



Project:

**“Community-led Coastal Management in
the Gulf of Mottama (CLCMGoMP)”**



Cohesion for sustainability

Mid Term Review report

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BCC	Behavior Change communication
CF	Community Facilitator
CEPA	Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness
CHF	Swiss Franc
CLCMGoMP	Community-Led Coastal Management in the Gulf of Mottama Project
DoF	Department of Fisheries
DRD	Department of Rural Development
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
FG	Fisher Group
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FD	Forest Department
GAD	Government Administration Department
GoM	Gulf of Mottama
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
HAFL	Swiss School for Agricultural, Forest and Food Sciences
KII	Key Informant Interview
MoALI	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation
MoNREC	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation
MTR	Mid Term Review
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NAG	Network Activities Group
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
RIS	Ramsar Information Sheet
SC	Steering Committee
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Assignable, Realistic, Time-related
TCC	Township Cluster Coordinator
ToC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
VDC	Village Development Committee
VFM	Vision Fund Myanmar
YAU	Yezin Agriculture University

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Community-led Coastal Management in the Gulf of Mottama Project implementation started in September 2015, after a 7 month inception period, and will ended in April 2018. The phase I of the project is the inception period and the implementation. The overall goal of the project is that *the unique biodiversity of the Gulf of Mottama is conserved and sustainably developed in order to benefit human communities that depend on it.*

This report contains the results of the project's Mid-Term Review, which is intended to assess the current state of the project, with an emphasis on analyzing the foundations of the project, and the challenges and opportunities for achieving its goals.

The findings and recommendations are summarised below.

Relevance

The project is highly relevant for the targeted area and the coastal community of Mon State and Bago Region. The project provides a range of sustainable solutions to overcome the difficulties that the fishery sector has faced over the last few years and also to reduce the environmental degradation of the unique biodiversity of GoM - an essential mudflat habitat for many bird species wintering on it.

The project is providing awareness of these issues in order to improve the protection of the GoM unique biodiversity, working to develop an inter-state management body for the Ramsar site and the buffer zone and to improve scientific knowledge on this specific eco-system and biodiversity that will be useful for adopting sustainable decisions in the management of the GoM.

Moreover, the project is articulating governance mechanisms for the local fisheries, improving fisheries regulation and providing value chain options in the fishery sector. In addition, scientific fisheries research is supporting these actions.

The project is also supporting diversification of livelihoods within the local communities by providing alternative opportunities to fisheries to help to reduce the pressure on fish stocks and facilitating stock recovery.

Additionally, the project provides actions on Disaster Risk Management (DRM) for increasing community resilience.

The recommendations are directly related to improving the Strategic Coordination, Leadership and guidance. They include a new position to ensure Strategic coordination, leadership and guidance of the project (the brain and the spirit), bringing about a better common understanding of the project among partners and stakeholders; and integrated approaches and guidelines for the field team. In addition, by installing feedback mechanisms among the partners and stakeholders, this position will ensure the cohesion of the project, that all partners use the same messages, and that new opportunities can be seized as they arise.

Effectiveness

Some key activities have been accelerated as a consequence of the successful Study Tour to Thailand for Government and Departments staff in June/July 2016. State and Regional governments are extremely engaged and collaborative generating many opportunities for the project and the regional development.

Mon and Bago government and departments have organised regional workshops aiming to start the process for developing the Coastal Management plan, just after the study tour trip to Thailand¹. Project staff are facilitating different workshops for the processes of establishing the multi-stakeholders platforms for the Coastal management plan and the Ramsar management plan, respectively. The process for designation of the Ramsar site is proceeding.

The project strengths are the expertise of the three consortium partners in complementary sectors, and the momentum of the project, regarding the attitude in collaborating. Some structures are of great value, such as the State Fisheries Committee. The main weaknesses of the project are the coordination and the communication.

Some achievements of the project have been the completion of the village's selection. Other processes are still ongoing like the Ramsar designation site and others have had some constraints with delays, such as the Theory of Change, the livelihoods strategy of priority groups and the communication strategy.

The recommendations are directly related to improving the Strategic follow-up of processes and project results. **The recommended new position will supervise several actions, such as the process of Strengthening the Governance at village level, ensure that guidelines and manuals are strategically designed and the communication strategy is maximized for the achievement of the goals of the project.**

Efficiency

The project has a need to strengthen its Coordination and Communication. The completion of the communication strategy with the involvement of the senior management partners is key to improving the project's efficiency. In terms of coordination there is a need to improve on both horizontal and vertical levels. The strategic coordination has been insufficient to support the clear understanding of processes and approaches among project team. At the level of the Project Implementing Unit (PIU) there is also a need for much greater coordination and integration of the project.

This will help in not only making decisions that can increase the efficiency of the project implementation, but also in building the capacity of the team. This is vital in all the key sectors of the project (fisheries, livelihoods and conservation), as well as on the level of sustainable development and agroecology² so that the team can have a solid foundation understanding of the logic that shows how the three sectors integrate and they can therefore improve the project implementation.

The recommendations are directly related to improving the Strategic support to project structures, which include a range of actions, such as strengthening the project team by having a **IUCN senior manager in country and including more BANCA** in the project structure and coordination. Furthermore, finalizing the tools and strategies that will facilitate the integration and logic implementation of **the project (theory of change, communication strategy, coordination and guidelines)** are vital. Additionally, there should be an analysis of the management of the PIU to increase efficacy and build capacities of the members of the team and stakeholders.

¹ Study Tour to Thailand took place in June/July 2016

² Agroecology is the science of applying ecological concepts and principles to the design, development, and management of sustainable agricultural systems. The agroecologist views any farming system primarily with an ecologist's eye; that is, it is not firstly economic (created for a commodity and profit), nor industrial (modeled after a factory). <https://www.sciencedaily.com/terms/agroecology.htm>

INTRODUCTION

The Community-Led Coastal Management in the Gulf of Mottama Project (CLCMGoMP) implementation began in September 2015 and it is planned to be completed in April 2018. An inception period started in February 2015 (initially planned to start in October 2014) and ran through to September 2015. Inception and implementation are the Phase I of a longer term commitment from the SDC.

The Mid-Term Review (MTR) took place in November and December 2016, in Yangon and Bago Regions and Mon State. The project is jointly implemented by three Consortium partners: Helvetas, Network Activities Group (NAG) and International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in partnership with Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Association (BANCA). In addition, the three Consortium partners have collaborators, contributing to the development of the project.

The project is being developed in Mon State and Bago Region, but also on a National level due to its governance aspect. The project is funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), who have undertaken a long term commitment, beyond this project (Phase I), and expecting a Phase II and Phase III in the next 8 years approximately. The project's main target is that *vulnerable women and men in targeted coastal areas of the Gulf of Mottama have improved livelihood security through effective fisheries value chain development, livelihoods diversification and equitable and sustainable management of resources.*

During the first phase, the project is being developed in a total of five townships: Kawa and Thanatpin in Bago Region and Kyaikto, Bilin and Thaton in Mon State and in a total of 30 villages. The project is very inclusive and involves a broad range of stakeholders (Government authorities and their departments, communities, academia, and the private sector located in Mon State and Bago Region).

The study used various qualitative tools, aiming to assess the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the project - with a strong emphasis on analyzing the foundation of the project; and the consortium and their partners in terms of their coordination and the challenges for the smooth implementation and achievement of the project overall goal.

From the analysis of the findings, and the context, this Mid-Term Review (MTR) offers an opportunity to provide recommendations to assure better achievement of the goals before the end of Phase I. Furthermore, this MTR provides valuable information for the next Phases of the project.

Overall the project had a total budget of CHF 4,549,925, for Phase I (inception and implementation) from SDC.

The **Chapters 1 and 2** of the report outline the background information of the project, as well as the mid-term review objectives and methodology.

Chapter 3 provides the findings of the MTR, along the lines of the first three OECD Development Assistant Committee (DAC) criteria: relevance, effectiveness and efficiency.

It begins with the analysis of the CLCMGoMP **relevance** (Section 3.1) paying attention to the last political changes in the country since the elections in November 2015. The project is highly relevant to the needs of the targeted area three sectors or components (conservation of the Gulf of Mottama habitat, sustainable fisheries management and sustainable livelihoods). The proposal design is consistent with the overall objective and the specific objectives in terms of outputs. In general indicators are clear and

appropriate; however few of them will not support in measuring the outcomes. There is strong need for strategic coordination, leadership and guidance as the Theory of Change (ToC) has not been approved and partners are working per outcomes instead as an integrated project.

The *effectiveness* (section 3.2) analyzes the achievements, strengths and weaknesses of the project, gathering evidence for providing recommendations to apply in this Phase of the project.

The project succeeded in organizing a study tour to Thailand, which has led to exceptional *momentum*. Some processes have been achieved with certain constraints, such as the selection of villages that took longer due to lack of integration criteria; and the formation of VDCs, which are still very new. Other processes are delayed, such as the communication strategy and the integration of the three sectors. The project supported the process of the Ramsar designation site, which it is still uncompleted.

Some strengths of the project are the broad experience and expertise of the partners; the excellent attitude of the State and Regional Government and their Departments in collaborating on the project's aim; and the attitude of BANCA in leveling project with the establishment of a Wetland Education Centre. Furthermore, the existing State Fisheries Committee and the recently established village co-management groups that have started controlling illegal fishing.

The main weaknesses of the project are the coordination and collaboration. Knowledge and skills among the project team have scope for improvement on technical aspects, coordination, communication and community facilitation. The poor coordination with BANCA needs to be addressed and should be better integration in the project at field level. The management at field level needs to be analyzed; and also it is recommended to consider having CFs at village level in the long term.

The degree, to which the project coordination, communication and management are *efficient*, can be outlined in Section 3.3. Strategic coordination is needed at senior management level, but also at the field level, which has been organized in horizontal (among same management level) and vertical from the field to the Steering Committee (SC). Strategies of the project and approaches need of further clarification and appropriate sharing. Communication also needs to be improved internal to improve the efficiency in the implementation and externally in order to pass the spirit of the project and contributes to the achievement of the goals of the project.

Based on the overall findings, **Chapter 4** lays out the recommendations at three levels. Firstly, to assure that the Strategic coordination and guidance aim of the project is supporting its implementation. Secondly, that the Strategic follow-up of processes and results can facilitate the necessary elements to achieve the expected results: including putting processes, manuals and guidelines in place; and that activities maximize project impact and a clear understanding of the roles in the consortium from effective perspective to achieve the goals of the project. The final important element is the organization of this complex project, ensuring that the Strategic support is provided to the project structures with efficient coordination and communication. It should include trainings, validating materials; capacity building for project team and stakeholders. Also, it should analyze the management of the Project Implementation Unit. **Chapter 5** completes the report with the conclusions of the study.

1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Gulf of Mottama coastline links Yangon and Bago regions to Mon State. The coastline of the Gulf of Mottama has a unique natural habitat of both national and global importance and at the same time it is home to local fishing communities. The Gulf of Mottama (GoM) receives large deposits of sediments from Ayeyarwady, Sittaung and Thanlwin Rivers. It is recognized as the most extensive and most significant intertidal³ mudflat system in Southeast Asia.

These tide-dominated characteristic results in a number of floodplains in the coastal areas, which form the basis for several small-scale fisheries activities. Also, as a consequence of the monsoon rains the rivers flood the low-lying parts of the coast providing seasonally extensive shallow-water areas allowing for further small-scale fishing. This unique ecosystem is home to a variety of aquatic species and wintering shorebirds. The importance of the GoM ecosystem has been raised by researchers and development partners as well as biodiversity conservationists, due to the vital significance as wintering ground for the critically endangered spoon-billed sandpiper⁴.

The prolonged overfishing and poor natural resources management, along with a weak legal framework (among other things) have each contributed to the current state of depleting fish and aquatic resources, livelihood insecurity and environmental degradation (including loss of key feeding habitat for bird species wintering in the GoM).

In order to correct this unsustainable situation the Swiss Embassy through the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has committed to support in the long term (8-10 years) the conservation of the special habitat of the Gulf of Mottama, through the CLCMGoM Project, which will support the wise use of the coastal resources and the development of sustainable livelihoods for the human communities that depend on it. Inherent in the project is the aim to improve governmental capacities, so from this experience they could develop other plans at State and Regional level.

The project's specific objective is that *"vulnerable women and men in targeted coastal areas of the Gulf of Mottama have improved livelihood security through effective fisheries value chain development, livelihoods diversification and equitable and sustainable management of resources"*.

A series of three interrelated expected outcomes are the basis of the intervention logic, and each partner is leading one of these expected outcomes:

Outcome 1: The benefits of sustainable fisheries management in the Gulf of Mottama are shared through effective value chains & equitable market access. Led by NAG.

Outcome 2: Vulnerable coastal communities have increased income and resilience through livelihood diversification and improved access to non-fisheries resources (for entire project duration). Led by Helvetas.

³ The tidal range shifts between 4-7m and migrates back and forth in synchrony with every tidal cycle by approximately 150 Km.

⁴ Spoon-billed sandpiper was assessed as critically endangered in 2008 by Bird Life International for the IUCN Red List. Available evidence suggests that a combination of habitat loss at key feeding areas on migration and on the non-breeding grounds, and the killing of waders by people for food at these non-breeding sites in Southeast Asia are the most likely contributing causes for its declining population.

Outcome 3: The special habitats of the GoM are sustainably and equitably managed on the basis of scientific evidence through integrated local, regional and national institutions and management bodies (for entire project duration). Led by IUCN.

The project, supported by SDC, is being implemented through a Consortium led by HELVETAS in partnership with Network Activities Group (NAG) a local organization and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The project has its main government stakeholders the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI) and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MoNREC), and their related departments; in particular the Department of Fisheries (DoF) and the Forest Department (FD). Also the Consortium partners have collaborators in the project whom bring additional expertise to the project from the academia, the private sector and Local and International NGOs. The consortium partners led their respective outcomes through agreements and partnerships with the following institutions and organizations:

Helvetas	Yezin Agriculture University (YAU), Vision Fund Myanmar (VFM from World Vision), Swiss School for Agricultural, Forest and Food Sciences (HAFL), Swiss Contact, Producer Associations
NAG	Fishers Development Association, Rakhine Fishery Partnership Platform, Myanmar Fisher Federation (MFF)
IUCN	BANCA, MU-Marine Sciences Department, Mawlamyine University

The project is in Phase I, which corresponds to the period among February 2015 and April 2018. It is anticipated that Phase II and III will continue for another 7 years as part of the long term commitment of the SDC in supporting the Regional and State governments. In addition to achieve the overall goal of the project this intervention also aims to build the relevant governmental capacities in order to develop other regional plans.

The MTR is evaluating Phase I of CLCMGoMP, which was implemented in 5 townships around the coastal areas of the Gulf of Mottama in south-eastern Myanmar, Kawa and Thanatpin in Bago Region and Kyaikto, Bilin and Thaton in Mon State.

The CLCMGoMP started in February 2015 with a 7-months inception period that ended in September 2015. Currently the project has been implemented for a year. A baseline and a number of technical studies were developed, including a non-fishery value chain study; a rapid socio-ecological assessment of the GoM, a political economy assessment and fisheries value chain analysis.

As the project has a focus on natural resources, governance and developing processes for the conservation and wise use management of the coastal resources, it involves the participation of many stakeholders, from State and Regional level to village level.

The government is the ultimate authority in terms of implementing the management plans and ensuring the inclusive governance in the process.

The project started its advocacy and building relationships with stakeholders in 2015 with the previous government. After the elections of November 2015, the National League for Democracy (NLD - previously in opposition) came to power and in April 2016 the government handover took place. The new government adjusted various Ministries and departments, the two ministries that are most relevant to the project are

the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MoALI) and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MoNREC).

With the change of government the project had to re-establish relationships with the new personnel in the Ministries and Departments at Regional, State and also Union level. This new political landscape meant the need to once again advocate for the project, assuring that the new government would be engaged and actively support the project.

ANNEX 1: List of Ministries and their departments in Myanmar from April 2016

ANNEX 2: Map of the Gulf of Mottama and RAMSAR site

2. THE MID-TERM REVIEW (MTR)

2.1. Objectives

A Mid-Term Review (MTR) was requested to be carried after one year of project implementation. The aim of the MTR is to understand and evaluate if the project has the required foundation to achieve the objectives of this phase, considering that the donor is committed to the long term with this project.

The Mid-term Review was carried out in November of 2016 in Mon State, Bago and Yangon Region. The research tools included key informant interviews (KII) and focus group discussion (FGD). The MTR analyses if the project is still relevant after the recent political changes in the country towards democracy, analyses the project's effectiveness by understanding if project processes of implementation would lead to achieving the stated objectives; and analyses the project's efficiency by analysing if the established consortium (and its partners) has the appropriate framework, capacities and conducive collaborations to efficiently achieve the project' targets.

The MTR lists three key questions, which are linked to the domains of relevance, effectiveness and efficiency.

- 1) Does the strategy and impact logic effectively support achieving the outcomes?
- 2) Are the consortium cooperation framework, capacities and collaborations conducive to efficiently deliver expected results?
- 3) Is the project on track to producing desired impact and reaching the specific project objective?

Relevance

This will be determined by the extent to which the activities are suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor. And what are the relevant changes in the project context that have occurred since the start of the project; and how the project adapted to these changes. The strategy and impact logic are assessed to see if the activities and outputs of the program are consistent with the overall goal and its objectives, and with the intended impacts and effects of the project.

Effectiveness

This is a measure of the extent to which the activities attain their objectives. For example; to what extent were the objectives achieved? What were the major factors influencing the achievement or non-achievement of the objectives?

Efficiency

This is a measure of the qualitative and quantitative outputs in relation to the inputs, from an economic perspective. To what extent the consortium cooperation, resources and stakeholder engagement and collaboration are efficiently in place for the aim of the project.

ANNEX 3 – Mid Term Review Terms of Reference (TOR)

2.2. Methodology

The MTR covered the selected townships of the project, in Mon State: Kyaikto, Bilin and Thaton townships and in the Bago Region: Kawa and Thanatpin townships. In addition, the MTR also covered activities in Mawlamyine township and Yangon.

As mentioned before, the MTR has been conducted after one year of project implementation, despite originally being planned for 2017. The Steering Committee (SC) agreed to have an early MTR, a process focused, due to the given approach drive nature of the project, focusing on the foundation of the project for its future implementation.

The consulting team was composed of a National consultant and an International consultant with complementary expertise to conduct the exercise. The timeline of the field work was adapted to the availability of the National consultant and finally started on the 9th of November and ended on November 17th 2016.

The MTR decided to conduct a qualitative study, due to the early stage of the project and the importance given by the TOR to analyzing the foundation of the project, their strengths and challenges in achieving the targets of the project. The nature of the project (interrelating three sectors) and the structure of three consortium partners with several collaborators, makes vital to analyze if all the partners are implementing the same goal strategy and if the implementation is balanced among the three components or sectors of the project.

A selection of qualitative methods was selected, including Key Informant Interviews (KII) and Focus Group Discussions (FDG). In order to obtain detailed information from all partners and relevant members of the project, donor, governmental stakeholders, traders, collaborators and ex-bird hunter; the team conducted with them KII. This was aimed at obtaining information to understand the foundation of the project and the functioning mechanisms in place. The FDG were conducted at community level in order to assess the level of understanding of the project their perception and expectations. In addition also the team conducted a FDG with the team of Community Facilitators (CFs).

The MTR conducted a total of 31 Key Informant Interviews (KII) with all partners of the consortium (Helvetas, NAG and IUCN), the donor (SDC), all members of the team, and with some partners of the project (University of Mawlamyine, and Vision Fund Myanmar) and the consultant Kenneth McKay.

The sampling strategy was decided upon with the support of project staff. Three areas of the project were selected with different challenges and dynamics to hold FGDs (West, North and East of the Gulf of Mottama). In Bago region (West of the GoM) they face the issue of loss of assets (soil); in the mouth of the Sittaung River (North of the GoM) the fishermen are travelling long distances for fishing; and in Mon State (East of the GoM) where illegal fishing is strongly depleting the natural resources.

The consultant team requested to the project team to call for the FDGs at least members from 4 to 5 villages to have a broad representation in each FGD. For each FGD were invited 2 members of each of the

groups that form the VDC (fisher group, on farm group, off-farm group) and 2 more people from the VDC, in order to represent people with potential different needs and interests.

A total of 4 FDG were held with men from 10 villages and 3 FDG with women from 5 villages. Gender disaggregation was a main objective to discover if the project was reaching women and men equally and if they had different perceptions and expectations from the project.

In addition further FGD was held with the Community Facilitators (CF) of the project in order to evaluate their understanding of the project and its approaches; along with their capabilities to contribute to the project and their needs to contribute to the implementation of the project and their further needs.

Preliminary meetings were held with the donor (SDC) to understand the historical context behind the project and their perceptions. A debriefing was held a week after the field research in Yangon with all the consortium partners (Helvetas and NGA present and IUCN through Skype) and the donor.

ANNEX 4 - Data collection tools: Questionnaires for KII and FGD

ANNEX 5 - List of stakeholders interviewed (KII and FGD)

Methodology adaptations

The FGDs with villages of the buffer zone was cancelled due to the fact that the project has started working in the 30 targeted villages only a year ago and although the process for defining the buffer zone has already started, among senior management partners and donors, the project has not yet completed the definition of the buffer zone.

The FGD with ex-bird hunters was cancelled as only one ex-bird-hunter arrived. A KII was conducted instead. Conducting a KII instead a FDG limited significantly the information collected and could not being triangulated with other ex-bird hunters.

Limitations

The MTR was initially postponed for few weeks until 28th October due to the limited availability of the National Consultant. According to the field plan 9 days were needed to conduct all the research exercises in Bago Region and Mon State, which was schedule from 9th to 17th of November. During this period was the national celebration of Thadingyut (Full Moon Festival- 14th November). The schedule of meetings (KII) therefore had to be re-considered and adjusted according to the availability of the key personnel to be interviewed.

Information about the methodology and criteria for the FGD was not clearly passed to some project members, resulting that for the 2 FGD in Mon State (East villagers), held in Kyar Si Aung village, only attended villagers of that village.

The project has a fast dynamic with the Government stakeholders being pro-active and also implementing project activities. Field work ended 17th November 2016, so information was collected until that date, but meetings and workshops were planned for the following weeks, so by the date of this report some information could be out of date.

Field work was very generous in sharing findings among National and International consultants. However, the lack of availability of the National consultant for the analysis and reporting limited the potential of the result of the report to some extent.

3. MID-TERM REVIEW FINDINGS

3.1. Relevance and appropriateness

‘The extent to which the objectives of a development intervention are consistent with beneficiaries’ requirements, country needs, global priorities and partners’ and donors’ policies.’

OECD 2010:32

QUESTION 1. Does the strategy and impact logic effectively support achieving the outcomes?

It is necessary that the main implementers of the project (the three Consortium’s partners and the project staff) have a clear understanding of the strategy and impact logic of the project in order to achieve its objectives. Furthermore, the project needs to assure that all partners implement the same goal strategy and the implementation is balanced among the three components of the project.

Common understanding of the project objective

There is evidence that the project team has a partial understanding of the overall objective of the project and the specific objectives. At the field level, the understanding of the staff in the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) is overly influenced by the area that they are responsible. In general it lacks a common perception of the project goal and of the integration of the different outcomes and areas of expertise; resulting in missing the spirit of the project and the sequence of connection among the different components.

Similarly, the government bodies and various authorities are mainly aware of the area where they are involved.

However, the private sector, the Mawlamyine Holding -member of the Myanmar Fisheries Federation (MFF) has a clear understanding of the project overall and the problems that the project expects to solve: conservation of coastal resources, improvement of the fisheries stock by a sustainable use of the resources and alternative livelihoods, and support with a Ramsar designated site. At village level, the project is perceived differently, mainly as livelihoods driven and anecdotal evidence recognizes some conservation aspects. There is not enough evidence that communities understand the project foundation of multi-stakeholder participation.

Relevance of the proposal

There is convincing evidence that the intervention pursued through the project is highly relevant to the needs of the targeted area, providing a range of sustainable solutions to overcome the problems that the fishery sector has raised in the last years: depletion of fishery resources. Also, researchers, development partners and conservationists have raised the environmental degradation of the unique biodiversity of GoM, an essential mudflat habitat for many bird species wintering on it, especially the critically endangered Spoon-billed sandpiper.

There is consensus among stakeholders and some project staff of the relevance of the proposal; however, their perception of relevance of the project is in general partial to one or other specific objectives of the project, fisheries development, livelihoods or conservation of the natural resources.

Consistency with donor’s policies and country needs

The project is in line with donor’s strategy for Myanmar (2013 -2017) as the project strongly contributes to the political and social transition in Myanmar by supporting democratic governance and establishing

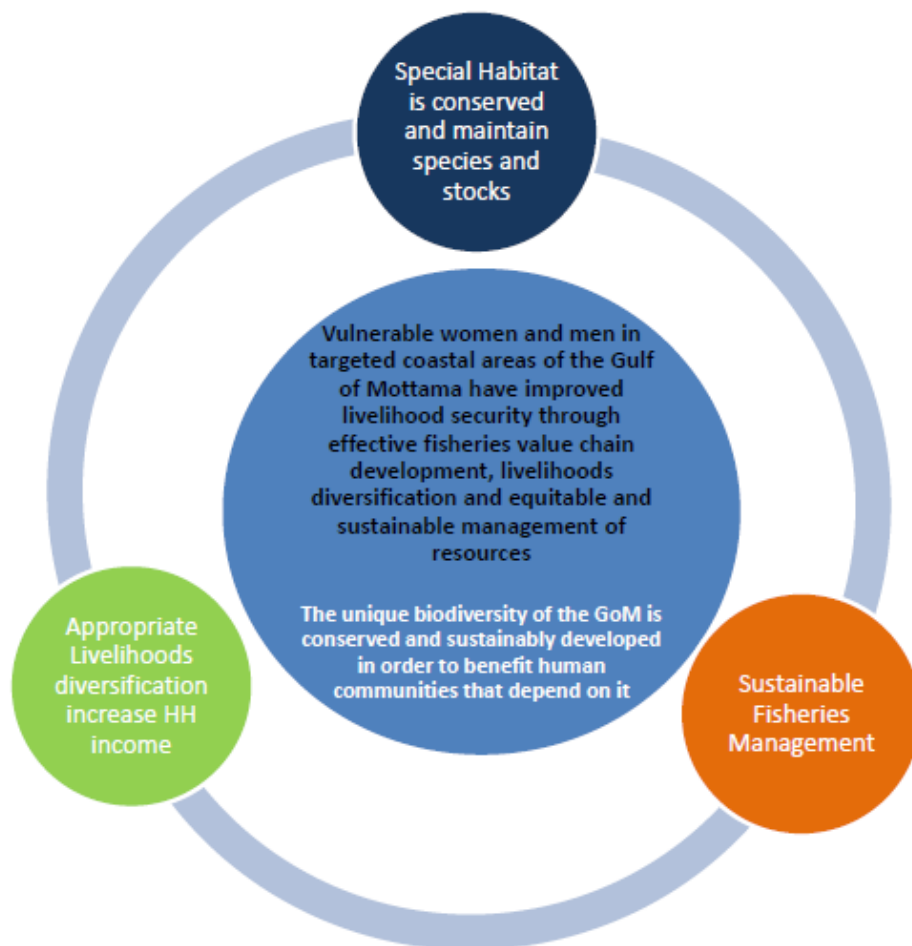
actions towards enabling the people of Myanmar to gradually gain confidence in, and benefit from their State institutions and services. The project is geographically established in the Southeast⁵ of Myanmar, as are other SDC's interventions, and focuses efforts in the same area of the country, allowing interactions, collaborations and learning between projects. Some of the initiatives include Generating Rubber Opportunities (GRO) project, and employment and vocational skills development.

Impact logic of project

The proposal design is consistent with the overall objective and the specific objectives in terms of outputs.

The benefit of sustainable fisheries management, the livelihood diversification and increased of income for vulnerable coastal communities and the sustainable management of the special habitat of the GoM (based on scientific evidence) are the three expected outcomes of the project that complement and need each other to obtain the specific objectives and the overall goal of the project.

Figure 1: Complementarity of the 3 outcomes of the project



At the level of Indicators, an analysis has been done based on the SMART criteria⁶. In general the indicators are clear and appropriate; however, there is a challenge in analysing them. The statement of “for entire project duration” in each Output could be interpreted also as a time based for the indicators. Some

⁵ Kayah State, Kayin State, East Bago Division, Mon State and northern Tanintharyi Division

⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMART_criteria

indicators would be difficult to measure for the entire project, such as those related to using the management plans and the ones related to increasing income or having access to new alternative livelihoods.

There are 4 out of 13 indicators that are not completely SMART, two of them not enough specific and one not measurable and another no time based.

Figure 2: Analysis of the Indicators against SMART criteria

Hierarchy of objectives Strategy of Intervention	Key Indicators	COMMENTS ON INDICATORS
Impact (Overall Goal)	Impact Indicators	SMART
Vulnerable women and men in targeted coastal areas of the GoM have improved livelihood security through effective fisheries value chain development, livelihoods diversification and equitable and sustainable management of resources.	No. of persons (women and men) directly benefitting from the intervention, and % of those (women and men) below national poverty lines	Good
	Net/ % amount of additional income from fisheries and non-fisheries livelihoods by women and men	Good. It would be good to have at least 2 years to have analysis depending on seasons
	No/types of stable and environmentally sounder employment options benefitting small scale fishers, small holder farmers, women and landless	Good
Outcomes	Outcome Indicators	
Outcome 1:	1.1 Increase in fish stock (catch volume and species) for commercial species or other indicator of recovering stock in fisheries	This cannot be Measured, as there is not baseline data of stocks before the project.
Benefits of sustainable fisheries management in the GoM are shared through effective value chains & equitable market access (for entire project duration)	1.2 Number of small scale fisher women and men benefitting from improved access to inputs and services from public/private sector	Good
	1.3. No/types of new or value addition market options benefitting small scale fisher men and women	Good
	1.4. No/types of institutions applying improved or new curriculums, policies, strategies and/or services	Good
Outcome 2:	2.1. No/Types of non-fishery employment and market options taken up by men, women and youth	Good
Vulnerable coastal communities have increased income and resilience through livelihood diversification and improved access to non-fisheries resources (for entire project duration)	2.2. No/types of new income options benefitting women and landless	Not enough Specific. 'Benefitting' is not clear if it is accessing to new income options or increasing by x % income/year or per month
	2.3. No/Types of land and water resources and assets more securely managed, including for disaster risk management	Good
Outcome 3:	3.1 A 'wise use' management plan, is agreed through inclusive processes and co-management bodies	Not enough Specific. No clear who will agree on the plan. And it is not Time based -> thinking on Indicator 3.2.
The Special Habitats of the GoM are sustainably and equitably managed on the basis of scientific evidence through integrated local, regional and national institutions/management bodies (for entire project duration)	3.2 Multi-stakeholder and inter-state/regional governance bodies are effectively implementing the agreed 'wise use' plan with support from the national level Wetlands committee	Not enough Time based, is it the same that they are functioning 2 years or 1 month?
	3.3 No/Types of occurrences in which new evidence and reliable information are used to inform region/state policies, regulations and strategies	Good

Theory of Change (ToC)

Convincing evidence shows that the ToC is not known among the partners and the project team implementing the project, because this has not been approved by the SC, drafted since early 2016.

There is a tendency towards working each outcome as one project rather than looking at the overall project goal. This is more manifested at the PIU level, but also evident to some extent at the senior management level. The lack of time given by the senior management partners to strategic discussions led to the ToC being still not approved.

In order to make the ToC approachable for all, it is critical that the multi-stakeholder management approach of the project needs to be addressed. Authorities need to understand their role as Public Services Providers and this also needs to be passed on down to the communities. At the same time the Government and Authorities need to better understand the problems and realities of communities and should spend

more time listening to their feedback. The communities are unaware of the governance of the project and the multi-stakeholder approach, which involves their participation in the management plans along with the authorities and government bodies.

- ❖ There is a need for **Strategic Coordination, Leadership and Guidance** for all the partners (the brain of the project) to assure that everyone from management to field level sees and implements the same goal strategy in the project meanwhile all interventions are balanced under the common goal.
- ❖ There is the need to strength the cohesion among consortium partners, by understanding of each partner's role in the project as a whole, and also to communicate this within the team and externally.

3.2 Effectiveness

‘The extent to which the development intervention’s objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into account their relative importance.’

OECD 2010:20

QUESTION 2. Is the project on track to producing desired impact and reaching the specific project objectives?

At this stage of the project, after a year of implementation and with 1.5 years to be completed of Phase I, it is essential to analyze the foundation of the project, which should lead to the achievement of the goals, the level of key achievement, strengths and challenges for the project.

Level of Achievements

The project team has developed an excellent relationship with the related Government Ministries and Departments in Mon State and Bago Region, which allows for very smooth implementation. The project has also established very good relationships and collaborations with the private sector (MFF). The private sector has being extremely collaborative and proactive on several levels: collecting relevant data on selected species of fish (volume) and also offering assets for enforcing the law against illegal fishing. Other private sectors still practice illegal fishing⁷; however, due to the sensitive and illegal nature of this, was to gather further information within the framework of this study.

In terms of coordination

The coordination among the IUCN and NAG in organizing the Study Tour to Thailand for Government staff of Bago Region and Mon State has had a catalytic effect, leading to exceptional *momentum* for the success of the project and the region development. The high levels of motivation and collaborative attitude of the different government actors has accelerated the processes of the project in establishing the multi-stakeholder platforms for the development of the Ramsar management plan and the Coastal management plan.

The establishment of the National Wetlands Committee in August 2016, which was a major recommendation from the project-supported national workshop in September 2015, has provided a framework and facilitates for the establishment of the Mon State Wetlands Committee - planned for end of November 2016.

⁷ Several sources pointed that all illegal fishing boats are from a specific ward in Kyaikto township. Approximately 30 fishers maintain this practice in the mudflat.

Key processes constrained by lack of mutual understanding

The selection of villages for the project was a long process that showed individual perspectives among consortium partners instead of a common focus towards the project goal and strategy. Criteria were a combination of particular criteria of two sectors or outcomes; NAG and IUCN⁸, instead of project criteria. Among the project team and partners there are different opinions about the selection of the villages. According to the experts some villages are not relevant for bird hunting mitigation and some villages are too far from the coast. Part of the disagreement/misunderstanding of the final selection is based on

- a. Lack of integration approach and common understanding at program level
- b. Key PIU staff do not know/understand the livelihoods strategy of priority Group 1, 2 and 3
- c. Strategic meetings among the consortium partners have been insufficient and unable to bring efficiency and clear messages in the process.

The activity was completed, and the process allowed identifying that partners were working with little integration at a strategic and a field level. The project has not corrected this.

The project has supported the formation of VDCs in each of the 30 selected villages, with representatives from the three groups established by the project: Fisher Group (FG), On-Farm Group and Off-Farm Group. The VDCs are still young and their structure and functioning is not so clear at village level. Due to the importance on Governance within the project, the VDCs require special attention to ensure a good participation from villagers' representatives in the multi-stakeholder platforms.

The project has developed an implementation guideline, but with relative contributions from other partners, showing poor common approach, due to the lack of strategic coordination harmonizing the inputs from the three expertise partners.

The delay in full elaboration of the communication strategy is affecting many aspects of the project, in its internal and external communication. Strategic inputs are needed from the three partners, in order to advance the strategy draft, which is currently in a very basic stage. The strategy lacks of behavior change approaches, despite the facts that the project is having a main focus on changes in behavior: fishers respecting spawning periods, bird hunters stopping activity and change to other livelihoods, government and communities mutually respecting and participating in making decisions processes.

Internally, the lack of clear strategic messages is making it difficult for integration of the different outcomes or sectors and there is worse coordination. This is strongly interrelated to be lacking the ToC. Externally, the lack of clear and appropriate messages reduces the effectiveness of project advocacy and brings erroneous messages and also misinformation about the project⁹. Also it is necessary to ensure that the information arrives to all stakeholders in appropriate format and the ownership of the project is improved.

There are some communication mechanisms for project implementation, an online site sharing documents and at PIU level the monthly and quarterly meetings. The lack of the strategic guidance to the project staff cannot be overcome by the range of meetings that the project holds: at PIU level (monthly and quarterly), at program level (half day meeting every 1-2 months) and the SC's meeting (half day meeting every 1-2 months).

⁸ IUCN criteria includes BANCA criteria

⁹ At village level, the majority of the communities believe that the project is livelihood driven and they do not acknowledge the governability aspect.

The project has supported the preparation of the Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS) and currently, the Forestry Department (FD) at Union level requested the last letter needed from the District General Administrative Department (GAD) from Mon State, in order to submit the proposal. The delay in the process has been due to the reluctance of the Forestry Department at Union level in applying a Ramsar site without forest area; and also the change of government in April 2016, which required the project to establish new relationships and advocating for the project.

Current status of the Coastal co-management plan and the Ramsar management plan

Partners and project staff speak about the two management plans with different ideas in how one links to other. From the IUCN side, the Ramsar Management plan is the umbrella for the entire project and the linkage among the 3 outcomes, meanwhile on the NAG side they are advocating for only one plan the Coastal Management plan that would include the Ramsar Management Plan as a part of that plan. At the stage of the field work, these processes have just started and were not completely defined.

Key facts:

- ◆ Lack of environmental understanding and qualified staff at Governmental level
- ◆ Weak knowledge in conservation and Ramsar within the project team at the level of the PIU
- ◆ Lack of communication materials supporting the process and ensuring the communication among all stakeholders and project
- ◆ The terminology used in the overall process, is often not the same, regarding plans, committees and platforms
- ◆ The project is developing in parallel with key stakeholders the establishing of the respective multi-stakeholder platforms for defining the coastal management plan and the Ramsar management plan

Strengths of the project

The **Consortium partners have broad experience and expertise** in the areas where they are taking the lead. Helvetas in Livelihoods, agriculture, off-farm income generations and governance; NAG in co-management of fisheries and fisheries sector development; and IUCN in conservation of natural resources, including the process to designate a Ramsar site. Furthermore, IUCN's partner, BANCA, is well recognized for their knowledge of the context in terms of conservation, raising awareness through the CEPA¹⁰ and their support stopping bird-hunting (mainly in Mon State, where the Ramsar site will be designated).

State and Regional Governments and their respective Departments. There is an excellent attitude in collaborating on the project's aim, driving quickly the two processes: the designation of the Ramsar site and afterwards the development of the Ramsar management plan; and the coastal management plan for Mon State and Bago Region. It is an invaluable *momentum* for increasing the potential success of the project, building capacities and contributing to more impact. The project should support it.

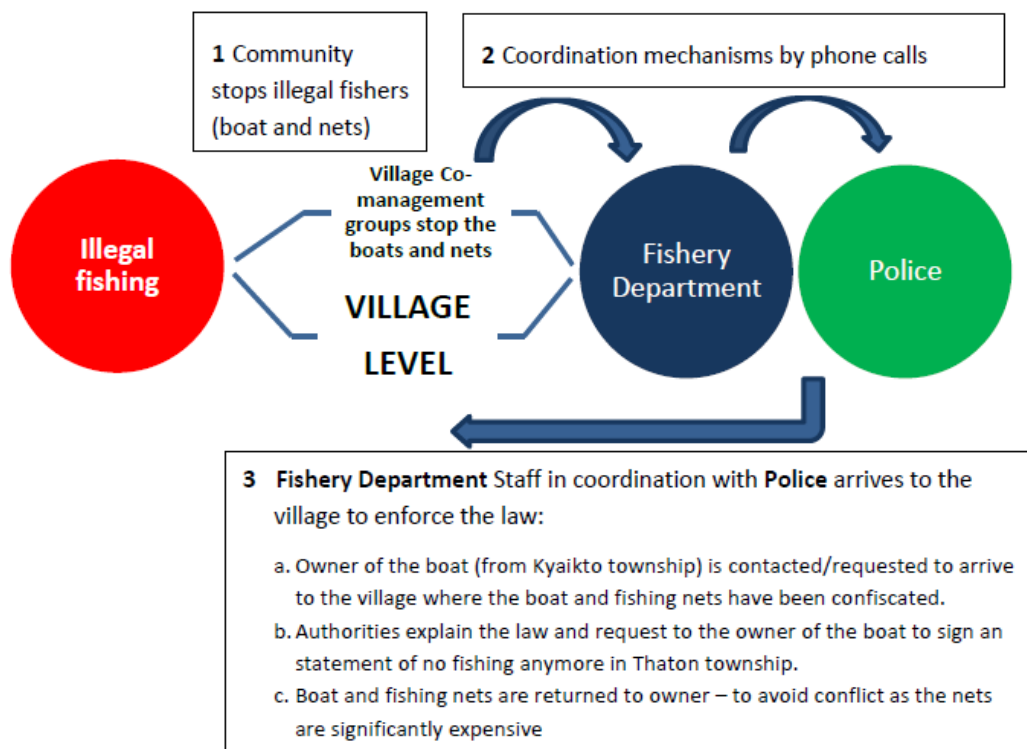
BANCA has the expertise and willingness to establish a **Wetland Education Centre**, a recommendation for the Ramsar sites. This would be an extraordinarily positive contributing to develop the understanding of wetlands, and the importance of the GoM Ramsar site for mitigating natural disaster effects, and conserving biodiversity and the natural resources. The project benefit significantly from being better understood.

¹⁰ Programme on communication, education, participation and awareness (CEPA)

The existing **State Fisheries Committee**¹¹ in Mon State (unique in the country) is a structure that provides added value to the project. The committee has a mandate of managing fisheries relevant affairs effectively and authority to amend or include essential sections in current fisheries law; also they are in charge of leading the Fisheries Co-Management Plan. Currently the Committee is planning to include in the Fishery Law a specification related to the GoM Ramsar site, which is necessary as the Ramsar site requests commitment from the Forestry Department ensuring a sustainable and effective management. However, as one of main problems is the illegal fishing, and the authority in water bodies is the Fishery Department, this amendment would allow the authorities to endorse the law on illegal fishing within the Ramsar site.

The *State Fisheries committee* has started the process of organizing **village co-management groups** in order **to control illegal fishing** (using *Thanzaka*¹² fishing net) in Mon State. This coordination mechanism aims to enforce the law, stopping illegal fishing, and involves the authorities departments and the fisher from the villages.

Figure 3: Multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism in place for stopping illegal fishing with *Thanzaka* fishing net (pilot experience in Thaton township).



Bago Region has had some experience in managing Moneyingyi Wetland Wildlife Sanctuary, since 2005. It should be an asset to learn about the positive experiences and failures.

¹¹ The State Fisheries Committee is composed by the MoALI, Fishery Department, RDD, Livestock, GAD and the MFF.

¹² *Thanzaka* fishing net is less than 1.5 inches mesh net, meaning mosquito net. Approximately 70% of the capture is very small -used for making fish paste, 20% is medium fish is for local market and only 10% is fish of bigger size.

At project level, the project staff is interested, questioning some decisions taken at senior management level, asking for clarification. Staff is aware of some of the knowledge and technical/strategic advice needed for developing their jobs and also for the success of the project.

Donor (SDC) is dedicated and committed not only to the long term funding of the project, but also to supporting processes. Their flexibility should allow incorporating opportunities to the project, which is an invaluable approach due to the continuous changing context of the project and exceptional opportunities for building capacities of stakeholders.

ANNEX 6: Multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism for stopping illegal fishing (Mon State) and Strategy of multiplication for other townships.

Weaknesses of the project

The main weaknesses of the project are the **coordination** and **communication** among the partners and collaborators implementing the project. These two aspects will be analyzed in the section 3.3 related to the Efficiency of the project.

The strategy and approaches of the project are not clearly in place and understood by the project staff, which results in difficulties in achieving the project results.

The knowledge and skills within the project team is insufficient to differing degrees. At technical level there are some knowledge gaps to be filled as the project is implementing different sectors or components (fisheries, agriculture, off-farm activities, value chain/added value, conservation, environment awareness and Ramsar). In addition, there is a need to provide knowledge on sustainable development, which is intrinsic to the principles of agroecology. Skills like coordination, communication and community facilitation have scope for improvement. Considering the nature of the project that proposes changes in behavior on the use of natural resources (fisheries, farming and hunting), the lack of knowledge of Behavior Change Communication (BCC) needs to be addressed for the project to achieve its goals.

Members of the team have stated the need for building the capacity of the different Governmental authorities and Departments. The case of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MoNREC) in Mon State is probably the most dramatic. In both cases is necessary to effectively address those needs.

IUCN has BANCA as partner/collaborator, responsible for the Communication, Education, Participation and Awareness (CEPA) plan, and supporting the Ramsar designations site process. Although they are working on the villages, BANCA is not completely involved in the planning and implementation at the field level¹³; despite all partners recognizing their expertise and deep knowledge of the area.

In terms of management, teams are spread across 3 offices (two in Mon State and one in Bago Region). Some members of the team will meet once in a month and other key staff like CF would meet with the other members of the team quarterly for 3 days planning. In addition the Fishery officer is not based in the main office Thaton with the other expert officers. This situation is a constraint for:

1. having an integrated planning and implementation
2. building the capacity of staff from the expertise sectors: fisheries, livelihoods and environment/conservation and integrated approach

¹³ The cooperation among IUCN and BANCA has changed from middle 2015 when BANCA's leadership changed to positive.

Community Facilitators (CF) are not from the community, so the ownership and sustainability of the project is reduced versus having CFs at the villages. Additional advantages of having the CFs at the village are to be closer to the beneficiaries and also that the CFs can advocate more regularly for the project, promoting and explaining the project's processes, and supporting it sharing appropriate messages and the spirit of the project.

The current *momentum* in terms of commitment and pro-active willingness from the different stakeholders (at different levels) and partners for implementing the project is moving quickly. Some opportunities for increasing the success and impact of the project could be missed.

The community perceives the project as a livelihoods project, so their timeframe expectations are relatively short term and expecting many inputs. This scenario could reduce the interest and support of the community in the project. Corrective measures involve the understanding of the project strategy and ensuring that is clearly communicated.

- ❖ There is need for a **Strategic follow-up** to ensure results are achieved on time and that project is on track for achieving the overall goal, maximizing its broader potential by capturing synergies and *momentum* opportunities from many stakeholders at Union, State and Regional level.

3.3. Efficiency

'A measure of how economically resources/inputs (funds, expertise, time, etc.) are converted to results.'

OECD 2010:21

QUESTION 3. Are the consortium cooperation framework, capacities and collaborations conducive to efficiently deliver expected results?

A significant weight of the project success is on the coordination among consortium partners, stakeholders and other collaborators. Communication is crucial for this project, internal among many partners and externally with stakeholders and public. Capacities and management also need to be assessed.

The work of each of the different stakeholders and collaborators appears to be appropriate to some extent; however, the management of the project needs to be assessed at the PIU level and that should include a deeper analysis of the dynamic and relationships between the project and stakeholders (government, private, CSOs).

Coordination

Horizontal level

The lack of time among consortium partners and presence of some partners are some of the factors affecting the *strategic coordination and leadership* within the consortium. Both factors were a challenge for the leading NGO, Helvetas. This is resulting in insufficient strategic debates and therefore limited guidance to the project. Although the project has conducted awareness sessions, the implementing team has a poor understanding of project's goals and impact logic. Project strategy is not understood, which leads to weak integrated planning and implementation (excessive division of the project into Outcomes).

Furthermore, coordination at field level has constraints, because not all expert officers (fisheries, livelihoods and Ramsar) are in the same office, reducing the opportunity for integrating planning and

understanding the logic implementation. Coordination has improved with the quarterly meeting (all staff involved) and the monthly meeting, but this is not enough.

There is evidence that coordination with collaborators, such as the Vision Fund Myanmar (VFM) or the Mawlamyine University needs to have greater strategic understanding and clarification of the project, in terms of unifying the common approach and acknowledging project approaches.

The livelihoods strategy of prioritizing groups 1 and 2 and later 3, was not well known or understood by Helvetas staff until few months before the MTR. In addition, VFM started implementing actions without the appropriate coordination and clarification of strategy and objectives between the management of the project and the VFM unit in the field. The lack of clear explanation of the process and activity resulted in villagers in disagreement with the microfinance system.

Vertical level

Among senior program level and the PIU coordination channels are not always respected through the line managers within the same partner; and also between different partners (having “shortcuts”). Decision making has strong weight in the Steering Committee¹⁴ (SC), to some extent due to the lack of fluent strategic follow-up among senior management partners.

Communication

There is conclusive evidence of the weak communication mechanisms at internal and external levels. The communication strategy needs to be completed with joint strategic advice from the consortium partners. Its completion is an urgent issue to address from a strategic perspective by the senior management level.

Internal communication: At horizontal level¹⁵, there is insufficient or practically non-existent strategic communication among consortium partners, with difficult follow up of topics due to inconsistent responses and insufficient strategic meetings. This fact also directs many decisions to the Steering Committee (SC). At the PIU level information is not always shared - this also links with the poor understanding of integral planning and implementation among team members. At vertical level¹⁶, the communication channel is formally only through the PM, with some delay in answers to the PIU from the SC, as they meet every 1-2 months.

There is a need to define the communication channels, improving the communication of the aims of the project, strategy and approaches in an effective way, technical information (research) and state of the processes developed in the project at horizontal and vertical level. The project has lacked the leadership needed for an effective strategic coordination and leadership of the consortium partners, which could have resulted in effective communication mechanisms for the appropriate internal communication.

External communication needs special attention in order to pass the appropriate messages, clear objectives and strategy of the project to different audience and stakeholders, taking advantage of all opportunities and the momentum for advocating for the project in the most effective way. At many levels, the project is not aware of the importance of external communication for this kind of project.

¹⁴ Steering committee is composed by Helvetas, NAG, IUCN (senior management), donor SDC and the Project Manager

¹⁵ Within the project organogram horizontal level would be the senior management partners on one side, and the PIU in other side.

¹⁶ This is between the Steering committee, the Seniors management partners and the PIU level

Timeframe

The project is ambitious considering the timeframe, expected results, and the amount of partners and stakeholders involved. One cause of the delay in the project implementation has been the long process of selecting the villages in Phase I (lasting about 7 months); however it is not the only factor. Management, human resources and the lack of strategic coordination and leadership has also affected the project implementation, with still unapproved strategic tools and mechanisms taking too long to be explained at the field level and often not understood by the staff. No measures have been taken in this respect and the three consortium partners are operating in the same way.

Management and human resources

At senior management level, it has already been highlighted the existing gap of not having full time presence of IUCN in country, dedicated to the project, affecting the strategic coordination and cohesion of the three partners. Also the lack of in country IUCN staff at senior management level reduces the effective capacity building of the Ramsar officer, *in situ*, and BANCA relation with the project.

Among the PIU staff, it is not clear the consortium's leadership, probably because there is not only one face at senior management level for Helvetas.

Regarding the management of the PIU, there are some challenges affecting the implementation. Staff is based in three different offices (Thanatpin, Kyaikto and Thaton townships), so Township Cluster Coordinator (TCC) and CFs have limited interaction with the expert officers for on-going capacity building and integrated planning, which has been identified as crucial issues. In addition, Project Manager (PM) workload managing and advocating with government has increased due to the complexity of the number of stakeholders in one State and one Region.

There is a need to revise and acknowledge the individual existing capacities and the skills and knowledge needed within the current project structure in order to have the most efficient model possible for achieving project overall goals. There is evidence of a need for capacity building of the project team at PIU level in all the key sectors of the project (fisheries, livelihoods and conservation) and on development and agroecology. It is vital that the project team has solid foundation on all those topics to understand that the three sectors of the project do not work isolated from each other, so the project team can implement an integrated project. In addition it is necessary to build the team capacity in coordination and communication, in order to have smooth implementation among the partners and their collaborators.

The facilitation in the community is conducted approximately 2-3 times per week by a CF, who is not from the village. There is scope of improvement in bringing the project's facilitation closer to the village, with CFs from the village in order to improve ownership and sustainability in the long term of the project.

ANNEX 7: Current Project's organogram

- ❖ There is need for **Strategic support for the management structures** in order to assure the most efficient organization will lead to achieve the project goals and support the sustainability of the project.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Strategic Coordination and Leadership to be included in the project

The project should include mechanisms ensuring Strategic Coordination and Leadership at management level and its results should convene into Guidance for all project implementer partners.

- ◆ Project needs to assure that has “*a brain*” that strategically oversees the overall project to:
 - Balance the intervention of the different partners
 - Ensure effective integrated planning between the three consortium partners
 - Facilitates systematized implementation (guidance) Ensure quality control of deliverables
 - Leverage new opportunities raised by stakeholders or partners
- ◆ Project also needs “*a spirit*” which reassures the cohesion within the consortium and also:
 - Ensure there is a common understanding of the project overall goals among all project members, stakeholders and collaborators
 - Ensure quality strategic dialogues among the expert partners
 - Ensure integration is in place with the right understanding of project goal
 - On-going supervision on the communication strategy ensuring the right messages are in place and that all new opportunities are seized

Actions to implement:

A. To hire a *Project Director or Strategic Coordinator and Leader* ensuring strategic coordination and leadership: the “*brain*” and “*spirit*” of the project, in order to:

- To lead strategic meetings with consortium partners for ensuring strategic dialogue, common understanding of the project, integrated and systematic implementation, and seizing new opportunities for leveraging the project.
- Guide the team for capitalizing learning experiences and process
- Organize meetings at PIU level to ensure that there is the necessary common understanding of the project and implementation is integrated across the sectors
- Develop participatory strategic messages with consortium partners as the project actions advance, to ensure that partners and project team are delivering to stakeholders correct messages (governmental, private, CSOs) .

B. Organizational workshop among partners for project cohesion in order to analyse with open mind and attitude the mechanisms needed; and the necessary measures for assuring better cohesion of the partners its partners, stakeholders and collaborators. (with external assistance)

Outputs:

- Road map
- Workshop for cohesion of the consortium partners
- Mechanisms and process for regular Strategic coordination and Guidance
- Have better understanding of the expertise of each partner
- Clarify the roles of the consortium, partners and operational structure
- Team building

C. Strategic workshop among consortium partners and stakeholders to clarify the **Management plans** to be developed and agree on the terminology used

- This workshop should allow to seize the process experience and capitalize it as a lessons learnt

D. Strategic Feedback mechanism will be led by *Project Director or Strategic Coordinator and Leader* with project team, stakeholders and collaborators with the aim of

- Ensure that the spirit of the project is in place.
- Seize opportunities and analyse them in order to include those that can leverage the impact of the project

2. Strategic follow-up of processes and results

In order to be on track for achieving project goals, some measures should be in place for assuring that:

- ◆ All partners understand and apply the Theory of Change (ToC)
- ◆ All partners are using appropriate project approaches
- ◆ Implementation Strategy needs to be validated with all the project team
- ◆ The project is doing integrated planning
- ◆ Results are achieved on time and to with standard quality that will allow to have significant impact

It is highly recommended to finalize the ToC and to validate it within the project team and stakeholders, in order to ensure that it is simple, easy to understand and everyone can follow it.

Actions to implement:

E. (A) The Organizational workshop among partners for project cohesion also has aspects that would contribute to the Effectiveness of the project

F. Strengthening Governance process

- Conduct an assessment of the situation of the VDCs established, in terms of: their understanding on the multi-stakeholder approach, governance, transparency, inclusion, participation, gender and how is their performance in those areas.
- Have a close monitoring of the VDC functioning by appropriated staff (with knowledge and experience)
- Provide comprehensive training on Governance and VDC for all staff
- Provide the necessary training/workshops to stakeholders according to the findings
- Analyse the possibility in having CF at village level and build their capacities (long term project)

G. Assure that communication strategy is maximize

- Strategic meetings among partners should analyse potentialities
- Activities should be planned on time and coordinate with the Communication officer
- Appropriate information and materials are provided in advance to the Communication officer

H. Assure that manuals and guidelines are strategically designed by senior management partners and validated with project team and if necessary with other stakeholders

I. Year Operation Plan (YOP)

- Facilitate in this planning the revision of activities and indicators
- Assure that flexibility allows to incorporate project opportunities
- Capacity building of public service providers and project staff should be included in the YOP

3. Strategic support to project structures

The project has a complex structure of consortium partners, collaborators, and a broad range of stakeholders, therefore it is vital to have a common understanding of the goals and approaches for the good governance of the project and the achievement of its goals. In this landscape, the Project Director or Strategic Coordinator and Leader will be essential to ensure that partners, collaborators and stakeholders have a common understanding and goals of the project.

The project should ensure that all efforts are in place in order to achieve an effective coordination and communication among consortium partners and also the stakeholders (including villages).

Actions:

- A. **IUCN senior manager** should be in country. It is necessary to contract a IUCN manager -full time position, with the knowledge or the necessary capacities for bringing into the project:
 - the strategic issues of conservation and Ramsar and improving the strategic dialogue with consortium partners
 - actively with other partners ensure integrating implementation of the sectors
 - ensure that capacity is built for the Ramsar officer and other opportunities to leverage the project results and impact
 - contribute to build the capacity of the team and other stakeholders
 - ensure that the work of BANCA is maximize among the project
- B. **The participation of BANCA** in the project should be revised so it is more present its work in the project:
 - Be included as a partner for all the planning, reporting and implementing
 - Integrate its activities with other project activities
 - Ensure that hunt mitigation is appropriately addressed from the project contributing to the project goals (Year Operational Plan)
- C. **Finalize the Theory of Change (ToC):**
 - Finalize it by the senior management partners, prioritizing to be simple that can be understood and implemented
 - Validated the ToC with project team and a range of different stakeholders
 - Ensure it is explained in a training session and also it is supported its understanding with practical exercises and appropriate support materials (IEC, etc.)
- D. **Support the development of the Communication Strategy**
 - Assure that the senior management partners provides quality of time and inputs to support the finalization of the Communication Strategy and assure also the participation of PIU officers and management
 - Assure that strategic inputs and messages are provided as part of the development of the components of the communication strategy, for example: communication campaigns, IEC materials, radio programs, tales, etc.)
 - Strategic coordination should search for synergies to strength the external communication of the project
 - Specific training on Behaviour Change Communication (BCC) should be provided to the project team
- E. **Coordination guidelines should be elaborated**
 - Senior management partners provides elaborate a Coordination guidelines
 - Validate guidelines with other members of the team and finalize into a friendly-user Coordination guidelines for all project implementers
 - Disseminate the coordination guidelines and support materials under the most effective

way (email communication, meeting, workshop, training, etc.) among all partners and members of the team

F. Workshop to Analyse the Management at PIU level

- Identify strengths, threatens, needs and opportunities for more efficient management
- Analyse the relationship with stakeholders and evaluate the workload for PM
- Evaluate the logistic of the 3 offices: consider where is the core of the project, the main activities location, the needs of the team for interacting and learning among them (expert officers-TCC-CF)
- Revise management processes and tools for planning, implementing, reporting and share with all PIU team for increasing effectiveness
- Ensure that the coordination guidelines have been understood by all the team and are effectively implemented

G. Capacity building of project staff

- Analyse current staff capacities, knowledge and skills
- Identify skills and knowledge needed
- Provide the training needed
- Re-think the opportunity/possibility in having CFs at village level (long term)

H. Building capacities of Government

- Identify the knowledge and skills needed in each department or area related
- Provide training / workshop
- Provide structured tour study visits to gain an understanding of similar development plans that governments have developed and how are implemented.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The Community-Led Coastal Management in the Gulf of Mottama Project (CLCMGoMP) has a great potential to succeed in its overall goal in the short-medium term; and it has already achieved significant important milestones.

The project intervention is highly relevant to the needs of the targeted area, providing a range of sustainable solutions to overcome the problems that the fishery sector have raised in the last few years and to reduce the environmental degradation of the unique biodiversity of GoM, an essential mudflat habitat for many bird species wintering on it, and especially for the critically endangered the spoon-billed sandpiper.

The project has managed to engage the Government authorities and Departments in Mon State and Bago Region to a very significant level leading to a great collaboration landscape, a *momentum* that project should leverage incorporating the opportunities that can maximize project's impact and regional development.

The submission of the Ramsar Information Sheet (RIS) to the secretariat for the Convention on Wetlands (Switzerland) is on process. At Union level, the Forestry Department (responsible for it) has requested to the Mon State Government the last letter needed before submitting the RIS.

The project is moving in creating the committees or platforms for defining the Ramsar Management Plan and the Coastal Management Plan. Workshops are frequently held for this purpose.

Does the strategy and impact logic effectively support achieving the outcomes?

The impact logic partially supports the achievement of the project outcomes. It is needed few adjustments in the Year Operational Plan (YOP): on indicators and adjusting activities according to needs and opportunities. The strategy is less effectively supporting to achieve the outcomes, as the ToC has not been completed (so the implementation is not integrated as expected). The lack of cohesion among partners and the lack of common understanding of the project goals have led to work individually, driven by outcomes.

Some strategic measures are necessary to ensure that the project is on track to achieve its outcomes. It is recommended to hiring a Project Director to ensure the Strategic Coordination, Leadership and Guidance needed - to have the brain and the spirit of the project. Furthermore, improve consortium partner's cohesion, and seize opportunities is recommended.

Is the project on track to producing desired impact and reaching the specific project objective?

The project is delay implementing activities. The lack of strategy and common approaches and the lack of cohesion among partners, with little strategic discussions are hampering the achievements of the project specific objectives.

Several processes and activities had constraints affecting the project in achieving its objectives; such as the formation of VDCs (villages' lack of understanding of the goals of the project and its governance aspect); the lack of understanding of the livelihoods strategy of Group Priority among the team; the microfinance intervention (by VFM) without knowing the project goals and strategy; and the ToC that is still unapproved. The project would need to incorporate measures for correcting or improving them.

Strategic follow-up of the processes and results of the project is recommended to ensure that approaches are harmonized among the partners. Furthermore, the governance process is recommended to be strengthened at the village level (VDCs), providing measures for its effectiveness in achieving the project goals. External communication should be maximizing the project potentials. The flexibility should allow seizing new opportunities at all levels: activities, new opportunities, capacity building of staff and stakeholders.

Are the consortium cooperation framework, capacities and collaborations conducive to efficiently deliver expected results?

The lack of cohesion among consortium partners, the weaknesses in coordination (horizontal and vertical); and the communication difficulties (internal and externally) are hindering the efficient delivery of the expected results. Project team capacities should be built up to facilitate more integrated implementation that can lead to the results.

It is vital that the project ensures Strategic support to project structures. It is recommended to improving the structure of the project, ensuring an IUCN senior manager present in Myanmar, increasing the participation of BANCA in the project; and finalizing the ToC and validating it with the staff. It is necessary to improve the coordination through simple guidelines and clear understanding and also the communication strategy. Building the capacities of staff and stakeholders is also necessary to conduce to the efficiency of the project.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1: List of Ministries and their departments in Myanmar from April 2016

ANNEX 2: Map of the Gulf of Mottama and RAMSAR site

ANNEX 3: Mid Term Review Terms of Reference (TOR)

ANNEX 4: Data collection tools: Questionnaires for KII and FGD

ANNEX 5: List of stakeholders interviewed (KII and FGD)

ANNEX 6: Coordination among different stakeholders enforcing the fishery law

ANNEX 7: Current Project's organogram