

Review of AusAID Periodic Funding for Humanitarian Assistance to Burma (PFHAB)



Final Review Report

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Acknowledgements

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Special recognition must be made to the people of Burma who have sat and shared with us their stories, experience, and perceptions. We trust we have done justice to them.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

3DF	Three Diseases Fund
AACES	Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme
ACCESS	Australia Indonesia Community Engagement and Civil Society Strengthening Scheme
ACFID	Australian Council for International Development
ANC	Ante Natal Care
ANGO	Australian Non Government Organisation
ART	Anti Retroviral Treatment
AUD	Australian Dollar
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BI-MM	Burnet Institute Myanmar
CBO	Community Based Organisation/s
CSST	Civil Society Snapshot Tool
CSO	Civil Society Organisation/s
DIC	Drop In Centre
DNH	Do No Harm
FBO	Faith Based Organisation/s
FHAM	Funds for HIV/AIDS in Myanmar
FY	Financial Year
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
GF	Global Fund
HSP	Health Service Provider
HWG	Health Working Groups
IDU	Injecting Drug users
IEC	Information Education Communication
LRC	Local Resource Centre
MC	Management Committee
MCCH	Mobilising Community Capacities for Health
MDF	Multi-Donor Funds
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
<i>Metta</i>	<i>Metta</i> Development Foundation
MRCS	Myanmar Red Cross Society
MSI	Marie Stopes International
MSIM	Marie Stopes International Myanmar
MTR	Mid Term Review
MSM	Men Who Have Sex With Men
NGO	Non Government Organisations
ODE	Office for Development Assistance
ODST	Organisational Development Snapshot Tool
OECD-DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development - Development Co-operation Directorate
OVC	Orphan and Vulnerable Children

PAC	Post Abortion Care
PDO	<i>Phaung Daw Oo</i> Monastic Education High School
PFHAB	Periodic Funding for Humanitarian Assistance in Burma
PLP	Pacific Leadership Program (AusAID)
PLWHA	People Living with HIV/AIDS
SCLSP	Southern Chin Livelihood Security Project
SHG	Self Help Groups
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SRH	Sexual and Reproductive Health
STI/s	Sexually Transmitted Infection/s
TAP	Technical Assessment Panel
TOR	Terms of Reference
TYF	<i>Tedim</i> Youth Fellowship
UN	United Nations
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
USD	USD Dollars
VCCT	Voluntary Confidential Counselling and Testing
VDC	Village Development Committee
VSLA	Village Savings and Loans Associations
WC	World Concern
WJSH	<i>Wachet Jivitadana Sangha</i> Hospital
YHWG	Youth Health Working Group

Definitions

Burma/Myanmar and Burma/Burmese: In line with the common Australian government usage, the term Burma as used in this report relates to the people and country of Burma/Myanmar. While recognising that sensitivity exists, the term Burmese is used generically and does not delineate between the many ethnic groups which constitute the population.

Civil Society: The arena of uncoerced/voluntary collective action around shared interests, purposes and values. In theory, its institutional forms are distinct from those of the state, family and market, though in practice, the boundaries between state, civil society, family and market are often complex, blurred and negotiated. Civil society commonly embraces a diversity of spaces, actors and institutional forms, varying in their degree of formality, autonomy and power. Civil societies are often populated by organisations such as registered charities, development non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community groups, women's organisations, faith-based organisations (FBO), professional associations, trade unions, self-help groups, social movements, business associations, coalitions and advocacy groups¹.

Partnership: An ongoing working relationship where risks and benefits are shared. A partnership is based on principles of equity, transparency, and mutual accountability. In practical terms this means each partner's involvement in co-creating projects and programs, committing tangible resource contributions and mutual accountability².

¹ The London School of Economics: Centre for Civil Society; sourced on March 28th, 2011 at <http://www.answers.com/topic/civil-society>

² AACES Concept Design, (2010) p. 33

Executive Summary

Burma is among the poorest countries in South East Asia with almost half of its 50 million people living in poverty. It's development remains constrained by a lack of progress towards real democracy, economic reform and improved service delivery. It is a complex and changeable environment which provides significant challenges for development actors including a highly regulatory environment, limited opportunities for working with authorities or through existing systems, poor communications and management infrastructure, extensive development needs, considerable ethnic and geographic diversity, and a complex peace and security context.

The Australian aid program seeks to assist the people of Burma through a program of humanitarian assistance targeting Burma's poor and most vulnerable, particularly those living in remote geographical areas. The *Periodic Funding for Humanitarian Assistance in Burma* (PFHAB) is a key part of the partnership between AusAID and Australian Non Government Organisations (ANGOs) in support of the objectives of AusAID's Burma Humanitarian Aid Framework 2007 -2010³. PFHAB provides 9.1 million Australian Dollars (AUD)⁴ to the following projects in the health and livelihoods sector:

CARE Australia	Mobilising Community Capacities for Health
Burnet Institute	Strengthening HIV Responses through Partnership
Marie Stopes International	Mobilising Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health in Burma
CARE Australia	Southern Chin Livelihood Security Project

In February 2010, Australia announced an expanded aid program with significantly increased resources, which will move the Burma program from a primarily humanitarian to a more broad-based development objective. Within this context, AusAID has undertaken a review of PFHAB in order to:

- ✦ allow it to make any necessary adjustments in the remaining term of PFHAB so as to maximise the benefits; and
- ✦ commence a process to consider the design of an NGO partnership program in Burma which would build on the PFHAB successes and lessons learnt to date, but more broadly target strengthening of civil society in Burma in the future.

This report details the findings of the Review at the level of the objectives of the PFHAB mechanism, as well as of its supported projects, and identifies

³ AusAID, Burma Humanitarian Aid Framework 2007-2010, Canberra 2007

⁴ Feb 2008 to January 2013

emerging opportunities for enhanced partnerships with ANGOs, as well as emerging opportunities for AusAID engagement with civil society in Burma.

The key findings of the Review are:

- ✦ Partnership with NGOs represent an effective aid modality for aid delivery mechanism in the Burma context;
- ✦ The PFHAB mechanism has enabled partners to deliver projects that meet the objectives of PFHAB and the Australian aid program in Burma in a challenging and changeable operating context;
- ✦ The PFHAB mechanism provides the security of long term (5-year) funding with a sufficient degree of flexibility and responsiveness required for maintaining partner presence and activity within the priority sectoral areas and within a changeable context;
- ✦ AusAID is generally seen by ANGOs in Burma as a flexible, responsive donor, although there is a perceived scope for AusAID to use its influence more broadly on areas of shared concern;
- ✦ The relationship between AusAID and its PFHAB partners remains one of contract service provider rather than partnership; and needs to be reconsidered in light of changing AusAID approaches toward partnership with civil society organisations;
- ✦ The operating context requires AusAID to spread its risk across a range of aid delivery modalities;
- ✦ The design of a future partnership approach needs to take into account the new directions of the Australian aid program to Burma as well as emerging AusAID policy and practice towards partnership with ANGOs;
- ✦ There is strong intent, and significant scope for AusAID to engage with civil society in Burma into the future;

In line with the findings of the Review mission, the Independent Reviewers make the following Recommendations.

PFHAB and AusAID NGO Partnerships

Recommendation 1: That AusAID move forwards with the design of an expanded NGO Partnership Program to deliver a comprehensive program in support of the complex and diverse develop challenges facing the people of Burma.

The design of a future partnership program should be based on emerging principles of partnership⁵, establish a clear system that promotes robust dialogue and mutual learning, with mutual accountability, that encourages partnership for the delivery of development programs in Burma into the future.

⁵ These principles are presented in Section 7.1 of this report

A draft timeline and proposed set of steps which could be considered for a Partnership design process is provided at Annex 8.

In principle, there should be a seamless transition between PFHAB and the proposed future Australia - NGO Partnership for Burma and that arrangements are in place to mitigate any risk of delay and ensure continuity of AusAID's program. To this end, it is proposed:

Recommendation 2: That AusAID provide a one-off extension of the PFHAB mechanism for a period of 12 - 18 months to mitigate any unanticipated delays in the establishment of the new AusAID - NGO Partnership and ensure an ongoing programming presence.

Recommendation 3: That AusAID increases the current annual allocations to PFHAB to address emerging funding gaps, ensure expanded reach and ongoing outcomes throughout the life of PFHAB.

In line with the above recommendation, the Independent Reviewers consider that focused efforts to strengthen M&E, approaches to crosscutting issues, supported capacity development of local partners and identifying opportunities to expand influence would further enhance impacts throughout the term of PFHAB and recommends:

Recommendation 4: PFHAB partners and AusAID should work together to strengthen M&E systems in order to demonstrate clear impacts in relation to shared objectives, gender, inclusion/exclusion and identify opportunities to expand analysis and influence.

Support for Civil Society in Burma

Civil society action in Burma has traditionally been viewed as clandestine and subversive. However since the Cyclone *Nargis* response, there appears to be an increasing acceptance of a role for civil society in responding to humanitarian crises, and increased opportunities for working with civil society have emerged.

There is considerable interest, opportunity and scope for AusAID to commence a direct engagement with civil society sector in Burma. However, it is faced with the challenge of understanding the most effective shape and form that this support could take to ensure the development of complementary objectives and a meaningful two-way engagement.

While AusAID has not yet developed a clear policy framework for its work with civil society, the ODE Working Paper: Best Practice for Donor Engagement

with Civil Society⁶ provides a clear set of lessons learned and directions for civil society programming including the need to mobilise a range of relationships, modalities and instruments. Further, the Paris Declaration⁷ among others, underlines the importance of program-based approaches to development intervention.

The emergent nature of civil society in Burma highlights the need to strike a balance between funding and technical assistance, and maximise the opportunity presented to provide assistance in a way which will enable the growth of the civil society space, and support civil society to determine what future role it can play in Burma's development.

To this end the Independent Reviewers recommend:

Recommendation 5: AusAID's approach to civil society engagement is best undertaken through direct engagement with local civil society actors, rather than through intermediaries or co-funding arrangements with other donors.

Recommendation 6: AusAID's future engagement with civil society needs to be undertaken with a clear development/program objective.

Recommendation 7: AusAID should establish a process for the design of a discrete program which makes strategic investments into the development of civil society capacities and action in Burma.

The Report provides a brief overview of the proposed broad principles and priorities for this engagement, and the steps that AusAID could take to commence this process of civil society program design.

In summary, the PFHAB mechanism is found to have been relevant to the intent and purpose of the Australian aid program in Burma at the time of its establishment, and has successfully mobilised resources to support ANGO partners to achieve clear outcomes within these objectives.

Present changes within AusAID practice in relation to partnerships with civil society, and the up-scaling of the aid program in Burma necessitate further consideration of the as yet unrealised potential of these relationships, to be undertaken through further design work focused on the establishment of common objectives, approaches and spheres of action to provide meaningful development assistance to vulnerable people and communities in Burma.

⁶ Hall, J & Howell, J; Working Paper: Good Practice in Donor Engagement with Civil Society (June, 2010)

⁷ http://www.oecd.org/document/18/0,3343,en_2649_3236398_35401554_1_1_1_1,00.html

1. Background

Burma is among the poorest countries in South East Asia with almost one third of its 50 plus million people living in poverty⁸. It's development remains constrained by a lack of progress towards real democracy, economic reform and improved service delivery. Burma was ranked 132 in 2004 and 129 in 2005 according to the Human Development Index.⁹

The Australian aid program seeks to assist the people of Burma through a program of humanitarian assistance targeting Burma's poor and most vulnerable, particularly those living in remote geographical areas. AusAID's Burma Humanitarian Aid Framework 2007-2010¹⁰ envisaged a role for Australian Non-Government Organisations (ANGOs) in delivering humanitarian assistance, particularly to women, children and youth, ethnic minority groups, displaced persons and others who may be affected by conflict.

The *Periodic Funding for Humanitarian Assistance in Burma* (PFHAB) is a key part of the partnership between AusAID and ANGOs. PFHAB's budget is approximately 9.1 million Australian Dollars (AUD) over a five-year period (February 2008 to January 2013) and focuses on the health (including basic health, HIV/AIDs and reproductive health), and livelihoods sectors. Cooperation Agreements are in place with three ANGOs, implementing four projects as follows:

Health		
CARE Australia	Mobilising Community Capacities for Health (MCCH)	\$1,918,269
Burnet Institute (BI)	Strengthening HIV Responses through Partnership	\$1,917,132
Marie Stopes International (MSI)	Mobilising Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health in Burma	\$1,964,692.69
Livelihoods		
CARE Australia	Southern Chin Livelihood Security Project (SCLSP)	\$3,361,400

In February 2010, Australia announced an expanded aid program with significantly increased financial resources, which will move the Burma program from a primarily humanitarian focus to a more broad-based

⁸ UNDP Human Development Report, EIU Country report, 2004. Estimates the population between 53 million and 56.1 million; quoted in MSIM "Mobilising Access to Reproductive and Sexual Health in Myanmar" Activity Design Document. 16 July 2007. p. 4

⁹ Human Development Reports. <http://hdr.undp.org/statistics/>

¹⁰ AusAID, Burma Humanitarian Aid Framework 2007-2010, Canberra 2007

development objective in Burma¹¹ in line with the forthcoming Burma Development Assistance Framework (2011-2014)¹².

It is anticipated that Australia's new development assistance program will:

"continue to address the critical humanitarian needs of the Burmese people and target the alleviation of critical needs in education, livelihoods, food security and health, especially maternal and child health. In recognition of the serious and sustained decline in the human capital of Burma, efforts to build the capacity of people, civil society and institutions to better plan and deliver essential services will increasingly underpin Australian aid to Burma"¹³.

It is within this context that AusAID is reviewing the performance of PFHAB in order to:

- ✦ allow it to make any necessary adjustments in the remaining term of PFHAB so as to maximise the benefits; and
- ✦ commence a process to consider the design of an NGO partnership program in Burma which would build on the PFHAB successes and lessons learnt to date, but more broadly target strengthening of civil society in Burma in the future.

2. Scope of Work

2.1 Team and Evaluation Partners

The PFHAB Review Team is made up of independent development consultant advisers, AusAID and Australian Council for International Development (ACFID) nominated representative. The team comprises:

Team Role	Name and Position
Team Leader	✦ Donna Leigh Holden Independent Reviewer
ACFID Nominated Representative	✦ Denise Nichols Independent Reviewer
AusAID Canberra	✦ Sue Nelson Country Program Manager ✦ Tamsin Coryn-Wyllie Program Officer

¹¹ The initial financial commitment to Burma was initially stated as being an incremental increase to AUD \$50million over a five year period. However the 2010/11 budget increased Australian aid to Burma to nearly \$50 million in the 2010/11 budget (from \$29million in 2009/10) to support accelerated progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

¹² New Framework currently being drafted.

¹³ PFHAB Review TOR

AusAID Burma	✦ Aung Kyaw Kyaw Program Officer
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Inputs to the Review will also be called from PFHAB ANGO partners in both Burma and Australia.

It should be noted that while the full Review Team participated in Review activities, this report has been developed by the Independent Reviewers. As such the findings and recommendations presented in the following pages are provided as advise to AusAID, and do not represent official agency views.

2.2. Review Objectives

The objectives of the PFHAB review are to:

- a) Assess the overall performance of PFHAB through two levels of analysis:
 - i) at the level of PFHAB's overall objectives; and
 - ii) at the level of the specific objectives of the four funded activities;
- b) Recommend actions necessary to improve the performance of PFHAB up to its due completion date;
- c) Provide insights and lessons learnt from the PFHAB experience for consideration of future programming with international NGOs, including options to strengthen the role of international and national NGOs in the Australian development assistance program in Burma;
- d) Recommend actions/next steps for a mechanism to focus on strengthening of civil society organisations (CSOs) in Burma.

This report is the principle product of this review and seeks to address the above objectives and the Terms of Reference (TOR) provided at Annex 1. Due to the two separate objectives in relation to i. reviewing the performance of the PFHAB mechanism and ii. making preliminary observations regarding the potential for a future AusAID program supporting local civil society in Burma, the report has been written in two distinct sections.

2.3 Review Methodology

2.3.1 Approach

The Review methodology was developed in recognition of the extensive level of review and reflection already undertaken by PFHAB partners, and with the intent to harness and build upon this knowledge in order to identify future opportunities. Lines of inquiry were adapted from Appreciative Inquiry methods which seek to address processes of change by consciously seeking

to identify what is working well, the successes and high points of experience and service, and bring all stakeholders together to develop an understanding of the "root causes of success". In short, it is a process of asking questions about what we value or appreciate in order to "improve" and to build on what we have discovered¹⁴.

2.3.2 Key Review Activities

The PFHAB Review comprised a desk review and meetings with ANGOs and AusAID in Canberra and a field mission undertaken between March 13th and 31st, 2011. The field mission comprised a range of activities including:

- ✦ briefings and meetings with AusAID Burma team members;
- ✦ meetings with managers of ANGO partner programs;
- ✦ a round table between ANGO partners, AusAID and the Review Team to discuss key strategic issues;
- ✦ an open consultation with local CSOs in Yangon and meetings with a number of key civil society actors to discuss strategic issues facing civil society and potential areas and opportunities of partnership;
- ✦ meetings with a number of key donors;
- ✦ field visits to partner activities to view field operations and meet with partner area program staff, beneficiaries, local authorities and local CBO partners to gain an understanding of project operations and impacts at the field level;
- ✦ a debriefing workshop during which the key findings of the review were discussed with AusAID's PFHAB partners.

During the field mission, the Review Team was able to travel quite widely and visit project sites in *Yangon, Mandalay, Southern Chin State, Mawlamyine* and *Yangon*. The extraordinary efforts of AusAID and its PFHAB partners in attaining the necessary permissions from authorities, facilitating access to beneficiaries, partners and arranging the logistics of this mission should be acknowledged.

The field mission schedule is attached at Annex 2, and a list of those consulted is provided at Annex 3.

The key fields of inquiry throughout the Review Mission focused upon:

- ✦ **Strategic Level**
 - ✦ The Development Context in Burma
 - ◆ Development Challenges
 - ◆ Sustainability
 - ✦ Civil Society in Burma
 - ✦ Partnerships

¹⁴ Appreciative Inquiry Network <http://www.appreciativeinquiry.net.au/aidev/>

✦ **Quality Project Management Procedure and Practices**

- ✦ Design
- ✦ Monitoring and Evaluation
- ✦ Cross cutting issues
- ✦ Risk management structures
- ✦ Partnership

A more detailed list of the lines of questioning used in undertaking this inquiry is provided at Annex 4.

2.4 Limitations

The primary purpose of the Review is to gain an informed understanding of how effective the PFHAB mechanism has been in enabling AusAID and its NGO partners to deliver humanitarian programs in Burma, to indicate its strengths and weaknesses and identify any efforts that can be taken to support the ongoing implementation of the mechanism in its final 2 years.

A secondary purpose is to identify key lessons learned from PFHAB and its associated partner programs, and identify opportunities and strategic issues to influence the shape and direction AusAID's ongoing efforts to design an effective portfolio of support to civil society in Burma into the future.

In light of the intent to understand the relevance and effectiveness of the PFHAB mechanism, and identify lessons learned, the review has not undertaken detailed evaluations of individual PFHAB funded programs at the implementation level. The key area of analysis is the extent to which programs are achieving their overall objectives, and most specifically the extent to which these have contributed to the overall strategic objectives of PFHAB and in turn the Australia aid program in Burma. Understanding the intent, key outcomes and implementational issues of each PFHAB supported project however are relevant to the review and as a result comprehensive project summaries are provided in Annex 5.

SECTION 1: PFHAB REVIEW

3. The PFHAB Mechanism

PFHAB was established in 2007 as a one-off mechanism and as "an integral part of Australia's humanitarian assistance to Burma given the chronic humanitarian situation and deteriorating state of the economy"¹⁵.

PFHAB has no clearly stated objectives outside of and is guided by Australia's Framework for Humanitarian Assistance to Burma which aims:

¹⁵ PFHAB Request for Capacity Statements pp. 18

“to alleviate suffering by responding to the humanitarian needs of vulnerable Burmese people¹⁶”

by implementing strategies:

“to increase and maintain access to vulnerable groups, to bolster civil society to improve basic information and analysis on humanitarian issues in Burma”¹⁷.

In line with the above framework, PFHAB focuses upon:

- ✦ health
 - ✦ basic health and primary health care including health promotion, cure and rehabilitation, nutrition, and provisions of waters and sanitation; and HIV and reproductive health);
 - ✦ HIV/AIDs including HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support particularly for high risk groups such intravenous drug users (IDUs), sex workers, and men who have sex with men (MSM);
 - ✦ reproductive health delivered by partners who have Family Planning accreditation and delivered in line with AusAID’s *Guiding Principles for Australian Assistance for Family Planning Activities*; and
- ✦ livelihoods including community and household food security, enhanced opportunities for income generation, basic infrastructure, enabling business environment and support for small and medium enterprise (SME), land tenure etc.

PFHAB was developed with the intent to support a number of key programming principles and approaches:

- ✦ Support the development of more effective protection mechanisms for the most vulnerable Burmese people;
- ✦ Emphasise the achievement of positive humanitarian impacts;
- ✦ Support research and analyses which align with the Framework and Australian Government priorities in Burma;
- ✦ Produce flexible outcome orientated designs that focus on sustainability, accurate costing and resourcing, incorporation of lessons learned; and sound poverty analyses;
- ✦ Support the establishment of credible data baselines for planning purposes and to allow the measurement of impacts not just outputs¹⁸.

The PFHAB selection process was open to AusAID accredited Australian NGOs following a Request for Capacity Statements¹⁹. Funding decisions were

¹⁶ ibid

¹⁷ ibid

¹⁸ ibid p. 19

¹⁹ PFHAB Request for Capacity Statements, 2007

based on technical assessments by a Technical Assessment Panel (TAP) convened specifically for this purpose, and confirmed by the AusAID delegate based on the TAP recommendations, available budget and value for money considerations.

The projects funded through the PFHAB mechanism have previously been listed in Section 1.

4. Review Outcomes

Sections 4 and 5 of this report present the major outcomes and findings of the PFHAB Review. Specifically, Section 4 (Review Outcomes) addresses the overall outcomes of the review at the strategic level and discusses a number of key themes and cross cutting issues. Section 5 (Key Findings) provides detailed observations and comments of the performance of PFHAB and its portfolio of projects in line with the OECD-DAC criteria²⁰.

4.1 General Observations

A number of key findings emerged consistently throughout the PFHAB Review as follows and are discussed in more detail within this report:

- ✦ Partnership with NGOs represent an effective aid modality for aid delivery mechanism in the Burma context;
- ✦ AusAID is generally seen by ANGOs in Burma as a flexible, responsive donor;
- ✦ The PFHAB mechanism has enabled partners to deliver projects that meet the objectives of PFHAB and the Australian aid program in Burma, i.e. the delivery of health and livelihoods programs to vulnerable communities in geographical challenging regions in Burma;
- ✦ The PFHAB mechanism provides the security of long term (5-year) funding with a sufficient degree of flexibility and responsiveness required for maintaining partner presence and activity within the priority sectoral areas and within a changeable context;
- ✦ The relationship between AusAID and its PFHAB partners remains one of contract service provider rather than partnership;
- ✦ The design of any future partnership approach needs to take into account the changing directions of the Australian aid program to Burma as well as emerging AusAID policy and practice in relation to partnerships with civil society;
- ✦ AusAID's relationships provide it with opportunities for leadership and influence: "The Australian government is better situated than others to

²⁰ OECD-DAC criteria are the AusAID standard reporting criteria for the review and evaluation of development programs (AusGuidelines)

influence the government²¹", "AusAID has a lot of potential for influence and assisting capacity building of ministry structures.²²"

- ✦ There is strong intent, and significant scope for AusAID to engage with civil society in Burma into the future.

4.2 Context

Burma is a complex and changeable environment which provides significant challenges for development actors.

- ✦ Lack of Democratic Processes underpin a vacuum in social policy and in turn service delivery.
- ✦ Highly Regulatory Environment: The presence of development actors is determined by strictly governed Memorandums of Understanding (MOU's) outlining approved thematic field of engagement, activities and geographic scope. MOU's can take considerable time to negotiate²³ and MOUs for new actors are not presently being issued. Restrictions are placed upon the employment of foreign nationals who also require approval and accompaniment from the authorities for travel to project sites. These approvals can take significant time.
- ✦ Relationships with Authorities: There is no scope at present for working through government systems and a high degree of fungibility risk. PFHAB partners need to establish relationships with local authorities to gain the necessary permissions to operate and commonly highlight that maintaining these are an ongoing and time-consuming process as a result of high turn-over of staff within local authorities.
- ✦ Diversity: Burma is home to a wide range of ethnic groups each with their own discrete set of cultural norms and practices, language etc, and access to certain ethnic communities is controlled by the authorities. The geographic landscape combined with poor infrastructure also poses challenges such as distance, terrain and seasonal access (such as flooding in wet season). One CARE staff in Southern Chin for example, explained that access to some villages in remote areas required a two-day walk from the closest road access. As one PFHAB partner identified, this translates into an operating context where "one size does not fit all²⁴" and differing challenges are met, and approaches required in each region.

²¹ Dan Collison, Save the Children, reiterated throughout the field mission by a number of donors and NGOs.

²² Meeting with 3DF

²³ NGO partners suggested that two years is the current norm for negotiation of MOU.

²⁴ Brian Agland, CARE Country Director, Myanmar

- ✦ Development Needs: Development needs in Burma are complex and extensive. Poverty is widespread with over half the population living below the poverty line²⁵. Infrastructure and basic services (e.g. health, education, access to markets) are poor. Land tenure is limited and there is a high degree of migration for labour and internal and external displacement of communities as a result of conflict. HIV/AIDs, maternal mortality, food security and malnutrition are also key issues of concern²⁶.
- ✦ Communications and Management Infrastructure: Internet and mobile telephone coverage are highly regulated, unreliable and expensive. Financial management systems are challenged by sanctions and internal policies and transactions are largely cash based. This means that organisations have to have strict management procedures and internal audit mechanisms in place to mitigate risk and ensure accountable management of donor and public funds.
- ✦ Peace and Security Context: The high degree of conflict combined with military control presents challenges in terms of access to some communities²⁷ as well as risks in relation to the security and protection of staff and partners. International development actors must remain highly cognisant at all times of the potential risks to communities and partner organisations posed by their partnerships and engagement. It further requires the development of strategic relationships with local actors who have sufficient trust and credibility to work with communities in conflict zones²⁸.

4.3 Administrative Arrangements

The PFHAB portfolio has to date been managed at the desk in Canberra and the relationship is largely one of contract management. The Independent Reviewers understand that this is largely due to the limited human resources in

²⁵ Myanmar has one of the world's lowest levels of public sector expenditure, with authorities spending less than \$1 per person per year on basic health and education combined." DFID Country Plan for Burma, October 2004. In Mobilising Access to Reproductive and Sexual Health in Myanmar Activity Design Document; 16 July, 2007

²⁶ Malaria and tuberculosis are a major concern, although preventable or curable. 1 in 3 children aged 5 are moderately to severely malnourished, only 40% of children complete 5 years of primary education, 50% of all child deaths are attributable to preventable causes such as acute respiratory infection, malaria and diarrhoea. Maternal mortality is among the highest in the region. HIV is consider a generalised epidemic, with UNAIDS estimating that 350,000 adults (15-49 years) are infected with HIV, representing 1.3% of the population in 2006. In "Joint Program for HIV/AIDs in Myanmar, Progress Report 2003/4 and FHAM Annual Progress Report April 2004-March 2005. P.9 in Mobilising Access to Reproductive and Sexual Health in Myanmar Activity Design Document; 16 July 2007

²⁷ Black zones are areas in which the military has full control, and brown zones where the military has partial control and regulates the delivery of aid and services.

²⁸ One example of this is the relationship that MSIM has established with the Mon Women's Organisation which has extensive networks enabling it to deliver services and programs in Mon areas.

Burma and the fact that the Burma program was not yet devolved to Post. The limitations of AusAID (human) resources were recognised by all stakeholders throughout the Review process, however these were not presented as impediments to implementation under the current arrangements.

A process of phased devolution is underway and additional personnel are presently being deployed on posting or appointed as local program staff in-country to support this process. While it is beyond the scope of the PFHAB Independent Reviewers to advise of the deployment and distribution of work of these personnel, we do anticipate that some changes to the administrative arrangements may occur in the future and in response to this process of devolution. Further, the need to ensure that AusAID is adequately resourced to support any future partnership program in which it plays a broader role than contract management and engages with NGO partners on a more strategic level, is a cause for future consideration.

Neither AusAID nor its partners identified any concerns regarding contract management to date. Partners were positive about Annual Planning Mechanisms used to review program delivery and outcomes as well as the responsiveness of AusAID in relation to approving changes to Annual Workplans etc.

Implementation Schedules (Workplans), Mid Term Reviews (MTR's) and regular reporting were being carried out in a timely way by partners²⁹. The Independent Reviewers did note however that reports were considerably large and time consuming, and that some revisions to reporting frameworks could be made in the future, to minimise onerous reporting and to better highlight the key contributions of projects to achieving the strategic objectives of the aid program.

4.4. Modality

Partnership with NGOs represents an effective aid delivery mechanism in the Burma context. While there is as yet no overarching policy framework for AusAID's work with NGOs, NGO Cooperation Agreements enable AusAID to use ANGOs to implement activities where they represent the most effective aid delivery mechanism³⁰. This is specifically the case in Burma where ANGOs and their local partners have demonstrated that they are able to deliver

²⁹ The completion of the CARE SCLSP MTR has been delayed due to challenges in gaining visa approval for the Lead Consultant to enter Burma. This has in part been addressed by the deployment of the CARE *Myanmar* M&E Team which has undertaken the bulk of the monitoring and review activities in the interim. The Review Team was provided with a draft MTR during the field mission. It is anticipated that the Lead Consultant will visit Burma in the near future to verify the results of the draft MTR and ensure its completion.

³⁰ There are indications that the forthcoming AusAID Aid Effectiveness Review will highlight the important role that NGOs play in delivery of the Australian Aid program and recommendations to further strengthen areas of partnership between AusAID and NGOs.

assistance to the most vulnerable populations, despite the constraints to the operating environment highlighted previously.

AusAID's PFHAB partners in Burma are accredited Australian NGOs, each with an established long term presence in Burma, institutional commitment, and working relationships with communities, civil society and the authorities which afford them access to communities, wide geographic scope³¹.

In the context of an up scaling of its own presence, increased resources and the opportunities presented by the shift to a more development focuses framework, AusAID is considering the establishment of broader partnerships with Australian and other international NGOs Burma. Further discussion on the opportunities for enhanced partnerships and recommendations for moving forwards are provided in the latter sections of this report.

4.4 Relationships

4.4.1 Relationship between AusAID and PFHAB Partners

The current PFHAB procedures have been an effective mechanism to provide funds to support program delivery, and relationships between AusAID and its partners are consistently referred to as being positive. These relationships however are more consistent with the procurement of services than strategic partnership.

While the lack of a partnering relationship does not appear to impact on effectiveness of activities undertaken, there is at present no structured process for dialogue on policy, strategic direction and coordination in areas of mutual concern³². This leads to lost opportunities in terms of sharing of lessons learned, potential for enhanced collaboration, advocacy and enhancing the profile of Australia's aid program in Burma.

"AusAID has a sub-contractor mindset. PFHAB has no apparent links to AusAID's strategic development or political goals. There is a need for political leadership with the regime and the UN alongside technical assistance³³."

It is important that AusAID and ANGOs recognise the strategic value and development impact of working together in a more meaningful way. AusAID and NGOs bring different resources, capacities, skills and knowledge to the development context. For example, AusAID brings funding, links with policy makers, coordination with the whole of Australian government partners and

³¹ Within the parameters of the agreed sectoral and geographic scope as outlined in there MOU's with the Burmese authorities.

³² This is not to say that dialogue does not occur, however this appears to be largely ad hoc, opportunistic and on a case-by-case basis and when acted upon is generally in line with the priorities of individual institutions rather than as an agreed platform for action.

³³ PFHAB Partner during Field Interview

linkages and influence with other governments/donors. NGOs have extensive networks on the ground to consult and deliver programs³⁴. They are often the sources of rich information at the community level, which has the potential to contribute to policy dialogue processes. They also provide linkages with the Australian community through which it can enhance the understanding of the Australian community about development needs inside Burma.

Emerging AusAID policy and practice is leading towards the development of more strategic partnerships between AusAID and NGOs³⁵ which recognise and build upon the added value of each set of skills, resources and capacities that each brings to the development context. A table demonstrating the key shifts between past and current practice is provided at Annex 7.

The design of a future partnership program should establish a clear system that promotes robust dialogue and mutual learning, with mutual accountability, and that enables each partner to mobilise its skills, capacities and attributes towards mutually agreed objectives.

4.4.2 Relationships Between PFHAB Partners and Local Civil Society

PFHAB partners utilise approaches which seek to either i. build the capacity of existing local CSOs to deliver ongoing services and technical support to communities within their specific area of sectoral expertise³⁶ or ii. support the establishment of community based mechanisms for peer support, such as self help etc³⁷.

The Review found that in each case, relationships between PFHAB partners and their local partners were generally solid. Local partners understood the terms, intent and purpose of their partnerships and placed significant value upon the technical and material support provided through them. For example, the Mon Women's Organisation stated that training provided by MSIM enabled them to provide public health education outreach in many inaccessible townships which resulted in increased client referrals to MSIM Centres. Similarly, a group of young people who decided to act to reduce health risks among young people made contact with CARE who provided them with capacity building activities in health education, life skills, report and proposal writing, and linked them with other training providers. They have now established a youth DIC with an ongoing program of youth support.

³⁴ AusAID's potential for this in the Burma context is referenced in previous quotations from partners and other funding agencies such as 3DF.

³⁵ The Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES) and Pacific Leadership Program (PLP) are two examples of this.

³⁶ For example the MSIM and BI-MM projects which work with established partners in enhancing their capacities to deliver HIV/AIDS and SRH services along clear quality standards.

³⁷ For example CARE MCCH which focuses on the establishment of SHG for PLWHA, youth etc.

While some efforts are made to provide training and mentoring aimed at strengthening the management of these local partner organisations, partnerships remain by and large very much project-based mechanisms. While clearly adding value to the capital of selected CSOs, there is also a lost opportunity to capitalise on the emerging window of opportunity to establish closer working relationships with CSOs in Burma. The present opportunity, and need to support wider institutional strengthening for local partners was a common theme of the MTR of each of the PFHAB funded projects and the Independent Reviewers highlight this as a priority for the ensuing implementation period of PFHAB (refer Recommendations 3 and 4).

4.4.3 Relationships Between AusAID and Local Civil Society

PFHAB provides AusAID with *de facto* engagement with local CSOs through their partnerships with the PFHAB partners. While most local CSOs appear to understand that funding support was originating from AusAID, they acknowledged a limited understanding of the intent of the Australian aid program to Burma. This current relationship does not translate to the level of direct engagement that the Independent Reviewers understands that Australia is seeking into the future. There is clear scope for an increased engagement between AusAID and local civil society outside of AusAID's existing activities and modalities as discussed in more detail within Section 2 of this report.

4.5. Visibility

PFHAB supported programs provide varying degrees of visibility of Australian aid to Burma. While visibility is generally a priority for the Agency, and clearly outlined within service contracts, the extent to which this is desirable within the Burma context now and into the future, is a point of negotiation for AusAID and its partners.

4.6. Risk Management

The operating context in Burma carries a range of political, security, operational and financial risks³⁸. The Review found that both AusAID and its partners are highly cognisant of the range of risks. Partners have undertaken sufficient risk analyses at the operational and institutional level and have put in place measures to monitor and mitigate against these.

4.7. Funding Landscape

Weak bilateral relationships, the compromised United Nations (UN) position, sanctions, public campaigns and lack of international political will to engage in development in Burma, among others, contribute to a constrained funding

³⁸ Risks include: Political risks: both internal and external political will for international development assistance, security: of partners and communities due to high levels of surveillance, civil conflict in some areas; support for Burma; operational risks, permissions required to implement activities, lack of infrastructure, geography and terrain which can lead to delays; financial risks: fungibility risks and risks associated with cash transfers.

landscape for development actors in Burma. In many cases, funding agencies are only positioned to provide short term funding for very specifically defined activities, which remain largely focused on humanitarian objectives. NGOs partners rely on centrally allocated public funds or project-based recoveries to meet their institutional and day-to-day operating costs.

The PFHAB mechanism provides the security of long term (5-year) funding within a constrained funding landscape. The value of this combined with the degree of flexibility for enabling partners to make long term commitments to the activities, communities and partners with whom they work should not be underestimated.

This flexibility and funding security however is limited to the activity level of the funded projects and within funding levels and thematic areas. While PFHAB partners identify instances where through the annual planning processes, partners have negotiated some change to the activities within their initial design documents, there is limited space for them to respond to emerging issues outside of the specific objectives for which their projects have been funded. Enabling a higher degree of flexibility to respond to a changing context, while continuing to ensure accountability and alignment with the objectives of the Australian aid program would add significant value to a future partnership program and most likely result enhance development outcomes.

While support for multi-donor funds (MDFs) provides some benefits for donors such as the ability to pool resources for shared objectives, undertake joint advocacy and delegate management responsibility to external mechanisms, there are also limitations including inflexibility around agreed objectives, sectoral priorities and populations³⁹, the dilution of attribution, distant relationship with partners, decreased visibility etc. **The present compromised position of the UN in Burma, and the contextual importance of spreading risk across a range of funding modalities highlights the need for AusAID to strike a clear balance between support to MDFs and direct support to civil society. The establishment of a range of delivery modalities warrants balanced consideration.**

4.8. Policy Frameworks and Cross Cutting Issues

The PFHAB Guidelines outline a number of cross cutting issues including gender, protection, Do No Harm (DNH) etc. The Review identified variable attention to the cross cutting issues across the portfolio of PFHAB projects, and found that while these have been clearly articulated at the project design

³⁹ One example of this highlighted by the 3DF was limitations on their ability to fund programs in prisons (including ART and methadone treatment), leaving a significant gap in the HIV/AIDs and public health response.

level, less attention has been paid, in some instances, during implementation. A brief discussion of these observations is provided below.

4.8.1 Gender

Without exception, all project designs articulate gender as a key focus. Indeed, a number of key outcomes in terms of the increased participation of women in services and to some extent in community decision making processes have been achieved, however, partners continue to focus their gender efforts on programming for women rather than in addressing gender at a systemic level. Greater attention to gender analysis at all levels of the project cycle and increased support for local partners in integrating gender approaches would likely result in strengthened gender outcomes⁴⁰.

4.8.2 Do No Harm

Inclusion and exclusion are key issues which interplay with the peace and security context of Burma and warrant considerable attention. This is clearly iterated within the PFHAB Framework which states that:

“PFHAB will continue to support the development of more effective protection mechanisms for the most vulnerable Burmese people. Protection will be afforded to vulnerable communities at every opportunity and needs to be considered when working in all sectors. PFHAB seeks to encourage NGOs involved to adopt the Do No Harm Principles⁴¹”

While partners are very sensitive to the need to protect the communities and partners with whom they work, and protection in its broadest sense is provided through the provision of health services to vulnerable target groups and efforts to improve livelihood security, there is little evidence of DNH analyses being integrated within project planning and review. In particular the Independent Reviewers note that while activities report positive outcomes for those who participate in their programs, there is no detailed analyses of who is excluded from program activities, nor of the reasons and costs of exclusion. Further attention to such analyses would considerably strengthen programming outcomes and significantly contribute to ongoing policy and programming analyses.

4.8.3 Child Protection

All partners have compliant Child Protection policy and procedures in place. Some activities have a specific focus upon children and young people, e.g. establishing community support mechanisms for Orphan and Vulnerable Children (OVC) and youth self help groups (SHG), and mainstreaming HIV/AIDs into school curriculum. The Review verified the relevance of working

⁴⁰ This has been consistently highlighted with the MTR's of the PFHAB partner projects and is reflected in the Project Summaries provided at Annex 5.

⁴¹ PFHAB Call for Capacity Statements.

with these groups and found that there may be increased scope for working with children and young people e.g. engaging them more widely within livelihoods programming to ensure that key messages relating to environmental protection, good sanitation, nutrition etc are imparted and remain life long values.

4.8.4. Fraud

All PFHAB partners have clear and approved mechanisms in place to protect against fraud in line with AusAID's Fraud Policy. During the field mission the Independent Reviewers identified a number of instances where partners have actively managed these issues utilising correct fraud management procedures.

4.8.5. Environmental Protection.

With the exception of the CARE SCLSP, the PFHAB funded projects have limited involvement in environment protection. Environmental protection is however, an area of key concern in Burma and is identified as a newly emerging sectoral area of opportunity⁴².

4.8.6. Humanitarian Action

Project interventions were found to in line with AusAID Policy for Humanitarian Action⁴³.

5. Key Findings

The following section of the report addresses the findings of the Independent Reviewers regarding the performance of the PFHAB mechanism and its portfolio of partner projects against the DAC performance criteria. Summaries of the outcomes of individual projects, upon which the latter analysis is made, are provided at Annex 5.

Effectiveness: was an effective approach developed and implemented to support the objective of PFHAB? How effectively was PFHAB managed and how did this impact on the achievement of the outcomes?

5.1.1. The PFHAB Mechanism

The PFHAB mechanism has enabled the flow of funds to ANGOs for the implementation of projects in line with the objective of Australia's humanitarian assistance to Burma "to alleviate suffering by responding to the humanitarian needs of vulnerable Burmese people", and is aligned with Australian Government strategies to "increase and maintain access to vulnerable groups, bolster civil society and to improve basic information and analysis on humanitarian needs in Burma"⁴⁴.

⁴² Increased opportunity to work within the environment sector was identified by local CSOs and donors alike (*Paung Ku*, DFID and the LRC).

⁴³http://www.usaid.gov/pressroom/publications/pdf/humanitarian_policy.pdf

⁴⁴ Burma Humanitarian Aid Framework 2007-2010 (public version)

The PFHAB mechanism provided contracting flexibility to enable changes to individual projects at the activity level in response to feedback from partners through their regular monitoring and review processes. The mechanism does not provide flexibility at the objective level, although with the limited resources provided through the mechanism, and the long-term commitments required for the successful implementation of projects, this has not been required to date.

The PFHAB mechanism plays an important role in a constrained funding landscape through the provision of supplementary or complementary funding which supports partner's core activities and fills funding gaps that other donors are unable or unwilling to fund.

The PFHAB mechanism does not provide guidance for management and institutional arrangements, and there have been no program funds allocated for resourcing of program coordination and learning across projects⁴⁵. Outside of the initial selection of projects, regular program monitoring (as time and access permits) and Quality at Implementation (QAI) documentation, AusAID program management has been largely "hand-offs" and does not enable any structured sharing of experiences, or lessons learned across the PFHAB portfolio. This will be a key consideration for any future partnership program to ensure it is aligned with emerging AusAID policy and practice in recent years.

5.1.2 PFHAB Projects

PFHAB projects have been implemented in line with the objectives and sectoral foci of the Australian Framework for Humanitarian Assistance to Burma.

The Review found that **projects have been well managed and that efficient systems are in place for financial and program management** in order to meet partner's contractual obligations to AusAID.

5.1 Relevance

Relevance: Does PFHAB achieve its stated objectives, does PFHAB and its supported projects contribute to the higher-level objectives of the Australian aid program to Burma? Was the design relevant to the need? Were objectives and performance indicators clearly specified? Were management and institutional arrangements appropriate?

⁴⁵ It should be noted however, that PFHAB partners have taken the initiative to implement semi-annual and ad hoc partner meetings to discuss project status, collaboration, the political/security context and undertake advocacy efforts.

5.1.1. The PFHAB Mechanism

The PFHAB modality was appropriate within the constrained operating context and at the time. The constrained operating environment within Burma requires a pragmatic approach to implementation, and working through established accredited Australian NGOs was and continues to be a relevant modality for working in Burma.

However, **PFHAB does not operate as a 'program' but rather as four separate projects**, without any substantive linkages between the projects or the thematic/sectoral areas of health and livelihoods. This limits the opportunities of partners to address the complex and interrelated development challenges facing communities within the targeted areas⁴⁶. Present AusAID approaches to partnership have moved beyond contractor – provider relationships. The complex and multisectoral nature of the development landscape combined with the limited presence of development actors, and the poor performance of government service provision to communities, suggests that integrated multisectoral approaches, including area based strategies may be more appropriate and lead to greater development impacts. As such there is considerable scope to expand the nature of partnerships in Burma in line with this into the future.

The PFHAB mechanism did not have clearly articulated objectives outside of the Australian aid program to Burma and the sectoral priorities therein. It did however articulate specific cross cutting issues and approaches such as protection (DNH), gender, partnership which have been achieved to varying degrees as previously discussed in Section 4.

The collection of PFHAB supported projects contributes to the objective of the Australian aid program to Burma and the sectoral foci of the PFHAB portfolio of projects is in line with the sectoral priorities identified within the Australian Framework for Humanitarian Assistance to Burma and in turn the PFHAB Guidelines.

The design is sufficiently flexible to allow changes to the program in response to feedback from partners through quarterly meetings and monitoring.

5.1.2 PFHAB Projects

The design of each of the PFHAB funded projects is in line with the development objectives and sectoral priorities of PFHAB. While ambitious in some areas, designs demonstrate clear program logic and are largely relevant to the identified needs.

The objectives and performance indicators of individual projects are clearly specified. M&E could be strengthened with more detailed attention to the

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demonstration of impacts at the objective level and more qualitative attention to crosscutting issues.

5.2 Efficiency

Efficiency: were resources well managed using appropriate systems and processes, and PFHAB and its partner projects demonstrate value for money?

5.2.1 PFHAB Mechanism

Despite challenges with distance/time and travel restrictions, **AusAID undertakes regular monitoring of partner projects.**

A key strength of PFHAB is that it **provides partners with the security of long term funding** within a constrained funding landscape. This ensures their ongoing presence and the delivery of services to vulnerable people and communities in the target areas.

The internal political situation, means that **there is no appetite for donors, nor scope for working through existing governing systems** for the foreseeable future.

5.2.2 PFHAB Projects

The Review found that **while ambitious at times, the program logic of PFHAB funded projects was based on sound analysis and relevant** to the operating context, localised development challenges and needs of the target groups.

PFHAB partners have clear systems in place for the monitoring of projects, however these are largely focused at the activity/output level. M&E activities include regular data collection and implementation reporting from field offices, monitoring visits to project sites, annual review and reflection workshops. MTR have also been undertaken for all projects. M&E activities continue to be output/activity focused and could be significantly strengthened through a review of M&E systems with an increased focus at the objective level, qualitative analysis and the articulation of impact, particularly with regard to measurement of the relevance and effectiveness of key approaches and cross cutting issues.

While it is beyond the scope of the Review to undertake a detailed analysis of the cost effectiveness of PFHAB and its individual projects, based on a review of project documents and discussions with AusAID, PFHAB and local partners and stakeholders, that **overall the projects have represented value for money, and have utilised appropriate systems processes and resources that adhere to AusAID accountability processes.** Indeed it warrants comment that individual projects have achieved sound outcomes with limited resources⁴⁷.

⁴⁷ The total PFHAB funding pool was AUD \$10 million for the five-year period. Funding allocations to each individual project are provided at Section 1.

Specifically, partners have sought as far as possible, to adopt programmatic approaches which in the interests of cost effectiveness and sustainability, focus upon enhancing the capacity of local partners to deliver services along quality standards and to work through established systems and organisations. This is particularly notable within the sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and HIV/AIDs programs which have made clear gains in developing the technical capacities of local health service providers to deliver health services in line with clear quality standards to vulnerable target groups, including sex workers, MSM, People Living With HIV/AIDS (PLWHA), poor women of reproductive age, young people etc. A further example is MSIM's work with local theatre groups (refer MSI Project Summary at Annex 5).

5.1.2 PFHAB Projects

With the exception of the CARE SCLSP and MCCH, which encountered some early delays⁴⁸ **PFHAB projects have largely been implemented in line with agreed timeframes and resources.** There appear to be no significant delays, under or overspend in any of the projects supported.

5.3 Effectiveness

Effectiveness: Was PFHAB an effective mechanism and were effective approaches developed and implemented to support its objectives? How effectively PFHAB and its partner projects managed and how did this impact on the achievement of the outcomes?

5.3.1 The PFHAB Mechanism

PFHAB has been an effective delivery mechanism within the available partnership models available at the time of its establishment, and its sectoral foci aligned with the objectives of Australia's then limited humanitarian engagement in Burma. The portfolio of PFHAB supported projects have **clear project logic and relevant approaches were implemented.** This observation however needs to be viewed in light of changes within AusAID approaches towards partnerships, and current shifts in the Australian aid program in Burma. Future partnerships need to align more effectively with these.

Sectorally based programming does not enable the degree of multisectoral or integrated approaches to development that will be required to address the complex development challenges in Burma within the context of an expanding aid program, opening windows of opportunity for engagement in wider sectors, and the opportunities presented by new approaches to partnership. The design of a future partnership between AusAID and NGOs needs to consider the extent to which it can mobilise multisectoral approaches including potentially area-based development.

⁴⁸ There was a three (3) month delay in Inception of the SCLSP due to institutional commitments to the Cyclone *Nargis* response. This was discussed and approved by AusAID and a 3-month extension to the completion date approved.

PFHAB partners would like to see AusAID maximise the opportunities presented by way of its position as a key donor to undertake more advocacy efforts specifically within the sectoral areas and on key issues stemming from program implementation. For example, for AusAID to use its influence within multi-donor funds in support of filling emerging funding gaps for the delivery of anti-retroviral therapies (ART) etc.

5.3.2. PFHAB Projects

Overall, there was strong endorsement from stakeholders for the effectiveness, appropriateness of content and locations of PFHAB supported projects. Local CSO partners of PFHAB partners demonstrated clear understanding of what was required from their partnerships and understanding of their accountability requirements. These relationships however continue to be project focused mechanisms or focused upon the delivery of services in return for the receipt of technical support to enable this. There is considerable scope for all PFHAB partners to revisit their own approaches to partnership with local civil society and support increased institutional capacity towards sustainability, and improved quality performance with a specific focus on cross cutting issues such as gender and inclusion/exclusion.

5.4 Impact and Sustainability

Impact and Sustainability: to what degree has PFHAB and its supported projects produced positive or negative changes directly or indirectly, intended or unintended? Are the benefits sustainable?

5.4.1 The PFHAB Mechanism

Key outcomes of the PFHAB projects evident at the present time⁴⁹ include:

- ✦ Strengthened capacity for local CSOs and service providers to deliver health and HIV services to vulnerable and remote communities;
- ✦ The provision of services to vulnerable people and communities including care and support services including ART for PLWHA, education and social support for OVC and ante-natal care (ANC), family planning and emergency obstetric care for women;
- ✦ Improved awareness of HIV/AIDs resulting in destigmatisation of PLWHA and other high risk/vulnerable groups such as MSM, sex workers and youth;
- ✦ The provision of access to clean water and improved sanitation for communities in Southern Chin State;

⁴⁹ The Review was undertaken at the three-year point of PFHAB implementation. Co-operation Agreements have a further 18 months – 2 years of planned implementation remaining.

- ✦ The establishment of clear models for permanent farming methods and community forestry activities to address the environmental and food security impacts of slash and burn farming practices;
- ✦ The identification of and access to market for new cash crops such as elephant foot yam;
- ✦ The modeling of village based savings and loans schemes (VSLA) to support village savings and facilitate access to credit for the poor;
- ✦ The provision of opportunities for women to engage in income generation activities and increased decision making in family and community decision making processes in some areas.

While PFHAB supported projects have achieved these solid impacts, and programmatic approaches by partners have sought as much as possible to address the potential for sustainability, the recurrent costs of development initiatives will be a pragmatic reality into the future as a result of the extensive development needs and significant gaps in service delivery and local governance mechanisms.

5.4.2. PFHAB Projects

PFHAB partners have strong capacities to implement programs which address the identified development priorities. The Review identified **clear evidence of the impacts** of each of the PFHAB supported projects highlighted above and these are discussed in more detail within the individual Project Summaries provided at Annex 5.

While PFHAB was established as a “humanitarian” mechanism, the Guidelines outline that:

“AusAID and partners, will where appropriate put greater funding and effort into the design of programs to produce quality, flexible outcome orientated designs that focus on sustainability, accurate costing and resourcing; incorporation of lessons learned; and sound poverty analysis.⁵⁰”

The approaches implemented by PFHAB partners are largely developmental by nature and take a pragmatic approach to addressing sustainability, as far as this is possible, within the funding limitations, and operational context.

Baselines have been established by and large in the early stages of program implementation but as highlighted within the MTR’s, could be more effectively used within project management cycle to better target the key areas of potential impact and influence and support sustainability in line with the above intent. Likewise, as previously discussed, M&E systems could be adjusted to provide a stronger analysis of qualitative impacts, rather than

⁵⁰ PFHAB Request for Capacity Statements, pp18

activity implementation, to support the development of strategies to underpin sustainability.

Specifically, the Independent Reviewers identified that while there are key areas of impact, these continue to be heavily reliant upon project-based mechanisms and rely upon ongoing project support including technical inputs and funding. Identifying opportunities to address the reliance upon donors for the financial and institutional viability of local partners, and replication of livelihoods activities outside of the established Farmers Interest Groups (FIG), Community Forestry Committees (CFC) and VSLA groups are two examples of areas where partner projects should seek to focus in the remaining PFHAB term to support sustainability.

6. Lessons Learned from PFHAB

The following lessons learned have been identified at the strategic level and are highlighted due to their potential to influence the design of any future AusAID – NGO Partnership. Lessons learned from the implementation of individual projects are summarised with Annex 5: Project Summaries.

- ✦ Opportunities for development programming in Burma are broader than initially expected and PFHAB partners have established sufficient credibility and trust to potentially (and carefully) extend their spheres of influence.
- ✦ Accredited Australian NGOs have sufficient access and established systems and relationships that make them a suitable modality for the delivery of development assistance to vulnerable communities in Burma.
- ✦ Opportunities are often harnessed through identifying innovators and risk takers, who in turn can demonstrate 'what is possible' and thereby establish broader interest and action among community members. Programming models need to provide for the entry of new target groups, so as not to unintentionally exclude participation of those less likely to take early risks.
- ✦ It is critically important to both AusAID and its partners to secure a continuity of presence and access to communities within existing geographic regions.
- ✦ It is important to depoliticise development assistance within Burma. This requires (at the present time), an ongoing separation between Australia's support for in-country development activities, and the provision of humanitarian assistance to refugees in border camps. The Independent Reviewers feel that there is however an unexplored potential to articulate

development strategies to build internal resilience to the factors which lead to migration and flight in some cases⁵¹.

- ✦ The provision of long term funding provides a level of security/tenure which maintains a programming presences of NGO partners and relationships.
- ✦ Due to the ethnic, cultural, political and geographic diversity of Burma, there is no “one size fits all” approach to development, and funding and programming approaches need to be highly flexible and response to regional variations.
- ✦ Clear, structured and more formalised mechanisms need to be developed to enable the desired degree of policy dialogue that both AusAID and its partners have identified.
- ✦ There is increasing appetite, capacity and a window of opportunity to engage with local CSOs in development activities in Burma.

7. Recommendations and Next Steps - PFHAB

The following section of this report outlines the Independent Reviewer’s recommendations for the development of a future AusAID - NGO Partnership for Burma, as well as for the duration of the current PFHAB program.

7.1. The Future of AusAID – NGO Partnerships

The Review finds that:

1. Within the context of an expanding aid program, the constrained operating context, and the proven track record of ANGOs to demonstrate impact, AusAID – ANGO partnerships will represent an effective delivery modality in Burma for the foreseeable future.
2. Australia’s NGO partners have significant and unrealised carrying capacities which would add significant value by expanding the reach and scope of the Australian aid program to Burma, and articulating Australian support to the people of Burma.
3. The operating context in Burma highlights the importance for AusAID to spread its risk across a range of modalities including direct funding support to civil society, MDF’s and co-funding arrangements etc.
4. AusAID approaches for partnership are presently moving beyond project-based, service provider contracts to more collaborative relationships (refer Annex 6) in line with a number of key operating principles:

⁵¹ This is a point for consideration within the design of future partnership mechanisms.

- ✘ Knowledge of and recognition of each partners different skills, strengths and attributes;
 - ✘ Recognition of the total investment into the program, not just from AusAID funding but also ANGO's and their implementing partners;
 - ✘ Regular formal and informal dialogue and exchange directly between AusAID and ANGOs and commitment towards honest, open and frank communication;
 - ✘ Clearly agreed overarching objectives, but flexibility for ANGOs to respond rapidly and flexibly as context and understanding changes;
 - ✘ Joint monitoring of program outcomes, but less focus on detailed activity monitoring;
 - ✘ Annual joint assessment of the quality of the partnership;
 - ✘ Actively seeking opportunities to link and represent each other's programs⁵².
5. The existing quality of relationships between AusAID and its ANGO partners in Burma, AusAID's institutional commitment to more collaborative partnerships with ANGOs, and the demonstrated capacity of partners to work effectively within a complex range of constraints and a high degree of political uncertainty highlights the potential for an expanded partnership model and would underpin its potential for success.

As such the Independent Reviewers recommend:

Recommendation 1: That AusAID move forwards with the design of an expanded NGO Partnership Program to deliver a comprehensive program in support of the complex and diverse develop challenges facing the people of Burma.

7.1.1. Pathway Forwards for Implementation of Recommendation 1

This proposed shift to a broader AusAID NGO Partnership Program for Burma in line with the above principles will, among others:

- ✘ Enable more equitable contributions to strategy, program and policy development;
- ✘ Strengthen the link between the Australian community and the Australian aid program in Burma;
- ✘ Enable AusAID to expand its program reach including to new sectors and geographic areas within the context of an expanded development focussed portfolio;
- ✘ Widen partnership opportunities for both AusAID and its NGO partners;
- ✘ Provide increased programming flexibility and mobility of resources.

⁵² Australia Africa Community Engagement Scheme (AACES) Design Concept p.17

We would anticipate that sound analysis of development needs and outcomes, support for local civil engagement, protection, building resilience to mitigate migration and displacement, social cohesion, strengthening accountability and program quality; and building support within the Australian community would be integral parts of this program. The extent to which partnership opportunities would be opened to non AusAID accredited international NGOs warrants consideration at the design stage, in light of the limited number of development actors in Burma at the present time⁵³.

The design of a future partnership program should establish a clear system that promotes robust dialogue and mutual learning, with mutual accountability, for the delivery of development programs in Burma.

In implementing Recommendation 1, the Independent Reviewers propose that as a first step, the AusAID Burma team have inter-departmental discussions with other AusAID Sections presently implementing or designing such Partnerships to gain an understanding of the range of Partnership models. In particular, the Independent Reviewers and PFHAB partners, noted the relevance of the AACES Partnership Program to the Burma context⁵⁴.

A draft timeline and proposed set of steps for a Partnership design process (based on this model or a variation thereof) is provided at Annex 8.

7.2. Existing PFHAB Mechanism

While the recommendation to move to an enhanced partnership model does not present any obstacles to the implementation of current PFHAB arrangements, it does present potential implications in terms of maintaining an AusAID programming presence during the transition to a new programming modality.

In principle, there should be a seamless transition between PFHAB and the proposed future Australia - NGO Partnership for Burma. While the current term of PFHAB⁵⁵ should allow sufficient time to ensure that the new mechanism is established by this time, the contextual risks are significant, particularly in light of the limited NGO presence and limited funding opportunities. It is critical that early contingency arrangements are in place to mitigate any risk of delay and ensure a continuity of the AusAID program.

To this end, it is recommended:

⁵³ This will be a matter for consideration throughout the Concept design process.

⁵⁴ CARE has been a participant in the development of the AACES Partnership. The Review Team has reviewed this and other models in the course of the Review and see significant linkages between the development of this partnership model, the operating context in Burma and the current will of AusAID and its partners to expand present partnerships.

⁵⁵ Projects are currently funded until the end of October 2012 (end Q 2 FY 12/12) with the exception of the CARE SCLSP and MCCH which have been extended until January 31st, 2013.

Recommendation 2: That AusAID provide a one-off extension of the PFHAB mechanism for a period of 12 months to mitigate any unanticipated delays in the establishment of the new AusAID - NGO Partnership and ensure an ongoing Australian programming presence.

The Independent Reviewers further find that:

1. Current PFHAB supported projects are largely meeting their objectives and are contributing to the objectives of the Australian aid program to Burma which in turn afford AusAID clear evidence of the value of its contribution to development in Burma.
2. The conclusion of the 3DF due to the reestablishment of the Global Fund in late 2011, will impact on the already constrained funding landscape, and will result in a number of clear funding gaps within the health sector. This is particularly resonant given that PFHAB funding has to a large degree been supplementary and value adding to these activities. As such it is likely that this will have a roll-on effect for PFHAB partners, their own local partners and PFHAB itself.
3. AusAID's PFHAB partners have significant capacity to up-scale operations, and that additional investments to these projects for the remaining term of PFHAB would enable partners to implement value added activities, increase intensity and enhance impact through enabling replication and enhancing the institutional capacities of local partners in particular

Recommendation 3: That AusAID increases the current annual allocations to PFHAB to address emerging funding gaps, ensure expanded reach and ongoing outcomes throughout the life of PFHAB.

Within the context of Recommendation 3, the Independent Reviewers:

1. reiterate the findings of the MTRs of each of the PFHAB funded projects which identify the need to review and strengthen M&E processes to enable a clearer focus on articulation of impact (rather than outputs), particularly in relation to gender, institutional strengthening of local partners, DNH and addressing issues of inclusion/exclusion,

and find that:

1. partners have established relationships with authorities and local organisations which may have the potential for them to expand their spheres of influence through the sharing of lessons learned and demonstration of impacts;

2. focused efforts to strengthen M&E, approaches to crosscutting issues, and identifying opportunities to expand influence would further enhance impacts throughout the term of PFHAB and should be the focus of ongoing efforts.

Recommendation 4: PFHAB partners and AusAID should work together to strengthen M&E systems in order to demonstrate clear impacts in relation to shared objectives, gender, inclusion/exclusion and identify opportunities to expand analysis and influence.

SECTION 2: CIVIL SOCIETY IN BURMA

The secondary task of the Review was to undertake a preliminary scoping exercise and recommend pathways that AusAID may take towards the development of a possible future program of support to civil society in Burma. The following Section of this report outlines the Independent Reviewers observations gained through discussion with AusAID and its ANGO partners, other international NGOs, local CSOs and civil society actors, and donors.

8. Preliminary Findings – Civil Society in Burma

8.1. Snapshot of Civil Society in Burma

Within Burma's political context, civil society has traditionally been viewed as clandestine and subversive. Following Cyclone *Nargis* however, local CSOs were able to mobilise and take a key role in the emergency and recovery response. This has provided them with increased exposure, enabled the development of new relationships with international actors, and has resulted in an increasing acceptance of their presence, particularly with regard to their role in responding to humanitarian crises. Since this time, civil society organisations in Burma have carefully begun to take advantage of the opportunity that this presents to commence engagement in wider spheres of work. It is estimated at the present time, that there are over 214,000 local CSOs assisting citizens with a multitude of social needs.⁵⁶

A number of further issues were highlighted throughout the field mission:

- ✦ Civil society actors and CSOs face considerable constraints such as access to government, financial sustenance and sustainability, access to populations, social and geographic reach that limit their potential to contribute to building effective governance institutions and processes;

⁵⁶ Karl Dorning, 'The Growth of Civil Society', Myanmar's Long Road to National Reconciliation, Trevor Wilson (Editor) ISAS, Singapore (2006) p. 197 in Evidence Brief 1. Aid effectiveness for Whom? ACFID, Canberra, 2010.

- ✦ There is limited direct funding of local CSOs by donors, the majority of funding flows through intermediaries such as international NGOs or civil society programs;
- ✦ Partnering between international NGOs and local CSOs are to a large degree based on sub-contractor – service provider models, in which local organisations deliver activities in line with the partners wider program/project;
- ✦ Current funding modalities available to local CSOs can have the impact of focusing their efforts on the sectoral objectives of their donor, and leading them away from their core business or other areas of emerging need and opportunity;
- ✦ There is some resentment from local CSOs about current financing practices which tie funding to activity implementation and capacity building but do not allow for any recovery of institutional (non-project related) needs;
- ✦ As with all contexts, it is important not to assume that civil society speaks with 'one voice', civil society is diverse and nascent, CSOs have widely disparate capacities, resources and perceived roles;
- ✦ Current capacity development activities tend to focus upon specific areas of technical skill development within priority sectors. Where capacity building on management issues are provided, these tend to be aligned with the financial accountability and reporting requirements of the donor agency and less upon the core competencies of civil society organisations such as public consultation and participatory planning, advocacy, social research, monitoring etc.

A number of programmatic mechanisms have emerged in support of civil society in Burma in recent years. This includes support for civil society networks such as *Paung Ku*⁵⁷ and the Local Resource Centre (LRC)⁵⁸, models such as *Pyo Phin*⁵⁹ which work on key drivers of change and seek to harness multi-stakeholder engagement in priority/emerging sectors of opportunity, support for increased partnerships between international and local NGOs and ad hoc direct funding to local CSOs for development and humanitarian programming. It is important to note that many of these activities are still in the early stages of development are taking considerable care in exploring the approaches and possible areas of engagement. Discussions with existing CSOs, civil society programs and donors indicated that there is considerable space for the development of more initiatives to work with civil society in Burma, rather than increased support to existing mechanisms at the present time.

⁵⁷ Hosted by Save the Children in partnership with a consortium of international NGOs including HOPE International, World Vision, CARE etc.

⁵⁸ Hosted by Burnet

⁵⁹ DFID and the British Council

The Independent Reviewers identified a number of key areas of potential engagement with civil society which would fill some existing gaps in current support to civil society in Burma, and which therefore warrants further investigation and consideration. These are:

- ✦ social marketing/IEC, social research and surveying skill development;
- ✦ strengthening accountability (both downward and upward);
- ✦ documentation, community based planning (including pro-gender and pro-poor approaches);
- ✦ capacity building – key competencies for civil society organisations;
- ✦ the peace and conflict context (inclusion/exclusion);
- ✦ establishing baselines and monitoring of the development of the civil society space.

8.2 Present AusAID Approaches to Working with Civil Society

There is considerable interest within AusAID and opportunity and scope for Australia to commence a direct engagement within the growing civil society space in Burma. One of the key challenges facing AusAID at present is developing an understanding of the most effective shape and form that this support could take to ensure the development of complementary objectives and a meaningful two-way engagement.

While AusAID has not yet developed a clear policy framework for its work with civil society, the ODE Working Paper: Best Practice for Donor Engagement with Civil Society⁶⁰ provides a clear set of lessons learned and directions for civil society programming at the present time. Specifically, this paper highlights the need for donors to:

“employ a range of different aid modalities, types of assistance, intermediaries and instruments so as to enable and promote the diverse and innovative activity of civil society.”⁶¹

Of specific relevance is the discussion on the role of civil society in supporting the creating demand for good governance, transparency and accountability in fragile states and the importance of donor support for this:

“Donors’ behaviour towards government and civil society within fragile contexts can itself be important in strengthening the environment within which civil society operates. Being transparent and accountable by, for example, providing more predictable aid flows and information on plans and performance and advocating

⁶⁰ Hall, J and Howell, J; Working Paper: Good Practice in Donor Engagement with Civil Society (June 2010)

⁶¹ *ibid* p.7

for civil society's participation in processes at national and international levels creates an environment that fosters good governance⁶²"

It proposes that two key approaches toward support for civil society in the context of fragile states includes:

- ✦ A focus on building civil society's role as an autonomous, countervailing power to the state – usually for unreceptive or authoritarian regimes.
- ✦ A focus on deepening the participation of citizens in the processes of governance – relevant for fragile states, well-functioning states, or a combination of these⁶³.

In short, this requires a shift away from a focus on organisations and organisational activities towards 'space', that is, support for the creation of an enabling environment⁶⁴ within which civil society can operate and act.

This support can take a combination of forms, technical, financial or political, however must be based on a clear analysis and baselines for:

"the state of the enabling environment so that they understand the context in which they are intervening and can assess the effectiveness of their interventions."⁶⁵

Partnership naturally underpins analysis and planning and is key to the successful implementation of such efforts.

9. Recommendations and Next Steps – Civil Society in Burma

While a number of civil society initiatives are presently being undertaken by a range of development actors in Burma, these are still emerging mechanisms and work within their own sets of constraints and purpose. Discussions with civil society actors, and donors indicated that there is considerable space for the development of more initiatives to work with civil society in Burma, rather than increased support to existing mechanisms at the present time. Further,

⁶² *ibid* p. 22

⁶³ Hall, J and Howell, J; Working Paper: Good Practice in Donor Engagement with Civil Society (June 2010) p. 25

⁶⁴ The enabling environment might include support for the legislation and regulations that govern civil society and the freedom of association, assembly and expression; political support for civil society; the relationship between government and civil society; the financial conditions underpinning civil society; the relationship between government and donors, in particular the government's confidence or suspicion of donors' intentions; and cultural attitudes towards civil society etc.

⁶⁵ Lavergne and Wood 2009, Advisory Group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness 2008 in Hall, J and Howell, J; Working Paper: Good Practice in Donor Engagement with Civil Society (June 2010)

Australia's position as a key donor in Burma suggests that it may play a valuable contribution to the development of civil society. AusAID should be careful not to risk dilution of its efforts, nor lose the opportunities currently being presented by investing its resources into existing activities.

Recommendation 5: AusAID's approach to civil society engagement is best undertaken through direct engagement with local civil society actors, rather than through intermediaries or co-funding arrangements with other donors.

As a result of growing dissatisfaction with the disjointed nature of project based mechanisms, and lack of alignment with agreed objectives, priorities and systems, The Paris Declaration⁶⁶ underlined the importance of program-based approaches to development intervention.

Recommendation 6: AusAID's future engagement with civil society needs to be undertaken with a clear development/program objective.

While the Independent Reviewers reiterate this need for a programmed approach to support for civil society, we also recognise the key challenge posed by the present absence of a country program strategy, meaning that AusAID's objective for engagement with civil society cannot as yet be clearly defined. However, the fact that this country strategy is currently under development presents an opportunity for AusAID to ensure that an analysis of civil society and its approach to working with it in Burma is integrated into the development of this strategy.

Recommendation 7: AusAID should establish a process for the design of a discrete program which makes strategic investments into the development of civil society capacities and action in Burma.

While the specific intent and purpose of this engagement will be identified through a design process which needs to:

- ✦ Take into account the AusAID policy context and best practice principles for engagement with civil society as outlined in the ODE Working Paper: Good Practice in Donor Engagement with Civil Society⁶⁷;
- ✦ Be based on a strong contextual analysis of the key strategic actors and drivers of change;
- ✦ Understand and seek to address the constraints faced by civil society in undertaking their core roles;

⁶⁶ The Paris Declaration

http://www.oecd.org/document/18/0,3746,en_2649_3236398_35401554_1_1_1_1,00&en-USS_01DBC.html

⁶⁷ Hall, J and Howell, J; Working Paper: Good Practice in Donor Engagement with Civil Society (June 2010)

- ✦ Reflect upon and respond to the peace and conflict context of as a key crosscutting issue (if not clearly articulated objective) of any future program;
- ✦ Take into the account the evolving (and emergent) nature of civil society in Burma, the varying skills and capacities inherent within this provide support for capacity building and enable the development of new organisations;
- ✦ Lead to the establishment of flexible and dynamic systems in support of civil society action in a changeable context (and enable progressive engagement with key actors);
- ✦ Establish robust systems of consultation, reflection and planning in line with the principles of partnership;
- ✦ Focus on the mobilisation of a combination of technical, political and financial support for civil society;
- ✦ Explore presently untapped areas of potential include support for social marketing/IEC, social research and surveying skills, strengthening accountability (both downward and upward), documentation, community based planning (including pro-gender and pro-poor approaches), peace and conflict, building internal resilience.

The implementation of this recommendation necessitates the development of a TOR for a consultative design process⁶⁸, which will lead to the development of:

1. A concept design for AusAID's engagement with civil society in Burma;
2. The development of a civil society engagement strategy for AusAID in Burma;
3. Determine an agreed a process forwards the finalisation of the design;
4. Completion and approval of the design.

There are two proposed options for AusAID to undertake this design process⁶⁹.

1. That AusAID commit to engagement with civil society as a key part of its program and to this end engage a Civil Society Adviser in-country⁷⁰ to manage a design - implement process. This would enable the commencement of a participatory design which would enable immediate and progressive support for civil society throughout the design process;

⁶⁸ The Independent Reviewers consider that there is significant scope for this process to include participatory mapping exercises and potentially a survey of CSOs needs for capacity development etc. The use of Civil Society index tools should be considered.

⁶⁹ The proposed steps suggest 2 very different approaches, which will rely on differing resources and arrangements, which require some further exploration. The design team is putting these suggestions up at the present time as draft recommendations in order to receive feedback from AusAID at this draft reporting stage. These will be further developed at final reporting stage based on the feedback.

⁷⁰ It is proposed this would be a civil society person, located within a host organisation.

2. That AusAID establish a Design Team to undertake Steps 1 – 3 above. At completion of stage 3, the recommendations for the direction of the design and process forwards would be articulated and decision making regarding the resourcing of the next steps undertaken. It is anticipated that this process could be undertaken within a period of approximately six (6) – nine (9) months, the duration of which would be contingent upon the design processes agreed.

10. Summary and Conclusions

In summary, the PFHAB mechanism is found to have been relevant to the intent and purpose of the Australian aid program in Burma at the time of its establishment, and has successfully mobilised resources to support ANGO partners to achieve clear outcomes within these objectives.

Development programming in Burma brings with it a wide range of challenges and requires consistent attention to the management of relationships and risk. A number of Australian NGOs have a long experience of working in Burma and possess the relevant understandings, relationships and management systems which make them a viable and effective delivery modality for AusAID while providing it with direct attribution for the impacts achieved.

Present changes within AusAID practice in relation to partnerships with NGOs and the present up scaling of the aid program in Burma necessitate further consideration of the as yet unrealised potential of these relationships with a focus upon joint analysis and planning, collaboration along shared objectives and effective resource mobilisation.

Finally, the opening of the civil society space since Cyclone *Nargis* presents increased opportunity for both AusAID and international civil society actors to engage in more meaningful levels with local civil society in Burma, with an absolute priority being on the development of the civil society space and creation of strong institutions.

The scope and nature of this range of partnerships warrants the implementation of clear steps towards the design of a future partnerships model to achieve the common objectives of AusAID, the ANGOs who made considerable investments into development in Burma and local civil society.

Annexes

Annex 1: Terms of Reference PFHAB Review March/April 2011

1. BACKGROUND

Australia has for many years sought to help the Burmese people through a program of humanitarian assistance targeting Burma's poor and most vulnerable, particularly those living in remote geographical areas.

NGO Cooperation Agreements enable AusAID to use ANGOs to implement activities when they represent the most effective delivery mechanism. In Burma, ANGOs and their local partners have demonstrated that they are able to deliver assistance to the most vulnerable populations, even during tightened travel restrictions. AusAID's Burma Humanitarian Aid Framework 2007-2010 envisaged a role for ANGOs in delivering humanitarian assistance, particularly to women, children and youth, ethnic minority groups, displaced persons and others who may be affected by conflict.

The *Periodic Funding for Humanitarian Assistance in Burma* (PFHAB) is a partnership between AusAID and ANGOs, linking ANGO activities and expertise to the Burma Humanitarian Aid Framework (2007-2010) for Burma. This partnership aims to ensure that the Australian Government's funding of ANGOs in Burma is effectively targeted.

PFHAB is based on Cooperation Agreements with three Australian NGOs: CARE Australia, Burnet Institute and Marie Stopes International (MSI). PFHAB has an approved budget of \$AUD 10 million over a five year period, commencing in February 2008 until January 2013.

PFHAB focuses on two sectors:

- ✦ Health (including basic health, HIV/AIDS and reproductive health); and
- ✦ Livelihoods.

Activities currently funded under PFHAB are:

CARE Australia	Mobilising Community Capacities for Health
Burnet Institute	Strengthening HIV Responses through Partnership
MSI	Mobilising Access to Sexual and Reproductive Health in Burma
CARE Australia	Southern Chin Livelihood Security Project

2. RATIONALE

AusAID intends to review the performance of PFHAB in order to allow it to make any necessary adjustments in the remaining term of PFHAB so as to maximise the benefits.

AusAID also wishes to commence a process to consider the design of an NGO partnership program in Burma which would build on the PFHAB successes and lessons learnt to date, but more broadly target strengthening of Burmese civil society in the future.

3. FUTURE PROGRAM

Last year (February 2010) Australia announced an expanded package of assistance which moves the Burma program from a primarily humanitarian focus to a more broad-based development program ([Ministerial Statement on Burma](#)) The 2010-11 Budget increased aid to nearly \$50 million (from approximately \$29.1 million in 2009-10) to support accelerated progress towards the MDGs. Australia's new development assistance program will continue to address the critical humanitarian needs of the Burmese people and target the alleviation of critical needs in education, livelihoods, food security and health, especially maternal and child health. In recognition of the serious and sustained decline in the human capital of Burma, efforts to build the capacity of people, civil society and institutions to better plan and deliver essential services will increasingly underpin Australian aid to Burma.

This future expanded program will reflect the objectives of the Ministerial Statement and Australia's strategic approach to aid in [Burma: An Interim Statement](#) (December 2010) and the forthcoming Burma Development Assistance Framework (2011-2014)⁷¹.

4. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the review are to:

- a. Assess the overall performance of PFHAB through two levels of analysis:
 - i. at the level of PFHAB's overall objectives; and
 - ii. at the level of the specific objectives of the four funded activities;
- b. Recommend actions necessary to improve the performance of PFHAB up to its due completion date;
- c. Provide insights and lessons learnt from the PFHAB experience for consideration of future programming with international NGOs, including options to strengthen the role of international and national NGOs in the Australian development assistance program in Burma; and
- d. Recommend actions/next steps for a mechanism to focus on strengthening of Burmese civil society organisations.

4. OUTPUT & OUTCOMES

The principal product of the review will be a report that addresses the above objectives and the below scoping criteria in these terms of reference for

⁷¹ The new Framework is currently being drafted.

distribution to AusAID, ANGOs, peak NGO/civil society organisations in Burma and Australia. Other outputs are listed under "Reporting Requirements".

Through the process and outputs of the PFHAB Review, the following outcomes are expected:

- ✦ improved effectiveness of the management of PFHAB;
- ✦ strengthened partnership between AusAID, ANGOs and International NGOs;
- ✦ enhanced programming model for future NGO engagement in the Australian development assistance program beyond PFHAB; and
- ✦ recommendations for actions/next steps for a mechanism to strengthen Burmese civil society organisations.

5. SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

The Review will address the following issues:

At PFHAB level assess:

- ✦ how flexible has the PFHAB design been during implementation; how effective and relevant have its monitoring and management mechanisms been; and what was the quality of its sustainability strategy, drawing out lessons from the management of PFHAB for other Cooperation Agreement windows in AusAID;
- ✦ the achievements of the PFHAB to date and contributions to achieving Australia's specific country Framework objectives including by drawing out successes, challenges, and lessons learnt for the potential future development of Australian support for international NGOs and civil society organisations in Burma in the context of the new Burma Development Assistance Framework (2011-2014);
- ✦ how effective has PFHAB been to date – have projected results been achieved? Are the risk management systems and structure in place and working well?
- ✦ ANGOs' and community perceptions of AusAID's contribution to the partnership, and AusAID's perception of the contribution of the ANGOs to the partnership;
- ✦ how cross cutting issues, in particular gender equity, have been addressed during program implementation; and
- ✦ the adequacy of AusAID's support and capacity to allow delivery on Program level outcomes, and the commitment of the ANGOs to deliver at that level.

At the Activity level, assess:

- ✦ the performance of the ANGO activities;
- ✦ how flexible were the relevant activity level designs during implementation; the effectiveness of the relevant monitoring and

management mechanisms; and the quality of the relevant sustainability strategies, including any evidence of replication beyond the activities' target areas;

- ✦ the management performance of the ANGOs, including in terms of their working and coordination mechanisms with other PFHAB ANGOs, AusAID, and partner communities;
- ✦ what has been achieved, including the thematic linkages to other activities and contributions to achievements of the objectives of the Burma Humanitarian Aid Framework 2007-2010;
- ✦ how cross cutting issues, in particular gender equity and disability, have been addressed during project implementation.

Future Programming:

- ✦ recommend how PFHAB may be strengthened in the period up to its due completion date;
- ✦ consider the development of civil society organisations in Burma, and the role of international and national NGOs, in assisting to reduce poverty in Burma;
- ✦ consider the strengths and challenges of the PFHAB partnership model, especially by assessing how PFHAB's activities link to other Australian development activities in Burma, to community development and civil society strengthening in Burma; and by assessing key differences with more recent AusAID Cooperation Agreements;
- ✦ make recommendations on how AusAID may strengthen its partnership with international NGOs based on the PFHAB experience, including options on how to enhance their role in achieving the objectives of the Burma Development Assistance Framework (2011-2014).

6. SCOPE OF SERVICES

The review will be conducted in four phases in Australia and Burma. It will commence on 1 March 2011 and conclude on 30 May 2011.

Phase 1: Desk review in Australia: (up to 5 days)

- ✦ review PFHAB documentation supplied by AusAID;
- ✦ review findings and reports of recent Mid Term Reviews of other AusAID NGO cooperation agreements;
- ✦ review relevant AusAID documentation, including regarding emerging consideration of policy approaches to strengthening the role of NGOs in the Australian aid program;
- ✦ draft an outline of an Issues Paper to share with ANGOs in Phase 2 (below). The Issues Paper should outline the approach, methodology and workplan for the review, including a summary of issues and major points/questions for in-country consultation and discussion and a proposed format for the Review Report. This Issue Paper needs to take into account lessons learned from previous Cooperation Agreements reviews.

Phase 2: In-Australia consultation: (up to 4 days)

- ✦ meet with Community Partnership Section, AusAID Canberra;
- ✦ meet with ANGO representatives in Australia (CARE in Canberra, Burnet Institute and Marie Stopes in Melbourne), facilitated through ACFID;
- ✦ finalise the Issues Paper and send to AusAID Canberra for circulation prior to the in-country review (by 8 March 2011).

Phase 3: In-Burma mission: 14 - 30 March 2011 (excluding travel)

- ✦ attend briefing by AusAID Rangoon on arrival;
- ✦ meet with PFHAB ANGOs, agencies and other donors;
- ✦ meet with relevant local NGOs and Non-PFHAB international NGOs involved in strengthening local civil society;
- ✦ travel to activity sites and meet with project teams;
- ✦ prepare a draft Aide Memoire consisting of initial findings and recommendations for discussion with AusAID Rangoon;
- ✦ hold an end-of-mission workshop with relevant stakeholders to present initial findings and recommendations.

Phase 4: In-Australia report preparation: (up to 10 days)

- ✦ prepare a draft Review Report (by 15 April) with findings, lessons learned and recommendations for consideration of future programming with NGOs to support the Burma Development Assistance Framework (2011-2014);
- ✦ Recommend initial actions/next steps for a future mechanism to focus on development of civil society organisations;
- ✦ conduct in-Australia debriefing with ANGO representatives facilitated through ACFID; and
- ✦ finalise the Review Report after receiving comments and feedback. Final date for Review Report is 5 May 2011

7. TEAM SPECIFICATION

The Review Team will comprise:

The Team Leader (Donna Holden)

The team leader is responsible for directing, coordinating and managing the assignment, including the submission of the Review Report to AusAID.

The team leader will have: (i) demonstrated experience in the monitoring, evaluation and assessment of development assistance activities, in particular NGO program assessment and performance evaluation; (ii) demonstrated understanding of the socio, political and economic situation in Burma (iii) demonstrated understanding of civil society organisations and NGOs (iv) strong leadership skills; and (v) sound cross-cultural knowledge.

The team leader will be responsible for:

- ✦ finalising his or her own international travel for in-country mission;

- ✦ liaising with AusAID Canberra and/or ACFID for in-Australia consultation;
- ✦ liaising with AusAID Canberra (Sue Nelson) on the team's work program and meetings schedule prior to the mission commencing in-country;
- ✦ initial planning and review of relevant documentation as listed below;
- ✦ coordination among team members on specific tasks during the mission;
- ✦ cooperating with AusAID to present and discuss the mission's *Aide Memoire* at the end-of-mission workshop;
- ✦ drafting the Review Report (electronically) by 15 April 2011; and
- ✦ finalising the review report after receiving comments and feedback.

The second team member (ACFID nominated NGO Representative - Denise Nichols)

The team member will have: (i) demonstrated experience in the monitoring, evaluation and assessment of development assistance activities in particular NGO program assessment and performance evaluation; (ii) demonstrated understanding of the socio, political and economic situation in Burma (iii) demonstrated understanding of civil society organisations and NGOs (iv) strong teamwork skills; and (iv) sound cross-cultural knowledge.

The team member will be responsible for:

- ✦ finalising his or her own international travel for in-country mission;
- ✦ liaising with the team leader on the team's work program and meetings schedule prior to the mission commencing in-country;
- ✦ working with the team leader on initial planning and review of relevant documentation as listed below;
- ✦ working with other team members on specific tasks during the mission;
- ✦ cooperating with the team leader to present and discuss the mission's *Aide Memoire* at the end-of-mission workshop;
- ✦ working with the team leader on drafting the Review Report by 15 April 2011; and
- ✦ working with the team leader to finalise the review report after receiving comments and feedbacks.

AusAID Canberra participant (Sue Nelson and Tamsin Coryn-Wyllie)

An AusAID Canberra officer from the Burma Program will support the Review Team to facilitate discussions relating to AusAID's policies and guidelines on cooperation with NGOs.

AusAID Rangoon participant (Aung Kyaw Kyaw)

This officer will provide local knowledge and necessary support to the Review Team as required.

8. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The Review Team will produce the following papers:

- ✦ **An Issues Paper** to be developed in phases 1 and 2, discussed with ANGOs, and sent to AusAID Canberra for circulation to relevant stakeholders before the in-country visit commences;
- ✦ **An Aide Memoire** for the end-of-mission workshop;
- ✦ **A Draft Review Report** (electronically) in a format outlined in the Issues Paper. The draft Review Report will be marked as draft and will have the revision date on the cover. The team leader should submit the draft Review Report to AusAID Canberra by 15 April 2011.
- ✦ **Review Report** (10 hard copies and electronically) in a format outlined previously in the Issues Paper. The team leader should submit the final report to AusAID Canberra following receipt of comments and feedback on the draft review. Final date for Review Report is 5 May 2011.

The team leader is responsible for preparing and submitting the above documents in consultation with the other team members. AusAID will have ownership of all documentation.

9. READING DOCUMENTS

The Review Team should consider all relevant documentation, including:

PFHAB Program documents:

- PFHAB Funding and Application Guidelines
- Recent Mid Term Reviews and cluster evaluations of other AusAID NGO cooperation agreements, including those for Solomon Islands, Laos and Africa

Documents for each of the four ANGO activities:

- Original designs
- Annual reports and plans
- Mid-term review reports (if available)

Other:

- Burma Humanitarian Aid Framework 2007-2010 (public version)
- Ministerial Statement
- Statement of Commitment
- AusAID Desk Review of Civil Society in Burma (draft 2009)

- Any current guidelines and decrees on the operation of NGOs or civil society groups
- Donor principles for engagement with Burmese civil society
- Australian Government Civil Society Engagement Framework Draft, unpublished.
- Working paper on good practice donor engagement with civil society
- Relevant research and analyses of the role and performance of NGOs and civil society organisations in Burma
- Best practice for working with community based groups: A review of NGO and UN Agencies' approaches to working with community based groups in the Ayeyarwaddy Delta following Cyclone Nargis 2009, Dan Church Aid.
- International Crisis Group 2001, 'Myanmar: the role of civil society', Asia Report No. 27, Bangkok/Brussels.
- Listening Project 2009, 'Field visit report: Myanmar/Burma', Collaborative Learning Projects, Cambridge MA.
- Local Resource Centre and Oxfam 2010, 'Progressing through partnerships: How national and international organisations work together in Myanmar', unpublished
- Pedersen, M, 'Burma/Myanmar: Aid, state fragility and the emerging principles for good donor engagement in fragile states', unpublished, Canberra.
- Petrie, C 2008, End of Mission Report UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, UNDP Resident Representative for Myanmar 2003-2007, unpublished
- Richmond, J, 'Promises, Prospects and Prognostications for a Civil Society in Burma', conference paper, Western Political Science Association.
- Sabandar, W, 2009, 'Post-Nargis Recovery in Myanmar', paper presented to Myanmar/Burma Update Conference, Canberra, 17-18 August.
- South, A 2004, 'Political transition in Myanmar: A new model for democratisation', *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, vol.26, no.2, pp.233-55.
- South, A 2008, *Civil society in Burma: The development of democracy amidst conflict*, East-West Center, Washington.
- South, A 2010, *Civil society in Myanmar: Three emerging trends*, Paung Ku Discussion Forum, unpublished.
- United Nations (2010), 'Engagement with civil society in Myanmar', meeting presentation, 16 March.

Annex 2: Field Mission Schedule

Time	Meetings/Activities	Venue
Sunday, March 13, 2011		
	Arrive Burma	Yangon
Monday, 14 March 2011		
08:30-09:30	AusAID Briefing by Shaanti Sekhom	Embassy
09:30-10:00	DFAT Briefing by HOM and DHOM	Embassy
10:30-12:00	In-depth discussion with Burnet	Burnet Office
12:00-13:30	Roundtable lunch with CARE, MSI, Burnet, AusAID	Restaurant
14:00-15:30	In-depth discussion with MSI	MSI Office
15:45-17:30	In-depth discussion with CARE	CARE Office
Tuesday, March 15, 2011		
07.00am	Flight leaves Yangon to Mandalay	
10.30 – 12.00	Project site visit in Mandalay (Paung Daw Oo Monastic High School)	Mandalay
12.00 – 1.00	Lunch	
1.00 – 15.00	Drive to Sagaing (2 hrs drive)	
15.00 – 16.30	Project site visit to Wachet Sangha Hospital in Sagaing	Sagaing
16.30 – 18.30	Return Drive to Mandalay (2 hrs drive)	
Wednesday, March 16, 2011		
08.00	Project site visit to CARE and MSI health activities in Mandalay (Visit to MANA Drop In Centre in Mandalay, CARE Myanmar Drop In Centre)	Mandalay
17.35	Flight to Yangon	
Thursday, 17 March 2011		
06.15	Flight Yangon to Nyaung Oo (Bagan) (plans for onward travel changed due to flight delays of 4 hours)	Mandalay
Friday, March 18, 2011		
07.00	Drive from Nyaung Oo (Bagan) to Mindat, Chin State (7 hours drive)	
14.30 – 15.00	Refresh and briefing at CARE office in the evening	Mindat
15.30 – 17.30	Village Visit – FGD with Farmers and Women’s Groups View village nursery, women’s gardens	
19.00 – 20.30	Dinner with local authorities (protocol)	
	Night stop at Mindat	
Saturday March 19, 2011		
07.00 – 0.730	Breakfast at Shining Star cafe	Mindat
	Mindat to Htai Lawng, Awi Gei village (3 hrs drive)	
	Observe catchment protection, nursery, home gardening and agro-forestry activities	
	Lunch	
	Meeting with FIG, VDC, KF, VSLA members and FEW at Community Development Centre in Awi Gei village	
	Awi Gei village to Mindat (3 hrs drive)	

19.00 – 20.30	Dinner with local partners	CARE Office
	Night stop at <i>Mindat</i>	
Sunday, March 20, 2011		
07.00 – 08.00	Breakfast at Shining Star Cafe	<i>Mindat</i>
08.00	Drive to <i>Nyaung Oo (Bagan)</i> from <i>Mindat</i> (7 hrs drive)	
18.00	Evening Flight (Air Mandalay by 17:33) from <i>Nyaung Oo (Bagan)</i> to <i>Yangon</i>	
Monday, 21 March 2011		
0.6.00	Drive from <i>Yangon</i> to <i>Mawlamyine</i> by car (7 hrs drive)	
15.00 – 17.00	Visit CARE health activities in <i>Mawlamyine</i>	<i>Mawlamyine</i>
	Night stop at <i>Mawlamyine</i>	
Tuesday, March 22, 2011		
07.30	Drive from <i>Mawlamyine</i> to <i>Mudon</i> (1 hr drive)	
8.00 – 10.00	Visit CARE health activities in <i>Mudon</i>	<i>Mudon</i>
	Drive to <i>Thaton</i> – Lunch on the road (3 hr drive)	
14.00 – 15.30	Myanmar Red Cross Clinic visit (<i>Thathon</i>)	<i>Thathon</i>
	Return from <i>Mawlamyine</i> to <i>Yangon</i> by car (5hrs drive)	
Wednesday, March 23, 2011		
09.00	Project site visit to MSI clinic in <i>Yangon (Thingangyun)</i>	<i>Yangon</i>
11.00 .00 – 17.00	Team meetings - planning	Hotel
Thursday, March 24, 2011		
10:00-11:00	<i>Paung Ku</i>	Save the Children
12:00-14:00	Meeting with British Embassy re <i>Pyoe Pin</i> (Richard Butterworth DFID and Gerry Fox British Council)	Monsoon
14:30-16:30	Local contingency planning group LRC & local NGOs	LRC
16:30-18.30	Update with AusAID	Embassy
Friday, 25 March 2011		
10:00-12:00	INGO Roundtable discussion (Oxfam, IRC, Hope International, Merlin, Swiss Aid, Action Aid, World Vision)	Embassy
1.00 -	Team preparation	Hotel
Saturday, March 26, 2011		
	Time for preparation of <i>Aide Memoire</i>	
Sunday, March 27, 2011		
	<i>Aide Memoire</i> and Presentation Preparation	
Monday, March 28, 2011		
	Time for preparation of <i>Aide Memoire</i> and Workshop	Hotel
16:00-17:30	Meeting with Mikko and 3DF team	3DF Office
18:30-19.45	Meeting with Claire Light + Matt Desmond	Strand Hotel
Tuesday, March 29, 2011		
09:30-12:00	End-of-mission workshop with stakeholders	Embassy
	Exit meeting with AusAID/DFAT (Shaanti, Denise, Donna, Tamsin, Aung Kyaw Kyaw, Bronte, Ruth)	Embassy
Wednesday, March 30, 2011		
8.00 – 9.30	Team Debrief	Hotel
10.30	Donna, Denise departure for airport	
Civil Society/PFHAB mission complete		

Annex 3: List of Consultations

ORGANISATION	NAME	POSITION	PROCESS
AusAID			
	Sue Nelson	Program Manager, Burma (Canberra)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Briefing ✘ Field Visits
	Michael Hassett	Counselor for Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Briefing ✘ Meetings
	Shaanti Sekhon	First Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Briefing ✘ Meetings ✘ Debriefing
	Aung Kyaw Kyaw	Program Officer (Burma)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Briefing ✘ Meetings ✘ Field Visit
	Tamsin Coryn-Wyllie	Program Officer (Canberra)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Briefing ✘ Field Visits ✘ Stakeholder Workshop
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)			
	Bronte Moules	Head of Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Briefing ✘ Debrief
	Ruth Stewart	Deputy Head of Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Briefing ✘ Debrief
Burnet Institute-Myanmar (BI-MM)			
	Dr. Karl Dorning	Country Representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Briefing ✘ Field visits ✘ Meeting ✘ INGO Meeting ✘ Stakeholder workshop
	Dr. Nan Pann Ei Kham	Project Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Briefing ✘ Field visit
	Soe Lin Htut	Comms Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Field visit
	Dr. Pone Myint Win	Program Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Stakeholder Workshop
Burnet Institute			
	Lia Burns	Program Manager Myanmar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Email
CARE International in Myanmar			
	Brian Agland	Country Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Briefing
	Joseph Kodamanchaly	Asst. Country Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Briefing ✘ Field visit ✘ Stakeholder Workshop

	U Shwe Thein	Program Quality Leader	✘ Briefing ✘ Stakeholder workshop
	Dr Kyaw Hlaing	Program Advisor, Health	✘ Field visit ✘ Stakeholder workshop
	Nay Myo Zaw	Program Coordinator	✘ Field visit ✘ Stakeholder workshop
	Myo Thura,	Agriculture Advisor	✘ Field visit ✘ Stakeholder workshop
	Ei Shwe Yi Win	Field Office Coordinator, Mandalay	✘ Field visit ✘ Stakeholder workshop
	U Khin Zaw	Field Office Coordinator	✘ Field Visits
	Dominic May Om	SPO (Social Mobilisation)	✘ Field Visits
	John Bosco Khaw	SPO (Agriculture)	✘ Field Visits
	Gei Hmaan,	Program Officer	✘ Field Visits
	Ghung Kee Gei	SPO (Forest)	✘ Field Visits
	Htin Kyaw Win	Program Officer	✘ Field Visits
	Chaing Mana	Program Officer	✘ Field Visits
	Zaw Myint Tun	SPO (WASH)	✘ Field Visits
	Malar Oo, AFO	SPO (IGA)	✘ Field Visits
	Kyawt Kyawt Khaing,	Admin Finance Officer	✘ Field Visits
	Kap Zo Lian	SPO (WASH)	✘ Field Visits
	Aye Aye Thin	Program Officer	✘ Field Visits
	Nilar Soe	Field Office Coordinator	✘ Field Visits
CARE Australia			
	Christina Munzer		✘ Meeting
	Rachael O'Mara	Senior Program Officer, Asia - Pacific	✘ Meeting
Mindat Township Baptist Association (MTBA) Local Partners CARE S..Chin			
	Rev Thang Ngai Om	Chairman	✘ Meeting
	Salai Naing Thang	Vice-chairman	✘ Meeting
Presbyterian Church Mindat (PSM) Local Partners CARE S.Chin			

	Ling Zaw	Chairman	✘ Meeting
	Ling Ling	Accountant	✘ Meeting
Dai Region Development Committee (DRDC) Local Partners CARE S.Chin			
	Hong Naing	Chairman	✘ Meeting
	Phoi Arr	Accountant	✘ Meeting
Paing Pai Village Southern Chin			
	Community Members	VDC & Farmers' Interest Group	✘ Field visit
	Community Members	Women's VSLA	✘ Field visit
Awi Gei Village Southern Chin			
	Community Members	Women's VSLA	✘ Field visit
	Community	Community Forestry MC	✘ Field visit
CARE Drop in Centre Mawlamyine			
	Hla Mon Aung	PHA Secretary	✘ Field visit
	Kay Thi Win	Chairman	✘ Field visit
	Aye Moe Htwe	Money Controller	✘ Field visit
	Thida Oo	Member	✘ Field visit
	Hle Hle Linn	Member	✘ Field visit
	May Hnin Thet	Member	✘ Field visit
	Aye Ma Ma Soe	OVC Secretary	✘ Field visit
	Ei Ei Khin	Accountant	✘ Field visit
	Aye Moe Htwe	Financial Controller	✘ Field visit
	Ni Ni Aung	Accountant	✘ Field visit
CARE DIC Kaw Kapon Village, Mawlamyine			
	Kaw Saw	MC member	✘ Field visit
	Saw Kyi	MC member	✘ Field visit
	Ma Maw	MC member	✘ Field visit
	Aung Win	MC member	✘ Field visit
	Phyo Su Win	MC member	✘ Field visit
	Tin Mya	MC member	✘ Field visit
	Thin Kyaing	MC member	✘ Field visit
	Nan Aye	MC member	✘ Field visit
	Tan Su Win	MC member	✘ Field visit
	Kay Zin Win	MC member	✘ Field visit
	Kyi Kyi Tan	MC member	✘ Field visit
	Khin Yandarr Win	MC member	✘ Field visit
MSM, Drop in Centre, Mawlamyine			
	U Tin Aung	Chairman	✘ Field visit
	U Tun Maung Win	Vice Chair	✘ Field visit

	Aung Moe Lwin	Accountant	✘ Field visit
	Chit Ko Ko	Outreach worker	✘ Field visit
	Aung Htoo	Member	✘ Field visit
	Pyae Sone	Member	✘ Field visit
Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) Thaton, Mawlamyine			
	Dr. Wut Yee Soe	Senior Tech Officer	✘ Field visit
	Hnin Phyu Phyu	Program Officer	✘ Field visit
	Dr. Kyaw Thura Htun	Medical Officer	✘ Field visit
	Khin Mi Mi Gyi	Nurse	✘ Field visit
	Zarni Tin	Counsellor (BBI-MM Mobile Team)	✘ Field visit
	Nant May Thazin	Nurse (BI-MM) Mobile Team)	✘ Field visit
	Saw Khu Se	Counsellor	✘ Field visit
	Mya San Thi	Field Supervisor	✘ Field visit
	Min Min Than	Field Facilitator	✘ Field visit
Marie Stopes International Myanmar			
	Dr. Sid Naing	Country Director	✘ Briefing ✘ Field visits ✘ Meeting ✘ Stakeholder workshop
	Dr Moe Moe Aung	Sr. Program Manager	✘ Briefing ✘ Field visits ✘ Meeting
	Dr Thida Kyaw	Project Manager	✘ Briefing ✘ Field visits
	Dr Khin Than Po	Centre Manager, MSI Yangon	✘ Meeting
	Dr. Kalaya Min Min Soe	Centre Manager, Ye MSI Centre	✘ Field visit
	Than Than Yi	SRH Promoter	✘ Meeting
	Thiri Thae Wut Yee	SRH Promoter	✘ Meeting
	Naw Seh Wah		✘ Field visit
	Dr Kyaw Min Htet,	Centre Manager, MSI Mandalay	✘ Field visit
	Ohnmar Aung	Junior Project Officer	✘ Field visit

Mon Women's Organisation			
	Mi Haung		✘ Field visit
	Mi Sarr Yarr		✘ Field visit
	Sar Non		✘ Field visit
	Mi Daung Malwae		✘ Field visit
	Mi Hong		✘ Field visit
Myanmar Positive Women Network Initiative			
	Naw Seh Wah	Chairperson	✘ Field visit
Mirror of Charity			
	Sister Martha Paul	Director	✘ Field visit
Mon Literary & Culture Association			
	Tin Nilar Soe		✘ Field visit
	Zin Mar Oo		✘ Field visit
	Kyaw Lin Tun		✘ Field visit
Chit Yar Zar Theatrical Performance Troupe			
	Chit Yar Zar	Lead Dancer/Actor	✘ Field visit
Burma Authorities			
	Dr Tin Maung Zaw	Liaison Officer	✘ Field Visit <i>Mandalay</i>
	Dr Thida Soe	Liaison Officer	✘ Field visit <i>Southern Chin</i>
	Dr. Zaw Win	Mon State Health Director	✘ Field visit <i>Mandalay</i>
	Dr Thant Zin Min	Liaison Officer	✘ Field visit <i>Mawlymine</i>
	U Khin Zaw	Department of Forestry	✘ Meeting <i>Mindat</i>
	U Min Naing	Manager, District Agriculture Services	✘ Meeting <i>Mindat</i>
	Dr Zaw Min Thant	Surgeon, Dept Health,	✘ Meeting <i>Mindat</i>
	U Win Myint	Secretary, Divisional Agriculture Services	✘ Meeting <i>Mindat</i>
	U Khin Maung Lay, Division	Secretary, Division PDC	✘ Meeting <i>Mindat</i>
	U Win Htay	Chairman, Division PDC	✘ Meeting <i>Mindat</i>
	U Tin Yi, District	Secretary PDC	✘ Meeting <i>Mindat</i>
	U Thein Lwin	Police Department	✘ Meeting <i>Mindat</i>
Paung Daw Oo Monastic School, Mandalay			
	Moe Myint Khaing	Project	✘ Field Visit

		Manager	
Watchet Jivitadana Sangha Hospital, Sagaing			
	Dr Thida Aye	TB Consultant	✘ Field Visit
	Dr Khin May Aye	Medical Officer	✘ Field Visit
	Dr Win Hle Aye	Medical Officer	✘ Field Visit
	U Tin Maung Shein	EC member	✘ Field Visit
	Su Su Hlaing	Nurse	✘ Field Visit
	Khin Mon Nwe	Nurse	✘ Field Visit
	Chaw Su Su Hlaing Htay	Nurse	✘ Field Visit
	Toe Toe Naing	Project Officer	✘ Field Visit
	Nilar	Counsellor	✘ Field Visit
Paung Ku, Yangon			
	Dr Kyaw Thu Aung	Director	✘ Meeting
	Dave McClintock	Advisor	✘ Meeting
	Win Tun Kyi	Program Manager	✘ Meeting
DFID Pyo Pin			
	Richard Butterworth	Service Delivery Advisor/Dep. Head, DFID	✘ Meeting
	Gerry Fox	Dir. Pyo Pin	✘ Meeting
LRC			
	Thu Thu Nwe Hlaing	Research Coordinator	✘ LNGO Mtg
Renewable Energy Association Myanmar (REAM)			
	Prof. Saw Win	Director	✘ LNGO Mtg
Gender Development Initiatives (GDI)			
	Hser Gay Paw	Intern	✘ LNGO Mtg
	Issac	Director	✘ LNGO Mtg
Ratana Myitta			
	Pagae		✘ LNGO Mtg
	U Nyunt Hlaing May		✘ LNGO Mtg
Myanmar Business Coalition on AIDS			
	Dr Khin Aye Aye	Executive Director	✘ LNGO Mtg
Myanmar's Heart Development Organisation			
	Aung Zaw Win	General Secretary	✘ LNGO Mtg
	Saw Ka Baw Htoo		✘ LNGO Mtg
Merlin			
	Paul Sender	Country Director	✘ INGO Mtg
Save the Children			
	Dan Collison	Ass. Country	✘ INGO Mtg

		Director	
Swiss AID			
	Ei Kalya Moore		✘ INGO Mtg
ActionAID			
	Bahadur		✘ INGO Mtg
	Ni Ni Myint		✘ INGO Mtg
Oxfam			
	John Priteaux Brune	Country Director	✘ INGO Mtg
Hope International			
	David Tegenfeldt		✘ INGO Mtg
Three Diseases Fund (3DF)			
	Mikko Lainejoki	CEO	✘ Meeting
	Dr Nu Nu Aye	National Public Health Officer (HIV/AIDS)	✘ Meeting
	Nang Mo Kham	Public Health Officer	✘ Meeting
Consultants			
	Claire Light		✘ Meeting
	Matt Desmond		✘ Meeting
	Linda Kelly	Team Leader, AACES Design	✘ Telephone discussions ✘ Email
CARE Income Generation Activity (IGA) Mandalay			
	Daw Thein Htay	IGA beneficiary	✘ Field Visit
CARE Children's DIC, Mandalay			
	20 children and young people Children's DIC	CARE/UNICEF program	✘ Field visit
Myanmar Anti-Narcotic Association (MANA) Office, Pyi Gu Da Gon DIC			
	Dr Tin Aye Kyi	Activities Manager	✘ Field Visit
	Ei The Saint	Finance	✘ Field Visit
	Aye Mon Myint	Nurse	✘ Field Visit
	Ohnmar Zaw	Counsellor	✘ Field Visit
	Ei Phyu Win	Outreach Worker	✘ Field Visit
	Bosco Nay Myo	Outreach Worker	✘ Field Visit
	Toe Toe Aung	Outreach Worker	✘ Field Visit
Australian Council for Overseas Development (ACFID)			
			✘ Telephone discussions

Annex 4: Key Areas of Inquiry

The following represents the key lines of inquiry during the field mission.

Strategic Level

The Development Context in Burma

- ✦ **Development Challenges**
 - ✦ What are the key development challenges in Burma and how are development actors meeting these?
 - ✦ What is the specific contribution of PFHAB partner programs to development in Burma?
 - ✦ What are the successes, challenges and lessons learnt?
 - ✦ What needs are/are not being met?
 - ✦ Is there space to meet these needs?
- ✦ **Sustainability**
 - ✦ What challenges does the operating context place pose to sustainability?
 - ✦ What strategies have been put in place to ensure sustainability of outcomes in the PFHAB?
- ✦ **Civil Society in Burma**
 - ✦ What is the role of Civil Society in Burma?
 - ✦ How can civil society in Burma be supported to fulfill this role?
 - ✦ What are the existing mechanisms for working with civil society in Burma? Are these sufficiently supported? Are they achieving gains? Are gains achieved in line with civil society aspirations?
 - ✦ What are the risks and challenges?

Quality Project Management Procedure and Practices

- ✦ **Design**
 - ✦ How flexible has the PFHAB design been during implementation?
 - ✦ What has worked well?
 - ✦ What has not worked so well?
 - ✦ What improvements could be made?
- ✦ **Monitoring and Evaluation**
 - ✦ What M&E mechanisms have been in place?
 - ✦ How effective and relevant have the mechanisms been?
 - ✦ What has worked well?
 - ✦ What has not worked so well?
 - ✦ What improvements could be made?
- ✦ **Cross cutting issues**

- ✘ How have cross cutting issues especially gender equity, child protection and the environment been addressed in the implementation of the program?
- ✘ What are the challenges in addressing cross cutting issues?

- ✘ **Risk management structures**
 - ✘ What systems and structures are in place to manage risk?
 - ✘ What is working well?
 - ✘ What is not working well?
 - ✘ What improvements could be made?

- ✘ **Partnership**
 - ✘ What is the nature of partnerships?
 - ✘ What is the added value of these partnerships to the Australian aid program in Burma?
 - ✘ Is the partnership model relevant to current AusAID policy and practice *vis a vis* partnerships?

Annex 5: Project Summaries

While it is outside the scope of this review to undertake independent and detailed assessments of each project funded under the PFHAB mechanism, an understanding of the core activities, implementation issues, achievements and lessons learned of these contribute to the overall observations of the PFHAB mechanism.

Throughout the Review process and field mission, the Review Team had opportunities review key documentation, meet with PFHAB partners and visit field locations to view and discuss the implementation of projects. The following summaries, are based on these observations (albeit limited in scope and duration) and lean heavily upon project reports and MTR, and simply seek to give an overview of project implementation, key lessons learned and identify recommendations for the future.

Annex 5.1 CARE: Southern Chin Livelihood Security Project

Title	Southern Chin Livelihood Security Project (SCLSP)
Duration	19 February 2008 to 31 January 2013
Budget	AUD 3.361,400
Goal	To improve the livelihood security of targeted communities in <i>Mindat</i> and <i>Matupi/Rezua</i> Townships, Southern Chin State.
Purpose	To enable members of vulnerable households in 87 villages to improve their food security, economic opportunities and health status.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ To build organisational and general management capacity of local organisations ✦ To increase household income and production levels through adoption of improved practices ✦ To facilitate health improvements through better access to water and sanitation, and associated health training
Key Partners	In 2010, CARE commenced partnership with local CBOs namely, village committees, <i>Mindat</i> Township Baptist Association, <i>Dai</i> Region Development Committee, Presbyterian Church of Myanmar, <i>Khui Ring</i> Village Development Committee.

Introduction:

During the field mission, the Review Team visited a small sample of the 87 villages in which the project is implementing activities, and attended meetings with local authorities and partners. This enabled the team to get an understanding of the progress of the project and discuss our observations at length with CARE field staff and Yangon based senior staff.

A draft MTR was provided to the PFHAB Review Team and contributes significantly to informing the project summary provided below.

Project Summary

The SCLSP operates in 62 villages in *Mindat* Township and 17 Villages in *Rezua*, *Matupi* Townships, and aims to enable vulnerable households to improve their food security, health status and economic opportunities, through increasing farm production, encouraging the establishment of permanent farming plots (as opposed to the use of shifting cultivation), community based forestry activities, establishing village based saving schemes, providing better access to water and sanitation and health education.

Specific Implementation Issues

The SCLSP commenced in February 2008, three months after initially anticipated due to the impact of Cyclone *Nargis* and the completion date

has been revised accordingly⁷². Heavy rains necessitating the postponement of catchment protection activities have caused further minor delays in some areas. A mouse plague in 2010 is predicted to contribute to severe food insecurity until August 2011 through the destruction of crops and food stores, and it is foreseeable that this may impact detrimentally on some aspects of the project in affected areas. NO further significant delays have been reported at this stage.

The project is ambitious in both geographic and technical scope and this is further compounded by access challenges due to geography. The MTR states that AusAID's original concerns over project complexity and the capacity of communities to absorb and undertake all activities appears to have been borne out to some extent with numerous references in internal project reports to households having limited ability to participate in some activities due to their farm labouring commitments.

The burn rate is at the time of Review was 87% of the eligible budget. The Review was unable to identify any significant over or underspend.

Review Findings

Relevance: does the project contribute to the PFHAB program and higher level objectives of the aid program to Burma? Was the design relevant to the need? Were objectives and performance indicators clearly specified? Were management and institutional arrangements appropriate?

The project contributes to the objective of Australia's humanitarian assistance to Burma *"to alleviate suffering by responding to the humanitarian needs of vulnerable Burmese people."*⁷³ Specifically this includes addressing food security, access to clean water and livelihoods in a vulnerable geographic location. It further seeks to provide communities with access to information on health issues and in its latter stages will seek to establish partnerships with local CBOs.

While ambitious, **the design is relevant to the needs identified and objectives and performance indicators are clearly specified** in relation to addressing the vulnerabilities of communities and households in South Chin State. However, recently established partnerships essentially appear to sub contract local CBOs to replicate established project activities within heavily defined parameters rather than build their capacities to engage with communities and respond to community identified need.

The project design adopted a **flexible and phased approach to implementation**, introducing relevant components gradually over the project

⁷² From 31 October 2012 to 31 January 2013.

⁷³ Burma Humanitarian Aid Framework 2007-2010

lifespan. This also has meant that project interventions and activities can vary from village to village in line with opportunities, resources and community needs.

The recent MTR found that whilst project **progress towards the purpose statement appears to be generally good, progress towards specific purpose level indicators is more challenging** due to limitations in the availability of data and implementing focus of the project. For example while the project has supported vegetable cultivation, there is far less focus on increasing dietary diversity. While outside baseline studies reporting that Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) measurements in children indicate an improvement in nutritional status, project purpose level indicators do not currently capture the contribution of component 3.4 (increased range of foods consumed) in achieving this outcome. Given that the agro-ecological conditions, market opportunities and farmer interest have led the project to focus on increasing incomes rather than food diversity or self-provisioning of staple foods, it may be a sensible and pragmatic strategy to consider revising the purpose level indicators to reflect this.

Effectiveness: was an effective approach developed and implemented to support the objective of the project? How effectively was the project managed and how did this impact on the achievement of the outcomes?

Approach:

Recognising that livelihood security is determined by a complex and interlinked set of factors, **the project design appropriately adopts an integrated approach to livelihood security at the village level** rather than focusing efforts on a single contributor to livelihood security.

The MTR highlights a **key challenge faced by the project in working with both village and higher-level organisations in balancing two methodologically distinct objectives** i. to build CBO and NGO capacity per se and ii. to use CBOs and NGOs to strengthen and facilitate activity implementation. To date greater emphasis has been placed on support to SCLSP implementation with capacity building actions oriented towards this as opposed to building member owned civil society structures.

Gender mainstreaming is a key crosscutting issue in the SCLSP approach. **The project has placed significant emphasis and invested considerably in gender mainstreaming**, including the development of a mainstreaming plan developed with project staff, communities and partners, associated trainings and technical assistance. This has facilitated the greater participation of women in village level planning and decision-making. There is scope at this time to deepen this work and more comprehensive gender analysis would strengthen the program further.

Implementation and Achievements:

- ✦ CARE's most recent Annual Report stated SCLSP's major achievements to January 2011 as:
 - ✦ Contributing to increased agricultural production through the introduction of new crops, improved varieties and technologies;
 - ✦ Increasing economic opportunity by creating linkages among market stakeholders, and increasing cultivation of market potential crops and livestock;
 - ✦ Established VSLAs to support new income generation opportunities;
 - ✦ Improved household hygiene and malaria prevention
 - ✦ Year round access to clean water for 90.53% households in the target areas;
 - ✦ CBOs confidently taking roles in facilitation and mobilisation for community activities. Partner organisations have progressively increased in management and technical capacity in preparation for implementation of their projects.

- ✦ The MTR noted that the project has successfully reduced the incidence of landlessness and land-poverty by some 26% to date with an end project target project of 40% and the activity on going.

- ✦ VSLA membership appears to be clearly contributing to improvements in household livelihood security through enabling easy, rapid access to low cost loans and income generating savings services.

- ✦ Village livestock banks appear to have had limited success due to the high death rates experienced in part due to some use of non-native pig varieties. Community members appear to prefer individual rather than group based systems and this may result in improved performance and reduce death rates.

- ✦ Water systems constructed have had multiple significant benefits and are highly appreciated. However the MTR highlighted that technical construction and/or design appear to require further improvement to ensure greater sustainability.

Efficiency: were resources well managed using appropriate systems and processes, and did the project provide value for money?

The program appears to have been well managed and effective and efficient systems are in place for financial and program management and monitoring. While the program by nature is challenging due to its scope and geographic location and associated challenges, the team felt that CARE had sufficient risk management and contingency plans in place to ensure smooth implementation.

The project appears to have produced intended positive changes in terms of outputs and **has met the majority of its output targets** on schedule.

The project requires intensive resource and time investment and return for this in terms of economic impacts at the household level may not be seen until the latter years of the project, due to the long lead time for crops and a transition to permanent farming can occur. **It is important that the project at this time will be able to demonstrate broad impacts at the household level.**

Impact and Sustainability: to what degree has the project produced positive or negative changes directly or indirectly, intended or unintended? Are the benefits of the project sustainable?

Considerable and significant progress has been made with reasonably good evidence of actual or likely positive impacts at household levels with respect to food security, incomes and health.

Project introduced **improved cultivation methods** such as elephant food yam are reported as **diffusing beyond immediate beneficiaries** and may result in broader additional household incomes gains as a result. The PFHAB Review Team observed that opportunities for cross learning about markets and expanding opportunities are planned for the coming months when villagers would visit *Lashio* in *Shan State* to share experiences.

Despite a highly patrilineal Chin society, the SCLSP has successfully **facilitated women's participation** within village level decision making through VDC structures.

Access to clean water and improved health indicators supports increased productivity, and further opens opportunities for women to engage in farming and income generating activities.

Village based discussions indicated that **VSLA were having positive results**, as it is the first time these have been implemented. Specifically, they have created a first opportunity for women to meet together and take an active role in the development of their communities. This is significant, and provides a good base for building however there is a need to continue to support the development of community managed mechanisms in order to improve sustainability.

The MTR identified that **community based organisations which have been established are almost entirely** (with the possible exception of Village Development Committees and VSLA) **project created implementation mechanisms** rather than member owned autonomous institutions. Sustainability prospects for all such institutions are thus limited until such a

point that support can be provided for institutional development and capacity building.

Recognising that the project was funded as a humanitarian initiative, sustainability is somewhat of a challenge. CARE has sought to use developmental approaches to facilitating changes in attitude and practice and **it appears that there are elements of the program that have good prospects for sustainability**. This will be seen more clearly in the coming years as the program progresses and the impact of increased household income and improved productivity become more apparent to program beneficiaries. The key challenge for sustainability will ultimately be about replication and due to the resource intensive nature and technical nature of some interventions this may be challenging.

While development activities tend to measure the impacts of participation, **the costs of exclusion are often given poorer consideration**. The Independent Reviewers noted the positive attitude of those participating in the program, however, discussions with beneficiaries indicated that there is **no scope for new members to join existing implementation groups**. It is not understood at this stage the extent to which this may result in some tensions or foster existing exclusion of some community members. Attention to this is required in the next stages of the project, to mitigate any potential conflict and also to support opportunities for replication and sustainability.

Lessons Learned

- ✦ A complex project should take into account the capacity of, and time needed for the community to absorb and undertake all activities due to their farming commitments among others.
- ✦ Replication of project activities may be challenging given the intensive resource inputs into the project.
- ✦ Gender analysis rather than gender mainstreaming would ensure that womens' equity as well as participation is impacted.
- ✦ The implementation approach poses some risks of exclusion and strategies to enable the entry of new beneficiaries would strengthen sustainability as well as cohesion.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the above observations of the field mission and are presented as suggestions to strengthen implementation. These may or may not be reflected in the forthcoming final MTR report.

- ✦ More detailed consideration of how to build the technical and organisational capacity of local partners, rather than as sub - contractors delivering project activities would significantly strengthen opportunities for rural development in the long term.
- ✦ A strengthened approach towards gender analysis (as opposed to women's participation/gender mainstreaming activities) would strengthen the likelihood of long lasting impacts for both women and men.
- ✦ There is some need to identify how the successful aspects of the project can be replicated (within communities) to enable a greater uptake of the farming, household garden and community forestry activities, without requirement for high intensity technical support or high cost material inputs.
- ✦ Increased attention to DNH analysis and issues of inclusion/exclusion/control could result in reducing exclusion, increasing participation, targeting the most vulnerable and strengthening community cohesion and resilience.
- ✦ Including children within project activities could be an effective strategy for supporting long term attitudinal change around issues such as environmental protection, sustainable farming techniques and health and as such may add value to the project.
- ✦ Given that agro-ecological conditions, market opportunities and farmer interest have led the project to focus on increasing incomes rather than food diversity or self-provisioning of staple foods, it may be a sensible and pragmatic strategy to consider revising the purpose level indicators to reflect this.

Annex 5.4 CARE: Mobilising Community Capacities for Health (MCCH)

Project Description

Title	Mobilising Community Capacities for Health (MCCH)
Timeline	1 February 2008 – 31 January, 2013
Budget	\$1,918,269
Goal	To reduce vulnerability to health risks amongst marginalised communities in <i>Tedim</i> and <i>Ye</i> Townships
Purpose	To facilitate improvements to health practices and community health management in <i>Tedim</i> and <i>Ye</i> Townships
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ To facilitate health/quality of life improvements of targeted communities ✦ To increase access to health services at local levels ✦ To build organisational programmatic capacity of selected community groups. ✦ Effective and efficient program learning and management

Introduction

As a result of restrictions on access to *Ye* and *Tedim* Townships where the primary MCCH activities are located, the PFHAB Review Team's visits were limited to three DIC in *Mawlamyine Mon* State. These field visits enabled the team to get an understanding of these aspects of the MCCH activities and enabled discussion with CARE staff, partners and beneficiaries. As we are unable to comment in considerable depth on the broad scope of project activities, we have drawn on the MCCH MTR and progress reports for the following summary.

Project Description

The MCCH project aims to address the health vulnerability of marginalised ethnic communities focusing on 11 villages and youth in urban areas in *Tedim* in Northern *Chin* State, and 6 villages and youth in urban areas in *Ye*, *Mon* State. A key focus is on mobilising communities and building the capacity of community groups to effectively participate in and lead health interventions. Health related activities focus on basic health education, providing support to PLWHA, outreach to young populations on safer sex and HIV/AIDS and STI prevention, and technical training for health services providers (HSP). Capacity building activities focus on supporting communities to strengthen health interventions through establishing support groups and DIC, training, establishing linkages to other stakeholders, fund raising, income generation and fund management (including the provision of micro grants and loans) and organisational development.

Project Summary

Specific implementation issues:

The MCCH MTR highlighted a number of implementation challenges:

- ✦ In *Tedim*:
 - ✦ Economic challenges: community members are unable to afford to seek treatment or buy medications;
 - ✦ Low levels of literacy and language issues are a significant barrier, and creative means of communicating health messages are needed. IEC materials are now being translated into local language.
 - ✦ Health Working Groups (HWGs) capacity to manage Revolving Drug Funds (RDF) varies and needs to be addressed in the remaining project period.
 - ✦ Access to treatment through existing health service providers is limited due to distance, high turnover of staff etc.

- ✦ In *Ye*, inadequate management capacity is a constraint in transferring leadership from CARE to the Management Committees of DIC and SHG and this will require ongoing support.

Financial Status:

The Review has not identified any over or under spend of Project implementation to date.

Review Findings:

Relevance: does the project contribute to the PFHAB program and higher-level objectives of the aid program to Burma? Was the design relevant to the need? Were objectives and performance indicators clearly specified? Were management and institutional arrangements appropriate?

The project contributes to the objective of Australia's humanitarian assistance to Burma "to alleviate suffering by responding to the humanitarian needs of vulnerable Burmese people", and is aligned with strategies to increase and maintain access to vulnerable groups, to bolster civil society and to improve basic information and analysis on humanitarian needs in Burma.

The project is also **aligned with policy objectives articulated in the Government of Myanmar National Health Plan.**

The MTR found that **the design is relevant to the needs identified** and activities and strategies for achieving the four objectives and performance indicators to measure achievement of these are specified in the design.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ The MTR conducted a desk review of the Logical Framework, M&E Framework and Risk Management Matrix. It found that from the baseline data, regular project monitoring, annual reports and EoP studies, the log frame indicators could be assessed and quantified at the end of the project.

The Independent Reviewers noted that the CARE team in *Mon* State received **effective support from the CARE** team in Yangon. We also observed that the team **works closely with the Ministry of Health** in *Mawlamyine* and with officials at village and township levels. Due to access restrictions the team was unable to make observations regarding the program in *Ye* and *Tedim*, however we have no reason to expect that the same does not apply to these program areas.

Effectiveness: was an effective approach developed and implemented to support the objective of the project? How effectively was the project managed and how did this impact on the achievement of the outcomes?

Approach:

The MTR found there was strong **endorsement from stakeholders for the effectiveness, implementation methods and locations** of the project.

The project builds on CARE's previous experience of implementing community health projects in both project areas, and includes both new communities and those communities with whom CARE has previously worked in community health programming.

Due to differing needs and local realities, **two different approaches to CBO capacity building are used in the two project locations to ensure they are contextually relevant:**⁷⁵

- ✦ In *Ye* a Strengths Based Approach (SBA) is used which works with CBOs to identify their own strengths and weaknesses and the activities they want to present. Because the approach is relatively new, the impacts and benefits of this approach will need to be reflected on in the future.
- ✦ In *Tedim* a more uniform approach is utilised where all CBOs have the same structure, and follow the same work plan with regard to health education training and implementation of project activities.

Cross Cutting Issues

While within their model CARE identified gender, ethnicity and Do-No-Harm as key cross cutting issues, it is at times challenging to gain a clear understanding of how these have been mainstreamed across the project cycle and what the outcomes and impacts of these strategies are.

Gender indicators were identified in the design as:

- ✦ Participation by men and women;
- ✦ Gender equity through benefits of the project;

- ✦ Improving women's access to health services and participation in project activities;
- ✦ Gender-sensitive research and surveys to inform programming lessons.

The MTR identified higher participation rates amongst women in Ye primarily due to men working away from home. This was also reflected in challenges in employing male Program Officers and community facilitators, which would add value to the project. In *Tedim*, women traditionally have very little influence on decision-making. While this was reported, there is little analysis as to the extent that this is having an impact on their participation in or access to project activities, or indeed how the project is seeking to address this. Similarly, the benefits of participation to women (e.g improved access to information and services, improved health seeking behaviour, behaviour change etc), are not addressed in the MTR. More **detailed gender analysis at all levels of the project cycle would strengthen implementation and assist a clearer articulation of the gender impacts of the project.**

Ethnicity indicators in the design included:

- ✦ Recruitment of field staff from target group locations;
- ✦ Setting realistic timeframes, in light of low levels of literacy and education;
- ✦ Using culturally relevant IEC materials (visual and local language resources).
- ✦ Integrating cultural considerations in planning of activities.

The MTR notes that although **there has been no difficulty in engaging with communities**, ongoing challenges include language barriers, recruitment of male staff and facilitators, lack of appropriate IEC materials. Also use of inappropriate technology has created barriers in the program, particularly in *Tedim*⁷⁶.

The MTR addresses the DNH approach, which is mentioned in the design document in terms of migration.⁷⁷ Efforts are made in both Ye and *Tedim* to include migrants in project activities including ART. The Independent Reviewers note that despite having to withdraw from working with some groups due to conflict, there is no discussion of how Do-No-Harm is used to address the peace and conflict contexts of these areas.

Implementation and Achievements:

⁷⁶ Three out of five HWG groups say content is not locally relevant. For example many villagers use Chin dialects; pictures of wells they do not have locally (although staff say this is not a major problem). IEC should use flip charts and pamphlets, few people use TV/videos as they do not have electricity. Mid Term Report; March 2011. p.10

⁷⁷ In *Tedim*, over half of the project households have migrant labourers, comprising 11% of the population, and in Ye, approximately one third of total households rely on migrant labour as one of the main sources of income. MTR, March 2011; p.24

The project has made good progress to date, implementing the main activities, meeting indicators and achieving objectives. According to the MTR there have been no significant delays to project activities which have effected implementation. A significant change was the reduction of villages in Ye from eight to six, due to security and access issues. However, activities with young people in the urban areas of *Mawlamyine* and *Mudon* have increased as a result.

CARE has implemented the majority of its activities as planned and made a number of key achievements.⁷⁸ For example:

✦ Ye

- ✦ PLWHA SHG, Youth Health Working Groups and
- ✦ Management Committees (MCs) to manage DIC
- ✦ have been established in all six project villages to implement the
- ✦ project community health initiatives.
- ✦ The YHWG participate in peer education activities and deliver messages about HIV/AIDS and safer sex behaviour among youths who are at risk of contracting the disease while working across borders in other countries.
- ✦ The MCs manage the DICs which provide safe spaces for PLWHAs to meet and talk openly.
- ✦ MCs are active in fund raising and have taken over the running of the DICs from CARE during the project period so far.
- ✦ PLWHA SHGs work to enhance the quality of life of PLWHA through activities such as providing home based care, per outreach, psychosocial support, counseling and fund raising to support PLWHA and community activities.⁷⁹
- ✦ To strengthen health services at the local level a continuous medical education program has been facilitated by CARE and is delivered to health service providers by health officials in local line departments.
- ✦ Referral networks have also been established to enable CBOs to support PLWHAS in accessing health treatment;
- ✦ There has been significant increase in referrals of PLWHAs since year 1 of the project.
- ✦ Building the capacity of CBOs has been achieved through providing formal and on-the-job training and cross visits to allow sharing of experiences and new ideas.
- ✦ Capacity assessments have been conducted to identify the future capacity building needs of the groups involved.

⁷⁸ MCCCH Semi-Annual Report, (1Feb-31 July 2010), p.4

⁷⁹ Four of the six PLWHA SHGs have donated money to monasteries and to peer PLWHAs when they are ill or for funerals and community activities; Mid Term Report; March 2011

✦ *Tedim*

- ✦ The project is currently being implemented in 11 villages in *Tedim*
- ✦ Eleven Health Working Groups take a lead in the implementation of village health activities. Membership of the groups comprise 100 participants formed under the *Tedim* Youth Fellowship (TYF).
- ✦ Coordination meetings are held in *Tedim* with a wide range of representatives including the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), INGOs, local NGOs and local authorities to avoid overlap in activities.
- ✦ Five villages were supported with loans to continue their revolving fund activities which allowed them to establish and maintain a medical store.
- ✦ A total of 917 health education sessions have been conducted by HWG members across all project villages.
- ✦ Distribution of bed nets, *Supa* tablets, oral rehydration salts (ORS), condoms, soap, latrine pipes and pans, bottled drinking water and mosquito repellent has been made to all project communities following health education sessions.
- ✦ Condom distribution has been undertaken to youth and migrant workers through peer youth, HWG and community members.
- ✦ Two quarterly reflection workshops were held with all project staff, and lessons learned noted for program learning and improvements for future project implementation.
- ✦ Formal and informal training and exchange visits between staff from the different project sites have enabled staff to share experiences and identify ideas that they may be able to include their project area.

Efficiency: were resources well managed using appropriate systems and processes, and did the project provide value for money?

The MTR demonstrated that **the program has been well managed internally by CARE and that efficient systems are in place for financial and program management including reflection and learning.**

While requiring care and discretion, no problems have been reported in regard to relationship with local authorities and **reports indicate that coordination with the Department of Health and relationships with the community are on the whole good.** However, youth groups have experienced misunderstanding of their activities related to safer sex and condom distribution from elders and monks which highlights the ongoing need to engage with all sectors of the community to maintain support for the project and its goals.

The annual review process allows staff to re-assess project activities against objectives each year and make amendments as necessary. The Review noted the positive efforts by CARE in including community leaders and committee members in this process.

Senior CARE staff undertake regular monitoring and reporting of the project, however **there is little evidence that CBOs undertake their own monitoring.** The MTR recommends that building the capacity of partners to monitor activities, understand their impact and inform future planning is an important part of building CBO capacity which should be addressed in the remaining project period.

Baseline surveys have been completed in Tedim and Ye in the early stages of the project and these coupled with regular project monitoring, annual reports and end of project studies, will ensure assessment and quantification of the log frame indicators at the end of the project.

Impact and Sustainability: to what degree has the project produced positive or negative changes directly or indirectly, intended or unintended? Are the benefits of the project sustainable?

The MTR reports that **significant behaviour change with regard to basic health improvements in the community can be attributed to the MCCH Project.** Observed changes were mostly related to personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, improved self-treatment, recognising symptoms and seeking help.

The PFHAB Review Team heard from members of a PLWHA SHG:

"Before I felt suicidal but after I heard about CARE and the PLWHA Self Help group I have hope. I am very involved with the group now"

"Our situation has changed now; we can go to the well and people talk to us."⁸⁰

Community capacity has been strengthened through the provision of training to CBOs and health service providers, the creation of linkages to other stakeholders and through providing opportunities for different groups (such as MMC and DIC) to work together.⁸¹

A number of unexpected outcomes were also highlighted by the MTR:

✦ *Tedim:*

- ✦ School-based health education had a much greater impact in household level information dissemination and behaviour change than was expected.

⁸⁰ Female, (PLWHA) members of the Management Committee Drop in Centre, *Kaut-kha-pon Village, Mawlaymine*, 22nd March 2011

⁸¹ The PFHAB Review Team observed this in *Kaut-kha-pon Village, Mawlaymine* DIC Management Committee which was comprised of representatives of SHGs, LNGOs and community members (refer to Annex: List of Consultations). 22nd March, 2011

- ✘ Reproductive health and family planning activities such as distribution of condoms and health messages to young people led to other family members also requesting them for family planning purposes.
- ✘ Ye:
 - ✘ Innovative ideas of young people at the DIC in *Mawlamyine* used grants and CARE support to identify other activities to support their life skills such as computer and English training in their DIC. This was verified during a PFHAB Review Team visit to this centre.
 - ✘ Successful grant management by MC to access other funding demonstrates that an increase in capacity and skills can open more doors for innovative groups.

Recognising that the MCCH was funded under a humanitarian framework, **programming strategies that seek to establish local community engagement in health, and promote improved health and sanitation practices and health-seeking behaviour provide good promise for permanent behavior change.** There is a need in the ensuing program period to focus on strengthening the capacity of CBOs such as DIC, DHG etc to continue their health activities after the project has ended. This includes the need to focus on organisational development, financial management and continued technical support through relevant line departments.⁸² Consideration also needs to be given to sustainability strategies for CBOs when small grants are no longer available to underwrite activities.⁸³

Poverty and exclusion are key barriers for the project and the MTR also identified these as risks, which could impact upon the success of the project. Specifically it noted that lack of health service provision does not allow further improvements in the health situation for the communities, particularly in *Tedim*; and further that complementary activities such as livelihood security could be added to strengthen community health benefits.

Lessons Learned

The following key lessons learned were identified in the MTR and are considered relevant to the PFHAB Review:

- ✘ Peer to peer approaches work well in engaging with and reaching the target population such as PLWHA and young people;
- ✘ Sensitisation and good coordination mechanisms with local authorities ensure support for the project and facilitate the smooth implementation of project activities;
- ✘ Coordination mechanisms allow CBOs to strengthen their links and profile in the community, and help reduce discriminatory attitudes for example to

⁸² Mid Term Review, March 2011

⁸³ In particular the Youth Generation Drop In Centre and the Men who have sex with Men's Group in Mawlymine were facing closure of their DIC as funding for the annual rent through the project was coming to an end.

PLWHA by providing information and a practical role model of working with them;

- ✦ Appropriate training and support materials which are practical, visual and in the appropriate language/dialect should be used in order to overcome literacy and communication barriers.
- ✦ There are variations in working with men and women. Women's participation is high, however poverty is a key factor in access to treatment due to low incomes is an issue. Male participation is low, largely as a result of labour migration.

Recommendations

- ✦ The Independent Reviewers **support the practical recommendations in the MTR, which address specific activities for each of the four objectives.**
- ✦ There is room for **more attention on the cross cutting issues of gender, ethnicity and Do-No-Harm**, including strengthened analysis at the planning stage and the development of quality and impact indicators.
- ✦ **Continued attention to the development of CBOs is required** to ensure that communities are self-supporting upon project completion.

Annex 6: Key Differences Between Past and Proposed Approaches to Partnership

AusAID is presently implementing a range of partnership approaches including the AACES Partnership, Pacific Leadership Partnership (PLP)

The following table outlines some of the key differences between past and current AusAID approaches towards partnership⁸⁴.

Cooperation Agreement	Partnership
Competitive Selection of NGOs based on concept notes solicited by AusAID	Selection based on degree of shared objectives, capacity to implement and willingness to adopt a partnership approach
NGOs do not share information or collaborate due to competitive selection	NGOs can share and collaborate as selection and design process differs
Design follows selection but before agreement signing	Design may not be necessary; or if so may be after agreement signing
Design enshrined in agreement	Design flexible
AusAID provides funding for project costs and some administrative overheads	Shared resources: AusAID provides more than funds; NGO provides fund and in kind contribution, recognised in agreement
Master/Servant contract that outlines NGO obligations	Partnership agreements that outlines both partner's obligations
NGO bears risk	Risk jointly shared between partners

⁸⁴ AACES Design Concept, May 2010 p 36

Annex 7: Proposed Steps for the Design of a Future AusAID – NGO Partnership

As part of the Review process, the Independent Reviewers reviewed a number of partnership models presently being designed or implemented by AusAID. The Independent Reviewers feels that the AACES Partnership Program, has similarities with the intent, constraints, enabling factors and broad objectives of Australia’s aid program in Burma. As such, the following steps are based upon the AACES Partnership and suggest a set of activities and timeframes that AusAID could take to establish a AusAID – NGO Partnership for Burma.

NB: There are two interrelated and concurrent processes being implemented: i. processes of engagement, analysis and design of program activities being undertaken by AusAID and its NGO partners, ii. Design processes to articulate the framework and establish the infrastructure of the Partnership facility, undertaken by a design team in consultation with NGO partners, AusAID and other stakeholders. The latter is highlights in blue.

	Activity	Sub Activities	Proposed Timeline	Responsibility
1	Discussions with country portfolios who are designing or implementing new partnership models .	✦ Discussion with Africa Desk re AACES	Q.4 2010/11 (May, 2011)	✦ AusAID
2	Identify the potential value of resources to be committed to the future AusAID – ANGO partnerships in Burma over a 5 year period beyond PFHAB		End Q.4 2010/2011 (June 2011)	✦ AusAID
3	Development of design concept for future partnership.	✦ Develop TOR for Design Team and mobilise resources	Q.4 2010/11 (June, 2011)	✦ AusAID
		✦ Develop Concept Design	Q 1 & 2 FY 11/12 (July – Oct, 2011)	✦ Design Team
		✦ Approval of Design Concept	End Q2 FY /12 (Dec, 2011)	✦ AusAID

4	Initiate Partnership Development Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ AusAID Briefing to ANGOs - Call for Capacity Statements 	Q3 FY 11/12 (Feb, 2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ AusAID ✘ Design Team ✘ NGOs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Capacity Statements Due 	Q 3 FY 11/12 Mar, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ NGOs
5	Selection of NGO Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Establish TAP 	Q 3 FY 11/12 (Feb - Mar, 2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ AusAID
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Selection Process Complete 	Q 4 FY 11/12 (June, 2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ AusAID ✘ TAP
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Selected NGOs advised and negotiations regarding design process commence 	Q 4 FY 11/12 (June, 2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ AusAID ✘ NGOs
6	Program Design Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Resourcing of ANGOs to engage with AusAID in undertaking baseline analysis, project concept designs 	Q 1, 2 FY 11/12 (July -Dec 2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ AusAID
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Funding agreements signed for design process and funds released 	Q 1 FY 12/13 (July 2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ AusAID ✘ NGOs ✘ Design Team
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Selected partner NGOs commence design with NGO partners 	Q 1, 2 FY 12/13 (July - Dec 2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ NGOs ✘ Local Partners ✘ AusAID
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Concurrent activity: Joint Design Process for Program Framework - M&E Arrangements, TA Mechanism, Joint Secretariat etc 	Q 1, 2 FY 12/13 (July - Dec 2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ Design Team ✘ AusAID ✘ NGOs
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ NGO Programs Peer Reviewed 	Q 3 FY 12/13 (Jan 2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ AusAID ✘ NGOs ✘ Panel
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ NGO Designs Reviewed and Finalised 	Q 3 FY 12/13 (March 2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✘ NGOs

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		✘ Approval of Final Partnership Design	Q 1 FY 12/13 (Jan 2013)	✘ AusAID ✘ Panel
7	Program Inception	✘ Establishment of Joint Administrative Mechanism	Q 2, FY 12/13 (Mar 2013)	✘ AusAID ✘ NGOs
		✘ Joint M&E Mechanism Established	Q 2, FY 12/13 (Mar 2013)	✘ AusAID ✘ NGOs
8	Implementation	✘ Ongoing consultation and planning mechanisms, release of funds, M&E activities, program implementation.	Q 4, FY 12/13 (April 2012 - ongoing)	✘ AusAID ✘ NGOs

Annex 8: Resources

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