Rohingya Crisis Myanmar: Strengthening Inter-Communal Cohesion through Storytelling, Dialogue and Community Engagement

Situation Analysis

Supported by an Impact Assessment of Peace and Development Initiative (Kintha)'s Community Engagement Initiative

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List of Acronyms

ANP	Arakan National Party
ARSA	Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army
BGP	Border Guard Police
CEI	Community Engagement Initiative
CfP	Culture for Peace
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GoM	Government of Myanmar
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
KII	Key Informant Interview
PDI	Peace and Development Initiative (Kintha)

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Executive Summary

Over six years since inter-communal violence affected Rakhine State, relations between Rakhine and mostly Rohingya Muslim communities are yet to recover, remaining characterised by mistrust and generally low levels of interactions. The situation in 2018 has been heavily influenced by the government of Myanmar's policy of segregation between communities, and a perception amongst many communities that the government is not listening to or acting on their concerns. The large-scale violence in northern Rakhine State in 2016 and 2017 has strained relations further.

This report provides a situation analysis of Sittwe, Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw and Buthidaung townships to support the planning of the project Rohingya Crisis Myanmar: Strengthening Inter-Communal Cohesion in Rakhine State through Storytelling, Dialogue and Community Engagement, designed by Peace and Development Initiative (PDI) Kintha, Culture for Peace gUG (CfP) and inmedio Berlin. As the storytelling project will be supported by the foundations laid by PDI's current Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) project, this report also provides an assessment of the impacts and challenges that project has met and the implications this has for the storytelling project.

Activities to strengthen social cohesion are crucial, and PDI is one of the few national organisations doing this bold work in what can be a context hostile towards organisations supporting engagement between Rohingya and Rakhine communities. Positively, there is a high level of awareness and positive perceptions of PDI in the areas surveyed.

Levels of current interactions between Rakhine and Rohingya communities differ between the surveyed areas (villages in Sittwe, Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw and Buthidaung townships) in both quantity and quality. Interactions in Sittwe and Mrauk-U were generally less frequent and more economic in nature. In Buthidaung, interactions were reported as more frequent, and social interactions were more frequently reported. Kyauktaw lay between these two. Significantly, this assessment has found that there is a high level of interest among all rural communities surveyed in having more frequent interactions with other communities in the future.

PDI's activities in the locations to date have been found to have supported positive changes in social cohesion, and there are examples of participants using the skills learnt to constructively manage conflict in their areas. Participants reported better relationships both within their communities and with other communities as a result of attending CEI workshops, highlighting the importance of intra-communal cohesion.

These findings suggest that different modes of programming are required in different locations. It is recommended that a "two-track" approach is taken by starting intra-communal activities in some locations, and inter-communal (between Rakhine and Rohingya communities) in others.

Given the divides recognised *within* communities, there is a need to engage between men and women, the youth and elders, as well as moderates and more hostile voices. This will not only support strong communities but will also develop ways for participants and communities to build bridges with others. There is a need to support the development of positive tools for communicating, including active listening skills and mediation skills, as well as greater knowledge of issues of gender and critical media literacy.

Conditions in certain areas of Buthidaung, particularly its urban centre, are suitable for intra-communal activities. Elsewhere in central Rakhine intra-communal activities should be conducted before moving to include both communities when it is assessed to be appropriate.

Other recommendations for the storytelling project are based on the challenges found with implementation in the locations to-date, and are summarised here:

- The current system of recruiting participants through village leaders needs to be revised. Where possible, PDI should recruit "mobilisers" in the villages to assist with this and other activities.
- Revising recruitment for more control will facilitate a greater number of women in activities.
- Spend extended time with participants in the project locations to consolidate learning and build relationships.
- Facilitators should be given opportunities to develop their understandings of the content and topics of modules, and to attend teacher/facilitator trainings to support effective delivery to communities with varying levels of understanding/language skills.
- Modules' curricula should be reviewed periodically with input from project staff.

Introduction

The introduction section of this report provides a brief background to the context in central and northern Rakhine State and PDI's engagement with local communities in those contexts to date. Given the great variation in context between locations, this report will consider each township separately. A brief background is provided, before an analysis of the current social cohesion context, the impact and challenges of the PDI's engagement to date, and opportunities for future engagement for the storytelling project. Most engagement in the locations surveyed has been through PDI's CEI project and as such this learning process has involved an impact assessment of this project with the goal of supporting the storytelling project in those locations. The impact assessment includes all townships but Kyauktaw, as CEI activities have not yet started in that township. Finally, the report will present its overall findings and recommendations.

Background

Rakhine State (formerly Arakan State) has long been a diverse, multi-ethnic frontier. Prior to military operations in 2017 which pushed over 700,000 people, mostly Rohingya, into Bangladesh, Rakhine State had a population of approximately 3.2 million people. Data indicates that prior to these military operations, approximately 60% of the state identified as ethnically Rakhine, some 30% of Rakhine State's population were Rohingya, and the final 10% made up of various other groups including Hindus, Chin, Bamar, Maramargyi, Khami, Dinet, Thet, Mro and Kaman.[1] Current statistics on ethnicity are unavailable.

> **Box: A note on names**
>
> The use of the term "Rohingya" remains very sensitive in Myanmar, where they are known as "Muslims in Rakhine", "Bengalis" or the derogatory "*kalar*", reflecting the commonly held belief that they are in Rakhine illegitimately.
>
> Not all Muslims in Rakhine State identify as Rohingya, particularly Kaman communities, who are recognized as an official ethnic group in Myanmar and are therefore given greater freedoms – although their rights – including freedom of movement – remain limited. Since 2012, Kaman communities have also been treated with suspicion and rumours have spread that some Rohingya have posed as Kaman in order to get citizenship rights.
>
> This report uses the term Rohingya to refer to the majority Muslim community in Rakhine State and "Muslim" to refer to Muslim communities in Rakhine or Myanmar more generally.

While coexistence has been the norm throughout the history of what is now Rakhine State, relations between Rakhine and Rohingya communities have been strained since at least the late colonial period. As the independence movement gained strength across the country in the 1920s and 1930s, those of South Asian origin were demonised and suspected of having loyalty to the British.[2]

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[1] "Distribution of Population in Maungdaw District and the Whole Rakhine State", Rakhine State Government, July 2017, available from: http://themimu.info/node/59448.

[2] Muslim communities in Rakhine State arrived as early as the 9th century, and there has been migration across the often-arbitrary border in both directions for at least hundreds of years. For a good illustration of this,

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Key actors and communities in general tend to date the origins of the current tensions to 1942 in particular –as Japanese forces took Arakan and the British retreated, Rakhine and Rohingya took different sides and communal violence ensued across the area. Rohingya were displaced from south and central Rakhine and fled to the north, while Rakhine communities fled from northern Rakhine to the south. As a result, Rohingya communities make up less than half the population in central Rakhine State, but have been the majority in northern Rakhine State's Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships, the modern border of Myanmar and Bangladesh.

During the period of military rule in Myanmar (1962 – 2011) many ethnic minority communities in Myanmar suffered exclusion, violent oppression and attempts by the state to erase their culture or language. These policies have been directed in particularly harsh ways towards the Rohingya community. The 1977-78 *Nagamin* military operation ostensibly to check citizenship verification cards was marked by killings, mass arrests, torture and other abuses, and over 200,000 Rohingya fled to Bangladesh.[3] Again, in 1991-92 the regime again repeated an operation with similar outcomes. Furthermore, the current 1982 citizenship law has effectively made the Rohingya community stateless, due to their exclusion from the list of Myanmar's 135 officially recognised "national races".

The current conflict context has been shaped in many ways by the inter-communal violence of 2012, which affected central and northern Rakhine State in two "waves" across June and October that year and can be linked to a campaign of hate speech following to the rape and murder of a Rakhine woman by Muslim men in Rambree Township, the massacre of 10 Muslim pilgrims in Taunggup Township and riotous violence in Maungdaw Township in late May/early June that year. Security forces were also implicated in the violence against Rohingya in 2012. Some 128,000 people displaced in 2012, mostly Rohingya, remain in internally displaced persons camps in central Rakhine State. While displaced Rakhine have been resettled and allowed to engage in economic, social and political life, continuing restrictions of freedom of movement for Muslim communities mean segregation and exclusion is the norm in many areas.

More than six years after these events, relations between communities remain limited, and are characterized by a lack of trust. Frequent checkpoints are a constant threat, where Muslims are regularly victims of extortion, harassment and arbitrary arrest. News of violence elsewhere, or rumours of impending violence, are often spread on Facebook and are a key trigger for incidents.

Despite the inauguration of a new political system with some limited democratic features 2011, and the election of the National League for Democracy in 2015, Rohingya communities have continued to suffer at the hands of the military, which does not answer to the civilian government. As a result of this history of conflict, oppression and neglect by the state, there is a legacy of poverty and exclusion, extremely weak legal, infrastructural and institutional frameworks, limited health and social services, and poor access to markets for the state population in general and for Muslims in particular across Rakhine State today.

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please see: Galache 2018, "'Illegal migration' in Arakan: Myths and numbers", *New Mandala*, 16 August, available from: http://www.newmandala.org/illegal-migration-arakan-myths-numbers/.

[3] "'The Government Could Have Stopped This': Sectarian Violence and Ensuing Abuses in Burma's Arakan State," Human Rights Watch, August 2012, p. 11–17.

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The events of 2016 and 2017 had a devastating impact for all communities in Rakhine State. In October 2016 military operations began in northern Rakhine State in response to attacks by the newly-emerged Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) on a Border Guard Police (BGP) outpost. In response, Myanmar military operations resulted in the displacement of 87,000 people, most of them Rohingya, to Bangladesh.

In 2017, a much larger scale military operation took place in northern Rakhine State, purportedly as a response to ARSA attacks on BGP outposts on 25 August 2017. An estimated 9,000 people lost their lives as a result of the military "clearance operations", and over 700,000 people were displaced.[4] The UN Human Rights Council-mandated Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar has recently found grounds for the investigation and persecution of Myanmar military officials on charges of genocide. Although the recent violence has taken place in northern Rakhine, it has been strongly felt in central Rakhine – fuelling mistrust, extremism and segregation.

PDI's activities have been affected by this changing context. Villages in which PDI was formerly working in Rathedaung Township were destroyed in 2017, particularly in western Rathedaung on the southern border of Maungdaw Township. This area was formerly populated by mostly Rohingya villages. In the aftermath of the violence the villages have been bulldozed and some Buddhist "settler" villages established, suggesting plans to alter the demography of the area permanently. New roads have also been built through affected areas, increasing accessibility between Maungdaw, Rathedaung, Sittwe and Buthidaung.

It is evident that processes of violent conflict and peacebuilding between communities do not occur in a vacuum. These dynamics are heavily influenced by a wide range of influences including state policies and politics, international factors such as narratives about Islam which have a global reach, the influence of religious leaders across Myanmar, newly-opened economic opportunities supported by international investment, and the victimization of other communities in Rakhine State who are often neglected and excluded from discussion. These conditions are ongoing, with hardened persecution of Muslim communities, particularly Rohingya, and the granting of rights to communities on an unequal basis – a reflection of the exclusionary conception of Myanmar national identity which has consolidated in recent years.

A consistent feature of the relationship between Rakhine communities and the central government is their apparent volatility. During the violence in northern Rakhine State in 2016 and 2017 a unity against the perceived "Rohingya threat" overshadowed the tensions between Rakhine communities and the central government. The latent level of discontent with the government has again become strikingly obvious due to several key events in 2018 which have increased perceptions of the marginalisation of Rakhine communities by the state.

In January 2018 police shot on protesters in Mrauk-U town, killing eight people. The protest was sparked by a refusal of the township government to give permission for a ceremony commemorating

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4 Report of the detailed findings of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar, UN Human Rights Council, 39th Session, 17 September 2018, p. 242

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the fall of the Arakan Kingdom to the Burmese in 1784. Shortly after this event, the Mrauk-U Township Administrator was assassinated and in February three bombs exploded in Sittwe, injuring none, in apparent retaliation. While a group of people have been arrested in relation to the murder, many observers believe that the Arakan Army, a Rakhine insurgent group, is behind these acts of violence.[5]

In late August, 51 Rakhine internal migrants traveling to work in Shan State were stopped, had their identity cards temporarily confiscated and were told to return to Rakhine State. The reasons for this remain unclear, but the group was reportedly told the action was ordered by the local military commander. The case sparked outrage on social media among Rakhine communities, and has increased suspicion of the military.

Most recently, on 25 September a member of Myanmar's military intelligence, Corporal Win Htike, was shot and killed in Sittwe during a festival. Before the shooting, threats had been made against the corporal's life. These earlier death-threats were related to a post that he had shared falsely claiming that 10 soldiers jailed for committing a massacre in northern Rakhine State in 2017 had been released from prison. The post went viral and was even shared by the UN Special Rapporteur on Myanmar Yanghee Lee.[6] Sources indicate that Win Htike was responsible for monitoring the Arakan Army's social media accounts at the time of his death, although this cannot be confirmed.

Three Rakhine youth, one an ANP member and the other two from Arakan Youth Conference have been arrested in relation to the deadly shooting, although there has been little evidence released supporting their involvement.[7]

There is a climate of fear amongst journalists across the country, and freedom of expression has become under threat during the current NLD government. As well as the jailing of two Reuters journalists for exposing a massacre of Rohingya by security forces in Maungdaw Township in 2017, a local Rakhine reporter survived a knife attack in Sittwe in December 2017.[8] There is increasingly intolerance of criticism of the government – an MP from central Rakhine's Rambree Township is facing charges of defamation for criticising the education system in his constituency. Former head of the ANP Doctor Aye Maung is also being held under charges of treason for his criticism of the central government in an event linked to the shootings in Mrauk U in early 2018. Doctor Aye Maung's son, U Tin Maung Win, won the Rathedaung by-election on 3 November in a land-slide victory[9] which saw anti-Naypyidaw sentiment mobilised by the three Rakhine candidates.

[5] Su Myat Mon 2018, "Dramatic Arrests in Yangon of Four Suspects in Mrauk U Killing", *Frontier Myanmar*, 7 February, available from: https://frontiermyanmar.net/en/dramatic-arrests-in-yangon-of-four-suspects-in-mrauk-u-killing.
[6] Moe Myint 2018, "Arakanese Activist Arrested in Sittwe", *The Irrawaddy*, 9 October, available from: https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/arakanese-activist-arrested-police-sittwe.html.
[7] Moe Myint 2018, "Three Arakanese Youth Activists Held in Rakhine," *The Irrawaddy,* 11 October, available from: https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/three-arakanese-youth-activists-held-rakhine.html.
[8] Ye Min Saw 2018, "Stoking the Embers of Fear in Rakhine State," *The Irrawaddy*, 30 October, available from: https://www.irrawaddy.com/opinion/guest-column/stoking-embers-fear-rakhine-state.html.
[9] U Tin Maung Win, running as an independent against the dominant ANP, won 82% of the vote – read by many observers to reflect the continuing influence of Doctor Aye Maung on Rakhine politics. "November 3, 2018, by-election elected Hluttaw candidates and results," *Global New Light of Myanmar,* 16 November 2018.

Within this complex conflict around government, Rakhine communities and Rohingya communities, the work of international organisations and NGOs in Rakhine State has become increasingly politicised. NGOs operating in Rakhine are frequently accused of bias towards Rohingya communities, and in recent years have adjusted their programming to achieve a more balanced coverage of communities.

Organisational Overview

PDI was established in 2013 with an aim to build sustainable peace between communities in conflict in Rakhine State. PDI operates projects in urban and rural areas of central and northern parts of the state. Participants include Rakhine, Rohingya, Kaman, Dinet, Hindu and other diverse communities. PDI aims to transform negative attitudes and behaviours contributing to conflict, inspire and motivate young people to work towards peace and to build local capacity for peacebuilding.

CfP, a Berlin-based organisation, together with inmedio are supporting PDI with the development of the new storytelling project to transform relationships between communities affected by conflict in Rakhine State. Since 2012, CfP have been promoting art and culture to support marginalised groups. Inmedio adds international experience in peacebuilding processes and mediation skills to the cooperation.

Community Engagement Initiative (CEI) Project

PDI's main mode of operation in rural areas is the CEI project. As such, it forms the basis for the storytelling project which will build on the trust that PDI has built with communities and the knowledge and skills that communities have strengthened through engagement to date.

The CEI project offers three-day workshops designed to strengthen social cohesion in rural communities in Rakhine State and has been implemented by PDI since 2013. Since 2017, the project has been focused on Sittwe Township, after ceasing operations in Buthidaung and Rathedaung following the military operations the same year. Activities in Buthidaung and Rathedaung were stopped due to security concerns, particularly in Buthidaung; and the fact that most of the Rohingya villages where PDI was working in Rathedaung were destroyed.

The project is currently being expanded to Kyauktaw and Mrauk-U townships in 2018-19. The goal of the project is to build social cohesion. Its indicators are related to increased collaboration between communities, and increased trust and collaboration between diverse youth in Rakhine State.

Three CEI modules in life skills, civics and peacebuilding are conducted within a one-year period in each village (6 villages per township). Participants are between the ages of 15 and 50, and there have been approximately 20 participants in each training. There is an effort to recruit youth in particular (defined as ages 18-25), although there have been obstacles to this, as discussed below.
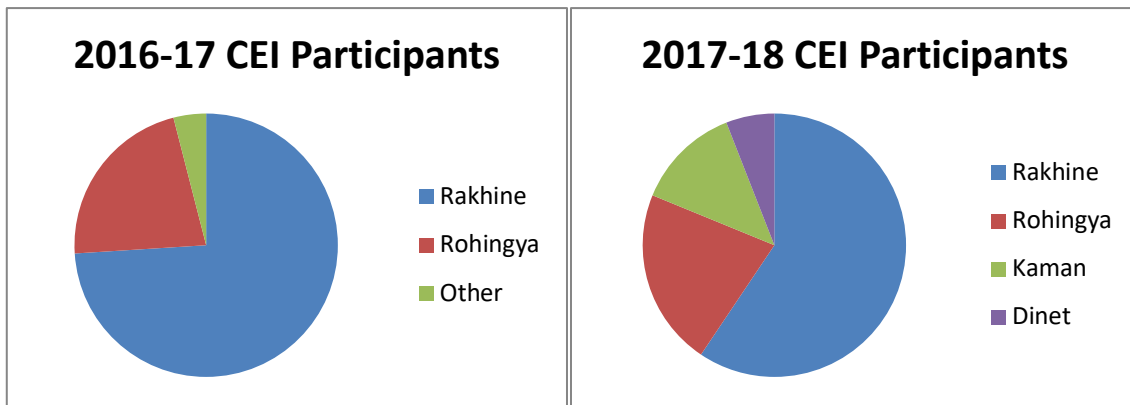
Chart 1: CEI participants by identity group, 2016-17 and 2017-18

In 2016-17, 74% of participants were from Rakhine communities, 22% from Rohingya communities and 4% from other communities (Chin, Khami and Dinet). Male participants were the majority in Rohingya communities (89% of total participants), while in Rakhine communities females were the majority (58% of total Rakhine participants).

In 2017-18, approximately 60% of participants were from Rakhine communities, 22% from Rohingya communities, 13% from Dinet communities and 6% from Kaman communities. In this year, only 6% of Rohingya participants were female. In Rakhine communities, the majority were again female, at 64%.
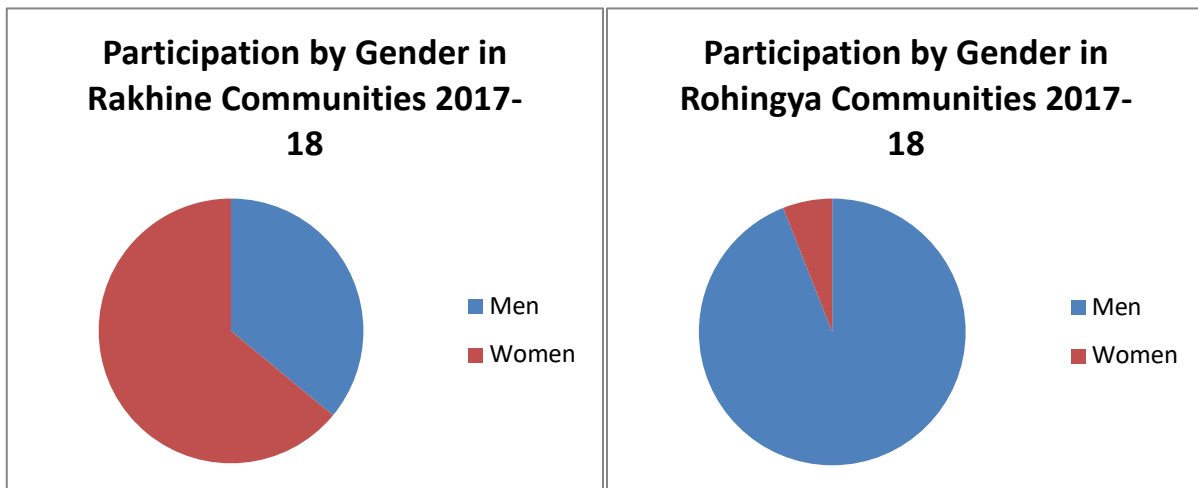
Chart 2: CEI participants by gender in Rakhine and Rohingya communities, 2017-18

Overall gender balance has been approximately even over the last two years of programming. In 2016-17, 48% of participants were female, and 49% were female in 2017-18. As shown above however, this does not mean equal representation in both communities, and meaningful participation of all participants is also a question.

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Research Objectives

To inform planning for the Rohingya Crisis Myanmar storytelling project, this situation analysis has been conducted in Sittwe, Mrauk-U, Buthidaung and Kyauktaw townships of Rakhine State. As PDI's CEI project forms the foundation of the storytelling project, the research has also identified the impacts and challenges of PDI's engagement to-date, in order to produce effective recommendations for the storytelling project.

The specific objectives of the research are to:
1. Analyse and document the current context of inter and intra communal relations in the research areas.
2. Identify conflict management mechanisms used by local communities in research areas.
3. Identify how PDI's existing CEI project is interacting with these contexts.
4. Identify and document successes* and challenges of programming to date, to inform best practice in the future.
5. Identify the opportunities and risks in terms of how PDI and CfP can take a conflict sensitive approach to engaging with communities in future activities.

Successes include changes in the nature of relationships between and within communities, the transformation of driving factors of conflict, and building momentum for peace including the development of constructive ways to deal with conflict.

Recommendations will be made to suggest;
- The locations which will be suitable for the storytelling project in 2019 and beyond;
- Activities to include in the storytelling project to suit the needs of communities;
- How the storytelling project can be structured to suit the context, and;
- How organisational performance could be improved to increase effectiveness and efficiency during the storytelling project.

Methodology

This section presents an overview of the methods, locations and limitations of this research.

Methods

This research project has used a mixed methods approach, involving qualitative in-depth, key informant interviews (KII), focus group discussions with project staff and a household survey.

This combination of research methods was designed to capture the voices of diverse actors in the locations surveyed, thereby ensuring that the challenges or limitations of the project, as well as the impacts and opportunities to future engagement, are identified.

During the research, data collectors sought to connect with both more "active" community members such as leaders of youth or women's groups, as well as "hard to reach" community members including people with disabilities, women, the elderly and socio-economically disadvantaged people.

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KIIs were conducted with community leaders, community members and CEI participants.

A household survey was conducted in rural areas with community members identified through a process of random sampling, designed to include diverse segments of the population. The household survey has been sensitive to a "funnel of attrition" in communities – gauging how much awareness there is of the CEI project. Questions have been developed according to research questions outlined in the Terms of Reference, as reflected in the objectives of this research (see above).

Data Collection, October 2018

In addition, a focus group discussion was held with PDI staff in Sittwe, particularly those working on the CEI project.

Due to sensitivities and the need to create a comfortable interview environment, recordings have not been made of interviews, and data collectors were instructed to take detailed notes.

In total, 69 KIIs were conducted and 69 household surveys – meaning a total of 138 respondents. Overall, 61 of the total number of respondents, or 44%, were female. A more complete breakdown of respondents' demographic details is provided in Annex 2. Additionally, the focus group was conducted with three PDI staff (2 female, 1 male).

During the analysis, peacebuilding education specialist Taylor O'Connor was consulted to review early drafts of the report and to provide input on analysis and recommendations.

All data collection tools are included in Annex 1.

Research Locations

This research project has been concerned with three townships in central Rakhine (Sittwe, Mrauk-U and Kyauktaw), and one in northern Rakhine (Buthidaung). The distinction between central and northern Rakhine is not a formal administrative one, but rather an informal distinction made by communities and organisations.

KIIs were conducted in two villages in each township, in rural areas in which the storytelling project could be extended to in the future. Necessarily, these are villages in which PDI has existing relationships and trust, for the most part developed through the CEI project.

One Rakhine and one Rohingya village were selected in each township, with the exception of Sittwe. This was done on the basis of including another group who are affected by conflict but who are often overlooked or ignored. The Kaman are the only majority-Muslim group to be recognised by the government as an official "national race." Despite the fact that many of them hold identify cards showing this, they are subject to the same travel restrictions as paperless Rohingya. This can sometimes be a source of tension between Kaman, Rohingya and Rakhine. Thin Ga Nat Kaman village was therefore included in the research design to improve understanding of these inter-communal relations and the opportunities to engage other communities in the storytelling project.

A small number of KIIs were conducted in Sittwe and Kyauktaw urban areas with some key informants, to be sensitive to the differences in context between urban and rural areas, and to ensure that Rakhine perspectives were included in Sittwe Township. Of the total 25 KIIs conducted in Sittwe Township, 9 were conducted in urban Sittwe (8 ethnic Rakhine respondents, 1 other). One KII was conducted in urban Kyauktaw.

A small number of KIIs were also conducted in Bu May village, Sittwe Township, as the storytelling project has already begun there. Bu May was not chosen as a primary research location due to the fact that there have recently been other research projects conducted there, including by PDI, and there was a risk of 'interview fatigue' and unwanted attention from authorities given the frequency of research there.

One village which has a majority population of people who identify as Kaman has been included in the research design for the purposes of determining the future direction of the storytelling project. The Kaman are a majority-Muslim group who are listed as an officially recognised "national race" in Myanmar and are thus eligible for citizenship – unlike Rohingya. They were included in the research design to determine the status of relationships between Rakhine, Rohingya and Kaman and the needs to build trust between those communities.

The primary research locations were decided in consultation with PDI and are as follows:

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Township	Village	Village Tract/Ward	Ethnicity/Religion	Population*	% Female
Sittwe	Thin Ga Nat	Thin Ga Nat	Kaman	3479	45%
	Ko Saung Hnit		Rohingya		
Mrauk-U	Bu Ywet Ma Nyo	Bu Ywet Ma Nyo	Rakhine	1967	56%
	Pi Pin Yin	Pi Pin Yin	Rohingya	939	56%
Buthidaung	Thapye Taung	Let Wae Dek Pyin Shey	Rakhine	1790	39%
	Maung Na Ma Pale Taung	Nan Yar Gone	Rohingya	125	51%
Kyauktaw	Kun Ohn Chaung	Kun Ohn Chaung	Rakhine	1,329	54%
	Ah Lel Kyun	Ah Lel Kyun	Rohingya	6,716	55%

A smaller number of KIIs were also conducted in the following locations:

Township	Village	Village Tract/Ward	Ethnicity/Religion	Population*	% Female
Sittwe	Urban Sittwe	Various	Rakhine	100,748	54%
	Bu May	Bu May	Rohingya	1,153	52%
Kyauktaw	Urban Kyauktaw	Various	Rakhine	19,492	55%

*Population figures are taken from the 2014 census and reflect population at the village tract level or total urban population (Sittwe and Kyauktaw).

Limitations

Identity: In a context of heightened sensitivity around identity, interview responses are inevitably moulded to some extent by the identity of the person asking the questions. Due to restrictions on travel and related security concerns, it has not been possible to hire Muslim data collectors. Under the current context, this may have had some implications for the responses given to data collectors, who identify as Rakhine.

The fact that research has been conducted in villages where PDI has existing projects and relationships has mitigated this limitation to some degree. Researchers have also consulted village leaders before carrying out research, and interviews were conducted with informed consent and assurances of anonymity.

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Gender: In Rakhine State, most individuals in influential positions in politics, the economy and religious institutions are men.[10] In recognition of the need to hear diverse voices in order to fully understand the dynamics of conflict in the areas under consideration, data collectors have actively sought out individuals of different genders to achieve gender balance amongst the sample.

Box: Women's Leaderships and Political Participation in Context
Across Myanmar, only 0.01% of village leadership positions are held by women. In the 2016-2021 parliament, female representatives at the Union level accounted for 13.7% of elected members, or just more than 10% when non-elected military representatives are considered. No township administrators in Myanmar are women, and women account for only 0.25% of ward and village administrators, or 42 of 16,785.
Source: Asia Foundation 2017

Data Collection: Due to both restrictions on internationals traveling and a short time frame for this project, a team of data collectors recruited through PDI networks were trained to collect data. presented some limitations due to the difficulty of finding people experienced in this work in Sittwe.

Government Permission: In one village in Kyauktaw Township, data collectors were stopped by police to ask for travel permissions. When they were unable to present these police allowed them to continue data collection for the day but told them not to return without permissions the following day. As a result, data collection was not fully completed in one village in Kyauktaw Township.

Context Variation: Village level contexts are highly variable and differ to a high degree within townships or even village tracts. Care has been taken in this report not to make unwarranted generalisations at the township level, and to present the findings as specific to the areas reached. However, certain generalisations can be made, particularly in the differences between northern and central Rakhine, as well as between townships. Other recent reporting has been consulted to ensure the findings presented here do not misrepresent the situation.

Weather: At the inception of the project, it was planned that a Dinet village in Buthidaung Township would be included in the research in order to include another perspective. However, due to unsuitable road conditions and heavy rain due to Cyclone Titli in the Bay of Bengal the research location was moved to Thapye Taung village, Buthidaung Township. Due to time lost, the household survey was not completed in Maung Na Ma Pale Taung, Buthidaung Townships.

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[10] Women's Political Participation in Myanmar: Experiences of Women Parliamentarians 2011-2016, Asia Foundation 2017, available from: https://asiafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Womens-Political-Participation-in-Myanmar-MP-Experiences_report-1.pdf

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Situation Analysis

Sittwe Township: Ko Saung Hnit and Thin Ga Nat villages

Village	Village Tract	Ethnicity/Religion
Thin Ga Nat	Thin Ga Nat	Kaman
Ko Saung Hnit	Thin Ga Nat	Rohingya

Context Background

Sittwe was established by the British in the 1820s when it replaced Mrauk-U as the political and economic centre of the area and continues to be the capital of Rakhine State. Between independence and 2012, the Muslim community constituted an estimated 40% of the town's population. All Muslims were pushed out of the urban area by the violence in 2012 and remain segregated from Rakhine communities. There does remain, however, one heavily policed quarter in downtown Sittwe where Muslims (both Rohingya and Kaman) have stayed – from which they cannot leave or enter without a police escort and the payment of bribes.

Relationships between communities in rural areas were also affected by the violence in 2012. In some locations contact has all but ceased, while in others it has gradually recovered. Interactions have predominantly been around economic activity, and typically remain lower than pre-2012 levels. Economic needs (particularly the fishing industry and labouring in paddy fields) appear to have strengthened relationships in rural areas.[11] This situation differs from urban Sittwe, where interactions are close to nil, despite the economic benefits which would come with greater interactions.

Sittwe is the base for several nationalistic Rakhine political parties, and in particular the Arakan National Party (ANP), who hold the majority of seats in Rakhine State's parliament. Prominent Rakhine politicians have rarely been a voice for reconciliation between communities.[12] This dynamic has an impact on the urban area, where nationalist sentiments are high and demonstrations are not uncommon.

Current Context: Social Cohesion and Conflict Management

Respondents from both villages reported a very low sense of security in the areas where they live. Lack of job opportunities, access to food and healthcare and the possibility of violence with another community were the greatest sources of concern.

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[11] "Building Resilience to Communal Violence: Lessons from Rakhine State", Centre for Diversity and National Harmony, September 2017, Yangon, Myanmar

[12] See, for example: Moe Myint, ANP Repeats Call to Keep Rohingya out of Southern Maungdaw, *The Irrawaddy*, 4 April, 2018, available from: https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/anp-repeats-call-keep-rohingya-southern-maungdaw.html.

Muslims can attend Sittwe hospital only in emergency cases. They require a police escort to travel to the hospital, where patients are segregated. A doctor who formerly worked at the hospital reports that Muslim patients are not treated equally, and face many barriers including restrictions on visitors or access to food. Respondents also noted this unequal treatment during this research process. This included Kaman Muslims who face the same restrictions to accessing Sittwe hospital despite their status as citizens. Like many other locations in central Rakhine State, segregation has entrenched suspicions of the other in all communities.

PDI project participants and other respondents in the villages reported an overall difficult situation in terms of their relations with other communities. Older people in the village more commonly reported that their interactions with other communities was to see friends, while for the most part younger people interacted in economic situations only, if at all. Usually this involved Muslims doing casual labour in Rakhine villages. Villagers in Thin Ga Nat also produce bricks, and Rakhine come to buy these. Interactions between Kaman and Rohingya are more common, and there is freedom of travel between Muslim villages and camps in this area.

In some cases, respondents noted very low levels of interaction with people from different religious and ethnic groups, often over one year. In an extreme case, one 29-year-old woman in Thin Ga Nat village stated that she had not had an interaction with someone from a different ethnic and religious group in 14 years. Despite this, she was interested in PDI conducting more activities in her village.

A 58-year-old man in Bu May noted that since 2012 there were few opportunities for Rohingya to work or travel. Other respondents in Bu May said that the only current relationships with Rakhine are economic, usually involving Rohingya selling groceries to Rakhine who come to buy. "We have these kinds of economic relationships. But we don't have relationships outside of this," according to a 48-year-old woman in Bu May.

Most villagers noted that the village leader would be their first point of contact during a conflict with someone from another ethnic or religious group. "Recently there was an issue between ethnic groups. The village leader called everyone to the village and instructed us to stay in and take care", said a 15-year-old participant from Thin Ga Nat village. This involves staying in the village, often under a community enforced curfew, and ceasing interactions with other communities.

Some respondents, however, commented that the reason for relying on the village leader was because there was no other person to consult on these issues.

In reference to conflict with other communities, a 20-year-old man from Ko Saung Hnit village reported, "if something happens, I don't dare to imagine [what would happen to us]." As reflected in these responses, there remains a low sense of security in the villages, and few resources to draw on to improve their situation.

The need to develop constructive relationships with other communities was cited by many respondents in the surveyed villages as something that they wished leaders and organisations to address, and most respondents wanted increased interaction between communities to be made a priority by their village leader in the future. All respondents from Ko Saung Hnit and Thin Ga Nat

villages noted that they wished to have more frequent contact with other ethnic or religious groups in the future.

This enthusiasm was not found everywhere, however. A 50-year-old woman in Bu May reported that; "I don't trust them (people from other ethnic or religious groups). Because after the conflict we didn't speak, we didn't have communication, and our religion and beliefs are not the same".

Respondents in Sittwe town were also less interested in rebuilding relations with Muslim communities. A politician from the dominant ANP commented that the safety in Sittwe town has been improved since Muslims left, and that they were not to be trusted. Similarly, a 50-year-old man in Sittwe town noted that "since 1942 we [Rakhine] have not trusted Muslims," referring to the communal violence which occurred during the second world war.

Several youth in Sittwe town, however, appear to be challenging such generalisations, and commented that they have no problems interacting with people from other communities. Some youth in Sittwe town said they would like to see Muslims regain freedom of movement.

Impacts

The very positive comments from communities indicate that PDI has established a high level of trust in the surveyed project areas in Sittwe Township. All respondents had at least some knowledge of the organisation and its activities, and perceptions were reported to be, in general, moderately to highly positive. Communication both within and between communities, understanding of difference and an increased knowledge base were all cited as benefits of the activities. These comments are also supported by further evidence, as outlined in this section.

Participants of PDI's CEI project were more likely than others to report that relationships between people from had improved during the project period. This was generally in terms of relations within their own community, although some noted that relationships had also improved with those from other communities.

It was particularly noted that improved communication styles had supported better within communities. One 18-year-old Muslim man noted that "the youth have been able to express their own ideas, and we now have got knowledge that is useful in communication".[13] He noted that since the project began, the village leader in his area has been meeting with villagers often in the evenings for discussion about the difficulties they are facing. He wished to be included again in future PDI activities, and he suggested that if the project was done again, there should be more integration of current issues in the village into project activities. Similarly, in Ko Saung Hnit village, a respondent reported that communications had improved both within her village and with those from other villages. She cited the communication skills learnt during the activities in relation to this.

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[13] Due to a problem with the interview tool, it was not possible to capture the specific communication skills that have been found useful by communities in some cases.

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Another youth also reported that youth have increasingly been united in working in village affairs. She noted that there was a "lot of danger" in traveling or communicating with other communities, but that this had improved during the period of the project, in terms of trust between villages of different ethnicities. Similarly, she reported that trust between people in the village had improved as a result of organisational activities.

A 17-year-old participant in Thin Ga Nat village reported that the most beneficial aspect of the CEI project was that it helped to solve issues in her community in a more constructive manner. "I know a lot more now than before I attended the workshops and can speak confidently in front of others now", she said. She commented that youths' perspectives on others had changed, and there is now more respect between individuals. She would like to see the workshops extended to involve others in the village, noting that there are many conflicts within families in the area.

A young Muslim woman was glad to have had the chance to learn new knowledge during the workshops and expressed a wish that the activities be extended or shared with others in the village. The opportunity to learn new knowledge in particular was cited by several respondents as an opportunity of the projects. These types of responses were not unusual and illustrate that PDI has developed a high level of trust in the project villages. Of the total 39 respondents in Thin Ga Nat and Ko Saung Hnit, eight respondents requested more workshops or activities in their village when asked if they had anything to ask at the end of the interview.

It was reported that during the project period, a village leader and villagers who were not speaking due to an argument resolved their differences in Ko Saung Hnit village. Another Muslim youth reported that the skills gained from the project allow them to engage in more work or other activities. After the project, she reported that people from different communities now greet each other on the road more often. She requested that the activities include more people from the village and that classes run for a greater duration.

Another 15-year-old male participant in Thin Ga Nat also commented that the duration of workshops should be longer. "Between youth there is no more discriminatory communication. Now, when we talk, we have more understanding. I can trust others, and share my difficulties with them. Next time, please share more knowledge to the other youth," he said.

Project staff had a strong awareness of the challenges that villagers face and their progress in overcoming them. "When I first taught the training, they didn't know how to communicate with their families and friend, but they improved after the training. Before they would argue about different opinions on topics, but now they consider the needs and wants of others," noted one PDI staff member. "With improved respect for others they are ready to listen," said another staff member. "Before the trainings they were just talking a lot, but now they understand we all have a need for respect".

Challenges

While PDI's engagement in these areas has had many successes, many community members surveyed who have not previously engaged directly with PDI reported that relationships with other

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communities had become worse in the last two years, due to the situation in northern Rakhine State. Organisations need to be aware of the challenges of external factors such as this and support relationships which will be resilient to these factors beyond organisation's control.

Positively, no major issues were reported with the PDI's existing engagement. Issues detected related to understanding and language, participant recruitment, and the duration of activities.

Some participants in communities reported difficulties understanding the topics and questions asked by facilitators, and others identified language difficulties. These difficulties are despite the resource that PDI has in a staff member who can communicate with Rohingya communities in their own language. As will be discussed in overall findings, this valuable asset is not being fully utilised. Difficulties in communication were not always the case, however, and other participants cited the explanations of topics by facilitators as a strength of the project.

Several participants in Sittwe Township commented that often those who were interested in attending workshops could not be included, reflecting the participant recruitment process difficulties known well to project staff.

The current system is to recruit via the village leader, who may select people on unintended criteria (including his friends of family or those who require meals that day). As a result, some participants show little interest in the content of workshops, while others attend for the incentives on the first day and do not attend on the second day.

Facilitators have also had to encourage village leaders to recruit youth. This is an issue in Rohingya villages in particular due to a lack of Rakhine or Myanmar language skills amongst the youth after six years of segregation. As such, village leaders are reluctant to select youth because they may face difficulties understanding the content. Gender is also an issue here, as Muslim women are in some cases confined to their houses and not allowed to interact. As a result of these factors, many participants are older men.

Aside from this, the most common complaint was that the workshop duration was not long enough. This is a risk for the project, as successful social cohesion activities require sustained and intensive engagement. The current system of only engaging for two days, three times a year is very low in intensity.

Opportunities for Storytelling

Most clearly, the respondents in the communities surveyed wished to build constructive relationships with those from Rakhine communities. Many cited poor relationships as a cause of their insecurity and identified improved interaction as among their greatest priorities. The willingness of communities to engage is a very valuable resource for the storytelling project.

While this research has not looked deeply into PDI's projects in any Rakhine communities in Sittwe Township, the willingness of certain Rakhine youth to engage with Muslim communities is clear from the experiences of the researchers, and discussions with Rakhine youth in Sittwe town. This can also

be witnessed very clearly in the enthusiasm of PDI's young staff base. Less positively, while enthusiasm for engagement is high among Rohingya and Kaman communities, indications are that it remains at a low level among many the most vocal in Rakhine communities.

In terms of current interactions, the relationships between communities in Sittwe Townships remain among some of the most challenging of the areas surveyed in this research. It will be challenging to engage Rakhine and Rohingya/Kaman in the same activities.

For this reason, it is recommended in Sittwe township that the storytelling project begins activities within communities as a starting point. There are many divisions between different groups within communities, including between older and younger people, men and women, etc.. Developing the communication, mediation and analytical tools to bridge these divisions will improve living conditions for communities, and build the skills for re-building relationships with other communities in the future. This will also build understanding of this novel project and identify suitable individuals to carry their stories to other communities.

Given the willingness to engage that does exist among these communities in Sittwe, however, there is potential for activities between communities in the future. The locations and participants should be chosen carefully by project staff in collaboration with stakeholders. The conditions in Bu May appear most conducive to inter-communal activities, given the economic relationships that exist there.

There is no need to tackle the difficult issues of conflict in the storytelling activities. There are many commonalities between those of different identity groups. These have been evident in this research and include challenges with job opportunities, difficult relationships supporting families in a situation of poverty, and education and health access. Along with other stories, these commonalities will support empathy between individuals, and are a building-block to mutual understandings of the difficulties each community faces.

Another opportunity is that of providing media literacy training to complement the storytelling. One 17-year-old man from Ko Saung Hnit village reported that due to low levels of education, many people in the village believed any rumour that they encountered on Facebook. His awareness of these issues is positive, but also shows that there remains important work to do. Increased understanding of the unreliability of information encountered on Facebook is needed and is one area in which future projects can make efficient progress with effective results through media literacy training. This was particularly mentioned in the villages in Sittwe Townships but would be helpful for all communities and is covered in the recommendations below.

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Mrauk-U Township: Bu Ywet Ma Nyo and Pi Pin Yin villages

Village	Village Tract	Ethnicity/Religion
Bu Ywet Ma Nyo	Bu Ywet Ma Nyo	Rakhine
Pi Pin Yin	Pi Pin Yin	Rohingya

Context Background

Mrauk U, the historical former capital of the Arakan kingdom, is to this day an influential cultural and political centre. The symbolism of this and the fact that Mrauk-U is home to several influential Rakhine nationalist figures can inspire what is at times a high level of nationalism. Like other locations, dynamics in the township are also affected by broader political developments as well as conflict in northern Rakhine State.

Villages in Mrauk-U Township were affected by some of the worst violence in 2012, and recovery has been slow since this time. Following the violence in northern Rakhine in 2016 and again in 2017, interactions between communities typically ceased due to fears of violence, as is often the case in villages across central Rakhine. At the time of writing, interactions have generally returned to the levels they were before October 2016.

As noted above, the historic and contemporary tensions between Rakhine communities and the Bamar-dominated Myanmar state have become strikingly evident during 2018. Mrauk-U has been a centre of some of these developments, such as when police fired on protesters in January of this year, killing eight people.

Current Context: Social Cohesion and Conflict Management

Levels of interaction in the villages surveyed in Mrauk U are lower than those in other townships. Only one third of those surveyed in Pi Pin Yin village reported interaction with someone from a different ethnic or religious group in the last 30 days. A similar percentage reported interaction in Bu Ywet Ma Nyo village.

The interactions between Rakhine and Rohingya communities were mostly economic, involving Rohingya working for Rakhine. A 60-year-old man in Bu Ywet Ma Nyo remarked that, "before the conflict, we had much more interactions with Muslims. It was very common that we would hire them to work when we had work in the fields. But now after the conflict I have no contact with them." Other respondents reported that economic activities were occurring to date, including labouring or trading.

Few were social interactions. One 60-year-old man in Pi Pin Yin village commented that, "I always have communication with my Rakhine friends. If they come to our village we have a coffee together and chat." This man also noted his community's difficulties in accessing basic services, and the segregated nature of these:

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> *"There are a lot of difficulties we are now facing. We are not allowed to travel a long distance; we must stay in our village. There are also a lot of difficulties and barriers to go to Sittwe Hospital for emergency cases. There isn't a school in our village though there is a school for Rakhine people in this village. However, we can now go and work in Rakhine villages.*
>
> *Women experience these difficulties worse than men. If they are ill, they cannot go to hospital without men. In addition, students who passed 10th standard are not allowed to go to the university."*

Bu Ywet Ma Nyo village is currently facing severe divisions and has split into two halves who now have limited communication. The cause of the division is often cited as a result of differing perceptions of a monk in the village. Communications have been severed between friends and families. The situation was told by a 50-year-old man:

> *"The biggest issue in our village now is the splitting of the village. Some of the villagers have said they don't want to see the monk now, and accuse him of various things, and the monastery has split. They accuse him of not being a real monk and have been expelled from the monastery. We have built a new monastery and have continued worshipping there. Because of this issue, now people in the village don't have the same warmness as we did before. When we started building the new monastery, people from old monastery objected to it and we had to resolve it in the court…*
>
> *The people in the village are not communicating very well or cooperating now. But this isn't a huge problem. If they invite us to a monk ordination ceremony there, we will go. If they don't invite us, we won't go. We will probably also invite them… This issue has caused splits within families and amongst the young people."*

Youth are deeply affected by this. One 17-year-old respondent noted that "in our village there is no harmony or understanding of others… there is no unity. The biggest thing is that the social relationships are no longer good here."

While most respondents cited the case of the monastery splitting as a major driver of division in Bu Ywet Ma Nyo, there have long been division in the community there. Villagers are also split politically, with severe divisions between groups who support the Union Solidarity and Development Party, and others who support the ANP. There are some perceptions in the community that these political divisions have contributed to the splitting of the monastery.

The divisions within the community were stark during the selection process for the position of Village Tract Administrator in Bu Ywet Ma Nyo village tract. As it would be unacceptable to both sides for someone from the other community to take the position, a negotiation was had, and the position was assigned to someone from another village situated in the village tract.

In PDI's project locations in Mrauk-U, a positive impact is forming, particularly among youth who have attended the CEI workshops. The CEI project has only been operating in Mrauk-U for four months.

Project staff report that participants seem to have developed greater understandings of others despite the short period of implementation to date. Staff commented, "this is a split village, and some youth never talk to each other", but after the training, youth "now think they should be communicating with those from the other side in more positive ways". Project staff reported that participants from Bu Ywet Ma Nyo were a particular group who have been very enthusiastic about project activities.

Community members also reported positive impacts of PDI's engagement. One youth noted that he had some difficulties before attending the workshop and didn't have the ability to tackle these by himself. He said that he draws on the resources from the activity now to overcome challenges, and that he has gained a lot of knowledge and communication has improved. Similarly, a 43-year-old man commented that "I have a good communication with others after training as I learnt to be patient during training."

Challenges

The challenges to operating in the villages surveyed in Mrauk-U have some commonalities and differences with those found in other townships. Participant selection and language were noted as issues again, but the challenges of intra-communal relations were particularly obvious.

Currently, PDI is only working with one side of Bu Ywet Ma Nyo village. There are different village leaders for each side, and PDI staff are considering the possibilities of bringing participants from either side to activities together. This is an issue that staff will have to manage, as engaging with only one side of the village may also have implications for PDI's interaction with the context there.

A challenge noted by project staff was pressure from some Rakhine communities. In one project area in Mrauk-U, staff have to cross a Rakhine village to reach the Rohingya village where they work. Some individuals are hostile towards this and one staff member felt as though they were judged as "traitors" as they passed. There is no relationship between PDI and the Rakhine village leader in this area.

This example reflects the fact that intra-communal division is a barrier for Rakhine who wish to engage with Rohingya communities. This is also shown by the example of the split village in Bu Ywet Ma Nyo. Constructive communication, negotiation and listening skills are needs for relations within a community and will bridge engagement with other communities as well. Addressing these barriers will increase understandings among community members, empower moderates and challenge divisive voices.

Participant recruitment was again cited as an issue. The lack of male participants in some Rakhine villages is evidently due to the fact that many Rakhine youth, particularly young men, travel to

foreign countries or elsewhere in Myanmar for work. A 50-year-old man in Bu Ywet Ma Nyo noted that "there are many women and few men in the [PDI] project. This is because they go overseas for work, and as such are not so interested in education."

Language was again identified as an issue. "I found the training a little difficult as I do not understand Rakhine language properly," said one 50-year-old woman from Pi Pin Yin village.

Opportunities for Storytelling

The opportunities for taking the storytelling project to Mrauk U are strong. Communities indicated a good relationship with PDI and positive perceptions of the impacts of its projects despite the short period of engagement. The vast majority of respondents from both Rakhine and Rohingya villages reported that they would like to see more interaction with other communities.

The positive impacts and feedback after the short period of the project in Mrauk-U also illustrates the need to continue engagement and consolidate these changes.

However, the villages surveyed in Mrauk-U also reported very low levels of interaction at the current time, and care needs to be taken when rebuilding these. As in Sittwe Township, the potential for joint Rakhine and Rohingya activities in the future needs to be done in collaboration with staff who know the context well and stakeholders in the villages. The short period of time that PDI has been working with these communities suggest that trust levels need to be developed further before integrating joint activities.

In Bu Ywet Ma Nyo, it is not suggested that Rakhine – Rohingya activities take place until the intra-communal tensions are resolved. Such activities may stimulate tensions within the village, given the negative perceptions around interacting with Rohingya that exist.

There case of the split village may be an opportunity for PDI to enter into a mediation role. Storytelling methods may be used as part of a narrative mediation. In such a method, the parties (in this case the two sides of the village) agree on some ground rules before each tells the narratives of the conflict from their perspective. The mediator summarises each narrative and makes a list of issues to be resolved, which the parties then agree upon. During this process, separate sessions may be held with each party to assess their goals, feedback and unstated objections or interests.

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Buthidaung Township: Maung Na Ma Pale Taung and Thabye Taung villages

Village	Village Tract	Ethnicity/Religion
Thapye Taung	Let Wae Dek	Rakhine
Maung Na Ma Pale Taung	Nan Yar Gone	Rohingya

Context Background

Buthidaung Township is part of Maungdaw District, northern Rakhine State. The two townships with comprise Maungdaw District (Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships) are the only Rohingya-majority townships in Myanmar. Due to restricted access to these areas since August 2017, the exact population is currently unknown. In July 2017, the Rakhine State government released figures showing that 740,661 of 817,486 people (90.6%) in Maungdaw region were Muslim.[14]

The ARSA attacks of 25 August included BGP outposts in this township, and the military retaliation was brutal, with little discrimination between civilians and suspected militants. The August 2017 violence has had devastating effects on Buthidaung and the current population numbers are unknown. Most of the 700,000 plus people who fled to Bangladesh were Rohingya from Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships, with a smaller number from Rathedaung Township. Satellite imagery shows that 96 settlements in Buthidaung were destroyed or damaged in the violence, compared to 277 in Maungdaw and 19 in Rathedaung (most in western Rathedaung near the border with southern Maungdaw – an area which formerly had a high number of Rohingya villages).[15] The villages surveyed in Buthidaung were not directly affected by the violence.

Buthidaung was subject to communal violence in the first wave of violence in June 2012, but few incidents were reported in Buthidaung during the second wave in October the same year. While Muslim communities in Buthidaung are subject to the same travel restrictions as other Muslims in Rakhine State, and face arrest for unauthorised travel, the demographic dynamics have meant that there is a much larger level of interaction and economic interdependence between Rakhine and Muslim communities than in central Rakhine State. The northern region of Buthidaung Township is mountainous, heavily forested and sparsely populated. It borders Bangladesh and Myanmar's Chin State. The isolation of the area has made it attractive for insurgent groups such as the Arakan Army, as well as for drug trafficking activity.

Before August 2017, northern Rakhine produced the largest share of rice in Rakhine State, and the displacement has had a severe economic impact on all communities. There is a contextual difference here between northern and central Rakhine State. While in central Rakhine land owners have typically been Rakhine, with Rohingya providing labour, in northern Rakhine a greater proportion of land has been owned by Rohingya, reflecting the demographic differences.

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[14] "Distribution of Population in Maungdaw District and the Whole Rakhine State", Rakhine State Government, July 2017, available from: http://themimu.info/node/59448.

[15] Myanmar: Buthidaung, Maungdaw and Rathedaung Townships / Rakhine State, Imagery Analysis, United Nations Institute for Training and Research, 18 October 2018.

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Current Context: Social Cohesion and Conflict Management

Respondents from the villages surveyed in Buthidaung reported a high level of interaction with people from other communities. These included attending religious ceremonies, and economic and social interactions with other communities.

While in other townships respondents often reported that their relationships with people from different communities had been severed by the conflict since 2012, in Maung Na Ma Pale Taung and Thabye Taung villages people typically responded that these relationships had continued. It was not uncommon for respondents to report that their recent interactions with people from another community were to "see friends". It was reported that children from different identity groups commonly played together, "safely and freely". This is a big contrast to the villages surveyed in central Rakhine State.

There was a recent incident of a small number of people from another area attempting to start a fight in Maung Na Ma Pale Taung. The village leader from Maung Na Ma Taung consulted the village leader from the nearby Rakhine village and together they defused the situation. Previous reporting on Rakhine State has highlighted the importance of village leadership and economic factors in managing conflict at the village level.[16]

Results from the household survey also indicate that there has been a decreased level of interaction following the 2017 conflict. Relatedly, it was very common for respondents also to note that they had concerns about conflict between, related to both inter-communal violence and fighting between the government and armed organisations. Buthidaung remains highly militarised, and Rakhine villages in the township were also attacked by Rohingya insurgents in 2017.

Impacts

Perceptions of PDI and its CEI project were very positive in Maung Na Ma Pale Taung. The most common remarks were elated to greater communication and understanding among people from their community and others, as well as a greater involvement of people in village affairs.

In terms of relations between people in the same village, a 22-year-old man from Maung Na Ma Pale Taung noted that the project had a positive impact. "Now, there is no discrimination between men and women. [Since PDI's engagement] people from other communities and people from our communities come together to play games." Another 50-year-old respondent noted that the activities had increased the unity between people in the village. One 22-year-old woman remarked that the project had significantly increased the level of education in the village, and that participants from the workshops were now increasingly involved in village affairs.

In Thapye Taung village, people had similar comments. An 18-year-old participant reported that the attitudes of those who attended workshops had changed and that people in the village were valuing

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[16] "Building Resilience to Communal Violence: Lessons from Rakhine State", Centre for Diversity and National Harmony, September 2017, Yangon, Myanmar

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each other more. There is now more understanding between people in the village and trust has risen due to PDI activities, according to a 22-year-old man in the same village.

Another 18-year-old man from Maung Na Ma Pale Taung noted that "the facilitators were good. I heard things that I had never heard before… Now, our own thoughts are changing." In terms of the content of workshops and facilitation, a 22-year-old participant from Maung Na Ma Pale Taung responded that, "now if there is a problem, we know the methods to take to solve it".

A 19-year-old male participant in Maung Na Ma Pale Taung said that the situation of his village had improved because of the CEI project; particularly in the way they communicate with people "The facilitators helped us to understand the difference in points of view between different people. It has been good, and it has been an enjoyable time", he noted. One 35-year-old man in Thabye Taung village remarked that PDI's activities had a positive impact on the community, because "now, if we have a problem, we will be able to understand it."

Respondents in Buthidaung did report an improvement in relations with other communities. "Trust and communication between people has grown. They (people from other ethnic/religious groups) come to our village, and there is never a problem now," according to the 18-year-old man in Maung Na Ma Pale Taung.

A 21-year-old woman from Maung Na Ma Pale Taung noted that the most useful part of the workshop for her was in regard to relationships with other groups. She commented that the group work was very beneficial and suggested that this be encouraged more in the future.

A successful example of social cohesion was found in Maung Na Ma Pale Taung, where villagers collaborated with villagers from the nearby Rakhine village of Nan Yar Gone to build a better road. It was evident to data collectors here that the relationships between the villages was very strong and had managed to avoid the divisions seen in other villages after the 2017 violence. One respondent here noted that he wished for more community infrastructure projects such as this to be integrated with future projects.

Challenges
Difficulties with the inclusion of youth were reported by participants and this reflects the overall difficulties with the participant recruitment process experienced in all locations. Similarly, concerns over the length and duration of the activities were raised. Participants also requested that organisations support with physical infrastructure, or that more practical skills be taught.

The feedback given by respondents in Buthidaung was much more specific than in other areas surveyed. The suggestions that organisations engage in livelihood or infrastructure activities perhaps reflect a greater familiarity with the humanitarian and development sector than other townships, given the longer history of INGO engagement in northern Rakhine.

In both Maung Na Ma Pale Taung and Thabye Taung villages, it was suggested by respondents that the duration of activities be extended. A 17-year-old female participant and an 18-year-old male

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participant from Maung Na Ma Pale Taung noted that the impact of the project would be much higher if the activity duration was extended ("perhaps up to a week").

The 17-year-old participant also noted that the impact of activities would be greater if more practical knowledge was taught, including livelihood skills. Two participants in Maung Na Ma village requested that future activities be based more in the affairs of the village, such as more physical community infrastructure development activities (roads or other infrastructure).

A 21-year-old woman from Maung Na Ma Pale Taung advised that the low attendance of youth at workshops was a barrier to greater social change in her village. "We have not seen changes in the situation in the village. Mostly, young people have not attended the workshop". She also suggested that workshop activities should be organised to connect youth with jobs related to their village.

Given the low level of access to education and job opportunities in the villages in Buthidaung, it is not surprising that respondents would like to see projects which will provide livelihood skills or infrastructure such as roads in their villages. Positively, however, those who attended CEI workshops in the past have noted that these "soft skills" have also been valuable in their daily lives.

Opportunities for Storytelling

Buthidaung is unique among the townships surveyed in that the high level of interaction and the social relationships that exist between Rakhine and Rohingya communities mean that activities with participants from both communities should be prioritised in the storytelling project.

Inter-communal relationships have been damaged by the violence of 2017, and there is a need to support the links that remain. The relationships between Rakhine and Rohingya in Maung Na Ma Pale Taung and Thabye Taung are strong and organisations' resources for the storytelling project may be better directed elsewhere.

In particular, conditions are suitable for inter-communal activities in urban Buthidaung, where relationships are still in recovery after 2017, and in large mixed villages, such as Nyaung Chaung and Kyway Chaung. There are also opportunities to engage Myo and Khami communities who have reportedly maintained constructive relationships with Rohingya communities.

Together with the need for engagement, there is a need to be aware that the context in Buthidaung differs dramatically from that in central Rakhine State. Due to the tensions which have resulted from the violence in 2017, care needs to be taken. This extends to the relationships between Rakhine and Rohingya communities as well as to the state and military. This location remains heavily militarised and organisations need to take care regarding how they are represented to these actors when engaging with communities.

Security conditions in remote parts of the township, including the north, are poor due to the presence of armed groups, and it is not suggested that organisations engage those areas at the present time.

Kyauktaw Township: Kun Ohn Chaung and Ah Lel Chaung villages

Village	Village Tract	Ethnicity/Religion
Kyauktaw	Kun Ohn Chaung	Rakhine
	Ah Lel Kyun	Rohingya

Context Background

Due to Kyauktaw's geographical position and the small size of its urban centre, relationships between Rakhine and Rohingya are particularly contingent on the dynamics of Sittwe and Mrauk-U Townships. This is also true of the economic situation, given that Kyauktaw's urban centre lies close to the main transport route between Sittwe, Mrauk-U and Yangon, with the road continuing through the centre of lower Kyauktaw.

Restrictions on movement in Kyauktaw have been strict for Rohingya communities since 2012, as in other areas. More than other areas in central Rakhine, however, there has been a pattern of greater freedom of movement between villages for Rohingya communities in Kyauktaw, and thus a greater level of interaction between communities.

A Lel Kyun was directly affected by violence in June 2012, and severe damage was done in this village. Relationships have been rebuilt since this time, but not to pre-2012 levels. Furthermore, following the violence in northern Rakhine State in 2016 and 2017, interactions between communities ceased temporarily but are reported to have returned to the level they were before 2016. Rohingya are able to attend the Sittwe hospital with travel permission in emergency cases only and are often unable to attend schooling above primary level due to travel restrictions. Like elsewhere in central Rakhine State Rohingya communities have no access to university.

Current Context: Social Cohesion and Conflict Management

Respondents in Kyauktaw reported the highest levels of interaction between communities, mostly economic, of the three central Rakhine townships considered. This may be in part attributable to fewer restrictions on movement, although the maintenance of these relationships also relies on an interest on behalf of community members to sustain relationships, and particularly the ability of village leaders to maintain communication.

The difficulties facing communities in Kyauktaw were similar to other areas; health, education, transportation infrastructure, job opportunities and general poverty. In Kun Ohn Chaung, like many other villages, there is no upper school and the costs associated with travel for education mean that many students do not complete schooling. In Ah Lel Kyun, the difficulties to access health care are compounded by restrictions on movement for Rohingya communities. It was noted by a 30-year-old Man in Ah Lel Chaung that only wealthy people from the village can access Sittwe hospital, through the payment of bribes. While in theory Rohingya can access Sittwe hospital with travel permission in emergency cases, this process is also time consuming and costly, affecting vulnerable individuals to a greater extent.

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The higher level of familiarity with other communities is highlighted by the fewer responses which spoke of those from other communities in absolute terms or made generalisations about others. For instance, one 49-year-old man in Kun Ohn Chaung village noted that trust was not related to one's ethnicity. "There are people you can trust, and people you cannot trust," he remarked. "I absolutely trust people from other communities. Because we have not had any problems since the incidents [in 2012]. To make sure there is no problem, we always control the villagers. If there is a problem, we tell the administrators," noted one respondent. In contrast, some respondents also reported a very low level of interaction, including a 54-year-old woman in Kun Ohn Chaung who reported that she had had no interaction with someone from another community in over a year.

While the interaction was often solely economic in nature, one 30-year-old man reported that he had many social interactions with friends from Rakhine communities, and in particular they played *chin lone* (cane-ball) together often.

The village leader in A Lel Chaung noted that he maintains very regular contact with people from other communities. This is usually in the form of meeting and discussing economic, education and humanitarian issues in their communities. Others in the village also reported regular contact with people from other ethnic or religious groups. Strikingly, all respondents from both Ah Lel Chuang and Kun Ohn Chaung reported that they wished to see more frequent interactions with people from different ethnic or religious groups.

Opportunities for Storytelling

As in Sittwe, the enthusiasm for more frequent interactions between Rakhine and Rohingya communities is a good basis for the storytelling project. Furthermore, there is a comparatively high level of interaction between Rohingya and Rakhine communities in the villages surveyed in Kyauktaw compared to those in Mrauk-U and Sittwe.

Given that PDI currently has a low level of engagement with these villages in Kyauktaw, and that this engagement is relatively new, there is a need to start slowly and sensitively with the storytelling project. This includes building consultative relationships with village leaders and allowing staff to spend time in the area developing their context knowledge.

Activities should start with engaging people from the same community, rather than involving both Rohingya and Rakhine participants in the first case.

Engagement in a new location in which PDI has limited previous interaction is an opportunity to learn from lessons from previous experience. Most obviously, new engagement in Kyauktaw could be an opportunity to try new methods of participant selection.

Findings and Recommendations

The findings and their related recommendations are noted in this section under the three subheadings of *Situation Analysis, Organisational and Programmatic*. When numerous findings or recommendations have been closely related, these have been listed together as bullet points to improve readability.

Findings and recommendations are also outlined in the table below.

Finding	Recommendation
Situation Analysis	
1. The storytelling project will be supported by PDI's reputation as a unique organization carrying out much needed peacebuilding activities	1. The storytelling project should be conducted in all areas where possible
2. There is enthusiasm in communities for more interactions with other ethnic/religious groups	2. Expand the storytelling project when opportunity arises
3. There are positive signs on social cohesion in PDI activity areas 4. Conditions are suitable in some areas of Buthidaung for inter-communal activities 5. Intra-communal division is a barrier for Rakhine who wish to engage with Rohingya communities 6. In Buthidaung, some respondents reported that they wish PDI to do more community infrastructure development projects or to teach more practical vocational skills	3. Emphasise the importance of intra-communal social cohesion 4. Take a dual-track approach to the storytelling project 5. Continue to maintain network of alumni and engage them where possible
Organisational	
7. Government permission for projects is not always being taken and this is affecting activities in some cases	6. Pay attention to government requirements for travel and request permissions to implement activities when required
8. Staff are working long hours and do not have time to reflect on best practice	7. Recruit an in-house resource person to conduct research into best practice in peacebuilding and education and reflect on PDI's successes
Programmatic	
9. There are no current issues identified with compensation at workshops	

10. The participant recruitment process for the storytelling project needs to take a different approach with key strategic improvements	8. Move from participant recruitment to participant selection

9. Invest in community "mobilisers" in project areas to support with participant selection and other support |
| 11. Some participants have difficulty understanding concepts and others have weaker general comprehension of Rakhine and Myanmar languages | 10. Spend substantial time in project locations with communities

11. Consult a peacebuilding education specialist to revise curricula |
12. Quantitative methods are being used to capture social interactions	12. Revise M&E system to include qualitative indicators and data collection tools
13. Some facilitators request more trainings to become more comfortable with courses' content and teaching methods	13. Build staff capacity on teacher/facilitation training and computer skills
14. Staff safety is an issue during some field visits	14. Staff should always go in pairs to villages
15. Participants are not being given sufficient resources during workshops	15. Give more learning resources to participants
16. Staff are not given sufficient *per diem* for costs related to field trips	16. Give staff more *per diem* for costs related to field trips
17. Changes have been made to attire	17. If clothing issues arise during the storytelling project, undertake a conflict analysis with staff to reach an acceptable compromise

Situation Analysis Findings

1. The storytelling project will be supported by PDI's reputation as a unique organization carrying out much needed peacebuilding activities

PDI is one of very few organisations, and of fewer national organisations, working on improving social relationships in Rakhine State. Goodwill among the communities will support opportunities to expand storytelling.

- *There is a high level of awareness of, and positive perceptions of, PDI*

There is a high level of awareness of PDI in the areas where it has conducted activities. Perceptions of PDI and its projects are very positive. This is significant, given the context in which communities lack "hard" vocational skills to escape endemic poverty, yet the "soft skills" provided in these trainings have been perceived very positively and participants can see that these are useful in their everyday lives.

- *Project staff have in-depth knowledge of challenges facing the communities they work with*

Facilitators have a high level of empathy for those from other identity groups, as well as a deep knowledge of the context at the village level. The vast majority of respondents with experience with PDI in the past were satisfied with previous activities and many noted that they would welcome more engagement.

- *PDI has established a high level of trust in the surveyed project areas*

All respondents in project areas had at least some knowledge of PDI and the CEI activity, and perceptions were positive of PDI and CEI. It is clear that PDI has developed a high level of trust in the project villages.

2. There is enthusiasm in communities for more interactions with other ethnic/religious groups

A significant finding from this research is that, when asked, all but three respondents in the rural areas surveyed reported that in the future they would like to have more frequent interaction with people from other communities. While this enthusiasm was less present in the urban areas surveyed, this is a significant base from which to establish more activities between Rakhine and Rohingya communities in rural areas during the storytelling project. The ability to conduct such activities is further supported by the successes of PDI's work to date in terms of building trust in communities and governmental actors.

Furthermore, there is a need for further engagement and communities would like to see PDI fill that gap. One respondent requested that workshops be extended to involve others in the village, noting that there are issues with domestic physical and verbal violence in some households.

3. There are positive signs on social cohesion in PDI activity areas

The storytelling project will benefit from and build on the improved relationships between communities supported in PDI engagement through the CEI project.

- *Youth have been more involved in village affairs*

Similarly, it was frequently found that youth who attended workshops are have become more involved in village affairs. This was consistent across townships and identity groups.

- *The storytelling project will be supported by the increase in trust and positive interactions between groups as well as within groups*

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Many respondents reported a higher quality of interactions both within their communities and with other groups, supported by the communication skills they learnt during workshops. Respondents also believed that trust levels had risen in their communities. These skills have benefited intra-communal relationships; supporting bonding within groups to overcome divisions. Positively, the risks for community members interacting with other identity groups have been reported to have reduced after workshops. This in particular will support the storytelling project.

- *Participants have increased awareness of important issues and have used learned skills to resolve conflicts*

An increase in useful knowledge which has helped people overcome conflicts or arguments was a common impact reported during this process. Several examples of individuals reporting the use of these skills are mentioned in this report.

- *Participants of PDI's CEI project were more likely than others to report improved relationships within and between communities*

The tendency for participants to report improved relationships may be due to their personal experiences of improved communications and relationships following the project. The inclusion of those individuals with a higher awareness and new individuals who have had little exposure to organisational activities will support an active cohort of participants in the storytelling project.

4. Conditions are suitable in some areas of Buthidaung for storytelling activities

More than any other location surveyed, there was a significant level of inter-communal interaction and trust in the areas surveyed in Buthidaung. Communities surveyed here expressed a comparatively high degree of interaction, including social interactions with other groups.

The lessons from central Rakhine following 2012 should be a lesson in how long recovery takes, and how institutionalised self-segregation can become. Positively, communities in the villages in Buthidaung have not self-segregated but do report that the violence of 2017 has damaged relationships. It is particularly important to consolidate the relationships between communities in Buthidaung, which are recovering from the 2017 violence.

Security remains an issue in Buthidaung, as it is highly militarised and insurgent groups continue to have a presence there, reflecting the reasons why PDI stopped working in Buthidaung in 2017. Urban areas are more secure and as such it is suggested that the storytelling take place there for the time being.

5. Intra-communal division is a barrier for Rakhine who wish to engage with Rohingya communities

Those in Rakhine communities who would like to see more interaction with Rohingya face hostility from others, who wish to limit interactions. There is a need to bridge these divides, which have a generational element given the time spent under segregation and are particularly pronounced in urban areas. The storytelling can bridge these divides by helping people understand these conflicts within their own communities.

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6. In Buthidaung, some respondents reported that they wish PDI to do more community infrastructure development projects or to teach more practical vocational skills

This finding was specific to Buthidaung's Maung Na Ma Pale Taung village. Given that CEI is not currently being implemented in this village, respondents may have been under the impression that data collection was conducted with the aim of preparing for new projects. This also reflects a greater level of familiarity with NGOs in Buthidaung, and respondents were more comfortable requesting livelihoods or infrastructure assistance.

Situational Analysis Recommendations

1. The storytelling project should be conducted in all areas where possible

PDI and its partner organisations are well-placed to conduct the storytelling project. PDI has a high level of trust and positive perceptions among all communities in rural areas, and there is enthusiasm for a greater level of engagement which can be delivered through storytelling.

Positive perceptions of PDI and the CEI project provide a strong basis to grow the storytelling project from.

2. Expand the storytelling project when opportunity arises

When it is deemed appropriate and if sufficient resources are available, the storytelling project should be expanded to include more areas and a greater number of participants. A higher level of engagement will yield more effective results and also is an opportunity to deepen engagement as communities are requesting.

3. Emphasise the importance of intra-communal social cohesion

Social cohesion is commonly recognised as including both *bonding* social cohesion (that within a community) and *bridging* social cohesion (that between communities and with authorities). Both are important, and interact and support each other. This should be recognised in the design and documentation of the storytelling project.

Bonding social cohesion (increased trust, connectivity, equality and orientation towards a common goal) is a goal within itself, as well as an essential building block to *bridging social cohesion* between different groups. The development of constructive ways of resolving conflict without resorting to violence, active listening and collaborative decision-making skills are evidently important not only for building strong communities in local areas, but also for connecting with other groups. One staff member noted that PDI seeks to build "from domestic peace to world peace."

Bonding social cohesion can also be supported by improving PDI's relationships with villages near the project areas. For example, relationships with other Rakhine people can be improved through a greater collaboration with stakeholders from the Rakhine community.

This may include village leaders from the Rakhine village cited above, where project staff face hostility from individuals from the community. Constantly cutting across this Rakhine village without any communication may also be harming local relationships between these neighbouring villages, and it is suggested that PDI senior staff consult project staff on this issue. A simple meeting between project staff and the villagers there to explain PDI's activities, objectives and project locations may ease tensions in these instances.

4. Take a dual-track approach to the storytelling project

Given the different contexts in different locations, the project should start with intra-communal activities in some locations and inter-communal activities in others. Inter-communal activities can be conducted in the first group of villages at a later date when organisations evaluate that participants are appropriately prepared and the context is suitable.

- *In central Rakhine State, build intra-communal relationships before focusing on inter-communal relationships*

In areas in central Rakhine State (Sittwe, Mrauk-U and Kyauktaw) in which interaction is low and relationships are not strong, it will be important to build intra-communal skills first. There is room to expand the project to Mrauk-U and Kyauktaw in line with the recommendations below in the future. Activities will also build familiarity and trust with organisations in new areas such as Kyauktaw.

- *For intra-communal activities, focus on communication skills, gender awareness, critical media literacy and constructive conflict resolution trainings*

These skills will help communities to overcome divisions within their communities, encouraging greater engagement between men and women, the young and older, the wealthy and disadvantaged, and moderate and extreme voices. Such skills will also support engagement between Rakhine and Rohingya communities.

The same activities may be suitable for inter-communal activities, although care should be taken not to introduced topics which are overly-sensitive before familiarity with the project has been built.

Increased understanding of the unreliability of information encountered on Facebook is needed and is one area in which future projects can make efficient progress with effective results. Similar trainings have been conducted in Rakhine State before, and PDI should use its networks to access resources for developing these courses.

- *Support inter-communal activities in Buthidaung*

Given the unstable security situation in rural areas of Buthidaung due to the presence of armed groups, urban Buthidaung is a suitable location for inter-communal activities. Interactions between Rakhine and Rohingya in Buthidaung are stronger here than in central Rakhine State.

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As well as urban Buthidaung, large mixed villages where interactions have continued, such as Nyaung Chaung and Kyway Chaung may be appropriate sites for engagement, particularly in the south of the township where security is better.

There are also opportunities to engage Myo and Khami communities in Buthidaung who, evidence suggests, have largely maintained constructive relationships with Rohingya communities.

- *Explore opportunities to enter a mediation role in Bu Ywet Ma Nyo, incorporating a storytelling approach*

If it is deemed to be within the mandate of organisations, the case of the split village in Bu Ywet Ma Nyo, Mrauk-U, may be an opportunity for PDI to enter into a mediation role.

Storytelling methods may be used as part of a narrative mediation. The parties (in this case the two sides of the village) agree on some ground rules before each tells the narratives of the conflict from their perspective. The mediator summarises each narrative and makes a list of issues to be resolved, which the parties then agree upon. During this process, separate sessions may be held with each party to assess their goals, feedback and unstated objections or interests.

The objective of a storytelling mediation is in part to assist the parties to detach themselves from the conflict through narrative, and to understand the perspective of the other party, allowing them to have a fresh perspective.

Given the capacity of inter-communal relations to deepen divides, it is not suggested that the storytelling project start Rakhine-Rohingya joint activities here until the divisions in the village are resolved.

- Relationships between communities outside of Rohingya and Rakhine are also strained and need support.

Relationships between other groups such as the Kaman, Dinet and others have been noted in this report as also facing difficulties. There is a need and opportunity to include such groups in future expansions of the storytelling project.

5. Continue to maintain network of alumni and engage them where possible

Given the strong network that PDI has generated through CEI and other projects to date, the time is opportune to maximise the advantage that this offers. This is already happening, as activity alumni are being connected online. There is opportunity to connect and engage more with this group of enthusiastic people, particularly youth, who are interested to become more involved in activities and education.

Alumni are a resource for the new storytelling project and are an asset for the activities beginning in Buthidaung. As well as involving other interested individuals, the alumni need to be kept engaged. The short-term nature of previous activities is a risk in this regard, and the good foundations built at the individual level should be maintained and developed through regular contact and deeper

engagement in activities. With expansion of the storytelling project in the future is an opportunity to engage alumni.

Organisational Findings

7. Government permission for projects is not always being taken and this is affecting activities in some cases

There is a current government policy that all organisations (national or international) must apply for permission before conducting any activities in Rakhine State. This is especially sensitive for research projects, and all organisations have had recent difficulties getting permission to conduct even baseline surveys.

As noted in the limitations section of this report, data collectors were unable to complete data collection in one village due to a lack of permissions.

While local organisations usually can conduct small-scale activities without consequence, longer-term or more intensive projects will gain more attention. It is unlikely, however, that even small-scale PDI activities go unnoticed given the networks of government informers in all villages, and the fact that there is often a police checkpoint near or at the entrance of Rohingya villages.

Conducting activities or research without permission may be putting communities at risk. By approaching village leaders for permission to conduct activities without seeking the formally required permissions from the state or township level is placing a burden on village leaders. This is particularly a risk for Rohingya communities, who face a high level of intimidation from military and local officials.

8. Staff are working long hours and do not have time to reflect on best practice

PDI staff have little time to reflect on their projects, document success stories and challenges, or research what has worked in education and peacebuilding in other contexts of Myanmar or elsewhere in the world.

Organisational Recommendations

6. Pay attention to government requirements for travel and request permissions to implement activities when required

PDI should to give some consideration to the issue of travel permissions. As noted above, there is a risk to communities, and particularly Rohingya communities, when conducting activities or research without formal permission. PDI should be aware of the power dynamics when approaching Rohingya village leaders - of their positionality as a "Rakhine" organisation and how the organisation may be

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perceived. There is a need to approach village leaders with the correct formal paperwork in order to reduce risk to Rohingya village leaders.

There is a need to consider, however, PDI's acceptable level of engagement and cooperation with the civilian government and military. This is an issue for all organisations operating in Rakhine State. The strict travel permission system empowers the government and gives control or leverage over activities. Some level of resistance and push-back is needed. Again, power dynamics are important. As a local organisation PDI perhaps holds a greater level of legitimacy (compared to international organisations) in the eyes of government and this can be a resource. Staff responsible for government liaison should continue to build constructive relationships with government personnel and explain the many positive aspects of PDI's activities.

Future planning needs to take these into account, particularly for shorter-term activities such as project evaluations. Plans should be made ahead of time to secure relevant permissions.

7. Recruit an in-house resource person to conduct research into best practice in peacebuilding and education and reflect on PDI's successes

To increase the efficiency and effectiveness of programs, PDI would benefit from having a staff number committed to researching peacebuilding and education best practices; what has worked in other contexts and what PDI could apply in the future. This person would also reflect on successes and what has been learned from challenges to improve future activities.

This could be implemented as a project. The staff member may hold a position at PDI's School of Social Sciences where they conduct a course and have student researchers to explore future opportunities.

Programmatic Findings

9. There are no current issues identified with compensation at workshops

While previous project reporting shows that compensation has been an issue in the past, there were no complaints about the current system of providing food and refreshments in return for the time participants spent at the workshop. All participants surveyed said this was acceptable.

10. The participant recruitment process for the storytelling project needs to take a different approach with key strategic improvements

Issues with the participant selection process in CEI have been ongoing and are recognised by staff and communities. The storytelling project is an opportunity to improve this process. The current system is to recruit via the village leader, who may select people on unintended criteria. As a result, some participants show little interest in the content of workshops, while others attend only to take the incentives on the first day and do not attend on the second day due to a situation of poverty or because they can better support their immediate needs by working.

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Project staff have had to encourage village leaders to recruit youth and women, due to a lack of diversity in the groups usually selected by village leaders.

- *Current collection of data on ethnicity and religion is a barrier to participation*

Difficulties have been had in relation to the sensitive Rohingya identity during participant selection. Application forms direct people to write their ethnicity and religion. Rohingya participants are not comfortable identifying as Bengali (the government's preferred term) due to its connotations that they are in Myanmar illegitimately. However, they are also uncomfortable identifying as Rohingya because they worry the form will be shared with government. Despite staff assurances that the forms are confidential and stored securely in the PDI office, this remains an issue. Asking participants to reveal this information highlights the divisive issue of identity, creating a barrier to relations with PDI staff, the majority of whom are Rakhine.

- *There is a low level of women's participation in Rohingya communities*

There is a very low representation of women participants in Rohingya villages in the CEI project. This is related to the difficulties in participant selection that CEI has faced. Overall gender balance is approximately even as there are a higher number of women participants in Rakhine villages, due to the large number of young men working outside of Rakhine. More research is needed into the qualitative participation of women participants in all communities.

11. Some participants have difficulty understanding concepts and others have weaker general comprehension of Rakhine and Myanmar languages

Some participants have reported that they were unable to follow some of the workshops because the concepts were not clear. This may be related to the curriculum difficulties noted by staff (recommendation 22). It was noted by some respondents in Rohingya communities in particular that they had difficulty understanding because of an unfamiliarity with the Rakhine or Myanmar languages.

Difficulties in communication were not always the case, however, and other participants cited the explanations of topics by facilitators as a strength of the project.

- *Staff language skills are not being used to their greatest extent*

Despite the useful advantage of having a CEI staff member who can speak the same language spoken by Rohingya communities, this skill has been used to a very limited extent to date. The ability of staff to communicate in the "Muslim" language[17] has not been used in Rohingya communities. The benefits of transparency, openness and honesty that would come with using the language spoken in Rohingya communities would be a huge benefit in building trust and strengthening communications.

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[17] Referred to here as "Muslim" language as per common usage in Rakhine State. This language, however, is spoken as a first language by many communities, including Rohingya, Dinet, Maramargyi and others. Many others also speak it as a second language, including Rakhine who live in close proximity to other groups.

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22. Quantitative methods are being used to capture social interactions

Current indicators for CEI rely on very quantitative methods (number of youth attending trainings, percentage of collaboration, number of trainings conducted, etc.) and these will not capture the nuance of interaction.

23. Some facilitators request more trainings to become more comfortable with courses' content and teaching methods

While everything taught in trainings was deemed useful, staff commented that sometimes they attend similar trainings in a short period of time and that topics become unnecessarily repetitive, while other trainings (teaching training in particular) have not been delivered often enough.

In general, however, staff reported very positive feedback on the trainings they have attended while at PDI. A training delivered by Adam, a visitor from Chiang Mai, was deemed very useful by staff in terms of understanding "walking in another person's shoes before judging them".

In particular, those who had participated in Do No Harm training with CDA (now Raft Myanmar) reported that it was very useful for their understanding of the conflict context and their position in it. "After the Do No Harm training, we saw a lot of our weaknesses and what we should change, including how we connect with village leaders, how we select participants and in what we wear," noted one staff member. Another noted that before the training she "was thinking of people as either bad or good. But now, I am thinking of them in terms of their needs and interests." Another result of the training is that the team now procures items from the project villages when available.

Staff also reported that the content of some of the CEI modules, particularly those on peace and conflict or communication skills were difficult for them to understand, and they did not feel comfortable facilitating those sessions. The difficulties in understanding these topic is related to the fact that while there are clearer definitions of these English language terms in the context of peacebuilding, there is little familiarity with them in Myanmar language, or indeed Rakhine or Rohingya. The project officer noted that facilitators needed more understanding of the use of computers as well.

- *The CEI curriculum structure presents difficulties for comprehension*

The CEI curriculum has some challenges to full engagement and understanding by participants, due to the progression from module one to module three. The second module is reported by staff to be a much higher level than the first or the third, and participants have had difficulty following. Facilitation staff also noted their difficulties in understanding concepts.

26. Staff safety is an issue during some field visits

Safety has been an issue for staff when visiting some remote villages. This has particularly been the case recently, due to news that the government had issued ID cards to Dinet people identifying them as Muslim. The origin of this news is not clear, but has influenced opinions towards Dinet people, including one of the CEI facilitators. She reports that these concerns are relatively recent, as

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previously she did not have any problems visiting villages. Concerns were also raised by staff regarding female staff members having to travel alone to villages to conduct trainings.

27. Staff are not given sufficient *per diem* for costs related to field trips

When travelling to villages for workshops, staff do not have sufficient *per diem* to cover their costs including lunch, snacks or water.

28. Participants are not being given sufficient resources during workshops

At the present time, workshops are being conducted to participants who often do not have notebooks or pens. This is a challenge to the retention of knowledge in communities.

17. Changes have been made to attire

The topic of facilitators' clothing has been consistently reported in previous project documentation. Following the Do No Harm assessment, clothing styles have been changed. This has followed complaints from communities and participants that facilitators were dressed inappropriately for teachers - a highly respected group in society. This has involved a change from jeans, trousers or skirts to traditional *tamein* and *longyi*. One project staff member explained the reason for the change as such; "We have to adapt with others. We are youth, so we need to get respect from the community." There were no reports of participants or community members criticising dressing styles during this research process.

The advantage of this change is that is shows responsiveness to the concerns of communities. However, in doing so there is also a risk that PDI reinforces notions of elders dictating to youths (particularly women) what they should wear. There is a delicate balance to be struck here.

One facilitator, however, noted that wearing traditional clothes makes travel difficult, and is neither comfortable nor practical for women who must wear the restrictive *tamein*.
This conflict over dressing style reflects a larger conflict of youth challenging traditional norms, and there is a substantial gendered element to this.

Programmatic Recommendations

8. Move from participant recruitment to participant selection

Given the inefficiency and randomness of the current village administrator-led participant recruitment process, there is a strong need to invest more resources in participant selection. This may involve pre-workshop preparation visits to communities, or the development of community "mobilisers" as outlined in the following recommendations.

A more effective participant selection process to ensure the recruitment of more youth and those interested in the topics taught will improve the impacts of projects vastly. Reforming this system

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would also support the recruitment of more female participants in Rohingya villages by giving PDI more control over selection.

- *Develop specific criteria for selection of participants. Integrate simple process to assess suitability of each potential participant prior to selection*

Three to five criteria are enough to assess suitability of prospective participants. Include motivation and interest as key criteria. Include a simple process to assess potential participants to inform selection. A simple informal 'interview' by the community mobiliser face-to-face with three to five questions would be sufficient.

- *Do not ask applicants to identify their ethnicity*

During the participant selection process there is no need for PDI to request applicants to give their ethnic or religious identity. This has been identified as a barrier and an obstacle to trust between PDI and Rohingya communities. There is little necessity to collecting this information, as most villages are ethnically homogenous and PDI can easily collect data of this kind if it wishes to.

9. Invest in community "mobilisers" in project areas to support with participant selection and other support

Investment in community-based "mobilisers" would have several benefits for the storytelling project and other PDI activities. This would not only reduce the current reliance on village leaders for organisation of activities and participant recruitment, but would also embed PDI in the community. Furthermore, mobilisers would be empowered to support their communities, themselves and PDI.

In order to set up the mobilisers system, trusted persons would be identified through existing projects or an application process. They would support PDI's operations in a part-time role. Most importantly, mobilisers could assist in the recruitment/selection process of participants. This would also give PDI more control of the recruitment process, and facilitate the recruitment of more youth, and other enthusiastic participants. Deeper connections and the engagement of community members would also build trust. Mobilisers other duties may consist of organising activities and resources (refreshments, venues, etc.) and would be paid a wage compensating their time.

It is suggested that one male and one female mobiliser be recruited in each project area, for the benefit of engaging a diverse group of participants. CEI alumni or alumni from other PDI projects may be suitable candidates. Mobilisers should be persons empowered to confront prejudices that the storytelling project may meet.

Mobilisers would also be an investment for future PDI activities. Mobilisers may assist in the facilitation of workshops/activities and could attend further facilitation trainings. This would result in more ownership of the project by village communities.

Finally, this system would allow PDI to overcome the current barriers to recruiting Muslim staff (travel restrictions and security concerns for Muslim staff) by having the staff based in their own communities.

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10. Spend substantial time in project locations with communities

Social cohesion activities require a high level of engagement over a long period of time to be successful. Future activities should plan for increased time spent with participants in villages, and a greater diversity of activities to support this. This will be one of the advantages of building the Rohingya Crisis Myanmar project on the foundations of CEI. The resources required for greater engagement should be built into budgets and be done in a cost-effective manner. Recruiting community mobilisers in all project areas is one way to achieve this.

- *Use language skills for better communication and trust*

Staff who are able to speak the same language as Rohingya should be encouraged to do so when interacting with Rohingya communities. The advantages of using the language skills are multiple and would help the programme to overcome communication challenges it currently faces. Greater use of language skills would facilitate a higher number of Rohingya youth in the programme, build greater trust and communication with communities, and would save resources and time spent on translation. Being able to speak the same language is a strength that should be used for building trust, and this issue should be raised with staff as a priority.

11. Consult a peacebuilding education specialist to revise curricula

A collaborative process between staff and an education specialist to improve the current CEI curriculum design would make the content more accessible to communities. The specific content of curriculum could also be edited to show participants how it is relevant to their immediate lives. This could involve editing particular activities or examples to improve familiarity to the lives of participants. The consultant could also address the difficulties with course progression identified by staff.

12. Revise M&E system to include qualitative indicators and data collection tools

For projects such as the storytelling project the manner in which participants interact is crucial, and the quality of interaction matters. Superficial or negative interactions may not be identified by quantitative methods of evaluation. The mechanisms through which interaction occurs (including existing social relationships) determine its quality in important ways. Differences may be amplified during interactions and perceptions of motivations of other identity groups and organisations may have unintended negative effects.

Qualitative indicators for the storytelling project may measure, for example, the extent to which interaction is occurring under conditions of equal social status from the perspectives of participants or the extent of shared goals and the motivations. Further research into project impact through in-depth assessments or regular data collection around perceptions of interactions in project areas will also support the development of more qualitative understandings of project impact. Stories collected from storytelling sessions may also be used for this purpose.

13. Build staff capacity on teacher/facilitation training and computer skills

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It is recommended that teacher trainings are delivered to staff on a more regular basis, such as within a four-month cycle. Staff are too busy with other work to properly invest time in understanding sufficiently the topics they are sharing. Teacher/facilitator trainings will be an opportunity for staff to gain a better understanding of and reflect on the topics they work around.

There is a need for clearer understandings of key terms in peace and conflict, their definitions and how to use them. Collaboration with an organisation for trainings on clearer understandings of how these terms can be differentiated and used effectively in Rakhine, Myanmar and in Rohingya languages would be beneficial. Such training would be useful for staff all staff working in the Rakhine context, but particularly those working directly on specific peacebuilding activities such as Rohingya Crisis Myanmar staff. Understanding of the module related to communication skills, and the lack of computer fluency among facilitators has also been identified as a challenge, and PDI should invest in building these capacities.

14. Staff should always go in pairs to villages

This will not only make facilitators feel more secure, but should also improve the quality of facilitation and attention given to participants.

15. Give more learning resources to participants

Given that currently even notebooks and pens are not being provided to CEI participants, there is a need to review the resources provided. It is suggested that *at least* notebooks and pens are provided; if possible more resources should also be provided including hand-outs of lessons from workshops. This was barrier to learning identified by staff. There are currently reported budget issues with implementing this recommendation, and budgets should be revised when there is an opportunity.

16. Give staff more *per diem* for costs related to field trips

Staff require more *per diem* for covering basic costs such as lunch and drinking water while they are attending workshops in the villages. PDI currently has very good facilitators and needs to make sure these basic costs are covered to ensure that staff are retained, and they are working in suitable conditions.

Currently some facilitators in CEI receive no *per diem* when working in certain villages and have to pay for lunch out of their own pockets. At least 2500 kyat is required for one meal per person.

17. If clothing issues arise during the storytelling project, undertake a conflict analysis with staff to reach an acceptable compromise

The dispute over what clothing is appropriate for facilitators is a microcosm of the larger issues of youth challenging tradition, and of the restrictions women face.

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It should not be the policy of PDI to give dress codes to their staff, especially when these will particularly affect women staff adversely. If staff or communities are dissatisfied with attire during the storytelling project, a workshop should be held with project staff to work through the underlying issues and come to an acceptable arrangement. This would be an exercise in conflict analysis.

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Annex 1: Data Collection Tools

Programme Staff Focus Group Discussion Questions (CEI)

General Information

Location	
Organisation	
Respondent's Positions	
FGD Date	
FGD Start Time	_ _ : _ _
FGD Finish Time	_ _ : _ _

Name of Interviewer	
Name of Note-taker	

Notes for interviewer

- *It is necessary to obtain informed consent before the FGD can begin.*
- *We want to ask the respondents about some key issues. Ask the main question first, then use the probes to explore particular issues that arise.*
- *Be flexible. Add your own questions to find out more about interesting information as it arises, and change the order of questions if it feels right for the conversation.*
- *Remember the key issues we want to understand, and phrase your questions in a way the respondent will understand.*

Introduction and Informed Consent

Mingalarpar. My name is _____.

I am here today on behalf of PDI to ask about the CEI project.

We want to understand what aspects of the projects implemented have worked well and what aspects we could improve. Based on the answers to this research, we will make recommendations for how we can improve programming. This interview should take about 45 minutes.

It is your choice if you wish to take part in this discussion, and you can choose to stop the discussion at any time. If you do not want to answer a specific question, let me know and we will skip that question.

Feel free to say what you think. There are no right or wrong answers. We will take notes today but your name will not be included.

Do you have any questions?

Do you wish to participate?

#	Age	Gender	Years of Education	Comment?

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1				
2				
3				
4				

Initial open questions:

1. What aspects of the CEI project do you feel have been most valuable?

2. What aspects of CEI have worked well in your view?

3. Did you experience any difficulties working with the CEI project?

   - Probe: what challenges have you faced in the communities?

   Did you experience any difficulties in relation to working with the government?

4. What were your tasks and responsibilities in the project?

5. Working for the project what was easy to achieve?

   - What was difficult to achieve?

6. Did men and women participate equally in the project activities?

   - If this was a challenge, how did the team try to overcome it?

7. Has CEI been experienced differently by men and women?

8. What support do you need for this project?

9. What compensation has been given to people attending trainings?
   - How has the compensation been perceived by communities? (for example, requests from VAs, people only attend for payment)

10. Please tell me about your experience facilitating the workshops.

11. Please give one example of something you learnt from a training which was useful.

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- Please give one example of something that was not useful.

12. Have there been difficulties communicating with communities who speak a different language?

   - How did you deal with this? Probe: When do you use a translator? Who acts as translator?

13. How do you select participants in the villages?

14. What should be done differently in the next cycle of the project?

15. Up to today, how has CEI changed relationships between people in the same village?

   Can you tell me an example?

16. How has CEI changed relationships between villagers and village leaders?

   Can you tell me an example?

17. How has CEI changed relationships between people from different villages?

   Can you tell me an example?

18. How has CEI changed relationships between people from different ethnic/religious groups?

   Can you tell me an example?

19. What should be done differently in the next cycle of the project to build better relationships?

20. From your perspective, has support for PDI grown among women in communities during the project?

21. From your observation, how do communities manage news or rumours of problems between different communities?

   - Can you tell me and example of rumours that are being talked about in the communities? How are these dealt with?

   - Has there been an example of this recently?

22. Do you have any other topic you would like to discuss today?

23. Do you have anything else you would like to add to our discussion today?

24. Is there anyone else you would suggest I talk to about this?

Finally, ask the respondents if they have any questions and thank them for their time. Sometimes the best comments and insights come after the formal section of the FGD has ended, so stay to chat for a while then record your impressions and any good quotes.
FINISH FGD

General Information

Village	
Village Tract	
Township	
KII Date	
KII Start Time	_ _ : _ _
KII Finish Time	_ _ : _ _

Name of Interviewer	
Name of Note-taker	

Notes for interviewer

- *It is necessary to obtain informed consent before the interview can begin.*
- *We want to ask the respondent about some key issues. Ask the main question first, then use the probes to explore particular issues that arise.*
- *Be flexible. Add your own questions to find out more about interesting information as it arises, and change the order of questions if it feels right for the conversation.*
- *Remember the key issues we want to understand, and phrase your questions in a way the respondent will understand.*

Introduction and Informed Consent

Mingalarpar. My name is _____.

I am here today on behalf of PDI to ask about the projects which have been implemented in your community.

We want to understand what aspects of the projects implemented in your village have worked well and what aspects we could improve. Based on the answers to this research, we will make recommendations for how we can better work with your community. This interview should take about 45 minutes.

It is your choice if you wish to take part in this interview, and you can choose to stop the interview at any time. If you do not want to answer a specific question, let me know and we will skip that question.

Feel free to say what you think. There are no right or wrong answers. We will take notes today but your name will not be included.

Do you have any questions?

Do you wish to participate?

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#	Age	Gender	Years of Education	Comment?
1				
2				

Initial open questions:

1. In your opinion, what are the biggest issues faced by your community today?

- Probe for issues related to jobs, health, education, communal conflict, etc – what difficulties do you face?

- Do men and women experience these differently?

2. Can you describe to us how the CEI project was conducted in your village?

3. Based on your experience, what did you find to be the most useful aspects of this project?

4. What are the difficulties you have found with this approach?

- Probe for any difficulties experienced during the project, including dealing with other communities or with PDI.

- Were you given any compensation for your time (money, lunch, refreshments etc.)?

 Was this acceptable? Where there any problems with this?

5. How was the facilitation of the workshops?

- What was your experience with the facilitators/trainers coming to your village?

- How do think facilitation could be improved inside and outside the workshops? (probe for issues with communication, etc)

6. Woud you say that the overall situation of your community has changed because of the project?

- If yes, ask how it has changed.

- If not, ask why it has not changed.

7. Would you say your personal situation has changed because of the project?

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- Probe for negative or positive changes, ask follow-up questions.

8. Have men and women experienced the project differently?

9. If the project was done again, what would you like to be done differently?

10. How has CEI impacted relationships between people within your village?
o Very positively
o Moderately positively
o Slightly positively
o Slightly negatively
o Moderately negatively
o Very negatively
    Please give an example.

11. After doing the CEI workshop do you feel you can trust other people in your village more?

    If so, please give an example.

12. In the last two years, how has the relationship between villagers and village leaders changed?
o Very positively
o Moderately positively
o Slightly positively
o Slightly negatively
o Moderately negatively
o Very negatively
o No change

    Please give an example.

13. How have relationships between people from your village and people from other villages changed?
o Very positively
o Moderately positively
o Slightly positively
o Slightly negatively
o Moderately negatively
o Very negatively

    Please give an example.

14. Have you had any interaction with someone from another ethnic/religious community in the last:

- One week?
- One month?
- One year?
- It has been over one year.

15. What have been the circumstances of your recent interaction with people from other communities?

- Attending religious ceremony (Thingyan, Eid, marriage)
- Economic interaction
- Social interaction
- Governance related interaction
- Other: _____

16. How does your village manage news or rumours of problems between different ethnic/religious groups which could affect your community?

- Can you tell me an example of rumours that are being talked about in the communities? How are these dealt with?

- Has there been an example of this recently?

17. Do you have any other topic you would like to discuss today?

18. Do you have anything else you would like to add to our discussion today?

19. Is there anyone else you would suggest I talk to about this?

Finally, ask the respondent if they have any questions and thank them for their time. Sometimes the best comments and insights come after the formal section of the interview has ended, so stay to chat for a while then record your impressions and any good quotes.
FINISH INTERVIEW

General Information

Village/Ward	
Village tract	
Township	
KII Date	
KII Start Time	_ _ : _ _
KII Finish Time	_ _ : _ _

Name of Interviewer	
Name of Note-taker	

Notes for interviewer

- *It is necessary to have informed consent before the interview can begin.*
- *We want to ask the respondent about some key issues. Ask the main question first, then use the probes to explore particular issues that arise.*
- *Be flexible. Add your own questions to find out more about interesting information as it arises, and change the order of questions if it feels right for the conversation.*
- *Remember the key issues we want to understand, and phrase your questions in a way the respondent will understand.*

Introduction and Informed Consent

Mingalarpar. My name is _____.

I am here today on behalf of PDI to ask about the situation in your area.

We want to understand the situation in your area for a research project about the work of PDI in Rakhine. This interview should take about 45 minutes.

It is your choice if you wish to take part in this interview, and you can choose to stop the interview at any time. If you do not want to answer a specific question, let me know and we will skip that question.

Feel free to say what you think. There are no right or wrong answers. We will take notes today but your name will not be included.

Do you have any questions?

Do you wish to participate?

#	Age	Gender	Comment?
1			
2			

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Initial open questions:

1. In your opinion, what are the greatest issues in your area today?
(*Guidance: do not read the options below*)

- o Unemployment
- o Food insecurity
- o Natural disaster
- o Inter-communal relations
- o Intra-communal relations
- o Health care access

- o Migration
- o Displacement (by weather/violence)?
- o Education
- o Restriction on travel
- o Other (if so, what?)

Please tell us an example.

Are these experienced differently by men and women?

CEI *(If there is no CEI in this area, skip to question 8)*

2. Are you aware of the CEI project conducted by PDI in your community?
Probe: what has been your engagement with this project?
- o Attended training
- o Know someone who attended training
- o Went to a meeting about this project
- o Was told about the project by village leader (formal)
- o Other _____

3. Would you say that the overall situation of your community has changed because of the project?

- If yes, ask how it has changed.

If not, ask why it has not changed.

4. Has the personal situation of people who attended the trainings changed?

5. Please tell us about any difficulties with CEI in your community?

6. How has the participant selection process been?

Probe: Have as many women been included in the project as men?
If not, what were the obstacles?

7. Apart from CEI training, what activities would you like to see in your community?

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(if the respondent is not clear, give some guidance – this could be new infrastructure in the village or vocational skills trainings)

Livelihoods

8. What is your primary source of income? Apart from CEI training, what activities would you like to see in your community?
(if the respondent is not clear, give some guidance – this could be new infrastructure in the village or vocational skills trainings)

- o Farming
- o Fishing
- o Casual labour
- o NGO employment
- o Government staff

- o Remittances
- o Trading
- o Hotel/restaurant
- o Healthcare
- o Other (if so, what?)

9. What sector do you think is most attractive for making a living?

- o Farming
- o Fishing
- o Casual labour
- o NGO employment
- o Government staff

- o Remittances
- o Trading
- o Hotel/restaurant
- o Healthcare
- o Other (if so, what?)

- Why do you think so?

Security

10. Generally, day to day, how secure do you feel in your area?
- o Very insecure
- o Moderately insecure
- o Slightly insecure
- o Slightly secure
- o Moderately secure
- o Very secure

- Can you tell us an example?

11. Do you feel that your security in your area has changed in the last two years?

- If so, can you tell us an example of how it has changed?

12. If you have any problem in your area who would you trust to help you? *(If the respondent asks, problems might be, for example, crime, inter-communal violence, domestic violence)*

- o Neighbours or family
- o Security forces (which one? (BGP/Police?)
- o Village/ward (*yat kwet)* administrator
- o Military

- o Community leader (formal? Informal?)
- o Religious leader
- o Other (who?)
- o _____

13. Compared to 2 years ago, do you feel you can trust other people in your area more?

14. If yes, why?
15. If not, why not?

16. Have you met someone from another ethnic/religious community in the last:
- o One week?
- o One month?
- o One year?
- o It has been over one year.

17. What have been the circumstances of your recent interaction with people from other communities?
- o Attending religious ceremony (Thingyan, Eid, marriage)
- o Economic interaction
- o Social interaction (meeting to eat/chat)
- o Governance related interaction (eg. meeting of administrators)
- o With organization/NGO)
- o With training
- o Education
- o Other – probe

18. Is there someone from another religious/ethnic group that you knew before violence in 2012/2017?

- Do you still have communication with them? How has this situation changed?

19. Recently, have there been any negative interactions between communities? *(Negative interactions could include; crime, disagreements, fights, violence, etc)*
   Probe: If so, what was the situation and how was it resolved?

20. How does your village manage news or rumours of problems between different ethnic/religious groups which could affect your community?

- Can you tell me an example of rumours that are being talked about in the community?

- Has there been an example of this recently?

21. How much do you trust the police/administrators to resolve problems between different ethnic/religious groups?
- o Very untrustworthy

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- o Moderately untrustworthy
- o Slightly untrustworthy
- o Slightly trustworthy
- o Moderately trustworthy
- o Very trustworthy

Please tell us an example.

INGO

22. In the past month, have you relied on any assistance from any:
- o CSO/NGO?
- o INGO?
- o UN?

23. Probe: what was this assistance? (food assistance, cash, infrastructure, education, etc)

24. Do you think organisations from outside, coming to work in your village, are a positive thing for your community?

    Probe: why? Why not?
    Why do you think they are biased? (*if the issue is raised*)

25. What are the greatest needs in your area that organisations could assist with?

26. If an organisation does an activity in your village, what compensation should they give participants? (*Guidance, if the respondent needs more information, say for example:* refreshments, money?)

27. Is there anything else you would like to add to our discussion today?

28. Is there anyone else you would suggest I talk to about these topics?

Finally, ask the respondent if they have any questions and thank them for their time. Sometimes the best comments and insights come after the formal section of the interview has ended, so stay to chat for a while then record your impressions and any good quotes.
FINISH INTERVIEW

Household Survey

For the enumerator:
Name:
Date:
Township:
Village-Tract:
Village:

For the participant:
Gender:
Age:
Religion:
Ethnicity:

1. Over the past 12 months, what was the main source of income for this household?
    Guidance: Income can be cash or in-kind, e.g. foraging or food growth for own consumption
    - o Paddy farming (land-owner)
    - o Casual laborer
    - o Fishing
    - o Trading (retail or wholesale of goods)
    - o Handicraft (making goods for sale)
    - o Government employee
    - o Vegetable garden
    - o Forestry (planting or foraging)
    - o Animal husbandry / livestock rearing
    - o Teacher
    - o Doctor/nurse/health worker
    - o Remittances
    - o None
    - o Other_____

2. In the past 7 days, has there have been times when you did not have enough food or money to buy food?
    - o Yes
    - o No
    - o Prefer not to say

3. During the last 30 days, has your household had sufficient food, water, shelter and urgent medical care?
    Guidance: Includes both household's ability to pay, and the access the household has to the service/goods. If the have money, but lack access, mark as no

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- o Yes
- o No

4. During past 30 days, has your household received any assistance? If so, what was this assistance?

Guidance: Do not read out options; select as many as apply (note: excludes remittances or gifts from family/friends)

- o No
- o Food
- o Cash
- o Water
- o Shelter support
- o Fuel
- o Prefer not to say
- o Other _____

5. If yes, who did you receive assistance from:

Guidance: Do not read out options; Select as many as apply

- o Township authorities
- o Village authorities
- o Local NGO
- o INGO/UN
- o Religious group (Monastery / Mosque)
- o Prefer not to say
- o Other:_____
- o Don't know

6. In the next 12 months, what would you like your village leaders to prioritize in order to improve the situation of your household?

Do not read out options; ask respondent to pick three most important things

- o Better healthcare
- o Better education
- o More jobs
- o Higher income
- o Restored freedom of movement
- o Better relations with other communities
- o More security
- o Improved and upgraded household infrastructure
- o More food
- o Choose a better leader
- o Prefer not to say
- o I don't know
- o Other

7. Who has the most influence in making decisions about things that happen in this village?
Guidance: do not read out; select one
- o Township Administrator
- o Village Tract Administrator
- o Village Tract Development Support Committee
- o Village Committee
- o Village Leader/head
- o Head of Hundred Household
- o Head of Ten Households
- o Elder or respected person (*Yetmiyetpa*)
- o Religious leader
- o Member of community-based organization
- o Wealthy land/business owners
- o Police
- o Ordinary villagers
- o Prefer not to say
- o I don't know
- o Other

8. During the past 30 days, have you participated in any meeting with other villagers to discuss important issues concerning your village?
- o Yes
- o No
- o Prefer not to say

9. During the past 30 days, have you spoken with any leaders in your village about your priorities or concerns? (excluding mass meetings)
- o Yes
- o No
- o Prefer not to say

I am now going to read you a series of statements. For each one, please say if you agree, disagree, or are unsure:

10. "I understand how important decisions that affect my village are made"
- o Strongly agree
- o Somewhat agree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Strongly disagree
- o Don't know
- o Prefer not to say

11. "I am able to take part in making decisions that affect my village"

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- o Strongly agree
- o Somewhat agree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Strongly disagree
- o Don't know
- o Prefer not to say

12. "I would like to take a greater part in making decisions that affect my village."
- o Strongly agree
- o Somewhat agree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Strongly disagree
- o Don't know
- o Prefer not to say

13. "I have been involved in selecting the leaders of my village"
- o Strongly agree
- o Somewhat agree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Strongly disagree
- o Don't know
- o Prefer not to say

14. "I feel comfortable talking to the leaders of my village about my priorities and concerns"
- o Strongly agree
- o Somewhat agree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Strongly disagree
- o Don't know
- o Prefer not to say

15. "The leaders of my village listen to my priorities and concerns"
- o Strongly agree
- o Somewhat agree
- o Neither agree nor disagree
- o Somewhat disagree
- o Strongly disagree
- o Don't know
- o Prefer not to say

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16. "The leaders of my village are effective in working for my priorities and concerns"
    o Strongly agree
    o Somewhat agree
    o Neither agree nor disagree
    o Somewhat disagree
    o Strongly disagree
    o Don't know
    o Prefer not to say

17. Are there any groups of people you think are less involved than others in important decisions that affect your village?
Guidance: do not read out; select as many as apply
    o Women
    o Youth
    o People living with physical or mental disabilities
    o Particular ethnic/religious groups
    o Older people
    o Poor people
    o Prefer not to say
    o Other
    o None

18. If you had a dispute with someone in your village, who would you _first_ go to for help resolving it?
    Guidance: Give example – "who would you ask for help if someone damaged something you require for your livelihood, such as a plow or fishing net?"
    Guidance: Do not read out options; select as many as apply
    o Township Administrator
    o Village Tract Administrator
    o Village Tract Development Support Committee
    o Village Development Committee
    o Village Leader/head
    o Head of Hundred Household
    o Head of Ten Households
    o Religious leader
    o Elder
    o Member of Community-based Organisation
    o Wealthy land/business owners
    o Family/Friends
    o Other members of my village
    o Police
    o I would not ask for help
    o I don't know
    o Prefer not to say
    o Other, please state:_____

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19. If you had a dispute with someone from outside your village, who would you ask _first_ for help resolving it?

    Guidance: Give example – "who would you ask for help if a group of youths were making very loud noises in a neighboring village?"

    Guidance: Do not read out options; select as many as apply

    - o Township Administrator
    - o Village Tract Administrator
    - o Village Tract Development Support Committee
    - o Village Development Committee
    - o Village Leader/Head
    - o Head of Hundred Household
    - o Head of Ten Households
    - o Religious leader
    - o Elder
    - o Member of Community-based Organisation
    - o Wealthy land/business owners
    - o Family/friends
    - o Other members of my village
    - o Police
    - o I would not ask for help
    - o I don't know
    - o Prefer not to say
    - o Other, please state:_____

20. During the past 30 days, have you spoken with villagers from another ethnic/religious group?

    - o Yes
    - o No
    - o Prefer not to say

21. If so, what kind of interaction was this?

    Guidance: Do not read out options; select as many as apply

    - o Seeing friends
    - o I work for them
    - o Hiring them to work for me
    - o I buy goods from them
    - o I sell goods to them
    - o I see them at the market
    - o Speaking to a service-provider (e.g. doctors, teachers)
    - o Speaking to government officials
    - o Speaking to village leaders
    - o Casual interaction (e.g. talking to a stranger on the road)
    - o Prefer not to say
    - o Other_____

22. How do you feel about interacting with members of another ethnic/religious group within your village-tract?
    Guidance: do not read "prefer not to say" option.
    - o Highly positive
    - o Somewhat positive
    - o Neither positive nor negative
    - o Somewhat negative
    - o Very negative
    - o Prefer not to say

23. How do you feel about interacting with members of another ethnic/religious group outside of your village-tract?
    Guidance: do not read "prefer not to say" option.
    - o Highly positive
    - o Somewhat positive
    - o Neither positive nor negative
    - o Somewhat negative
    - o Very negative
    - o Prefer not to say

24. Compared to 2 year ago, has your amount of interaction with members of another ethnic/religious group increased, decreased, or stayed the same.
    Guidance: do not read "prefer not to say" option.
    - o Increased
    - o Stayed the same
    - o Decreased
    - o Don't know /
    - o Prefer not to say

25. In the future, would you like to see these interactions become more frequent, less frequent, or stay the same?
    Guidance: do not read "prefer not to say" option.
    - o More frequent
    - o Stay the same
    - o Decrease
    - o Don't know /
    - o Prefer not to say

26. Do you feel safe in your village?
    Guidance: do not read "prefer not to say" option
    - o Very safe
    - o Somewhat safe
    - o Not sure

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- o Somewhat unsafe
- o Not safe at all
- o Prefer not to say

27. If you feel unsafe, what is causing this?
    (*Guidance: do not read options below*)
    - o Cyclone and flooding
    - o Violence from villagers within your community
    - o Violence from another ethnic group
    - o Disputes with villagers within your community
    - o Inter-communal disputes/conflict with nearby populations
    - o Lack of documents
    - o Alcohol / drunkards
    - o Drugs abuse
    - o Domestic violence
    - o Sexual abuse
    - o Arbitrary arrest by police
    - o Thieves
    - o Fires
    - o None
    - o Don't know
    - o Prefer not to say
    - o Other

28. Compared to 2 years ago, do you think the safety situation in your area has improved, stayed the same, or got worse?
    - o Improved
    - o Stayed the same
    - o Got worse
    - o Prefer not to say

Section 2: only to be asked in CEI implementation areas

29. What interaction have you had with the CEI project, conducted by PDI in your community?
    - o Attended workshop
    - o Was invited to join workshop (but didn't)
    - o Know someone who attended workshop
    - o Went to a meeting about this project
    - o Was told about the project by village leader (formal)
    - o Was told about the project by another person in the village
    - o No interaction/unaware of the project
    - o Other _____

30. What impression do you have of the CEI project?
    - o Highly positive

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- o Somewhat positive
- o Neither positive nor negative
- o Somewhat negative
- o Very negative
- o Prefer not to say

31. Has the CEI project increased the opportunities for young people to access education in your area?
    - o Yes
    - o No
    - o Don't know

32. If yes, please give an example:

32. Has the CEI project increased opportunities for young people to access jobs in your area?
    - o Yes
    - o No
    - o Don't know

If yes, please give an example:

33. How has the CEI project changed relationships between people in your village?
    (*Guidance: do not read "don't know" option*)
    - o Highly positive
    - o Somewhat positive
    - o Neither positive nor negative
    - o Somewhat negative
    - o Very negative
    - o Don't know

Please tell us an example:

34. How have relationships between people in your village and village leaders changed during the CEI project?
35. (*Guidance: do not read "don't know" option*)
    - o Highly positive
    - o Somewhat positive
    - o Neither positive nor negative
    - o Somewhat negative
    - o Very negative
    - o Don't know

Please tell us an example:

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36. How have relationships between people from your village and people from another village changed during the CEI project?
   o Highly positive
   o Somewhat positive
   o Neither positive nor negative
   o Somewhat negative
   o Very negative
   o Don't know

Please tell us an example:

Is there anything else you would like to mention?

Finally, ask the respondent if they have any questions and thank them for their time. Sometimes the best comments and insights come after the formal section of the interview has ended, so stay to chat for a while and record your impressions.
END SURVEY

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Annex 2: Demographic Details of Respondents

Township	Total No. KII Interviews	Total No. HH Surveys	Total No. Respondents	Male Respondents	Female Respondents	Rakhine Respondents	Rohingya Respondents	Kaman Respondents	Other/unknown ethnicity Respondents
Sittwe	28	20	48	27	21	8	25	5	10
Mrauk-U	20	19	39	19	20	22	17	-	-
Buthidaung	15	10	25	15	10	15	10	-	-
Kyauktaw	6	20	26	16	10	15	11	-	-
Totals	**69**	**69**	**138**	**77**	**61**	**60**	**63**	**5**	**10**

Quick facts:
- With 69 KIIs and 69 household surveys, a total of 138 people were responded to this research
- 43% of respondents were Rakhine and 45% were Rohingya
- 44% of respondents were female
- These figures do not include interviews with project staff (1 male, 2 female)