

Final Independent Evaluation of the Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee (JMC) Support Platform Project (SPP)

Myanmar

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Evaluation Report

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Acronyms

ABSDF	All Burma Democratic Students Front
BGF	Border Guard Forces
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CNF	Chin National Front
CoC	Code of Conduct
EAO	Ethnic Armed Organisation
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
GoM	Government of Myanmar
JMC	Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee
JMC-L	Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee - Local Level
JMC-S	Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee - State Level
JMC-TSC	Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee - Technical Secretariat Centre
JMC-U	Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee - Union Level
JPF	Joint Peace Fund
KIO	Kachin Independence Organisation
KNPP	Karenni National Progressive Party
KNU	Karen National Union
LCM	Local Ceasefire Monitor
MEL	Monitoring Evaluation & Learning
NCA	Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NMSP	New Mon State Party
PBF	Peacebuilding Fund
PIP	Project Initiation Plan
RCSS	Restoration Council of Shan State
SoP	Standard Operating Procedures
SPP	Support Platform Project
TA	Technical Assistance
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN/DP	UN Resident Coordinator Office and UNDP
UWSA	United Wa State Army

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Executive Summary

On 15 October 2015, the Government of Myanmar (GoM) and eight Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAO) signed a Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA). This set up a Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee (JMC) to: implement provisions of the NCA; monitor adherence to the Code of Conduct; investigate alleged violations; and undertake problem-solving functions. At the request of the Government the UN created a Support Platform Project (JMC-SPP) as a conduit for international technical assistance to the JMC.

This Final Independent Evaluation of the JMC-SPP covers the period January 2017 to December 2018 and includes the \$6.5 million project as a whole, meaning the UNDP \$300,000, \$2.3 million Peacebuilding Fund support, the \$2.2m Joint Peace Fund multilateral support and \$946,803 bilateral support from Norway. It includes activities which have received significant in-kind support, from GoM, EAOs, the UN system and other donors and covers the activities of the Project Management Unit (PMU).

The project goal was to enable the JMC to engage effectively in ceasefire monitoring in accordance with the NCA thereby ensuring a) the nationwide ceasefire agreement is maintained and strengthened, b) a conducive space for the national political dialogue is created and c) public confidence and trust in the national peace process is improved. Project activities were structured around the following three output areas: 1) the JMC-TSC to act as Responsible Party and receive donor funds through a UNDP administrative structure, for its main activities (80% of financial resources) 2) the UN to conduct Technical Needs Assessment (TNA) for JMC to consider its ceasefire capacity development needs, and the UN/DP to coordinate and provide Technical Assistance (TA), across a wide range of thematic areas determined by the parties in the JMC (5% of financial resources) 3) the UN to receive and manage donor funds, conduct assessment and monitoring of the TSC's administrative and financial systems, and provide TA on institutional capacity development (7% of financial resources).

The theory of change for the project was: if the JMC functions well and is credible it will a) contribute to increased public confidence and trust in the overall peace process by showing that parties to the NCA have the capacity to solve ceasefire violations without resorting to violence b) encourage other EAOs (non-signatories) to join the NCA c) create a supportive environment for the national political dialogue. The underlying theory of change for the chosen project management structure was: if the UN Support Platform is created in support to the JMC it will have a catalytic effect in a) enabling the JMC to secure significant and predictable financial support in order to undertake its mandated functions through a single funding channel that is not hampered by conflicting interests and priorities b) creating an important linkage between the UN and the national peace process by providing a "strategic opening to boost the role of the UN as a trusted partner and neutral facilitator in the peace process".

At the outset of international support a comprehensive set of indicators were developed that would provide international partners with a means to verify progress over time. Financial monitoring and output tracking has been conducted through the project cycle and two of three key assessments were conducted twice each, Technical Needs Assessment (TNA1 and TNA2), and Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT1 and HACT2). However, several key indicators were not monitored and key elements of the baseline were missing making it hard to measure some aspects of project impact. Notwithstanding the creation of a project board, it was acknowledged in the project reporting that the decision making processes and management of the JMC have been largely closed to external actors. The Evaluation Team did not have access to disaggregated data from the Complaint Management System so could not use this to analyse the impact of the Monitoring, Verification and complaint Resolution system.

The staffing, capacity building and equipment inputs provided by the JMC-SPP have built a standing infrastructure for monitoring that is in a position to collate event reports and process complaints filed. The very fact that the JMC meets is itself a valuable outcome. Likewise the establishment of the TSC offices which exist at Union and State level, although not in an effective way at Local level, is an important part of building a national infrastructure for peace. The JMC is effective as a platform within which individual members can come together to de-escalate tensions between the respective parties they represent. The achievement of this trust and confidence building between representatives of the parties, by creating a space for dialogue, should not be underestimated and the international support has been catalytic in delivering this outcome.

However more than three years after the signing of the NCA, the JMC remains a passive monitoring operation, relying more on reporting from committee members and other parties than on its own proactive monitoring activities in response to grievances. There is a lack of evidence on the effectiveness of the JMC as a mechanism to actually conduct monitoring, verification and resolution. It is not a sufficient mechanism for upholding victims rights and ensuring the protection of civilians, including victims of sexual and gender based violence, against violations committed by NCA signatories.

The project's theory of change implies that the intervention is embedded in a wider positive peacebuilding process with dynamics beyond the scope of the project. In the event the lack of progress in the wider political process has had a serious impact. Profound difficulties between the parties remain and the decision by KNU and RCSS to suspend cooperation with the JMC demonstrate the precariousness of the situation. Prompt investment by the UN of relatively small amounts of money in support of the JMC was a risk worth taking but which has led to only some of the hoped for changes.

Recommendations

Related to ongoing support to the JMC

- Put a clearer focus on transforming relationships between the parties as an explicit benchmark for measuring project success.
- The international community, including the UN, should continue to advocate publicly and privately for progress on all aspects of the NCA.
- Continue direct international support to the JMC to help remedy the inherent asymmetry of the joint mechanism.
- Recognise that the crucial task of impartial adjudication of allegations of abuses against civilians by armed actors, and effective remedy for victims, is unlikely to ever be sufficiently addressed by the JMC.
- International actors engaging with the JMC, whilst continuing to promote compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law by the JMC, have a responsibility to ensure a balanced approach in their advocacy and financial support for peacebuilding in Myanmar.
- JMC activities need to be rebalanced towards local level field monitoring and verification.
- Continued effort is required to bring JMC membership, TSC staffing and policy framework into line with NCA principles of equality and non-discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, religion, culture or gender.
- JMC members, particularly at Union level, need to proactively encourage transparency and openness.
- Avoid replicating complex and disproportionate reporting and accountability structures that struggle to be effective.
- Take up recommendations made in the TNA on how social media and ICT can be a tool for ceasefire monitoring and for outcome monitoring, evaluation and learning.
- Conduct a participatory review, including non-signatories, of how JMC has fared in terms of its ability to implement its mandate based on the provisions of NCA.

Related to SPP as a model for PBF engagement on ceasefire monitoring elsewhere

- Consider undertaking a comparative review of hybrid approaches combining short term mission deployment (DPKO and DPPA MSU) within a longer term capacity building project (UNDP) in support of national peace implementation architecture.
- Remain vigilant that a peacebuilding engagement is not being instrumentalised for other goals.
- Donor created Project Management Units are not a shortcut to overcome an absence of national capacities. Where there is an absence of relevant national expertise on the local labour market to be drawn upon by national mechanisms, donor created PMUs will face the same recruitment difficulties.

1. Introduction

1. Myanmar is host to some of the world's longest and most complex internal conflicts. On 15 October 2015, the Government of Myanmar (GoM) and eight Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs) signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) signalling a new phase in the effort to end the country's armed conflicts. This was the culmination of more than two-years of negotiation. Although many groups did not sign, it was widely considered a breakthrough in the peace process. The NCA set up a Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee (JMC) to carry out the following: implement provisions of the NCA; monitor adherence to the Code of Conduct; investigate alleged violations; and undertake problem-solving functions.
2. Following a request for assistance, first from the parties to the NCA then from the newly elected Government of Myanmar, the UN conducted a high-level assessment of options in mid 2016. The mission recommended the creation of a UNDP project management structure that would establish a platform, that became known as the Support Platform Project (JMC-SPP). This would be a conduit for international technical assistance (TA) to the JMC with a view to providing coordinated financial, institutional and technical assistance in support of the JMC's mandate and functions with regard to implementing the relevant parts of the NCA. The UN project was conceived as an initial first phase one year start up to be followed by a second two year phase. The corresponding UNDP project document was given the heading 'Initiation Plan' and support to the JMC has been referred to internally within the UNDP rather confusingly as the 'SPP PIP project' ("Support Platform Project Project Initiation Plan project"). In the event the first project was extended to a 21 month project implementation period. Rather than a follow on second phase, the UN project was closed at the end of 2018 and replaced by a non-UN led JMC Multi-Stakeholder Platform (JMC-MSP) whereby the JMC would receive and manage donor funding directly.

2. Evaluation Approach

3. A final evaluation was provided for in the December 2016 UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) project document that outlined the JMC-SPP proposal, and was approved by the JMC Union level tripartite committee (JMC-U). The overall joint JMC-UN project document and subsequent donor agreements accepted that this evaluation would cover the whole project and all donor funding over the project implementation period. Detailed terms of reference for the evaluation (Annex I) were established by an Evaluation Reference Group (ERG) co-led by the UN and JMC. The Peace and Development Adviser, UN Resident Coordinator's Office is Secretary of the ERG, in partnership with the JMC-TSC.
4. As per the Terms of Reference, this evaluation seeks to understand if the benchmarks in the first phase of the platform have been achieved. In particular it seeks to assess the project relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability and focuses on the project results as well as areas for improvement and learning

2.1. Methodology

5. To achieve the evaluation's stated objectives an effort has been made to apply international best practices from the Peacebuilding Funds (PBF) evaluation methodology¹. This included seeking to answer the evaluation questions through a combination of different types of evidence and ensuring that the evaluation team remained independent and impartial while drawing on their expertise to explore the nuance and complexity of the JMC mechanism. As requested in the Terms of Reference the Evaluators applied the criteria in the OECD Peacebuilding Evaluation Guidelines² with an approach focused on reconstructing the project's theory of change followed by a log frame analysis and an effort at outcome mapping. This approach is appropriate in conflict and transition context as

• ¹ UN Peacebuilding Support Office. 'Guidelines on PBF Funds Application and Programming'. UN Peacebuilding Support Office, update 2018. https://www.un.org/peacebuilding/sites/www.un.org.peacebuilding/files/documents/pbf_guidelines_-_2018_update_-_english.pdf

² OECD. Evaluating Peacebuilding Activities in Settings of Conflict and Fragility: Improving Learning for Results. DAC Guidelines and Reference Series. OECD, 2012. <http://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict-fragility-resilience/publications/4312151e.pdf>

it recognises the difficulty of tracking direct linear chains of cause and effect in situations of complexity, where statistical data is inherently hard to access and even harder to validate and baselines are difficult to establish.³

6. To achieve this the evaluation team developed a mixed method approach during the Inception Phase to explore and analyse the interplay between different outputs, the national/state/local context, and broader stakeholder relations, specifically between Tatmadaw (national army), EAO and civilians. An Evaluation Matrix of key research questions (Annex VI) based on the Terms of Reference gave a tentative indication on whether the question was expected to be answered through documentary [DOC] (eg existing reports), quantitative [QUANT] (eg financial reporting), qualitative [QUAL] (eg focus group discussion) or comparative [COMP] (eg peacebuilding literature) research. The Inception Report proposed data gathering through collection of both primary, documentary evidence and qualitative evidence from a range of stakeholders on project activities and approaches, conditions and the context in Myanmar and the outputs and outcomes generated. This approach corresponds to three main research techniques of a) document review, b) key informant interview and c) focus group discussion.
7. A set of questions to guide the key informant interviews (Annex VII) and the focus group discussions (Annex VIII) were developed on the basis of the Evaluation Matrix. The Data Collection phase focused on field visits to five state capitals for meetings with JMC S & L members and TSC staff invited by the TSC to meet with the evaluation team at JMC TSC offices. During these meetings the Research and Information Management Unit of TSC conducted a baseline survey following which the Evaluation Team had an opportunity to structure a focus group discussion or conduct bilateral key informant interviews. An analysis of the sample size during these interactions is provided at Annex V. In addition the Evaluation Team organised its own separate discussions at a different venues with invited members of local civil society at four of the five locations. Primary data was also gathered in Yangon through key informant interviews with members of the Evaluation Reference Group, Technical Secretariat Staff and external observers from the diplomatic corps and NGOs.
8. Written programme documentation and information, provided by the project management team, covering project documents, mid-term and annual narrative reports and minutes of board meetings was analysed before, during and after the in-country mission (see Annex II list of documents consulted). This was supplemented with analysis of comparative documentary evidence such as think-tank reports, academic research and other materials from relevant actors to provide contextualisation and validation of findings. Initial analysis with main findings was presented to the Evaluation Reference Group at the end of the in-country mission in a validation workshop. This workshop also provided the Evaluation Team with an opportunity to gain insight into dynamics and relationships between key actors in the project.
9. Analysis and validation of data as well as triangulation of results was subsequently carried out during the Synthesis Phase. Key issues were selected, based on transcripts of the key informant interviews and focus group discussions, through an iterative process of triangulation with the documentary evidence. These key issues were then clustered and text coded into a data analysis matrix (see Annex IX). A draft Evaluation Report was then prepared and submitted to the Evaluation Reference Group in English and Myanmar. Comments and reactions from key members of the Evaluation Reference Group were gathered during a conference call and through written submission to the Evaluation Team.

2.2. Scope and Limitations

7. The scope of the evaluation covers the period January 2017 to December 2018 and includes the \$6.5 million Project Implementation Plan project as a whole, meaning the UNDP \$300,000, \$2.3 million Peacebuilding Fund support, the \$2.2m Joint Peace Fund multilateral support and \$946,803 bilateral support from Norway. The evaluation includes activities which have received significant in-kind support, from GoM, EAOs, the UN system and other donors. This covers the activities of the

³ Brusset, Emery, Cedric de Coning, and Bryn Hughes, eds. *Complexity Thinking for Peacebuilding Practice and Evaluation*. London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2016.

Project Management Unit (PMU) that was led by the international UN Chief Technical Advisor / Project Manager.

8. The evaluation team has grappled with constraints in terms of the time and resources available to explore a complex and wide ranging set of issues. The ERG originally designed, and UNDP advertised, a tender for a 5-person team to conduct a 2-3 month evaluation but no bids were received. It was particularly challenging to conduct a final project evaluation in the absence of many baselines and indicator data⁴. The difficulty the project faced in establishing an effective Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning system is in part a reflection of the highly sensitive nature of the subject matter and delicate set of relationships between the Tatmadaw, EAOs, civilians and the international community. Moreover, given the time available, ongoing conflict in parts of the country, and that there has not been a tradition of transparency, public accountability and scrutiny of the security sector, it is not surprising that the Evaluation Team were not able to interact meaningfully with some of the key stakeholders. At JMC-U level the Evaluation Team engaged with only one of the ten Government members, two of the ten EAO members and none of the civilian members (see Annex V). During focus group discussion at State and Local level it was largely only the civilian members that were prepared to discuss issues. The lack of engagement with the Tatmadaw was particularly significant given both the role the army play within the ceasefire monitoring mechanism and their potential influence on other actors.⁵ Where interaction was possible, politically sensitive and confidential data such as the data within the TSC Complaint Management System was not provided. Findings also need to be understood in a context where ‘social desirability bias’ may have played a strong factor ie the answers provided by respondents primarily seek to signal their conformity to values derived from historical, social, political and cultural context.
9. These methodological shortcomings are related to the sensitive nature of the information sought and cannot be fully mitigated against. Such types of challenges are not unusual in conflict and peacebuilding settings. Evaluation is not a peculiarity of development assistance and remains an important and useful learning exercise. There is an existing literature on how to evaluate military, peacekeeping and security sector related interventions that is relevant to the Myanmar ceasefire monitoring architecture (see bibliography at Annex III). Moreover a great deal of output reporting was undertaken by the JMC-TSC with the Project Management Unit and a large number of needs assessment, audit, feasibility, lessons learnt and capacity reviews were made available to the evaluation team (see Annex II). Taken together these already provide a very comprehensive overview of the inputs provided by the international community to the JMC as well as the continued debates between key stakeholders both within and outside the JMC over the role and function of the mechanism.
10. Given this context, the evaluation team therefore believe the most value added can be gained by focusing on capturing outcome and impact perceptions gathered during focus group discussions and key informant interviews in this report. The expectation is that this may bring to light new or under appreciated dimensions in the work of the JMC and the way in which the international community provided its support. Hence the following report supplements rather than synthesises existing reports and reviews and seeks to offer useful recommendations for the future.

*“To tell the truth,
people are still afraid
and people cannot
tell the truth”*

3. The Context

3.1. The Conflict

11. Myanmar is host to some of the longest internal conflicts in the world with multiple conflicts occurring in different parts of the country’s territory. A diverse mosaic of ethnic nationalities make up about a significant portion of Myanmar’s population, and the so-called ‘ethnic states’ cover more than half of the territory of the State. For much of the post 1948 independence period it was possible for non-state armed groups to hold and administer large swathes of territory, forming Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs). Cyclical crackdowns on movements demanding greater political autonomy led

⁴ Further analysis is offered at para 36 and findings provided on the Monitoring and Evaluation framework at para 50.

⁵ The political constraints on the methodology had an impact on the robustness of the findings that is noted at para 38.

to a proliferation of groups claiming to represent peoples such as the Karen, Kachin, Karenni, Shan, Mon, Wa and Chin, and the emergence of a complex array of alliances against the government.

12. While each conflict has a different historical trajectory the main axes of conflict have concerned firstly the democratisation process and secondly the degree and nature of self-determination, power sharing, resource sharing and the assertion and protection of ethnic, religious, linguistic and cultural identities. The years of conflict and inter-communal violence have resulted in death and injury, forced migration and displacement, damage to public and private property, disruption of livelihoods and social services and a fragmentation of family and social relations. War economies have led to illegal extraction of natural resources and significant revenues have been generated through illicit drug production and trafficking. As elsewhere, the conflict has impacted men and women differently with available information pointing to increased burden on women taking up non-traditional roles (albeit conversely, with opportunities that come with it) and increased physical insecurity.
13. After several rounds of talks between the government and seventeen armed movements, the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement was signed between the Government and eight EAOs on 15 October 2015 that created the foundations for ceasefire monitoring and national political dialogue. Signatories of the NCA included two large groups, the KNU and RCSS, whilst a further seven EAOs involved in the negotiations remained as non-signatory and three other groups were excluded.
14. Despite efforts to reach agreement on an overall peace settlement through national political dialogue, and to bring those groups who had not signed the NCA (non-signatories) into the framework, different areas of the country including Shan, Kachin and Rakhine state continued to experience Tatmadaw/EAO and EAO/EAO clashes following the signing of the NCA with associated suffering of the civilian populations. Such incidents have generally been more intense when involving non-ceasefire groups but there have also been serious incidents involving NCA signatories.
15. Over this same period the crisis in Rakhine State and exodus of hundreds of thousands of refugees to Bangladesh has been a major focus of national and international attention.

3.2. Pre-JMC efforts at ceasefire monitoring in Myanmar

17. Prior to the 2015 NCA there had been numerous ceasefire arrangements and agreements of a more or less formal nature. During the 1990s these were bilateral unwritten agreements⁶ between the military led government and up to 40 groups that established areas within which the EAOs could continue to bear arms as well as to pursue lucrative business opportunities on condition that they did not recruit or procure additional weaponry. These agreements were not accompanied with any clear code of conduct, monitoring or peacebuilding approach to address structural issues or resolve underlying conflicts.
18. This long period that followed could be characterised as no peace/no war. It came to an end in April 2009 when the Government announced that ceasefire groups should be incorporated under the Myanmar Army as Border Guard Forces (BGFs). This was rejected by some of the larger groups such as the UWSA, KIO and NMSP while some smaller groups were transformed into BGF battalions.
19. The Government that came to power in March 2011 made the achievement of a negotiated nationwide peace agreement one of its top priorities. Talks were opened with the five groups where the previous ceasefire had essentially broken down as well as eleven groups that had never joined the previous ceasefire process. The process of negotiation was gradually institutionalised under the Government's chief negotiator, U Aung Min, supported by the Myanmar Peace Centre - a body decreed by the President, staffed by national experts and which secured funding from the EU, UN Peacebuilding Fund and other donors. By mid 2012 thirteen groups had signed new bilateral ceasefire agreements with the government. Crucially, these held out the prospect of political dialogue to address demands and underlying grievances of the EAOs. At the request of a number of the EAOs (RCSS, KIO, KNPP, KNU, CNF and ABSDF) there was also recognition of the need for ceasefire monitoring with agreement that it should be undertaken jointly between the two sides ie

⁶ With the exception of the agreement with the Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO)

Government and EAO. The Ceasefire Negotiation and Implementation Programme of the Myanmar Peace Centre already began the task of recording ceasefire violations.

20. In parallel there were a number of locally based initiatives to conduct 'independent' ceasefire monitoring. This was undertaken by civil society organisations not on the basis of an agreement and subsequent request from the armed actors but rather on the basis of a civilian protection logic.

3.3. The JMC Mandate, Approach and Theory of Change

21. The JMC Terms of Reference (ToR) and Military Code of Conduct (CoC) describe a tripartite and three-level committee, comprised of Government/Tatmadaw, EAO and civilian members operating at Union, State and Local levels (JMC-U, JMC-S and JMC-L). JMC-U, in its meeting of 7-8 January 2016, approved establishment of a Technical Secretariat Centre (TSC), Secretariat of JMC-S (SS) and Secretariat of JMC-L (SL) placed under the overall supervision of the JMC-U to support the implementation process and undertake activities previously carried out by the Ceasefire Negotiations and Implementation Division of the Myanmar Peace Centre.
22. An implicit set of propositions, or theories of change, can be reconstructed on the basis of the NCA and related Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct.
 - If there are well-functioning local monitoring mechanisms in ceasefire areas, then stability will be maintained through their ability to investigate alleged breaches, resolve disputes and prevent escalation.

Assumption - some violations occur at local level accidentally due to lack of understanding or lack of clarity around what does or does not constitute a ceasefire violation

- If an accurate and timely early warning and early response system, can be established, linking local monitoring to the state and Union level, then political leadership will be able to respond quickly and effectively to prevent the breakdown of ceasefire agreements.

Assumption - some violations occur against the wishes of the senior leadership; the party concerned would then take action to restore discipline, reasserting control over their forces and re-establishing their commitment to the agreements they have entered into. If they do not do so there is likely to be a split within the party and/or a breakdown of trust with other parties.

- If the senior leadership of the representatives of armed groups are brought together in a permanent ceasefire monitoring structure there will be an increase in confidence and trust in the other side's good faith in upholding agreements they have entered into.

Assumption - Increased contact between the Tatmadaw and EAO leadership will reduce mistrust and suspicion.

- If confidence and trust is built between the parties through the ceasefire monitoring mechanism and through progress in the accompanying political dialogue there will be less incentive to renege on commitments made in the NCA..

Assumption - Weaker parties need reassurances to overcome the 'commitment dilemma'. The inevitable loss of relative power by the non-state armed group following a ceasefire means government commitments to honour agreements risk not being seen as credible.

23. In summary, the underlying assumption is that ceasefires violations may be accidental or calculated and may or may not have approval of central leadership. Ceasefire monitoring mechanisms are needed to answer the parties' needs for credible information that gives them reassurance that the other parties are maintaining their side of the bargain. Hence the JMC's incident reporting or early warning system needs to a) assess whether the incident took place b) assess if the incident is a violation c) give a view on whether it was accidental or deliberate d) consider whether the violator was acting within or outside their respective chain of command.
24. The NCA provides for the JMC to include "trusted and well respected individuals" (ie Myanmar civilians) as Committee members whilst the potential involvement of international observers was left for future decision by mutual agreement (NCA Para 12.c). The absence of any third party security

guarantee in Myanmar is notable given that this has been an important feature of ceasefire monitoring in other conflicts, not necessarily or primarily because it is a normative international standard or requirement but rather as a functional response to the asymmetry of power between state and non-state actors that is usually present in the aftermath of intra-state conflicts. In peacebuilding literature ceasefire monitoring mechanisms have been seen as a response to the commitment dilemma whereby parties require a third party assurance to build the credibility that promises made in the ceasefire agreement will not be broken⁷. This makes the NCA provisions on political dialogue all the more important as it held out the potential for constitutionally embedding power sharing agreements that would prevent a dominant actor from retaining advantages.

25. The Myanmar approach has been to balance the relative power of the different sides within the JMC itself in a spirit of 'jointness' whilst at the same time integrating local "trusted and well respected individuals" as a means to build in a degree of non-partisan involvement.
26. The NCA introduced the additional complexity that the Tatmadaw and EAOs have agreed to 'administer the rule of law in ceasefire areas and take action against perpetrators in accordance with the law in coordination with each other' (NCA Para 5.h). This raises questions over the law applicable and what type of action may be taken against perpetrators. Furthermore the JMC ToR states that, following verification of a complaint of a ceasefire violation it rests with the relevant organisation to take 'further actions in accordance with their procedures and law' and then send a report about their actions to the relevant JMC (JMC Terms of Reference Para 80 & 81). In other words when a verified complaint is against a party to the NCA it is that party itself, that is represented on the monitoring body, that needs to ensure appropriate remedy. This makes it difficult to apply human rights standards of evidence and protection of defendants and is one consequence of the JMC mechanism being constituted by representatives of the parties rather than being constructed as an independent third party.

4. Support Platform Project: How was the project designed?

4.1. Project Formulation phase

27. The JMC was constituted immediately following the signing of the NCA and became a legal entity by way of Presidential Decree of 19 November 2015. By February 2016 the TSC had prepared a Draft Narrative Proposal and approached international donors, including the UN, with a request for project financing of \$23m for three years. The Special Adviser of the UN Secretary-General on Myanmar was supportive of the UN engaging and on 24 February the JMC made a formal request to the UN Resident Coordinator. Following the change of Government at the end of March, the Office of the State Counsellor wrote to the UN Resident Coordinator on 16 May reiterating the request for UNDP immediate support to the JMC through bridge funding and supporting in principle the establishment of a Myanmar-based "UN Platform". This would establish a project support structure through a locally implemented UNDP project to channel funding from multiple donors. An innovative oversight structure gave a direct role for the UN Resident Coordinators Office with the ability to draw upon substantive technical inputs from UN Peacebuilding Support Office and the Mediation Support Unit of the Department of Political Affairs, a so called 'matrix management UN/DP' of the Project Management Unit.
28. UNDP initiated bridge funding at the beginning of June whilst simultaneously deploying a high-level expert UN formulation mission that was in-country 18-22 July 2016. This mission made recommendations on the future platform in consultation with the JMC-TSC, the JMC leadership, the GoM, EAOs and development partners. As a result Norwegian funding commenced on 10 November 2016 and \$2.3m under the Peacebuilding Fund Immediate Response Facility was approved on 9 December. On 23 February 2017, the JMC-SPP was presented and endorsed – including its US\$6.5 million budget – by the Joint Coordination Body (JCB) for peace process funding. The JMC-SPP Project Initiation Plan (PIP) project was then signed to run 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018, with a PMU and the JMC-TSC as the Responsible Party (RP) to receive funding for the

⁷ See for example Walter, Barbara F. 'Bargaining Failures and Civil War'. *Annual Review of Political Science* 12, no. 1 (June 2009): 243–61. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.polisci.10.101405.135301>.

JMC. Additional support through the JMC Support Platform was anticipated from the JPF and other donors including China with the latter making an early offer of support of \$1m per year over a three year period.

4.1. How the Support Platform Project articulates its theory of change

29. The Peacebuilding Fund project document explicitly set out the following theory of change:

- If the JMC functions well and is credible it will a) contribute to increased public confidence and trust in the overall peace process by showing that parties to the NCA have the capacity to solve ceasefire violations without resorting to violence b) encourage other EAOs (non-signatories) to join the NCA c) create a supportive environment for the national political dialogue.

Summary of Assumptions

continued GoM and EAO support to the implementation of the NCA according to the principles and objectives stipulated therein

JMC continues to function as an effective platform that creates conditions for peace, security and cooperation on the ground

cooperation within the JMC will lead to increased trust among NCA signatories

30. This formulation does not in itself justify a Support Platform Project established as a UNDP project as a logical intermediate step on the pathway to change. The following underlying theory can however be clearly inferred and reconstructed on the basis of the rationale provided for drawing on the Immediate Response Facility:

- If the UN Support Platform is created in support fo the JMC it will have a catalytic effect in a) enabling the JMC to secure significant and predictable financial support in order to undertake its mandated functions through a single funding channel that is not hampered by conflicting interests and priorities b) creating an important linkage between the UN and the national peace process by providing a “strategic opening to boost the role of the UN as a trusted partner and neutral facilitator in the peace process”⁸

Assumptions

rapid access to UN financing and the establishment of a Project Management Unit in the Phase 1 start up year will be catalytic because it will avoid a gap in funding and enable the TSC to live up to its project, donor management and fiduciary accountability role in the early phase.

the UN has a comparative advantage as an impartial inter-governmental entity that will help navigate the geopolitical realities impacting the peace process and mitigate risks of competition between providers of international technical assistance.

the Support Platform is the best available mechanism to enable the JMC to gain access to the UN's significant institutional expertise and international comparative experience of ceasefire monitoring. Access to this expertise is wanted by the JMC and needed to ensure JMC activities are credible and informed by international best practice.

4.2. Intervention logic: Objectives, Anticipated Results and Activities

31. The overarching outcome sought was: **The JMC engages effectively in ceasefire monitoring in accordance with the NCA.**
32. The envisaged overall impact of the support to the JMC Support Platform was: **the nationwide ceasefire agreement is maintained and strengthened, creating a conducive space for the national political dialogue and improving public confidence and trust in the national peace process.**

⁸ See PBF IRF prodoc p.11.

33. The project – a Peacebuilding Fund project that evolved into a Project Initiation Plan (PIP) mechanism – was subsequently structured around three outputs designed by both the JMC-TSC and UN/DP that are to be evaluated:

Output 1: the JMC-TSC to act as Responsible Party and receive donor funds through a UNDP administrative structure, for its five main activities

- a) the functioning of JMC's U/S/L committees (*Result - The JMC tripartite mechanism established at central level, in target states/regions and in priority local areas (townships)*)
- b) all TSC operations (*Result - JMC-TSC offices are functioning and staffed, at central level, in target states/regions and in priority local areas (townships)*)
- c) monitoring, verification and conflict resolution (MVR) (*Results - the JMC tests, puts in place and continuously improves its core SoPs on MVR, dispute resolution, conflict de-escalation and civilian monitoring; the JMC undertakes MVR activities in response to ceasefire violations and complaints*)
- d) knowledge sharing and training (*Result - the JMC initiates capacity development and training for JMC members and TSC staff on all essential normative functions of ceasefire monitoring at multi-levels*)
- e) public outreach (*Result - The JMC undertakes periodic information sharing with stakeholders at all levels, is able to run public outreach activities with communities in 6 target states/regions*)

Output 2: the UN to conduct Technical Needs Assessment (TNA) for JMC to consider its ceasefire capacity development needs, and the UN/DP to coordinate and provide TA, across a wide range of thematic areas determined by the parties in the JMC-U (*Results - a validated multiannual technical assistance provision plan is in place for the JMC; the platform puts in place a mechanism for coordinating technical support - Technical Support Group; The JMC benefits from access to in-house technical expertise, and capacity development and exposure to international comparative experience including on key ceasefire interface issues such as gender and human rights protection*)

Output 3: the UN to receive and manage donor funds, conduct assessment and monitoring of the TSC's administrative and financial systems, and provide TA on institutional capacity development (*Results - the core delivery, governance and M&E structures for the JMC Support Platform are set-up and maintained; the administrative capacities of the TSC are strengthened; the multi-year JMC Support Platform is designed and set up*)

34. In terms of required inputs, the project document indicated the overall financial resource need of \$6,564,924. The achievement of the first output was estimated to require 80% of these resources, the second output 5% and the third 7% with the remainder for general management support.

4.3. Observations on Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning & Project Indicators

35. The JMC mechanism has by definition a monitoring function at its heart. Over an 18 month period there were more than 80 formal meetings of the JMC at Union, State and Local Level. Of more than 500 complaints that were found to be within the scope of the JMC it is reported that at least three quarters were resolved and closed. During the course of the evaluation some made the argument that through this Monitoring, Verification and complaint Resolution activity the committees gain a specific perspective on local and regional conflict dynamics and progress on implementation of the NCA. This potentially allows the Tatmadaw and signatory EAOs to evaluate the situation, learn from the experience and develop appropriate response strategies. The Evaluation Team was not provided access to disaggregated data from the Complaint Management System on complainant profile, type of complaint, party complained against, remedy pursued and whether remedy was judged acceptable to the complainant. The internal deliberations of the JMC are also not available so it is not possible to make a judgement on how effective the Complaint Management System proved to be as a Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning system allowing the JMC to update its overall approach in line with experience.

36. At the outset of international support a comprehensive set of indicators were developed that would provide the international partners offering support with a means to verify progress over time. Financial monitoring and output tracking has been conducted through the project cycle and two of three key assessments were conducted twice each, Technical Needs Assessment (TNA1 and TNA2), and Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfer (HACT1 and HACT2). However, several key indicators were not being monitored and key elements of a baseline, specifically the community perception or capacity development survey, was not conducted. According to project reporting there were several reasons for these gaps including: confidentiality of figures that could not be shared with outside actors; over-ambitious targets given TSC capacities or ones that are out-of-sync with the political context and progress of the peace process; absence of full-time M&E capacity in the TSC or PMU, and the lack of availability of a planned international M&E expert from the JPF until after the closure of Phase I.
37. The availability of data to the evaluation team on each of the original project monitoring indicators is set out in summary below:

Results and activities / Indicators	Status of monitoring against indicator
Objective: JMC effectively undertakes ceasefire monitoring in accordance with NCA and informed by international humanitarian law and international human rights law	
Indicator 1. # and % of NCA violations addressed effectively against established criteria (criteria to be developed, with the TSC, including on civilian protection)	Data available but without quality criteria Total since Apr 2017: 422/ 601 or 70% complaints received resolved/closed
Indicator 2. Perceptions of confidence of NCA signatories in the JMC against established criteria (criteria to be developed, with the TSC, including on jointness)	•Baseline survey of JMC members developed and being conducted after closure of phase I.
Indicator 3. % of public who express understanding of the JMC's mandate and functions in respective areas	•No monitoring available
Result #1: JMC is set up and carries out its core functions	
Indicator 1.1: # and % of sampled ceasefire violations under the mandate of the JMC, where JMC members report being satisfied with the MVR process	•No monitoring available
Indicator 1.2: % increase or decreases in reported incidents with analysis for increase/decrease	•No monitoring available
Indicator 1.3: % of civilians who state that they (or someone they know) have reported violations into the ceasefire complaints mechanisms have been satisfied with the manner in which complaints were handled (Ranking to be developed for the satisfaction)	•No monitoring available
Indicator 1.1.1: # of JMC committee bodies constituted and fully operational (against established criteria) at Union, State and Local levels (criteria to be developed)	•Data available but without quality criteria Total at end Sep 2018: •1x JMC-U •5x JMC-S •2x JMC-L (Hpa'pun not fully operational)
Indicator 1.1.2: # and % of women civilian members in JMC committee bodies at union, state and local levels (disaggregated by membership, i.e. Government/Tatmadaw, EOA, civilian)	Data available Female participation by JMC level: •JMC-U: 0% •JMC-S: 19% •JMC-L: 11% Female participation by membership: •Government/ Tatmadaw: 0% •EAOs: 5% •Civilians: 48%

Indicator 1.1.3: # and % of meetings held jointly (against established criteria including joint agenda-setting, meetings in mutually-agreed locations)	<p>“Data available but without quality criteria Total since April 2017 at end December 2018 (21 months):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •9x JMC-U mtgs; •12x JMC-S Shan mtgs; 12x JMC-S Tannitharyi mtgs; 14x JMC-S Kayin mtgs; 14x JMC-S Mon mtgs; 13x JMC-S Bago mtgs; •10x JMC-L Langkho mtgs; 1x JMC-L Hpa’pun mtgs
Indicator 1.2.1: # of JMC TSC offices functional against established criteria (criteria to be developed)	<p>•Data available but without quality criteria Total at end December 2018:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •1x TSC-U •5x TSC-S •2x TSC-L (Hpa’pun not functional)
Indicator 1.2.2: # and % of women employed at TSC at all levels (disaggregated by role: management, programme, operations, and support services level (union, state, local) and location)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Pending disaggregation by role •At end December 2018: 38% TSC staff were female •Disaggregated by level at end December 2018: •TSC – U: 17/43 (40%) •TSC-S: 19/47 (40%) •TSC-: 0/2 (0%)
Indicator 1.3.1: # of new SOPs drafted and applied that are informed by international humanitarian law and international human rights law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Data available but unclear linkages to IHL & IHR •Total SOPs/ TORS at end Dec 2018 (not including amendments): 20 TORs/ SOPs Adopted
Indicator 1.3.2: % and # of ceasefire issues/violations/complaints received by the JMC that are in the mandate of the JMC (disaggregated by source and type)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •This data is confidential between the parties
Indicator 1.3.3: # and % of ceasefire issues/violations/complaints verified by the JMC (disaggregated by source and type)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Pending source and type disaggregation •See Indicator #1 above
Indicator 1.3.4: % and # of ceasefire issues/violations/complaints resolved by the JMC (disaggregated by source and type)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Pending source and type disaggregation •See Indicator #1 above
Indicator 1.4.1: Training curricula on MVR and related undertaking (interview case management case referrals etc.) developed and adopted by the JMC	Available
Indicator 1.4.2: # of JMC members and TSC and LCM staff completing function specific training courses on agreed curricula (disaggregated by topic/course, level and gender)	Available
Indicator 1.4.3: % of training participants who report increased levels of understanding of training topics following training (disaggregated by topic/course and gender)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Pending JMC Member and Staff Survey baseline
Indicator 1.4.4: # and % of JMC members and TSC and LCM staff who are satisfied with the training and capacity development initiatives (by type, by gender, by topic/workshop type)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Pending JMC Member and Staff Survey baseline
Indicator 1.5.1: # of regular joint public consultation by JMC (by location and type)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Available •Over 21 months, since Apr 2017: 93 Public consultations
Indicator 1.5.2: # of civilians attending briefing meetings with JMC (disaggregated by sex, by location)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Available •Over 21 months, since Apr 2017: 14,895 females attended briefing meetings out of 36,798 participants (40% women)
<p>Result #2: JMC's capacities are strengthened and informed by international humanitarian law and international human rights law</p>	

Indicator 2.1: # and descriptions of instances in which training concepts were applied as reported by JMC members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pending JMC Member and Staff Survey baseline • See main body activity 2.2 and below on TNA1-2
Indicator 2.2: Reflections of JMC members on the quality of technical assistance provided by the Platform (quality includes: usefulness, relevance, timeliness etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity building survey being carried out after the end of phase 1. • TNA provides recommendations & TSC conducts its own training evaluations after each event.
Indicator 2.1.1: Multi annual technical assistance plan developed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available • TNA1 Report included a table of Recommendations on Capacity Development Plan (TA Matrix) updated during TNA2. • TA plans have been approved in JMC-U bi-monthly meetings, including the development of the JMC-U Course Directive
Indicator 2.1.2: # and % and descriptions of recommendations from the TNA that are planned to be applied to the programme (by type of support)	<p>Partly available</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JMC-U does not track its decisions in relation to the TNA recommendations,
Indicator 2.2.1: # of JMC TSC staff, JMC members and LCMs receive capacity development and support on cross-cutting issues (disaggregated by course, gender, function)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No data available
Indicator 2.2.2: # of JMC members and TSC staff participating in international training courses and in-country and foreign exchange visits (disaggregated by gender and type)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualitative data available
Result #3: JMC Support Platform Project facilitates support to the JMC through project management, quality assurance and institutional capacity-development	
Indicator 3.1: Project meets its bi-annual and annual financial delivery targets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available • Financial support to the JMC ended on 13 December 2018, preliminary delivery figures indicate that the delivery rate was 91%. The delivery rate has remained lower than anticipated.
Indicator 3.2: # and descriptions of Project Board recommendations that are applied to the Project	<p>Available</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Since April 2017: 5 project board meetings, with 6 action points and 13 endorsements were applied by the project
Indicator 3.1.1: Project is audited in line with UNDP corporate standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available • Audit findings were released in Q6 and the project will be audited again after it's conclusion.
Indicator 3.2.1: # of short-term consultants providing on-site support to TSC on institutional topics (by type)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available
Indicator 3.2.2: # of training events on institutional topics (by type, # of participants and sex)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available
Indicator 3.3.1: # and % and descriptions of key lessons learned through meetings with JMC, workshops and consultations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Available • Report "Reflecting on the UN/DP JMC-SPP: Lessons Learnt."

5. Main Findings

38. The following main findings are based on the data gathered during the field work phase through key informant interviews, focus group discussions and surveying conducted by the TSC. This data was subsequently analysed and triangulated with the many available internal project documents and external reports. The key output of the project, with 80% of the allocated financial inputs, was to act

as a conduit for financial assistance necessary for the effective functioning of the JMC. As stated in the project reporting, notwithstanding the creation of a project board, it needs to be acknowledged that the decision making processes and management of the JMC have been largely closed to external actors. The evaluation of output area one can hence be considered akin to evaluation of a budget support type programme looking at broad macro impacts and wider context. Whilst remaining primarily demand driven, the formal project management structures had more direct control over the second and third output areas making it more possible to attribute effect and make specific recommendations.

5.1. Relevance - were the assumptions on which the JMC was set up, and international support was provided, sensible in the specific context of Myanmar's transition 2015-2016?

5.1.1. Relevance of activities under Output Area 1 - design of the JMC-TSC

39. The relevance of the JMC structure and design can be measured according to the expected needs of the three key stakeholder groups; the Tatmadaw, the EAOs and the civilian population of conflict affected areas. As set out at Section 3.3 above, the analysis of the conflict context anticipates that the EAOs have an interest in a monitoring body that would reduce their power asymmetry with the Tatmadaw. Conversely the Tatmadaw have an interest in ensuring stability, national unity, maintaining their authority and avoiding becoming subordinate to a higher authority outside their chain of command. Meanwhile the needs of the civilian conflict affected population from the monitoring body is for a mechanism that would ensure effective redress when they are direct or indirect victims of violations of the ceasefire.

40. With regard to the EAOs, whilst underlining their attachment to a JMC in principle, and welcoming of progress that has been made, there were a variety of concerns expressed that the design of the JMC was not always delivering the desired 'jointness', that there remained ambiguity around issues such as territorial demarcation and that the 'balanced package' agreed within the framework of the NCA was not being respected, in particular with regard to development activities in EAO controlled or mixed areas (so called 'interim measures') and progress on political dialogue. Specific design problems were also noted with the assumption of a uniform size and resourcing of each State level JMC whereas situations in different states differ widely. For example in some locations there are several active EAOs, some of which may be NCA signatories and others not. It was also suggested that the design of the monitoring mechanism was structurally imbalanced as most of the monitoring need is in remote areas, where clashes take place, yet the JMC-TSC is only really physically present in State capitals or Yangon and it has not proven possible to roll-out the envisaged local monitoring mechanisms. Interviewees of all sides noted that the suspension of cooperation with the JMC mechanisms in late 2018 by KNU and RCSS were clear indicators that the JMC was not proving as relevant to their needs as anticipated.

"Tatmadaw generally have not tried to gain advantage and have worked constructively"
Male, JMC

"In reality the Government members have a veto"
Male, TSC

41. With regard to the Tatmadaw perspective on the relevance of the JMC it is difficult to make firm findings. Interactions with Government members of the JMC at lower level were generally supportive of the mechanism in principle but there was a general reluctance to discuss whether the SoPs and ToRs were relevant to the context. There was some unease from Government members that they are put in a position on the committee of needing to take decisions whilst they continue to operate in a hierarchy where they are expected to implement rather than take decisions. Some respondents speculated that the relevance of the body to the Government is that, as an overall result of the NCA, the JMC has brought stability and government services to areas that were previously conflict affected.

"JMC does not have power to investigate the root causes of an incident but only takes the complaint at face value"
Male, TSC

42. Many respondents, particularly those representing Community Based Organisations, noted that in the initial phase of establishing the JMC local populations had high expectations that it would function as a mechanism to address a wide range of grievances such as land disputes, extortion and forced recruitment into armed forces. There was a feeling that the way the ToRs and SoPs have formalised the Complaints Management System, together with the absence of local level monitoring, means these expectations have not been met. Others felt that these initial expectations were based on a misunderstanding of the mechanism and that it needed to be made clear that it was not a

"The local population have been told that they can complain, but the way it works is that it is only the accused organisation who can act against itself"
Male, TSC

court that could deal with a whole range of civil or criminal complaints. Some JMC civilian members and civil society actors with a good understanding of the design of the system pointed out that the mechanism generally worked to resolve disputes between the parties in private on the basis of 'making problems go away' rather than a victim centred approach that would ensure effective redress, accountability and that rights were upheld.

"An independent monitoring body with internationals and CSOs would be better for us. The current model is in deadlock so it is not workable"

Female, CBO

43. Discussion with civilian members revealed a further asymmetry in the design of the mechanism, not between Tatmadaw and EAO but rather between the civilian Committee members who serve in a personal capacity and those who attend purely by virtue of their job function. It was suggested that it is problematic that both Government and EAO members retain a primary duty to their line hierarchy/chain of command rather than to the collective decision making within the Committee. Furthermore they may only spend a short period of time on the committee before being moved to other jobs. This works against the Committees developing an *esprit de corps* that would help changing mindsets as a useful conflict transformation function.

"decisions are taken above and handed down to local level"

Male, TSC

"Committee discussions cannot solve problems locally as some members require a green light from their HQ"

Female, JMC

5.1.2. Relevance of activities under Output Area 2 - the provision of technical and capacity building support

44. The initial project design had envisaged a Technical Support Group⁹ or some form of pooled mechanism by which the expressed needs of the JMC for support in the form of workshops, advice or training could be best matched to those in a position to supply. Prior to the establishment of the Support Platform Project a range of international peacebuilding organisations that were already offering capacity development to the Army and EAOs were exchanging information informally in meetings of an International Peace Support Group. A Technical Support Group could have played a stronger role in channeling expertise from within the UN family, specifically UN DPKO and UN DPA as well as more broadly. In the event no pooled mechanism was formalised and capacity development continued to be provided on the basis of parallel relationships. This was managed flexibly in a way that built trust over time so that highly specialised expertise was provided through workshops organised collaboratively on issues such as media training, insider mediation and disengagement drawing on UN and non-UN technical assistance providers. Most capacity building was managed internally, some was organised and led by the PMU and some was organised bilaterally. Interlocutors identified this support as highly relevant to expressed needs of JMC members. It proved wise to move away from a model where the JMC would solicit thematic support principally through the UN and/or that the PMU would be the main entry point for on-call access to expertise within and beyond the UN system.
45. As noted above the Government and EAO members of the committees do not necessarily serve for long periods of time before being moved to other functions. It was mentioned during discussions that some of those who attended international exposure trips had subsequently been replaced on the committee and hence the knowledge acquired was not of benefit to the Committee. Whilst international exposure trips have proven value in generating innovative solutions and building confidence between participants the selection of participants is crucial if they are to help build capacity over the longer term. This is again an issue where the project management was constrained by not being in the decision making role.

5.1.3. Relevance of activities under Output Area 3 - the Support Platform Project Management Unit

46. The Support Platform Project was designed with the assumption that a PMU would be co-located with the TSC and that it would be able to ensure smooth transfer of funds on the basis of a high degree of mutual understanding. Emphasis was placed on the neutral role that the UN would be able to play and the unique profile it would bring that would underpin the 'platform' concept which relied on bringing other donor partners on board. In the event the Support Platform Project only very partially functioned as a platform in the way intended. As described below in the section on effectiveness, a number of factors hampered the PMU from fulfilling this function some of which

⁹ P19 PBF prodoc. This idea was subsequently referred to in the PIP prodoc and the TNA as a 'Technical Resource Pool'.

could not be foreseen¹⁰. There was however already at the design phase a recognition that other donors had envisioned that the JPF would function with a strong, if not principle role, in delivering funding and technical support to the JMC and that there would be rivalry with a UN SPP approach. The risk management strategy suggested to address this was to request the GoM to explain the vision and for the UN to seek support from a balanced and broad range of partners. This did not prove sufficient to solve the problem.

5.2. Effectiveness - to what extent were the original JMC and project objectives achieved?

47. The PBF 2018 Annual JMC-SPP Progress Report and the UNDP JMC-SPP quarterly project progress reports provide a thorough and detailed overview of project activities. The overall picture is of a range of staffing, capacity building and equipment inputs that have built a standing infrastructure for monitoring that is in a position to collate event reports and process complaints filed. However, as noted in one of the assessments, more than three years after the signing of the NCA, the JMC remains a passive monitoring operation, relying more on reporting from members and other parties than on its own pro-active monitoring activities in response to grievances. This section will draw more on the key informant interviews and focus group discussions to explore further how effective the JMC is perceived to be in monitoring the ceasefire and resolving disputes.

5.2.1. Effectiveness of activities under Output Area 1 - the JMC-TSC effectively delivering across its five main functions

48. It was clear from discussions at state level that most respondents either implicitly or explicitly felt that the very fact that the JMC meets is itself a valuable outcome. Likewise the establishment of the TSC

Due to the public consultation meetings particularly in rural areas, people have come to know more about JMC and appreciated it.

Male, JMC

"In fact the rate of achievement of the JMC has been very low"

Female, CBO

"JMC cannot be effective because it cannot offer any security guarantee and there is no certainty it will take action and provide an effective remedy"

Male, CBO

offices which exist at Union and State level, although not in an effective way at Local level, was valued and the JMC members and TSC staff had relevant knowledge and skills on the basis of the Course Directive. These positive achievements however have to be set against very mixed views concerning the effectiveness of the JMC as a mechanism to actually conduct monitoring, verification and resolution. Some respondents suggested that the failure to fully clarify the application of basic concepts such as demarcation is an indicator of lack of overall effectiveness of the mechanism. The lack of consistent Local Civilian Monitoring, despite the adoption of a ToR on the issue, was particularly remarked upon in light of the JMC mandate on Protection of Civilians. It was also noted that at the local level it is often in fact the local government administrator, rather than the JMC-TSC, that has the authority and resources to convene large public meetings or to gain the necessary authorisations to visit specific locations. Furthermore respondents indicated that the JMC has measured effectiveness too much on the basis of counting Union level meetings, adoption and translation of ToRs and SoPs and the resolution of disputes between senior leadership rather than in terms of the ability to monitor the situation on the ground in the most conflict affected areas. The data gathered does not demonstrate that the JMC has so far been an effective mechanism for upholding victims rights and ensuring the protection of civilians, including victims of sexual and gender based violence, against violations committed by NCA signatories. Demonstrating the ability to deal with such cases in a sensitive, effective and impartial manner is a key determinant of the JMC's credibility.

We still have cases of forced displacement due to fear of action by Tatmadaw or EAO. If JMC was effective this should not be happening

Female, CBO

"few women have knowledge to participate in the process"

Female, CBO

5.2.2. Effectiveness of activities under Output Area 2 - the SPP thematic capacity development activities

49. Interlocutors were explicit in their praise of the effectiveness of support provided by the PMU and the Technical Needs Assessment exercise as a means to prioritise and mobilise relevant expertise based on the JMC-U needs. Furthermore there was recognition that the relationships of trust that were established enabled senior members of the JMC and TSC to talk through complex issues in a 'brain storming' type mode. Through this process new possibilities and capacity needs could be defined

¹⁰ These issues are set out clearly in the Lessons Learnt Report of the UN/DP JMC SPP that was made available to the Evaluation Team.

collectively. This is an important achievement allowing a shift away from a demand driven only model with the inherent risk where the JMC may not know what is available. In contrast, committee members at State and Local level had a perception that capacity development opportunities were much more freely available at the Union level.

5.2.3. Effectiveness of activities under Output Area 3 - the SPP project management, quality assurance and institutional capacity development function

50. The results monitoring framework that was advocated by donors and agreed as part of building M&E capacity was evidently not effective. The approach was not realistic given the sensitive nature of the subject matter and the ability of the project to mobilise the necessary expertise.
51. As noted in the project reporting, the two micro assessments conducted under the Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfer as well as the Project Management lessons review explore in detail the effectiveness of the Project Management Unit model in delivering the intended objectives. These highlight that, whilst the administrative capacities of the TSC to handle funds were strengthened, core delivery, governance and M&E structures within the PMU were only intermittently available. This was partly as a result of the reluctance of the GoM to increase the budget ratio between staffing the PMU and financing JMC operations that became apparent in the early phase of the project. It also reflects the difficulty of recruiting and retaining qualified staff in the PMU, in part related to the uncertainty surrounding the continuation of the SPP project and the decision not to proceed with phase two and instead to change to a direct funding approach (eg both of the national staff resigned from the PMU shortly after the decision to change approach). This points to a flawed assumption at the outset that the PMU would be able to rapidly recruit and retain qualified national staff with the necessary skill sets, for example on project management and M&E, where the TSC itself would be unable to.
52. A necessary condition for the Support Platform Project to be able to be effectively perform the quality assurance and fiduciary backstopping task was to have meaningful capacity to understand what is happening within the JMC. This need was clearly stated at the outset, for example in the framing document of the Formulation Mission. The results monitoring framework advocated by donors and agreed as part of building M&E capacity was unable to deliver the effectively in conditions where the SPP board members came to accept that national ownership would mean sensitive decision making in the main activity area of direct support to the JMC was closed to the UN.

5.3. Impact - what happened as a result of the establishment of the JMC and the international support provided to it?

5.3.1. Overall impact of activities under Output Area 1 - the JMC-TSC activities

53. Many informants stated that slow progress on the political roadmap (Chapter 5 of the NCA) impacted negatively on the work of the JMC-TSC. A core evaluation question is whether the JMC itself had a positive, negative or no discernible effect on available **space for national political dialogue and public confidence and trust in the national peace**

process. It is hard to measure project impact in the absence of baseline and comprehensive national perception survey data. It is welcome that the Research and Information Management unit of TSC is starting to conduct baseline surveys that will allow tracking of overall impact. The surveying of JMC member attitudes that was carried out by the TSC simultaneously with the evaluation of JMC members confidence found a satisfactory level of confidence in the way JMC was conducting activities related to awareness raising and capacity building. Opinions were more reserved on JMC activities related to conflict resolution, monitoring, verification and coordination. This corresponds with the

opinions expressed during focus group discussions run by the External Evaluators where JMC members generally spoke highly of the JMC as a platform within which individual members can come together to de-escalate tensions between the respective parties they represent. The achievement of this trust and confidence building between representatives of the parties by creating a space for dialogue should not be underestimated. At the same time serious difficulties between the parties remain with regard to the wider political process; the KNU

I think the local population do not know anything about the JMC
Male, JMC

Women attend the community outreach programme but this is not necessarily an indicator that they engage meaningfully.
Male, TSC

"First view is that the JMC has supported a ceasefire and this makes the local people happy. Second view is that the local community are worried that if the peace process proceeds their land may be confiscated according to application of Government land laws. The local EAOs will no longer be able to protect their property"
Male, CBO

and RCSS, the two main signatory EAOs, had suspended cooperation with the JMC during the period the evaluation and surveying was being conducted.

54. A systems thinking evaluation approach would seek to analyse the types of violations that the MVR system is handling in order to see whether they are those which, according to the project's theory of change, are most likely to cause conflict escalation if left unaddressed. This was not possible to do because, as noted, the Evaluation Team did not have access to disaggregated data from the Complaint Management System. During focus group discussion with Committee members and with CBOs a relatively high degree of scepticism was expressed on whether the public outreach effort has generated an increased understanding or greater public confidence in the mechanism. Indeed there was some suggestion that these activities may have a negative impact in reinforcing fear and mistrust of authority amongst the civilian population if there is a perception that the JMC is a Tatmadaw, rather than joint, body when conducting activities in areas that have traditionally been held by EAOs.

When public outreach activities are organised by the local Government and include the Tatmadaw it passes a message to the local community that this is a Government institution. It needs to be made clear that the problem solvers are independent civilian members

Male, JMC member

55. Community Based Organisations with prior and existing engagement in Civilian Ceasefire Monitoring made the point that the JMC design had at the outset failed to capitalise on and leverage existing networks. It was noted by them that, given the scale and magnitude of the challenge, the JMC members and TSC alone could never hope to directly address all the ceasefire violation cases. The sense that an opportunity was missed by the JMC at an early stage, by not building on existing CBO initiatives, was also shared by some members of the international community. There was a need for much greater engagement with civil society in order to deliver a multiplier effect.

"We were never consulted and when they do have public meetings they do not invite us"

Female, CBO

"Wider society needs to be active participant so that Tatmadaw and EAO are encouraged to adhere to their commitments"

Male, CBO

5.3.2. Overall impact of activities under Output Area 2 - the SPP thematic capacity development activities

56. Plausible claims were made that the mobilisation of UN expertise, including as a result of discussion that took place during the TNA exercise, had a significant impact on JMC members thinking about key issues. The survey conducted by the TSC into JMC member satisfaction with the study visits, training and workshops they had attended found that overall those surveyed reported a reasonable degree of improvement of understanding on relevant subjects with a slightly lower level of practical application. In focus group discussion there was significant emphasis placed on the utility of overseas study visits. Two important caveats apply that make it difficult to interpret these remarks; firstly some of the visits that were referred to were not actually delivered as part of the SPP but were rather bilateral initiatives only loosely coordinated with the PMU. Secondly this is an area where responses may be influenced by personal desire to participate in such visits rather than a reflective consideration of individual or system wide benefits.

5.3.3. Overall impact of activities under Output Area 3 - the SPP project management, quality assurance and institutional capacity development function

57. JMC and TSC respondents were generally positive about the catalytic effect of the international support, but this is again an area where there needs to be a degree of caution about social acceptance bias in the methodology. Effort was made to emphasise that the evaluators did not represent UNDP and would not have a role on future resourcing decisions. However the context and optics of the encounters made it difficult not to create the impression of a benefactor/beneficiary relationship with the JMC and TSC 'beneficiaries' expressing gratitude for the support received.
58. The preference of some donors to provide support through bilateral or JPF funding modalities had been recognised at the outset. Internal reporting made available to the evaluators as well as key informant interviews with staff of the UN, TSC staff and donor organisations made it apparent that there were extensive project management blockages and difficulties encountered during implementation. A first category of issues were technical problems flowing from decisions on the number of staff made available to the PMU and the complexity of 'matrix reporting' across JMC, UNDP and JPF financial systems. A second category of more political issues related to monitoring and reporting and concern control of the flow of information and decision making power within the project. A third category of difficulties encountered are external to the project itself, such as the

decision of China not to join the project that impacted on the overall legitimacy of the SPP approach. As the project proceeded UN/DP was required to draw extensively on staff time without being able to recover such cost and found itself caught between respecting the needs and national ownership of the JMC whilst at the same time meeting the high expectations of development partners yet with little dedicated capacity. This had a negative impact on the perception of the quality of the project. The JPF subsequently decided to shift to a direct support model rather than continuing to work through a UNDP managed PMU with an expectation of greater leverage to push for meaningful changes.

5.4. Efficiency - was the SPP the most efficient and cost effective way to achieve the objectives?

5.4.1. Output area 1 - Were JMC-TSC activities efficient and cost effective

59. One of the project design constraints was the desire of national counterparts, to appeal to a spirit of voluntarism and avoid creating what was referred to locally as a peace industry. There was strong pressure to limit the proportion of funds for international experts and UN operating costs. The encounters with JMC S and L members and TSC staff indeed left a strong impression of a service ethic and that the JMC is leveraging personal and political capital with minimal financial inputs.

Within the limits of the resources we could achieve a lot... I spend my own time and for example used my own car to undertake a specific. I was not reimbursed any expense but I was happy to do so because it is for peace

Male, JMC

We don't claim back the money. We would of course welcome more support, but if we do not get more support we will still do our work selflessly

Female, JMC

60. A tension was however expressed around differential remuneration between the Government, EAO, civilian committee members and the TSC staff that is built in to the design of the mechanism. Following a salary table negotiated jointly by the parties, and approved by the JCB, TSC staff receive higher salaries than the standard Government pay scale. EAO members depend on the resources of their organisation whilst civilian members are in principle offering their services on a voluntary basis. A plausible argument is made that that the TSC would not have attracted good staff if they paid Government salary rates.
61. Significant underspend indicates that the initial budget assumptions were unrealistic, above all the 'big-bang' approach whereby it was assumed that all ten envisaged local offices would be fully operational from the start. Furthermore it is difficult to reconstruct a comprehensive activity based budget given that the government and some bilateral donors have made many in-kind contributions (eg UN HQ and country office in-kind for all management and most expert time 2016-2018, vehicles gifted by India and China).
62. It is relevant to note in the context of input relative to intended outcome that most of the time of TSC staff was reportedly spent on administrative tasks (recruitment, procurement, logistics) rather than on technical support on substantive ceasefire monitoring.

5.4.2. Output Area 2 - Were the SPP thematic capacity development activities efficient and cost effective

63. The thematic capacity development activities conducted by the SPP appear to have been appropriately authorised and accounted for although it was suggested that some activities could have been more efficiently delivered by drawing on locally based expertise, although Myanmar nationals would struggle to counter perceptions of bias. As noted a number of national, regional and international capacity development opportunities were made available outside the framework of the SPP by some of these partners.

5.4.3. Output Area 3 - Were the SPP project management structures and processes efficient

64. The decision of the GoM to encourage the Support Platform Project was explicitly linked to the expectation that this model would enable the efficient channelling of funding from multiple donors cutting across geo-political divisions. It is an indicator of the difficulties encountered on delivering on this expectation that the change in modality for the next phase is known as a 'Multi-donor Support Platform' with the implication that the Support Platform Project was not already a fully efficient multi-donor platform. During project start-up, four separate sources of funding were received, reported on

and managed, with significant external political pressures. Separate sources of funding will continue to be received by the JMC under the next phase but the significance of the change to a Multi-donor Support Platform is that there will not be an intermediary UNDP contracted Project Management Unit. It will become clearer over time whether the revised approach is able to deliver expected outputs more effectively.

65. Some respondents expressed concern that excessive layers of accountability, reporting requirements and scrutiny imposed high opportunity costs in the sense that scarce human resources within the TSC and UNDP PMU were absorbed in project management activities that were not proportionate to the effect generated and could have been better deployed on other activities. One indicator cited is the number of drafts and redrafts of various iterations of project documents, reports and log frames, and consequent time taken in formal Project Board meetings and informal discussions.

5.5. Sustainability - will the benefits be maintained, and the negative side effects reduced, in phase II?

5.5.1. Output Area 1 - Will the JMC-TSC be able to sustain its five main activities?

"JMC is better than nothing and should continue"

Male, JMC

66. The wider political context of the peace process in Myanmar is an external determining factor on the possibility to maintain and improve upon gains made under the SPP.

Evidently the KNU & RCSS decision to suspend their cooperation has a major impact.

Whilst Committee members and TSC staff generally want to remain optimistic, there were some who are reconsidering their continued participation as they start to doubt

whether the mechanism can deliver on its objectives. There was also particular frustration and anxiety from committee members at the inability to activate the local level monitoring.

"We feel tired because of all the difficulties. We are worn out"

Female, JMC

"Throughout my life I have participated for the public good and ceasefire brought many benefits to the local people... now there have been more violations and I am considering whether to continue."

Male, JMC

67. TSC staff operate in a challenging working environment with long and unsociable working hours but appeared to be admirably professional and motivated. There were no specific reports of threats to TSC staff security, although this needs to be set into context where there is no permanent presence in the most conflict affected areas.

5.5.2. Output Area 2 - Will the JMC be able to continue to access in-house technical expertise and exposure to comparative international expertise?

68. Capacity development activities are on a sound footing and existing relationships that have been built with UN experts and the wider peacebuilding community offer the prospect of continued collaboration. The JMC-TSC has already indicated the desire to establish a renewed modality in order to be able to draw upon UN expertise. This maybe possible on an ad hoc basis as well as in the framework of a CMI project under the JPF umbrella.

5.5.3. Output Area 3 - Will the JMC-TSC be able to directly receive and manage donor funds?

69. The move to phase 2 is an indicator of progress during phase 1 in building sufficient capacity that JPF is able to consider funding directly. Direct funding implies that a project management unit would need to be created within the TSC structure. In the future it will be the TSC itself that will be responsible for donor relations, routine reporting on outcomes and for this it would require a properly staffed Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning function.

6. Conclusion

70. The staffing, capacity building and equipment inputs provided by the JMC-SPP, notably under Output Areas 2 and 3, have built a standing infrastructure for monitoring that is in a position to collate event reports and process complaints filed. The very fact that the JMC meets is itself a valuable outcome. Likewise the establishment of the TSC offices which exist at Union and State level, although not in an effective way at Local level, is an important part of building a national infrastructure for peace. The JMC is effective as a platform within which individual members can come together to de-escalate tensions between the respective parties they represent. The achievement of this trust and confidence building between representatives of the parties by creating a space for dialogue

should not be underestimated and the international support has been catalytic in delivering this outcome.

71. However more than three years after the signing of the NCA, the JMC remains a passive monitoring operation, relying more on reporting from members and other parties than on its own pro-active monitoring activities in response to grievances. There is a lack of evidence on the effectiveness of the JMC as a mechanism to actually conduct monitoring, verification and resolution. It is not a sufficient mechanism for upholding victims rights and ensuring the protection of civilians, including victims of sexual and gender based violence, against violations committed by NCA signatories.
72. The project's theory of change implies that the intervention is embedded in a wider positive peacebuilding process with dynamics beyond the scope of the project. In the event the lack of progress in the wider political process has had a serious impact. Profound difficulties between the parties remain and the decision by KNU and RCSS to suspend cooperation with the JMC demonstrate the precariousness of the situation. Prompt investment by the UN of relatively small amounts of money in support of the JMC was a risk worth taking but which has led to only some of the hoped for changes.

7. Recommendations

Related to ongoing support to the JMC

- **Put a clearer focus on transforming relationships between the parties as an explicit benchmark for measuring project success.** A core function of the JMC is exchange of information and resolving of disputes between the armed actors. The JMC is a unique model and there is plenty of evidence that it has contributed to building confidence between the armed actors. This goal was not however clearly translated into the project activities, report indicators and evaluation process which had instead a heavy focus on setting up an infrastructure for ceasefire monitoring activities. In the overall narrative of how to judge the project it is to some extent a victim of its success as it is Myanmar's most visible peacebuilding mechanism: as a result it bears the full weight of expectations for progress on the peace process. Its continued functioning is a necessary but not sufficient for overall political progress towards peace and stability in Myanmar.
- **The international community, including the UN, should continue to advocate publicly and privately for progress on all aspects of the NCA.** The JMC cannot achieve its goals in the absence of wider political progress. Political leadership in the spirit of balanced implementation of the NCA is a prerequisite. Continued engagement by the international community is needed to encourage parties to adhere to their commitments.
- **Continue direct international support to the JMC to help remedy the inherent asymmetry of the joint mechanism.** The JMC is essentially composed of a state party on the one hand and non-state armed groups on the other. The civilian members do not have their own power base to draw upon and derive their legitimacy from their personal integrity and conduct. The possibility of international support was foreseen in the NCA for a reason: it provides additional confidence and legitimacy to a high risk venture as well as welcome financial support that allows the recruitment and retention of high calibre staff to the TSC.
- **Recognise that the crucial task of impartial adjudication of allegations of abuses against civilians by armed actors, and effective remedy for victims, is unlikely to ever be sufficiently addressed by the JMC.** The complex political environment and multi-stakeholder nature of the JMC, including the engagement of the international community, has resulted in some role confusion and competing vision as to the main purpose and possibilities of the mechanism. This has been exacerbated in the Myanmar transition where the international community has had an incentive to place a premium on building and maintaining relationships with hitherto inaccessible security actors over upholding underlying human rights principles. As a result success has tended to be judged in terms of the satisfaction of the armed actors rather than the reduction of abuses.
- **International actors engaging with the JMC, whilst continuing to promote compliance with international human rights and humanitarian law by the JMC, have a responsibility to ensure a balanced approach in their advocacy and financial support for peacebuilding in Myanmar.**

Whilst not explored by this evaluation, greater effort is needed to build an effective human rights architecture in Myanmar that holds duty bearers in the security sector to account.

- **JMC activities need to be rebalanced towards local level field monitoring and verification.** There is broad recognition that field monitoring needs to take place and it was central to the original JMC concept. The current configuration assumes that local monitoring can be commanded from the central level on the basis of agreements of the top leadership. This approach has not worked. As a result there has been some effort to attempt different models. A renewed effort to build differentiated and context based local level monitoring drawing on existing CBO structures offers a way forward.
- **Continued effort is required to bring JMC membership, TSC staffing and policy framework into line with NCA principles of equality and non-discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, religion, culture or gender.** 48% of civilian members of the JMC and 38% of TSC are female but there is only one female EAO member and no female Government members. It is critical to continue to strive for an enabling environment where women participate, contribute freely and appropriate conditions are created for handling cases of Sexual and Gender Based Violence.
- **JMC members, particularly at Union level, need to proactively encourage transparency and openness.** Whilst recognising that incident reports and the treatment (or non-treatment) of ceasefire violations by the armed actors are politically sensitive, there has been an undue lack of transparency and accountability concerning the flow of standard management information within the JMC during the SPP. It is, for example, difficult to understand why local civil society are not given standard descriptive information about the JMC when they request it. This was sometimes described as a consequence of needing to handle state secrets. It is a fallacy that the security sector by definition cannot undertake strategic planning and review progress towards goals on the basis of a robust monitoring, evaluation and learning system. This is being remedied for the future.
- **Avoid replicating complex and disproportionate reporting and accountability structures that struggle to be effective.** Donors provide financial support to institutions in fragile and politically sensitive conflict environments around the world and there are ways of ensuring an appropriate level of accountability without undue interference in national political processes. During Phase I there were perhaps different interpretations on what was meant by the support platform being 'Myanmar based'. Some national actors believed this would mean that there would not be the usual standard of scrutiny that comes with international support. When negotiating support in future the JMC and international community needs to have a more honest discussion about the distinctions made in Myanmar between legitimate management reporting on project progress and illegitimate questioning of national political decisions. Sidestepping the issue results in a proliferation of processes, meetings and reports that struggle to deliver the expected changes. This seems to be better understood in the set up of Phase 2.
- **Take up recommendations made in the TNA on how social media and ICT can be a tool for ceasefire monitoring and for outcome monitoring, evaluation and learning.** The evaluation was not aware of wide spread use of social media for public outreach and ICT more generally as a tool for activity monitoring and data gathering on JMC impact. There may be potential in investing more intensively in this area.
- **Conduct a participatory review, including non-signatories, of how JMC has fared in terms of its ability to implement its mandate based on the provisions of NCA.** This has already been recommended by the second TNA report. The JMC model broadly assumes that non-signatory EAOs would progressively join the mechanism. Whilst some groups have subsequently signed the NCA the main non-signatory groups have not joined and the KNU and RCSS have suspended cooperation. This calls for a fundamental review of the JMC ToRs and SoPs that needs to include recognition of negative perceptions of the JMC amongst local communities and non-signatory EAOs and how these might be addressed. It is not however a moment to scale back the running costs and overheads of the JMC-TSC but rather the institution must continue, and be seen to continue, to function.

Related to SPP as a model for PBF engagement on ceasefire monitoring

- **Consider undertaking a comparative review of hybrid approaches combining short term mission deployment (DPKO and DPPA MSU) within a longer term capacity building project (UNDP) in support of national peace implementation architecture.** The SPP approach failed to

create a platform or mechanism and rather than being a new model for UN engagement on ceasefire monitoring it should best be understood as a hybrid of UNDP direct implementation project with enhanced draw down of DPPA expertise contracting global ceasefire experts, and support from UN agencies, funds and programmes in support of a mechanism led by the armed actors. The original vision of this developing as a platform channeling all other donor support never fully materialised. The precise JMC SPP approach came with considerable reputational and transaction costs and is unlikely to be replicated in other peacemaking contexts. However this hybrid way of working in support of a national institution is in line with the UN's Sustaining Peace agenda and the need to break out of institutional silos. Difficulties were experienced in Myanmar that have been fed by, and will continue to feed, unhelpful generalised characterisations such as 'development/project driven approaches do not have the speed and flexibility needed to operate in a conflict/post conflict setting' and 'diplomatic/security engagements cannot be monitored or evaluated'. A compendium of best practices in this area would help challenge such views and offer practitioners inspiration to overcome implementation obstacles.

- **Remain vigilant that a peacebuilding engagement is not being instrumentalised for other goals.** Support to national peace architectures always has a risk of generating a 'too important to fail' dilemma meaning that once the international community has begun financing an initiative it becomes impossible to subsequently end support, even when a mechanism may not be performing, or even may be exacerbating rather than reducing conflict dynamics. Once there is no credibility behind any threat by donors to suspend cooperation there is little financial leverage to encourage national actors to adhere to international standards. The basic principles underpinning the logic of ceasefire monitoring need to be at the centre of support to nationally owned ceasefire monitoring. Other objectives, such as building and maintaining relationships with traditionally unreceptive security actors, should not dominate.
- **Donor created Project Management Units are not a shortcut to overcome an absence of national capacities. Where there is an absence of relevant national expertise on the local labour market to be drawn upon by national mechanisms, donor created PMUs will face the same recruitment difficulties.** Outsourcing of project management from national institutions to internationally contracted Project Management Units is not a magic bullet to the problem of lack of national capacity caused by the absence of trained and experienced personnel on the local labour market. This dilemma is inherent in all capacity development projects and the approaches used by development agencies in other sectors can equally be applied in peace and security engagements.

Annex I - Terms of Reference

Briefly describe the project rationale / background and the objectives of the project

These Terms of Reference (ToRs) outline the conduct of the Final Independent Evaluation (FIE) of the JMC-SPP Project Implementation Plan (PIP), by a team of senior independent and external expert consultants. The final evaluation was provided for in the December 2016 UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) project document that outlined the JMC-SPP proposal, and was approved by the JMC Union level tripartite committee (JMC-U). The plan is that the FIE be independently and professionally conducted to international standards, with JMC engagement throughout, and at least its Executive Summary will be publicly available. The PBF's Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) will provide expert guidance.

Emphasize the relevance/purpose of the work required and how it is linked to the project context

Purpose of evaluation: The PBF project document outlines that "The Project will be subject to a final external evaluation to understand if the benchmarks in the initial phase of the platform have been achieved. The outcome of the evaluation will be very important to inform the planning and implementation of the next phase of the JMC support platform". The UN's global guidance for the PBF outline the concept and rationale for final evaluations. Several key elements of this FIE, that follow global practice, are that it will be independent and impartial, conducted by a team of external experts, and guided by an Evaluation Reference Group.

The present Terms of Reference (ToRs) refer to the Final Independent Evaluation of the JMC-SPP Project Implementation Plan (PIP), by a team of two independent experts/consultants, one international expert as a team leader, and one national expert, both on Individual Contracts (IC).

The final evaluation was provided for in the December 2016 UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) project document that outlined the JMC-SPP proposal, and was approved by the JMC Union level tripartite committee (JMC-U). The plan is that the FIE be independently and professionally conducted to international standards, with JMC engagement throughout, and at least its Executive Summary will be publicly available. The PBF's Peacebuilding Support Office (PBSO) will provide expert guidance.

The PBF project document outlines that "The Project will be subject to a final external evaluation to understand if the benchmarks in the initial phase of the platform have been achieved. The outcome of the evaluation will be very important to inform the planning and implementation of the next phase of the JMC support platform". The UN's global guidance for the PBF outline the concept and rationale for final evaluations. Several key elements of this FIE, that follow global practice, are that it will be independent and impartial, conducted by a team of external experts, and guided by an Evaluation Reference Group.

Scope of evaluation:

The FIE team will review the \$6.5 million PIP project as a whole, including JMC Result #1, and UN/DP results #2 and #3, not just how PBF's \$2.3million funds were spent. During project design in 2016, agreeing to a single final evaluation of the whole project avoided four separate donor plus one overall evaluation. The final evaluation will focus on the two years January 2017 to December 2018, the project results as well as areas for improvement and learning. In particular it will assess the Project Initiation Plan (PIP) JMC-SPP April 2017 to December 2018 for relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the project. This will lead to recommendations for the PBF, for the JMC and its Phase 2 Multi-Support Platform (JMC-MSP), and for the UN, donors (as applicable) and technical assistance providers.

FIE team selection: UN/DP (including the PBSO) and JMC-TSC will conduct the application and selection processes for the FIE team, based on these ToRs, and UNDP rules. The team will be selected either as individual consultants on UNDP contracts or through an institutional contract procured through UNDP.

FIE team composition: The FIE team will be composed of a team of International (1) and National (1) Evaluator. International Evaluator will act as a Team Leader and should have peacebuilding evaluation experience, and first-hand knowledge of peace processes that include with negotiated settlements with ceasefire arrangements. The National evaluator should have knowledge of the Myanmar political context and peace process, as well as native-speaker language skills. The team should have (or at least have

access to) subject matter expertise to cover the JMC's core mandate, ceasefire related matters and protection of civilian provisions in the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA).

All team members need fluency in English. During the inception period, the availability and quality of baseline data will be assessed, and a decision taken whether it needs to be augmented, and how. The proposed team composition and / or expertise needed and available to the team are:

- a. Team leader: peacebuilding evaluation expert with the knowledge of peace processes including negotiated settlements with ceasefire arrangements. Comparative knowledge of other peace processes and ceasefire mechanisms highly preferable; other thematic expertise relevant to the JMC's core mandate highly preferable;
- b. National Expert: national expert in Myanmar's armed conflict and transition; other thematic expertise relevant to the JMC's core mandate highly preferable; fluency in Myanmar or another ethnic language preferable; The national expert should ideally have experience in translating to the government and Ethnic Armed Organisations; experience interpreting and / or translating in civil-military, armed conflict and ceasefire-related terms preferable.

UNDP will provide the required logistical support (vehicle, arranging meetings, etc).

Expected Outputs and Deliverables

The evaluation team would at least produce: an Inception Report; a full draft report for review, and; a Final Report, with a stand-alone Executive Summary. All reports will be in English and Myanmar, using the JMC-SPP glossary of terms. The team will organise a validation workshop, with ERG and other JMC participation, to test the team's assumptions, findings, and recommendations. The report should utilise high quality info-graphics and other means of communicating the data and their findings. Final editing is with the evaluation team, supported by PBSO. While the principle is that the PBF's final evaluation reports are publicly available, in order to respect confidentiality of the JMC and the NCA signatory parties, the co-chairs of the ERG through consultations with the ERG and other key stakeholders if necessary, will advise the PBSO if the report should be publicly available in full or in part. The following are indicative phases and timelines:

- Phase 1 - ERG formation, and team selection
- Phase 2 - Desk review and inception report
- Phase 3 - Data collection in Myanmar

Annex II - List of Documents Consulted

Core documents

The Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement Between The Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and Ethnic Armed Organizations (NCA), 15 October 2015, https://peacemaker.un.org/sites/peacemaker.un.org/files/MM_151510_NCAAgreement.pdf (unofficial English translation)	15 October 2016
Myanmar Peace Centre - Draft Narrative Proposal "Establishing the Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Mechanism to Monitor the Nationwide Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement"	17 February 2016
UNDP Myanmar - Norway Specific Agreement "Strengthening Ceasefire Implementation in Myanmar"	10 November 2016
UN Peacebuilding Support Office/Peacebuilding Fund Project Document "Support to JMC Support Platform", signed 9 December 2016 http://mptf.undp.org/document/download/20450	9 December 2016
Concept Note - Support Platform for Myanmar's Ceasefire Joint Monitoring Committee - submitted to State Counsellor	February 2017
Myanmar News Agency, "[The Joint Coordination Body for Peace Process Funding] JCB reaches six agreements," http://www.globalnewlightofmyanmar.com/jcb-reaches-six-agreements/	24 February 2017
UNDP Myanmar Project Document "JMC Support Platform" https://info.undp.org/docs/pdc/Documents/MMR/JMC-SPP%20signed%20pro-doc.pdf	28 March 2017
Joint Peace Fund UN Agency to UN Agency Contribution Agreement "JMC Support Platform Project"	14 September 2017
UN Peacebuilding Support Office progress reports	
UN Peacebuilding Support Office, JMC Support Platform Project half yearly update http://mptf.undp.org/document/download/20459	30 June 2017
UN Peacebuilding Support Office, JMC Support Platform Project Annual Project Progress Report http://mptf.undp.org/document/download/20460	20 December 2017
UN Peacebuilding Support Office, JMC Support Platform Project Semi-Annual Progress Report http://mptf.undp.org/document/download/20461	18 September 2018
Project board documentation	
Minutes of 1st JMC-SPP Board Meeting	22 September 2017
UNDP, JMC Support Platform Project Quarterly Progress Report, Financial Report Q1 April - 30 June 2017, Narrative Report Q1&2 1 July - 15 September 2017	30 September 2017
Note to File - JMC Support Platform Project Project Management Unit 'Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) update'	19 October 2017
JMC Support Platform Project 'Project Board Terms of Reference'	12 December 2017
Minutes of 2nd JMC-SPP Board Meeting	14 December 2017
UNDP, JMC Support Platform Project Quarterly Progress Report, Q3 October - December 2017	12 March 2018
Minutes of 3rd JMC-SPP Board Meeting	3 April 2018
Minutes of 4th JMC-SPP Board Meeting	25 June 2018
Note to File - JMC Support Platform Project Project Management Unit 'Handover and JMC-SPP project status'	31 August 2018
UNDP, JMC Support Platform Project Quarterly Progress Report, Q5 1 April - 30 June 2018	28 September 2018
Minutes of 5th JMC-SPP Board Meeting	28 September 2018
JMC Support Platform Project 'Terms of Reference - Final Independent Evaluation'	October 2018
UNDP, JMC Support Platform Project 18-month Progress Report, 1 April 2017 - 30 September 2018 (draft)	February 2019

Internal Assessments and Reviews

Project Formulation Mission "Framing Document"	mid 2016
"Report of the Project Formulation Mission for the United Nations Platform to Support Myanmar's Ceasefire Joint Monitoring Committee"	15 August 2016
JMC "Technical Needs Assessment mission report" [1]	September 2017
JMC "Technical Needs Assessment mission report" [2]	March 2019
Moore Stephens LLP Chartered Accountants "UNDP Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) Micro Assessment, Technical Secretariat Centre - Joint Monitoring Committee, Myanmar" [1]	18 August 2017
Moore Stephens LLP Chartered Accountants "UNDP Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers (HACT) Micro Assessment, Technical Secretariat Centre - Joint Monitoring Committee, Myanmar" [2]	10 May 2018
JMC Support Platform Project "Project Management Lessons Review"	11 July 2018
JMC "Functional Needs Assessment Report"	17 July 2018
"Organizational/Financial Capacity Assessment (OFCA) Report - Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee Multi-Support Platform"	5 December 2018
"Reflecting on the UN/DP JMC-SPP: Lessons learnt" (draft)	March 2019
<u>JMC approved Terms of Reference and Standard Operating Procedures</u>	
Terms of Reference for the Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee at different levels	18 November 2015
Ceasefire terms and conditions and military code of conduct	18 November 2015
Terms of Reference for the Technical Secretariat of the Union Level Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee	23 February 2016
Terms of Reference for the Technical Secretariat of the State Level Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee	23 February 2016
Terms of Reference for the Technical Secretariat of the Local Level Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee	26 April 2016
JMC Standard Operating Procedures for Complaint and Dispute Handling	28 June 2016
JMC Standard Operating Procedures for Verification	13 September 2016
Terms of Reference of the Chair, Vice-Chairs, Secretaries and Members of Union Level Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee	13 September 2016
Terms of Reference for Executive Director and Deputy Executive Director	14 September 2016
Terms of Reference for Liaison Offices of the Ethnic Armed Organisations	18 November 2016
Standard Operating Procedures for Joint Mobile Monitoring	7 February 2017
Operational Manual [not made available to the evaluation team]	7 February 2017
Terms of Reference for Local Civilian Monitors to do monitoring in wards and villages	3 May 2017
Security related Standard Operating Procedures	5 May 2017
Terms of Reference of the Different Levels of JMC for the Stakeholders Engagement and Public Consultation	3 July 2017
Terms of Reference JMC Support Platform	3 July 2017
Standard Operating Procedures for Geographic Information Systems	20 November 2017
Terms of Reference for Chair, Vice Chairs and Secretaries and Members of State/Regional Level Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee (JMC-S)	3 July 2018

Terms of Reference for Chair, Vice Chairs and Secretaries and Members of Local Level Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee (JMC-L)	3 July 2018
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Terms of Reference for Civilian Representatives of different levels of JMC	5 July 2018
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Annex III - Bibliography

Evaluating Peacebuilding Interventions - Methodologies and Guidance

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Annex IV - Evaluation Schedule

Inception phase 11-14 March 2019

- Desk review of basic project documentation provided by UN
- Discussion of the evaluation approach with members of the ERG
- Planning of the evaluation mission
- Drafting and submission of an evaluation inception report including survey protocols, range of people to be interviewed, dates of visit, itinerary and names of evaluation team

Data collection phase 16 March - 4 April 2019

- Bilateral meetings in Yangon with members of the Evaluation Reference Group, Technical Secretariat Staff and external observers (diplomatic corps, NGOs and civil society)
- Field missions to Taunggyi, Taungoo, Hpa-An, Mawlamyine and Myeik
 - survey (conducted by the TSC), key informant interviews and focus group discussion with JMC-S and L,
 - focus group discussions with representatives of Community Based Organisations
- Validation workshop of preliminary findings in Yangon with Evaluation Reference Group members

Synthesis phase 5 April - June 2019

- Data analysis
- Drafting, reviewing, finalisation and translation of the evaluation report

Annex V - Meetings / Telephone Interview and Focus Groups

Yangon

UN	<p>Peter Batchelor, Resident Representative a.i. UNDP</p> <p>Dawn del Rio, Deputy Resident Representative UNDP</p> <p>Peter Barwick, Peace and Development Advisor, Office of the UN Resident Coordinator</p> <p>Susu Thatun, former Head Peace Support Unit, Office of the UN Resident Coordinator</p> <p>Dilruskhi Fonseka, Social Cohesion and Governance Specialist, UNDP</p> <p>Adrian Morrice, former Chief Technical Adviser/Project Manager, JMC-SPP</p> <p>Sophie Boutcher, lessons learnt consultant, JMC-SPP</p> <p>Sujeeta Bajracharya, M&E Analyst, UNDP</p> <p>Linnea Lindberg, Peace & Development Officer, Office of the UN Resident Coordinator</p> <p>Joerg Stahlhut, Programme Advisor/Chief of Unit Governance and Sustainable Peace, UNDP</p>
TSC	<p>Aung Naing Oo, Executive Director</p> <p>Seng Pan, Deputy Executive Director</p> <p>Saw Ronald Hein, MVR Manager</p> <p>Aung Mrat Lurn, Coordination and Capacity Building Manager</p> <p>Min Zaw Oo, former Executive Director TSC/Executive Director Myanmar Institute for Peace & Security</p>
Donor	<p>Sean Deely, Head of Strategy & Advisory Support, Myanmar Joint Peace Fund</p> <p>Harald Nordgaard, Senior Policy Advisor, Royal Norwegian Embassy</p> <p>Edward Bell, Conflict Advisor, DfID/British Embassy</p>

Telephone

UN	<p>Dilruskhi Fonseka, Social Cohesion and Governance Specialist, UNDP</p> <p>Harald Thorud, Programme Management Officer, UN Peacebuilding Support Office</p> <p>Anna-Lena Schluchter, Associate Peacebuilding Officer, UN Peacebuilding Support Office</p>
External	<p>Emma Leslie, Executive Director, Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies</p> <p>Oskari Eronen, Asia Director, Crisis Management Initiative</p>

Participation in Focus Group Discussion at JMC State Offices

		Overall			Government Members			EAO Members			Civilian Members - Govt. nominated			Civilian Members - EAO nominated		
		#	Present	%	#	Present	%	#	Present	%	#	Present	%	#	Present	%
JMC - Shan	Male	14	1	21,4%	5	0	0,0%	5	1	20,0%	2	0	50%	2	0	50%
	Female		2			0			0			1				
JMC - Bago	Male	14	5	42,9%	5	2	40,0%	5	0	0,0%	2	2	100%	2	1	100%
	Female		1			0			0			1				
JMC - Kayin	Male	14	4	57,1%	5	0	0,0%	5	2	40,0%	2	1	200%	2	1	100%
	Female		4			0			0			3				
JMC - Mon	Male	14	3	28,6%	5	1	20,0%	5	1	20,0%	2	0	0%	2	1	100%
	Female		1			0			0			1				

JMC - Tanintharyi	Male	14	2	21,4%	5	0	0,0%	5	0	0,0%	2	0	50%	2	2	100%
	Female		1			0			0		1	1	100%		0	
Totals State level		70	24	34,3%	25	3	12,0%	25	4	16,0%	10	8	80,0%	10	9	90,0%
JMC - L Lankho		8	5	75,0%	3	2	66,7%	3	2	66,7%	1	1	100%	1	0	100%
			1			0			0			0		1		
JMC - L HpaPun		8	3	50,0%	3	2	66,7%	3	0	0,0%	1	0	100%	1	1	100%
			1			0			0		1	1	100%		0	
Totals Local office		16	10	62,5%	6	4	66,7%	6	2	33,3%	2	2	100,0%	2	2	100,0%

Contacts with JMC-U Members

		Overall			Government Members			EAO Members			Civilian Members - Govt. nominated			Civilian Members - EAO nominated		
		#	Contact	%	#	Contact	%	#	Contact	%	#	Contact	%	#	Contact	%
JMC-U	Male		3			1	10,0%		2			0			0	
	Female	26	0	11,5%	10	0	10,0%	10	0	20,0%	3	0	0,0%	3	0	0,0%

Focus Group Discussions with Leaders of Community Based Organisations

22 March 2019	Taunggyi	7 participants (4 women, 3 men)
	Taungoo	None
25 March 2019	Hpa-An	4 participants (4 men)
26 March 2019	Mawlamyine	4 participants (2 women, 2 men)
4 April 2019	Myeik	3 participants (1 woman, 2 men)

Annex VI - Key research questions

Evaluation Questions	Specific & Measurable?	DO C	QU ANT	QU AL	CO MP
Relevance					
1. The quality of the problem analysis and the project's intervention logic and logical framework matrix: to what extent were the Support Platform Project objectives consistent with the needs, requirements and priorities of the JMC-TSC?	Yes.	X		X	
2. Participation of Tatmadaw, Ethnic Armed Organisations and civil society in the design and in the management/ implementation of the project.	Yes, although 'participation' should be defined toward actual outputs.	X		X	
3. The appropriateness of the project management including the recommended monitoring and evaluation arrangement, including the objectively verifiable indicators of achievement.	Yes, will be based on common M&E standards.	X		X	X
4. Was the intervention logic the most appropriate to meet the needs identified?	Based on stakeholder perceptions and best available comparative evidence.			X	X
Effectiveness					
5. How effectively did the Support Platform Project help in					
· Supporting the work of the JMC-TSC as a Responsible Party in delivering the functioning of JMC's U/S/L committees, all TSC operations, monitoring, verification and conflict resolution (MVR), knowledge sharing and training, and public outreach at local level.	Yes, although utility must be included.	X		X	
· delivering Technical Needs Assessment (TNA) for JMC to consider its ceasefire capacity development needs, and the UN/DP coordinates and provides TA, across a wide range of thematic areas determined by the parties in the JMC-U	Yes.	X		X	X
· enabling the UN to receive and manage donor funds, conduct assessment and monitoring of the TSC's administrative and financial systems, and provide TA on institutional capacity development.	Yes, although it risks being based on financial and human resource inputs rather than outputs, e.g. the level of donor funding rather than the impact of such funding.	X	X	X	X
Efficiency					
6. Extent to which the costs of the project have been justified by the benefits whether or not expressed in monetary terms in comparison with similar projects or known alternative approaches, taking account of contextual differences and eliminating market distortions.	Yes, especially through the use of common return on investment and cost: benefit ratios and analysis.	X	X		X
7. The quality and appropriateness of day to day internal and external management of the project. This should include risk management.	Yes, if based on common risk management approaches and standards. Management can also be quantified in terms of efficiency and verified through qualitative evidence and best practices.	X	X	X	X
Impact					

8. Extent to which the objectives of the project have been achieved as intended, including what difference the project made to ensure implementation of relevant provisions of the NCA, monitoring adherence of the parties to the Military Code of Conduct, investigation of alleged violations and performance of problem-solving.	Yes, although dependent on the quality of data/information attained for other evaluation questions.			X	X
Sustainability					
9. The evaluation should inform the planning and implementation of the next phase of the JMC support platform	Yes.			X	X
Coherence					
10. Extent to which the project contributed to/contradicted other contributing partners policies.	Yes and this will be based on whether contributions/contradictions had a material impact on policies.	X		X	X

Annex VII – Guideline for Key Informant Interviews

Donor/partner	JMC Member	TSC
Relevance		
		Do you think the activities provided through the Support Platform Project meet the needs, requirements and priorities of your JMC?
According to information received and comparative international examples, were the project management arrangements fit for purpose, including the recommended monitoring and evaluation arrangements?		In your view, were the project management arrangements fit for purpose, including the recommended monitoring and evaluation arrangements? What worked well, what didn't work well?
		Do you have any baseline and targets for monitoring your office's performance? Can these be disaggregated by gender?
Were you consulted on the way the JMC TS was set up?	Were you consulted on the way that the JMC TS was set up	Were you consulted on the way that the JMC TS was set up
	Was training/capacity building provided, was it relevant?	Was training/capacity building provided, was it relevant?
	Did you as a committee member get what you needed from Secretariat to take part in committee meetings (discussion – expectations of what the TSC and international community should provide)	Did you as a TSC staff member get what you needed to perform your function (discussion – capacity building programme of the TSC)
Effectiveness		
	Do you understand more about ceasefire monitoring now than you did when you first joined the committee? Is this capacity gained on the job or was it because of capacity building exercises run by the TSC (eg workshop, seminar, ToRs, SoPs)	Do you understand more about ceasefire monitoring now than you did when you first joined? Is this capacity gained on the job or was it because of capacity building exercises run by the TSC (eg workshop, seminar, ToRs, SoPs)
Did you help supply international advisers?	Did you have contact with international advisers. Did the work of different international assessment and advice missions help you to identify solutions to any problems you face in upholding the NCA	Did you have contact with international advisers? Did their work help you to identify solutions to any problems you face in supporting the JMC?
	Do you think the TSC manages its work capably and effectively?	
Efficiency		
	Do you think that enough funds have been made available for the JMC?	Do you think that enough funds have been made available for the JMC? Did they arrive in time?
Could the same results have been achieved in another way?	Could the same result have been achieved in another way?	Could the same result have been achieved in another way?

How much time have you spent on JMC related discussions (reporting, stakeholder engagement meetings/ board)	Has the time you spent on JMC related activities been worthwhile?	Can you give a rough idea of % of work time you spend on (eg 6 month period) on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitoring, Verification, resolution - Technical capacity building, developing ToRs/SoPs, knowledge sharing and training - Coordination/servicing needs of JMC meetings - Public outreach & stakeholder management at local level - Project management (eg internal reporting, data collection and analysis, meetings such as this one, weekly office meeting,) - Administration and finance (eg recruiting, budgeting, procurement) How has this changed overtime?
Impact		
How would you assess the difference the work of the JMC has made over time in ensuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant provisions of the NCA could be implemented in your are - the adherence of the parties was effectively monitored - investigations into alleged violations took place - problems you with the other party are resolved? - problems with the local population are resolved 	How would you assess the difference the work of the JMC has made over time in ensuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant provisions of the NCA could be implemented in your are - the adherence of the parties was effectively monitored - investigations into alleged violations took place - problems you with the other party are resolved? - problems with the local population are resolved 	How would you assess the difference the work of the JMC has made over time in ensuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relevant provisions of the NCA could be implemented in your are - the adherence of the parties was effectively monitored - investigations into alleged violations took place - confidence between the parites is increased - confidence of the population in the political process is increased
	Do you think JMC activities have changed perceptions of women's role in ceasefire monitoring? How have activities had this kind of effect?	Do you think TSC activities have changed perceptions of women's role in ceasefire monitoring? How have activities had this kind of effect?
What effort has the international community made to ensure international humanitarian law and international human rights law is recognised and respected	Is your work on the JMC recognises and respects international humanitarian law and international human rights law?	What safeguards has the TSC put in place to ensure that procedures recognize and respect international humanitarian law and international human rights law?
What would have happened if the international community had not supported the JMC? Would the situation be better/worse?	What would have happened if the international community had not supported the JMC? Would the situation be better/worse?	What would have happened if the international community had not supported the JMC? Would the situation be better/worse?
How do you think the local population perceive your work on the JMC?	How do you think the local population perceive your work on the JMC?	How do you think the local population perceive the work of the JMC?
Sustainability		
	What technical issues need to be addressed in the coming months to improve the working of your JMC?	What technical issues need to be addressed to improve the ways in which the TSC supports the JMC?
What lessons can we learn from how donors have provided and channelled international support?		What lessons can we learn from how the TSC has received and managed international support?
Do you think the level of international engagement with the JMC should a) remain the same b) increase c) decrease?	Based on what you know of international engagement so far, do you think the level of international engagement with the JMC should a) remain the same b) increase c) decrease?	Based on what you know of international engagement so far, do you think the level of international engagement with the JMC should a) remain the same b) increase c) decrease?

Annex VIII - Guidance Questions for Focus Group Discussions¹¹

Thank you for talking with us today.

We are an independent team conducting a final evaluation of the work of a UN support project to the Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee. This was set up to implement provisions of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement of 15th October 2015 between the Government of Myanmar and eight Ethnic Armed Organisations. The goal of the evaluation is to learn about what has been accomplished by the project, what has worked well, and what has not worked as well. Lessons from this review will be used to help inform future support by the international community to the JMC mechanism.

We have spoken with the JMC members. But it is very important for us that we also hear the perspective of the people who ultimately benefit from the peace – the local people.

The information collected today will only be used for the evaluation. Are you willing to participate in this study? If you are too busy to stay, or you think it is not relevant to your work it is no problem, please enjoy the coffee and cake but feel free to leave when you need to.

We will not use this information in a way that links opinions given to any individual or your specific organisation in the report but we would like to name your organisation in a list at the annex of the report. Do you agree?

We would also like to clarify that this interview is entirely voluntary and that you have the right to withdraw from interview at any point without consequence.

We have a short list of questions to learn about the ways that these projects may have worked with you and your community - and your knowledge and experience with these projects and their activities?

1. Do you feel comfortable to give us your views on relationships between a) the Government b) the EAOs c) the civilian population?
2. What do you know about the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, and the JMC?
3. Could you describe changes (if any) comparing life before the NCA and after the NCA?
4. What monitoring, verification and conflict resolution activities do you know of that have been carried out locally? By whom were they carried out?
5. How important do you see increasing local community awareness of the NCA has been as part of the JMC's activities?
6. Have the local community had complaints against either the Tatmadaw or the Ethnic Armed Organisations?
7. Are they aware of a role of the JMC to investigate complaints? Why, or why wouldn't violations be reported?
8. Have investigations been carried out by the JMC?
9. Did those carry out the investigations behave fairly?
10. What were the positive/negative results of the investigation for victims?
11. Do you, and how do you, see the work of the JMC complementing other initiatives to support the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement?
12. Do you think JMC project activities have changed Tatmadaw and Ethnic Armed Organisation perceptions of the situation facing local communities? How have activities had this kind of effect?
13. Do you think JMC project activities have changed perceptions in communities of women's role in ceasefire monitoring? How have activities had this kind of effect?
14. How do you see human rights feature in the implementation of the Support Platform project?

¹¹ Not all questions were asked to all informants, based on time limitations and the fact that knowledge and experience with the project varies among respondents

Annex IX - Data analysis matrix for text coding

Focus Group discussion	Government	Ethnic Armed Organisation	Civilian Members	Secretariat	CBO/community leader
Relevance - was the SPP aligned to the needs of the local context, of the NCA signatories and the international community's values and principles					
Effectiveness - did the SPP achieve its stated purpose, what major factors contributed to achievement/non-achievement					
Efficiency - how economically are resources converted into results					
Impact - what have been the positive and negative effects of the SPP on attitudes, behaviours, relationships and practices					
Sustainability					
Coherence					