



EMReF
Enlightened Myanmar
Research Foundation



SOAS
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Arts & Humanities
Research Council



Regional Parliaments
in Myanmar:

Planning Comparative Research

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1. Background (Summary)

Enlightened Myanmar Research Foundation (EMReF), with the support of Global Research Network on Parliaments and People (GRNPP) and the technical support of Hansard Society (UK) and SOAS, University of London, conducted a two-day workshop on “Comparative Research on Sub-national Parliaments” between 9 and 10 August, 2018 at Inya Lake Hotel, Yangon, Myanmar. There were 31 participants from CSOs, artists, cartoonists, experts, GRNPP representatives and EMReF staff working and interested in Myanmar’s national and sub-national parliaments.

The workshop organized for the first time in Myanmar was led by Myat The Thitsar, Director cum Strategic Advisor (EMReF) and Myat Thet Thitsar, CEO (EMReF), together with the team of Parliamentary Research and Support Programme (PRSP). Researches on parliaments were presented by Dr. Ruth Fox, Director & Head of Research, Hansard Society. Dr. Richard, Program Manager, GRNPP, presented how anthropology can shed light on politics and shared his own experience of his ethnographic research experience done in India.

2. Purpose of Workshop

The overall purpose of the workshop was twofold: to share different research experiences, design, methods and methodology on parliaments and public engagement with politics and to plan for an Audit of Political Engagement (APE) in Myanmar in order to promote political culture of representation. The objectives of the workshop in details are as follows:

2.1. To Learn Each Other’s Current Works, Challenges and Future Research

The workshop brought together individuals from different organizations from seven states and seven regions working on parliaments to share their current works, the research methodology and methods they use, the challenges they face, and their planned future researches. The lessons learned from the sharing will broaden knowledge and improve skills which will in turn empower the participants to handle their own issues more competently and efficiently.

2.2. To Learn from International Practice and Experiences

Dr Ruth from Hansard Society and Dr Richard from GRNPP were invited to lead the workshop. It was hoped that the participants will learn from their expertise in research practices and international experiences particularly about audit of political engagement, ethnographic study, and multi-disciplinary approaches to parliamentary research and public engagement in politics to widen and deepen their knowledge as researchers on parliaments.

2.3. To Promote Participatory and Inclusive Consultation and Planning

The workshop provided a space and time for the participants from different parts of the country to come together to share, learn and plan for future researches. The discussion and consultation with the guidance of international experienced researchers aimed to nurture and promote participatory and inclusive consultation for future researches.

2.4. To Plan for the Grant Application for APE and Performance Assessment

The information and lessons learned from the workshop were collected by EMReF, in partnership with Hansard Society (UK) to develop a grant proposal for “Audit of Political Engagement” and “Performance Assessment” to be submitted to GRNPP.

3. Preparation Stages

3.1. Selection of Organizations and Participants (Criteria and Process)

CSOs were invited to the workshop based on three different backgrounds and different states and regions: the CSOs working on researches and policy advocacies to sub-national parliaments; the CSOs composed of artists (film makers, graphic designers, painters, and cartoonists) promoting the values of peace, human rights, and democracy; and the states and regions to help and make inclusive approach the workshop effective and useful.

3.2. Invitation and Logistical Arrangements

Official invitation letters were prepared for prospective participants from 14 states and regions. They were contacted by phone and informed about the details of the workshop. When invitees had confirmed their attendance, logistics such as transportation and accommodation was arranged for them. Round trip air tickets were provided to the participants from Chin, Kachin, Kayah, Rakhine, and Tanintharyi, whereas the rest of the participants used the buses. The costs for transportation and accommodation for all participants from outside Yangon and the costs for transportation for the participants from Yangon were covered by the workshop grant. Interestingly, the workshop even provided a participant who is a nursing mother with a room for themselves for better maternal care. At the end of the first day of workshop, we arranged return journey for the participants.

3.3. List of Participants and Their States /Regions and Affiliation

S. N	State/ Region	Organization	Research area and/or Working Area
1	Mandalay	Yone Kyi Yar	Governance and policy advocacy (training and research)
2	Mon	JUSDO	Policy Advocacy and Research on Mon Parliament on Women Rights and Child Rights
3		National Enlightenment Institute-NEI	CSO and Stakeholder Engagement with local Parliaments
4	Shan	Civic Education and Social Science School (SAG)	Civic Education and Resaerch Learning platform
5	Karen	Research Institute for Society and Ecology (RISE-CS)	Public engagement with parliament through social researches
6	Kachin	Naung Shaung Development Institute (NDI)	School of Social Science and Development. conducted research on elections and opinion polls, currently conducting accountability and trust
7	Chin	Chin Bridge	Representative and Participatory Democracy
8	Taninthar yi	Dawei Development Association (DDA)	Parliamentary Watch and Media Engagement
9	Rakhine	Peace and Development Initiative (PDI)	Peace initiative among communities; School for capacity building, performance management and project cycle management
10	Sagaing	The Helpers of Perfect Democracy (HPD)	Parliament support in drafting bills and advocacy support; Peace and Land Rights
11	Kayah	Kayaw Literature and Culture Organization	Literature and culture CSO
12	Ayeyarwa ddy	Ayeyarwaddy Social Development Organzation (ASDO)	Land Rights Research and engagement with local parliaments
13	Magway	Parliamentary News and Information Center-PNIC	Local parliamentary research and media engagement
14	Bago	Pace on Peaceful Pluralism (PoPP)	Local parliamentary research and advocacy support in peace
15	Yangon	School of Law, Gender and Politics	Public Engagement and Gender Sensitive Research
16		Yangon Film School	Learning and advocacy space through documentary and other visualized technology
Total Org:			16
	Individual	Cartoonist - Maung Maung Phaung Tain	An active cartoonist who usually express public issues, politics and human rights through daily newspapers and social media
		The Anada/ Htin Kyaw Aye	Legislative tracking; Parliamentary Record Keeping
		Poet- Maung Saung Kha	A poet who is also media rights activist
		Diverse Youth Art Platform – Zon Cy	A youth performer
		Professor- Dr. Ardeth Maung Thawngmung	Chair of Political Science Department of Umass Lowell
		Film Director- Mi Mi Lwin	A researcher as well as a youth film/documentary director who is awarded for her documentary from many countries.
Total Individual Participants			6

4. Two-day Workshop's Activities

As the workshop was conducted between 9 and 10 August, 2018, the activities were divided into day 1 activity and day 2 activity.

4.1. Day 1 Activity

The workshop was in a stimulating way interspersed with interesting presentations, lively sharing and animated discussion throughout the two days.

The first session of the first day opened with introducing and sharing among participants about the researches they were doing, the lessons they learned and their future researches. The groups then presented their sharing to all participants. (See results at lesson learned)

Afterward, **Dr Ruth recapped the main themes** from the presentation. She pointed out that most groups felt they were weak in research methodologies and technical skills necessary for conducting good-quality researches while other researchers expressed the challenges of resource constraints. The issues around parliaments also emerged a number of times. Researches on anti-corruption also got highlighted by some groups. In the group presentation, the difficulty with disseminating research findings came out as a top challenge. Researchers also experienced the lack of public understanding of research and its value and uses.

Dr. Ruth then went on to present about **international research on parliaments**. She started with who conducts research on parliaments. She then proceeded to mention the research methods used in researches on legislature. She gave plenty of examples of research on parliament, including research on representation, the role and work of MPs, scrutiny and accountability, cultures and rituals, ethnics and standards, administration and governance, public engagement and parliamentary performance.

As a concrete example of research methodology and as a way of promoting social sciences and arts, **Dr Richard Axel, the anthropologist, from GNRPPN**, presented how anthropology can shed light on politics and share his own experience of his ethnographic research experience in India.

Dr Richard then talked about **‘Interdisciplinary Research for Parliament for People (P4P) Grant,’** highlighting three themes focused by P4P Grant, namely culture of representation, history of exclusion and instability and imagining deeper democracy through media and arts. He also mentioned the many benefits of collaboration between humanities and arts.

As an exercise for collaboration between arts and humanity in research, the participants then went into groups to brainstorm and share possible ways to make research findings more accessible and reach more people. (See results in Lesson Learned)

4.2. Day 2 Activity

The agendas were **Audit of Political Engagement (APE)** and **open consultation on planning APE for Myanmar**.

Daw Myat Thet, CEO of EMReF started off the second day a statement, **“Why should we do APE in Myanmar?”** According to her it was time to do it. Now that there is a variety of actors (parties and interest groups such as business and what not), the question arises as to who to trust.

Reflecting on the public confidence in itself, the ways of political engagement, the changes in political scenes all called for APE in Myanmar. She added that it is important to conduct APE from a standpoint not of a blame game or for a particular party, but from an independent and impartial position.

A question and answer section followed the presentation. (See results in Lessons Learned)

Dr Ruth continued the workshop with **the nature of APE and how it works**. APE is an annual health check on public attitudes toward politics and parliament with the purpose of measuring political pulse, monitoring reputation of parliament, “a critical friend’s scrutiny”, framing recommendation for reform and informing parliament as to how the public want to have access to information about its work (e.g. through web, telephone, social media, workshop). Face to face annual opinion poll survey is used as a method for APE.

The building blocks of political engagement were then presented as including knowledge and interest, action and participation, efficacy and satisfaction influence and involvement, public knowledge, perception, attitude on MPs and parliaments, standard in public life, the media, citizenship and civil society.

APE measures interest, willingness to vote, knowledge, influence of their involvement, and satisfaction. Demographic differences include, but not limited to, age, gender, social class, education, employment and housing tenure. APE also measures public knowledge of their local MP, change of attitude to parliament, the public’s priorities and public’s opinions on how MPs should spend their time.

Dr Ruth gave two **international examples of Audit of Political Engagement**, namely Serbia and Albania. An interesting point in the audit in Albania was that integrated the local context such as freedom of media, political system, concept of strong leader, and qualities of MP.

Another significantly different example of APE is The Samara’s Democracy 360. Its purpose is to give “a report card” of political engagement, giving letter grades such as A, A+, B etc... It also gives recommendations to government such as “suggestion for investments in ‘democratic infrastructure’ to improve future results”.

Afterward, Dr Ruth presented **Impact of Audit of Political Engagement**. She mentioned some substantial impacts. APE becomes a reliable source for journalist, politicians, and campaign groups. It is also cited by MPs. More importantly it helps shape democratic reform agenda, and inform future direction. A case in point is Serbia where the parliament didn’t use to be very open. However, the audit centre tried to engage with it and over time it becomes more open. Audit centre also tries to hold an MP-civil engagement day. The fact that audit is conducted year in and year out creates opportunities to engage and preempt results.

Conducting APE is not without challenges. Time, money, people (especially who will take the poll, analysis), understanding by people of its finding and media coverage (in that they usually pick a certain part only without looking at the whole picture), are common challenges.

A **question and answer section** followed with some notable points below.

Q: Many turned out to vote in Scotland but satisfaction level was very low. What's the explanation here?

R: Scotland is historically quite active. It has had its own parliament since 1970 and it's not in Westminster. The Scottish have a real desire for their own politics. Brexit referendum was led by (..) party but Scotland has had the momentum. UK system is very centralized. Scotland satisfaction is lower because they want to leave UK.

Q: Stakeholders (politicians and villagers) think the statistical sample is too small. They won't accept the explanation of the validity of the research. How should one deal with this?

R: It depends on the education background of people or how familiar they are with statistical methods. Polls are just a snapshot of something with a certain percentage of marginal errors. They are not for predicting future. The debate over poll is that it's better done face to face than over telephone or on the Internet.

After the Q & R section, Daw Myat Thet took over the floor and presented **matters to consider in conducting APE in Myanmar**. She posed three questions, namely 1) Should the scope of the survey be questions or themes?; 2) What questions should be asked regularly?; 3) What topical area might be covered?

She then presented a **mind-map for Myanmar** in which knowledge (of parliament, government, check and balance, role of citizen), participation (vote, protest, campaign, public meeting, consultation, meeting MPs, petition, passive participation), representation (perceived, actual), accountability and transparency (efficacy and effectiveness) and interest (prioritization of problems and issues) could be included.

The **group discussion and presentation** that followed participants brought up the following points.

Action and participation: Did you vote in the last election? Do you have contact with your MPs? Do you attend local meetings? What do you think are necessary qualifications of an MP? How old an MP should be? Should an MP have political experience? Should they (PMs) have certain background (education, family)?

Knowledge of local parliament: MPs' names, Ministers' names, Ministers' job descriptions, issues to bring to MPs, understanding of democracy, information and perception of parties, the role and functions of hluttaw, constraint for engagement, confidence on different components of government, challenges,

Hluttaw: basic information about hluttaw, interest in hluttaw, collaboration, response to collaboration.

Current political heartbeat: satisfactory or not, level of participation, perception on parties, how evidence is collected for policy making/decision.

The workshop then went on to discuss **APE methods and tools for Myanmar**.

Mixed method was proposed and its research flow is summarized as follows:

1. Brain storming workshop and interview → 2. Focus group → 3. Design survey → 4. Test survey on small sample → 5. Revise questions if needed → 6. Train volunteers → 7. Conduct survey → 8. Analyze result → 9. Test with focus groups/experts/groups/interviews → 10. Publish and promote (supplement with additional researches)

Participants broke off into groups again to discuss “**How big should the pilot be?**” (See results in Lessons Learned)

The participants continued with an exercise to **define the population**. They came up with categories such as gender, age, ethnicity, religion, hard to reach groups (people with disability, homeless, military personnel oversea), employment, wealth status, education level, rural/urban, political affiliation.

Dr Ruth concluded the workshop with different ways of **achieving Impacts**. Several non-conventional multi-disciplinary approaches were presented.

- Tell a compelling story: the human voice
- Tell a compelling story: word association – people name animals whose attributes are like those of MPS generally. For instance, a person compares an MP to a horse, to associate it’s tireless hard work for people. Or an MP is compared to a pig to mean he/she is dirty and greedy.
- Tell a compelling story: projective techniques – interviewees bring an object to describe an MP. For example, one interviewee brought a dustbin, stating that politics is rubbish.
- “lego parliament”: participants are given lego bricks to build the kind of parliament they want to build.

Data visualization for digital/social media, for instance, a 2-3-minute video, is also said to be a good medium. Still another possibility is to have to host exhibition.

4.3. Major Learning Points from Each Session

From the sharing of participants on **Current works, challenges and future researches**, the followings are noteworthy.

Strength

The participants felt that the fact that there are workshops on research such as this one or organizations that are doing research was already strength. These occasions provide them with deeper understanding of the importance and relevance of research and the value of their work.

Challenges

Several levels of challenges were expressed during the group discussion. At the structural level, Myanmar does not have systematic and reliable database system. Research organizations are weak in collaboration with government offices. More often, it was found that government offices seem unwilling or afraid to collaborate.

At the societal level, there is a lack of understanding of the importance and relevance of research. Besides, people do not know how to use research findings. Consequently, people do not realize the role of research in policy making process. The level of education of citizens and their knowledge of political organizations or certain concepts pose a great challenge. For instance, in

one research respondents don't know what corruption means, making it difficult for researcher to obtain feedbacks. What is more, according to experiences of some researchers, the police themselves do not seem to know laws. Some government offices or businesses would not meet researchers without official letters from authorities. At a deeper level, fear seems to inhibit people from giving information.

For the practitioners such as the researchers themselves, they found that cooperation and networking among organizations are weak. They are not very satisfied with the lack of effective means of dissemination of research findings, advocacy, and promotion of value chain (of research). They also felt that they couldn't produce results with good evidences and facts in their research.

At the Individual level, some think they are weak in technical knowledge and skills of research (such as proper sampling and their representation methods to collect data and measure). Getting work done in time (such as data collection and dissemination) was a struggle. They couldn't find specialists in specific fields (e.g. planning) to turn to for help.

Future research

The topics for future researches mentioned by participants include representation of government and MPs, the process of promulgation of laws, ways to implement policies on the needs of states and regions, ineffectiveness of justice system, the extent to which companies and businesses comply with terms of contracts, culture, identity and leadership of Mon, Pao, and Karen, and mother-tongue education.

Collaboration between social sciences and the arts

A participant pointed out that the architecture of Union Hluttaw building does not incorporate signs and symbols denoting federalism. Instead, it is solely dominated by Burmese architectural designs. Besides, the colors of all the rooms in the Union Hluttaw are of the same color. Based on color therapy, different colors in different venues would have met specific needs.

In order for research to be disseminated into the public and have greater value and thus impacts, a group suggested, it needs to penetrate the media subtly, steadily and consistently, just as the way Sai Htee Saing and Sai Seng Mao's music capture the hearts of many people in Myanmar.

Another similar way for research to be effective in advocacy is the way it presents its finding. According to a cartoonist, "People don't like being taught. People tend to react negatively to being patronized. However, people tend to accept and smile when an issue is put in a nice way. He gave an example of his experience of drawing cartoon for the cause of preserving Ayeyarwaddy dolphins. Instead of saying, "They are endangered species. You should get involved in the efforts to preserve them", depicting "Ayeyarwaddy dolphins are so cute," met better reception by the public.

Another group discussed that research findings can be disseminated in Myanmar traditional "*than chap*" or in animation.

Some groups highlight structural change in order that arts and social sciences could be more freely and creatively incorporated in research. For one thing, cultural barriers for women to participate in politics should be reduced. Moreover, perception of women participation in politics should be corrected with any possible means. Secondly, the Minister of culture in a State or

Region should come from the majority of the people from that state. The case of the Minister of culture of Karen State, who is a Burmese, and doesn't have any knowledge of Karen language or culture, is a perfect example in point of cultural barrier.

APE for Myanmar

The following questions and answered were exchanged between participants and Dr Ruth.

Some individuals as well as organizations and businesses use the findings of research on culture, traditional music and costumes for commercial use. What to make of and assess this situation?

Ruth answered that even some charity groups use the research findings. Hansard makes its research findings free but requests acknowledgment if used by anyone, as it cannot afford lawyer fee to prosecute.

How long would APE research take?

9 months. It needs to take into consideration political calendar (holiday season, the time when annual gathering of parties is held, election date.

Are recommendations included in the APE research?

Hansard doesn't. Samara 360 does. However, you can make recommendations in a different report, Besides, a year is too short a time to make recommendations. A few years' time is called for.

When will EMReF do APE?

Many cultures (such as democratic participation, research) need to be revived. The research must be impartial and of quality. (So, not sure when yet?)

Our research is forgotten soon after release. What can we do about it?

If we do it regularly and with good quality, maybe, culture will change and the public will anticipate the findings.

Parliaments in other countries have theatres, show rooms, galleries, exhibition and extensive archives. Besides, the pictures are of very good quality. It's very different here in Myanmar.

Ruth: UK parliament didn't use to be very open. Because of Hansard society's repetitive push, it let students use parliament for debate. It takes a long time to get to where it is today now. Individuals in institutions are very different but critical. We have to find ways to deal with and keep working on in different ways. We need to be patient for changes.

Discussion on "How big should the pilot be?"

Which states or regions should APE be conducted?

- What criteria to use for sampling?
Based on conflict, non-conflict, population, size?

- One possibility is to include every state and region but would result in a very small sample size from each state and region, giving rise to the question on validity.
- The nature of conflict, government structure and population make it hard to come up with a sample size to encompass the whole country.
- Given that states and regions differ in terms of topography, population, and level of conflicts where should APE be conducted? How to choose which states or region? Given that budget is limited, what criteria do we use to choose which states and regions?
- Some groups prefer to do it in all states and regions, proportionally distributing sample size of 1200.
- Others choose states and regions with more population. Still others chose the states and regions from the four corners of Myanmar and one from the middle of the country.
- Some were concerned that conflicts are going on in some states or regions that correct representation is hard to come by.

5. Overall Outcome of Workshop

5.1. Major Learning Points Reflecting the Purpose of Workshop

The workshop has produced several issues in order to develop the selection criteria for the states and regions for the future APE research. Moreover, it has helped to be able to identify the active organizations which EMReF can work together for the short-run and the long-run research projects in relation to national and sub-national parliaments. The workshop has built and strengthened a network to be active in working together for the betterment of society and its people through researches between and among the participants.

The participants have an opportunity to learn first-hand international research practices and experiences in addition to a face to face discussion with the research grantors from the GRNPP. The presentations and the discussions made reflect how urgent the needs of research trainings are for most civil society organizations and how important research grants like GRNPP are in order to nurture and promote the culture of research across the country.

The methods and methodology presented in the workshop added new tools, as it were, in the toolbox of researchers. These methods are also very relevant in Myanmar where formal research methods are not understood properly. A realization for the need to find more effective ways to disseminate research findings emerged quite strongly from the workshop. Different possible ways of dissemination were also explored.

Some of the approaches shared in the workshop were particularly interesting. The example of APE in Albania and Serbia also provide practical tips on how to formulate questions that are locally relevant. The two audits successfully integrated into the audit local culture and conception of leadership.

A valuable learning in terms of practicality in conducting APE the lessons from international examples. Especially worth noting in doing research and APE is the timing, that is when to conduct the poll (political calendar), and effective ways of dissemination (through newspaper, TV media, radio, social media etc.) and methods. In the experience of Hansard Society's work,

especially what it has accomplished, for instance, in making the parliament more open up to the point that students can visit and sit in parliament chambers to do their debates, is very inspiring. This kind of positive change from international examples empowers Myanmar and gives inspiration for budding researchers.

Most heart-warming learning from the international experience is the erection of the statue of Lauwell Faucent in the park, representation the inclusion of women in politics and policy making.

The lesson from ethnography is very relevant in Myanmar's political arena. Talking about his experience of doing an ethnographic study in India, Dr Richard pointed out how tribal communities form social relations and institutions, and rites and rituals may look exotic to outsiders but how these cultural practices influence representation and play very subtle roles in making connections and form power structures and influence decisions. Anthropology, according to him, is especially apt to examine 'politics, parliament and democracy on culture and practices and social institution.

The benefits of collaborating with humanities and art can be illustrated with a saying which goes, "A picture is worth a thousand words". It engages the audience more, and thus takes the researchers and readers and policy making out of comfort zone. Social science and arts also link the past, present and future and thus creates new opportunities to think and create democracy.

5.2. Major Learning Points Reflecting the Purpose of Workshop

The lessons learned, the challenges, and the risks of the workshop identified are described. First of all, all participants deeply understand the research grant application, its procedures, and its terms and references, whereas the capacities of their own respective organizations are slightly different. Second, a language barrier is a challenge for some participants because it makes them cripple to digest the information provided at the workshop. Furthermore, even though they have full interest in research, the level of the existing knowledge they have is different.

Another challenge that the participants are facing is a lack of knowledge about the integration of arts and humanities into research. They are unclear about how to integrate them into the research because they are from different backgrounds. One of the participants, a Cartoonist said, "I have never attended the research training like this one before. This is my first time to get to know the research in which cartoons can be integrated." Like the cartoonist, most participants seem to see little room for integrating arts and humanities into the researches related to parliaments.

6. Concrete Path to Next Proposed Project

6.1. Planning Meeting with Dr. Ruth at Office

The meeting with Dr. Ruth, together with EMReF CEOs Myat Thet, Myat The, and Program Manager of Parliamentary Research and Support Program to plan for sub-national research on Audit of Political Engagement was taken place at the upper room of EMReF Office on 11 August, 2018. The focus of the meeting was on the next project proposal and its detailed activity plans covering the selection criteria for states and regions and the actual timeframe. The next

project proposal which needs to be submitted in September 2018, in partnership with Hansard Society, UK.

The following activities to be implemented from December 2018 to June 2020 with the support of GRNNP are discussed in detail. The proposed project discussed is divided into two parts: Audit of Political Engagement, which will be conducted in 3 states and 3 regions and Performance Assessment to be conducted in some states and regions based on the 2015 performance assessment done by EMReF. The task was to be taken both by Dr. Ruth and EMReF were divided and discussed in detail. The meeting also covered the research methods and all other steps. In the afternoon, Dr. Ruth shared Brexit with EMReF staff.

6.2. Selection of States and Regions and Preparation for Timeline

Shan, Rakhine, and Kayah States and Tanintharyi, Sagaing, and Yangon Regions are selected for the audit of political engagement based on three criteria, which are: (1) conflict, tension, and non-conflict areas; (2) Small, medium, and large sizes of hluttaws; and (3) Hilly, plain, and coastal areas. First of all, Shan State and Rakhine State are considered the conflict areas because there are internal displaced people (IDPs) in Shan State and more than 6 million people have fled to Bangladesh from Rakhine State. Karen State in which the fight between an armed group and the military still continues and Tanintharyi Region where there is a growing tension due to the economic zone between local people and the investors are regarded. Sagaing Region and Yangon Region are regarded as a non-conflict area.

Second, the hluttaws in Myanmar are formed based on the size of population. Rakhine and Karen State hluttaws are considered small, Sagaing and Tanintharyi Region hluttaws are medium and Yangon Region and Shan State hluttaws are large. Third, only Shan State is generally regarded as a hilly area, whereas some parts of Sagaing Region and Rakhine State are hilly. Karen State, Sagaing Region, and Yangon Region are considered a plain area. The coastal areas include Rakhine State, Tanintharyi Region, and Yangon Region. In addition to the three criteria, there are five self-administrative zones in Shan State and one self-administrative zone in Sagaing Region and ethnic representatives in most state and region hluttaws. Hence, it is highly believed that the selected states and regions are able to cover and reflect the conditions and situations of political engagement between the elected representatives and the constituents in Myanmar.

The proposed project start and end dates were discussed in detail during the meeting. The first research study titled audit of political engagement (APE) will start in December 2019 and end in January 2020. The research trainings for researchers from the selected states and regions will be provided in their respective states and regions and the report writing will be at EMReF. The second research activity, known as the 2016-2020 performance analysis under the National League for Democracy (NLD) led government will be conducted January and July 2020. Since EMReF has conducted the 2010-2015 performance analysis in particular states and regions, its rich experiences and skills will be able to help deal with this project to be finished within 6 months. For both key informant interviews and focus group discussions, hluttaw speakers, deputy hluttaw speakers, deputy director generals from hluttaw offices, chief ministers, one or two other ministers from the governments, political party leaders, and CSOs leaders, including media from the same states and regions done in the 2010-2015 performance analysis will be selected.

7. A Short Video Documentary

A short video documentary which covers a two-day workshop activity done in Yangon in August 2018 is made. Please visit the following link to watch it:

<https://www.facebook.com/emrefmyanmar/videos/257363604972369/>

Annex

Some Photo Records Taken at the Workshop





