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**Local
Governance
Mapping**

The State of Local Governance: Trends in Myanmar

**A Synthesis of people's
perspectives across all States
and Regions**

Photo credits

Emilie Röell
Myanmar Survey Research

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THE STATE OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE: TRENDS IN MYANMAR

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UNDP MYANMAR

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Acknowledgements

UNDP would like to express its sincere thanks to the Ministry of Home Affairs and the General administration Department (GAD) for their unrestricted support and cooperation during the Local Governance mapping, which required extensive information gathering and interviews not only with citizen but also with staff members from various departments. The mapping would not have been possible without the General Administration Department's support.

This report contains a synthesis of the data and findings across all States and Regions and concludes the mapping exercise. It builds on an earlier draft prepared by Mr. Gerhard Van' t Land (senior Public Sector Management consultant for UNDP. The final report was written by Ms. Alexandra Walcher, (UNDP Local Governance Consultant) who undertook an extensive analysis of all the data, brought in additional perspectives and further cross tabulated the empirical data. The report has benefitted from substantive contributions from Ms. Emilie Röell (UNDP Consultant) and Ms. Anki Dellnas (UNDP Local Development and Governance Specialist).

A special word of thanks also for some of the many people who have contributed with technical expertise and in depth contextual knowledge of the Myanmar situation from the beginning of the mapping project: U Aye Lwin (UNDP Local Governance Specialist) and Khin Kyaw (Local Governance Analyst)

The community-level mapping and data analysis was undertaken by Myanmar Survey Research (MSR).

The Local Governance Mapping being undertaken as part of UNDP Myanmar's Local Governance/ Local Development Programme is funded by the Government of Japan, Government of Sweden, DANIDA and UNDP.

Acronyms

BADF	Border Affairs Development Fund
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
CRC	Citizen Report Card
CSC	Community Score Card
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FY	Fiscal Year
GAD	General Administration Department
GoM	Government of Myanmar
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
KII	Key Informant Interviews
LGB	Local Governance Barometer
NLD	National League for Democracy
PRF	Poverty Reduction Fund
RDF	Rural Development Fund
TA	Township Administrator
TDSC	Township Development Support Committee
TMAC	Township Municipal Affairs Committee, also TMuC
TS	Township
USDP	Union Solidarity and Development Party
W/VTA	Ward/Village Tract Administrator
W/VTDSC	Ward/Village Tract Development Support Committee
WA	Ward Administrator



Executive Summary

Myanmar has been undergoing drastic changes in the past few years. Even though the government's reform process has started only recently, several encouraging early gains in terms of improved governance can already be noticed. At the same time a number of challenges remain that need to be further looked into and addressed.

The local governance mapping was carried out to better understand how local governance actors, within the context of the current reforms, have been functioning so far. The mapping focused on development priorities and improvements, development planning and participation, and information, transparency and accountability. The findings help assess capacity needs particularly at the township level and below, and encourage local governance actors to adjust to the new situation and to new demands of people-centred service delivery.

One important part of the mapping was the citizen report card (CRC) survey, which collected the people's perspectives on local governance. This report focuses on the findings from this survey, presenting the people's perspectives across Myanmar. While the CRC survey is not strictly based on statistical analysis, efforts were made to follow certain criteria to make the data representative and balanced, and the sample sizes were considered sufficient to draw valid conclusions. The methodology was tested in two States and further refined in the second and third phase of the mapping process. In total, about 5,400 people in all 14 States and Regions were asked questions relating to the core principles of local governance, and relating to their satisfaction and experience with basic services provided by government (such as basic healthcare, primary education and water supply). The findings help inform the reform agenda.

The safety and security situation in some of the conflict affected areas has improved over the last few years due to cease-fire agreements, however, there remain safety concerns amongst people, also in other States/Regions. As the overall security situation affects development and people's perceptions it was important to establish if respondents felt unsafe. On average, more people in the States feel unsafe than in the Regions (86% vs. 96%). While conflict is clearly the main factor for respondents to feel unsafe, the worsening morale of people (like alcoholism, no respect for others etc.) and the lack of law enforcement have also been mentioned in a number of States/Regions. As regards another aspect of safety and security, 38% of respondents felt free to publicly express their opinion about the government and felt no restriction to say what they want. 31% would be careful to whom they say what they think and 26% do not feel free at all. In general, people in the Regions and in urban areas appear to be more vocal than people in the States and in rural areas.

Water supply, roads and the lack of jobs appear to be the biggest concerns for people in the country overall. When asked to name the most important problem in their village tract or ward, water supply was most mentioned by respondents. Giving the data a different spin however, the lack of jobs emerges as the biggest issue when looking at the two most mentioned problems, representing about 60% of the people if seen as a share of the total Myanmar population. It has to be noted though that the data also reveals that the specific problems vary hugely across different villages and wards. Hence, it becomes very clear that a localised approach to addressing people's needs would greatly benefit the local development situation and citizen's satisfaction with public service delivery.

The W/VTA is the person people see foremost responsible for solving their development problems (33%), closely followed by the State/Region/Union Government (31%). These results seem to confirm the view, also backed by data collected on other questions, that the W/VTA plays an important role as “extended arm” of the government and as the interface between the government and the people. On a related question, over half of the respondents (57%) think that the government is aware of the development problems in the village/ward and out of those almost two thirds (65%) believe that the government is not doing anything to address their issues.

Remarkably, considering the short time since the reforms have been initiated, people have noticed improvements in their development situation over the last three years. The improvements have been seen first and foremost in the education and roads sector. As for the other sectors, overall respondents in none of the States or Regions saw improvements in the health sector as most noticeable; and improvements in water supply were nowhere neither mentioned most nor second most. Almost one third of the people have not seen any improvements. Similar to the findings on the most important development problems though, there are significant variations across villages/wards with regard to the improvements people have noticed. It also needs to be noted that the development and service delivery conditions were very poor in most areas to begin with and any improvement comes with high visibility.

Over 90% of respondents overall are of the opinion that the situation is the same or better as regards primary education, basic health services and quality of water supply. Given their importance and suitability as proxy indicators for overall development systems and performance, the education, health and water sectors have been looked at in more detail through a range of survey questions. Over two thirds of the people see improvements in primary education, over half in basic health services and just one third in water supply. More than two thirds of respondents are satisfied with the quality of education and just over half with the quality of public health services. It also needs to be noted though that with regard to health services 43% of respondents said they use private health facilities and with regard to water supply the majority of the people use natural or private water sources in the absence of other options. Hence, it can be assumed that there is much room for improvement in that respect.

The newly introduced development funds like the Poverty Reduction Fund, Rural Development Fund, Constituency Development Fund and in some areas the Border Affairs Development Fund have opened new avenues for the involvement of citizens in planning their development priorities at the local level. Citizens are involved indirectly through the people’s representatives in the TDSC, TMAC and W/VTDSC. There are quite a few improvements that could be made, though, to ensure that people’s needs are addressed through the committees. There are questions around the TDSC’s, TMAC’s and W/VTDSC’s role and representativeness and only very few citizens are actually aware of these committees, indicating a great need for more information, interaction and consultation with people. Direct participation of citizens in village tract/ward meetings is also fairly low, with less than half of respondents participating overall. With respect to participation there is a clear gender and urban/rural divide, with 54% men and 39% of women and 53% of rural and 36% of the urban population participating. The interviews furthermore revealed that only 19% of the respondents have ever been invited to a meeting in which the government wanted to talk about new projects like schools or health facilities or about the problems in the villages/wards.

On average, the large majority (60%) of people rely on verbal communication through the 10/100 household heads being passed on to them, and the large majority of people would appreciate to receive more government related information. To improve people's access to information it is crucial to look at how important government related messages get channelled down to citizens and who are the key actors in passing on information. Some specific information sharing strategies could be developed therefore to enhance the flow of information, building on the traditional and still effective way of "mouth to mouth" communication through W/VTAs, 10/100 HH Heads and village elders, accompanied by means of mass communication. As for people's awareness of their government representatives, the W/VTA emerges once again as the main actor, with 86% of the people being familiar with their W/VTAs name. In terms of people being aware of public funds that are spent in their village/ward just over one third of respondents have knowledge of government spending. When asked directly whether they feel sufficiently informed it becomes clear that the great majority of people (76%) thinks that not enough information has been passed on to them. Access to and the availability of information are key aspects regarding transparency and accountability and a number of CRC survey questions aimed at getting a better understanding of how well people are informed and their sources for government related information.

In the people's view the "traditional" roles of the W/VTAs are still dominating and much fewer people have noticed the new more development-oriented functions. Since the introduction of the 2012 Village Tract and Ward Law, the W/VTAs are now elected indirectly by the people by and from the group of 10/100 household heads. While the W/VTAs mentioned that they do feel more accountable to the people since their election, from the people's perspective, less than one third (29%) of respondents have noticed a difference in the way W/VTAs respond to their requests or the way they communicate with the people. In line with the W/VTAs perceived central role in community mediation and ensuring peace and security, the W/VTA also emerges as the first person that people approach in case of disputes – for 63% of respondents for land disputes and for 68% of respondents for disputes in general. The low level of people's awareness about the W/VTAs new development functions may not be surprising considering that the changes have been introduced only recently and that the W/VTAs traditional role to that of a people's representative hasn't been fully transformed yet. For W/VTAs to act as interface between the people and the government seems important though as there is no official mechanism at the moment for the committees like the TDSC and TMAC to regularly consult with citizens and also the practical difficulty for TDSC/TMAC members to achieve this.



1. Introduction

Myanmar's political and institutional landscape has undergone dramatic change in recent years. Already prior to the "official" beginning of the reform process in 2011 led by the President His Excellency U Thein Sein a new Constitution was adopted in 2008. Following the National League for Democracy's (NLD) gaining of parliamentary seats in the by-elections of April 2012 the military-dominated ruling Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) was confronted with an opposition in the National Assembly for the first time in decades. Decentralisation and local governance were declared priority areas for reform. The need to improve public service delivery, making it more responsive to the people's needs and the important role of sub-national institutions in that respect has been emphasised by President U Thein Sein and reiterated since on several occasions.¹ While the pace of overall reforms has clearly slowed more recently, increasing responsibilities and resources have been transferred from the Union government to lower government levels to achieve these goals.

To support this process, in 2013 UNDP and the General Administration Department (GAD) under the Ministry of Home Affairs agreed to conduct a local governance mapping across the country. The purpose of this mapping was to present a snapshot of the state of affairs of local governance in all 14 States and Regions in Myanmar in particular at the township level. The objective was to provide an overview of people's perception of the quality of governance in general and the quality of governance in service delivery (for a selected number of key basic services namely basic health, primary education and water supply) at the township and the village tract or ward level; and to identify related capacity needs of government and non-government stakeholders to improve their performance for good local governance and effective service delivery. The mapping was carried out in a phased manner in all 14 States and Regions of Myanmar between December 2013 and January 2015.

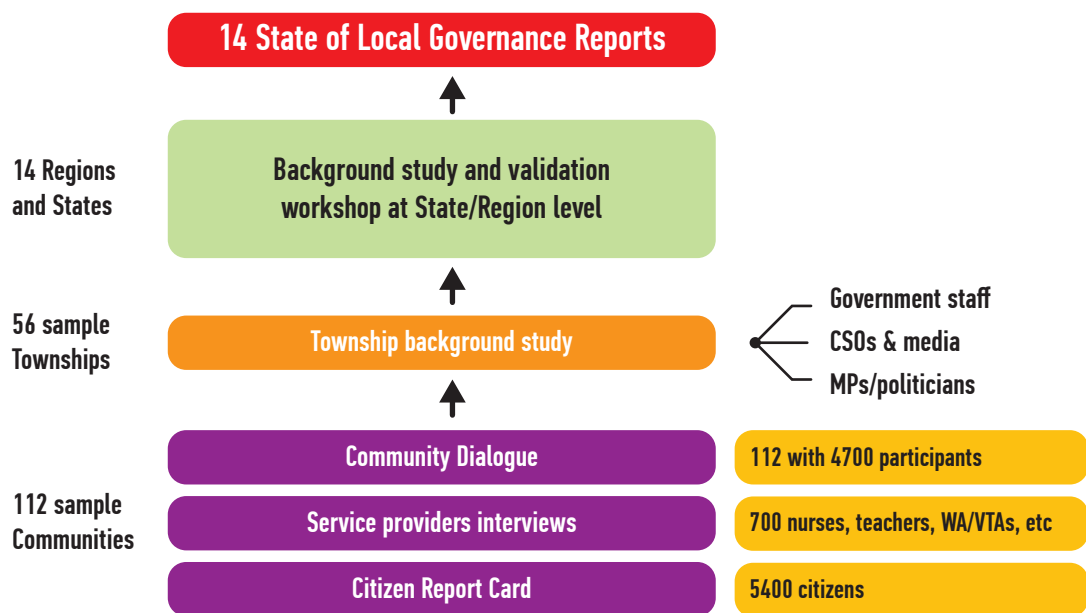
In order to obtain a holistic perspective of governance at the local level, the mapping used a combination of the below mentioned instruments to map the quality of local governance from a ward/village-tract, township and Region or State level perspective. The methodology has been developed particularly for the Myanmar context and draws on various local government assessment methodologies and frameworks that have been tried and tested in different parts of the world:

- The Local Governance Barometer (LGB), which has been applied in countries such as South Africa, Malawi, Zambia, Liberia and Egypt, which are characterised by a limited availability of reliable administrative and statistical data on the service delivery process and the quality of governance. The LGB uses a set of localised governance indicators that are used by various stakeholder groups to "score" performance on governance measures at the local level. It emphasises awareness raising and constructive dialogue around governance and presents an overview of governance strength and weaknesses; and
- A combination of the Citizen Report Card (CRC) and Community Score Card (CSC) techniques as developed in India and Bangladesh that seek to provide citizen feedback on the quality of service providers, and strengthening the capacity of service users to engage in a constructive dialogue with service providers and administrators about the quality of service delivery.

1. Most notably in President U Thein Sein's speech to the Union Legislature in June 2012, and more recently in a similar address in December 2013 and January 2014 for example and in his monthly speeches on national radio.

These methodologies are well suited for countries that are seeking to enhance active citizen participation, as is also the case in Myanmar. In line with the emphasis on driving participation in local governance, the mapping exercise focused more on what can be called the “interactive” dimensions of governance, i.e. on those indicators that describe and analyse the interaction between stakeholders, related to accountability, transparency and participation, and less on indicators that describe and analyse the internal functioning of government (such as financial management and administrative checks and balances, for instance).

It combines a variety of tools, namely citizen report cards, frontline service provider interviews, community dialogues at the grassroots level, and extensive background studies that included secondary data collection, key informant interviews and focus group discussions at the township and State/Region levels. Such tools not only facilitated the gathering of data and information on the dynamics of local governance, but they also served to introduce new methods of engagement by government of the community at both the village tract/ ward and township level.



Overall, around 8,500 citizens and 3,000 government staff participated in the research. The individual reports for each of the 14 States and Regions give a detailed account of the mapping and its findings for each and every State/Region. A comprehensive explanation of the overall background and the methodology can be found in the report on *Mapping the State of Local Governance in Myanmar: Background & Methodology*. The present report focuses on the wealth of data the CRC exercise alone has yielded and provides a synthesis of the findings from a citizen’s perspective. It compares the data collected in all States/Regions and describes the commonalities and differences that emerge from the CRC findings.

As part of the CRC survey, about 5,400 people were interviewed on their experiences and satisfaction with public services and government performance. The questionnaires focused on the core principles of local governance, and the satisfaction and experiences of people using basic services provided by government (such as primary healthcare, primary education and water supply). The mapping, and hence also the CRC survey, were carried out in three phases and first piloted in Mon and Chin State.² On the basis of the experience in Mon and Chin, the questionnaires and interview process have been fine-tuned. The second phase covered the States/Regions Kayah, Kayah, Tanintharyi, Bago and Ayeyarwaddy and the third phase Kachin, Magway,

2. In order to pilot the methodology six townships were selected in each, Mon and Chin State, which is a higher number of TSs than in other States/Regions of comparable size and population.

Mandalay, Rakhine, Sagaing, Shan and Yangon. Due to the changes and improvements in the interview process and questionnaires, some of the interview questions have been adjusted or questions added in later phases of the CRC survey (these differences are pointed out throughout the report where applicable).

The surveyed townships and village tracts/wards were selected jointly with government and civil society through purposive sampling. The selection criteria attempted to capture the socioeconomic differences within each State/Region and included township size, rural/urban, diversity in economic activities and development, accessibility factors and ethnic diversity. Given the current political and security situation in Myanmar and the consequent lack of access to many areas, random selection of townships was not deemed feasible. However, wherever the security situation allowed, post-conflict and ceasefire areas were included. In some of the Phase III States/Regions, more townships were selected to also include Self-Administered Zones (Sagaing and Shan), areas with minority populations (Rakhine) and IDP populations (Rakhine, Mandalay and Kachin) but no interviews were held with refugees or people in IDP camps.

Within each township, two village tracts/wards were selected on the basis of the same selection criteria as the townships, in close consultation with the Township Administration. A maximum of four villages/ward areas were then randomly selected within each village tract/ward. The interviewed households were also selected through a random sampling method.

While the study is not strictly based on statistical analysis, efforts were made to follow certain criteria to make the data as representative and balanced as possible. The total sample size of the pilot study for the community survey of 576 respondents per State and Region was considered sufficient to draw valid conclusions for the whole population of those two States (Chin and Mon) with a high confidence level and a negligible margin of error. In all other States and Regions, interviewing about 100 respondents in 3 to 8 townships per State/Region raised the error margin to about 10 percent (based on average population size per township), but was adequate to get a sense of local issues, experiences and perceptions, which are necessarily also context specific. States were oversampled as compared to the Regions.

As mentioned above, this report focuses on the citizen's perspective and the findings from the CRC survey. Following the executive summary and the overview of the reform context and the mapping methodology in the present introductory chapter, Chapter 2 explains the sample sizes for the survey and demographic background to provide an overview of the CRC respondent's profile. It also looks at the safety and security context at the time of the survey and how comfortable respondents felt to express their opinion. Chapter 3 presents the key findings of the CRC survey. The first section in this chapter looks at the main development challenges that people see in their area and whether they have seen any improvements in service delivery over the last three years. Going further into the changes people perceived this section also examines issues around access to specific services, i.e. primary education, primary health services and water supply. The chapter then explains the survey findings with regard to development planning and participation to get a better understanding of the changes since the beginning of the reform process and whether development planning has become more responsive and participatory. The last section in this chapter provides an overview of the current state of issues relating to information, transparency and accountability and gives an idea where changes have already started to take place and where more attention needs to be directed.



2. Demographic overview of CRC respondents and security context

This chapter intends to provide a brief introduction to the sample sizes that were used for the CRC survey and to the respondent's background and profile per State or Region and on average. This is important as some of the findings of this mapping exercise may need to be read in the light of aspects of the respondent's background and profile, for example that the urban population tends to be more vocal than the rural population; or that some rural areas, particularly in the States, have longer been "neglected" in terms of development and hence the change experienced and noted by people in this survey may appear higher.

2.1 Key demographic indicators and profile of respondents

The tables and graphs in this section give a brief overview of the respondents' profile, illustrating the urban/rural, State/Region, educational background and ethnicity ratios of the people interviewed. As for the gender balance, half of the respondents were male/female respectively.

Table 1 below provides an overview of population, size and number of townships of Myanmar's States and Regions.

Regions / States	Census 2014			Land area		# of TSs
	#	%	% urban	Km ²	%	
1. Kachin	1,689,654	3.3%	35.94%	88,980	13.3%	18
2. Kayah	286,738	0.6%	25.3%	11,760	1.8%	7
3. Kayin	1,572,657	3.1%	21.9%	30,327	4.5%	7
4. Chin	478,690	0.9%	20.9%	36,277	5.4%	9
5. Sagaing	5,320,299	10.3%	17.1%	93,873	14.0%	37
6. Tanintharyi	1,406,434	2.7%	24.0%	41,061	6.1%	10
7. Bago	4,863,455	9.5%	22.0%	38,867	5.8%	28
8. Magway	3,912,711	7.6%	15.1%	45,025	6.7%	25
9. Mandalay	6,145,588	12.0%	34.8%	30,999	4.6%	31
10. Mon	2,050,282	4.0%	27.8%	11,242	1.7%	10
11. Rakhine	3,188,963	6.2%	16.9%	35,020	5.2%	17
12. Yangon	7,355,075	14.3%	70.1%	9,917	1.5%	45
13. Shan	5,815,384	11.3%	24.0%	155,672	23.2%	55
14. Ayeyarwaddy	6,175,123	12.0%	14.1%	33,705	5.0%	26
15. Nay Pyi Taw	1,158,367	2.3%	32.5%	7,069	1.1%	5
TOTAL	51,419,420	100.0%	29.6%	669,794	100.0%	330

Table 1: Main demographic overview for Myanmar³

Table 2 on the next page provides an overview of the Citizen Report Card sample sizes per state and region.

3. See the Myanmar census 2014.

Table 2: Citizen Report Cards (CRC) sample sizes

Regions / States	CRC Sample					
	# of TSs	# of wards	# of tracts	urban respondents	village respondents	TOTAL respondents
1. Kachin	4	2	6	96	288	384
2. Kayah	3	2	4	96	192	288
3. Kayin	3	3	3	144	144	288
4. Chin	6	4	8	192	384	576
5. Sagaing	4	2	6	96	288	384
6. Tanintharyi	3	2	4	96	192	288
7. Bago	3	2	4	96	192	288
8. Magway	3	2	4	96	192	288
9. Mandalay	3	2	4	96	192	288
10. Mon	6	5	7	240	336	576
11. Rakhine	4	2	6	96	288	384
12. Yangon	3	3	3	144	144	288
13. Shan	8	5	11	240	528	768
14. Ayeyarwaddy	3	2	4	96	192	288
15. Nay Pyi Taw						
TOTAL	56	38	74	1,824	3,552	5,376

Certain factors regarding the representativeness of the CRC sample sizes need to be kept in mind when looking at the survey findings. Table 3 below shows that the Regions or States with lower population, like Kayah or Chin particularly, are over-represented in the CRC survey. These are in general the more rural States or Regions. As for States/Regions with a high total population (like Mandalay or Yangon) or with a high urban population (like Kachin) the urban population is under-represented, while it is over-represented in the more ‘rural’ States/Regions. This means that as compared to the total Myanmar population there is a higher percentage of Chin or Kayah State respondents represented in the survey, while there is a lower percentage of Yangon or Mandalay Region respondents. For example: Kayah’s population represents 0.6 % of Myanmar’s total population but Kayah’s respondents make up 5.4% of the total number of survey respondents; Yangon’s population represents 14.3 % of Myanmar’s total population but Yangon’s respondents make up only 5.4% of the total number of survey respondents. Hence, Kayah respondent’s views are over-represented while Yangon respondent’s views are under-represented (as compared to those State’s/Region’s population share of the total Myanmar population) in the overall (average) survey results. As for the urban bias, the percentage of total urban respondents (33.9%) is slightly above the total Myanmar urban population (29.6%), apart from the over-/under-representation of the urban population in some particular States/Regions (see Table 3). These factors of over-/under-representation could in some cases skew the average findings, particularly if the survey results are “extreme” in one of these specific States/Regions where such a bias occurs, like Chin or Yangon.

Table 3:
Representativeness
of the samples⁴

Regions / States	% of TSs sampled	population as % of total population	respondents as % of total ⁵	urban population as % of total	urban respondents as % of total ⁶
1. Kachin	22.2%	3.3%	7.1%	35.9%	25.0%
2. Kayah	42.9%	0.6%	5.4%	25.3%	33.3%
3. Kayin	42.9%	3.1%	5.4%	21.9%	50.0%
4. Chin	66.7%	0.9%	10.7%	20.9%	33.3%
5. Sagaing	10.8%	10.3%	7.1%	17.1%	25.0%
6. Tanintharyi	30.0%	2.7%	5.4%	24.0%	33.3%
7. Bago	10.7%	9.5%	5.4%	22.0%	33.3%
8. Magway	12.0%	7.6%	5.4%	15.1%	33.3%
9. Mandalay	9.7%	12.0%	5.4%	34.8%	33.3%
10. Mon	60.0%	4.0%	10.7%	27.8%	41.7%
11. Rakhine	23.5%	6.2%	7.1%	16.9%	25.0%
12. Yangon	6.7%	14.3%	5.4%	70.1%	50.0%
13. Shan	14.5%	11.3%	14.3%	24.0%	31.3%
14. Ayeyarwaddy	11.5%	12.0%	5.4%	14.1%	33.3%
TOTAL	17.2%	97.7%	100.0%	29.6%	33.9%

The below graphs (Figure 2 and Figure 3) show the ratio of **urban/rural respondents** by State or Region and show that in total more or less the same percentage of urban and rural respondents was interviewed for each “group” States and Regions, i.e. about 34% urban in States/Regions and 66% rural in States/Regions overall. This ratio largely corresponds with the overall urban/rural population ratio for the whole of Myanmar, which has an urban population of 29.6% according to the 2014 census.

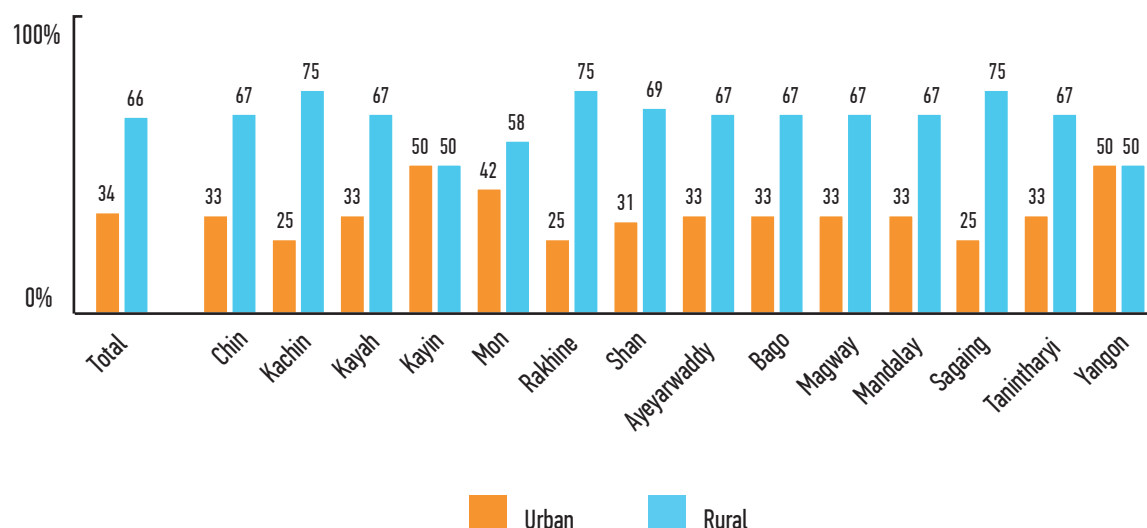


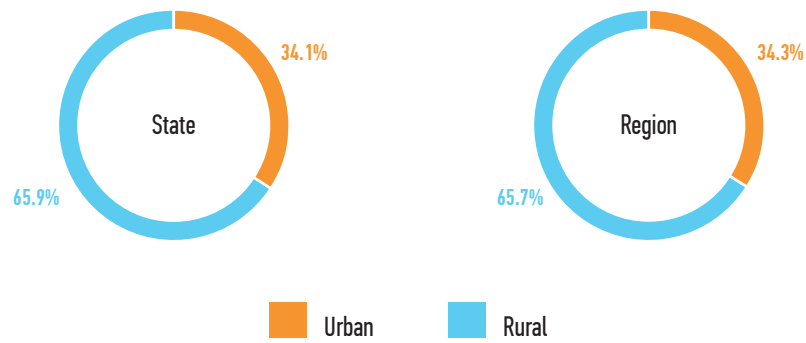
Figure 2: Urban/rural respondents

4. This overview table does not include the figures for Nay Pyi Taw as it was not included in the survey.

5. The fields in red mark the over/under-representation as compared to the percentage of total population.

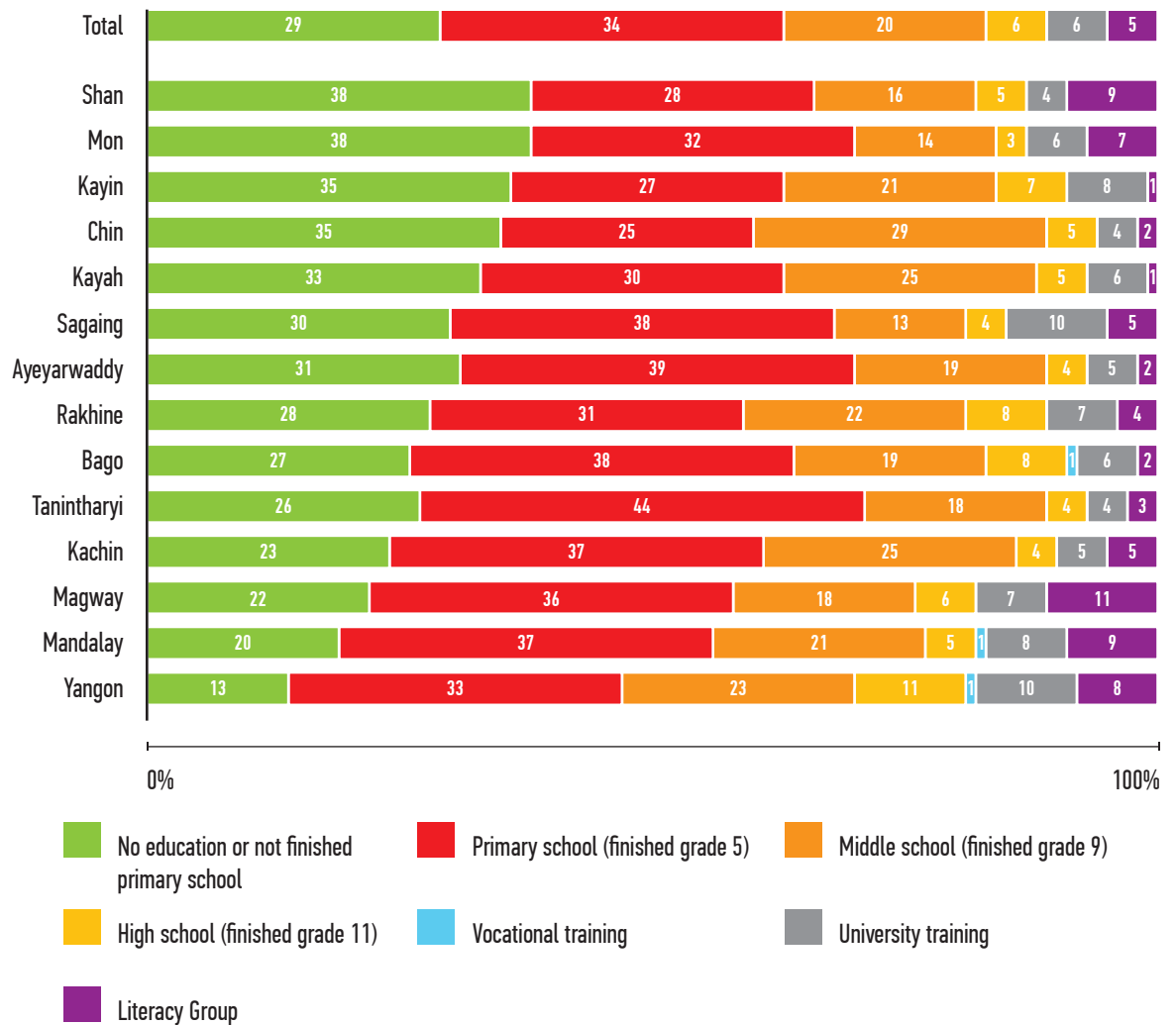
6. The fields in grey mark the over/under-representation as compared to the average urban population.

Figure 3: Urban/rural respondents (grouped)



Comparing the data for Regions and States with regards to **educational background** of the respondents (see Figure 4 and Figure 5), it can be seen that with the exception of Kachin and Rakhine⁷, in general the largest group of respondents in the States have either no education at all or have not completed primary school (33%), while in the Regions having at least completed primary school (grade 5) was most common (38%).” The differences between “high school” and “university training” graduates are not striking on the other hand.

Figure 4: Respondents' educational background (by State/Region)⁸



7. The percentage of respondents in Rakhine with primary school education is still lower (30.73%) than the average (34%) though.
 8. Literacy group = people who didn't complete primary education but who can read.

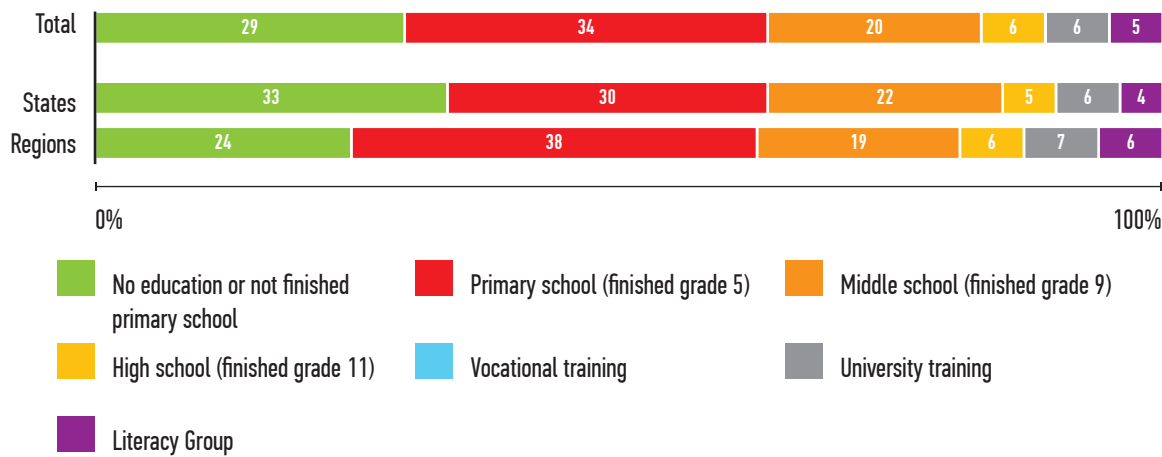


Figure 5: Respondents' educational background (grouped)

Looking at the data regarding the **age groups** of respondents (see Figure 6 and Figure 7), one can notice that the people interviewed in the States were generally younger than the people in the Regions. As for the age group 18-30 years there is a noticeable difference, with 22% of State respondents belonging to that age group as compared to 17% of Region respondents. The differences for the other age groups are marginal.

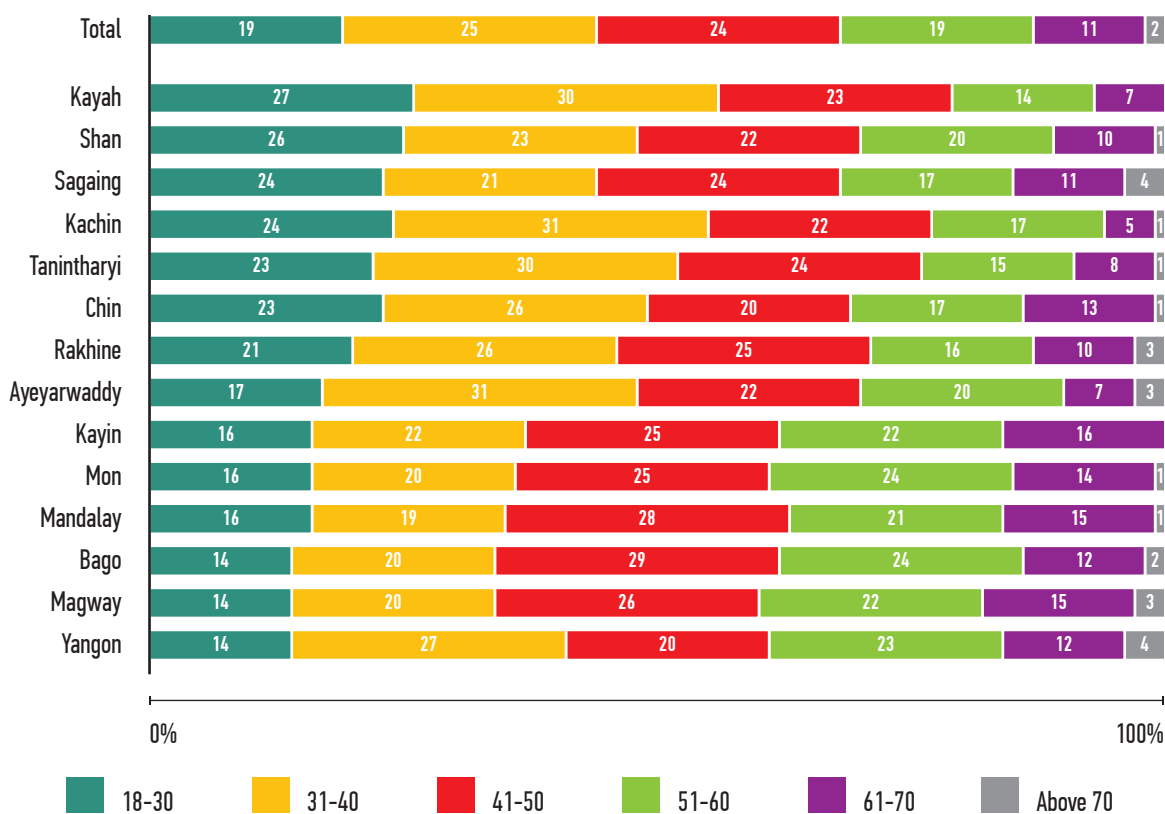


Figure 6: Respondents' age group

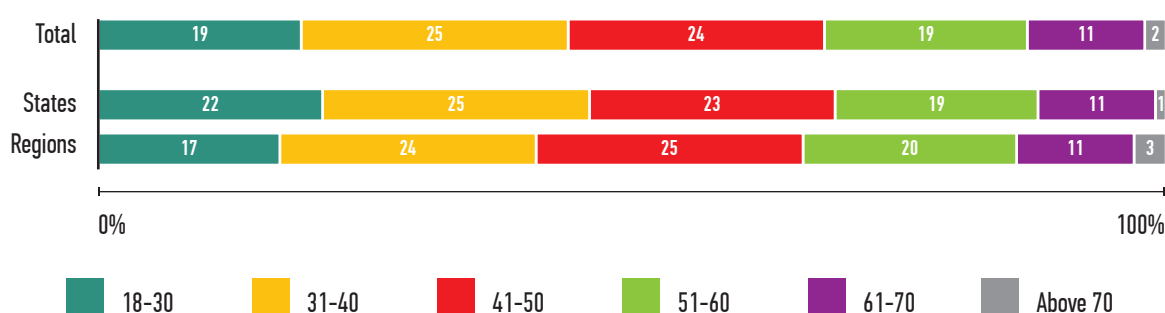
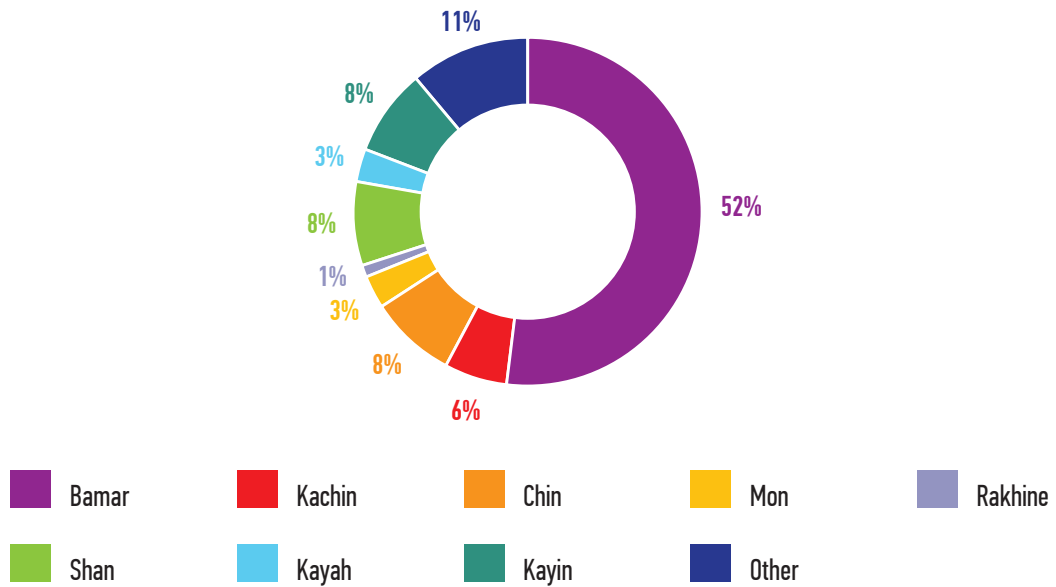


Figure 7: Respondents' age group (grouped)

Overall, the majority of people interviewed were from the majority group ethnic Bamar (see Figure 8). There are, of course, big differences across States and Regions though, as can be seen from the below Figure 9 and Figure 10. As expected, on average the large majority of respondents in the Regions were Bamar (82%) compared to merely 16% ethnic Bamar in the States. However, Bamar is still the largest ethnic group represented across all State respondents, closely followed by the ethnic Chin (15%) as the second largest ethnic group in the States. Other ethnic groups are barely found among Region respondents.

Figure 8:
Respondents' ethnicity (overall)



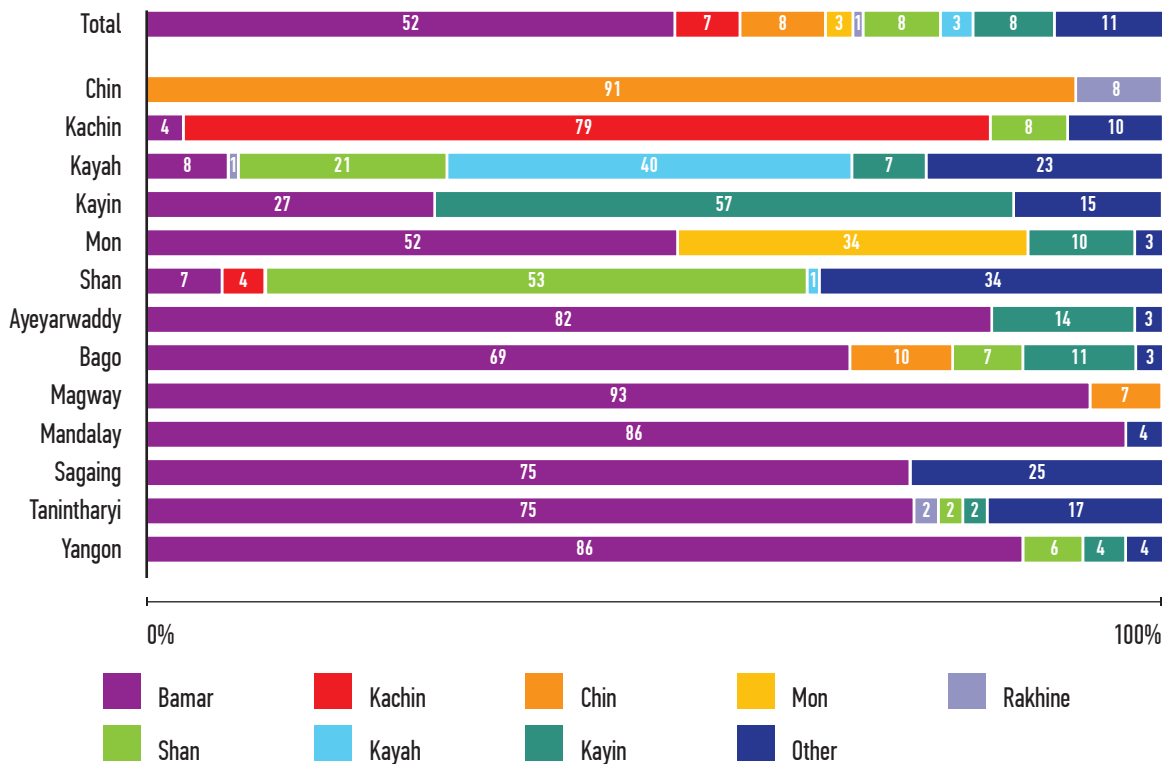


Figure 9: Respondents' ethnicity (by State/Region)⁹

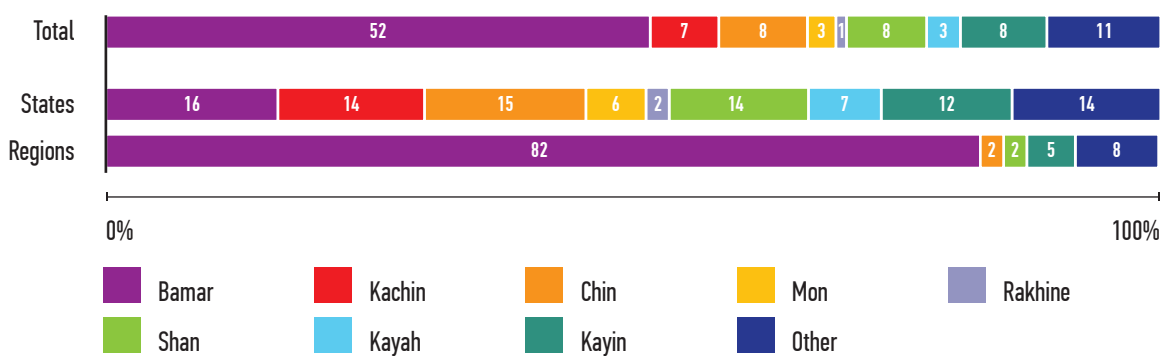


Figure 10: Respondents' ethnicity (grouped)

2.2. Safety and security context

While the safety and security situation in some of the conflict affected areas has improved over the last few years due to cease-fire agreements, there remain concerns about safety amongst people and not only in the States where there is ongoing conflict. As the overall security situation affects development and people's perceptions it was important for the mapping to establish if respondents felt unsafe.

Not unexpected, more people in the States said that they felt unsafe than in the Regions (see Figure 11). In Kachin, where there is an ongoing conflict, 20% of the respondents felt unsafe. In Rakhine 14% and in Shan 10% reported to feel unsafe. Interestingly, when those who indicated they felt unsafe or neither safe or unsafe, were asked why they felt like that, the majority of those respondents in Shan mentioned the worsening morale of people (like alcoholism, no respect for others, etc.) as primary reason (see Figure 12). This is also the main reason in Ayeyarwaddy (for 86% of those who felt unsafe or neither safe nor unsafe), in Mandalay (for 54), and in Kayin (for 42%). In Rakhine clearly the conflict between different groups of people stands in the forefront (69%); and in Kachin the ongoing conflict (44%) and that people feel threatened as a member of their community (41%). In Mandalay two thirds of respondents are concerned with the lack of law enforcement, which is also a safety factor that has been mentioned by quite a number of people in the other States/Regions.

9. This graph does not include ethnicity data for Rakhine. Due to sensitivity issues this question was not asked in Rakhine. Regarding their religious background, the majority of Rakhine respondents was Buddhist (87%), 10% were Muslim and 3% Christian.

Figure 11: In general, do you feel safe in your village tract/ward at the moment? (by State/Region)

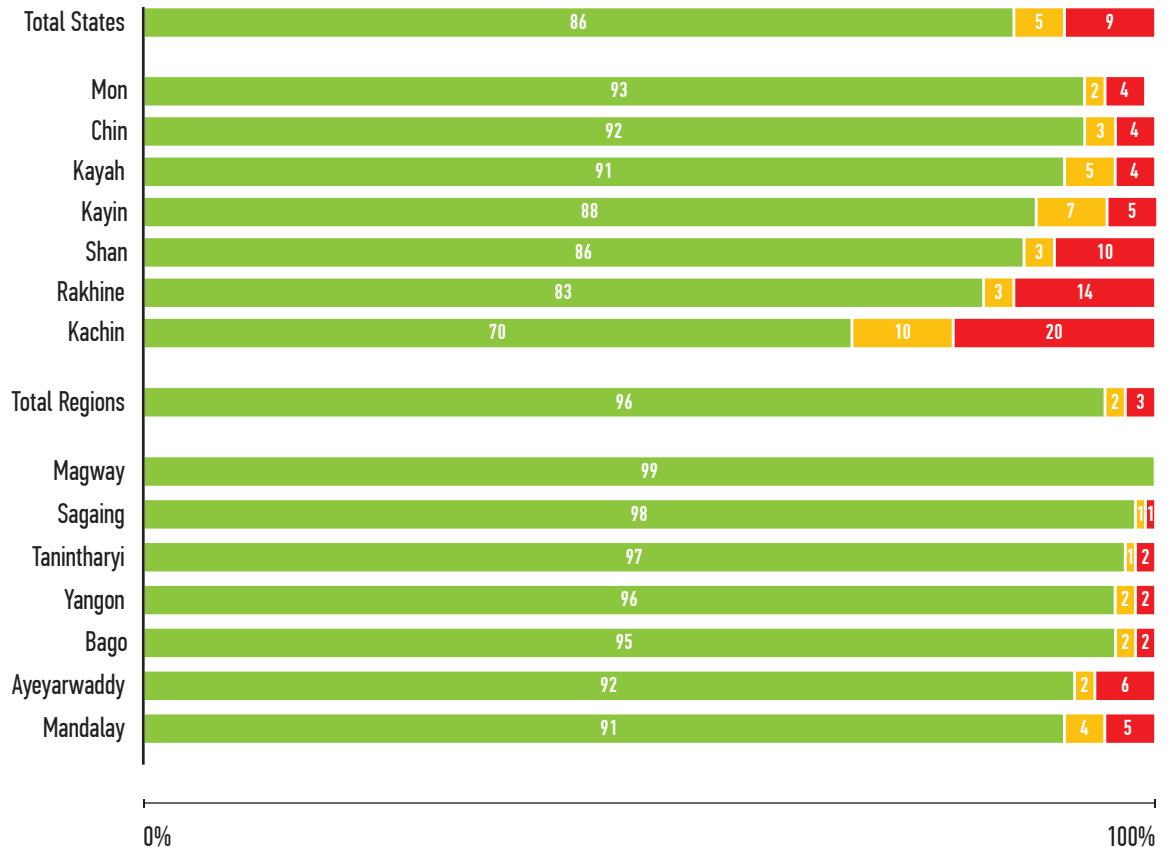
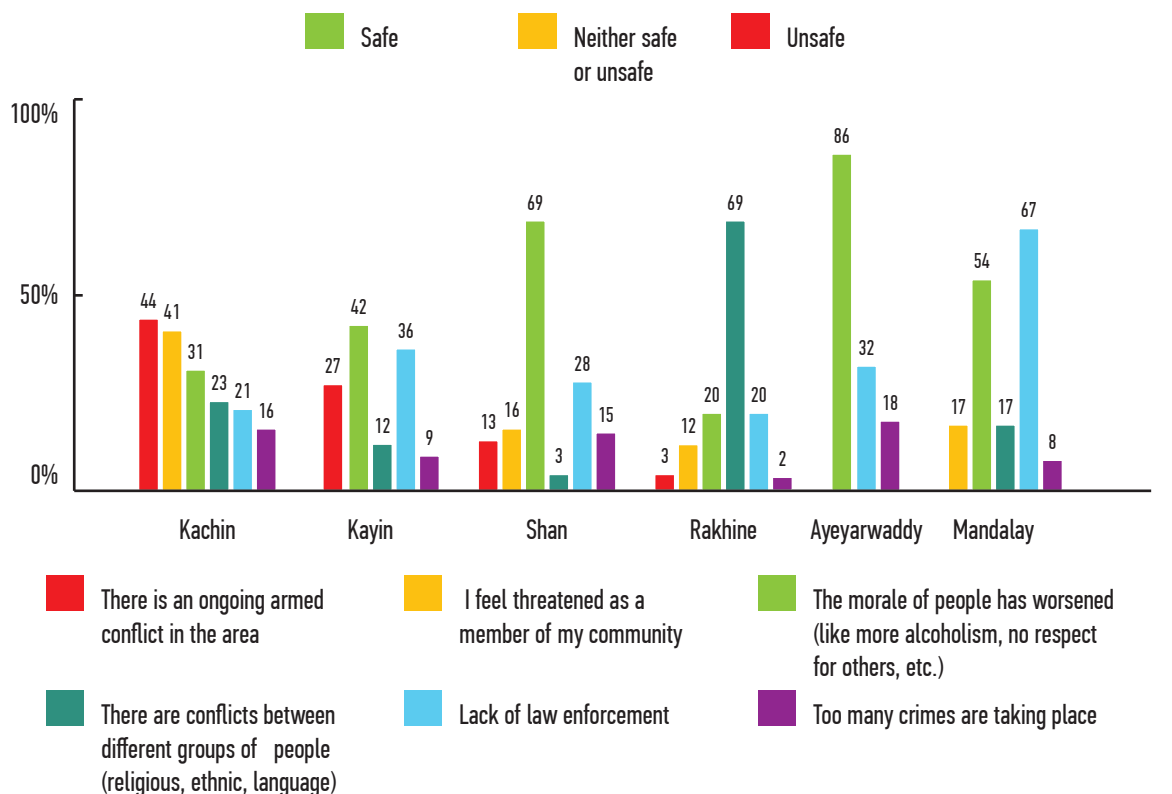


Figure 12: "Why do you feel 'Unsafe' or 'Neither safe nor unsafe'?" (only asked to respondents who indicated to feel unsafe or neither safe nor unsafe. Data selected for States and Regions where more than 5% of respondents felt unsafe)



Another aspect of safety and security relates to freedom of expression, which is also an important factor for transparency and accountability. Whether people feel free to publicly express their opinion about the government is a key consideration when carrying out the CRC survey and interpreting the findings. On average 38% of respondents said they feel no restriction to say what they want. 31% would be careful to whom they say what they think and 26% do not feel free at all. It may be assumed therefore that people in some areas at least are still cautious expressing their

opinion and that some of the answers that were provided to the interviewers may be influenced by that and perhaps have a bit of a positive bias.

In general, people in the Regions tend to be a lot more vocal than in the States (See Figure 13). In the Regions 44% of the respondents felt completely free to speak and only 23% felt not at all free while in the States more people felt restricted (31%) than feeling free to speak (30%). Also, more people in rural areas don't feel free (29%) than in urban areas (18%). It was also found that for example in Yangon and Mandalay almost half of the respondents feel no restriction in voicing their opinion (see Figure 14).

Overall, it appears that the urban population, particularly in the Regions, tends to be more vocal than the rural people and some of the findings may need to be seen in that light.

In general, people in the Regions tend to be a lot more vocal than in the States.

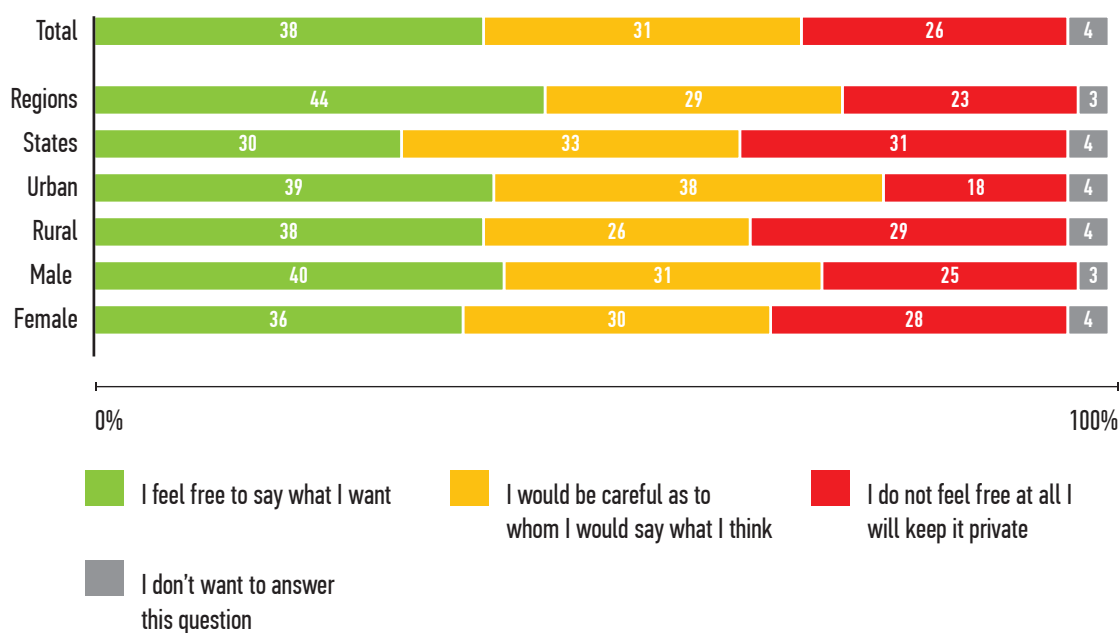


Figure 13: To what extent do you feel free to say in public your opinion about the government in general? (grouped)¹⁰

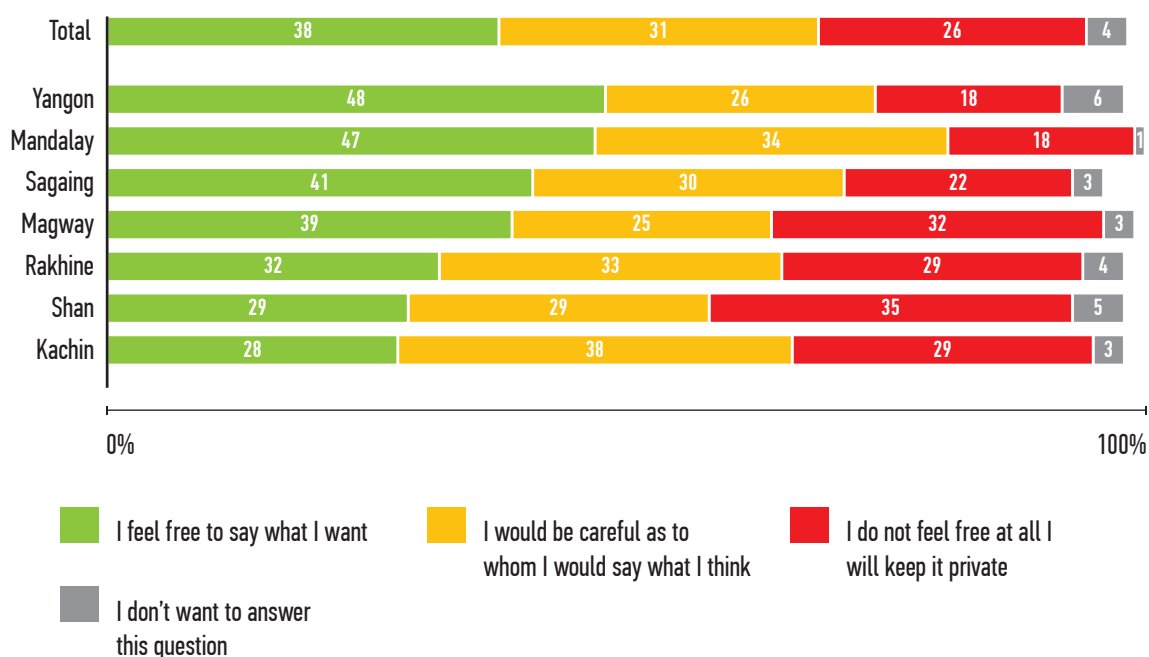


Figure 14: To what extent do you feel free to say in public your opinion about the government in general? (by State/Region)¹¹

10. This information is available only for seven States/Regions, this question was included only in the third phase of the mapping in the following States/Regions: Kachin, Rakhine, Shan, Magway, Mandalay, Sagaing, Yangon.

11. Ibid.



3. People's perspectives: key findings

As explained earlier, this report focuses on the citizen's perspective using the wealth of data the CRC exercise has yielded. The survey questionnaires were developed in a way to capture local governance dynamics rather than a subjective interpretation of an issue, i.e. respondents were not asked to speak directly on governance matters but asked questions that allow for conclusions on the relevant governance issues. The questions were guided by the core principles of good governance, i.e. effectiveness and efficiency, transparency and rule of law, accountability, participation and equity.

The survey findings described here are clustered into groups of related questions, forming the sections of this Chapter. It has to be noted though, that some of these issues are very much interrelated and could also be structured differently. This is the case particularly with questions that can be linked to information, transparency and accountability issues, like questions on who is responsible for addressing development problems or whether or not people have to pay for medicines for example.

In the following section the report will be looking at the findings relating to the main development problems that people perceive in their area and the improvements they have noticed in the last three years. This section also seeks to take stock of the most important government initiatives taken so far and what they mean for people on the ground. Further examining people's perceptions of the changes over the last three years with regard to access to services, the CRC survey looked more closely at the three sectors primary education, health services and drinking water supply. In section 3.2 on development planning and participation the report presents, from the people's point of view, the findings on how far the attempts to make development planning more participatory and people-centred have resulted in actual changes on the ground. The last section (3.3) discusses people's perceptions on information, transparency and accountability issues.

3.1 Recent developments

In this section, the current development situation and the recent developments overall and regarding the sectors education, health and water supply in particular, are described from the people's perspective. This not only provides information on whether the reform process has resulted in changes on the ground, but also gives an indication of which areas future interventions could focus on as well as serve as baseline data that can be used to establish any progress that is achieved by such interventions over time.

In the last few years, the GoM has increased the amount of resources available for service delivery substantially. Some of these resources are channelled through the newly introduced special funds for local development (see section 3.2. below) and through grants or loans made available for specific State/Region level departments, supplemented by local tax and other revenue options. The introduction of these funds constitutes one of the most significant policy initiatives as they allow for a more decentralised approach for governance and decision-making at the township level. But also at the Union level the funds for public services have been on the rise. The education sector budget for example has grown from Kyats 310 billion (USD 310 million) in FY 2010/11 to Kyats 1,142 billion (USD 1,142 million) in FY 2014/15.¹² While this is still only 5.92% of the GoM's budget and a mere 1.33% of Myanmar's GDP¹³, compared to 5 years ago this is a very significant

12. As mentioned by President U Thein Sein during the 2014-15 fiscal year budget meeting of the Financial Commission on 7 January 2014.

13. UNICEF, 2013; Snapshot of Social Sector Public Budget Allocations and Spending in Myanmar. Other countries in the region spend on average approximately 3% of their GDP on education, with Thailand leading the group with more than 5%.

increase. As for health care, the national health budget has grown from Kyats 92 billion (USD 92 million) in FY 2010/11 to Kyats 652 billion (USD 652 million) in FY 2014/15. Although this is a huge increase over the last years, it amounts to only 3.38% of the GoM's budget and 0.76% of the total GDP in FY 2014/15.¹⁴ Although these amounts are still relatively low compared to sector budgets in other countries in the region, for Myanmar they show a substantial increase, which also seems to have been noticed by the people.

3.1.1 Recent overall developments in the States and Regions

To get an idea about the current state of service delivery in the country and at the same time to understand if people have started to notice any changes in the past few years when reforms have started to be implemented, respondents were asked what the most important problem in their village tract or ward is, and whether they think responsible actors are aware of the problem and are doing something about it, and whether they think responsible actors are aware of the problem and doing something about it. Table 4 and Figure 15 provide an overview of the most important problem in people's village tract or ward.

Table 4: What is the most important problem in your village tract/ward?

State/Region population as share of national population	State/Region	Water	Roads	Health	Electricity	Jobs
0.6%	Kayah	37.2%	13.2%	14.2%	16.7%	8.3%
0.9%	Chin	32.0%	6.8%	4.2%	16.7%	12.7%
9.5%	Bago	26.7%	11.8%	8.7%	13.2%	24.3%
11.3%	Shan	25.0%	16.8%	11.7%	18.2%	10.0%
7.6%	Magway	25.0%	18.4%	14.2%	9.0%	20.1%
2.7%	Tanintharyi	24.7%	11.1%	17.0%	12.2%	16.0%
12.0%	Ayeyarwaddy	10.8%	29.2%	6.9%	12.2%	28.8%
4.0%	Mon	7.1%	25.5%	7.6%	15.8%	11.8%
14.3%	Yangon	14.9%	22.9%	10.8%	13.2%	19.8%
6.2%	Rakhine	15.6%	18.2%	16.4%	8.6%	14.1%
10.3%	Sagaing	21.4%	17.2%	24.2%	7.3%	16.7%
12.0%	Mandalay	18.8%	19.4%	19.8%	12.8%	18.8%
3.3%	Kachin	15.0%	21.0%	8.0%	24.0%	13.0%
3.1%	Kayin	15.6%	7.3%	9.0%	16.3%	21.2%
Averages (% of CRC respondents)	average	20.70%	17.06%	12.35%	14.01%	16.82%
	population weighted average	18.97%	19.24%	13.22%	12.95%	18.66%
Share of national population	most mentioned problem	33%	37%	23%	3%	3%
	2nd most mentioned problem	14%	16%	9%	20%	57%
	Total (1st and 2nd most mentioned problem)	47%	53%	32%	24%	60%

14. Myanmar Times 5 November 2014.

Figure 15: What is the most important problem in your village tract/ward? (by State/Region)

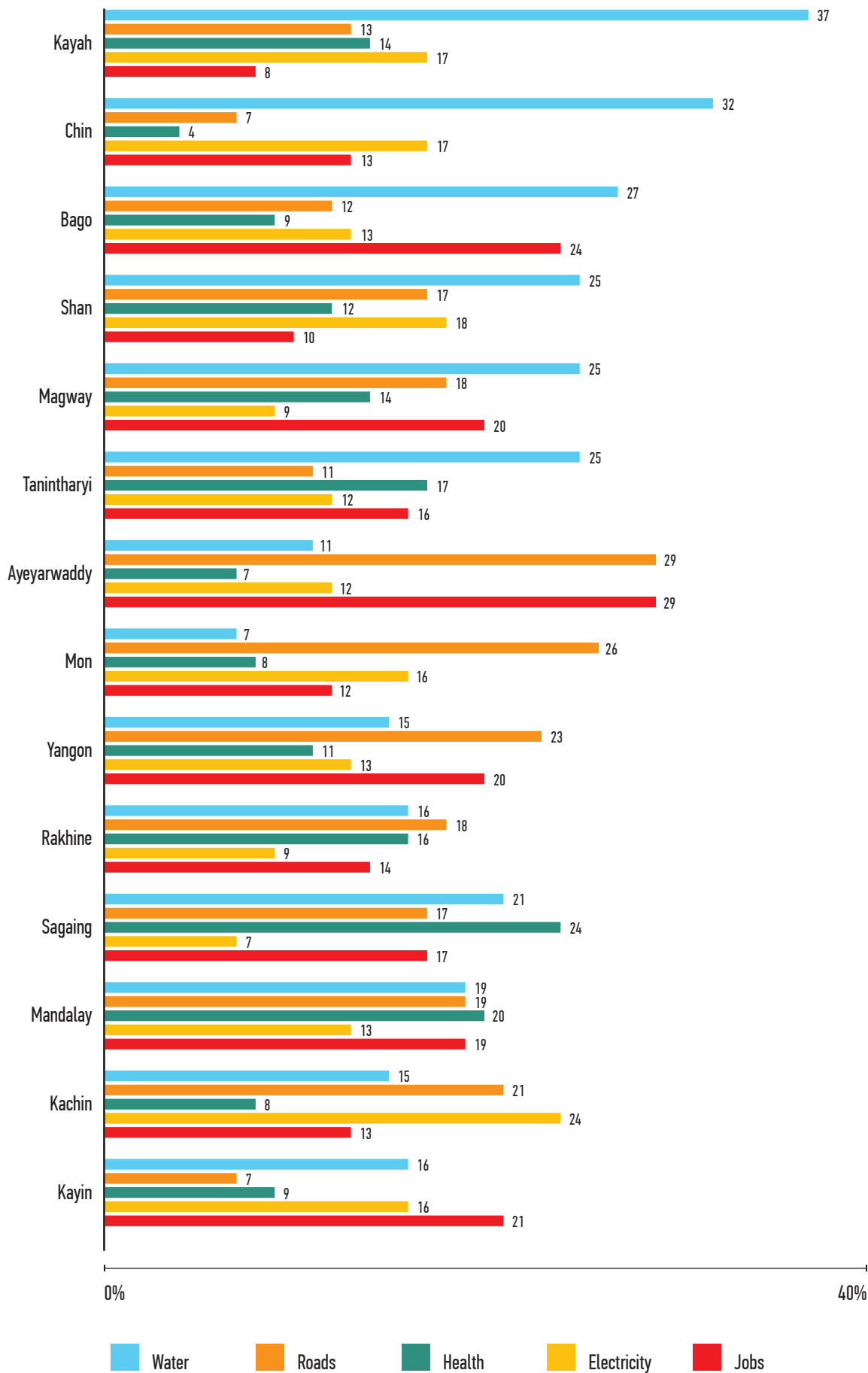
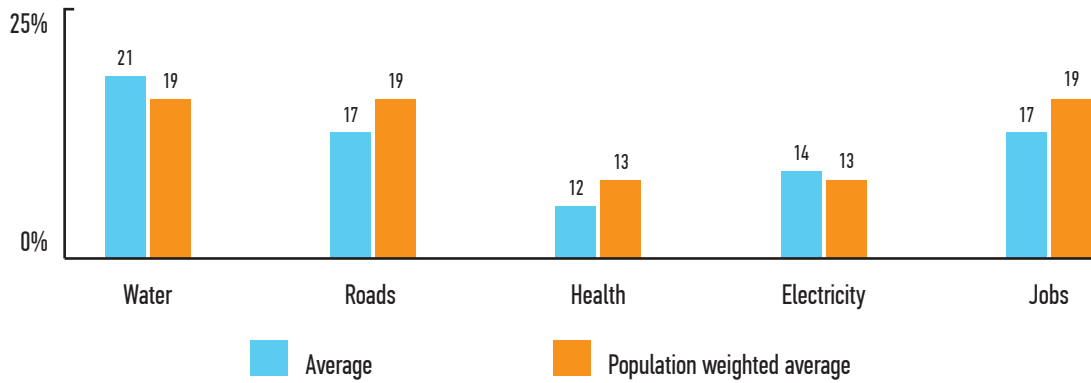


Figure 16: What is the most important problem in your village tract/ward? (Total and weighted average for all States/Regions)



The data resulting from the question “what is the most important problem in your village tract or ward” can be looked at in several different ways. While the respondents’ views vary greatly across States and Regions, and across the different townships (see the respective States/Regions reports for details), water is seen as the major development issue for almost 21% of the respondents overall. It emerged as the most important problem for the majority of respondents in six States and Regions, which represent about 33% of the people if seen as a share of the total Myanmar population. Bad roads were cited as most important problem by about 17% of respondents and it was the most important problem for the majority of people in four States/Regions, representing about 37% of the total Myanmar population. In two of the Regions health is perceived as the largest problem for the majority of the population, representing about 23% of the total Myanmar population. Overall, about 12% of respondents noted health as their main development issue. Electricity and the lack of jobs each stand out as most important problem in one State respectively. Electricity is a problem for 24% of respondents in Kachin, representing about 3% of the total Myanmar population. 21% of respondents in Kayin see the lack of jobs as their most important problem, representing about 3% of the total Myanmar population. Overall, 14% of respondents saw electricity as their main problem and about 17% of respondents noted the lack of jobs. Interestingly, in none of the States/Regions education emerged as people’s most important problem, neither was it second most mentioned by respondents as their main problem. On average, only 7% of the total respondents cited education as main issue, with the highest number of respondents in Rakhine (13%), followed by Kachin (10%).

Taking into account only the first and second most mentioned development issues and combining these figures (see Figure 17) we get a slightly adjusted picture, if the results are put into context and seen as a share of the total Myanmar population. The lack of jobs was second most mentioned by a number of respondents representing as many as 57% of the total Myanmar population, which is by far the highest percentage for the second most pressing development issue. Looking at the development issues most and second most cited together, the lack of jobs also emerges with the highest score in six States/Regions, representing about 60% of Myanmar’s total population. This is followed by roads, the first and second problem given in six States/Regions, representing about 53% of Myanmar’s population and by water, which is the first, and second most mentioned issue in eight States/Regions, representing about 47% of the population.

Overall, it can be concluded that the three priority areas that need further attention in future development planning are: road infrastructure, water supply and employment.

Overall, it can be concluded that the three priority areas that need further attention in future development planning are: road infrastructure, water supply and employment. Having said that, the data emerging from the townships covered in this survey and in all States and Regions also clearly shows that there are huge variations across different localities in terms of development problems, and clearly ‘one size does not fit all’ and development needs to be localised. Through the recently introduced local development funds, like the Poverty Reduction Fund, Rural Development Fund or Constituency Development Fund, and with the local level planning process becoming more participatory and responsive, there is a great opportunity to direct these funds to local projects that meet the needs of the people.

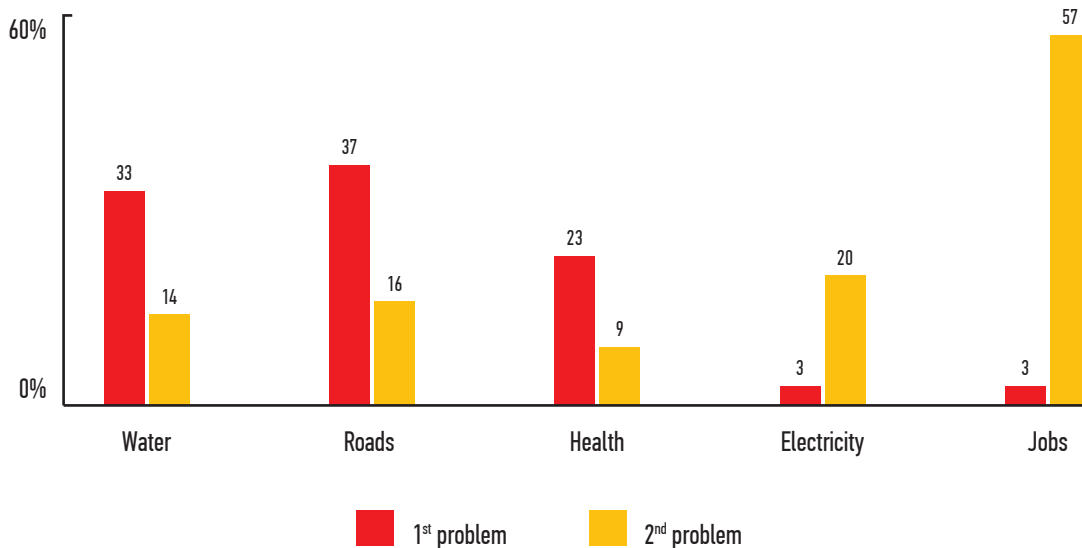


Figure 17: Share of population (as share of total national population) naming their most important problem and the second most mentioned problem

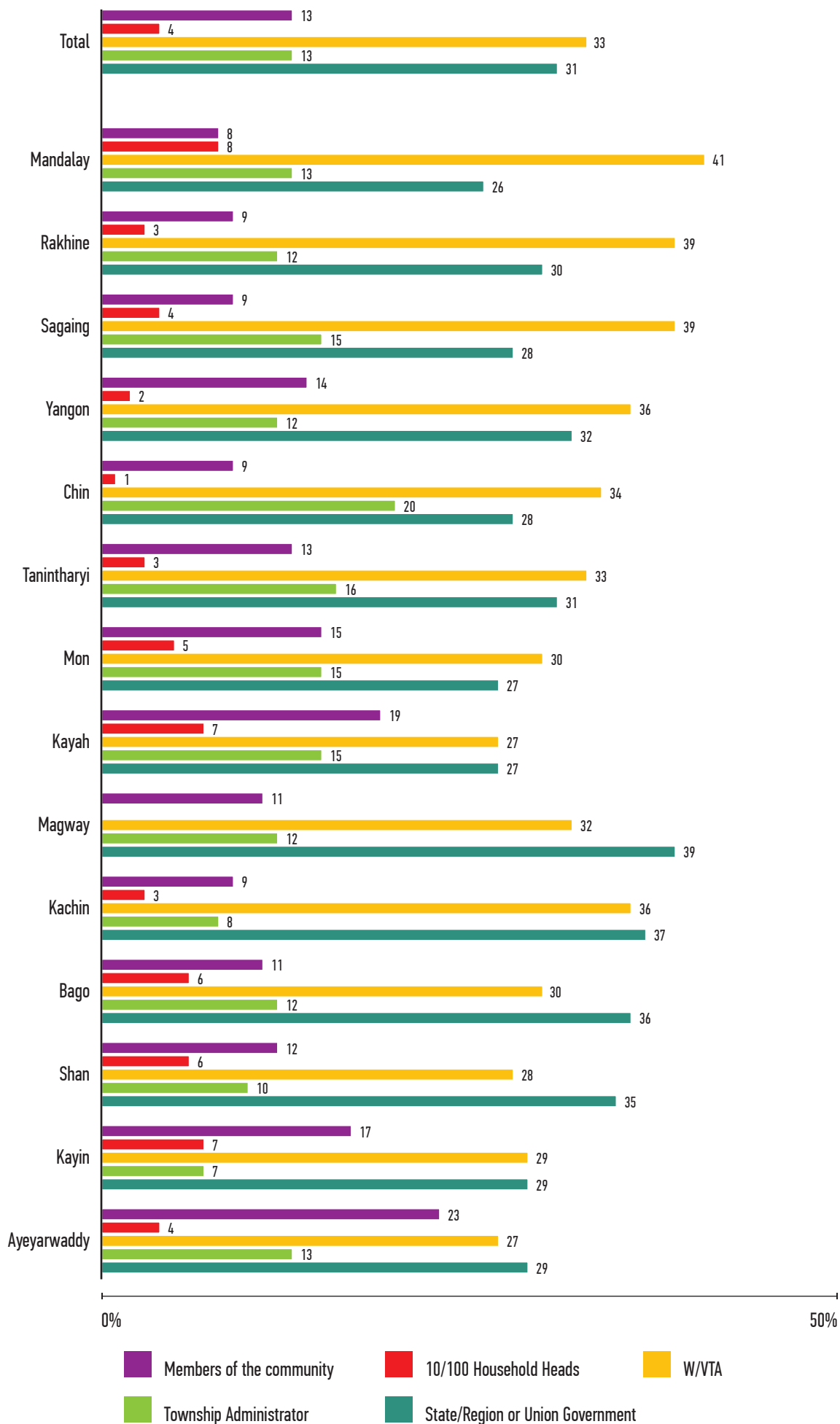
The identified development problems lead to the next question, asking people who in their opinion is the responsible institution or person to address these issues, which is an important aspect of accountability (this will be discussed in more detail further below).

Overall, the VTA or WA is the person people see foremost responsible for solving their development problems (33%, see Figure 18). This is closely followed by the State/Region or Union Government, which were grouped into one category in the CRC questionnaire (31%). This trend is the highest in Mandalay with 41% attaching the main responsibility to the W/VTA and only 26% to the State/Region/Union government, which is the lowest compared to other States/Regions. A fairly high number of respondents in Magway (39%) see the responsibility lying with State/Region/Union government, but still also 32% with the W/VTA. Very few people (13%) think that the TA should solve their development issues, which is probably a sign that the TA is not very visible to and approachable for the people, although the TA has in fact much more control over solving their problems than the W/VTA. Chin is an exception, where 20% of respondents see the responsibility with the TA. It should also be noted that the TA rotates while the W/VTA lives in the community and very seldom takes up jobs in other locations than where he/she lives.

Overall, the VTA or WA is the person people see foremost responsible for solving their development problems (33%).

Ayeyarwaddy stands out in a different way in the sense that 23% of the respondents expect the members of their own community to address the problems in their area, much more than people in other States/Regions. Only in Kayah this view is also relatively high among people (19%). One of the reasons could be that people there have become used to solving their own problems – in Ayeyarwaddy because there people got together for reconstruction efforts in the aftermath of the cyclone Nargis and in Kayah perhaps because many areas were long isolated from public services due to armed conflict.

Figure 18: Who is the first person responsible for solving this problem? (by State/Region)



The differences between States' or Regions' and male or female respondents are minor (see Figure 19). Interestingly though, most urban respondents tend to hold the State/Region or Union Government (36%) responsible and only 26% of them the W/VTA, while 36% of the rural respondents see the responsibility with their W/VTA and only 28% of them with the State/Region or Union Government. This may be an indication that in rural areas people feel their W/VTA is more accessible than the higher-level government institutions and for the potentially important role of the W/VTA as the 'extended arm' of the government and as the interface between the government and the people. The important role of the W/VTA is further discussed below (Section 3.3.2).

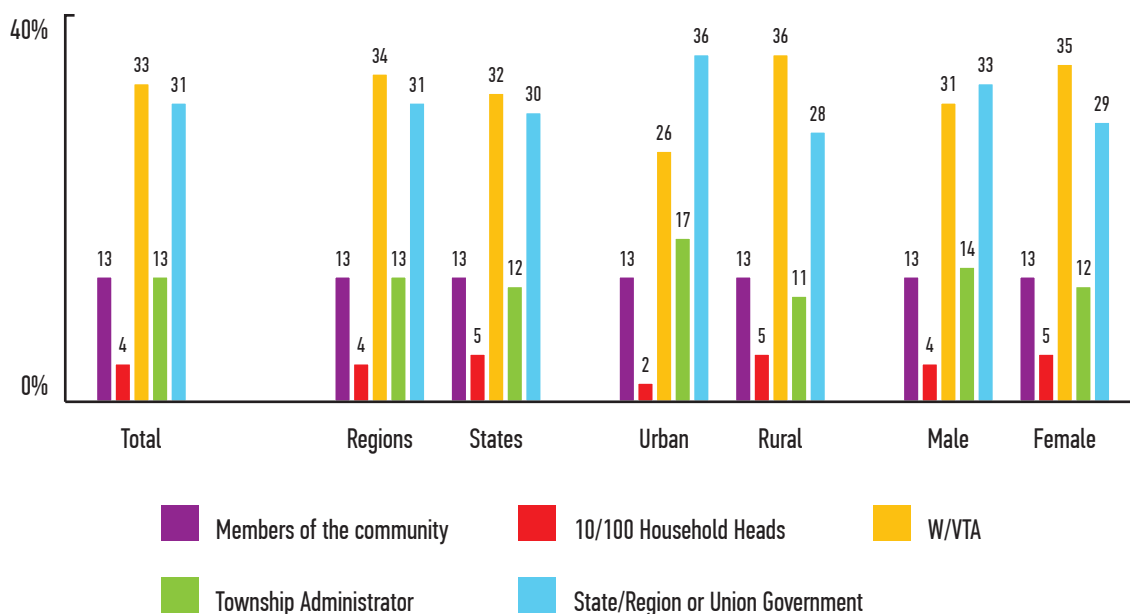


Figure 19: Who is the first person responsible for solving this problem? (grouped)

When asked whether in their opinion the government is aware of the problem at all, the majority (57%) thinks that the government is indeed aware (see Figure 20).

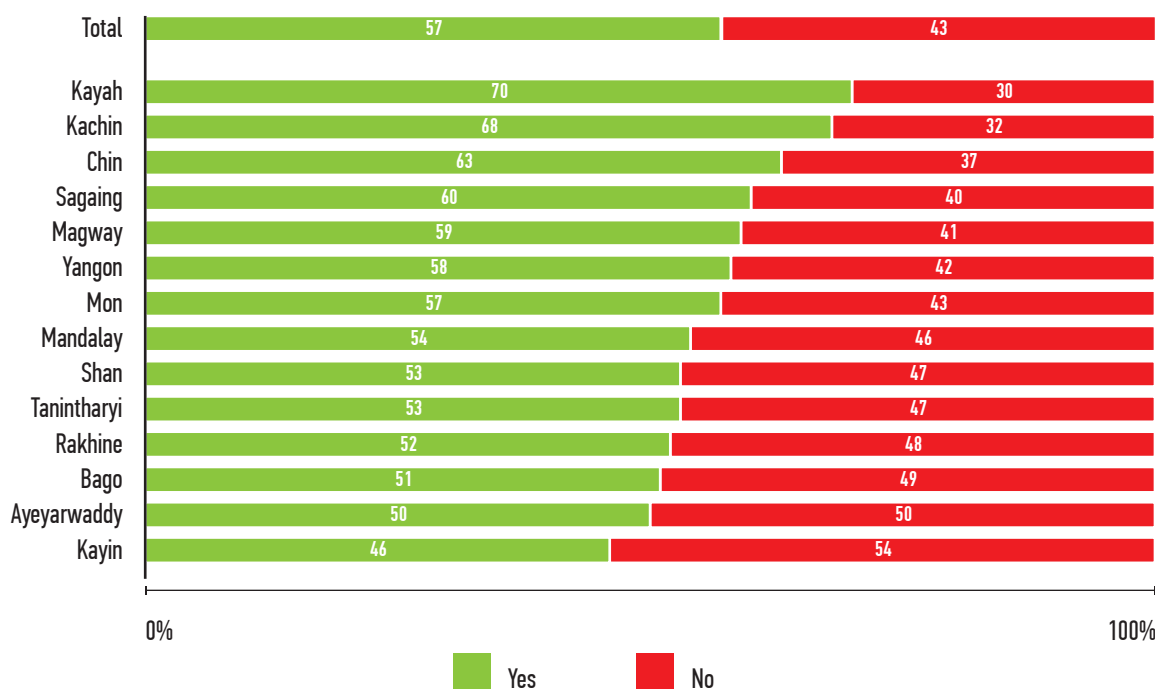
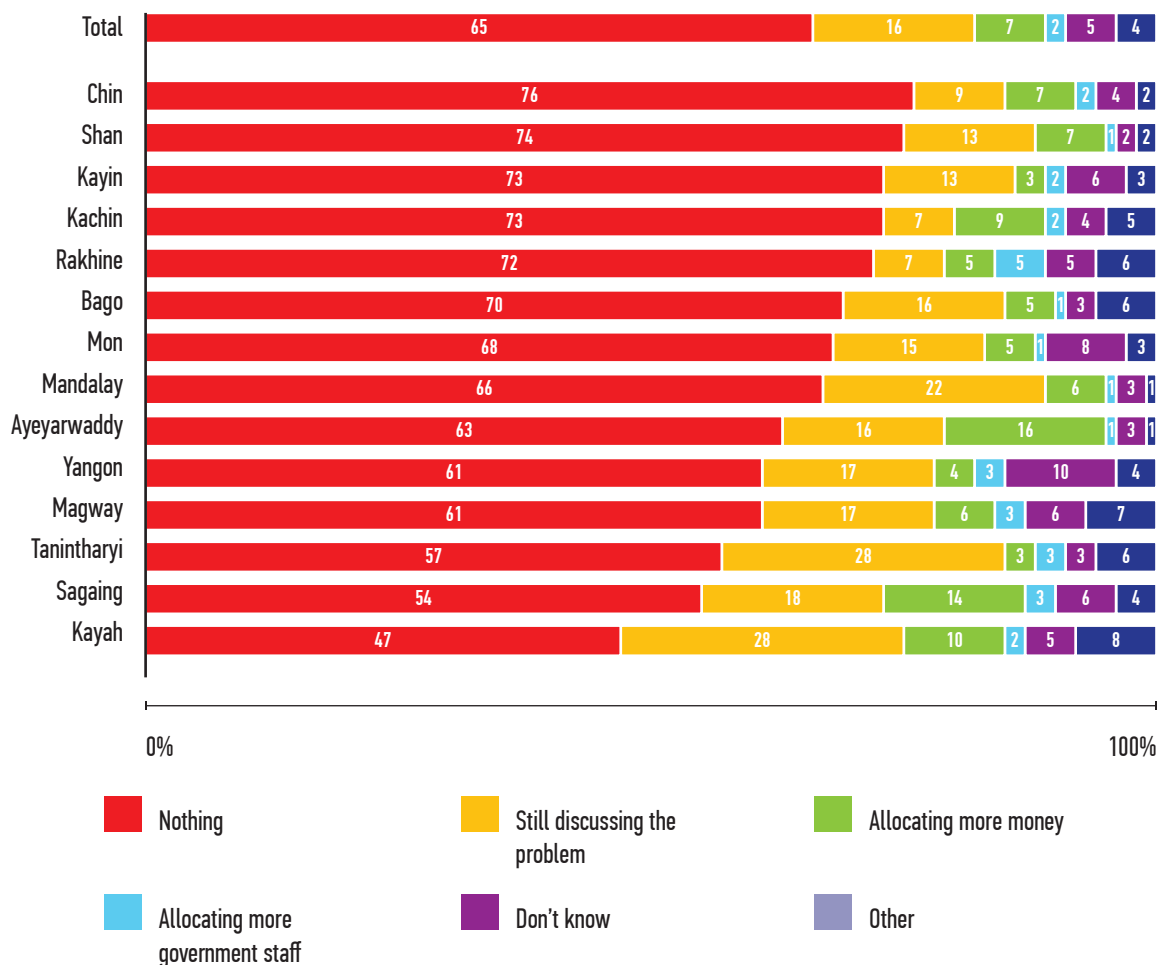


Figure 20: Do you think that the township administration or the government in general is aware of this problem?

For those who think that the government is aware of the problem the question follows what the township administration or any other government body is doing to resolve the problem. Almost two thirds of the respondents (65%) think that the government is not doing anything to address their issues (see Figure 21). This view is particularly prevalent in Chin, where 76% of the people say the government is doing nothing and only 9% think it is still discussing the problem. Also for people in the conflict affected states: Shan (74%); Kayin (73%); Kachin (73%) and Rakhine (72%) the visibility of government actions appears very low. The exception is Kayah, which interestingly is right at the opposite end of the spectrum and 53% think the government is doing something to resolve their problems (the lowest score). This may be due to several possible reasons – either the government is responding better to people’s needs, or it is better at informing about what it is doing, or the government is doing more. The government doing more is perhaps the most significant factor as Kayah in the last few years has had a much higher development budget per capita than any other State or Region. Also, Kayah has been neglected for a long time hence any positive change would be more obvious to the people. 10% of Kayah’s respondents explicitly mentioned that the government is allocating more money to solve the problems. Overall only 7% believe that the government is allocating more resources to solve the identified development issue. More on the positive side, at least 16% think that the government is still discussing the problem. Again, together with Tanintharyi in this case, this score is the highest for Kayah’s respondents where 28% think that the government is still discussing.

Figure 21: What is the township administration or any other government body doing to resolve this problem? (by State/Region)



In general, more people in the States than in the Regions are of the opinion that government is doing nothing (69% vs. 62%) and slightly more women (67%) than men (64%). Also people in urban areas hold a slightly more negative view than in rural areas (68% vs. 64%) (see Figure 22).

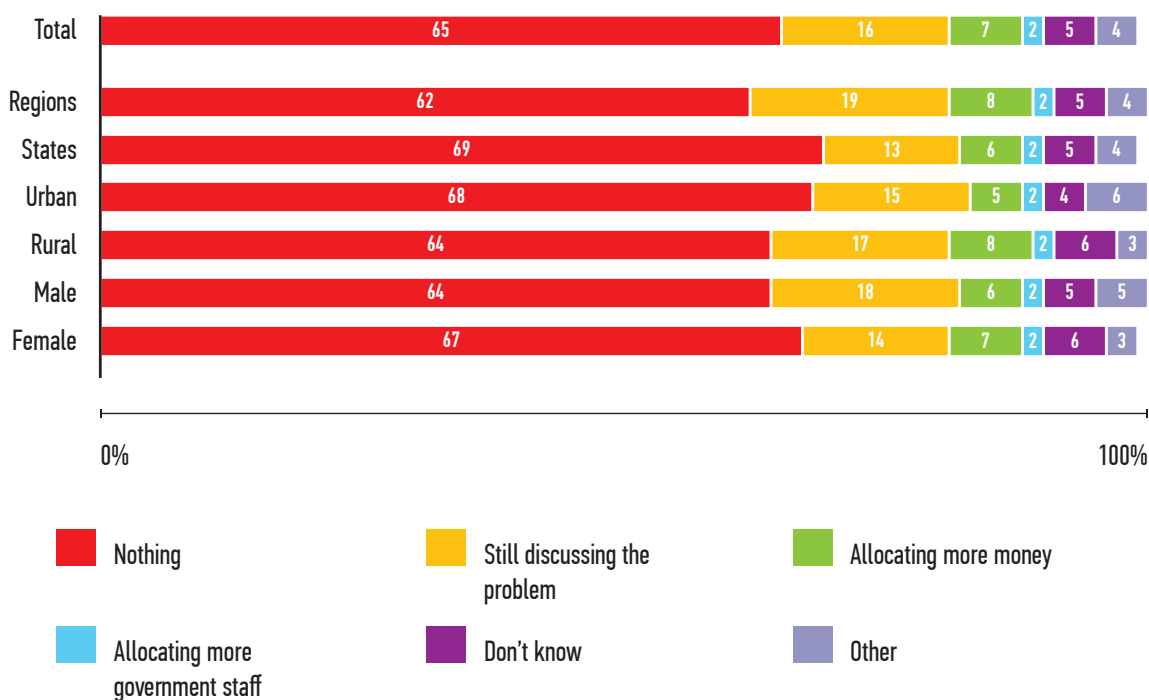


Figure 22: What is the township administration or any other government body doing to resolve this problem? (grouped)

Moving on from the main development issues, despite the many challenges there are also positive trends that people noted when they were asked about improvements made by the government in their village tract or ward over the last three years.

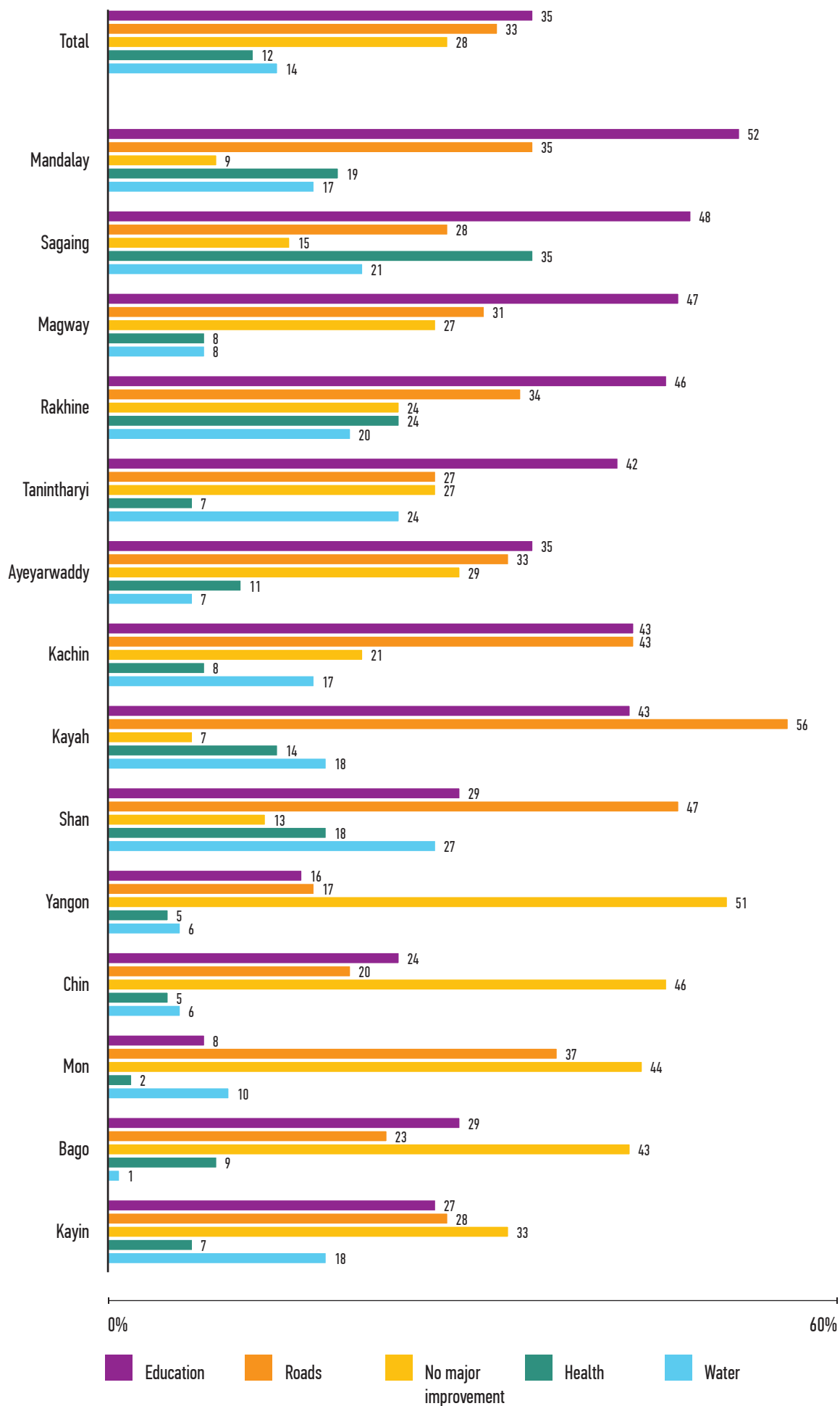
Overall, education emerges as the sector where most improvements were noted (35% of respondents, see Figure 23). This was clearly seen as most important improvement by people in Mandalay (52%), Sagaing (48%), Magway (47%) and Rakhine (46%). The majority of respondents in six States/Regions cited the changes in education as most important improvement in fact. Putting this into context with the total Myanmar population, like was done above for the main development problem, these six States/Regions represent about 52% of the total population. Education as main improvement was also reported second most by respondents in five States/Regions, representing about 26% of Myanmar's population.

Overall, education emerges as the sector where most improvements were noted (35% of respondents). Education as main improvement was also reported second most by respondents in five States/Regions, representing about 26% of Myanmar's population.

Improvements in the roads sector were seen as most important change by 33% of overall respondents. Roads improvements were particularly noteworthy and mentioned most in three States, Kayah (56%), Shan (47%) and Kachin (43.4%), representing about 16% of Myanmar's population. Road improvements were however also mentioned second most by respondents in eight States/Regions, representing about 63% of Myanmar's population. 28% of all respondents noticed no major improvement in the last three years, which corresponds to the majority of people asked in five States/Regions representing about 32% of Myanmar's population (see Figure 24).

As for the other sectors, in none of the States or Regions improvements in the health sector were seen as most noticeable. Only respondents in Sagaing (35%) noted changes in the health sector as second most important improvement. Improvements in water supply were nowhere seen neither as most nor second most important change. In Shan 27% of respondents noted improvements in water, the highest score for water overall. Only very few respondents noted any improvements with regard to employment generation (less than 1% overall).

Figure 23: What are the most important improvements the government has made to the situation in your village tract/ward over the last three years? (by State/Region)



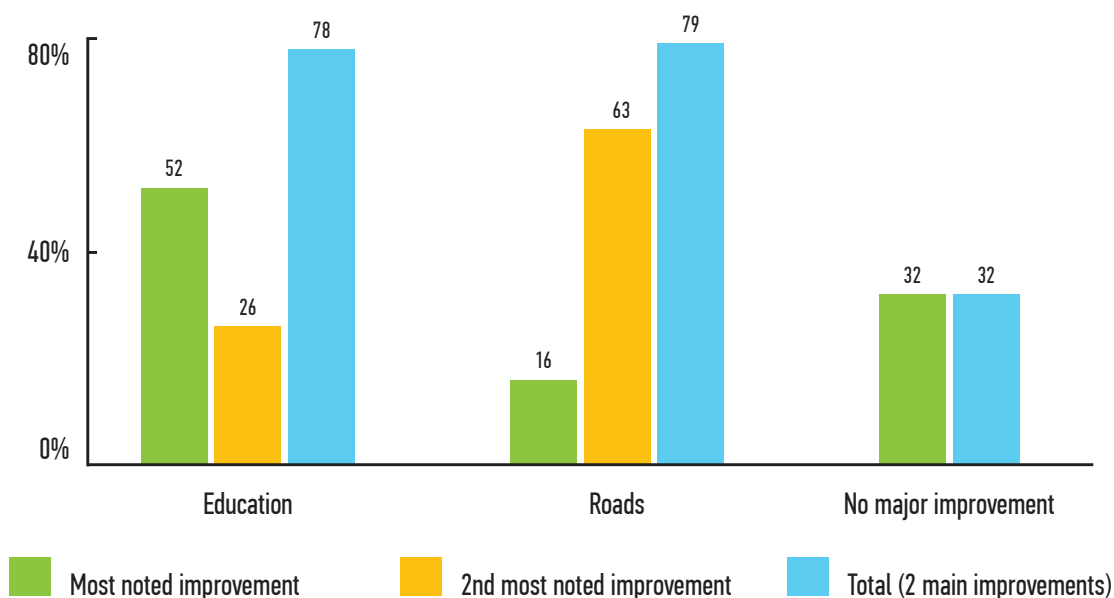


Figure 24: The two most mentioned improvements seen as a share of Myanmar's total population

Comparing the data in terms of other aspects perhaps the most remarkable difference is that many more rural than urban respondents (43% rural as compared to 20% urban) see improvements in education, while more urban than rural respondents (40% urban as compared to 30% rural) see improvements in roads (see Figure 25). Also, more urban respondents (32%) noted no improvements than rural respondents (25%). Whether this is indeed because there have been less changes in urban areas or because of the urban population being perhaps more vocal than the rural population is not entirely clear. Looking at differences between States and Regions, more respondents in the Regions mentioned improvements in education and roads (38% and 37%) than in the States (31% and 28%). Also, in the Regions only 24% noted no major improvements in the last three years, while 32% in the States saw no positive change (see Figure 25).

Many more rural than urban respondents (43% rural as compared to 20% urban) see improvements in education, while more urban than rural respondents (40% urban as compared to 30% rural) see improvements in roads.

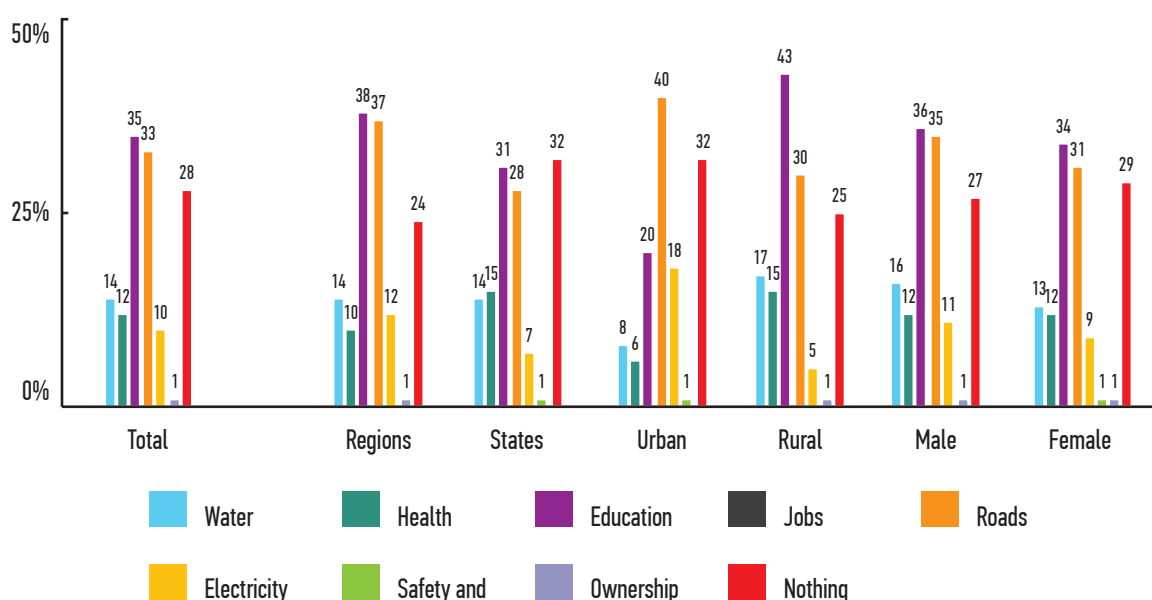


Figure 25: What are the most important improvements the government has made to the situation in your village tract/ward over the last three years? (grouped)

3.1.2 Recent developments: access to services

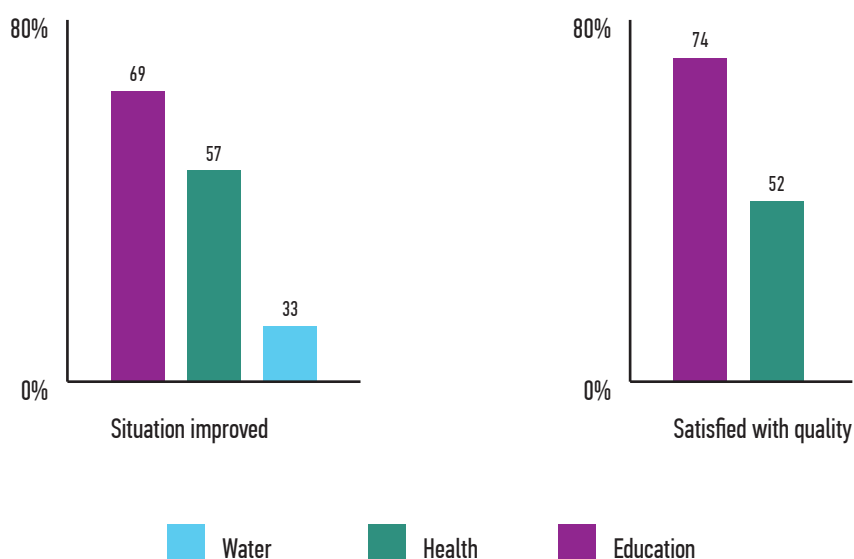
Further examining changes over the last three years with regard to access to services, the CRC survey looked more closely at people's perceptions of primary education, basic health services and water supply. These sectors are often used as an indicator for overall local government systems and performance and because of their fundamental importance to the people and therefore a core responsibility of a responsive government. The people's perspective on the functioning of certain aspects of these sectors provides a valuable insight and contribution to the assessment of the quality of service delivery.

Overall, for all three sectors, over 90% of respondents are of the opinion that the situation is the same or better.

Overall, for all three sectors, over 90% of respondents are of the opinion that the situation is the same or better. The biggest improvement has been seen in the education sector, by over two thirds of the people, followed by health with just over half, while just one third of the people saw an improved situation for water supply (see Figure 26). Also regarding the quality, more people are explicitly satisfied with the quality of primary education (74%) than health services (52%).

To keep in mind also, as for education, people are entirely dependent on public service delivery. With regard to health services and water supply people have alternative options, like private service providers or other channels, and therefore perhaps tend to be less critical of government.

Figure 26: Percentage of people who think that the education/health/water situation has improved and who are satisfied with the quality of education and health



3.1.2.1 People's perceptions on education

Overall, the primary education sector is where people have seen the biggest improvements (69%) over the last three years and noted so explicitly (see Figure 27). In some States or Regions this was noted by as many as 78% (Kayin and Yangon) and up to 80% (Tanintharyi) of the people. The least improvement was seen in Chin and Bago, with 51% however still by over half of the respondents and by 55% in Rakhine. There don't appear to be big differences between rural/urban, male/female or State/Region respondents, apart from that rural respondents (72%) seemed more positive than urban (63%) and slightly more State respondents (9%) noted a worsened situation than Region respondents (4%). With the exception of Rakhine, also a large majority of people in the conflict-affected States (Kachin, Kayah, Kayin and Shan) saw improvements in primary education (see Figure 28).

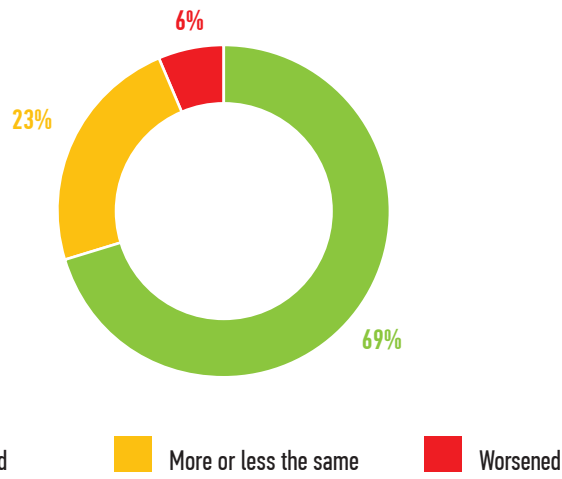


Figure 27: People's views on improvements in primary education (average)

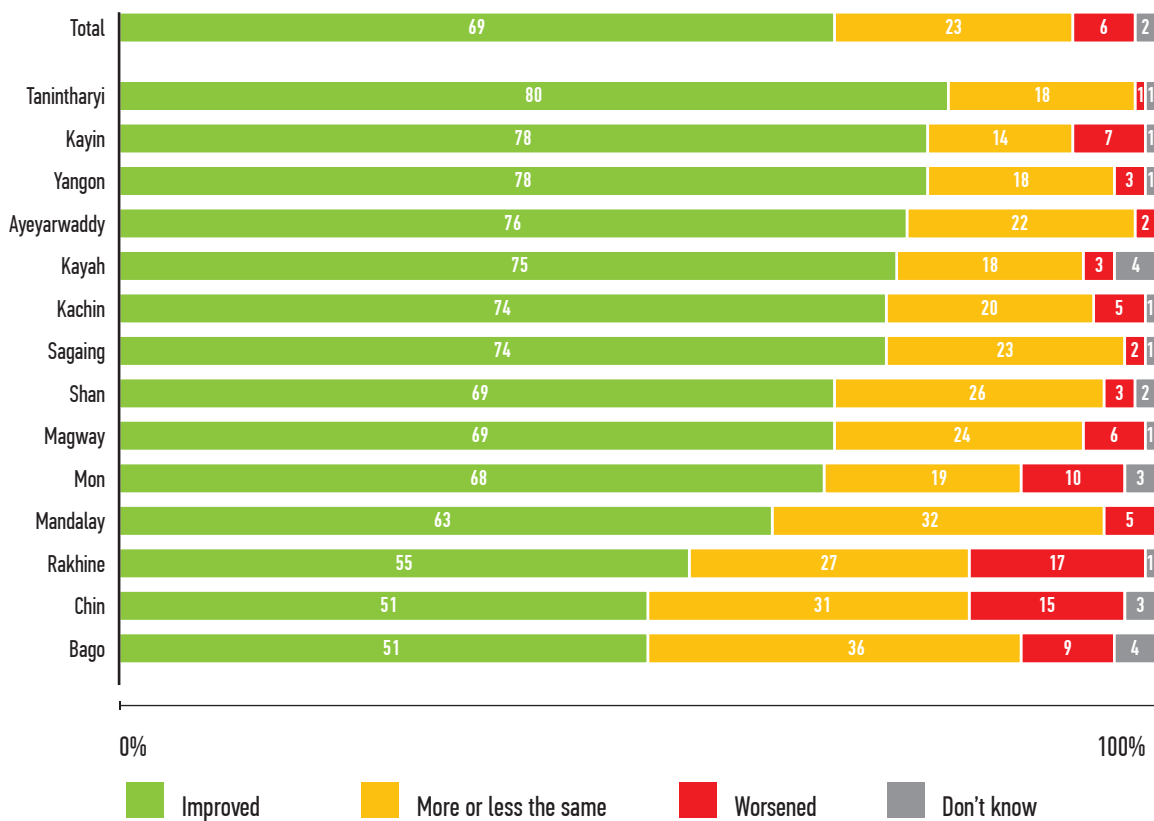


Figure 28: People's views on improvements in primary education (by State/Region)

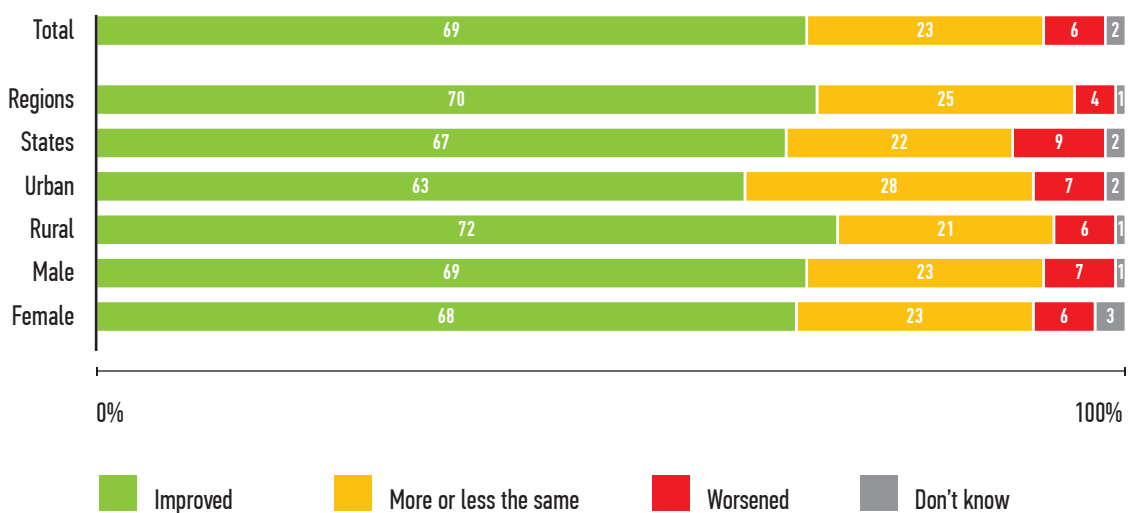


Figure 29: People's views on improvements in primary education (grouped)

The reason given in all but one State/Region for the improved situation in education was a new or improved school building. Only in Rakhine the most cited reason was an increase in the number of teachers (closely followed by better/new building though). Interestingly, the reason given in most States/Regions for the worsened situation was also poor maintenance of buildings, not enough classrooms or toilets. Only in four States/Regions other reasons were mentioned more (i.e. less teachers and worse teaching system). This perhaps points to very diverse conditions across village tracts/wards and townships and the need for localised solutions to these problems that help to address the issues in the particular areas.

Also regarding the **quality of primary education** there are no big differences between urban/rural, male/female respondents (see Figure 30). Looking at the States or Regions, the Regions' respondents on average seem to be more satisfied with the quality of education in their respective areas. Of all States or Regions, with 82% Magway and Kayin receive the highest score, while only 56% of Rakhine's respondents are satisfied with the quality of primary education, which is by far the lowest score (see Figure 31). In Rakhine 26% of respondents expressed they were not satisfied with the quality of education.

Figure 30:
Perceptions on the
quality of primary
education (grouped)

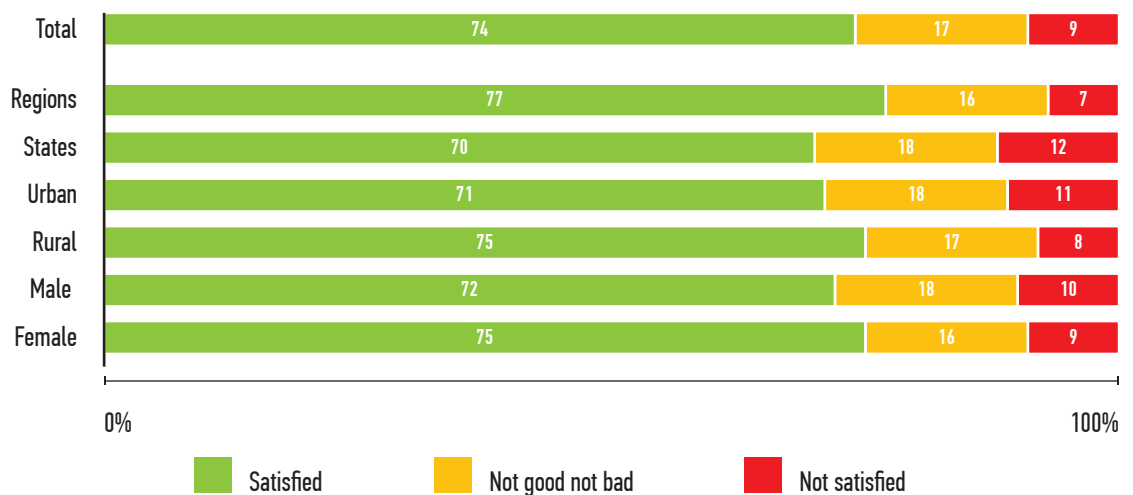
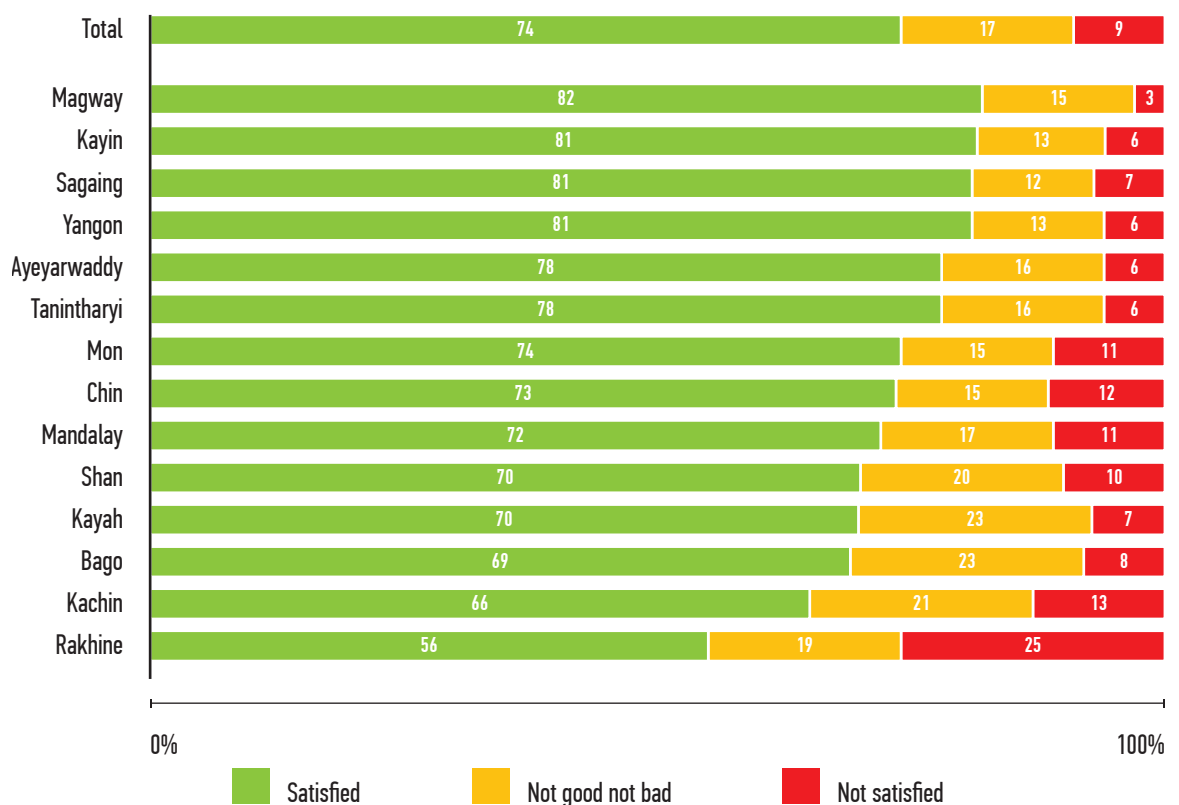


Figure 31:
Perceptions on the
quality of primary
education (by State/
Region)



A positive picture emerges when looking at people's perceptions on whether they believe that their children receive the same treatment as all other children in the class (see Figure 32). On average 94% of respondents think their children are treated equally at school and only 4% think this is not always the case. The large majority of people in all States/Regions share that view, only in Rakhine (88%) and Kayin (89%) less than 90% believe their children are not equally treated. Almost all school children in Magway (99%) appear to be receiving the same treatment. Interesting is perhaps also that 98% of respondents in ethnically very diverse Shan State think that their children are always treated equally.

94% of respondents think their children are treated equally at school and only 4% think this is not always the case.

There are no significant differences between the views of male and female and respondents in States and Regions overall, and only a slight difference between urban (90%) and rural people (96%).

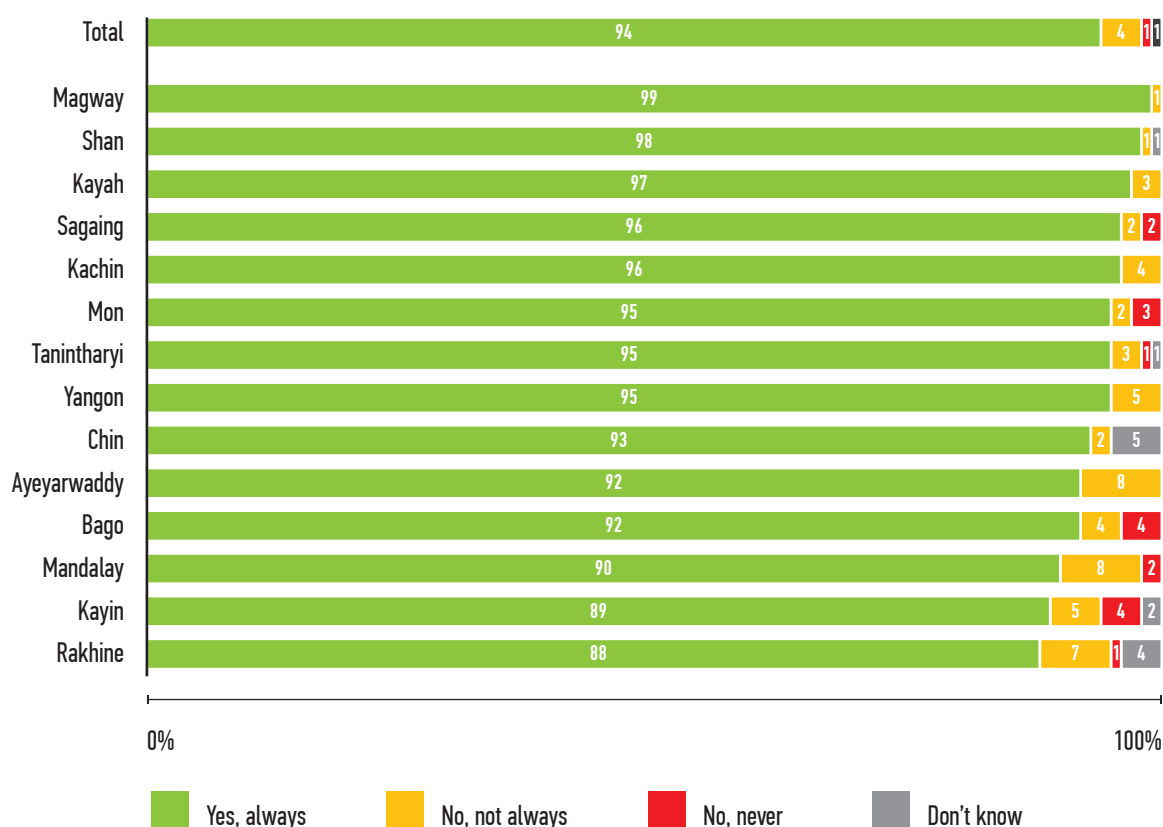


Figure 32: Regarding the education for your child, do your children receive the same treatment as all other children in his/her class? (by State/Region)

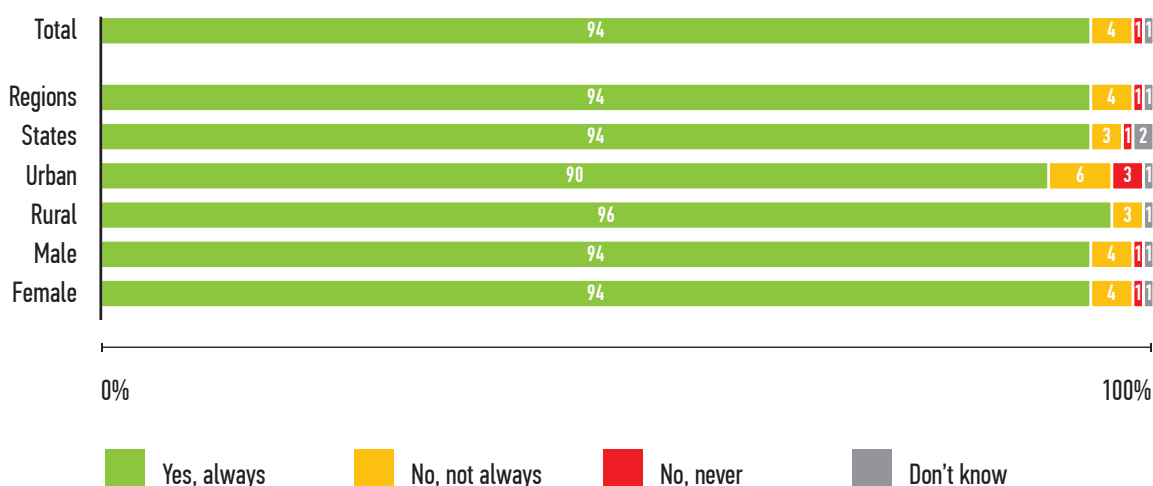


Figure 33: Regarding the education for your child, do your children receive the same treatment as all other children in his/her class? (grouped)

3.1.2.2 People's perceptions on basic health provision

Unlike for education where people are (almost) entirely dependent on the government provision of education, with regard to basic health care people in many areas have the option of choosing between a public and a private health care facility. Overall, 49% of respondents use public health facilities while 43% use private health care (see Figure 34), either one often for reasons of proximity, depending on which one is closer to their homes. Almost 9% of respondents use other alternatives like traditional doctors, quacks, auxiliary midwives or simply no health facilities. This figure appears particularly high in Chin (see Figure 35), where out of the 34% that use alternative 'services' about 11% use quacks and a fairly large number of respondents (15%) use no health facilities at all. The most cited reason by Chin respondents (62%) for using any (or no) health facility is that there is no other option nearby, followed by habit (33%) and the availability of well qualified/experienced staff.

Figure 34: Use of public or private health care facilities (grouped)

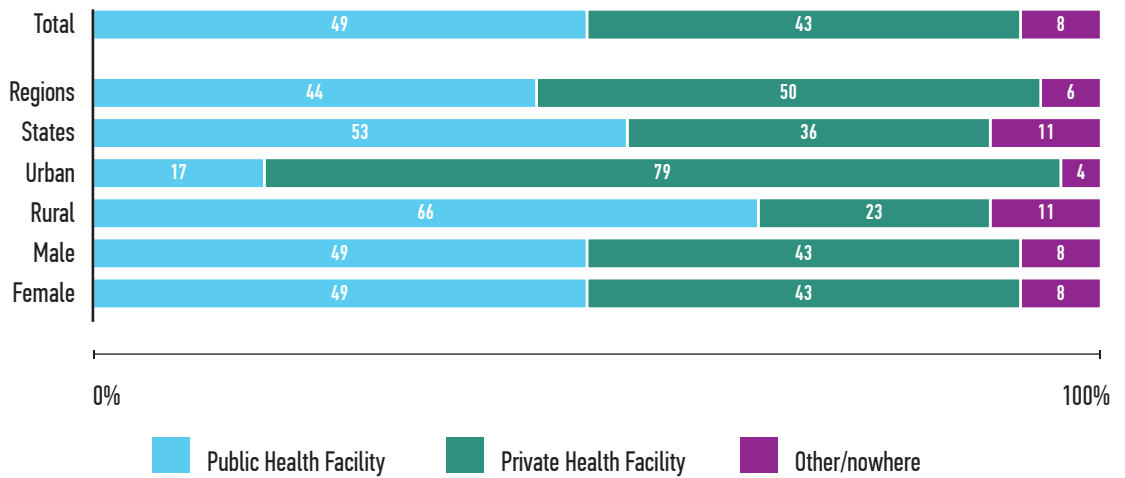
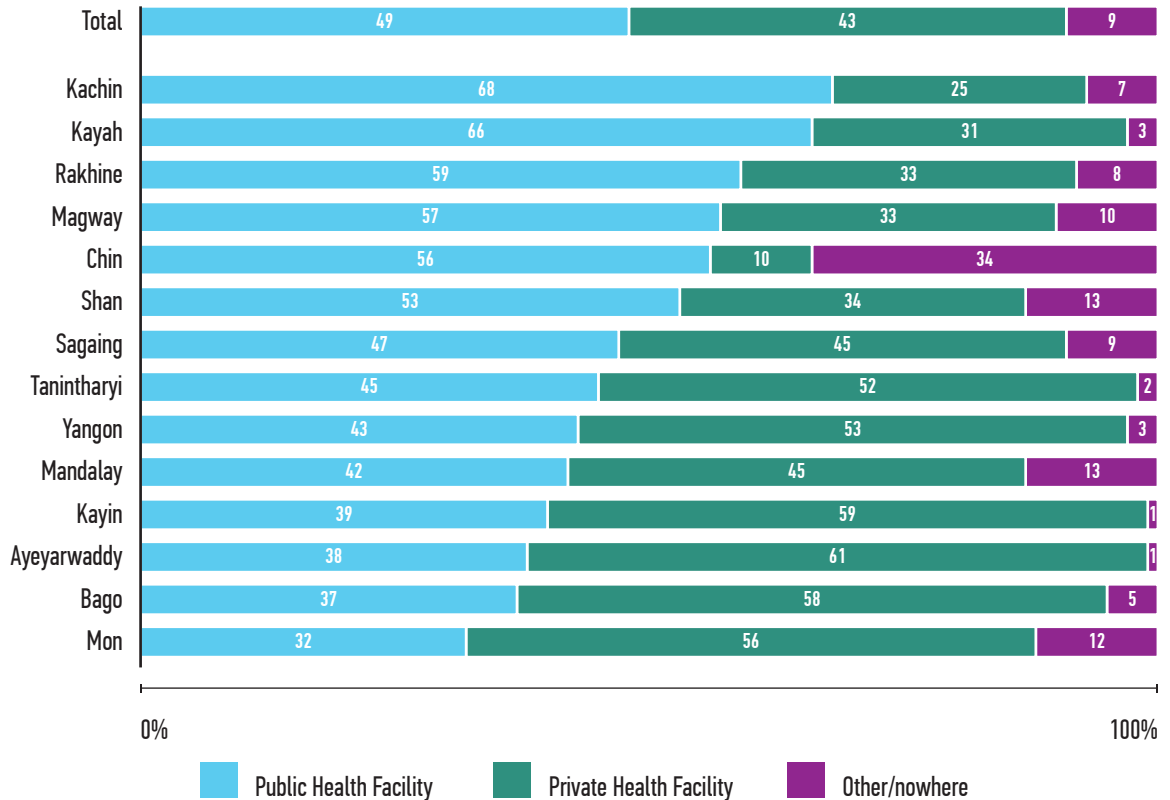


Figure 35: Use of public or private health care facilities (by States/Regions)



People in the States seem to rely more on public health facilities (53%) than in the Regions (44%) and tend to use 'other' or no facilities more often than in the Regions (11% vs. 6%) (see Figure 34). Further, the data shows clearly that the majority of urban people first and foremost use private health facilities (79%), while the majority of the rural population (66%) uses public health care. There don't appear to be any gender differences.

Overall, over half of the respondents that use public health facilities feel that health services have improved in the last three years and over 90% think that the situation is the same or better (see Figure 36). The main reason for the improvements cited by people in most States/Regions are new or improved health facilities. Interestingly, health services scored the highest in three of the conflict affected States Kachin, Kayah, Kayin (67% and 66%) (see Figure 37). The least improvement was seen in Chin and in Shan but with 49% still almost half of the people thought health services have become better. Rakhine stands out in terms of worsened situation – 13% of respondents in Rakhine expressed that basic health services have worsened, to a large extent due to a negative change in the attitude of health staff. The degrading or closing down of health facilities was the most cited reason for people in Chin, where 10% see a worsened situation. Overall, in at least half of the States/Regions (e.g. Rakhine, Mon, Kachin, Shan, Magway, Sagaing, Bago) the majority of people attributed the worsening of health services to a negative change in the attitude of health staff. In at least three States/Regions (e.g. Chin, Ayeyarwaddy, Kayah) the degrading or closing down of health facilities was the reason given for the worsening of the situation.

The majority of urban people first and foremost use private health facilities (79%), while the majority of the rural population (66%) uses public health care.

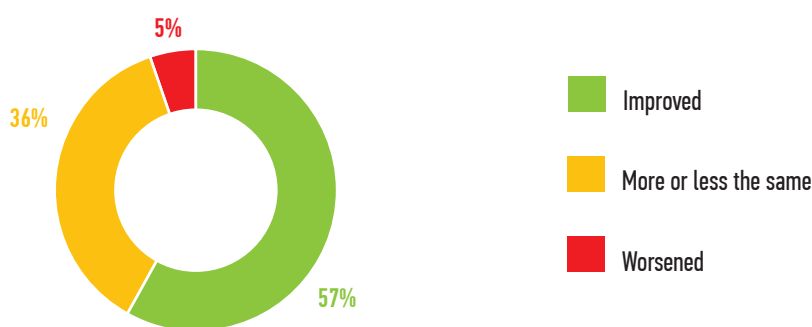


Figure 36: People's views on improvements in health services (average)

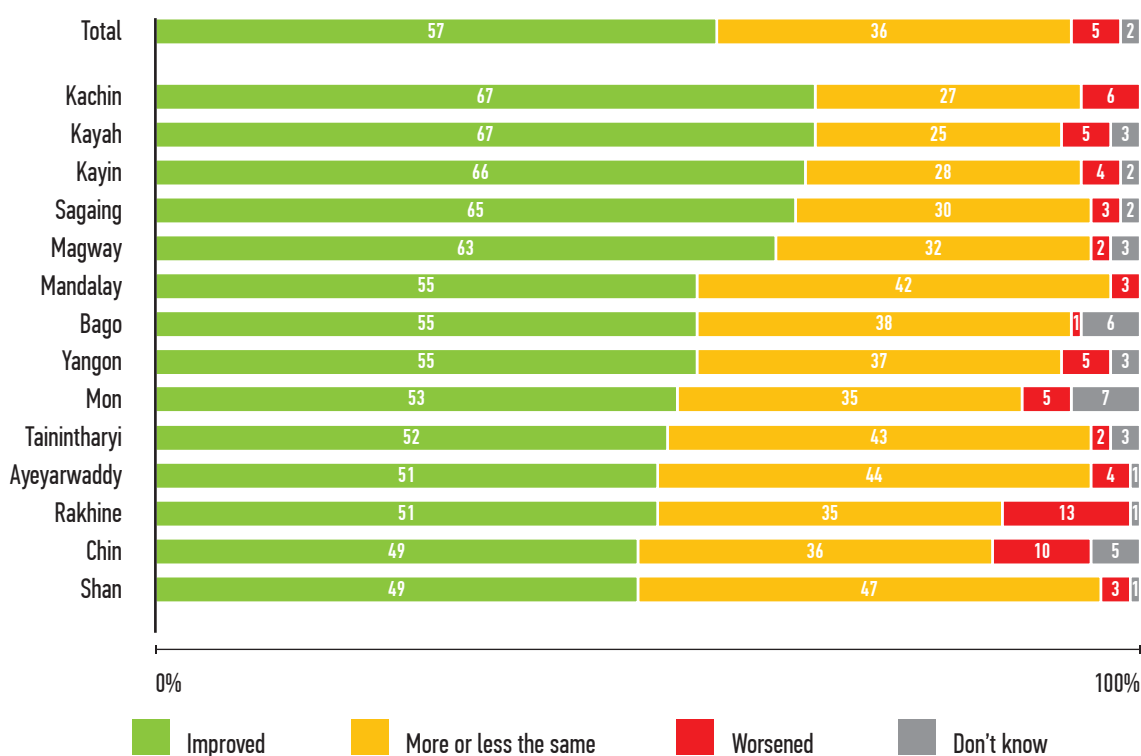
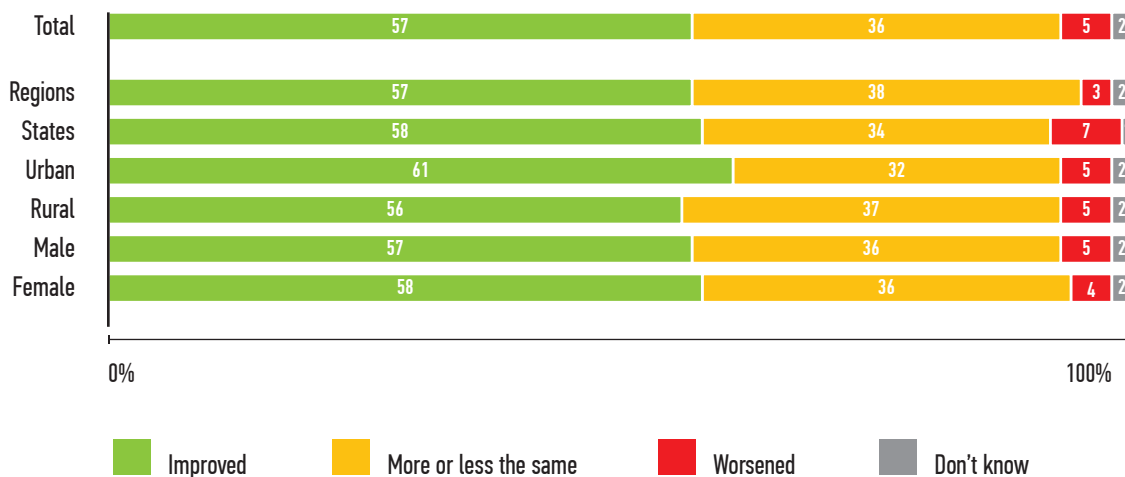


Figure 37: People's views on improvements in health services (by State/Region)

On average there are no big differences between States and Regions, although 6% of State respondents mention that the situation has worsened as compared to only 3% of Regions' respondents (see Figure 38). More urban than rural respondents see improvements (61% vs. 56%), while for more rural respondents the situation appears more or less the same. Female respondents are only marginally more positive (by 1%) than male respondents.

Figure 38: People's views on improvements in health services (grouped)



Regarding the **quality of basic health services**, over half of the respondents (52%) are satisfied while 19% were not satisfied overall (see Figure 39). Female respondents seem to be a bit more positive about the quality than male (55% as opposed to 50%) and urban more positive than rural respondents (56% vs. 52%). Of all States or Regions, Sagaing stands out with 67% of the respondents satisfied with the quality of health services and only 13% are explicitly not satisfied. The opposite picture appears in Ayeyarwaddy which has the lowest number of satisfied respondents (39%) and 28% are explicitly not satisfied, closely followed by Rakhine where only 44% are satisfied and 30% not satisfied. In Chin the highest number of respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with the quality of health services (33%), however still half of the respondents stated to be satisfied. This points to the very diverse conditions in the different townships and village tracts/wards and hence the need for localised solutions.

Figure 39: Perceptions on the quality of primary health services (grouped)

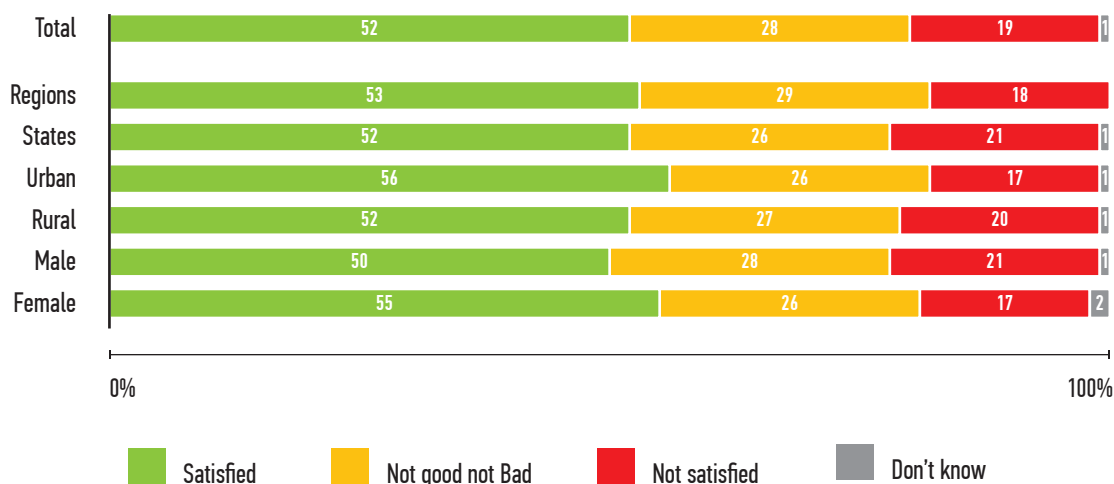
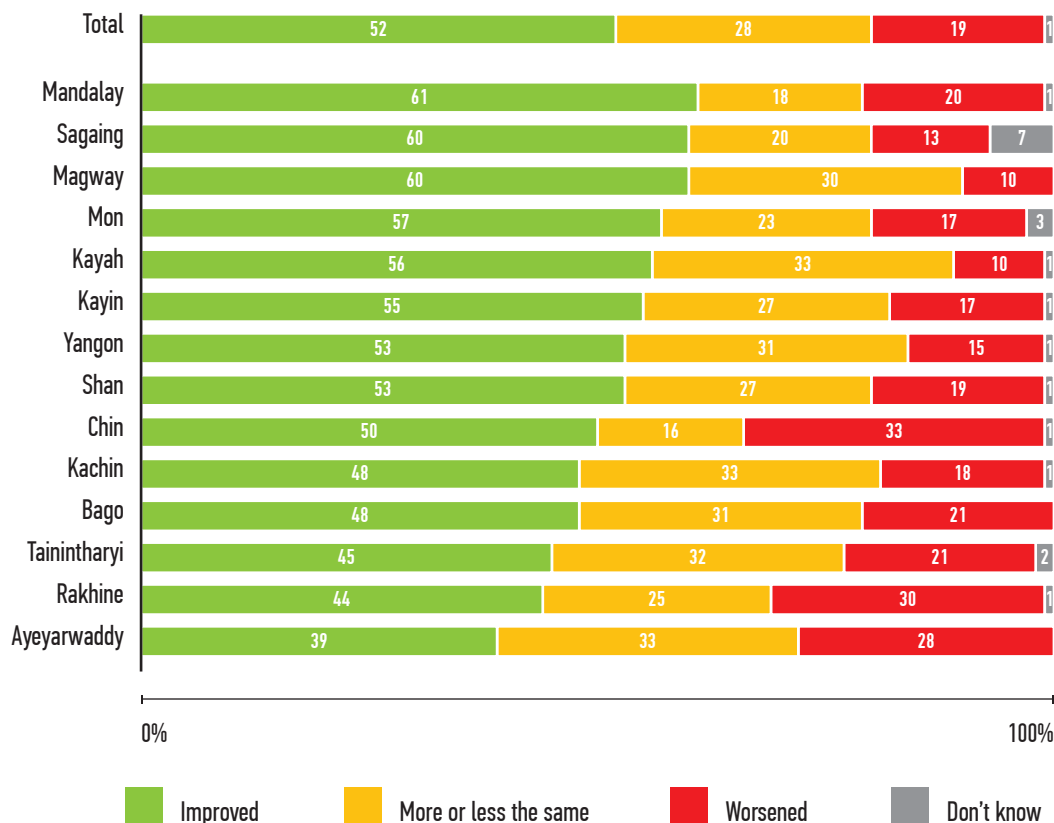


Figure 40: Perceptions on the quality of primary health services (by State/Region)



As an aspect of access to basic health services as well as accountability, people were asked whether or not they had to pay for the medicines at the public health care facilities.

Overall, a clear majority (59%) of respondents claimed they always had to pay for medicines, while 24% did so sometimes and 17% never. The differences across States and Regions are significant with over 70% of the people in Mon (74%), Mandalay (73%) and Chin (70%) always paying for drugs and less than 50% in Sagaing (47%), Tainintharyi (46%) and the lowest score in Bago (40%); however the highest percentage of respondents in Bago (36%) sometimes pay for medicines (see Figure 41). On average, 83% of the people pay always or at least sometimes. In Mandalay even 95% and in Yangon 93%. On the positive side, 29% of respondents in Tainintharyi and 27% in Rakhine never pay for medicines.

In general, more people in the States than in the Regions (63% vs. 55%) reported that they always pay for medicines at their public health facility, and slightly more so in rural than urban areas (59% vs. 55%) (see Figure 42). 26% in urban areas said they never pay for essential drugs however, as opposed to just 16% in rural areas.

Overall, a clear majority (59%) of respondents claimed they always had to pay for medicines, while 24% did so sometimes and 17% never. whether this is a question of mismanagement or misunderstanding, if not being addressed this could contribute to an erosion of the newly emerging trust between citizens and government institutions.

Figure 41: Do you always, sometimes or never have to pay for the medicines that the nurse or doctor gives to you or a household member, at the public health facility? (by State/Region)

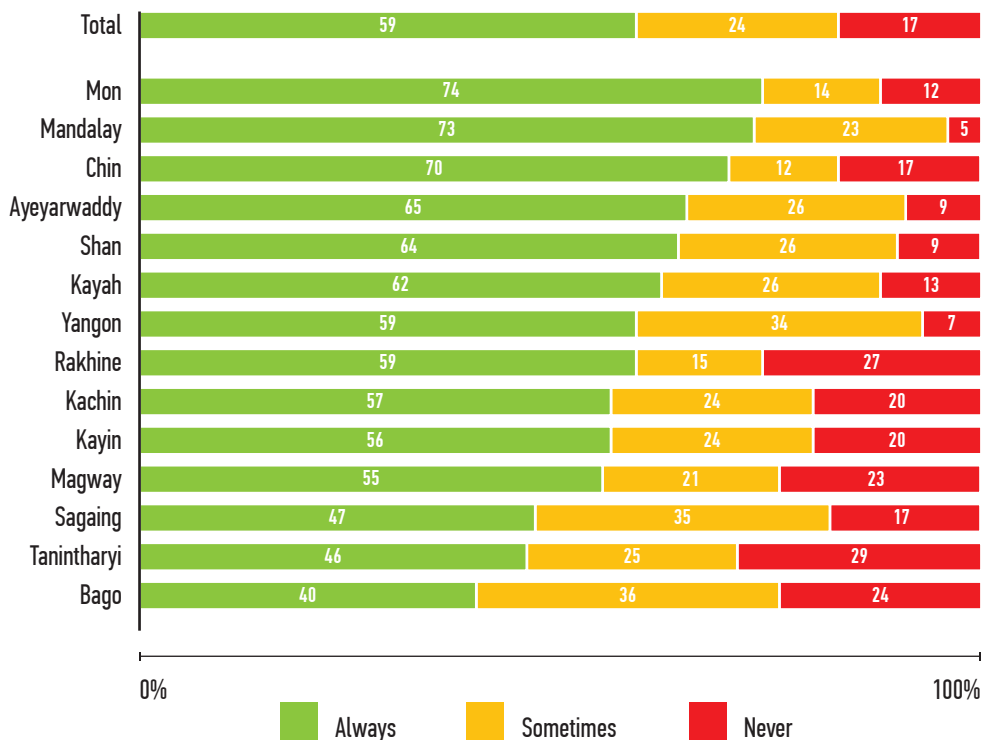
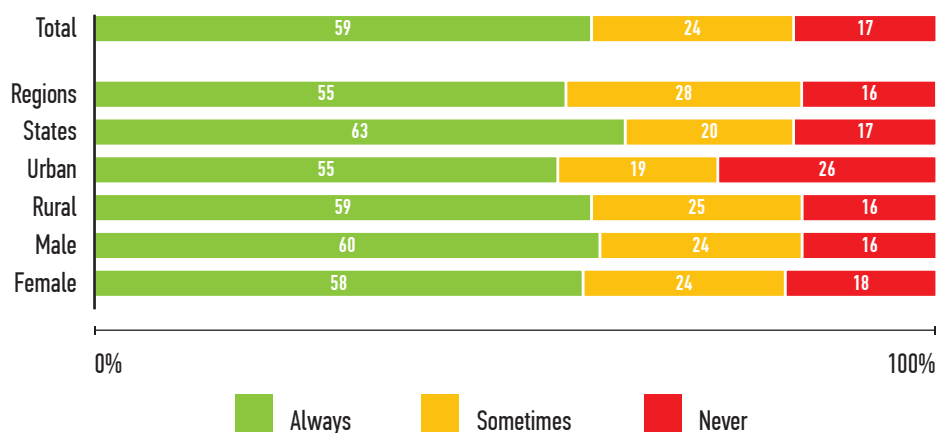


Figure 42: Do you always, sometimes or never have to pay for the medicines that the nurse or doctor gives to you or a household member, at the public health facility? (grouped)



Since 2013 essential (and generic) drugs are supposed to be available free of charge at public health facilities, if in stock. Only if out of stock patients have to pay and for other than essential medicines. The CRC survey questions did not provide for a distinction between medicines that have to be paid for and those free of charge. Many of the respondents who mentioned that they always had to pay for medicines claimed that they were not given an explanation from the medical staff why they were charged. Whether these incidents are an indication for mismanagement at health facilities or simply point to poor articulation and misunderstandings between health workers and service users could not be clearly established through the survey and would need to be further investigated. What is clear though, they results demonstrate that people are not aware of the rules pertaining to payment for medicines and when they have to pay. And whether this is a question of mismanagement or misunderstanding, if not being addressed this could contribute to an erosion of the newly emerging trust between citizens and government institutions.

Regarding people's perceptions on equal treatment at the local public health facility overall 94% believe they or their families receive the same treatment as everyone else in the village and only 4% say that is not always the case (see Figure 43). 1% of respondents think they are never treated equally. There are no significant differences between State/Region, urban/rural and male/female respondents. The differences across States and Regions are marginal, only Chin stands out with merely 73% of respondents receiving the same treatment in their opinion. 9% of Chin respondents say they don't always receive the same treatment and 16% don't know.

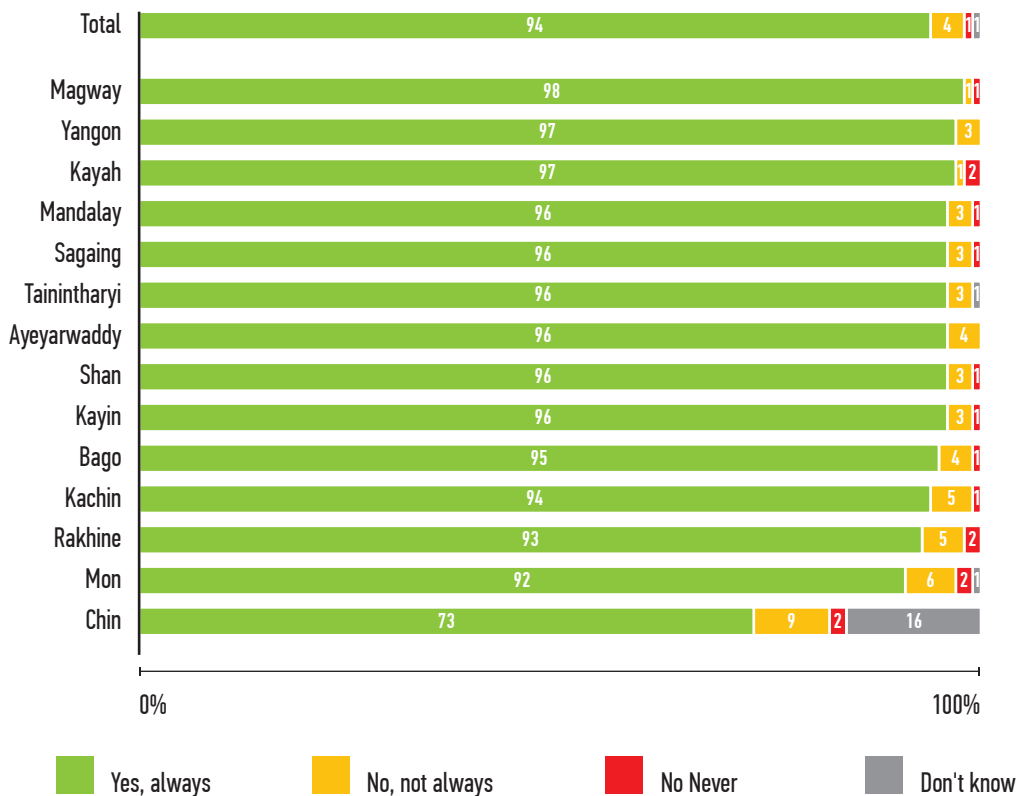


Figure 43: Regarding health services, do you or your family members receive the same treatment as everyone else in this village? (by State/Region)

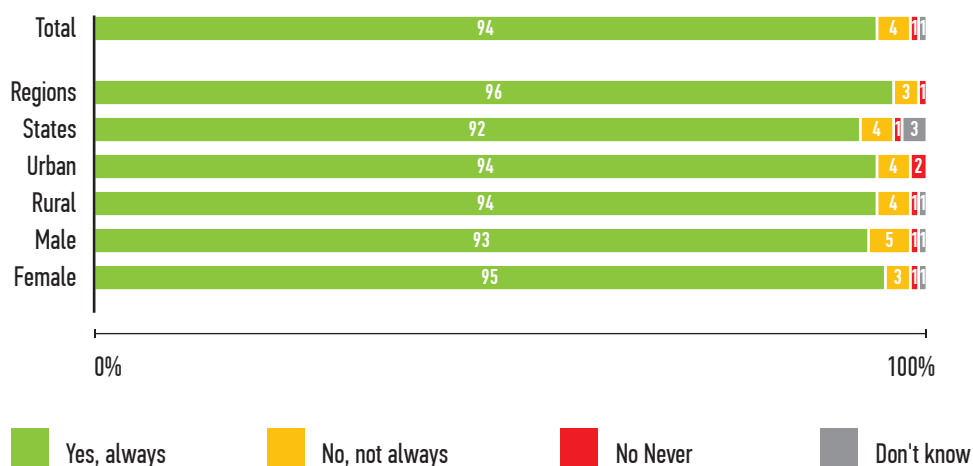
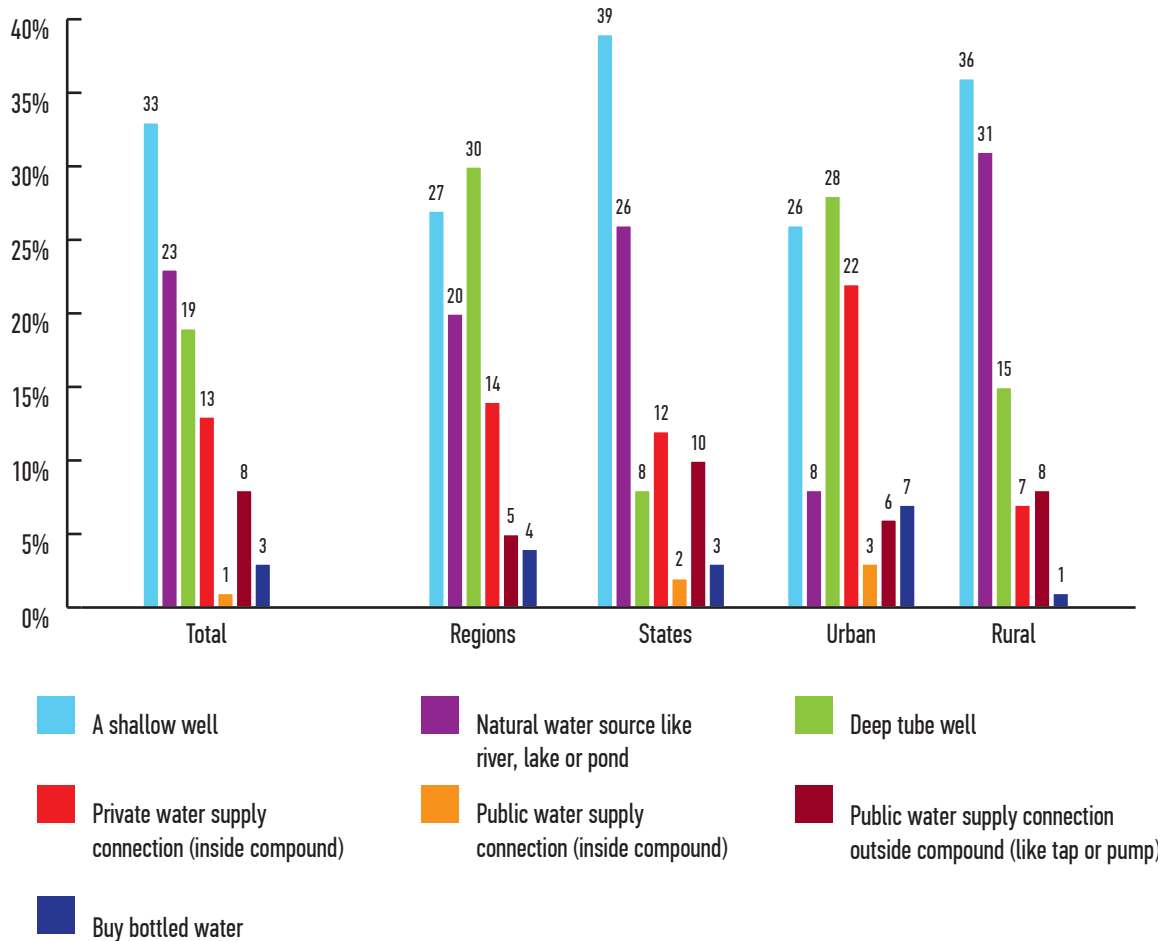


Figure 44: Regarding health services, do you or your family members receive the same treatment as everyone else in this village? (grouped)

3.1.2.3 People's perceptions on quality of water supply

For water supply it is important to take a closer look at the main water sources that people are using for drinking water. The majority, one third of the people, rely on a shallow well as their main water source, and more so in rural areas (36%) than in urban areas (26%) where the majority of people use water from a deep tube well (28%). 31% of the people in rural, and 8% even in urban areas, get their water supply from a natural source, like a river, lake or pond. On average only 9% of the people use a public water connection (inside or outside their housing compound) as their main water source. 13% have access to water through a private connection, 22% of such in urban and 7% in rural areas (see Figure 45).

Figure 45: Main water sources (grouped)



Looking at the distance people have to travel to get to their water source, overall the majority (57%) of respondents spend 0-5 minutes to get to their water source, 30% spend 5-15 minutes, 9% 15-30 minutes, 3% 30-60 minutes and only 1% spend more than 60 minutes. There are, of course, big variations across different localities and also States and Regions as can be seen from the below figure. As expected from its difficult terrain, people in Chin are taking the longest time to get to their main water source. People in Magway and Kayin seem to be spending much less time to get water (see Figure 46). Overall, the differences between States and Regions are not so striking, with the large majority of respondents of States and Regions spending up to 15 minutes to get to their main water source. Between urban and rural areas there are clear differences though – it takes up to 5 minutes for 77% of urban respondents to get to their water source, and up to 15 minutes for 93% of them. In rural areas it's up to 15 minutes for 85% of respondents, out of which only 47% spend less than 5 minutes to get to their water source (see Figure 47).

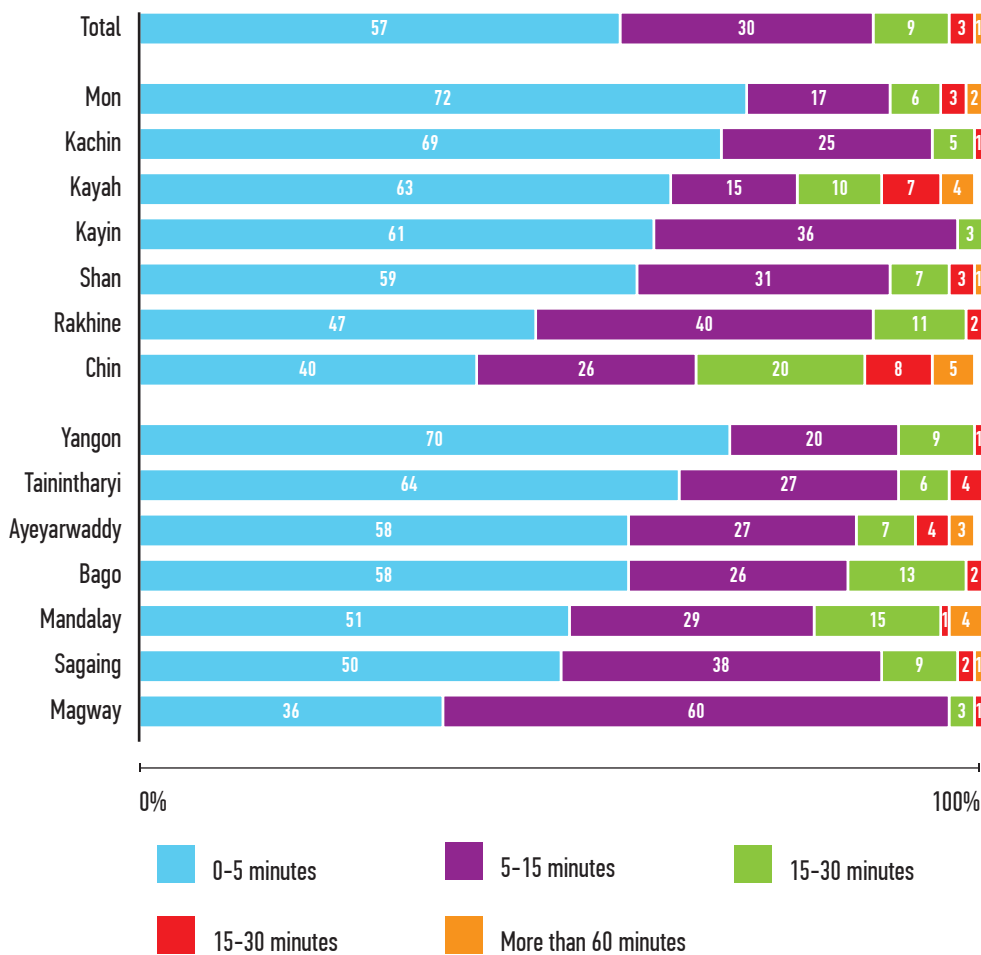


Figure 46: How long does it take to get to the main source of drinking water for your household? (by State/Region)

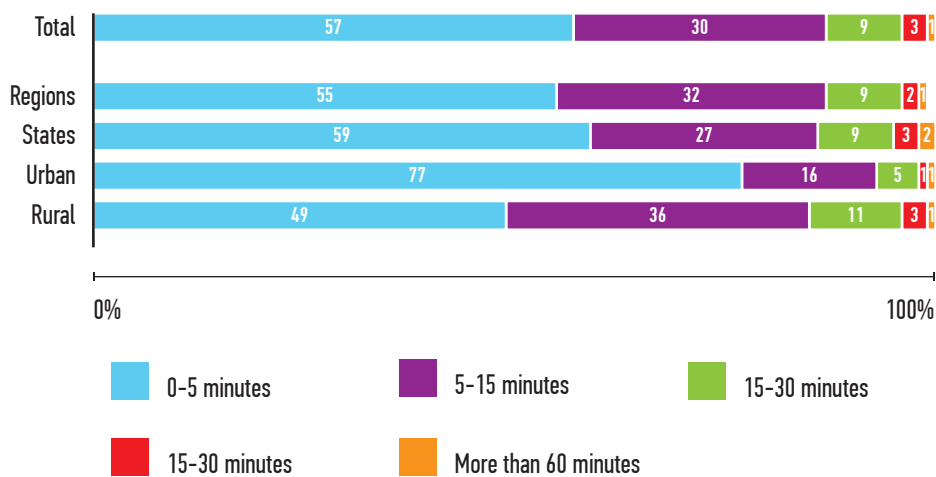


Figure 47: How long does it take to get to the main source of drinking water for your household? (grouped)

Looking at the data regarding people’s perceptions on questions surrounding water supply the main message is that there is quite a bit of room for improvement. The positive side is that overall 91% of respondents are of the view that water supply is the same or has improved over the last three years (see Figure 48). For 9% the situation worsened however. The installation of new or more water pumps is the main reason for improvements given by people in most States/Regions. In a few States/Regions the water source is now closer than three years ago. In about half of the States/Regions the water source is now further away, while in most other States/Regions the source has become polluted and the situation worsened therefore. Respondents in Kachin (43%),

Mandalay (42%) and Magway (41%) see the biggest improvements in water supply. The negative outliers are Chin and Tanintharyi where for 22% in Chin and 21% in Tanintharyi the situation has worsened, in both cases the majority of people found their water source now further away (see Figure 49).

On average there are neither big differences between States and Regions nor between male and female respondents. However, more rural than urban respondents see improvements (35% vs. 28%), while there is no difference in terms of worsened water supply (see Figure 50).

Figure 48:
People's views
on improvements
in water supply
(average)

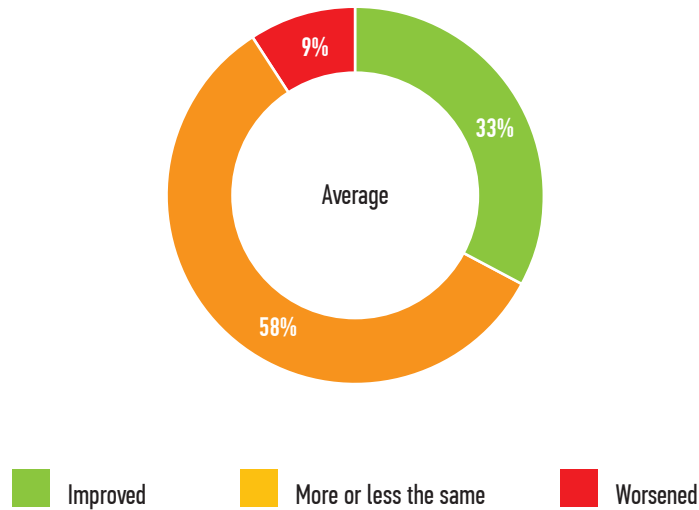
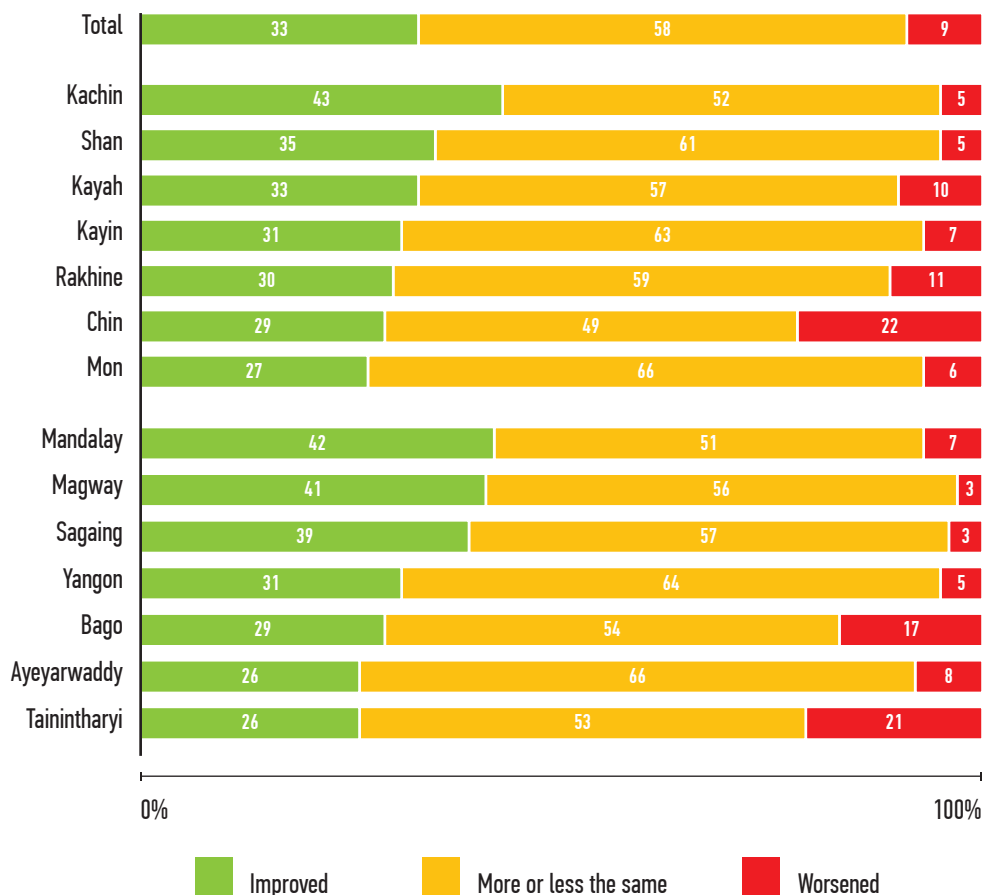


Figure 49:
People's views on
improvements in
water supply (by
State/Region)



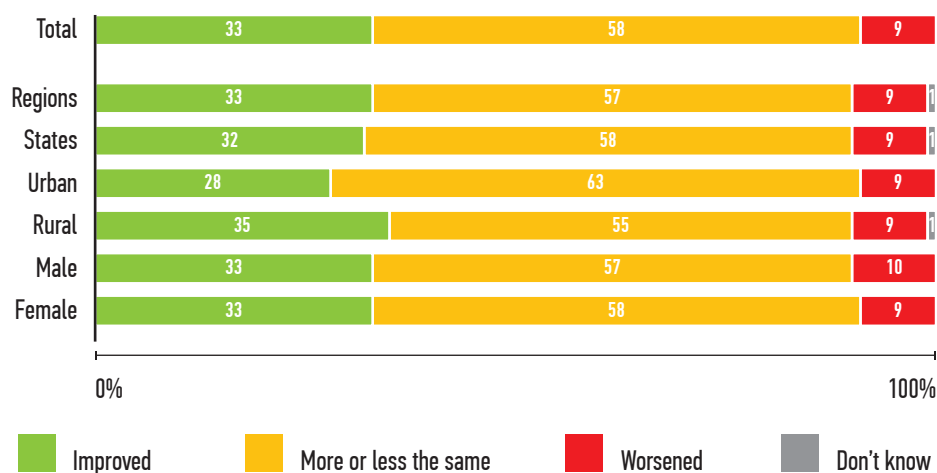


Figure 50: People's views on improvements in water supply (grouped)

Considering that the majority of respondents mentioned water as their main problem, and looking at people's perceptions on the water supply situation and their available water sources it becomes apparent that there still is a great need for improvements in this sector. Also with regard to water supply, the newly introduced local development funds offer the opportunity to direct resources to those priority areas that people have identified in their specific localities.

3.2 Development planning and participation

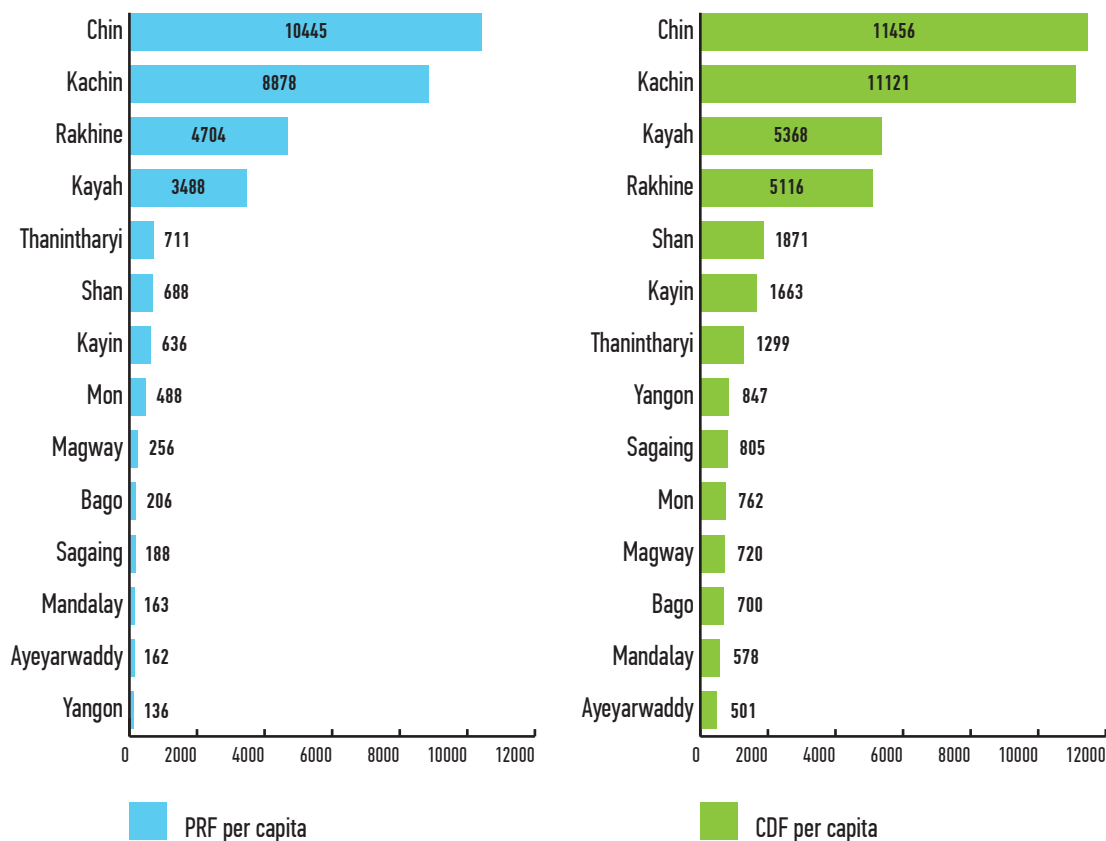
The newly introduced funds for spending on local infrastructure development, particularly the Poverty Reduction Fund (PRF), the GAD's Rural Development Fund (RDF), the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) and in some (only conflict affected) areas the Border Affairs Development Fund (BADF), have opened new avenues for the involvement of citizens in development planning and the prioritisation of projects at the local level. Although still of modest financial volume, the introduction of these funds is one of the most significant policy initiatives of the current government and constitutes perhaps the most significant change in terms of governance and decision-making at the township level. Sub-national/local discretion over financial resources is a critical aspect of (fiscal) decentralisation. These special funds allow State or Region governments, elected Hluttaw members and townships to participate in the selection of development projects. While the final discretion formally still lies with higher government authorities, the township level plays a key role in the management of these funds and in many cases their proposed project selection is respected by the final decision-makers. The involvement of citizens and communities in the project identification and selection is currently in a nascent stage still and happens primarily indirectly through the people's representatives in the development support committees (see below). Strengthening the mechanisms for citizen participation and raising people's awareness in that respect is a key concern therefore. The CRC findings reveal that these areas deserve to be given some further attention, given the potential of these funds to build trust between the people and government as communities increasingly recognise the government as service provider addressing their needs, a key aspect of improved local governance.

In financial terms, these special development funds are at present of negligible size compared to overall government expenditure. Their funding pool has seen a substantial increase though. Under the PRF for example each State/Region was allocated Kyats 1 billion in FY 2013/14, with the exception of Chin, which received Kyats 3 billion due to its high poverty rate. In FY 2014/15 the PRF saw a huge increase from a total of Kyats 16 billion to Kyats 50 billion, with State/Region funding

Although still of modest financial volume, the introduction of local development funds is one of the most significant policy initiatives of the current government and constitutes perhaps the most significant change in terms of governance and decision-making at the township level.

allocations seeking to take into account poverty, remoteness and post-conflict reconstruction needs.¹⁵ Regarding the RDF it is not possible to establish the amounts with sufficient certainty, as there are no documents publicly available on how the funds are allocated. It appears that each GAD office at township level may have received Kyats 20 million for the PRF in FY 2013/14 but officials in some townships claimed they did not receive such funds. Moreover, according to some townships the RDF includes or is supplemented by own source revenue components. Hence the RDF amounts vary across townships. The CDF allocations have remained at Kyats 100 million per township for the last two years. Since the development funds have not been allocated based on population criteria the available amount per capita varies greatly across States/Regions, as is being illustrated with the examples below (see Figure 51).

Figure 51: Per capita allocations for the PRF and the CDF per State/Region in Kyats (FY 2014/15)



The participation of citizens can take two main forms – indirectly through the recently established committees like the Township Development Support Committees (TDSC), Township Municipal Affairs Committees (TMAC) and Village Tract or Ward Development Support Committees (W/VTDSC) or the W/VTAs that being indirectly elected actually represent the people through his/her formal role in the planning process for certain development funds; and directly through people’s participation in various meetings at village tract or ward level where development priorities in their respective areas are discussed.

A detailed description of these committees, the above mentioned decentralised development funds and the related planning process can be found in the report *Mapping the State of Local Governance in Myanmar: Background & Methodology*.

15. In FY 2014/15 Kyats 1 billion was allocated to each S/R except for 5 billion to Chin, 15 billion to Kachin, 15 billion to Rakhine and 4 billion to Shan State.

3.2.1 Indirect citizen participation

As part of the attempt to make development more people-centred the Township Development Support Committees (TDSC) and Village Tract or Ward Development Support Committees (W/VTDC) were established in 2013 and a bit later the Township Municipal Affairs Committees (TMAC). Apart from playing a consultative and advisory role they are assisting the TA and township level departments, including in different ways in development planning.

The committees appear to be set up and functioning everywhere. In most places they have started to play a role in the township development planning process to varying degrees, particularly also with regard to the decentralised development funds. However, the committees' composition and election procedures vary across different townships and States/Regions. In many townships the public representatives on the committees were elected from among selected interest groups, often the business sector, and therefore their ability to represent the interests of people from all segments of society has been questioned. Also, only in a few places the committees, either themselves or through the 10/100 household heads or W/VTAs have actually held direct consultations with citizens. In quite a number of places logistical challenges have been cited that hamper direct consultations in practice, particularly in rural areas. For citizen's interests to be represented it is however important that they are involved in the process in one way or another to be able to voice their concerns. The issue of representation is also an important aspect of accountability and improving the accountability relationships between the people and government.

To enhance the committees' legitimacy and their role as citizen's representative's in the township development planning process it is important for people to be aware of these committees. Currently this awareness is extremely low. On average a mere 4% of respondents have heard of either TDSC or TMAC, with the urban population (8%) being clearly better informed than the rural population (2%) (see Figure 52). The highest overall awareness level is seen in Mon (8%), while in Bago only 1% knew about those committees (see Figure 53). Looking at the level of awareness among urban respondents the picture is a lot more positive than the overall figures (see Figure 54 and Figure 55). This can probably be explained by the fact that many of the TDSC and TMAC members have been elected from ward based (more urban) interest groups. It was claimed that this would make regular meetings at township level easier and members would not have to travel so far, as there are no mechanisms to compensate for travel expenses. Sagaing is the positive outlier with 18% of urban respondents being aware of the committees, followed by Chin and Mandalay with 14%. The urban population of Yangon, Bago and Ayeyarwaddy is with 2% the least informed about the existence of the TDSC/TMACs (see Figure 53).

On average a mere 4% of respondents have heard of either TDSC or TMAC, with the urban population (8%) being clearly better informed than the rural population (2%).

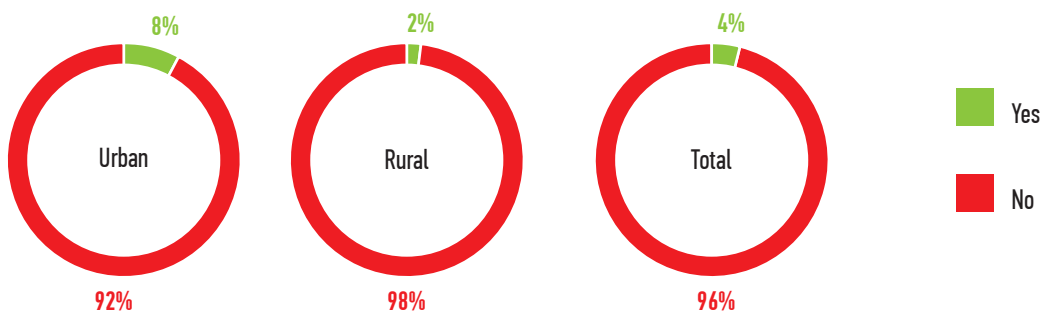


Figure 52: Citizen's awareness of TDSC/TMAC (urban/rural)

Figure 53: Citizen's awareness of TDSC/ TMAC (by State/ Region)

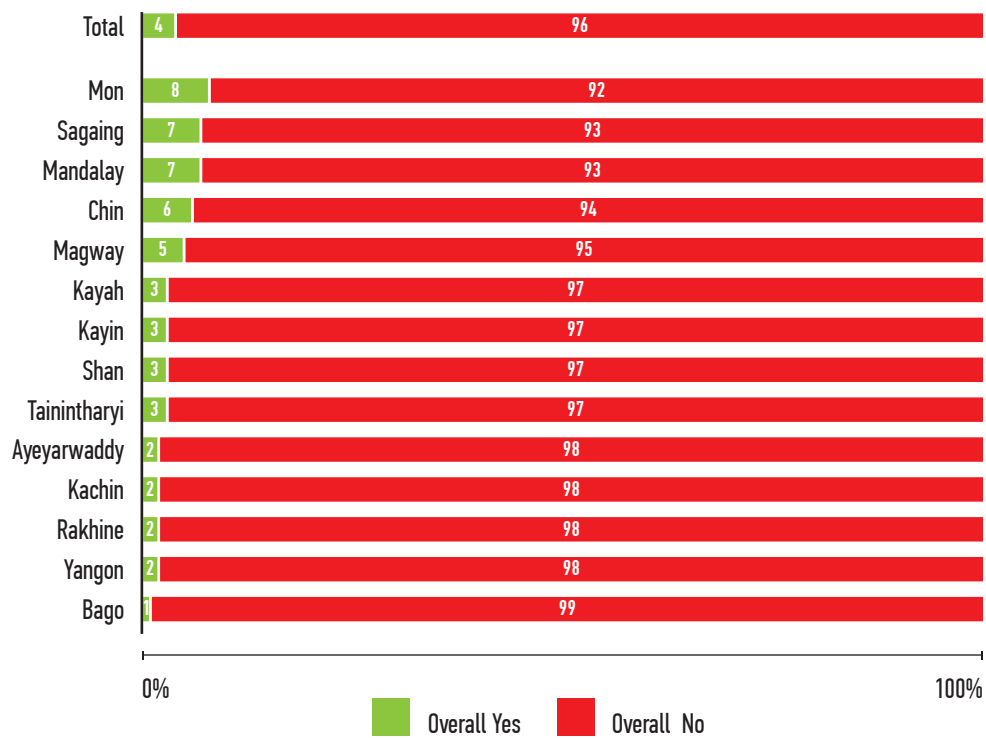
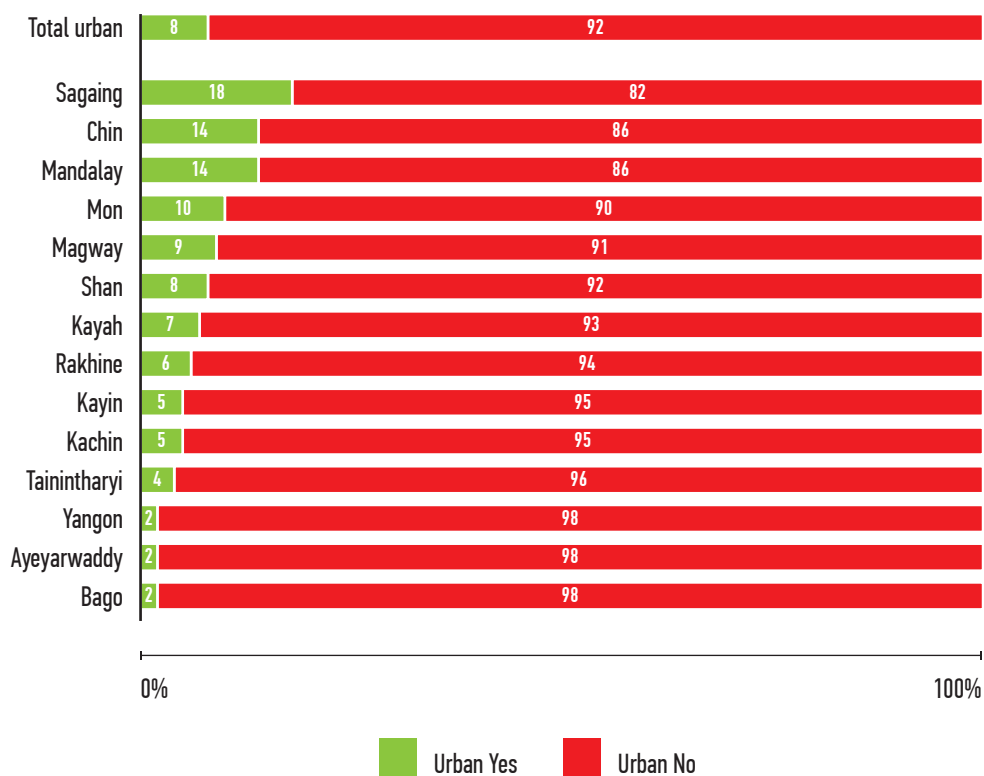


Figure 54: Citizen's awareness of TDSC/ TMAC – urban respondents (by State/Region)



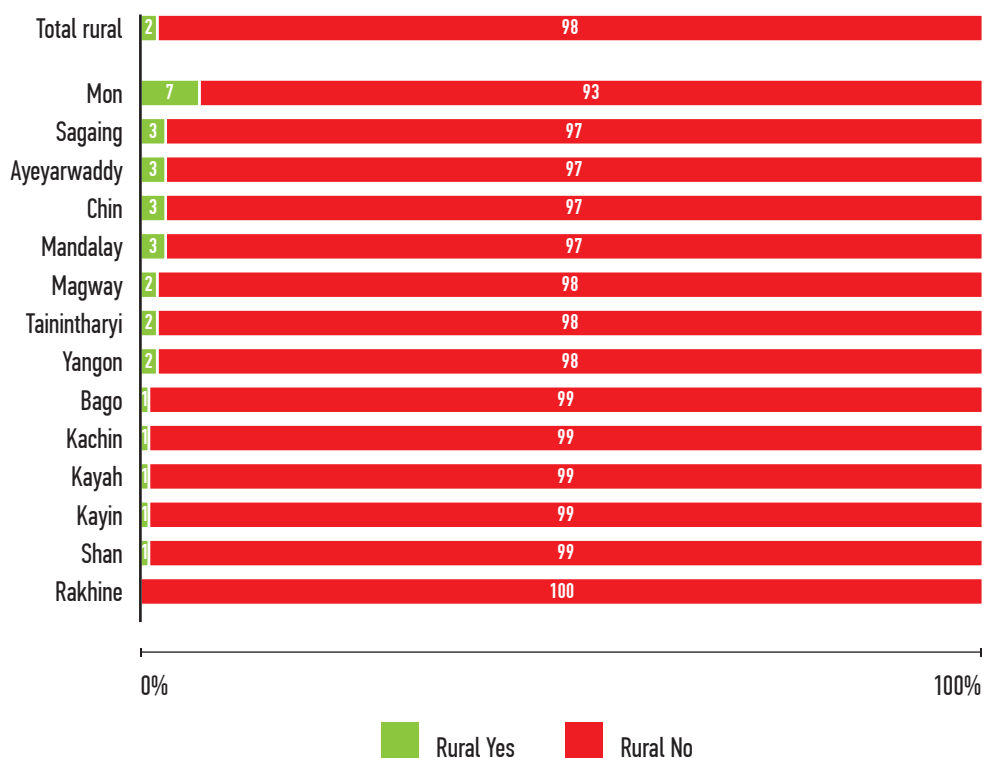


Figure 55: Citizen's awareness of TDSC/TMAC – rural respondents (by State/Region)

Like the TDSCs, as per the Presidential Notification the States and Regions were also obliged to establish the W/VTDSC in 2013. Except for one member who is a government representative, all other W/VTDSC members are supposed to be elected by the people in the wards/village tracts and one from among the 10/100 household heads. While the W/VTDSC's set up is conceived in a more democratic way, many questions remain for example regarding their relationship with other committees and membership. In many areas their role has been rather marginal in the short time they have been around but given their proximity to the people they could potentially play a much more important part, for example in their mandate to support the W/VTA, particularly if the W/VTA's role becomes stronger.

On the positive side, while hardly any of the respondents have heard of the TDSCs or TMACs, comparatively many more people are aware of the Village Tract or Ward Development Support Committees (W/VTDSC) in their area, on average 27% (see Figure 56). However, considering that almost all their members are supposed to be elected directly by the people this figure seems quite low still. This may be an indication that such elections have not been consistently held everywhere or that people have not been well informed about them. The highest level of awareness was found among respondents in Magway, where more than one third (37%) know about their W/VTDSC. In Kachin (32%), Sagaing (30%) and Mandalay (30%) at least more than average knew about the W/VTDSC. Merely 15% of Shan's respondents are aware of W/VTDSC. Generally, more people in the Regions (30%) and more in the rural areas (29%) than in the States (23%) and the urban areas (25%) knew about it. The level of awareness among men is also significantly higher than among women (32% vs. 23%) (see Figure 57).

Figure 56: Do you know about the W/VTDSC in your area?¹⁶ (by State/Region)

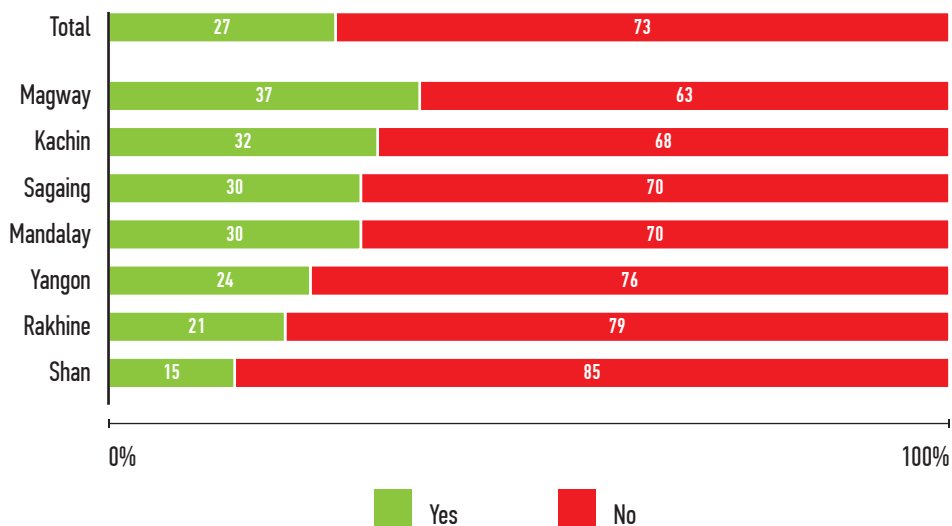
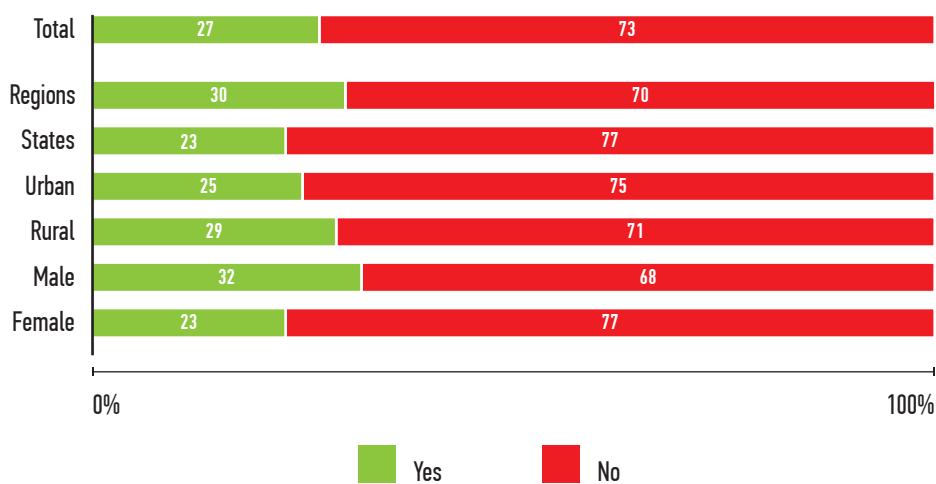


Figure 57: Do you know about the W/VTDSC in your area?¹⁷



Of those who knew about the W/VTDSC in their area, only 30% participated in the election of its members. The variations across States/Regions are not huge so there appears to be a general issue of people not being well informed about the elections and about the role and potential benefits of the W/VTDSCs. Yangon saw the lowest participation in the W/VTDSC elections (21%). In Shan, although it had the lowest level of awareness (see above) 33% of respondents participated in the elections, which is at least above average and the third highest participation rate among States/Regions. In Magway on the other hand only 26% participated in the election although it had the highest level of awareness. Still very modest, the highest level of participation was found in Kachin (35%) (see Figure 58).

Overall, the differences between States and Regions are not big, but clearly the participation in rural areas (32%) and among the male population (33%) is higher than among the urban (24%) and female population (25%) (see Figure 59).

16. This information is available only for the following 7 States/Regions: Kachin, Rakhine, Shan, Magway, Mandalay, Sagaing, Yangon.
 17. See footnote above.

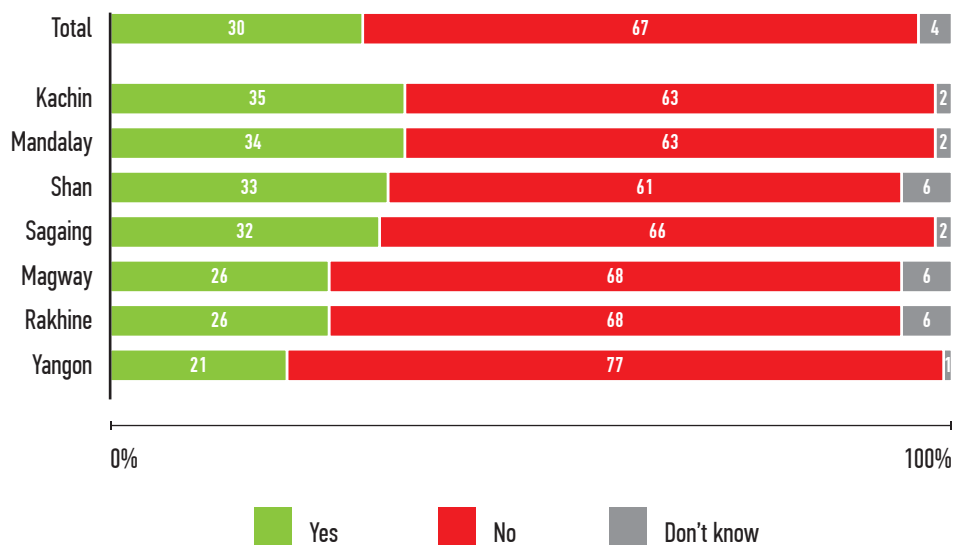


Figure 58: Did you participate in the election of the W/VTDSC?¹⁸ (by State/Region)

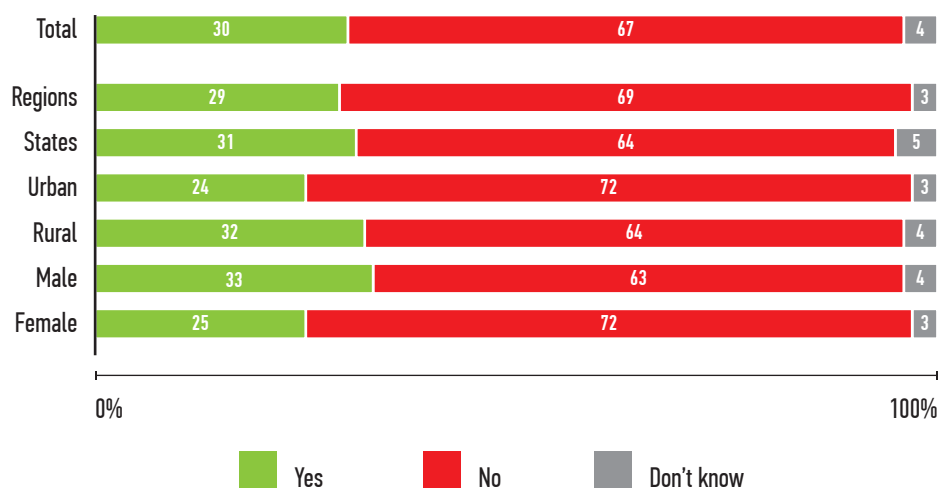


Figure 59: Did you participate in the election of the W/VTDSC?¹⁹ (grouped)

Of those who knew about the W/VTDSC in their area, 27% have been consulted by members of the committee at least once (see Figure 60). Interestingly, while Magway had the highest percentage of respondents knowing about the W/VTDSC's existence it seems to have the lowest percentage of respondents that have ever been consulted by a committee member (22%). So being aware does not necessarily translate into being involved. Kachin is the positive outlier, with one third of the people that have been consulted. In Shan, which has the lowest level of awareness, at least 29% have been consulted. Again, more people in rural than in urban areas (30% vs. 24%) have been consulted by committee members, and more men than women (30% vs. 24%). But in this case slightly more respondents in the States than in the Regions (29% vs. 26%) have been approached by W/VTDSC committee members (see Figure 61).

On average a mere 4% of respondents have heard of either TDSC or TMAC, with the urban population (8%) being clearly better informed than the rural population (2%).

18. This information is available only for the following 7 States/Regions: Kachin, Rakhine, Shan, Magway, Mandalay, Sagaing, Yangon.

19. See footnote above.

Figure 60: Have you ever been consulted by members of that committee?²⁰ (by State/Region)

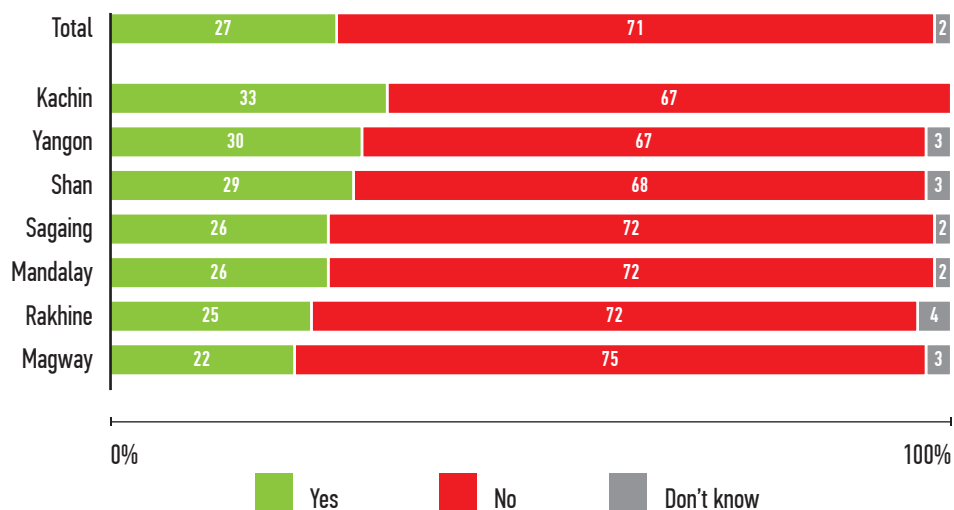
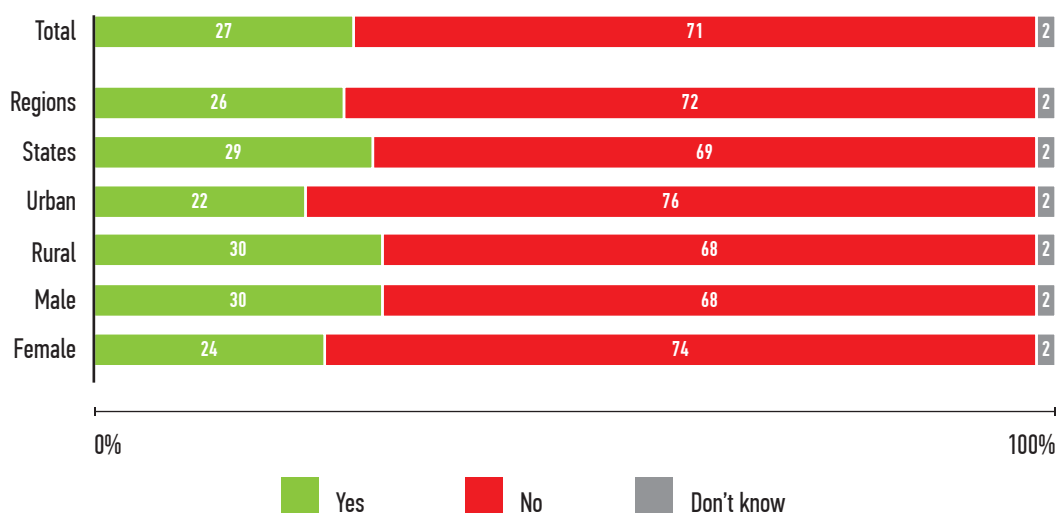


Figure 61: Have you ever been consulted by members of that committee?²¹



3.2.2 Direct citizen participation

With regard to direct participation of citizens in village tract or ward meetings the situation varies across different States and Regions and ranges from 63% of respondents in Tanintharyi claiming that they sometimes participate, to only 38% in Sagaing. On average, less than half (47%) sometimes participate in village tract/ward meetings (see Figure 62).

20. This information is available only for the following 7 States/Regions: Kachin, Rakhine, Shan, Magway, Mandalay, Sagaing, Yangon.
 21. See footnote above.

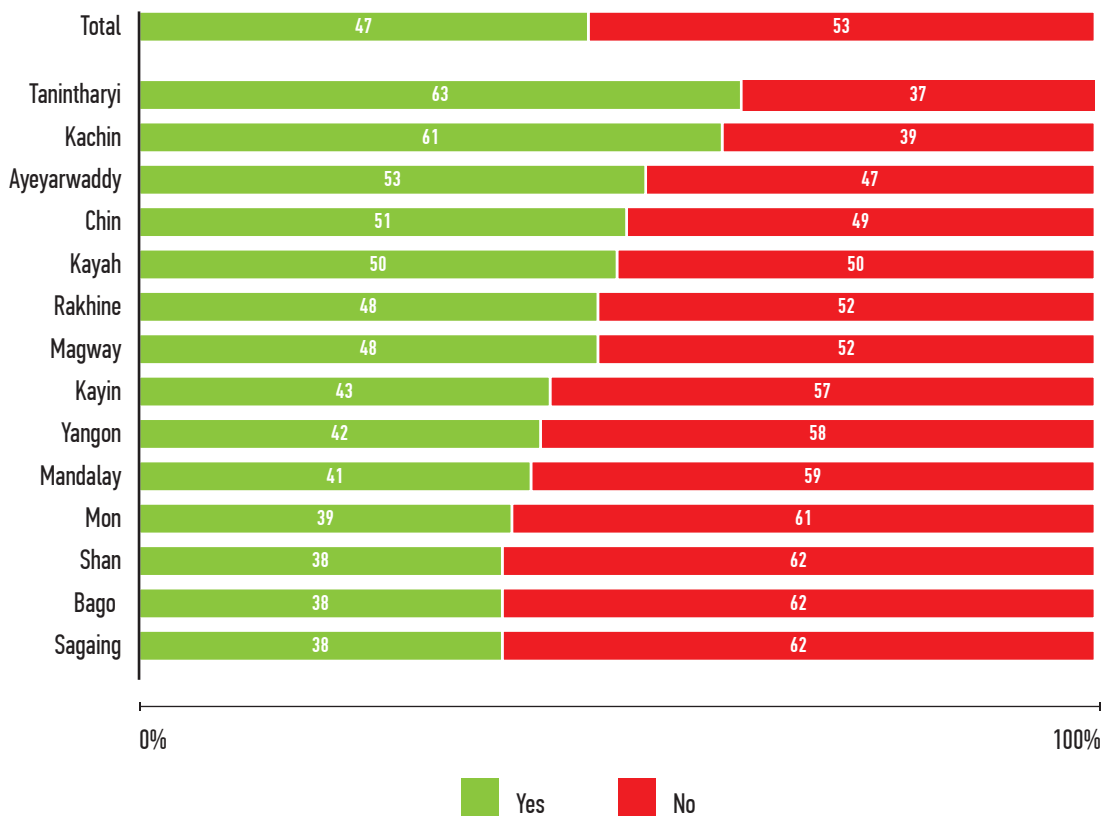


Figure 62: Do you sometimes participate in a village tract/ward meeting? (by State/Region)

While overall there is hardly any difference between State and Region respondents, there is however an urban/rural as well as a gender divide regarding participation. In rural areas people appear to be far more likely to participate (53%) than in urban areas where on average only 36% participate. When it comes to gender differences, on average 54% of men sometimes participate in village tract/ward meetings as opposed to merely 39% women (see Figure 63). Looking at the gender differences in more detail it can be seen that there are big variations across different States and Regions, with participation of women as low as 29% in Bago and the highest in Tanintharyi with 58%. The most striking difference can be seen in Chin, where 70% of male respondents sometimes participate but only 33% of women. In Magway the situation appears the most balanced with 49% men and 47% women participating (see Figure 64).

In rural areas people appear to be far more likely to participate in village tract/ward meetings (53%) than in urban areas where on average only 36% participate.

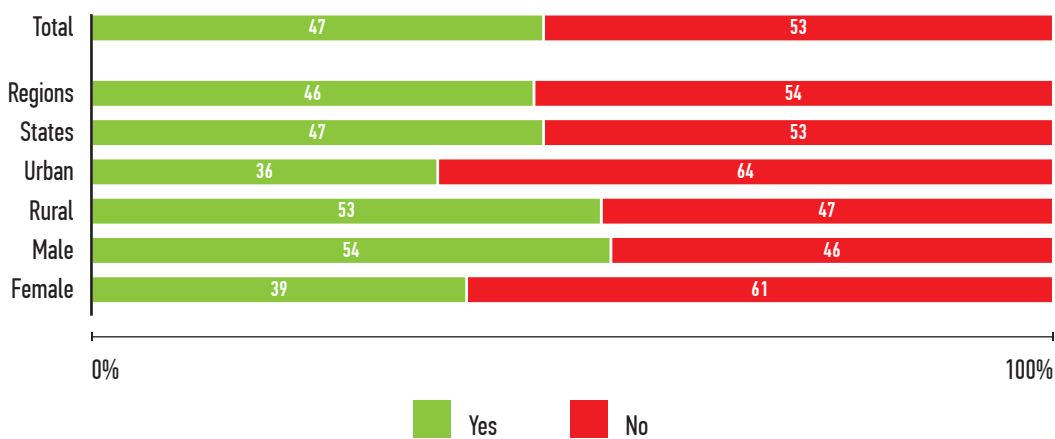
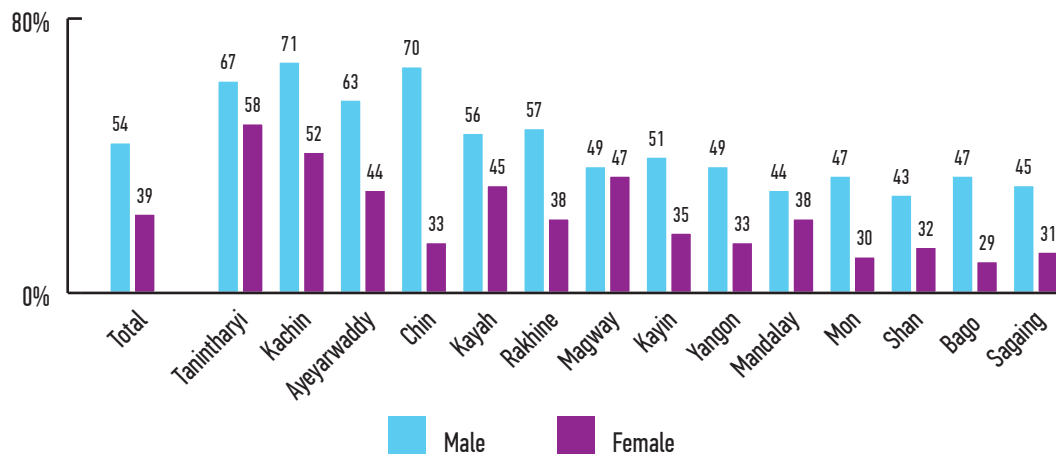


Figure 63: Do you sometimes participate in a village tract/ward meeting? (grouped)

Figure 64: Percentage of male/female respondents that sometimes participate in village tract/ward meetings (by State/Region)

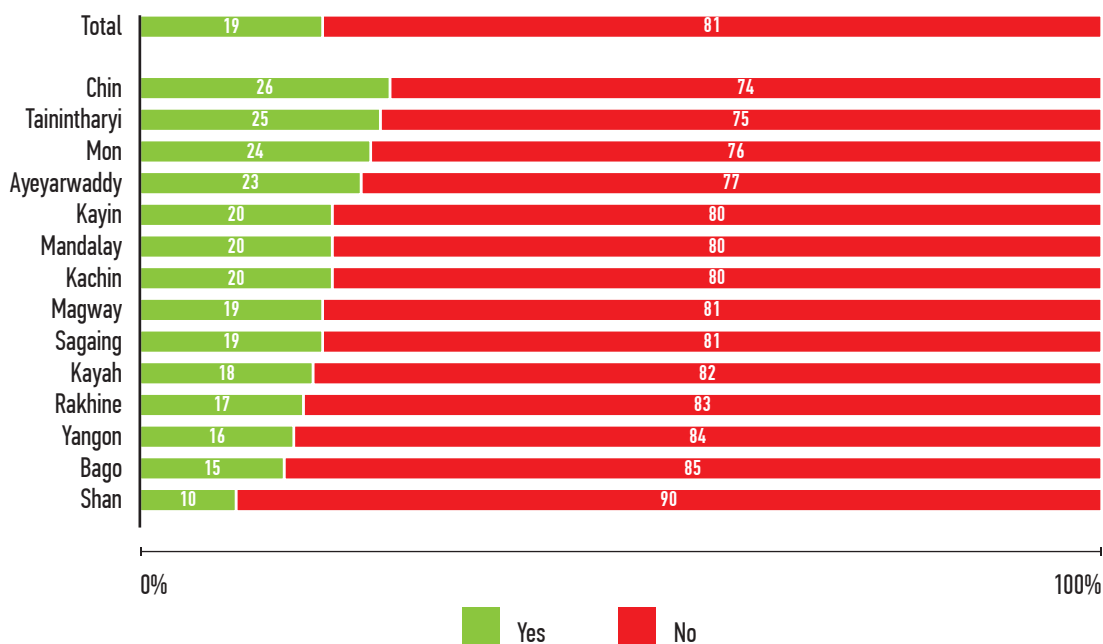


When asked for the reasons for not participating, respondents, male and female, in most States/Regions said that they were either never invited, they did not hear of any meetings or that there were no meetings organised in their village²². In some States/Regions people said that they don't have the time to attend or that meetings are planned at the wrong time. This reason was given by a higher number of female than male respondents.

Further looking into the question whether or not people have been invited to meetings to discuss development issues in the village, overall only 19% of respondents have ever been invited (see Figure 65). In Shan even as many as 90% of respondents have never been invited. Remarkable considering the many geographical and logistical challenges, almost 26% of Chin's respondents have been invited which is the highest among all States/Regions. This can perhaps be attributed to a rather innovative solution local administrations in some townships have come up with to address the accessibility problems, like the voluntary 'terrain representatives' in Thantlang Township who support the VTAs on development issues and communications. This or similar models could be considered in other places as well to encourage citizen participation, or to improve communication for example.

Overall, more rural than urban respondents have been invited (23% vs. 13%) and more men than women (22% vs. 13%) (see Figure 66), an issue that has already been mentioned above.

Figure 65: Were you ever invited to a meeting in which the government wanted to talk to the villagers about new projects like schools or health facilities in this village or about the problems in this village? (by State/Region)



22. This information is available only for seven States/Regions. This question was asked only in the third phase of the mapping in the following States/Regions: Kachin, Rakhine, Shan, Magway, Mandalay, Sagaing, Yangon.

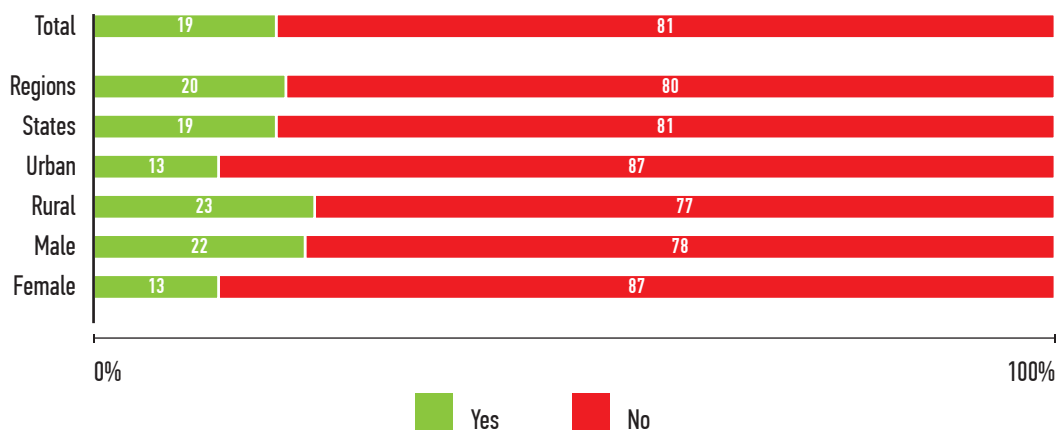


Figure 66: Were you ever invited to a meeting in which the government wanted to talk to the villagers about new projects like schools or health facilities in this village or about the problems in this village? (grouped)

Taking a sector specific angle on the question whether people have ever been involved in or invited to meetings with government officials to talk about health services, primary education or water services in their village tract/ward it becomes apparent that by far more people participate in and are invited to education related events (28%) than health (6%) or water (7%) (see Figure 67). Whether this is because education authorities are more active or there is a greater interest by citizens regarding education matters is not clear though. The situation varies greatly across States and Regions for all sectors. Nonetheless, the general trend shows that overall more people in the States than in the Regions have been involved or invited, more men than women and more rural than urban people.

More people participate in and are invited to education related events (28%) than health (6%) or water (7%).

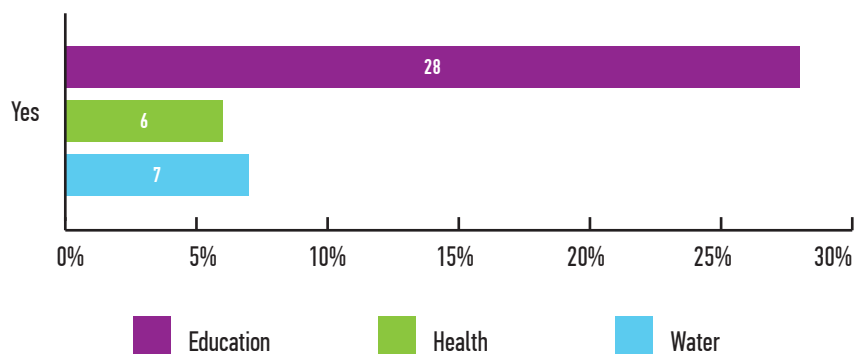


Figure 67: Percentage of people having been involved in or invited for a meeting with government officials to talk about the health services, education and water in the village tract/ward (total average)

Regarding health, on average a mere 6% of respondents have been involved or invited to meetings. The highest percentage of people involved/invited was found in Kachin (14%) followed by Yangon (12%) (see Figure 68). As for Kachin this is in line with the comparatively high rate of participation in general village tract/ward meetings, unlike Yangon where participation rates were below average in general meetings. The lowest outliers are Bago (1%) and interestingly also Tanintharyi (2%) which seems to have the highest participation rate in village tract/ward meetings otherwise.

Figure 68: Have you ever been involved in or invited for a meeting with government officials to talk about the health services in your village tract/ward? (by State/Region)

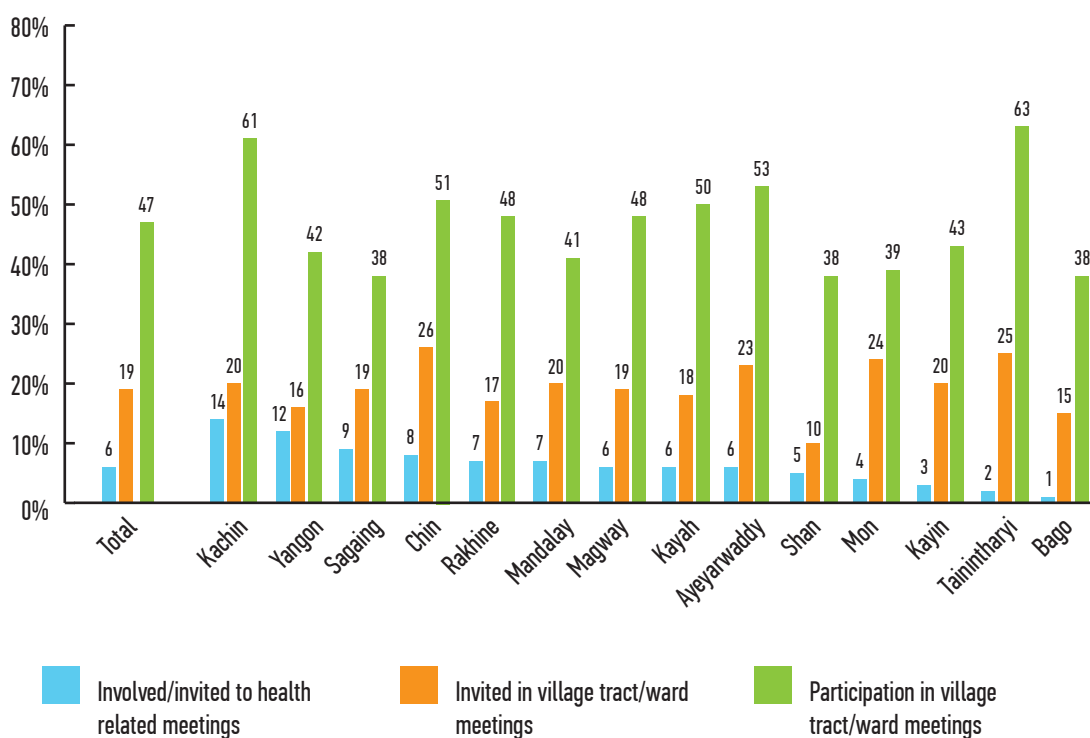
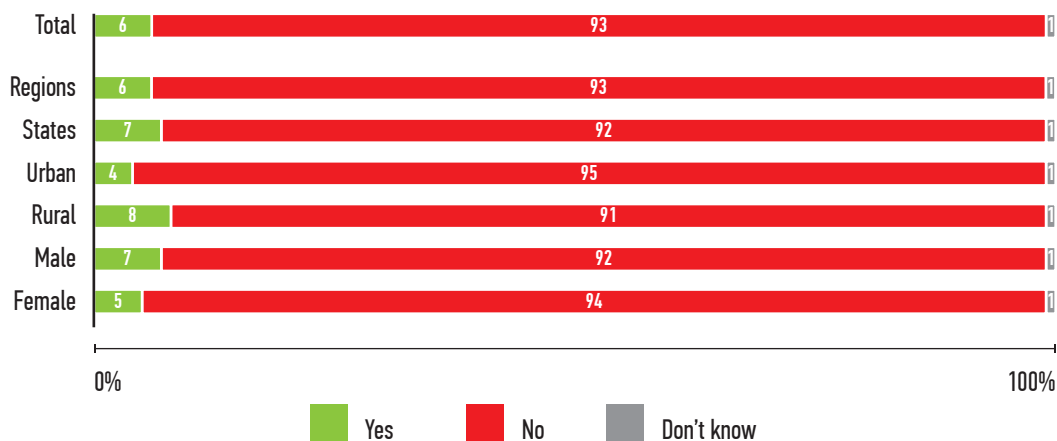


Figure 69: Have you ever been involved in or invited for a meeting with government officials to talk about the health services in your village tract / ward? (grouped)



As for education, although overall less people than participate in village tract/ward meetings on general issues, education sees by far the highest rates of involvement compared to health and water services. Also, a larger number of people appear to be involved in and invited for education related meetings than are invited for regular village tract/ward meetings. It has to be noted though that the sector related data on participation does not leave room for differentiating between “being involved” and “being invited”. The highest number of respondents being involved/invited was again found in Kachin (43%), and followed by Yangon (38%) (see Figure 70). In Mon, which has below average participation rates in village tract/ward meetings (39%) 37% of respondents claim to be involved in/invited to education meetings. The least involvement was seen in Magway (15%), Sagaing (15%) and Shan (17%). Unlike for Magway, as for Sagaing and Shan this seems to be in line with the general trend on participation in village tract/ward meetings.

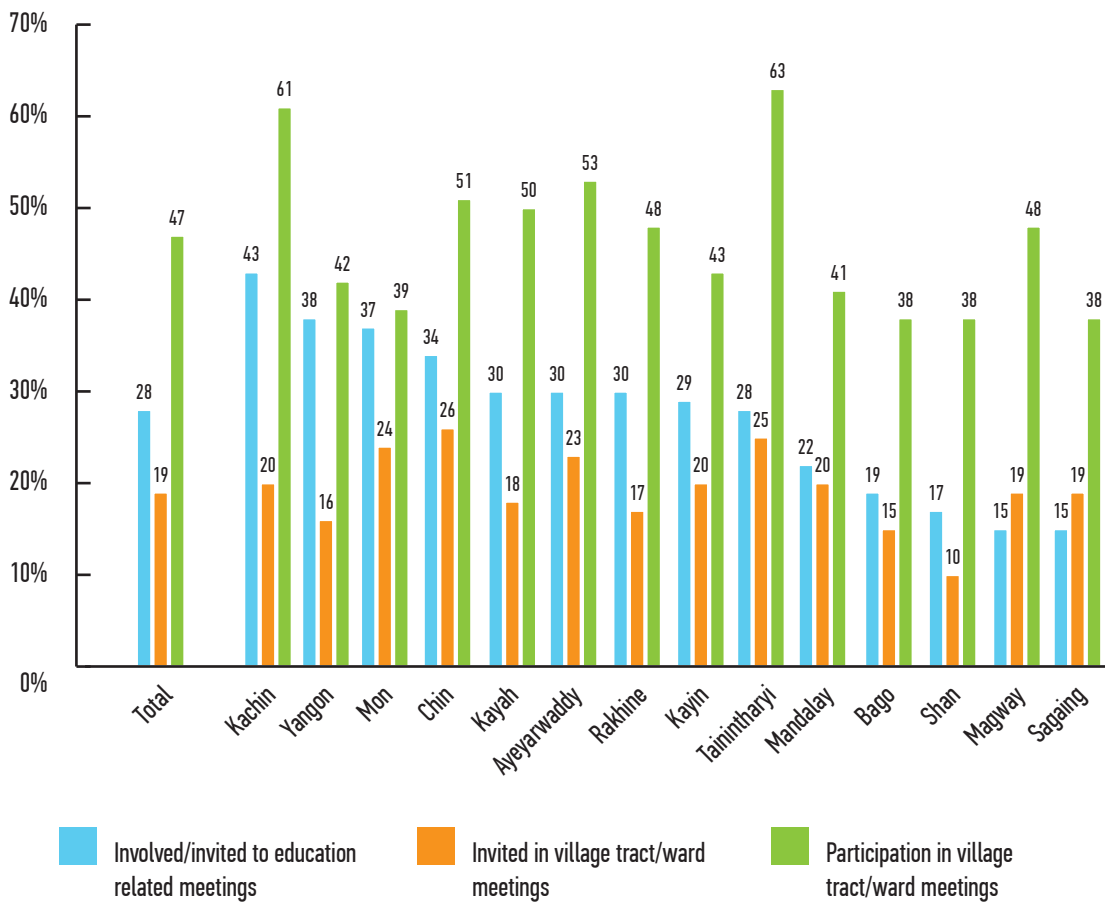
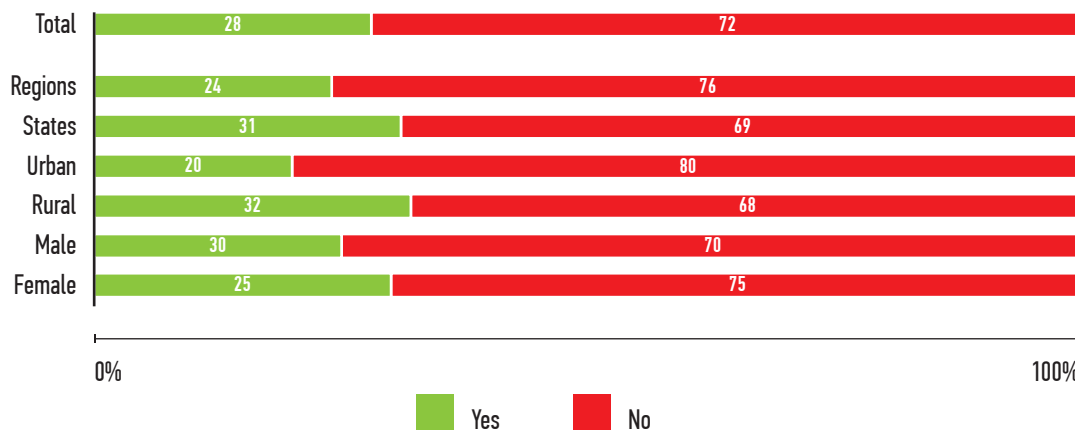


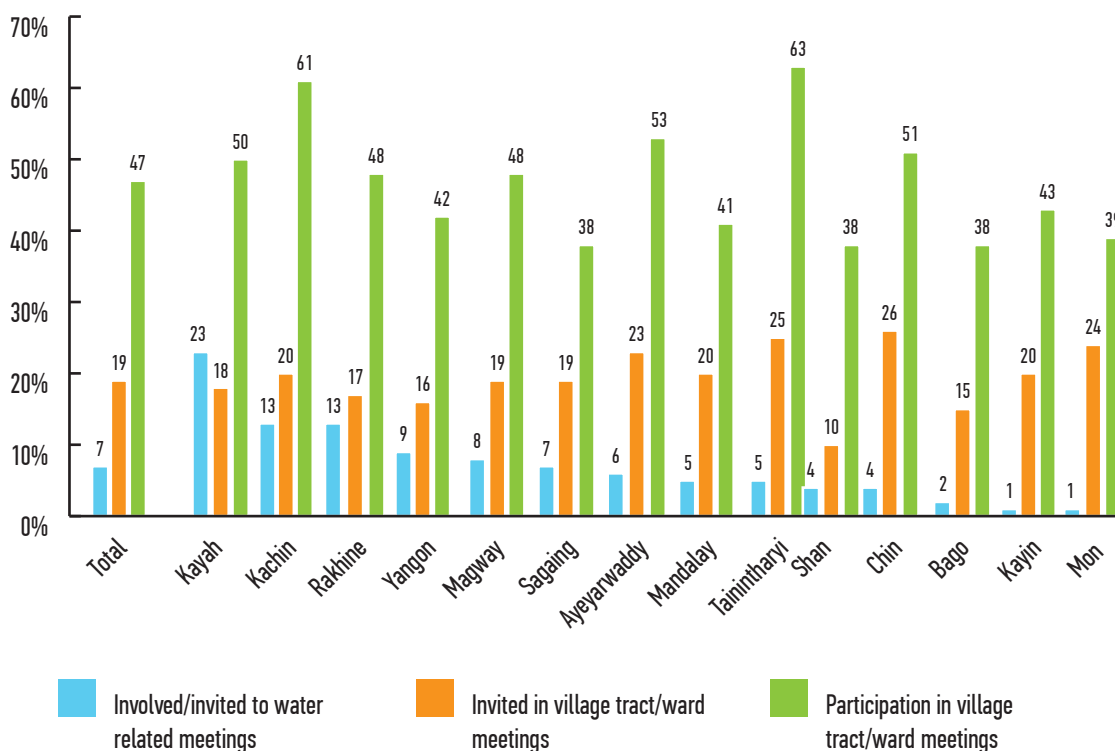
Figure 70: Have you ever been involved in or invited for a meeting with government officials to talk about primary education in your village tract/ward? (by State/Region)

Figure 71: Have you ever been involved in or invited for a meeting with government officials to talk about primary education in your village tract/ward? (grouped)



Regarding water supply, on average only 7% of respondents have been involved in or invited to meetings. The highest involvement rate far ahead of other States/Regions was found in Kayah (23%), followed by Kachin and Rakhine (13% each) (see Figure 72). A mere 1% of respondents stated to be involved/invited in Kayin and Mon and only 2% in Bago all of which have comparatively low participation rates also in general village tract/ward meetings.

Figure 72: Have you ever been involved in or invited for a meeting with government officials to talk about the water services in your village tract/ward? (by State/Region)



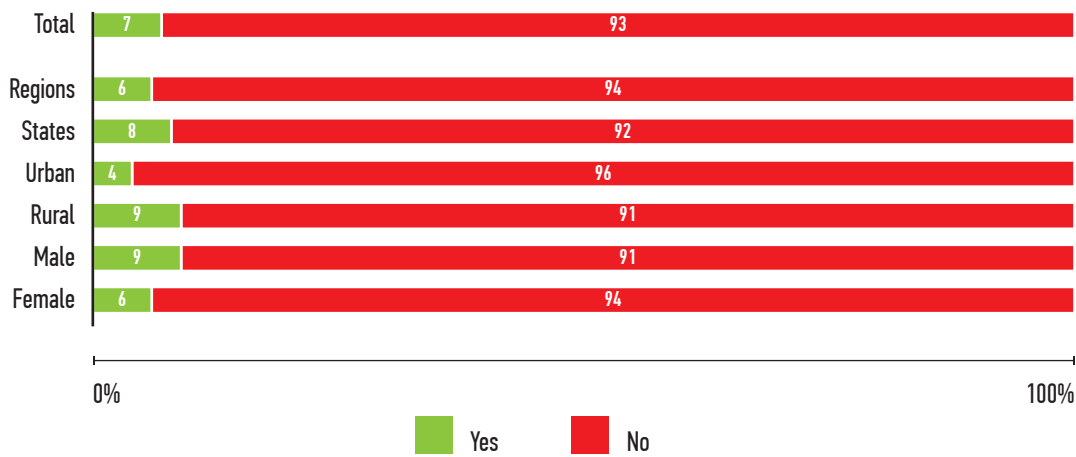


Figure 73: Have you ever been involved in or invited for a meeting with government officials to talk about the water services in your village tract/ward? (grouped)

3.3 Information, transparency and accountability

Transparency and accountability of government and its institutions and office bearers are some of the cornerstones of democratic societies. In the wake of the reforms of the past years, the Myanmar government has expressed the willingness and commitment to become more accountable to the people and increase transparency. Considering Myanmar's past and the previously limited opportunities for citizens to exercise their voice and to influence change, it is expected to take some time until behavioural and attitudinal changes take root – on both, citizen and government side. Nevertheless, some changes, perhaps more informal than formal, in the interaction and relationship between citizens and government are starting to appear and are important steps towards restoring the basic mutual trust between citizens and state.

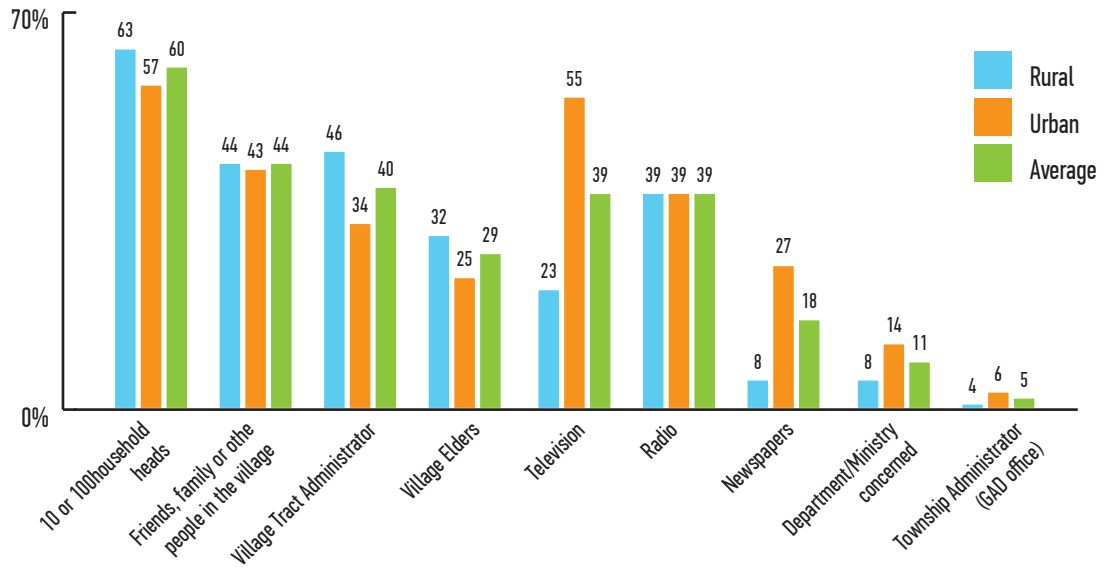
3.3.1 Information

Access to and the availability of information are key aspects of transparency and accountability. Without the necessary information, for example on government decisions or responsibilities, development plans and budgets etc. citizens have no basis to hold government accountable. Information is therefore a crucial element in any attempt to increase accountability.

For that reason, it is necessary to also understand people's sources of information and how people learn about important government related information. On average, the large majority (60%) of the people rely on communication through the 10/100 household heads. This is the main channel of information in rural as well as urban areas, although more so in rural areas (63%) (see Figure 74). The second most important source of information for urban respondents is television (55%), while for rural respondents it is the VTA (46%). Overall, people's peers (friends, family or other people in the village) are the second most important information source (44%). Apart from radio, media (TV and newspapers) clearly play a bigger role in urban areas. In general, verbal communication is still the main information channel for both, rural and urban respondents, although more so for the rural population. Consequently, it is crucial to look at how important government related messages get channelled down to citizens and who are the key actors in passing on information. Again, the W/VTAs play a critical role here, as they receive information from the TAs and can share it either directly with citizens and/or through the 10/100 household heads. In practice, it depends very much on the willingness and attitude of the individual W/VTAs if and how much information is being communicated.

On average, the large majority (60%) of the people rely on communication through the 10/100 household heads.

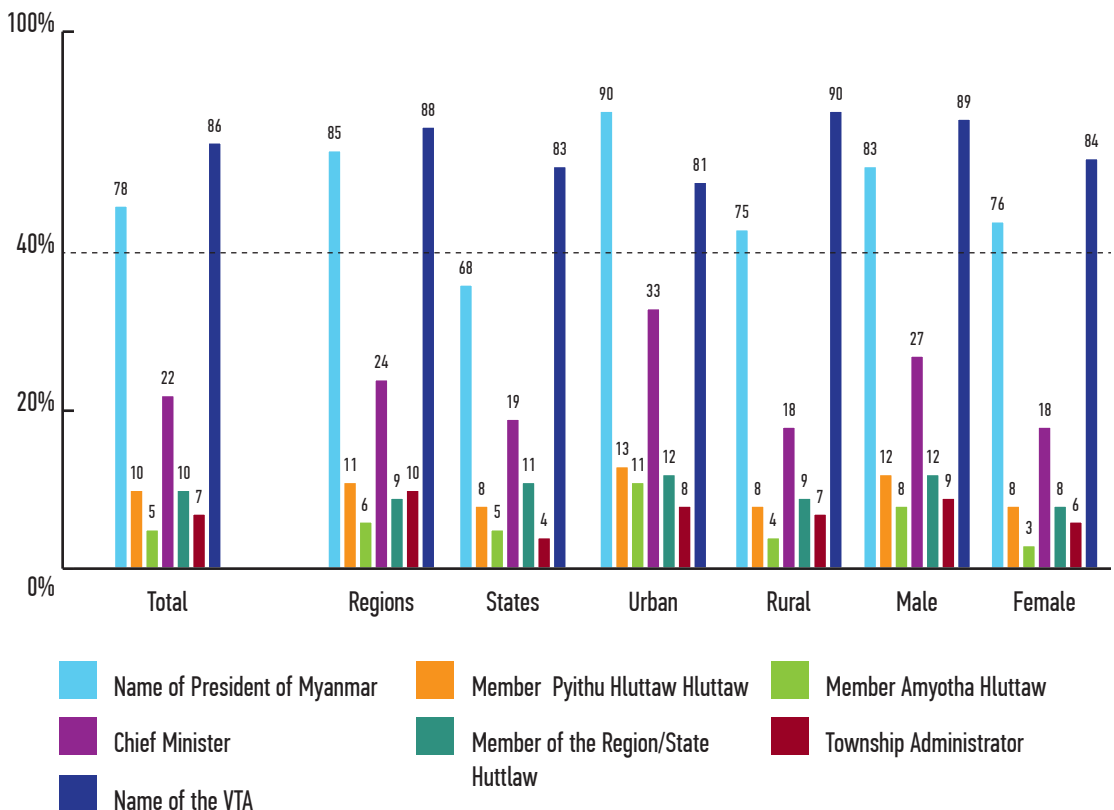
Figure 74: If there are new laws or directives from the government, how would you usually learn about them?



The awareness of government representatives in general seems to be slightly higher in urban than in rural areas.

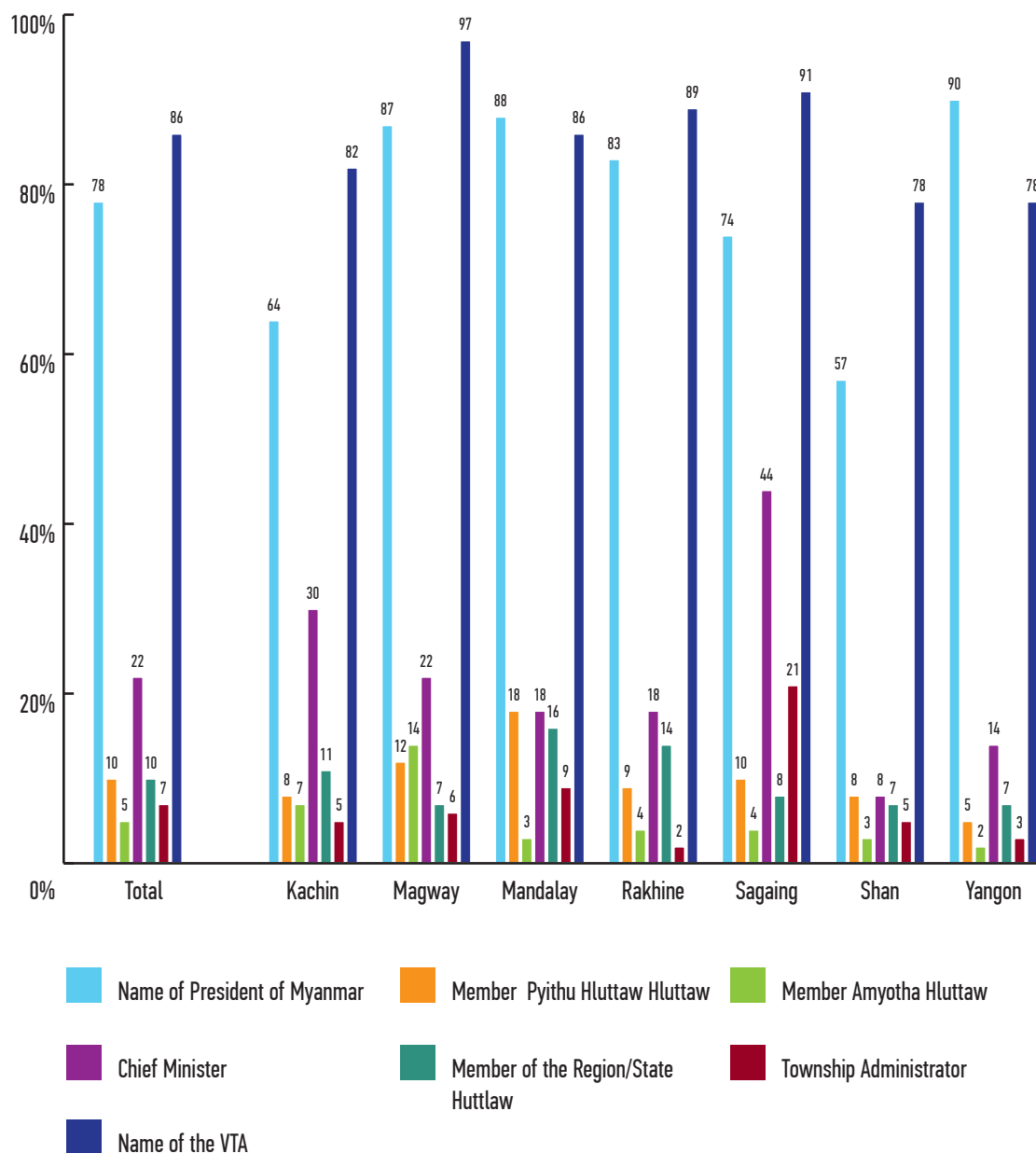
In order to get an idea about the familiarity of respondents with key government figures, they were also asked to mention the name of various government representatives. On average, most people know the name of their W/VTA (86%), even more than those knowing the name of the President of Myanmar (78%). However, in urban areas more people know the name of the President of Myanmar (90%) than that of their W/VTA (81%), while in rural areas 90% of respondents know their W/VTA and only 75% know the President's name. The awareness of government representatives in general seems to be slightly higher in urban than in rural areas. This is more pronounced in the Regions where also more people overall are able to name government representatives than in the States. Also more men than women know the names of key government actors (see Figure 75). Looking at the different States/Regions, the highest levels of awareness of government representative's names overall appear in Sagaing, followed by Magway, where 97% of respondents named their W/VTA for example. Respondents in Shan were the least aware of key officials (see Figure 76).

Figure 75: Knowledge of the names of various government representatives²³



23. This information is available only for seven States/Regions: Kachin, Rakhine, Shan, Magway, Mandalay, Sagaing and Yangon.

Figure 76: Knowledge of the names of various government representatives (by States/Regions)²⁴



Another aspect of information and people's ability to hold government better accountable is their awareness of public funds that are spent in their village/ward. Overall, with just over one third (35%) of respondents, there appears to be very limited knowledge of government spending. The rural population (41%) is much more aware though than urban people (23%) and similar for respondents in the Regions (40%) compared to respondents in the States (29%) (see Figure 77). The differences across States and Regions are also substantial, with only 25% of Kachin's respondents being aware of public spending compared to 50% of Mandalay's respondents. Interestingly perhaps, the awareness of respondents in Yangon is comparatively low (26%) (see Figure 78).

24. This information is available only for seven States/Regions: Kachin, Rakhine, Shan, Magway, Mandalay, Sagaing and Yangon.

Figure 77: Are you aware of any government funds being spent in your village/ward?²⁵ (grouped)

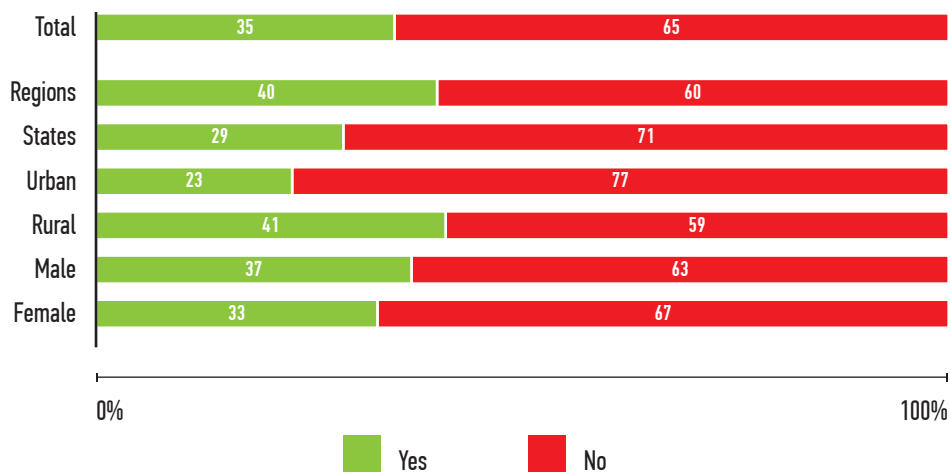
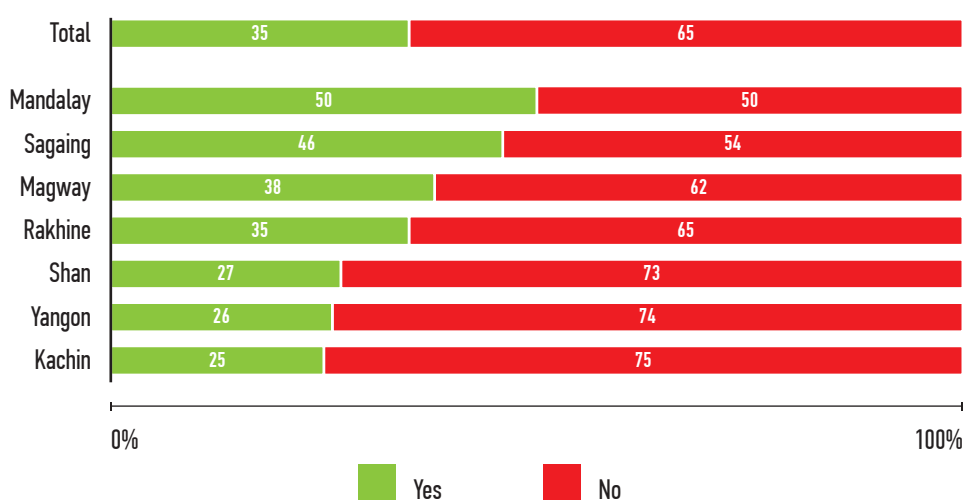


Figure 78: Are you aware of any government funds being spent in your village/ward?²⁶ (by State/Region)



When asked directly whether they feel sufficiently informed it becomes clear that the great majority of people (76%) thinks that not enough information has been passed on to them.

When asked directly whether they feel sufficiently informed it becomes clear that the great majority of people (76%) thinks that not enough information has been passed on to them. In general, people in rural areas (28%) feel better informed than in urban areas (18%) and people in the Regions (27%) more so than in the States (22%) (see Figure 79). The views vary greatly across different States and Regions – information provision in Magway has been comparatively better (39%) than in other State/Regions while in Rakhine only 11% say they have been getting sufficient information (see Figure 80).

All in all, to support the government’s aim for increased transparency and accountability and to address the citizen’s call for more information, some specific information sharing strategies could be put in place to enhance the flow of information from the government to the people. These could build on the traditional and still effective way of “mouth to mouth” communication (through W/VTAs, 10/100 HH Heads and village elders) and means of mass communication.

25. This information is available only for seven States/Regions: Kachin, Rakhine, Shan, Magway, Mandalay, Sagaing and Yangon.
 26. See footnote above.

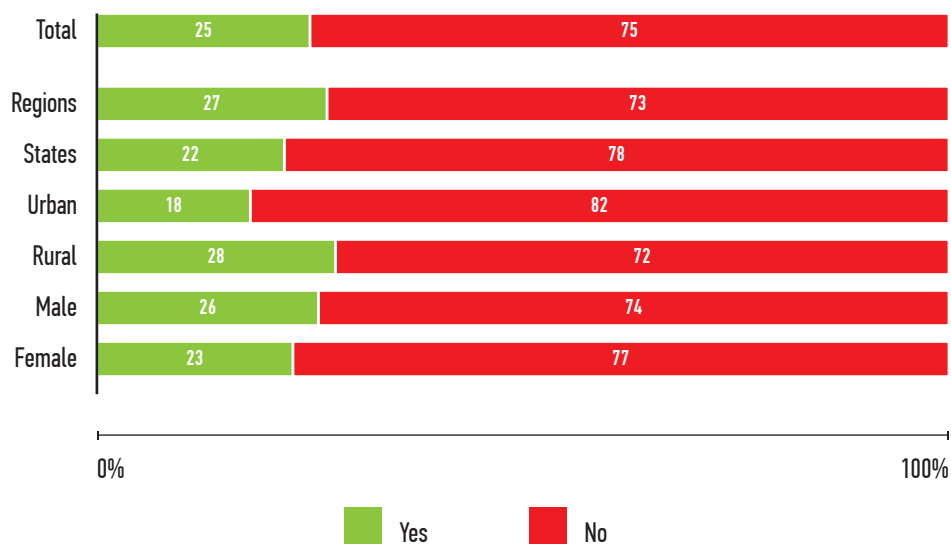


Figure 79: Citizen's views on whether they feel sufficiently informed by government (grouped)

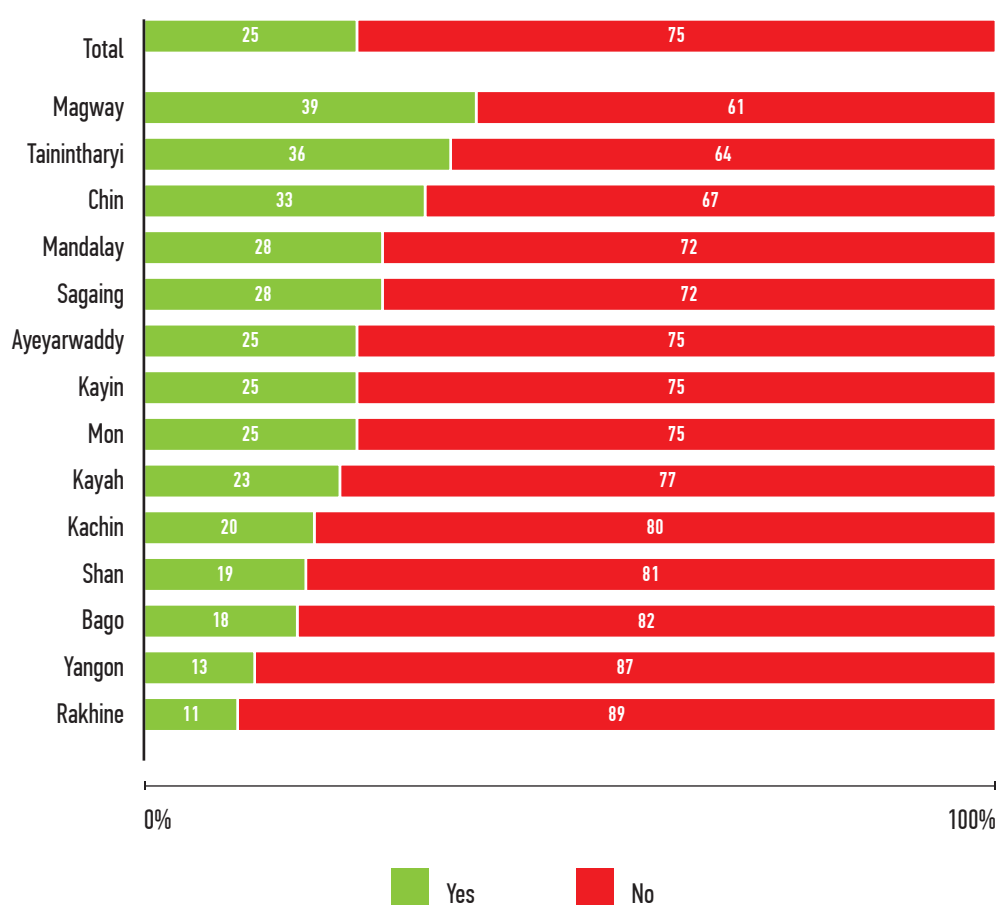


Figure 80: Citizen's views on whether they feel sufficiently informed by government (by State/Region)

3.3.2 The role of the W/VTAs

Prior to the 2012 Village Tract and Ward Law, which provides for their election, the Village Tract/Ward Administrators (W/VTAs) were selected and recruited by the TAs. The W/VTAs are now indirectly elected by the people by and from the group of 10/100 household heads²⁷. The pool of local candidates is still mostly controlled by a limited group of government officials though and according to tight criteria. Still, the W/VTAs in most States and Regions mentioned that they do feel more accountable to the people since their election.

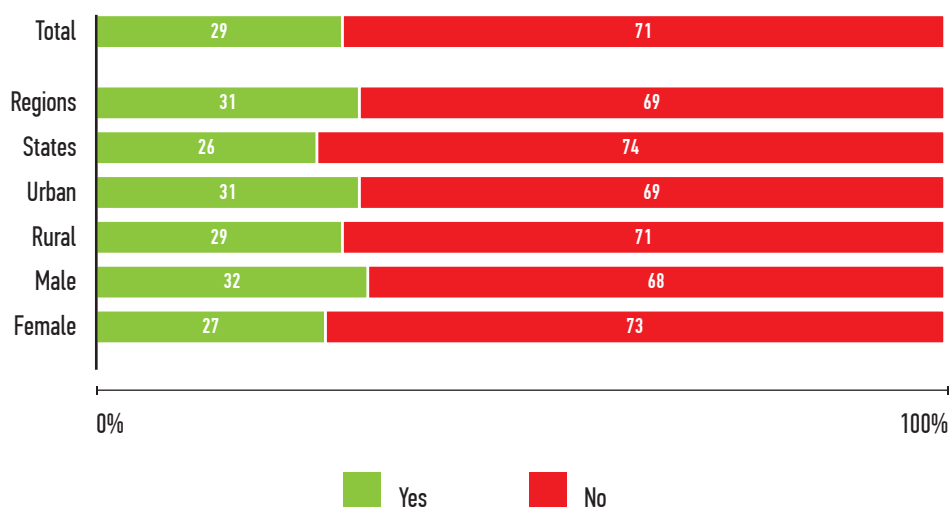
27. The 10/100 household heads, also called village heads or village administrators (incorporated in the administrative system during the British colonial rule), still play an important role in assisting the VTA who usually oversees 4-6 villages. They are not part of the formal government structure and are either elected by the community or self-appointed.

When comparing with before the 2012 W/VTA elections, less than one third (29%) of people's respondents have noticed a difference in the way W/VTAs respond to their requests or the way they communicate with the people.

Less than one third (29%) of people's respondents have noticed a difference in the way W/VTAs respond to their requests or the way they communicate with the people. The difference was felt more in the Regions and in urban areas (29%) than in the States (26%) or rural areas (29%), and also more by men (32%) than women (27%) (see Figure 81). The least change was noted by respondents in Shan (21%), while 38% of Sagaing's respondents felt there was a change, which is still just over one third of the people.

While the 2012 Village Tract and Ward Law provided for their election, it only marginally changed the W/VTAs role to act as elected representative of the people. The traditional mandate and functions of the W/VTA position have been largely retained, like the maintenance of law and order in the village tract/ward, disciplinary matters or organising community labour, while the new law has also given some room for a few functions relating to a more developmental role, like consulting with villagers in decision-making, providing information and bringing village problems to the Township Administration.²⁸

Figure 81: Do you feel that after the VTAs were elected in 2012, anything changed in the way they respond to people's requests and demands, and the way they communicate with the people in the ward/village?²⁹



Overall, in the people's view the "traditional" functions of the W/VTAs are still dominating. The low level of people's awareness about the W/VTAs new development functions may not be surprising considering that the changes have been introduced only recently.

Overall, in the people's view the "traditional" functions of the W/VTAs are still dominating. 49% of the people see the W/VTAs conflict mediation role in the forefront, followed by 42% that noted the ensuring peace and security role (see Figure 82). Also, 20% still mentioned "ensuring that people participate in community labour" which originally related to forced labour. With the exception of "bringing village problems to the Township Administration" which scores relatively high (35%), the new more development related functions have not been noticed by many people. Only 17% of respondents mentioned "Consult and involve villagers in decision-making at village level" and merely 9% saw the information provision role of the W/VTA. The new functions seem to be a bit more visible to people in rural areas and in the Regions than in urban areas and the States. Likewise, slightly more male than female respondents noted the new roles. The people's awareness of the W/VTAs new roles also varies greatly across different States and Regions. Respondents in Magway seem to be the most familiar with the W/VTAs development related functions, followed by Kachin, Kayah and Yangon. People in Mon appear to be the least aware and also comparatively few respondents in Chin and Kayin have noticed the new roles (see Figure 83).

27. The 10/100 household heads, also called village heads or village administrators (incorporated in the administrative system during the British colonial rule), still play an important role in assisting the VTA who usually oversees 4-6 villages. They are not part of the formal government structure and are either elected by the community or self-appointed.

28. Ward or Village Tract Administration Law. Ministry of Home Affairs, 2012. Chapter 7, clause 13. As outlined in the Law, the VT/WA is e.g. responsible for the maintenance of law and order in the village tract/ward; disciplinary matters; monitoring development projects; helping with rural development and poverty reduction; informing and assisting government agencies on crime prevention; submitting requests for public events to the TA; monitoring overnight guests; issuing entertainments licenses, registration of deaths and births, maintaining irrigation works; collecting land revenue and carrying out additional duties assigned by the TA and government departments in accordance with the law.

29. This information is available only for seven States/Regions: Kachin, Rakhine, Shan, Magway, Mandalay, Sagaing and Yangon.

The low level of people’s awareness about the W/VTAs’s new development functions may not be surprising considering that the changes have been introduced only recently and that the W/VTAs’s traditional role to that of a people’s representative hasn’t been fully transformed yet. The W/VTAs are potentially highly instrumental to support the Township Administration in their coordination role, as they directly interact with citizens, and are able to bring people’s development needs to the township level. For W/VTAs to act as interface between the people and the government seems even more important as there is no official mechanism at the moment for the committees like the TDSC and TMAC to regularly consult with citizens and also the practical difficulty for TDSC/ TMAC members to achieve this.

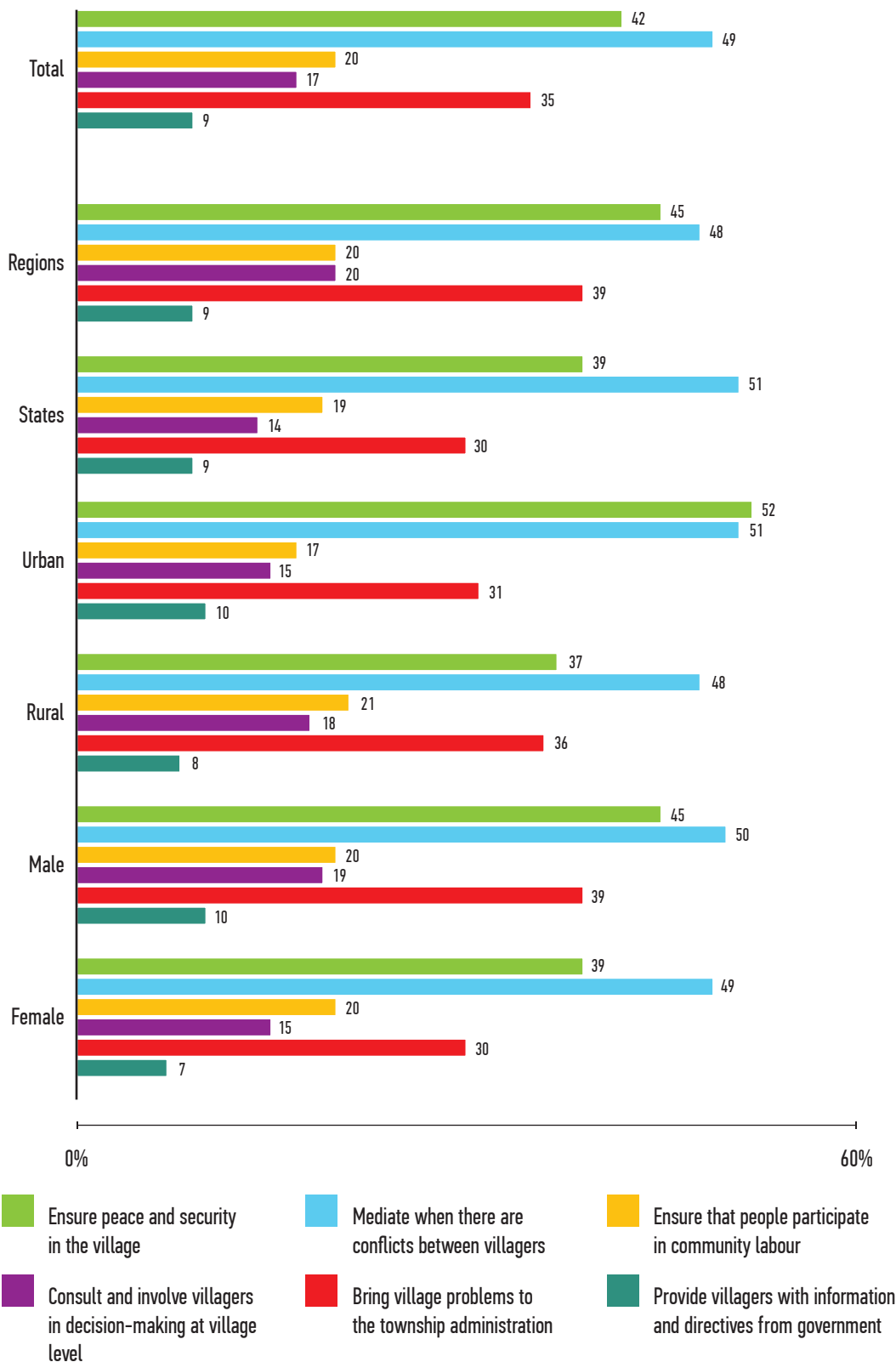
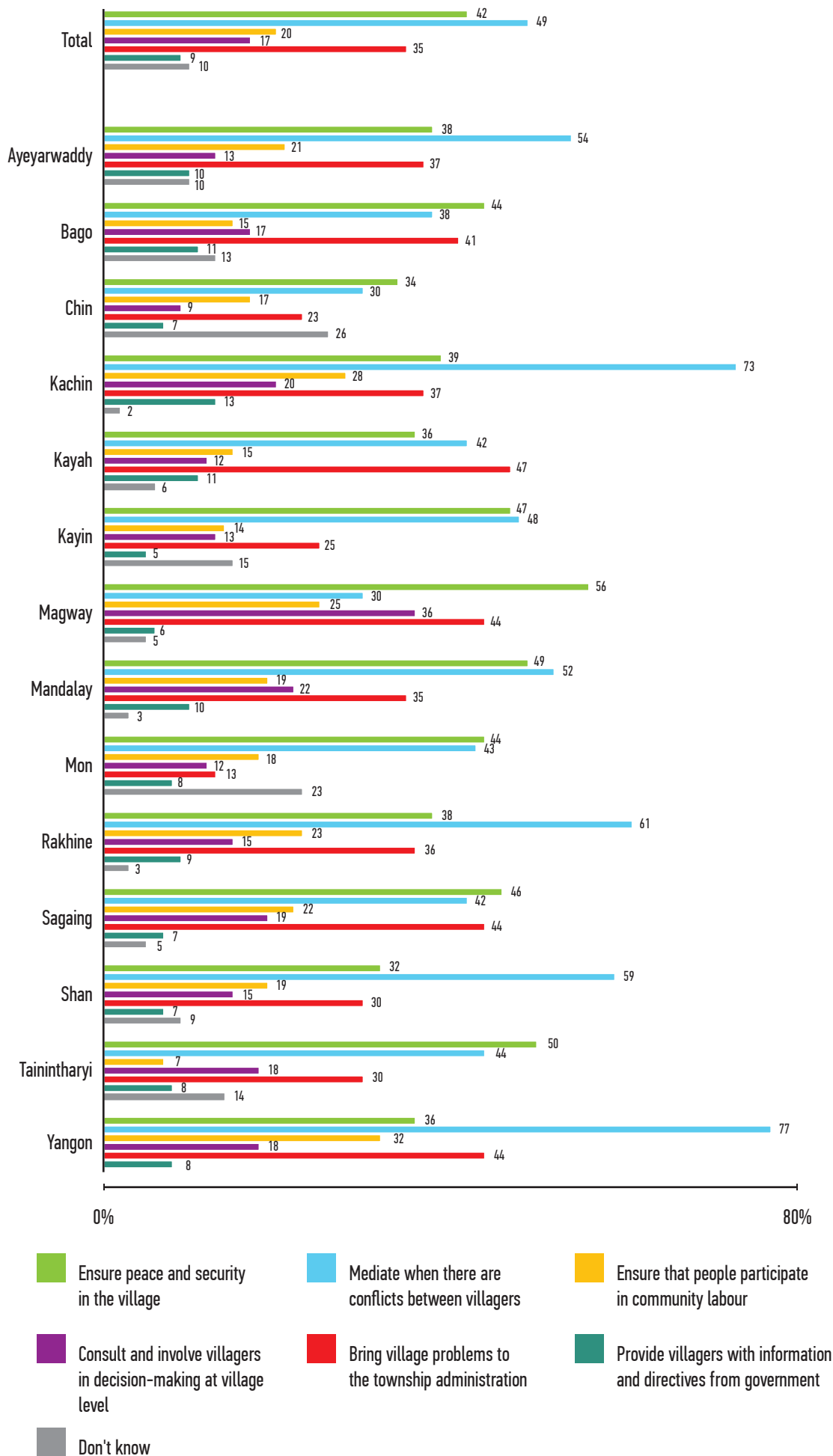


Figure 82: The role of W/VTAs as seen by citizens (grouped)

Figure 83: The role of W/VTAs as seen by citizens (by States/Regions)



3.3.3 Grievance redressal

In line with the W/VTA's perceived central role in community mediation and ensuring peace and security, the W/VTA also emerges as the first person that people approach in case of disputes – for 63% of respondents for land disputes and for 68% of respondents for disputes in general (see Figure 84 and Figure 85). As for land disputes, there is hardly any difference between States/Regions and men/women, but more urban respondents turn to the W/VTA than rural respondents. As for disputes in general, there is a clear difference between Regions (73%) and States (59%) and between urban (76%) and rural areas (64%). The 10/100 household heads are the second most approached person but much less than W/VTAs.

In case of a dispute, more urban respondents turn to the W/VTA than rural respondents.

There are big differences across the States and Regions though (see Figure 86 and Figure 87). In Magway for example 85% of respondents first approach the W/VTA and only 11% the 10/100 household head. As opposed to Shan, where the 10/100 household heads seem to play a much stronger role and are the first person to approach for 49% of respondents and for 44% the W/VTA. With the exception of Shan, in all other States and Regions the W/VTA is the first person that people approach either for land disputes or disputes in general. All other options are rarely used by people. Mon stands out though where 22% of respondents didn't know who they would approach for land disputes and the same for 10% of people in Chin.

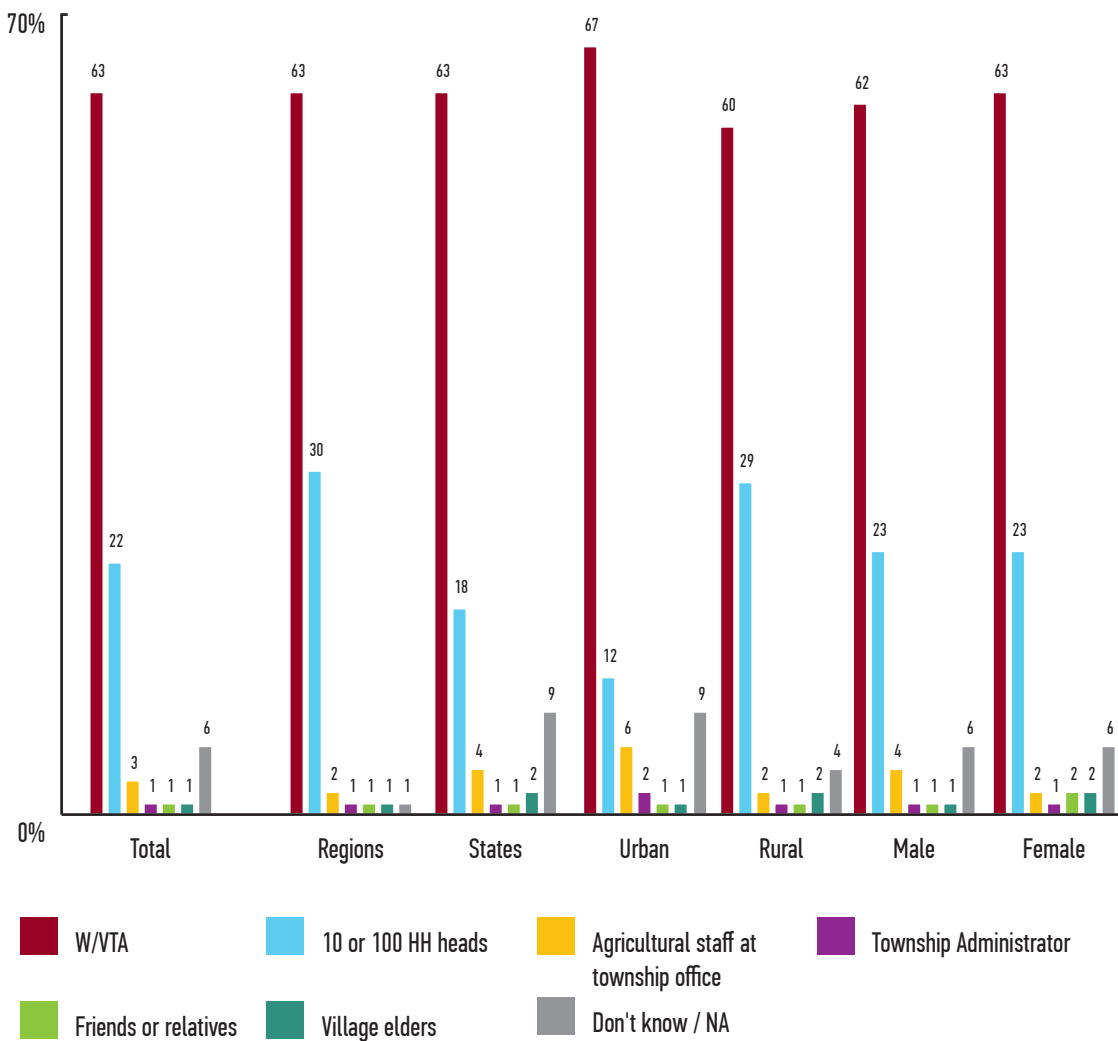


Figure 84: First person approached in case of land dispute (data grouped for 7 States/Regions: Chin, Mon, Kayin, Ayeyarwaddy, Bago, Kayah, Tanintharyi)³⁰

30. For the seven States/Regions of the phase I&II mapping the question related to land disputes only. For the seven States/Regions of phase III of the mapping the question was asked regarding disputes in general.

Figure 85: First person approached in case of dispute (data grouped for 7 States/ Regions: Kachin, Rakhine, Shan, Magway, Mandalay, Sagaing Yangon)

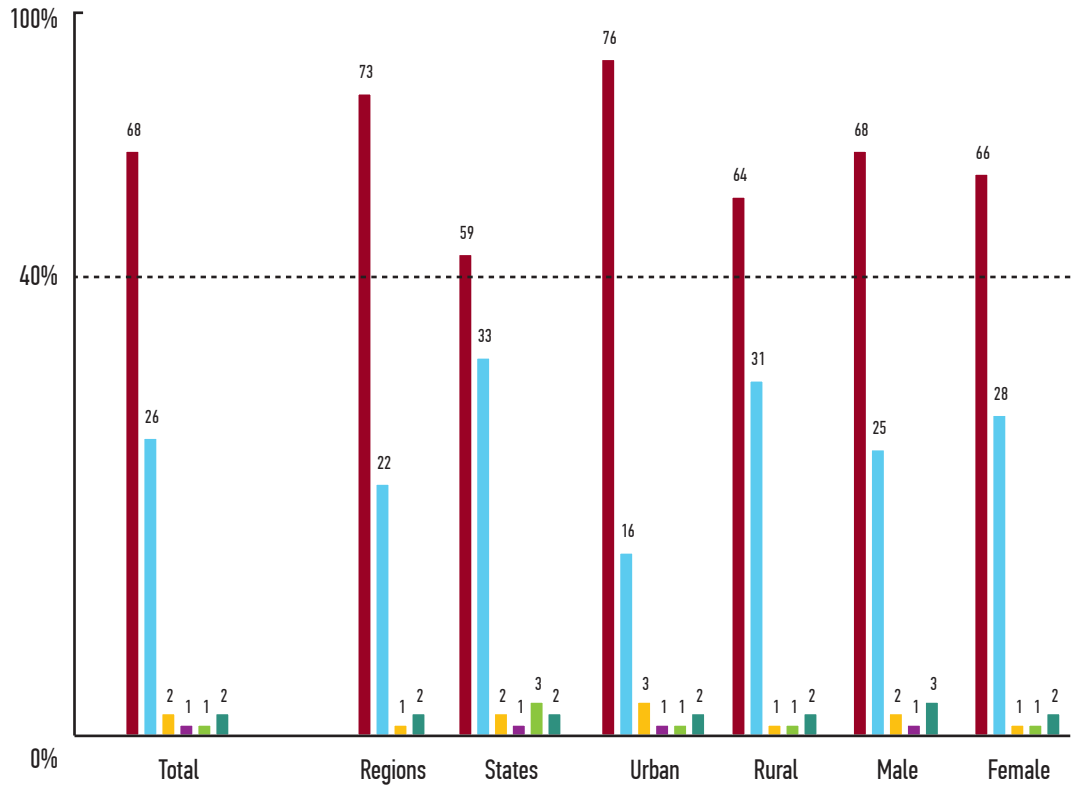
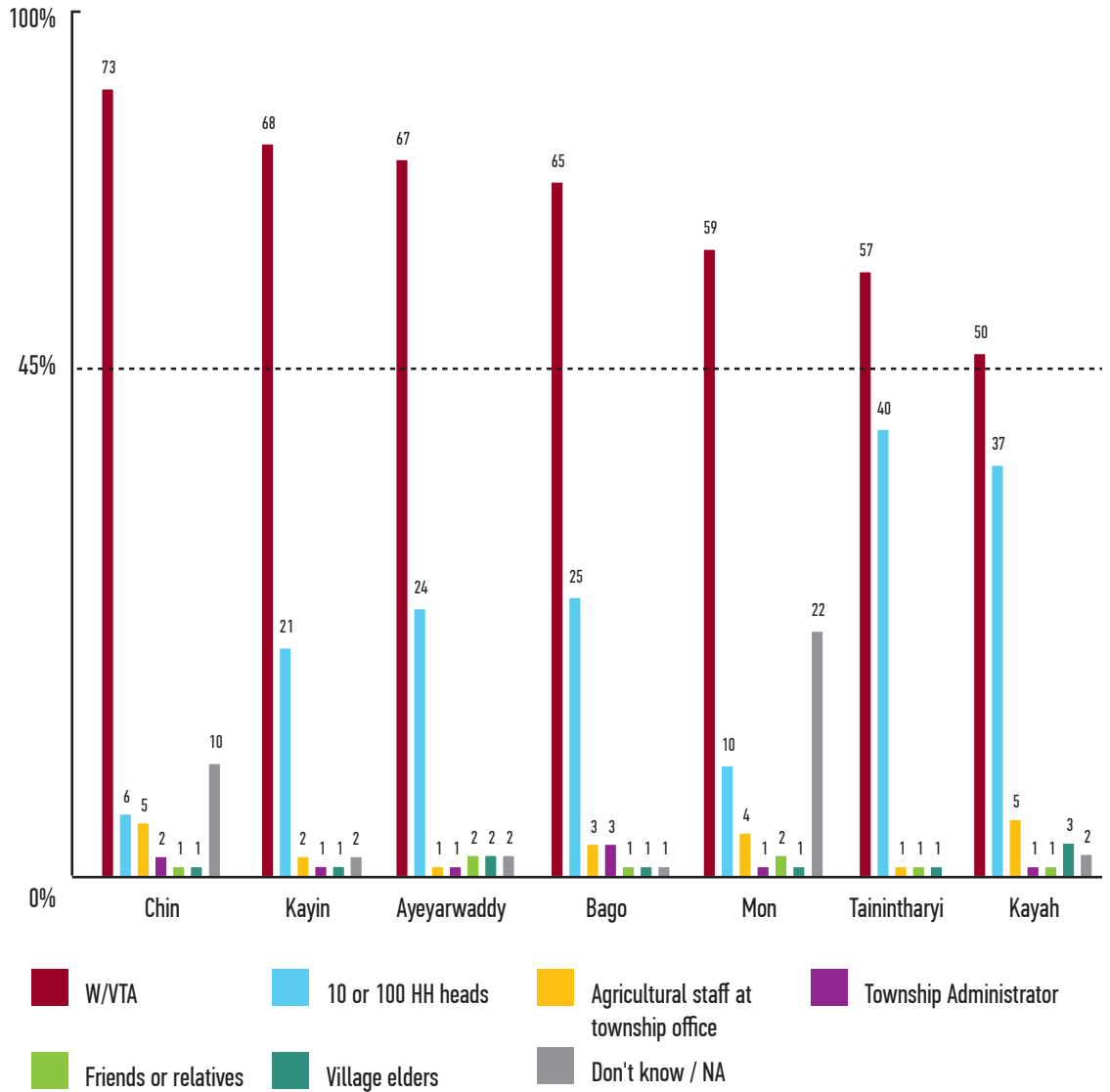


Figure 86: First person approached in case of land dispute (data 7 States/ Regions: Chin, Mon, Kayin, Ayeyarwaddy, Bago, Kayah, Tanintharyi)



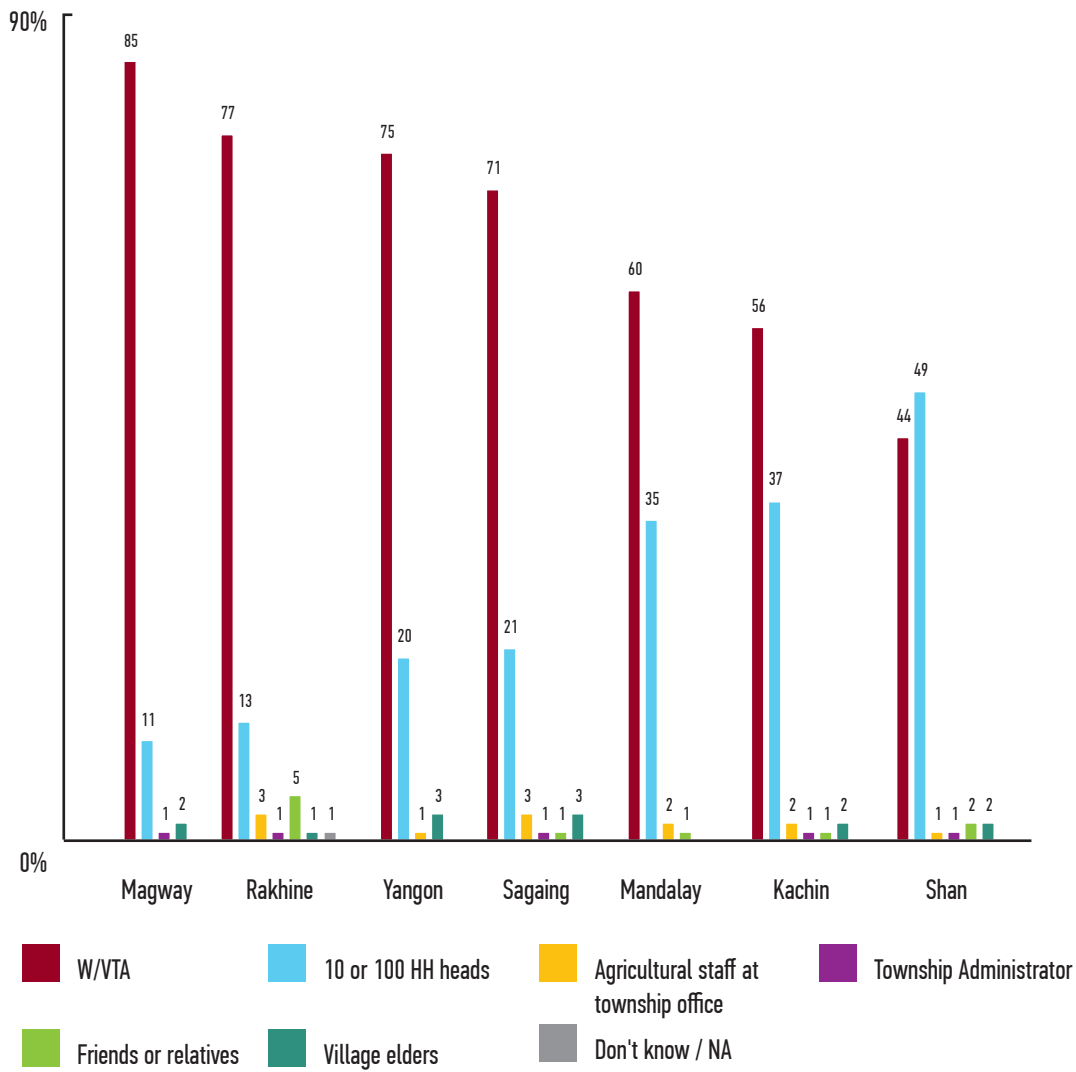


Figure 87: First person approached in case of dispute (data for 7 States/Regions: Kachin, Rakhine, Shan, Magway, Mandalay, Sagaing Yangon)



4. Concluding remarks

Myanmar's process of change started only recently, but several encouraging early gains in terms of improved governance can already be noticed. At the same time, a number of challenges remain that deserve to be further looked into and addressed. These challenges are not surprising given the decades of military rule, isolation and conflict, and the short time since the beginning of the reforms.

The synthesis report complements the detailed state and region specific **State of Local Governance** reports that have been developed under the mapping. A detailed analysis of local governance structures in Myanmar is outlined in **Mapping the State of Local Governance in Myanmar: Background and Methodology**. The CRC survey database will also be publicly available for other stakeholders and development partners to use and draw data from.

The primary objective of the synthesis report is to make an overview of the key findings from all States and Regions available in one single report, outlining the differences in the geographical areas - the States and Regions - from a gender and rural/urban perspectives. As shown in the report, people do recognize improvements in their areas and they also start to be aware of the different new opportunities in which they can influence local decision-making.

But whilst we see an evolving local governance structure that actually allows people to have a voice in local decision-making, such as the indirect election of the Ward and Village Tract administrators, and the establishment of Township and Ward/Village Tract Development Support Committees with interest group and public representation, the general understanding of representation is still weak. The election of committee members is in some cases more of a selection than an open election of candidates put forward in a structured manner by organisations or people.

It was also noted that there still are extremely few women in local administrative or elected positions. As the World Bank pointed out in their World Development report 2012, gender equality not only matters for reasons of equity, it is also plain smart economics as it enhances economic efficiency and improves development outcomes in several ways.

Maybe 'representation' is one of the single most important aspects of Myanmar's governance reforms that needs attention; not only vis-à-vis women; it is equally important that various committee members and elected representatives actually represent the group they are acting on behalf of, or represent. Only through strong and capable state institutions and genuine representation that includes all groups of society the agenda of good governance can be achieved. This topic will be further addressed in a policy paper based on a more in depth analysis of the local governance findings and how they can be used to further support the reform agendas and the policy makers.

Meanwhile, past and future reports developed under the UNDP local governance program published under the Local Governance mapping series are posted at the UNDP Myanmar web page: Please keep following <http://www.mm.undp.org/>



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