

BRACED Myanmar

RESULTS REPORT 2016/2017



Towards a Resilient Myanmar



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Writing and Editorial
Bhushan Shrestha, Chit Min Htun, Chloe Dessemond,
Jeremy Stone and Su Hlaing

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1 Introduction

Myanmar, the second most vulnerable country to disasters

and climate extremes globally, is at a moment of unprecedented institutional, economic and social change. The Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters (BRACED) Myanmar Alliance Project (2015 – 2017) aims to contribute to this transition, from household to national policy level, through building the resilience of over 350,000 individuals – especially women, children and disadvantaged groups - in 155 villages in 8 townships across hilly, dry and coastal ecological zones in Myanmar.

The BRACED Myanmar Alliance, identifies resilience as a mixture of skills, capacities and resources to be able to anticipate and adapt to changing conditions and absorb shocks and stresses to be able to achieve development plans and objectives.

Through a unique model of policy, action and media outreach, a diverse collaboration amongst local and international partners combine disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, environmental management, community development, policy, gender, and livelihoods expertise to improve community and institutional understanding of climate risk, drive increased responsiveness, and promote scale-up and replication of resilient practices in the face of climate extremes.

The project is being implemented by a consortium of 6 Myanmar based UN and civil society agencies led by Plan International together with Action Aid, BBC Media Action, Myanmar Environment Institute, UN-Habitat and World Vision.

This report presents results achieved by the project and its partners from January 2015 to March 2017 documented through a mid-line survey conducted in December 2016 and ongoing internal monitoring systems conducted through March 2017.



- ① Kyaukpyu Township (Rakhine State)
- ② Toungup Township (Rakhine State)
- ③ Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township (Yangon Region)
- ④ Hpa-An Township (Kayin State)
- ⑤ Meiktila Township (Mandalay Region)
- ⑥ Labutta Township (Ayeyarwaddy Region)
- ⑦ Mawlamyine Township (Mon State)
- ⑧ Kengtung Township (Shan State)

2 BRACED Myanmar Project

2. a Objectives and work packages

The project works across 3 levels covering community resilience, institutional responsiveness and advocacy and policy influence.

The work packages are the activities that are implemented to support resilience building.

BRACED Objectives

1

Develop targeted communities' knowledge, skills and increase access to resources to mitigate the risks of and recover from climatic shocks and stresses

2

Support institutions to be more coordinated and responsive to risks

3

Support knowledge development and influence take-up and replication nationally and globally

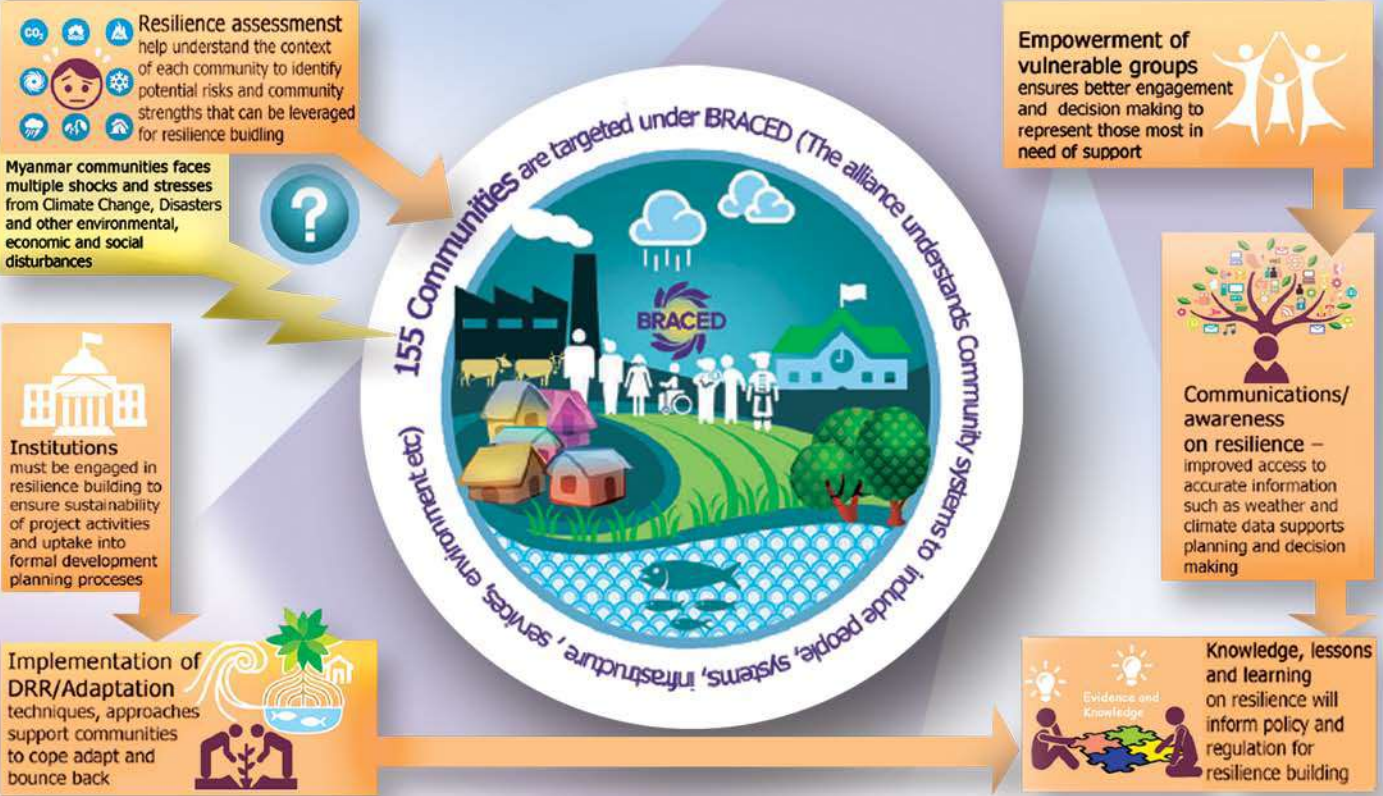
BRACED Work Packages

- Comprehensive community resilience assessments and action plan development
- Implementation of activities prioritized in the action plans to mitigate shocks and stresses
- Financial safety nets through Women Self-Help Group (WSHG), Microfinance, and Village Saving and Loan Association (VSLA) inclusion through Women's empowerment and child centered resilience approaches
- Communicating resilience and risk information to increase understanding of shocks and stresses and build skills and capacities to incorporate risk information in planning
- Township planning for resilience building including Township Disaster Management Plans (TDMPs) and Township Environmental Management Plans (TEMPs)
- Fostering networks and sharing between government, communities and project's capacity building on access and use of weather and climate information
- Research – Climate Asia, decentralized risk informed planning, financial services, climate and weather information dissemination
- Advocacy and sharing events to encourage uptake of BRACED resilience approaches and activities into policy strategies and wider projects.
- Documentation of best practices and lessons and knowledge sharing

2. b

Resilience framework

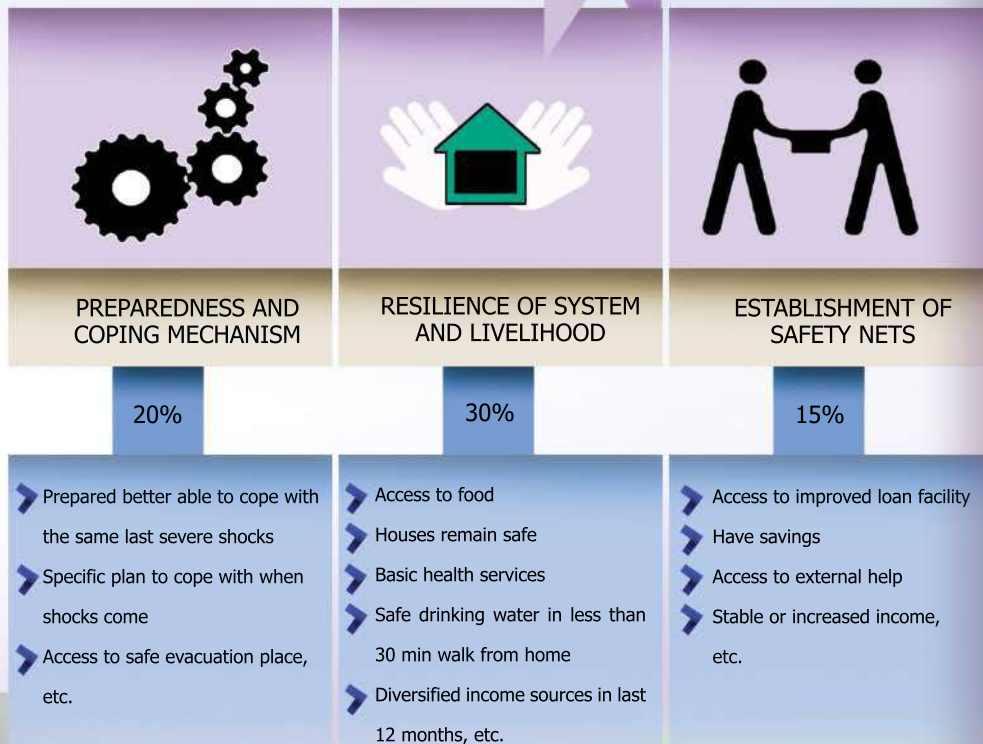
The above mentioned work packages are being delivered through a resilience building framework highlighted in the diagram below.



2. c Resilience measurement framework

To understand the impact that BRACED activities have on the resilience of target communities, BRACED Myanmar has implemented a comprehensive results measurement framework using a composite index of resilience. The index includes 30 sub-indicators comprising five dimensions of changes which were selected, grouped and weighted in participatory method together with beneficiaries and stakeholders.

BRACED Myanmar Composite 5 DIMENSIONS OF CHANGE at Household



Index of Resilience FOR MEASURING RESILIENCE Level in Myanmar



COMMUNICATION, ACCESS
AND USE OF INFORMATION

20%

- Access to weather forecast/risk information
- Use of weather forecast/risk information to make key livelihood decisions
- Assets to receive information, etc.



DECISION-MAKING AND
PLANNING

15%

- Women's participation in planning & decision-making
- Children's participation in planning & decision-making
- Women's confidence on raising concerns to local authorities, etc.

The assessment of changes in resilience (using the composite index) is measured using a quasi-experimental evaluation approach surveying 2,400 households – 50% from target villages in which the project is directly intervening, and 50% from comparable non-target villages. Non-target villages provide a representative comparison to the target villages matched by shocks, economic and ecological status and population size allowing the project to attribute changes in target villages to the BRACED project measured against background changes and developments occurring across villages without project support. To prevent spill-over effects from the interventions, an exclusion zone around each target village was established at a radius of 2km to 5km from the target village.

The survey includes 50% women respondents to better understand impacts on different genders. During the mid-line survey 2016, data were only collected at target villages due to time and budget constraints. An end-line survey will be implemented at the end of 2017 to collect data from both target and control villages. Further, a tracker survey was designed to measure the outreach of resilience Public Service Announcements (PSAs) being disseminated under BRACED, and covered a representative sample of 1,000 households from 8 target townships.

3 BRACED Myanmar Project's Results in Action

BRACED Myanmar has achieved progressive results in its first 2 years of implementation. The highlighted results are based on the findings of the midline survey undertaken in December 2016 and information gathered through regular monitoring until March 2017.

3. a Communities adapt risk informed planning

Village Disaster Management Committees (VDMCs) were mobilized in all 155 project villages and provided with improved capacities, practical task forces and required training. VDMCs' roles and responsibilities were established to lead and steer resilience planning and implementation activities in the community.

155 target villages have completed their community resilience assessments identifying shocks and stresses, vulnerabilities and capacities. Action plans were developed to mitigate risks.

100% target villages reported that they used some level of climate/risk information in their village planning compared to 56% in 2015 baseline survey.

"With BRACED support, we formed village disaster management committee involving women, and developed community resilience action plans using hazard map, seasonal calendar, past disaster profile, etc to identify risk and prioritize key mitigation actions for village and household level. We are implementing prioritized actions in the resilience action plan with support from BRACED, community contribution and local government to cope effects of disasters and climate extremes".

*Nyein Chan Aung,
Htone Bo Kwat Village,
Hpa-An Township, Kayin State*



3. b Households are better prepared with plans to respond disaster and climate shocks

VDMCs and community members in target villages are demonstrating improved actions for preparedness for disasters and climate change.

Over 40,000 households were mobilized through comprehensive resilience assessments and action planning across 155 villages to address climatic shocks and stresses.

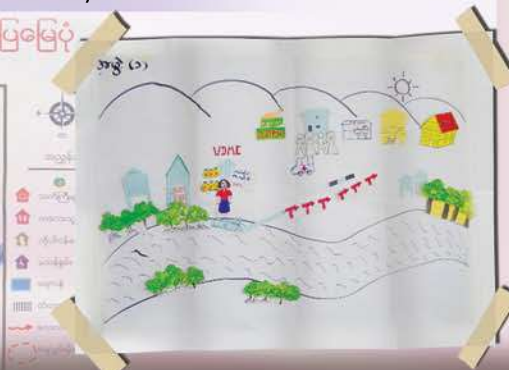
Over 140 communities resilience plans were implemented improving livelihoods, agriculture, community infrastructure (evacuation centers, access roads and water supply systems) and improved financial services.

22% of target population (23% female and 20% male) now have household level plans to cope with anticipated shocks compared to 13% in 2015 baseline survey.

24% of target population (24% female and 25% male) have tried new agricultural techniques (organic farming, new machinery and water system, etc.) compared to 6% in 2015 baseline survey.

10% of target population (8% female and 12% male) have tried raising new type of animal compared to 3% in 2015 baseline survey.

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"Our village used to suffer every year from floods, we used to lose stored foods, assets, livestock and paddy and other crops before harvesting due to floods. Thanks to BRACED team they helped us to conduct community resilience assessment, plan and construct flood protection dam and water gate. During last monsoon, our village was not flooded, we could harvest paddy safely and save our all assets and livestock"

U Mg Mg,
Da La San Village,
Dagon Myothit (Seikkan) Township,
Yangon Region



3. c People's access to financial services increased

Self-Help Groups (SHGs)/Village Savings & Loans Associations (VSLAs) members and microfinance loan recipients are using loans for livelihoods and income generation activities and for household and family activities including establishment of small businesses, children's education, house improvements, livestock breeding, fisheries and inputs for agriculture.

2,600 people (around 90% women) have received access to financial services through BRACED supported microfinance, SHGs and VSLAs.

87 VSLAs/SHGs were established and operationalised engaging 1,775 members (around 90% women) with improved capacity, facilitation support, and seed grants.

Around 1,000 microfinance clients are served providing affordable loans to improve their livelihoods and cope with climatic shocks.

"BRACED supported microfinance helped my family to establish and expand cloth sewing business providing opportunities for additional income and savings to better feed family members during lean and flooding seasons and support children's education"

*Daw Win Win Khaing,
Shwe Myaing Thiri Ward,
Mawlamyine Township, Mon State*

3. d Women and children trained and engaged in planning and decision making

As key stakeholders in resilience awareness and planning at community level, women and children have been engaged through a range of resilience awareness, planning, implementation and knowledge dissemination activities.

Over 5,000 women and 2,500 children (50% girls) were trained or educated on climate change adaptation, resilience, women leadership and community resilience assessment, and engaged in local level planning and decision making.

100% target villages ensured some level of women's representation at their community level resilience planning compared to 57% in 2015 baseline survey.

85% target villages ensured some level of children's representation at their village level community resilience planning compared to 44% in 2015 baseline survey.



"After attending training from BRACED, I have gained a good knowledge on the effects of disasters and climate extremes, and how we can be better prepared to address them. Now, I can discuss about it with adults and older people or whenever I have chance to contribute in village level planning or awareness raising. I share my knowledge on resilience building and climate change with other children and community members."

*Ma Thwal Thwal Hnin
(17 years old)
G Pyin Village, Tougup
Township, Rakhine State*

3. e People received and used weather forecasts/risk information

Many community members were found to be aware that frequency and intensity of hazards are increasing but did not thoroughly understand the cause of the increasing hazard. Community resilience assessment, climate change and resilience awareness trainings provided to the community have resulted in increasing use of weather forecast/risk information for preparedness planning.

78% of target population (77% female and 79% male) have access to weather forecasts/risk information compared to 56% in 2015 baseline survey.

Of those, 60 % use weather forecast/risk information to make key livelihood decisions compared to 44% in 2015 baseline survey.

Over 359,000 people (Men: 184,314 and Women: 175,239) reached through resilience and adaption messages in 8 target townships through Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

Over three-quarters (78%) of those reached say that the PSAs have improved their confidence in taking action to help prepare for an extreme weather event (10% improved a lot, 68% improved a bit).

Half (52%) of those reached say that they or their family have taken action as a result of exposure to the PSAs such as storing food or making preparations for a disaster.

"BRACED showed me where to find climate and weather information. These days, I listen to radio to get weather forecasts before making decision to plan or harvest my crops"

*Daw Artee, Pan Phat Akha Village,
Kengtung Township, Shan State*



3. f Awareness on risk of climate change increased

Community members were educated on climate change and its effects through multiple mediums including community awareness sessions, training, IEC materials and Public Service Announcements, which helped to improve awareness of community.

73% of target population (70% female and 78% male) have heard about 'climate change' compared to 51% in baseline survey 2015.

Of those who heard, 74% people are experiencing effects of climate change into their villages compared to 44% in baseline survey 2015.

"Nowadays our village is experiencing more intensive, water shortage, dry lands, deforestation, temperature rise and floods compared to 5 years ago. BRACED informed us these effects are taking place due to climate change, and showed us how can we adapt to those climate change effects locally through community resilience assessment, planning and implementation"

*Ma Khin Swe Aye,
Taung Kalay Village,
Hpa-An Township, Kayah State*





3. g Coordination and partnership improved

Several activities supported by the project have fostered greater collaboration and coordination between stakeholders including communities and local and national government level on resilience.

17 monsoon forums were organized together with Department of Metrology and Hydrology (DMH) engaging all relevant stakeholders and systematically disseminated weather and climate information to incorporate in preparedness and development planning.

With BRACED guidance, DMH Facebook account was updated to a sponsored page, which helped to increase access to weather and risk information to additional 600,000 Facebook user in real time increasing to 1 million followers.

490 local/subnational institutions including VDMCs, CBOs and local administrations were trained and mobilized to address shocks and stresses to disaster and climate change.

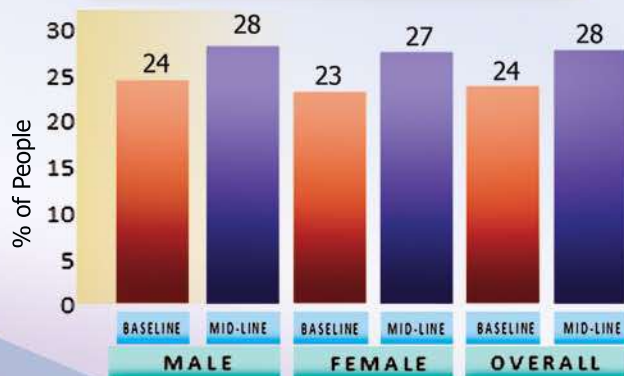
Township level authorities are being equipped with updated Township Disaster Management Plans (TDMPs) and Township Environment Management Plans (TEMP) to better improve their disaster-resilience planning and provide services in coordinated manner.

4 Contribution to Resilience Index

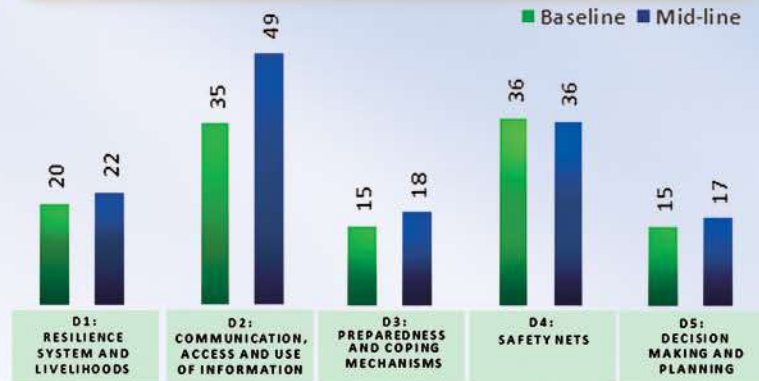
The resilience index scores presented here are based on data collected in baseline survey 2015 and mid-line survey 2016. The project plans to implement significant scale of activities between January to July 2017 which will be captured through end line survey to be rolled out in November/December 2017. The degree of changes across specific dimensions varied, which was expected as it is understood that some dimensions require more intensive investment and engagement over a longer time period than the current project period. The survey also only measured targeted villages and therefore does not fully account for attribution of project activities.

The mid-line survey 2016 shows that across all BRACED townships, 28% of the target population reported improvement on their resilience status based on the composite index of resilience (please see 2.c of this report) compared to 24% in baseline survey 2015. The similar level of progress are measured for both male and female beneficiaries.

Resilience Index Progress



Dimensions-wise Progress on Resilience Index



Further, the results showed 49% of the target population compared to 35% in baseline survey 2015 had improved communication, access and use of information. Other dimensions have also measured progressive improvements from baseline survey as shown in above bar diagram.

The BRACED Myanmar Alliance is now looking forward to be able to document and disseminate evidence of best practices and learnings from the first phase of implementation of the project. This knowledge will be used to sustain current activities and to replicate and scale the community resilience framework beyond the current BRACED programme. The alliance will support the implementation of the following recommended actions to improve resilience planning in Myanmar:

Support the integration of risk information into formal community and township planning processes and improve dissemination of risk information through formal channels.

Help strengthen local development through better coordination and collaboration between communities, local governments, sector line departments, the private sector and non-governmental organisations. This should include platforms for dialogue and sharing of experiences and learnings.

Support to sustain BRACED tools and approaches and learnings at township and community level authorities and stakeholders, and improve future local level community resilience planning and services delivery in an inclusive manner.

Please direct any questions publication to:

Jeremy Stone: JeremyKieron.Stone@plan-international.org

Bhushan Shrestha: bhushan.shrestha@plan-international.org

Design Creation

Aung Thura (FDCA)

www.aungthuradnc1@gmail.com



Plan International Myanmar

No.7 Kanbawza Street, Ward No (2) Golden Valley,
Bahan Township, Yangon, Myanmar