

FELLOWS AND CIVIL SOCIETY

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Fellows and civil society

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A report by Silva Ferretti for ActionAid
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Cover picture: a bridge built in the Ayeyerwaddy division. The iron posts used are taken from dismissed electrical infrastructure. Communities successfully negotiated with the government to use them – free of cost - for bridge construction. The emergency grant provided to them for disaster risk reduction interventions resulted in a solid, permanent bridge rather than only in a bamboo one.

Scope of this work

Is it possible for civil society to engage with the government in Myanmar? ActionAid has been working to this end, since 2006, by means of its *fellowship programme*. The fellowship programme is intended as an approach for bringing communities together and - through participatory processes - achieving cohesion, peace and development. The linch pin of this programme are fellows and volunteers. They are young leaders - change makers - trained to support their own communities (or the communities where they are placed for a long term stay). They seek to empower the communities to act on their needs and aspirations, to build on their own capacities and resources and to forge linkages and collaborate with other key stakeholders.

The assumption of the programme is that - before the fellows - communities would not have been approaching government officials (for example asking for support to meet their basic needs/rights or to complain about injustice) or they would have been very hesitant or afraid. The experience so far indicates that fellows and volunteers have indeed helped communities in engaging with (mainly local) government authorities. Fellows mobilized villagers and equipped them with the assertiveness and the skills needed to collectively engage with government authorities to address their concerns.

This report will provide an overview of the fellowship programme to:

- Discuss what assumptions underpin the programme
- Articulate how fellows are trained and how they manage to stimulate change (in particular re: engagement with local government)
- Illustrate how the work of fellows and volunteers has unfolded in practice
- Highlight contextual opportunities and challenges for the programme

The report starts by illustrating the **methodology** employed. It then highlights the **objectives** of the programme. Whilst the programme started with a clear vision for change, it did not prescribe how such change should happen: it was open to learning and to adaptation in the local context. Hence, the report presents some key **information about the context** and highlights factors that shape the fellowship work.

The report then highlights **achievements of the programme**; it presents the **model** underpinning action, to clearly show how tangible changes were driven by soft ones; and discusses how the programme worked to provide **core skills** to fellows.

Finally an outline of how **stories of change** tend to unfold is provided, as well as some observations on the **way forward** for the programme.

Methodology

Providing a snapshot of the fellowship programme is no easy task. Each fellow is encouraged to autonomously devise the modalities of engagement and action that will best serve the community where he/she operates, to be fully responsive to the local context and dynamics. This takes place in a country which is complex – ethnically, physically, politically diverse - and where local situations are highly varied.

One way forward to describe the work of fellows would have been to embrace this richness through the collection of diverse case studies. In my exposure to the programme I met many committed fellows and I heard the fascinating stories of their engagement. I felt, however, that to give full justice to these accounts, I should have devoted more time to investigate each of them in context. I should also have visited the communities where the fellows had operated, and captured the views of the people they worked with. This was not possible in the time available and due to access constraints. Narrating “shallow stories”, would have lacked the texture, the grain, the details that are needed to fully appreciate the value of the engagement of the fellows.

I therefore chose a different approach: to try to identify the *structure* underpinning the programme, based on the evidence I could gather. The downside of this approach is that it is more arid, and does not fully bring in the voices of the fellows.

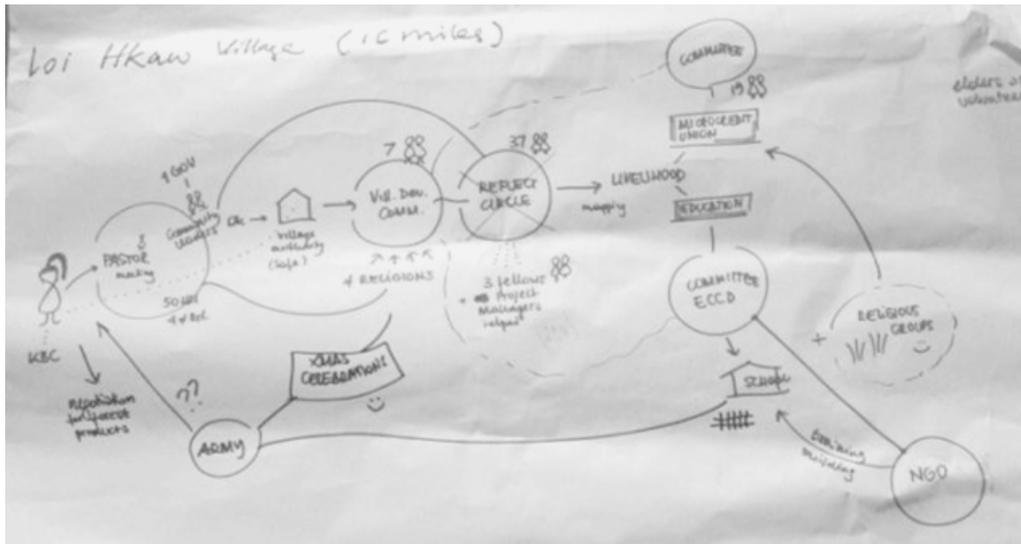
This paper was based on research work undertaken in July-August 2010. It builds on:

- Review of reports and case studies produced by AA Myanmar on the fellowship programme;
- Data derived by a simple questionnaire administered by AA to fellows;
- Interviews (held in Yangon) with fellows;
- Interviews with AA Myanmar current and previous staff involved in the fellowship programmes or in other AA programmes working with fellows / volunteers.

Interviews with fellows sought to:

- Capture the **timeline of the engagement** of fellows / volunteers within their communities;
- Map what **relationships** (with what groups, with what individuals) were modeled in the process of engagement, and to what end;
- Assess what **core skills** were critical in shaping engagement.

It was important to understand the engagement of fellows with their community as a fluid process, continually seeking to adapt to local needs and opportunities, rather than trying to rely on pre-determined patterns. One key characteristic of the fellowship programme is, in fact, that – especially in its initial stages - it had “thrown the fellows in at the deep end” when placing them in the communities. The fellowship programme had provided fellows with tools and capacities to mobilize people, but with no blueprint on how mobilization should proceed. Hence, the interviews and story collection needed to be an open, inquisitive process, to understand the nuances of the engagement of fellows in the communities: each story was different.



Interviews were accompanied by the sketching of visual accounts of events, to better capture individual stories of fellows.

Another challenge for this work is that the engagement of civil society (fellows and the communities they work with) in Myanmar with the government has often happened through “baby steps”, and lead to apparently “minimal” achievements, which could be easily overlooked. Hence the importance of focusing not only on the most tangible achievements, but to unravel the process leading to them. It is only then that more subtle (but deeper) changes can be revealed.

The fellow programme has yielded a lot of learning, but most of it has not yet been systematized. This report will look specifically at systematizing the experience of the fellowship programme re: engagement with the government. It will try to reveal underlying frameworks, and the potential for the emerging models.

The framework used to understand what changes were brought by the fellows was the ActionAid “people, power and change”. It helped to see tangible changes in a community as the culmination of a process of empowerment of people, which leverages different areas of change to realize power shifts. The framework (and its “fit” with the fellowship approach) will be discussed later in this report.

Focus and limitations of this work

This work is intended as an initial scoping study on the engagement of civil society with government in Myanmar. It sought to find evidence of successful engagements, and did so by collecting “anecdotal” stories rather than by systematically looking at the overall programme. Whilst doing so, it also sought to point out what approaches and framework could be used by AA staff to further advance a broader and more in-depth reflection and learning on the topic.

This study should therefore be seen as:

- An opportunity to consolidate the understanding and the potential around work with local government, as it emerges from “anecdotal stories” of engagement of the fellows
- an attempt to define methodologies and areas for further investigation, that can be consistently applied by AA staff in monitoring their work with fellows.

The facts and the stories collected so far are only the tip of an iceberg: understanding how the fellows operated, how relationships were built, what was the local context would of course require a much more in depth study of each story, which was not possible in the limited time available.

Most interviews / case studies used for this report were collected in Yangon, and are therefore representative of the viewpoint of the fellows only. Follow up work would be required with the communities and the key stakeholders involved in the process of change, to triangulate facts and get a deeper understanding of change from different perspectives. However this was not possible in the time available for this research. A more in-depth research on these topics would also have to factor in access problems and sensitivity of the issues dealt with.

Objectives of the fellowship programme

Since 2006 ActionAid in Myanmar has developed a “fellowship” programme, to train young people as “change-makers” in social development theory and participatory methodologies. Fellows are then deployed in selected communities, to support them to analyze the causes of their poverty, to identify strategies to overcome it, and to support communities in their collective action. The fellowship programme is built to foster a model of leadership recognizing that tangible changes in the lives of the poor and marginalized people in Myanmar can only be achieved through strong collective action, and by promoting collaboration amongst key stakeholders. Strictly speaking the fellowship are not the change “makers”. They are *catalysts* for change in a community.

Specific objectives of the fellowship programme¹:

- To **train** young people as “change-makers” in social development theory and participatory methodologies
- To **mobilise** community members through the establishment of functioning Reflect circles in villages
- To support the community to **analyse** the causes of their poverty and to identify strategies to overcome these
- To **support community action** to undertake identified activities as determined by the communities themselves
- To build the capacity of the community to **undertake their initiatives** and facilitate ongoing development processes
- To strengthen the capacity of communities to **actively engage with state and non- state actors** to mobilise resources
- To facilitate networks of fellows and community members to link people at various levels and strengthen civil society

A learning programme, not prescribing change

ActionAid and partners have worked substantially to build the capacity of the fellows – as well as their understanding of participatory / empowering processes – so that they could catalyze change. But, interestingly, it did not specify *how* change should happen. The programme was designed to leave space for fellows to experiment: to find their own way in the community where they live and work, which was – for them - a mixed blessing. On the positive side it made it possible to develop ways to work really grounded in the context, and created space for innovation. Unexpected possibilities unraveled. The challenge was that fellows, in particular the earlier batches, were “on their own” – when deployed to a village – in trying to navigate the local context and in finding the best way to apply their learning. There was no “safe and tested process” to fall back on when things became challenging.

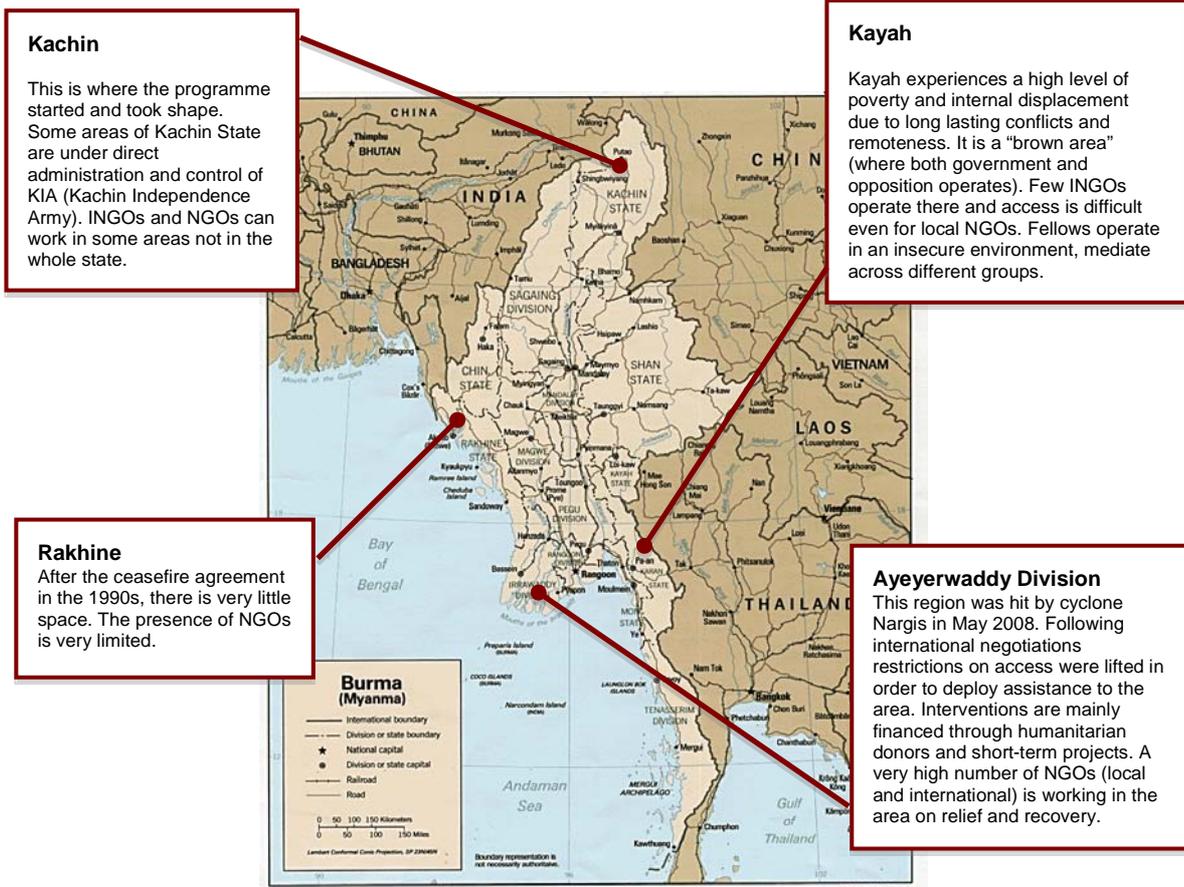
This openness was a deliberate choice of the programme, and required strong commitment from AA and partners to experimentation and learning. They invested in providing assistance and support to fellows to discover – together - the best way to serve the communities they were deployed to. Fellows were organized in “clusters” (a geographical grouping of fellows working in 5-6 neighbouring villages) for mutual support, with one fellow designated as the cluster leader. There was no ready-made solution, no pre-defined path for change. There was – instead - room for innovation.

¹ From: “the change makers”, AAM leaflet.

The programme evolved organically. Different dynamics were at play in different contexts. Fellows responded to these based on the training they received, but also on their own experience and sensibility. This resulted in a very rich programme, but also in a programme that is very difficult to document.

The approach in context

The fellowship programme operates in different regions of Myanmar, characterized by varied ethnic groups, and different political environments. In some areas conflict is ongoing, and fellows work within it, negotiating space and support for community action with different factions, without taking sides. Elsewhere the main challenge has been the sensitivity of authorities over “political” activities: participation / mobilization activities are subjected to close scrutiny. Fellows often had to convince local institutions about the nature of their work and the value of their activities. Being transparent and explaining their purpose was critical to obtaining the acceptance and support of the local authorities. Different local histories also resulted in different attitudes of the communities. In some cases a “culture of silence”, accompanied by fear of engagement with institutions was ingrained. Overcoming it, showing that there was a space for local participation and decision-making, showing that it was indeed possible to work with government institutions through non-confrontational methods for engagement was a big challenge for the fellows. Much of their effort has been directed at changing such culture and attitudes.



Overall the programme has proved that participatory models of engagement, leading to improved local decision-making and action are viable in the Myanmar context. The programme could work in different and challenging contexts. Even when initial suspicion over fellow activities arose (to the point that some fellows were threatened /

arrested), fellows and their supporters could always ultimately demonstrate the participatory activities they promoted were genuinely oriented towards peace, cohesion, development. The key for engagement, in such varied contexts, was always the same: **transparency and openness** about the activities undertaken. And a true commitment in non-factional mobilization of the community, with a focus on building self-reliance on shared objectives.

In addition to the above, contextual / programming factors that contributed to shape fellowship work - and which have a bearing on how relationships amongst civil society and institutions unfolded - are:

The culture of the AA partners supporting the fellows. AA supported fellows with different local partners. Their understanding of the role of the fellows varied. Some fully hold a vision of fellows as grassroots leaders in the villages. In some cases the vision of fellows coincides more as “NGO field officers” on a long-term posting in a village. And some fellows eventually got recruited by local partners or other NGOs. Such visions resulted in different recruitment modalities. For example, when fellows were felt to be “NGO staff” there was more emphasis on their educational background and on having the “right qualifications”, on paper. Such different visions also crept in the way programmes unfolded. When grassroots activism was the driving force of programmes, the emphasis was on *mobilization*. Elsewhere, interventions leaned towards “management” of project activities, emphasizing the *results*. But the main drawback of a creeping “NGO” culture is when it creates a wrong self-perception by some fellows. As one partner put it “*we explain they’re **not professionals**, but volunteers who want to do something for the community. But soon some fellows start considering themselves as officers and thinking they know more than the villagers themselves*”.

Engagement / contacts of ActionAid partners with local and national institutions. Linkages and contacts of ActionAid partners with local and national institutions, and willingness to use them, also made a difference to the space available for collaboration. Some partners ensured support from government officers for their activities (including easing access to resources). They rallied support by demonstrating to what extent the community was already self-reliant and how much it had already achieved. In the Delta area, for example, the government provided a community with the wood required for a large bridge after partners demonstrated to government officers what the community had already achieved, investing its own labor and fundraising locally. Incidentally, this also demonstrates how much valued are modalities of development based on self-reliance by those in power.

Budgets available: Fellowship activities have been financed through different sources. The programme budgets were uneven, and this resulted in different amounts being available for fellows to start up development activities.

Presence of other NGOs. In some areas fellows were de facto the only developmental actor present, and this led to deeper engagement / mobilization work with communities. Lack of prior presence of NGOs also meant that fellows operated on a clean slate with respect to development initiatives. The drawback is that bringing people together, overcoming their fear to engage in participatory work is very challenging.

Elsewhere – in particular in the context of emergency response, the operational environment was very crowded: some villages attracted large numbers of NGOs, over twenty in some cases! Each NGO demanded some involvement from community members / or the building of a local committee as a point of reference for work and project management, often in a non-coordinated way. In a context where communities are busy managing so many international donors the space for mobilization is reduced, and communities and their leaders might simply not have the time and the interest to take part in a long and deep mobilization process when so much other funding is available. It is therefore to the credit of fellows and field officers that

participatory processes had indeed taken place, and that – as a result – communities sized opportunities for collaboration with local institutions (for example with the GONGO USDA – *Union Solidarity and Development Association*, which has a very large membership and has a capillary presence in the country). It is also worth pointing out that - when organizing committees - the approach of ActionAid and partners was not to build a new and independent committee (the prevalent way of working of many organizations), but to link, as far as possible, to existing structures in the communities, to strengthen them and their capacity to better relate with other local institutions.

Working with institutions: what was achieved?

The modalities and the results of the engagement with government and institutions varied. This section provides some concrete examples of what was achieved. It arranges them on a scale which starts from “fellows being tolerated” and goes all the way to “fellows / communities capable to negotiate with government”.

“The problem on my arrival was the disagreement and refusal of the village tract leader. He called for the village headman and asked for my approval letter to stay in the village. He said that my stay was illegal since I did not have a permit from the government to work in the village. One day, he even called me and inquired about my intentions for coming to work in this village. He was suspicious of me and thought my intentions were politically motivated. He was doubtful when I told him that I came here to work for community development. He tried to undermine me by saying: “how could a young woman work for social change of this village”. He mocked me further by saying that I could not make any difference because I was a woman - “what changes could you make?” I took all his remarks as a challenge. It was my good fortune that the village headmen and other villagers respected the idea of my staying in the village to work for village development and negotiated approval for me to stay.”

So, the first step was to be **tolerated** and, eventually, **accepted**: in a context where even getting the permission to organize a public meeting can be challenging - getting a space to meet and debate and to engage in participatory activities is an important achievement. At times, the activity of the fellows and the communities caused concern to government officers, so clarification meetings were needed. But trust was eventually built.

The subsequent step, from acceptance and *laissez-faire* to **collaboration**, was a big leap for the fellows. It not only required that the government changed its modality of engagement with the communities, but - most importantly - it required a big shift in fellows' and communities' attitudes. Many fellows confessed that their favored strategy would have been – once action plans were defined - to rely only on the communities own mobilization and resources, without (further) involving the authorities. Distrust of government and personal histories contributed to this standpoint. However many fellows and communities realized that involvement of government officers was indeed necessary, that it could make available needed resources and lead to stronger outcomes. They overcame their resistance to engagement, and found opportunities for cooperation.

In some cases collaboration was pretty straightforward: government was for example asked to release resources that were not particularly scarce, or left unused. But in some cases, communities reclaimed access to land, or the right to remain in one place, and this involved more delicate **negotiations**. There are also success stories of fellows and communities reacting to abuses perpetrated by those in power, which they denounced and successfully demanded redress.

Tolerance	<p>Getting permission to stay The presence of fellows in a village had always to be negotiated with local leaders, including government representatives. Their subsequent degree of involvement varied, and in some cases remained limited to “tolerance”. In some cases, the initial activities of fellows in villages caused alarm amongst government officers. The programme records cases of fellows summoned or investigated. Apparently simple activities like drawing social and resource maps were seen to be sensitive. Village meetings – when authorities were not aware of them – were regarded as problematic, a breach in their capacity to know what was going on. However, negotiation, openness about the activities, support by respected community members about the truly humanitarian intent of the fellows meant that activities were tolerated and could continue.</p>
Trust building, Acceptance	<p>Space for participatory decision-making In some cases young leaders had to rely on support from other structures (e.g. churches, monasteries) to held their meetings, which could not otherwise be allowed. But with time most fellows gained acceptance for their meetings and groups. The reflect circles, the saving and loans groups became recognized entities in the villages. In some cases also the local village leaders (part of local governance) started to take an active role in their management.</p> <p>Create connections / improve relations: In some cases, when the relationships between villagers with government institutions were limited or uneasy, fellows managed to diffuse tension and create dialogue amongst different groups. This also helped to create points of contact with institutions, which had been threatening for communities. For example organizing a carol-singing programme in a village served to break the ice, bringing together and creating peaceful engagement amongst the villagers and the army, who were both invited to participate.</p>
Collaboration	<p>Contribution to community projects Local institutions (for example USDA in cyclone Nargis-hit areas) supported communities in procuring materials and resources for their projects. This support resulted, for example in a number of bridges build as part of Disaster Risk Reduction activities. Money provided by ActionAid would have sufficed only for bamboo bridges, but communities obtained additional inputs from the local government. For example, they negotiated permission to use dismissed old iron posts for construction, or they were granted from local authorities the possibility to buy wood at the (highly) discounted government price.</p> <p>Delivery of inputs to communities In some cases communities successfully lobbied the government to provide them with inputs. These ranged from provision of educational materials, to inputs for community forestry projects. In most cases seeing the progress communities had already made on their own (for example in creating spaces for education for the children) was a strong incentive for the government to reward self-reliant communities with more inputs.</p> <p>Creation of infrastructures In some cases the government responded to requests from communities to repair / get new infrastructure (e.g. schools, road). A village in Kachin – who lost ownership of some customary land as a company was provided a long term lease – managed to negotiate with authorities to obtain a school as reparation. The creation of the school also meant that a community threatened by displacement saw implicitly recognized by the government its right to stay. Development is now continuing. A road is being built.</p> <p>Access to public resources Some communities initiatives (for example pond construction) could not happen without permission from government to use public land. Fellows recalled that getting such permission used to seem impossible to community members. The presence of the fellows and their empowerment process meant that some communities were successful in setting up committees which presented their plans to government authorities, and obtained the needed legal documents.</p>

Communicating project results

Successful projects run in cooperation with the government (e.g. on water irrigation systems in Kayah and Rakhine) have been featured on government-run media. The news features explicitly mentioned the contribution of communities and the importance of “self-help/reliant” development.

Reclaiming land / resources:

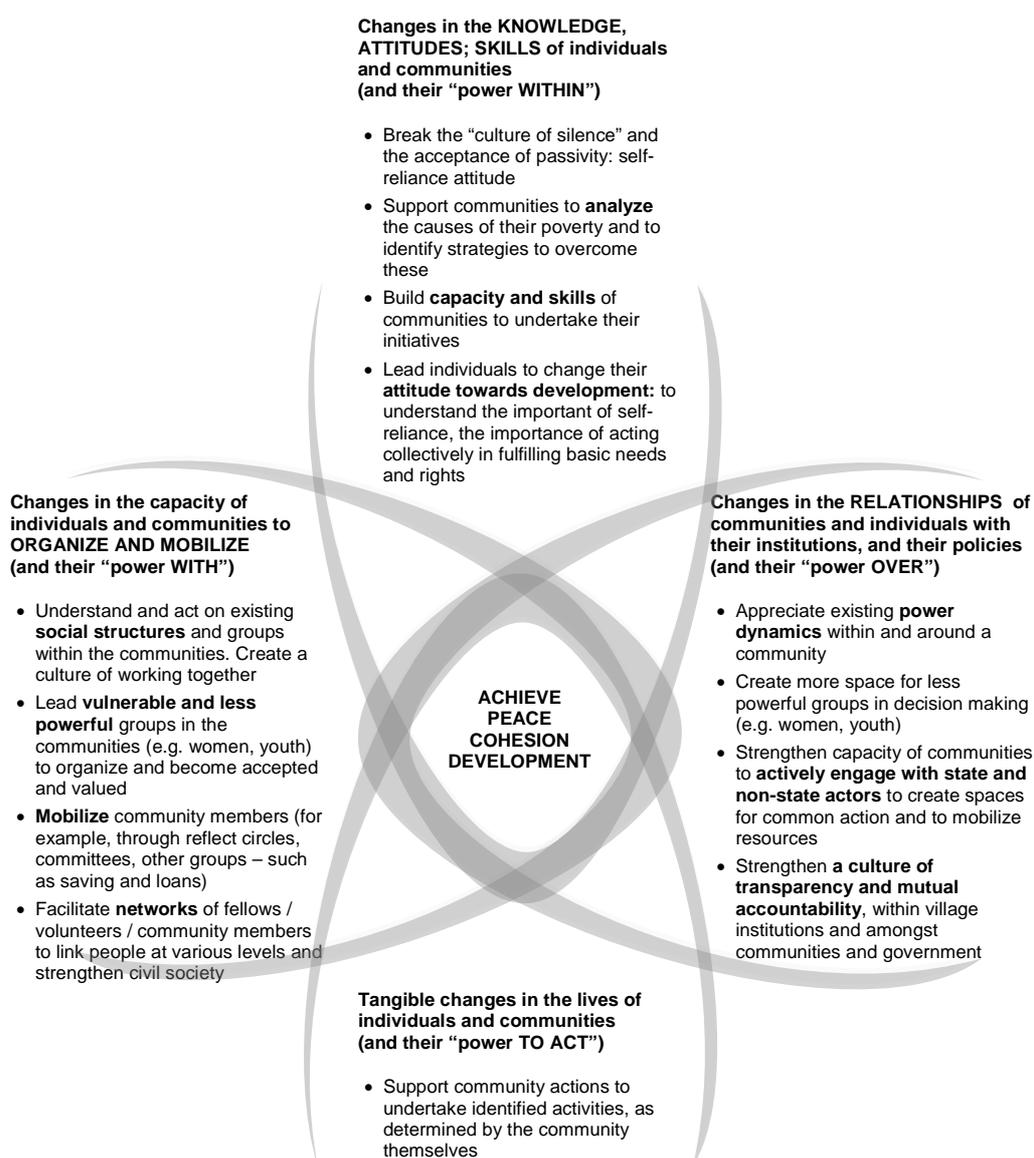
Fellows have managed to help communities reclaim land / resources that were seized by the government / army (a common issue especially in “brown areas”, where conflict is ongoing). In one village, for example, villagers could not access their pastures, as the army started an encampment there. Negotiations with the army (at regional commander level), allowed them to again get access to the pasture. In another village, occupied by a military site, villagers managed to negotiate access to half of their land.

Readdress of abuse:

Villagers have experienced abusive behaviors by some people in power, including sexual abuse, but dared not to ask for readdress. The presence and advice of fellows made communities and local volunteers aware of their rights, and in one situation empowered them to ask army officers to respond to the abuse perpetrated by one of their soldiers. In this case the army battalion left the area after paying compensation to an abused girl.

The model for change

The model of change which underpins the work of fellows is illustrated in the diagram below.



The relevance of this model for the action of fellows in the context of Myanmar is evident. It helps to appreciate how apparently small tangible changes are only the “tip of the iceberg” in a long chain of deep changes, which affect the nature of the individuals, of the communities and reshape relationships within them and with other stakeholders. The “people, power and change” framework helps to understand that:

- Sustainable and meaningful tangible changes will not be the result of “delivering services” to a community. They must rather result from a process of **empowerment**, where individuals and communities gain awareness and skills to

produce change. They learn to work together and to connect with key stakeholders for change.

- “Change” is therefore not a stand alone act (for example, providing a good), but a **process**: the result of a multiple changes, deeply interlinked.
- The framework also emphasizes the importance of **soft areas of change** (awareness, mobilization, institution changes) – which often remain invisible. Whilst recognizing that they are hard to account for – because they do end in “hard outcomes and hard indicators” – it nevertheless underlines the importance to closely look at change in these areas. Soft areas are indeed the most valuable ones: tangible changes are the means to achieve such deeper changes.
- The framework also strongly links areas of change to power shifts. Meaningful change should not be superficial. It should be internalized and lead to shifts in power. For example, work done in the awareness area is not used to “deliver new notions” that remain untapped, but at engaging with people so that they really experience shifts in their “power within”.

The linkages of “change” with “empowerment” is at the core of the action of fellows, and are key to understand what the fellowship programme tries to achieve, and what areas it leverages, when empowering civil society to engage with the government. The fellowship programme is not so much interested in who has power (what party / political faction / ethnic or religious group) but seeks to change how power is exercised and shared:

- Poor and marginalized people are active agents (particularly women / youth / people with disabilities, children, ethnic minorities)
- Solidarity, alliances for peace and development are built
- Those in power are responsive to people’s demands (accountability)

Core skills of fellows

The model for change implicit in the fellowship programme focuses and relies on “soft” areas of change. Consequently the investment in capacity building is particularly on soft skills.

Training

The fellowship programme makes considerable investments in training fellows and volunteers. ActionAid experimented with various **training formats** and time durations. (The pressure for emergency response, for example, led the organization to initiate a modified approach - the village youth volunteers scheme - using shorter training modules so they would be able to quickly start work in their villages. See Appendix 1 for more information.)

Trainings were designed to be **iterative**: for fellows the **first round of training** now lasts around 30 days and provides fellows with the foundation skills and theory needed. It includes subjects as varied as: development concepts e.g. poverty, vulnerability, inclusion, sustainable development, participation, governance; facilitation skills; specific approaches and tools such as: PLA/PRA, Participatory Vulnerability Analysis, Reflect; gender; and planning for the initial placement period of 2 months.

Some of these concepts might be seen as potentially challenging in the Myanmar context, so ActionAid and partners invested considerable attention to be true to the concepts, but adapt the language to the local context when addressing issues that could have been controversial (e.g. rights, governance). In some cases, ideas were discussed directly based on practice, bypassing the need of having only trainers-led sessions on NGO concepts. This also helped fellows to gain a deep understanding of the issues rather than mastering NGO jargon.

The **second iteration** is typically oriented at sharing experiences and learning, and to consolidate fellow knowledge in the area of rights and entitlements and conceptual understanding of livelihood, education and other development interventions; formation of self help or saving and loans groups; disaster risk reduction, reporting as well as strengthening their knowledge of participatory tools and approaches.

The **third round training** of 20-30 days duration again focuses on fellows sharing experiences and learning, as well as advanced sectoral knowledge based on fellows specific needs in their placement area (e.g. primary health education, community forestry and livelihoods) as well as conflict resolution / peace building as relevant to their particular context.

Training is organized, when possible, **in the areas where fellows operate**. This requires at times negotiation with the government in order to have the necessary permission, which is taken as an opportunity to increase mutual understanding and trust. ActionAid and partners have been open to inviting government officers to training sessions, for transparency purposes. When it was not possible to hold training in the most sensitive areas, it was organised in other rural locations and became an opportunity to share learning across different areas.

At the end of each year, a Participatory Review and Reflection Process is facilitated by ActionAid, and if the programme continues into years 2 and 3 a short advanced training is provided annually.

Core skills of fellows

This training is not conventional NGO training provided for staff. One fellow, who has now become NGO staff, pointed out that “management” skills were not part of the curriculum. She would have valued this as part of building capacity towards the current job. The point is that *not* focusing on management skills - as they are demanded now by NGO and other institutions - is not an oversight, but a deliberate choice by the programme. Fellows are not there to control and to manage, but to enable other people. Facilitation skills and understanding local dynamics of power take priority over managerial models which are, by their own nature, top down.

The preference for the programme is to equip fellows with skills that can really lead to empowerment of the local community, and to mobilize a range of stakeholders (including government) in supporting the development of a community. Core skills of fellows include:

Facilitation	To bring community members together and help them to express and discuss ideas and converge on a common course of action. This includes mastering participatory methodologies and tools to allow various individuals and groups to interact.
Understand analyze Mobilise	To enable communities to understand the root causes of their poverty and vulnerability, so that they can be most effectively tackled. To stimulate people to overcome inertia, and to engage in their own development. This involves building a culture of self-reliance and proactiveness in communities who have been passive, and adopted a “culture of silence”.
Mediate	To lead groups and individuals in the community to overcome differences and mistrust. The capacity to mediate and, in the long term – to reduce/solve conflict and build peace is an important asset in communities that were often affected by divisions and internal conflict. Fellows take considerable effort in devising initiatives that bring people together, rather than divide them.
Organize	To demonstrate and encourage people how to best work together. Fellows have several tools at their disposal to organize people. The establishment of Reflect Circles and of Saving and Loans groups has proved very effective in creating lasting structures within the communities. Care is also taken to support the less powerful groups in organizing and mobilizing. Experience shows that groups of women, and of poor people - initially mocked by the rest of the community! – can drive lasting change and they can gain importance in their communities.
Inform / raise awareness	To raise awareness, self-confidence and knowledge of individuals within a community – about their basic rights, where they can ask for support when needed (including: how to link up and seek support from another NGOs or from government departments) and the skills needed to improve their situation. Fellows also engage in non-formal education / in encouraging access formal education / in hygiene promotion activities, or providing simple technical support. When consulted for this study, fellows did not mention this as a strong area, however the debate in the national fellows conference in January 2011) suggests that many fellows have successfully engaged in this.
Plan	To facilitate communities to agree on a common plan of action and to follow them up. Fellows use, to this end, methodologies such as Participatory Vulnerability Analysis (PVA) which links analysis of vulnerability to planning. Fellows also develop some proposal writing skills for submission to their “mother organization” i.e. the organization supporting them/partner - or to other organizations active in the area.
Learn, reflect, share	The nature of the programmes - which allows fellows to be free to experiment and to adapt their knowledge to the context – requires a learning climate to be created. Social capital is built through networks. Fellows need to share their experiences, and get suggestions based on practice. A system of clustering fellows is set up – geographically - in their operational areas. The training is also an important opportunity for exchange.

All these skills have an obvious relevance for helping and empowering fellows and communities to engage with the government. It is through these skills that fellows can persuade individuals and communities that it is indeed possible to engage with local and state institutions. With these skills the fellows have overcome the inertia and reticence of communities. Several stages of *activation* are often needed. First, to persuade people that it is indeed worthwhile and possible to engage on common projects, and then, to overcome their fear of engaging with external stakeholders, government institutions, in particular.

The methodologies for *analysis* and action used by the fellows – e.g. PVA - incorporate solid stakeholder and power analysis, and are designed to link local action with collaboration and advocacy with actors at different levels. The fellows' practice showed that it is indeed possible to apply PVA-like methods of planning, analysis and action in the context of Myanmar. It was noticed, by some field staff, that PVA might still look – to the eyes of government officers – to be a messy process (many people are involved and there are lots of debates...). However because the process is systematized and can be explained and made clear, the necessary trust and transparency is created for authorities to let it be. The results of these processes – stronger plans and better understanding and capacity to explain root causes of problems, become an asset in dialogue with institutions and eventually a base for realizing and claiming rights.

The capacity of *organizing* has been key in engaging with government: on one side, seeing that communities could help themselves and work effectively together was often an incentive for government to support them. On the other side it was precisely their capacity to organize that led people to effectively open communication channels with the authorities. For example, setting up committees for negotiating with the government, and proactively involving local leaders in the structures they established, such as the reflect groups, has brought very tangible results.

Linked to this, the *capacity to plan and* to seek the support of other stakeholders on the plan (including government) has been instrumental in rallying the needed support – and the needed buy in from institutions - for change in the communities. As many fellows pointed out, clear plans and clear engagement go a long way in winning support for their projects.

Last but not least, *knowledge of their entitlements* helped communities and fellows to more confidently approach the government, either in obtaining support or redress.

The confidence that change can happen

It is apparent that the focus of the fellows' capacity building is on skills that cannot be learnt only as theory, with textbook learning. They had to be developed in practice and often in challenging contexts. As one fellow said "*My diplomatic skills have developed by dealing with different parties – the government of Myanmar, cease fire groups and people from the village*". A hard undertaking indeed. The skills advanced by the fellowship programme involve attitude changes in the fellows themselves. Gaining some of these skills meant, for the fellows, working on themselves to overcome their weaknesses' and to build self-confidence. Some fellows pointed out how difficult it was for them to facilitate confidently when still "feeling small" in front of the community. For others facilitation came easier, but structuring a plan was demanding. Others felt weak in mediation. In some cases, when realizing their weakness, fellows teamed up with volunteers in the community who could help them in their weakest areas. Some, for example, explained that local volunteers could be more effective in mediating. Other relied in the organizing or financial skills of community members.

A recent survey with fellows done by AA, asking in what area they felt most changed revealed that most highlighted "understanding and sharing" and "confidence" (scoring the highest at 29% and 25% respectively). Other options scored less: equity and

empathy (10%), decision making skills (4%), more interest to self reliance approach (4%), management skills (13%), and social skills (11%).

When looking at the histories of change, it is apparent that it is indeed the confidence of the fellows, their courage in persisting even when nothing seems to work, their resolution in engaging and facing government authorities even when scared to do so, that ultimately made change a reality.

Steps in facilitating change

As discussed when presenting the model that underpins the fellowship programme, to gauge the impact of the fellows and civil society (and their interaction with government) it is key not to pinpoint only *what change has happened*, but to *tell the story of such change*. But, as already discussed, with the exception of the relief interventions – which largely followed a similar model – stories of change in individual communities vary largely (and of course, even the apparent similarities amongst relief interventions conceal different dynamics and interactions which would be worth unpacking). In order to give at least a broad idea of how change unfolded (and how engagement with government tended to develop), an outline of recurrent stages of engagement is presented.

Exploratory phase (forging linkages)

When entering a community, fellows need to forge contacts and develop trust and credibility. This includes either the partner staff or the fellow her/himself introducing to local authorities (village leaders, religious leaders), explaining the purpose of the deployment, getting permission to stay and a place to live. The reception of different communities has been varied: some have been welcoming – especially when the fellows already had some contacts / friends in the areas. Some fellows were met with indifference, with a “be and let be” attitude. Some encountered an overtly hostile environment (a woman fellow, for example, was accused of being a prostitute, seeking to start a new life). At this stage local government (in particular Village Tract leaders) are informed about the fellows and their activities, but no substantial engagement happens at this level as the fellow seeks to familiarize themselves with their community.

Seizing opportunities for action...

Establishing themselves as leaders for change was further compounded by the young age of the fellows (in a society where leadership is linked to age), by their gender (most fellows are woman) and by their lack of resources. Fellows did not come with lavish grants, but only with their facilitative skills. The fellows had to find ways to involve communities in an analysis of their situation, in organizing themselves and in planning a way forward. Not an easy task, in communities which are often apathetic and resigned to the state of things.

Fellows often started to prove themselves and their worth to the communities by seizing little opportunities for action. Mobilization of communities could happen only if communities trust the fellows and their intent, and if they could demonstrate having useful skills. Support to children’s schooling has been frequently chosen as an entry point. In villages where education facilities were scarce or non existent organizing classes for children was valued by the children themselves and by their parents.

Registering children for classes became, for some fellows, an opportunity to draw the first village map, on which further planning was then based. Creating space for work took considerable time also because community members had other burning priorities to secure their livelihoods. Fellows joined to give a hand when possible, as a way to forge relationships and better understand village life. Initial activities to establish trust and relationships have included:

Social	Awareness Activities	Teaching
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Helping at village ceremonies Working with villagers (e.g. help them in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness on development and social issues, health awareness, education, development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching songs to youth Literacy programme with young and elders Teaching at school with

cultivation, fishing and firewood collecting) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participating / organizing social activities (e.g. video shows) and sport activities • Accepting the hospitality of villagers (e.g. staying at different houses) 	and environment issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using games • Start using PRA tools and data collection 	young children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer religious teaching
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... or jumping into action

In the cyclone Nargis-affected areas, the situation was different: fellows came to communities within the framework of an emergency recovery project. They had a task at hand (usually to work on livelihood and Disaster Risk Reduction / Psychosocial activities), resources for them and urgency to start the work so that it could be completed within the timeframe – typically short – of the project. However grants were usually relatively small, and sufficient for little improvements only. Volunteers and communities were made aware that good planning, involvement of the communities and – possibly – involvement of the government could go a long way in stretching what these seed funds could do. This is how, for example, grants for community prioritised action points, for example, a small bridge, triggered the building of large ones, as government provided support and material to enhance them. Only when communities resolve to work together and make plans, could fellows start to apply for project funding.

Overcoming divisions:

Many fellows soon become aware of latent or open conflicts in the communities where they worked. These often derived from ethnic, religious and/or political divisions, and had deeply affected community dynamics for a long time. When confronted with conflict, fellows had to first guarantee that different factions perceived them as neutral. Some villages were sandwiched between government and rebel forces, and to work fellows needed to be accepted and recognized by both sides.

When facing local conflict, fellows tried to create opportunities for bringing different sides together - before engaging in major work, which, if started prematurely, could have been even further divisive. They used the trust and the respect they gained with their initial engagement to promote simple activities. Collective planting activities, or inviting women to cook snacks together helped to re-establish relations. As one fellow put it, they *“did not want to meet each other but eventually decided to come feeling bad about refusing the teacher of their children”*. Often these little activities become the defining moment in mobilizing people to work together.

Setting up groups and collective activities:

When they gained trust, the fellows could start to make systematic use of the structures they had been presented with in their trainings: Reflect Circles and Savings and Loans groups. They also sought to involve as many people as possible by facilitating various groups (children, youth, women). In Ayeyerwaddy Division, fellows focused on the establishment of committees (or, more often, on integrating their work into existing committees). Establishing groups was not straightforward. In some communities fellows had to bypass the prohibition of public meetings, so they negotiated support from the religious leader in running their activities. At times, to lure people into meetings, fellows attracted them with video projections, and had debates prior to the screenings. In places where other NGOs were operating, fellows had to manage their expectations (communities were used to service delivery by NGOs with minimal involvement), and getting attendance at meetings was an issue in communities where other NGOs had given financial compensation to people to attend meetings). Often the pioneering groups established by a fellow (for example, saving and loans groups for women) were undermined by other community members. But when such groups started to demonstrate their potential, other community members started to get engaged.

At this stage the involvement of local authorities varied. In some cases they did not engage with any group, and simply monitored action. Elsewhere the local leaders (for example the government-appointed leaders of the villages) chose to join in and to practice novel ways to do participatory decision making. As the local government elected leader of a village said *“by working in the committee, I learnt that the best decision making is participative, and that leaders need to be accountable to their communities”*.

Putting communities in the driving seat

When groups started functioning and communities defined their plans for action, fellows ensured the community - not themselves - were in the driving seat. This required effort, as many communities were not used to participatory decision-making, and accepted passively the decision of their leadership (a problem that was particularly strong in the conflict areas that have been living under military / government control).

Fellows selected volunteers that could work side by side with them and who could ensure the sustainability of the work undertaken. At this stage communities made impressive change. At times such changes did not require engagement with government (e.g. village cleaning, improved hygienic conditions...). However, when communities engaged with government (asking for permission to use resources, for contributions and inputs) they always successfully managed to significantly improve their conditions. For example, roads, bridges were built and schools repaired...

Sustainability of intervention:

What happens when a fellow leaves their village? Are communities really convinced of the self-reliance approach, and ready to continue their action? This area was difficult to assess in this study, given that it was not possible to meet with communities and get their perspectives. There were mixed feelings about this. Some fellows mentioned that the villagers may go back to the usual way of doing things when not motivated. Others recall going back to their villages and seeing the groups they helped to create still functioning and achieving more change that they could not have imagined in their community. Fellows working in the emergency context mentioned that their groups survived longer compared to committees set in the emergency phase by other NGOs. What is sustainable is the change in fellows, volunteers and community committees and their confidence to engage with more powerful actors, as well as the changes in attitudes within the communities.

What is the space for working with the government?

The experience of ActionAid and partners in working with fellows demonstrates that there is space for fruitful collaboration. It has been possible, with incremental steps, to claim rights, strengthen democratic practices and accountability. This final section looks at interesting directions for engagement with the government emerging from the work of ActionAid and partners with fellows.

Options for strengthening future engagements

Looking ahead, areas that offer potential to push forward the engagement of civil society with government - within the fellowship programme - seems to be:

- I. Linking local change with action at the national level
- II. Civil society engagement with the Government
- III. Expand connections amongst fellows and local civil society
- IV. Continuing to invest in volunteers, as agents of change

I. Linking local change with action at the national level

The fellowship programme indicates that engagement with government does not need to be limited at the local scale, but that it is possible to link local and national level work, through the engagement of the organizations supporting the fellows.

<p>NGOs supporting the fellows (AA and partners) can connect with government officers at national / regional level to advance issues emerging from communities which cannot be addressed by fellows / communities alone</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Advocacy</p> 	<p>NGO supporting the fellows and ActionAid can sensitize higher levels of government about the scope of the programme, to create trust, awareness around the activities and identify possible channels for support</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Create a safer and productive space for engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use existing linkages (including personal connections) / forums – formal and informal - amongst civil society organizations and government authorities / work with national platforms (e.g. on DRR) • Create trust by being transparent and open about activities (e.g. government officers informed of activities, invited to participate in trainings) • Demonstrate quality work (e.g. quality of facilitation in training was appreciated by government observers) • Long-term engagement • Openness in working with the government, and capacity to demonstrate that the agenda is dictated from community needs rather than ideology
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II. Civil society engagement with the Government

The model of engagement with the government chosen by ActionAid and partners is not – as in other countries – “claiming rights”, in a potentially confrontational way.

Through the fellowship programme, fellows have helped communities to realize entitlements by working together with the government. It is a bottom up approach, grounded in community needs and aspirations, not modeled on an agenda “from above”.

The experience shows that within this framework space for engagement and collaboration with government indeed exists. And, actually, engagement with government is needed. A fellow remarked: “*Government cannot be sidelined. We will have to work with it whether we like it or not. This is why it is important to strengthen civil society*”. Preconditions for creating engagement with the government, as emerging from the practice are:

- Work is driven by **proved communities priorities and needs**, not by an external agenda.
- Communities demonstrate that they want to be **self-reliant**, and show engagement.
- The vision for development is an inclusive one, which recognizes the government is an actor that needs to be **transparently** informed and involved in the process.

All the above points are not easily achieved: the role of the fellow is precisely to use soft skills and participative process to get a strong analysis of local conditions, shared plans of action and to empower communities so that they not only can take action, but can “dare” to work with the government. This is what enables fellows to become catalysts for change.

Change needs to happen in a “safe space”. Trust amongst all the individuals involved has to be created (which can be challenging in situations where there is frequent turnover of government staff). Openness and information sharing has proved to be the best way to dispel doubt about the motive of the engagement of fellows and communities. The non-political (as in “non-factional”) character of the work has to be emphasized. Communities and fellows have to be guided in engaging with government, but to avoid any unnecessary conflict.

The work of the fellow is non-political, when “political” is understood in a narrow sense, as advancing partisan interest. The fellow did not attempt to advance any pre-determined agenda, nor did they side with any party. The work of the fellow is political in the highest sense the word, which is to create space where people can have a say about decisions that matter for their lives, and where civil society and government institutions can work together to advance them.

III. Expand connections amongst fellows and local civil society

Experience with the fellowship programme - but also engagements of ActionAid in Myanmar in partnership with other organizations – indicates that there might be potential to strengthen fellows and voluntary action by equipping them with more linkages to civil society. It is suggested that more extensive stakeholder mapping at the inception could help to better link fellows to local civil society, and create a more supportive environment. Rather than being tied to a mother organization only, fellows should be able to relate to an umbrella of organizations, to gain more support but also to increase – through their action - the involvement of civil society in advancing local development.

IV. Endogenous or exogenous agents of change?

The first batch of fellows was deployed in their region, but not in their own villages. They have therefore been working as *exogenous* agents of change. The advantage of this is that they were not part of local dynamics and conflicts, and that, when engaging with local authorities, they could be seen as more neutral outsiders and mediators. To ensure sustainability of action, fellows identified and coached 2-4 local volunteers in their (placement) village. They gained the needed expertise to facilitate groups and

mobilise planned activities. However, the extent to which fellows have managed to convey - not only their practical experience, but also the concepts and ideas that they have gained through their training and learning exchanges - to such volunteers is unclear. There is therefore a risk that the approach behind the programme might be lost. Overall fellows have achieved impressive change, but, as they move out of communities, what is left behind and what is next for them? How will fellows further progress their capacity to drive change? Some fellows have become leaders in their own communities. Some fellows are now working in NGOs, but there is a risk that NGO work can “normalize” them, and funnel their knowledge and experience - not in innovative programmes - but in the management of the old. Working through outsiders deployed in communities was a powerful way to test ActionAid’s approach in Myanmar. Now that the approach proved its value, the question is: to produce lasting changes in communities, are exogenous agents the best option?

After cyclone Nargis ActionAid started investing in village youth volunteers, as *endogenous* agents of change (see Appendix 1). The use of these volunteers created different dynamics of engagement. When volunteers were ill-selected, and perceived as siding with only part of the community, they failed to mobilize effectively their communities. But when they were “owned” by the whole community, they managed to create remarkable change. Experience has shown that young and motivated agents for change can gain the response and the trust needed to push their communities into action, to transform relationships within them, and also to support communities to engage with the government.

The way forward is probably to continue to invest in young leaders – fellows or volunteers - selected from their own communities, and ensure that they are selected in such way to ensure that communities have full ownership of them, and a say in their selection. Challenges will of course remain – as illustrated when looking at “insider/outsider” agents of change. Working through endogenous agents for change might not always be possible, in particular in areas with a history of conflict, when passivity is ingrained, or when existing dynamics that prevent self-reliance are so strong that change really requires a fresh outsider to inspire change.

Appendix 1: Evolution of the fellowship programme

The fellowship programme started in 2006 as a DFID funded programme in Kachin state. The key feature of the fellowship programme is to build self-reliance, and “Action without Aid”. It incorporates ActionAid’s “Reflect” model. This is an approach to learning and social change seeking to create a space where people feel comfortable to meet and discuss issues relevant to them and their lives. *“Reflect aims to improve the meaningful participation of people in decisions that affect their lives, through strengthening their ability to communicate”*.² This approach implies long-term commitment with communities. Establishment of reflect circles, in various incarnations, was at the core of fellows engagement: some worked alongside existing village committees, others ended up being closely connected with “saving and loans” groups, also set up within the programmes. Some operated independently, others tended to link to existing structures (e.g. churches / monasteries). Whatever the setup, the establishment of these circles went hand in hand with the preparation of community action plans through facilitated participatory processes.

The programme was then expanded to Kayah and Rakhine states, also politically sensitive contexts. The fellows were faced with the need to mediate across different factions or had to work in areas under strict government control. Furthermore in some areas they had to operate in isolation from other developmental actors, as international NGOs are not allowed and/or have a very limited presence in these regions. Experience proved that, also in these contexts, community mobilization and engagement with local authorities was indeed possible. UNDEF funds brought new dimensions to the approach through enhancing the leadership quality as well as enabling networking.

2006 Fellowship programme is piloted in Kachin	2007 Programme is expanded in Kayah and Rakhine	2008 Adapting to emergency. Fellows are deployed in Nargis-affected Areas	2008 Fellows / volunteers trained for relief and recovery programmes	2009 Network building	2010 Programme continued through variety of funding sources.
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The cyclone Nargis response was a turning point for conceptualizing youth leaders’ role in the villages: it led ActionAid to re-think how fellows work could be adapted to emergency response, and created a space for experimenting new solutions. In particular, it led ActionAid to invest in village youth volunteers.

When cyclone Nargis hit Myanmar, ActionAid mobilized existing fellows for the response. In the immediate aftermath of the emergency they operated with no other resource than their knowledge, helping communities to organize themselves to get aid assistance and to do whatever they could do, on their own to start restoring their lives and livelihoods. As a cyclone Nargis survivor remembered, the presence of fellows

² Quoted from: *Introduction to REFLECT*, on line at : http://www.actionaid.org.uk/doc_lib/189_1_reflect_introduction.pdf

and their mobilization skills helped them to overcome trauma, react and get together, when their lives were in shambles.

Fellows were then firmly put at the core of ActionAid response programmes, financed through a variety of donors. However it soon became clear that the fellowship model had to be adapted for response to emergency and for shorter term projects. Training and capacity building for new youth leaders had to proceed at a much faster scale, so that they could be more rapidly deployed. In parallel with fellows ActionAid started to also train “village youth volunteers”. The volunteers underwent a shorter and often more focused training (mainly covering community mobilization and organisation, psychosocial care, livelihoods and disaster risk reduction), and worked in their own community rather than deployed outside.

In parallel with emergency response, fellows continued to operate on longer-term “developmental projects” in Myanmar (and in the Delta), supported by several donors.

All these adaptations mean that, as of today, there is not only one breed of “youth leaders” and – notwithstanding the common goal (achieving peace, cohesion, development by mobilizing civil society) - varied modalities for action and engagement evolved. The following are some aspects worth highlighting to get a sense of the variety and the potential of fellowship engagement with civil society and government.

Timeframe for action and the “projectization” of recovery work. One distinctive aspect of the work of the fellow was, at the inception, the long-term engagement and the possibility of working according to the community’s pace. This created more room to truly understand what community priorities were and to rally key stakeholders around these. A longer timeframe also allowed fellows to build the confidence of villagers to engage with the government with little steps. This resulted in a high degree of variation in the “stories of change” lead by the fellows.

Emergency interventions were supported through short term funding, which reduced time for the process of engagement with communities. The need to achieve the objectives stipulated with the donors in short time frames somehow changed the dynamics. Engagement of volunteers in short term projects veered towards more conventional NGO work. Interventions tended to stick on a common blueprint – the activities set out in the proposal and log frame. It is also true that, even within this relatively rigid structure, the capacity and drive of volunteer/fellows, the community interest and the attitudes / engagement of local leaders could still make the difference between a programme that delivered a stipulated outcome and one that, in the process, also broke new ground in strengthening the collaboration amongst civil society and their institutions, or the capacity of people to organize for common goals.

Focus of interventions. In donor funded emergency programmes, domains of interventions were more clearly pre-established (focus on psychosocial work / livelihoods / disaster risk reduction). This structured set of objectives and deliverables allowed to develop focused curricula to train fellows and volunteers to deliver on these, and also in devising ways to build engagement with local authorities functional to these areas of work. Fellows working in development contexts had much more freedom in exploring alternative areas of work, but they were then less equipped with specific technical skills or tried and tested modalities to approach local leaders and government departments, as well as with resources. This suggests that the ideal balance will be to continue to engage in open programmes, but also to consolidate learning on how to best engage with government in different areas of work, to strengthen the action of fellows.

Development / humanitarian work. Working in development or within humanitarian response changed dynamics and the nature of work. Beside the timeframe and the “projectization” of work, attitudes and needs of actors changed. Some ActionAid partners suggested that the extent of need and the scale of disaster might have compelled authorities to be more responsive to the request of their citizens. So,

despite the short timeframe, citizens and volunteers managed to persuade their government to provide considerable investments (for example, materials to build bridges).

Insiders / outsiders. Some youth leaders were *deployed to* a village; others (most often volunteers) worked within their own village. Outsiders, once accepted by a community can become more “neutral” (which is important in areas of conflict) and - as an “external driving force” -can “push” the community to mobilize (and support it in doing so) to an extent that is not easy to achieve for insiders. Outsiders can also be in a stronger position to help the community to negotiate with government authorities. Insiders had sometimes lesser voice, and this was more challenging especially for young volunteers. In some cases they are (or are seen) – by lineage – as part of ongoing conflicts, and therefore unable to reunite a community in common work. But when insiders have been successful, they have become truly an engine for change, and gained status and credibility within their communities. Using insiders means that what is invested in their growth will stay with communities for the longer term.

Methods and tools for action. The core skills of fellows have always included use of PRA/PLA tools and capacity to organize and mobilize people with groups (reflect circles / saving and loans group / work with committees). Reflect circles are – by their own nature – long-term enterprises, and are found in the developmental programmes. Their attendance was varied, as they involved youth, parents, community representatives. In several cases local village leaders did participate in the circles, and this of course created an important space for more representative forms of decision-making. Emergency programmes had tended to operate through committees, which was the operational model of most organizations working in cyclone Nargis response. To the credit of the fellows interviewed, they tried to link to existing committees, rather than created ad hoc ones. When it comes to PRA/ PLA tools, the choice and sequence of tools to be used was standardized in emergencies, and more flexible in developmental interventions. Saving and loan groups could be easily set up, and are found in both development and relief interventions.

Operational context. The operational context and the capacity of fellows / volunteers to engage with other organization varied greatly, as discussed in the section “the approach in context”

Appendix 2: Examples of engagements of fellows

Reasons to contact	Government departments	People involved in the process	Outcomes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical assistance to construct fresh-water pipeline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rambre township Municipal Dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fellow • Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received technical assistance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inviting to attend the opening ceremony of village library • Hoping to build relationship and recognition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rambre township Information & Communication Dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fellow 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority attended and made personal donation to the village library
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking permission to use public land for building community water pond 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rambre Township authority • Village Tract Leader • Rambre Township Settlement & Land Records Dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village Development Committee leaders/secretary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received permission to use public land • Received technical assistance – Bulldozer and machine driver
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requesting resources for malaria awareness for villagers • Water problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phruso township Health Dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Villagers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefitted from awareness building • Received used mosquito nets • Received bricks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridge construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S.D.A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fellow • village leader 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • -Established a bridge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking school materials and school teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phruso township Education Dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fellow • Villagers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received school materials (desks, books)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking school materials and school teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Township Education Dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fellow • Villagers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received school materials(desks, books)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requesting technical assistance for animal health information and infectious diseases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Township Veterinary & Livestock Dept. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Villagers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Received awareness about animal diseases
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irrigation Dam 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiation with government school headmistress to get government recommendation for requesting primary school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Township Education Minister • Government school headmistress 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Forestry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Township Forestry Dept. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Forestry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Township Forestry Dept. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Forestry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Township Forestry Dept. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Forestry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Township Forestry Dept. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiation between ceasefire group, KNPP and villagers regarding logging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • village tract level authority • ceasefire group KNPP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fellow • Villagers • villager headmen • religious leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reached agreement with KNPP not to disturb the process • Reached agreement with ceasefire group to build roads and development for villages • Agreed that villagers will be responsible for security issues