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neutral	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0
Satisfied	1	0	2	0	2	0	1	2	3	1
Very satisfied	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0

Table 20. Satisfaction with received feedback

As previously mentioned, 14 respondents, interviewed from 5 VTs, had filed grievances. At least 14% of the respondents stated they were very satisfied with the feedback provided and how the feedback was delivered. Whereas the remaining respondents felt feedback should have been received earlier.

Despite the type of grievance received, it is evident that a reply to each complaint or suggestion should be provided within a specific timeframe to ensure complainants feel their voices are acknowledged.

Q.8 Did you have any difficulty in communicating with the grievance officer?

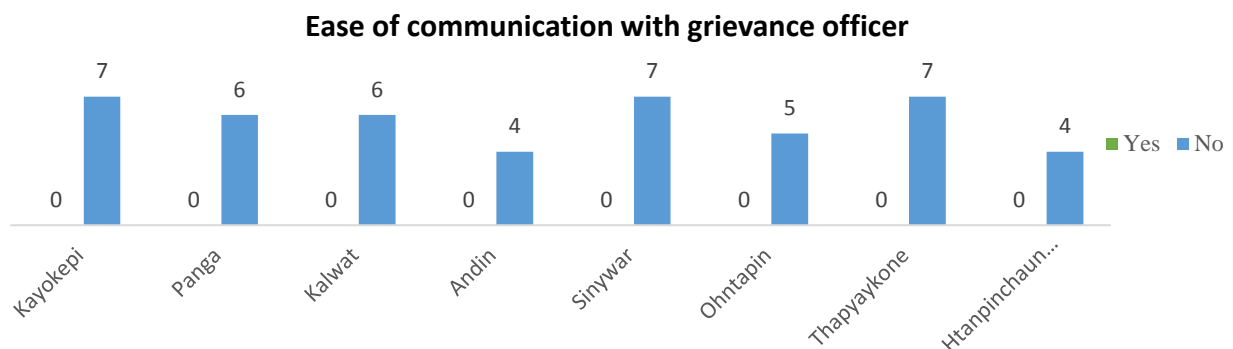


Figure 16. Ease of communication with grievance officer

	Kayokepi		Panga		Kalwat		Andin		Sinywar		Ohntapin		Thapyay kone		Htanpin chaunggyi	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Male	0	3	0	4	0	3	0	3	0	6	0	3	0	5	0	2
Female	0	4	0	2	0	3	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	2

Table 10. Ease of communication with grievance officer

All respondents found it fairly easy to communicate with the appointed grievance officers. This was primarily due to the following reasons:

- Grievance officers were often trusted members of the villages
- Given the familiarity with grievance officers, communication was seen as an easy activity

- CSOs appointed had been operating in some areas for long of period of establishing a relationship with key villages and village tracks. At the same time establishing good engagement and facilitation skills
- Grievance officers appointed were able to speak the local language

Q.9 What is your overall satisfaction with GRM process?

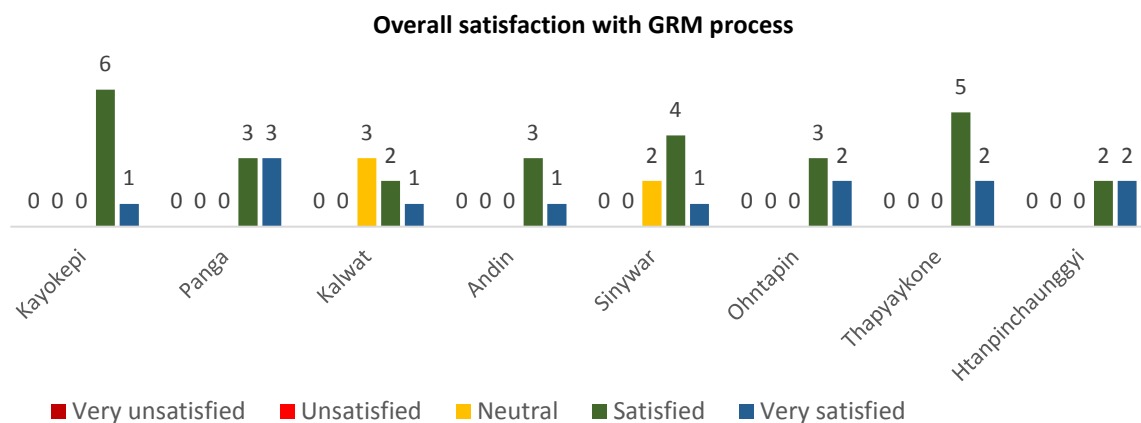


Figure 17. Overall satisfaction with GRM process

	Kayokepi		Panga		Kalwat		Andin		Sinywar		Ohntapin		Thapyaykone		Htanpinchaunggyi	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Very unsatisfied	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unsatisfied	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Neutral	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Satisfied	6	0	1	2	2	0	2	1	4	0	2	1	4	1	1	1
Very satisfied	1	0	3	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	1	1	1	1

Table 11. Overall satisfaction with GRM process

When monitoring the level of satisfaction with the GRM process, 89% of the respondents indicated they were satisfied with the process. However, the remaining number respondents from Ka Lawt and Sin Ywar indicated that they were neutral about the process as they were yet to use the mechanism.

Q.10 Do you see yourself using this mechanism for t future REDD+ activities?

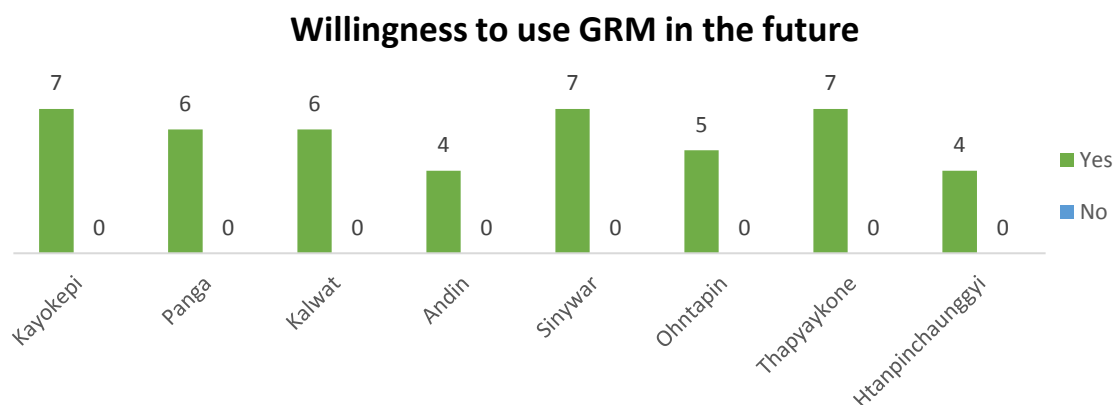


Figure 18. Willingness to use GRM in the future

	Kayokepi		Panga		Kalwat		Andin		Sinywar		Ohntapin		Thapyaykone		Htanpinchaunggyi	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Male	3	0	4	0	3	0	3	0	6	0	3	0	5	0	2	0
Female	4	0	2	0	3	0	1	0	1	0	2	0	2	0	2	0

Table 12. Willingness to use GRM in the future

Given the results received so far, it is no surprise that respondents stated they would use the mechanism in the future as it allows them to easily communicate their grievances and encourage two-way communication. This is further supported by the responses provided in the table below.

- I will use the mechanism because we can raise our voice about the project.
- Yes, because it was easy to use.
- I will use it more because I like how we received the feedback we filed for.
- Yes. It is nice to know that I can send if I have any concern.

Q.11 Do you have any suggestions/feedback on the mechanism?

To complete the interviews, respondents were asked to provide feedback on how to improve the mechanism. The feedback received has been categorized and conveyed below with supporting quotes.

1. Frequency

Respondents felt that additional GRM awareness sessions should occur more frequently to ensure communities understood the purpose of the mechanism and most importantly the process associated with the mechanism.

2. Continuously building trust

Given the success of the initial consultation and the use of appointing grievance officers at the village and village tract level, respondents recognized the importance of building trust. As a result, a suggestion is to continue trust once the REDD+ program progresses to the next level. According to respondents this is a key factor in achieving success.

3. Language

Understanding the community profile including language influences the community's ability to access the mechanism. Respondents confirmed that when ethnic groups are present the local language should be used. This should be evident across communication materials used as well as throughout the consultation process.

4. Timing of feedback

Respondents felt feedback for each grievance received should be provided in a timely manner avoiding delays. In the process, maintaining trust in the mechanism. It is also evident that additional consultation on M&E should take place carefully explaining when acknowledgement, feedback, and closure should take place. In addition, engage with communities to better understand how to identify realistic indicators that future grievance officers, committees etc. can abide by.

- I would like to suggest conducting GRM awareness sessions in communities more frequently to increase the knowledge and understanding of the GRM
- I think it is important for the mechanism to be trusted in the communities once implementation begins
- It is good to use the local language for those who live in communities where ethnic groups are present
- I would like the project to discuss with the community again and inform when the mechanism will actually be implemented
- We want to receive feedback as soon as possible after we submit a grievance

4. Recommendations

4.1. Recommendations for the improvement of FPIC process

4.1.1. Lessons learned

Having reviewed the FPIC process against the initial criteria the following observations and lessons were made – Table 24.

	Lessons Learned
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communities should be well informed about upcoming consultations through various channels – announcements in the village, project leaflet, letters to the villagers, village administrator, creating Viber group for communication with village representatives; It is important to always consider important festivals such as Thadingyut festival, national day festival etc. and avoid organizing consultation during this time; • Identify an indicative timeline for engagement activities and determine how activities will be sequenced; Communities should be well informed about upcoming consultations; Development of a communication and information strategy is an appropriate and effective way. A communication plan can help to ensure that all aspects of the consent process are communicated to the right-holders. The information provided should be balanced explaining the benefits and potential risks of the suggested Policy and Measure. • Communication with each community must be in the language the communities speak

	<p>and use of a translator or facilitator might be required if the team doesn't speak the same language. Although it would be preferred if the project officer speaks the language of the community;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The meeting time is an important factor for women to participate. The time around 10 am- 12pm and 2pm-4pm are considered the best time in general as during this time, the women have finished preparing meals. Among the aspects to discuss and capture: who should make the decisions, possible timeframe for community discussions and agreement, how potentially marginalized groups will be involved, requirements to reach a decision and how agreements will be documented. For important meetings, it is preferred to invite the whole village with an invitation letter. • It cannot be expected that for each consultation, every right-holder will join, nor will share the information to others. Therefore, it is important to strategically calculate how many consultations will be needed and launch the grievance mechanism since the beginning for people to have a communication channel to ask and send suggestions. It is beneficial to organize the first meeting at the village level; • It is important to identify active and influential groups in the village, which could support and encourage others to participate. However, those groups may mostly influence the people with similar interests, not cover other stakeholder groups. Any important new information or changing circumstances or policies should be shared transparently and discussed if necessary.
Mangrove	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In VT with mangroves, there are two main livelihoods: farmers and fishermen. The interest of each group is usually different. Farmers are keen on extending farmland into vacant land while fishermen are keen on doing mangrove conservation. It is important to take this into consideration and investigate whether there are internal conflicts on land use between the villages from the same VT; • It is important to identify if the mangroves are considered vacant land or reserved forest by FD. If it is vacant land, different interests may exist. This is especially relevant in the case of PaM 10. The different interests can be within the same village or between two different villages. Therefore, during consultation, it is important to involve both villages even if one village is not close to the mangrove area – this would prevent conflict; • It is important to consider that villages that are out in the sea/across the river require a water way to access land and attend the consultation. The time of high tides can influence the transportation way. It is important to inform villagers in advance for any village tract meeting; • Usually the main village may not depend on the mangrove forest for any resource but the villages that do not have access to electricity depend on the mangrove for fuel wood. This should be monitored closely during the data collection stage.
Terrestrial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the main livelihoods in Mon state among the villagers is growing rubber which is one of the factors of deforestation. It is important to identify the owners of the rubber plantation to involve them in consultation. Some of the rubber growers do not live in the village which might create a potential barrier; • There are some villages that are located remotely and far away from the main village in the village tract, additional time should be allocated to inform them about consultation. It is recommended to visit those areas for data collection and consultation.
Union Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The engagement process still requires information to be provided to GAD, with the collaboration of FD for smooth planning and initial introduction to the villagers. Although, it should be considered during the engagement process whether the GAD has an influence

	<p>over the village admin who in turn has an influence over the village; The presence of GAD or FD at the data collection stage should be minimum to gather non-bias data.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth awareness raising and information about the program should be provided to FD and GAD to encourage effective support; • It was observed that appointing village representatives to collect grievances proves to be an effective approach.
Mixed Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presence and the role of EAO in this area and their influence should be identified firstly. In case of the pilot, in mixed-controlled areas the decision-making process was the same as for the union control location however influence of NMSP was observed; • If there is no EAO representative in the administration, the engagement process can follow the same as for Union System. (In Andin case, it is Union System); • If there is an affiliation, it is important to identify which group in the village tract is influenced by EAO/ associates and engage them through EAO focal person.
EAO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Even though the approval process to EAO does not have as many red tape as the union administration, it is important to identify the liaison person from the EAO side and prepare to have a backup person to contact as the liaison person can always change; • In EAO areas, there are chances that conflict can break out anytime among different EAO or with Tatmadaw; • EAOs are sensitive to security issues. Some of the EAOs would be willing to work with the program but would not want to be affiliated with government or work with the government; <p>The villagers might be easier to organize through EAO representatives. At the same time, presence of EAOs in some villages during the consultation can influence the discussion and data collection. Presence of EAOs should be avoided during the consultations and not introduce bias unless right-holders choose EAOs to represent them. The villages prefer the decision-making to be done at the VT level and involve VT admin, party leader village leaders and respective leaders based on the issues. VT >> Township NMSP >> District NMSP >> State NMSP. Although it can differ depending on the EAO.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication in EAO area can be difficult due to the absence of telecommunication as one of security precessions. Therefore, in this case, it is important to ensure that the liaison person can efficiently pass the information within the EAO area. In addition, to improve coordination with the EAO, they can advise on who/ which CSO they would prefer to work with or would allow to work in their area.
Accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the case of Mon State, majority of the village tracts are accessible but some villages in some VTs are less assessable.
Less Accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the case of Mon state, even the less accessible VT can be easily accessible. But this will be different in places like Ayeyarwady. In this case, for the engagement, it is important to identify who can be the liaison person from less accessible villages to deliver information. It is suggested to identify which telephone line is the best to communicate on and open a Viber account for the liaison person. Capacity of this person should be developed.

4.2.2. Recommendations for FPIC process

Based on the key findings, lessons learned and discussions with the communities of the outcomes of the Project, the following recommendations are proposed to improve the approach of the FPIC process:

1. Conduct FPIC preparation at the village level

Preparation for FPIC plays a crucial role in carrying out FPIC and its outcomes. This is a crucial step for the success of the process. Multiple factors indicate that in order to follow all the principles of Free Prior Informed Consent, the preparation process, specifically gathering of the primary data should start at the village level. Identifying rights-holders, examining how communities record and make decisions, whether any conflicts or discrimination towards indigenous people exist, understanding the legacy issues/past conflict of the targeted area is challenging at the village tract as these stakeholders might not be aware of consultation, have barriers to attend consultation or won't have an opportunity to attend as some of the villages are more remote than others.

The preparation stage might require multiple field visits in order to gather all the information and build trust with right-holders.

2. Establish REDD+ working group at the village level

In the National REDD+ Program, appropriate decision-making authorities will vary depending on the state or region of Myanmar. It is important to identify whether existing decision-making structures or authorities will be representing right-holders in the process of FPIC. Accomplishing this task would be challenging at the village tract level as the administrative structure might differ depending on the authority. Although the majority of studied village tracts have a traditional way of making decisions often involving the village tract administrator, village leaders and respective leaders. However, this often depends on the subject and matter of issues. As the subject of REDD+ is broad, decision-making processes may vary. For this reason, village level consultation should occur at the initial stage and rights-holders should establish a working group at the village level which would represent the interests of the rights-holders at the village tract level. Depending on the decision of the village, this group can play a role of focal people, making sure the information is passed to other members of the community, or be entitled to make a decision for the village. Guidance should be provided to the community on how to form the group to make sure gender-equality is maintained, representation of ethnic groups and other vulnerable groups are fairly represented. To facilitate full representation of the interests' special activities or safeguards might be required. By following traditional and hierarchical ways of decision-making, some communities might be resistant to include women in the process.

3. Engaging with support organizations

The Project has confirmed the effectiveness of working with regional or local representative organizations working in the areas related to the environment,

conservation, rights of indigenous peoples and/or expert or advocacy groups – enables communities to access independent information and advice about the REDD+ initiative. In addition, these organizations can support FPIC implementation by achieving the following:

- Facilitate the process of dialogue between REDD+ and the communities,
- Act as a focal point of REDD+ in the area and provide additional information,
- Be a part of monitoring process of agreement between REDD+ and community.

4. Capacity building for rights-holders and support organizations

In order for rights-holders to make informed decisions, capacity building would be necessary to fully undertake FPIC. It is suggested that FPIC design process should identify the major supports needed (e.g. facilitation, information, and communication materials) to provide to local people to help facilitate their internal discussion. Capacity building for support organizations would be required to develop an in-depth understanding of the Free Prior Informed Concept principles and guidelines along with the knowledge of the proposed Policies and Measures. These organizations need to have a good understanding of proposed plans in order to address questions the rights-holders may have.

5. Establish robust multi-channel communication strategy

Information flow within village tracts are not always efficient. Therefore, in order to guarantee one of the key principles of FPIC – ‘Informed’ – a strategy should be developed and consistently monitored. The information should be balanced and provide potential benefits and risks that REDD+ might lead to. Information should be conveyed in an easy, accessible and engaging way as subject of climate change. As REDD+ and PaMs are not easy to understand establishing a multi-channel communication strategy can help facilitate community’s awareness and understanding.

Multiple channels of information dissemination should be used to make sure that villages located in remote areas will be aware and have access to information. Some of the most effective channels include but are not limited to:

- Sharing information through village tract administrator, village leaders and youth groups – depending on the village;
- Sending letters to the rights-holders in advance of the consultation to inform about the date and time;
- Placing Project information leaflets in the village tract and village in a visible place communicating an overview of the project, dates of the agreed consultation or information sharing, contact details of the working group, supporting organization assigned to the village;
- Members of working groups would be key stakeholders to help share information at the village level;
- Developing informative, easy to understand, interactive videos would help to deliver information in an easy and accessible way;

- Use modern channels of communication – Viber groups can be created to disseminate information, share videos or other materials.

6. Time for the decision should be established by the rights-holders

Appropriate time should be given to the right-holders to consider proposed Policies and Measures. Interactive dialogue is likely to be interspersed with periods of time for community leaders and members to freely discuss their concerns and proposals among themselves. Local people should be involved in the FPIC process as early and as much as possible. It is recommended that they are involved in the selection of date and time for any activities related to FPIC at the village level, e.g. awareness raising, internal discussion. They should also be involved in the discussion on how much time is needed for them to discuss and come up with a decision.

7. Record of consent

One distinction between FPIC and more general consultation processes is that specific agreements should be documented in a mutually agreed form among all parties. The agreement should be specific and capture different areas like resource management, distribution of benefits and mitigation of potential risks, terms and conditions for the agreement. Once rights-holders are prepared to make a decision, the decision-making process should take place. Based on the preferences of the community, decisions can be made through open-voting or ballot. Further attention should be dedicated to make sure how principle of 'Free' will be guaranteed, especially in EAO-controlled area. Due to unexpected development of conflict in EAO-controlled village tracts, the Project to pilot the consent consultation in the area was prevented. This also applies to the Union-government controlled areas where GAD influence is still strong. Unless rights-holders decide to include village tract administrators in the decision-making process, their participation should be minimized. Both parties should maintain appropriate records of all agreements, including written accounts and audio or film records, and these should be made available to the communities in their preferred language and media formats.

4.2. Recommendations for the improvement of GRM process

Based on the results of the pilot of GRM, following recommendations were developed based on the principles of Grievance Redress Mechanism.

No.	Principles	Key Recommendations
1	Legitimacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include relevant government departments and administration bodies (Union or EAO) depending on the area.• Ensure decision-making powers are independent and representative of a group of people involved in the grievance
2	Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure accessibility considering the diverse range of communities• Involve systematic/consistent collection/compilation of data on the mechanism and appropriate information sharing• Include local based grievance officer for informing and improving engagement

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make information available in different languages • Ensure that information on grievance mechanisms are shared at each village level to improve access of the mechanism • Appoint local based GRM officer at a township level who understand the local context well and appoint village representative to encourage better information flow between village and village tract level. • Use local representatives that villagers are familiar with so that they will feel comfortable enough to raise a question, and or file a grievance. • Establish a process to collect grievances from the areas which don't have mobile connection
3	Predictability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly define procedures and time frames for each stage of the GRM • Identify and inform a clear time frame (KPI) of each stage of grievance mechanism so that the complainants will know what they should be expecting and when. • The indicators should be revised again after a certain period of time when the mechanism becomes functional within the community. For example, decreasing the period for acknowledgement and feedback and raising the percentage for satisfaction.
4	Fairness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the impact on different groups • Ensure transparency, confidentiality and impartially within the mechanism • Accessible to all groups including vulnerable groups • Always identify if there are different stakeholders that can be involved in the grievance/ issue and consider the impact on them as well.
5	Rights Compatibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all the different stakeholders have access to deliver their voices and concerns • The information is available in both Mon and Burmese language. • Make the grievance form available in the local language and encourage the complainants to write in their preferred local language if they wish. Clearly describe that it is not limited to only Burmese language.
6	Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish local partners to help roll out the mechanism and build trust • The role of EAO should be included in the grievance mechanism process • Ensure that the resolution system reflects the system that the community are comfortable with and trust to use. • Involve the village admin, and village elderly as well as the educated (youth) leaders that the villagers socially approve in the GRM committee and maintain gender equality.
7	Accountability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involve a structured approach to resolving complaints and concerns • Encourage feedback regarding REDD+ • Ensure accessibility considering the diverse range of communities as well as socio-cultural practices. • Involve systematic/consistent collection/compilation of data on the mechanism and appropriate information sharing
8	Community Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds awareness on communities about PaMs based on their livelihoods

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider the impact on all stakeholders with a focus on indigenous populations• Provide training to build capacity of the village representatives and grievance officers• The frequency of the requirement for awareness session will be different from one village to another. Identify the minimum requirement of awareness sessions as a standard and add on more sessions based on the needs of the village.• GRM campaigns should be considered to raise awareness about GRM• Baseline KAP should be conducted before the awareness raising and campaign to assess the level of initial knowledge. In addition a KAP survey should be completed at the end period to measure any progress or improvements.
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Appendix 1. Community Profile

Village Tract	Township	Villages	Village Tract Profile
An Din: Mixed-control, Accessible Mangrove	Ye	6	<p>Consist of six villages with total of 1469 households and a population of 9792. The majority of the population is Mon ethnic minority. VT has a strong influence from NMSP. The main Livelihood is Horticulture including Bettel Nut, Rubber Plantation, and Durian. The village tract has natural mangroves. In addition, forest department planted over 20 acres of mangrove and the community is planting mangrove forest. In 2015, a coal-fired power plant was planned to be build next to An Din village. However, the project was suspended in early 2016 after strong opposition and protest by local villagers. This issue remains unsolved as the project neither progressed nor cancelled. In order to protect the natural ecosystem, the community applied for a Community Forest Certificate 4 years ago but has not receive a certificate till now. There are several committees formed for the village tract by state government. The government committees are formed through a voting system (village tract administrator selects two to three nominates for the committees and villagers vote for their preferred candidate). The communities have formed the youth group to support environmental activities. This group is very actively working for mangrove plantation and protection. Issues or concerns are generally discussed with the village tract administrator and village' leaders make the final decision. If the question is related to religion, the village head monk makes the decision. The community respect their monk and the majority of the decisions, even non-religion related ones, are made by monk.</p>
An Nin Union-control, Accessible No Forest	Thanbyuzayat	5	<p>There is no Mangrove or Terrestrial forest because all the land is used for agriculture (paddy fields) and horticulture (rubber plantations). The area consists of five villages with total of 1084 households and a population of 4487 Male and 2638 female. The main ethnicity is Mon and some are Karen. There is also a large percentage of Bamar due to migration from the Ayerwady Region. Field observation indicates that there are some species along the shore line, but it couldn't be classified as Mangrove species. Village Tract has some groups and committees, such as Community development, Fire fighter committee, Public Army, NLD/ USDP/ NMSP, Funeral helping committee. Mon National day and Buddha festivals are mostly celebrated. Most of the land issues are between communities and are generally solved by the VTA and village leaders. Larger issues such as rape, land ownership between families are solved by relevant departments. General information (village meeting and important information for communities, meeting invitation e.g. village festival day) is distributed via phone and loud speaker.</p>
Ka Lawt Union control, Accessible, Terrestrial	Ye	1	<p>The Village Tract consist of one village only. There is a total of 800 households with a total population of 4142. The majority of the population is Mon ethnic minority. Although the village tract has a school and is accessible by both genders, the education is poor due to the lack of teachers. People use the land for agricultural purposes such as commercial farming. The villagers' religion is primarily Buddhism. Complaints amongst villagers are generally solved by the Village Tract Administrator. If it cannot be solved, the case is reviewed by departments of Township. If it is a religious case, the village's monk addresses the case.</p> <p>Water resources are sourced from a nearby mountain. The communities connect pipelines from the stream to their house. The mountain is over 3600 acres wide and 6 miles far from the village. Village Leaders shared that in March, there was an illegal logging case which was captured with the coordination of the forest department. At least 100 tons of hard wood species was cut. The Village Tract Administrator did not mention this case nor did the Township Forest Department.</p>
Ka Byar Union control, Less Accessible, no forest	Ye	3	<p>There is no forest land or mangrove along the beach. There is a mountain in the village which the communities depend on for water resources. The mountain is now owned by individual communities (own by 2 to 3 villagers which they protect with fence) where betel- nut, rubber, durian is planted. The main livelihood is fishing, horticultural and livestock. The majority of the communities are Mon and they follow Buddhism. Land issues are normally within the communities and are resolved at this level. During rainy season they have to travel with a lorry because of floods in Han Kan village. Ka Byar was formally controlled by NMSP, but at the moment there is peace.</p> <p>According to the community, one of the reasons of deforestation is peace. When the EAO was controlling the land, no one could claim ownership. Now the land price has increased, and people have applied for documents to indicate land ownership and converted the forest land for horticulture purpose.</p>

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			Land issues are present within the communities.
Kyauk Mi Khaung 4 villages: Union control, Accessible, no forest 3 villages: EAO control, Less Accessible, terrestrial forest	Ye	7	<p>The village tract has total of 1159 households with a population of 5247. Out of 7 villages, 4 villages are under government control. Representatives of these villages attended the meeting Other 3 villages representatives did not attend the meeting as the village administrator did not invite them. The 3 villages (Wei Zin, Wei Paung, Pha Lai villages) are under NMSP control. The village leaders are selected by NMSP applying their own process and procedures. This 3 villages are near Reserved forest. Separate approval will be required from NMSP and sub office of NMSP in Ye to access these villages. Those areas currently have conflict with KNU according to the forest ranger and VTA.</p> <p>Government control area: there is no forest land. There are not many complaints concerning land. Community issues and concerns are solved by VTA and village leaders. Complaints and issues that are not solved at the community level are addressed at the township level. The majority of the population is Mon, the main language of communication is Mon language. The communities' religion is Buddhism. The decision-making process is clear in the 4 villages controlled by the government. The NMSP control area, the decision-making process involves NMSP.</p>
Ka Yoke Pi Union control, Less Accessible, mangrove forest	Thanbyu-zayat	2	<p>The village tract has a total population of 7094 and 1282 households. There is a mangrove forest around the area. The two villages have different ethnic groups. Ka Yoke Pi has both Burmese and Mon people while the other village, Htaung Kay, only has Mon people. In Ka Yoke Pi, the main type of livelihood is rubber plantation while the main livelihood in Htaung Kay is fishing. Men are more responsible for managing the plantation and fishing which are the main income sources of the families. Women take care of their families and children. Both the men and women have equal opportunities to access to school and medical facility. There is also a high number of young people going to Thailand for work. There is a village tract level land management committee which is formed by the government to coordinate for land related issues. There are migrant workers working in the villages, especially for the fishing business. The workers are generally from the Ayeyawaddy Regions. The villagers believe that the forest area (mangroves) is not decreased as they do not do logging. Despite the majority of the people in Ka York Pi speak in Mon, they cannot read/write Mon. They couldn't read the UNDP's REDD+ materials (Mon version) well.</p>
Pa Nge Union control, Accessible, mangrove forest	Thanbyu-zayat	2	<p>Village Tract consists of 3344 households and a total population of 14028. Though the village tract is very diverse with Mon, Bamar, Rakhine and Karen; about 90% of the people in the village tract are Mon which makes Mon Language the preferred language. There is no terrestrial forest in the village tract. All the forest is turned into rubber gardens now. But there is mangrove along the river to the sea. Pa Nga has NMSP influence as it is a birthplace of NMSP current chairman. It is a very strong Mon national ethnic community. The main livelihood of the village track is rubber plantation. The village youth has a strong influence in the village. They lead, advocate and facilitate for the village development's activities. The issue is now moved to state level. There are a lot of community groups in the two villages such as social welfare group, blood donation group, mon literature group, youth volunteer group, maternal and children group, etc. There is a village tract level land management committee which is formed by the government to coordinate land related issues. The CBOs and community are interested in mangrove conservation activity. They are looking forward to more trainings or awareness raising activities happening in their VTs on conservation. The potential extension of farmland can impact on mangrove areas. Currently the VT has been protecting the mangrove area with the support of FD. But they want to raise more awareness to the community.</p>
Htan Pin Chanung Gyi Union control, Less Accessible, mangrove	Paung	3	<p>The village tract has total of 1461 households and a total population of 9665, with men and women in the ratio of 49:47. There are many ethnic groups among the people such as Mon, Karen, Bamar and Tamil, with the majority being Mon. The main language that the people use is Mon. People in the village tract depend on farming, agriculture, fishing and opening small enterprises such as small shops for their daily income. There is a maternal and child care group that helps the incapable mothers and the people in need but only one clinic for all of the three villages. There are a lot of community groups in the village tract, such as the funeral service group, firefighter committee, people's army, charity group and women's affair group. When there are problems or issues among the people, the problems are taken to the village tract administrator to be solved. Bigger issues that cannot be solved by</p>

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forest			<p>the VTA are taken to the township administrator. If the issue is related to land ownership, it is handed-over to the land management committee. All three villages in the village tract are of mangrove forest types. There are 300 acres of reserved mangrove area. The FD had also applied to extend this area to another 1450 acres as reserved area. There are representatives of People's Army who are armed with 10 guns, mainly responsible for village security. They work together with the village tract administration. The only land conflict is the conflict between the Military business enterprise called Myanmar Economic Holding Ltd and community. The land conflict with MEHL has reached parliament level.</p> <p>Community was enquiring on how the project provide any conservation activities in the VT.</p>
<p>Tha Pyay Kone</p> <p>Union control, Accessible with mangrove forest (only Kar The village)</p>	Paung	3	<p>A total of 274 households and 1856 people. The majority is Bamar and Mon. A Tamil ethnic group also lives in this VT. There are a few Karen ethnic minority living in this area. The villages rely heavily on agriculture and fisheries. The main livelihood is rice farming. The information is passed to the household leaders and they deliver it to the designated persons. For the village wide announcement, loudspeaker is used to share the information. Regarding the grievances or issues, the VTA handles the issues most of the time. Bigger issues that he cannot settle within are sent to relevant department/committee or to township level. For land issue, the process goes from village tract level and management committee to township level if necessary. Mangrove forest is found only in the village Kar The. It is also on vacant land, that was found by the sediment. The community is trying to apply CF for this mangrove area (300 acre.) There is a conflict between fishermen group and farmers group because the fishermen group wants to apply the vacant land for CF and the farmers want to apply it for farm land. Because of this conflict, the farmers do not let the fishermen pass through their fields to access to the river.</p> <p>There are representatives of People's Army who are armed with 5 guns, mainly responsible for village security. They work together with village administration.</p>
<p>Sin Ywar</p> <p>Union control, Less Accessible with terrestrial forest</p>	Paung	3	<p>There are total of 645 households. In those three villages, 99% of the people are Karen with only 1% being Burmese, so Mon is the preferred language used. The people mostly make use of agriculture, fishing and livestock farming. When there are complaints between the villagers, the villagers go to the village head and he/she will try to come up with a solution. If the village is not able to come up with a solution the problem is then taken to the township administrator or the police station. The villagers don't really have a say in the problem as the it is normally solved by the village tract administrator himself. The village tract has a community forest that has a total area of 500 acres and also a reserved forest. There is a conflict between the villagers and mining businesses. During our implementation, the expectation from the community is that we will help with mining conflict. The CF management is run by the committee members' own fund. They demonstrated an interest to have funding opportunity from our project.</p>
<p>Ohn Ta Pin</p> <p>Union control, Accessible, terrestrial forest</p>	Paung	6	<p>The tract has a total of 890 households and a total population of 5093. All the villages have terrestrial forests. Unlike the other village tract, the Pa O people are the majority at this village tract instead of Mon. The main livelihood of the village is agriculture, mostly rubber plantation. There are a lot of community groups in the village tract. Men's group is interested in conservation of forests, but they don't know how they can do it. Women's group participation in villages activities have not been encouraged in the past. But women participation has increased since NCCD project has been implemented in the village. All villagers are not happy with the mine as they clear the mountains and pollute the water. This can be the main issue raised by the community during our implementation.</p>

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Appendix 2.

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Annex 3. Received Grievances related to REDD+

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References

ⁱ UN REDD FPIC Guidelines

ⁱⁱ (MCRB, 2016).

ⁱⁱⁱ April 2012, *UNDP REDD+* – Guidelines on Stakeholder Engagement in REDD+ Readiness