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Overview of the 2019 MDRN Survey:
Citizen Perceptions of YCDC Public Services

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Introduction

Myanmar is moving towards democracy. Starting with the adoption of a new Constitution in 2008 that allowed a transition from military to civilian rule, a long-awaited general election was held in 2015, resulting in the National League for Democracy (NLD), the pro-democratic party, coming to power. Throughout this transition, Myanmar has witnessed the rise of new civil society organizations. Democratization efforts are supported by independent think tanks with researchers who are committed to providing innovative policies to address various social problems.

With the support of the East Asia Institute (EAI), the Myanmar Democracy Research Network (MDRN) was launched to conduct joint research related to democratic governance and public policy. The network consists of seven civil society organizations in Myanmar, including Sandhi Governance Institute, the Yangon School of Political Science, the Open Myanmar Initiative, Yone Kyi Yar Knowledge Propagation Society, the Naushawng Development Institute, the Salween Institute for Public Policy, and Another Development. As the first joint research project, in April 2019, the MDRN conducted a joint public opinion survey of Yangon citizens to ask how they perceive the Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC)'s public services. Among the fourteen duties and responsibilities of YCDC, MDRN chose to focus on seven topics: taxes, the waste management system, the water distribution system and water usage, stray dogs, access to public parks, streets and street lights, and markets. Through this research, the MDRN assessed the satisfaction of Yangon's citizens with the services provided by the YCDC and provided policy suggestions based on the results of their survey. This introduction explains the background of this research and how it was designed.

The Importance of the Role of Local Governance and Quality of Public Services

When a society moves towards democracy, one of the most important areas that the government tries to improve is the role of local governance and the quality of public services. There are three essential reasons for this.

From Democratic Control and Legitimacy to Effectiveness and Accountability
Looking at the example of South Korea's transition to democracy, administrations in the beginning focused on

strengthening the legitimacy of the democratic government by expanding democracy and executing democratic control. However, once the process of democratic transition stabilizes, how well these governments solve issues of public interest and offer economic growth and welfare to citizens (good governance) often determines the success or failure of each administration (Jaung, 2006).

From Government to Governance

The interests and goals of a democratic government shift from the challenges of institutionalizing a systematic democratic transition between administrations to establishing a governance structure capable of expanding welfare and offering quality public services and economic growth. Pursuing a government-driven vertical process in decision making and policymaking as in the past will only limit the ability of a government to solve national and social issues that are complicated by the information and globalization age (Lee 2010).

Local Governance and Public Services

In building a competent governance structure, it is important for the central government to move away from the past's vertical decision-making process to developing a more inclusive one based on public-private partnerships that involve various stakeholders, such as local governments, businesses, communities, and various civic groups. As the importance of decentralized power grows, governance at the local level plays a bigger role (Lim 2010).

Particularly in less-developed new democracies, developing human capital, establishing public infrastructure, and enhancing the quality of public services for the betterment of quality of life are urgent tasks, and these have emerged as critical challenges when it comes to assessing local governance. Even before the transfer of power, the transfer of the responsibilities of providing public services and implementing effective improvements were seen as vital tasks. (Myanmar Times, 2014).

As a way of promoting a democratic culture, the Myanmar government has made efforts to involve local regions and citizens in the decision-making process. With the adoption of the 2008 Constitution, Myanmar, which was previously highly centralized, has begun to decentralize decision making by establishing fourteen sub-national governments. These consist of seven states and seven regions, five self-administered zones and one self-administered division, and the Union Territory of Naypyidaw. Then, the states and regions are made up of districts, which are in turn made up of townships. Urban wards and village tracts are grouped into townships (Asia Foundation, 2018). This enables citizens to more actively participate in the local political process.

YCDC and Public Opinion Surveys

Democratic governance only operates effectively with civic participation and public-private partnerships by selecting key agendas and deciding policies and implementing policies together, not with a one-way, unilateral approach from the central government to society that was often imposed in the past. To improve cooperation and participation of the civic society, it is important to grasp citizens' attitudes from the stages of diagnosis, evaluation, and policy demand-finding process of any given problem.

In this context, the MDRN examined perceptions of citizens residing in Yangon. Yangon is the largest city in the country with a population of 4,777,683 in 2019, three times the size of Myanmar's second largest city, Mandalay (World Population Review, 2019). It is the commercial capital of Myanmar and was the official capital

city of Myanmar until 2005, when the government relocated the administrative functions to Naypyidaw. Given the importance of this city, this survey is the first step to assess local governance in Myanmar.

The MDRN analyzed the evaluations of Yangon citizens of the YCDC, which is chaired by the Mayor of Yangon and is the local governance organization that is responsible for Yangon's development and preservation, regulations and oversight of major industries, and public services offered to citizens. Therefore, assessing YCDC's duties and responsibilities is an effective method to assess the overall local governance of Yangon and the quality of its public services (YCDC, 2014). This joint research aims to assess the duties and responsibilities of the YCDC and to find policy implications in terms of how its public services might be improved through studying the citizens of Yangon.

In order to effectively capture the perceptions of the citizens, the MDRN conducted a public opinion survey. Public opinion surveys and polls are one of the most effective ways to assess citizen attitudes and perceptions of decision making and implementation of public policies. With the rising importance of governance, public opinion surveys are now seen as independent actors in the governance process that assess policy implementation and identify new policy demands (Kraft and Furlong 2018).

The Duties and Responsibilities of the YCDC

The YCDC is the administrative body of Yangon and consists of twenty departments. In 1990, the Yangon City Development Law formally established the YCDC, delegating responsibilities to the committee, such as city planning, tax collection, and development. In order to effectively maintain and develop the city, the YCDC carries out the following duties and responsibilities (YCDC, 2014):

1. Drawing and implementing land policies, administration of lands, developing and enforcing planning controls, protection of heritage buildings, regulation of construction sites
2. Construction and maintenance of parks, gardens, playgrounds, and recreation centers
3. Promoting events and exhibitions to enhance the work of YCDC
4. Providing parking spaces for vehicles and reducing traffic congestion
5. Construction, maintenance, upgrading and administration of markets
6. Regulation, control, and healthcare for animals and pets, including the inspection of meat and fishery markets and supervision of slaughter houses
7. Practice of environmental protection and waste management, including the collection and treatment of waste, management of landfills, and prevention of water and air pollution
8. Regulation and issuance of licenses for ferryboats and supervision of ferry businesses
9. Licensing and regulation of trading warehouses and pawn shops
10. Ensuring the safety of the citizens through the prevention of natural disasters and management of the fire services
11. Issuance of licenses regarding slow-moving vehicles such as tricycle rickshaws
12. Provision of water supply and sanitary systems
13. Supervision of cemeteries and incinerators, and overseeing the land use of cemetery compounds
14. Other beneficial municipal works, such as environmental services

The MDRN selected seven topics from among these fourteen which are deemed necessary and important for the daily lives of citizens: taxes, the municipal solid waste management system, the water distribution system and current water usage, stray dogs, access to public parks, streets and street lights, and markets.

The 2019 MDRN Survey and its Research Design

The 2019 MDRN survey was conducted through face-to-face interviews in April 2019, with a sample size of 485 adults aged 18 years old and older in Yangon. The survey was conducted directly by the MDRN, with Hankook Research Company acting as an advisor on methodology. Citizens were asked approximately 150 questions to assess their satisfaction with and perceptions of the facilities and services provided by the YCDC.

Table 1. Overview of the 2019 MDRN Survey Methodology

Methodology Overview	
Sampling	Four-step probability sampling
Sample size	485 adults, aged 18 years and older in Yangon
Method	Face-to-face
Survey period	April 2019
Margin of error	±4.45 percent at the 95% confidence level
Survey organization	Myanmar Democracy Research Network (MDRN)
Methodology advisor	Hankook Research Company, South Korea

Research Design

In consideration of limiting factors such as the time available and cost, the target sample size was set at 510. The sample was set to reflect the population composition ratio by district (Appendix 1).

Seventeen townships were selected from the thirty-three YCDC service townships. Five wards were selected for each township for a total of eighty-five wards. Since the target sample size was 510 persons, six persons per wards, of which three were men and three were women, were extracted. In addition, household and household members were selected using a probability sampling method, and one household member was selected to complete the survey from each household. The target sample reflecting the population composition ratio by gender is shown in the (Appendix 2).

Sampling Design

In addition to setting the target sample size, this survey underwent a strict four-step probability sampling procedure (Appendix 3). Probability proportional to size (PPS) takes varying sample sizes into account, which helps to avoid underrepresenting one subgroup in a study and yields more accurate results. The sampling of townships was sorted in descending order of population in each town, as shown in Appendix 4. Cumulatively, seventeen townships including 306,555 persons were selected. The number 306,555 is a figure dividing the entire population of 5,211,431 citizens by seventeen townships. Then, after calculating the population of each ward, the survey select-

ed certain wards by number dividing the total population by five. The MDRN then selected five wards from each township.

The next step was to sample households using systematic sampling. The MDRN selected the first household, and households after that by calculating the tenth household on the left or right. In this way, the MDRN selected six households for each ward. Lastly, for the sampling of household member, the MDRN used a Kish Grid. Since the survey targeted adults, the MDRN counted the number of adults in each household eligible for the survey. The final sample description is shown in Appendix 6. ■

Appendix

Appendix 1. Target Sample

District	Number of townships	Population	Population ratio (%)	Target Sample reflecting the population ratio(n) (1)	Number of selected townships (2)	Number of selected wards per township (3)	Number of survey locations (2)*(3)=(4)	Samples per ward (5)	Total samples per district (4)*(5)=(6)
N	7	2,111,251	41	207	6	5	30	6 (M3,F3)	180
E	7	1,612,575	31	158	5	5	25	6 (M3,F3)	150
S	9	960,944	18	94	3	5	15	6 (M3,F3)	90
W	10	526,661	10	52	3	5	15	6 (M3,F3)	90
TOTAL	**33**	**5,211,431**	**100**	**510**	**17**		**85**		**510**

Appendix 2. Target Sample by Gender

District	Population			Target sample that reflects the population ratio (n)			Target sample			Weight		
	Total	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**
Total	**5,211,431**	**2,466,918**	**2,744,513**	**510**	**241**	**269**	**510**	**255**	**255**	**1.000**	**0.947**	**1.053**
N	2,111,251	996,922	1,114,329	207	98	109	**180**	**90**	**90**	1.148	1.084	1.212
S	960,944	457,237	503,707	94	45	49	**90**	**45**	**45**	1.045	0.994	1.095
E	1,612,575	771,671	840,904	158	76	82	**150**	**75**	**75**	1.052	1.007	1.097
W	526,661	241,088	285,573	52	24	28	**90**	**45**	**45**	0.573	0.524	0.621

Appendix 3. Sampling Procedure

Layers	Sampling Method
1. Township	PPS (Probability proportional to size)
2. Ward	PPS (Probability proportional to size)
3. Household	Systematic Sampling (Interval 10 houses)
4. Household Member	Kish Grid

Appendix 4. Sampling of Township by PPS

District	Township	Total population	Order 1	Order 2	Cumulative	Selection 1	Selection 2
Northern District	Hlinethaya	687,867	3	1	687,867	V	V
Eastern District	Dagon Myothit (South)	371,646	11	2	1,059,513	V	V
Northern District	Shwepyitha	343,526	7	3	1,403,039	V	
Eastern District	North Okkalapa	333,293	10	4	1,736,332	V	
Northern District	Mingaladon	331,586	6	5	2,067,918	V	
Northern District	Insein	305,283	1	6	2,373,201	V	
Southern District	Thakayta	220,556	19	7	2,593,757	V	
Eastern District	Thingangyun	209,486	8	8	2,803,243	V	
Eastern District	Dagon Myothit (North)	203,948	12	9	3,007,191		
Northern District	Mayangon	198,113	5	10	3,205,304	V	
Southern District	Dala	172,857	16	11	3,378,161	V	
Eastern District	Dagon Myothit (Seikkan)	167,448	14	12	3,545,609		
Eastern District	Dagon Myothit (East)	165,628	13	13	3,711,237	V	
Southern District	Tamway	165,313	21	14	3,876,550		
Eastern District	South Okkalapa	161,126	9	15	4,037,676	V	
Northern District	Hline	160,307	2	16	4,197,983		
Southern District	Mingala Taungnyunt	132,494	15	17	4,330,477	V	
Western District	Kyimyindine	111,514	29	18	4,441,991		
Western District	Sangyoung	99,619	30	19	4,541,610		
Western District	Bahan	96,732	32	20	4,638,342	V	
Northern District	Kamayut	84,569	4	21	4,722,911		
Southern District	Dawbon	75,325	17	22	4,798,236		
Southern District	Yankin	70,946	20	23	4,869,182		
Western District	Ahlon	55,482	28	24	4,924,664	V	
Southern District	Pazundaung	48,455	22	25	4,973,119		
Western District	Lanmadaw	47,160	26	26	5,020,279		
Southern District	Botahtaung	40,995	23	27	5,061,274		
Southern District	Seikkyi Khanaungto	34,003	18	28	5,095,277		
Western District	Pabedan	33,336	25	29	5,128,613		
Western District	Kyauktada	29,853	24	30	5,158,466		
Western District	Dagon	25,082	31	31	5,183,548		
Western District	Latha	25,057	27	32	5,208,605		
Western District	Seikkan	2,826	33	33	5,211,431	V	
	Total	**5,211,431**					
	17	**306,555**					

Appendix 5. Sampling of Wards by PPS

District	Township	Ward (W)/Village Tract (VT)	Total	Cumulative	Total population
Northern District	**Insein**	Kan Nar (West) (W)	9,476	9,476	**305,283**
Northern District	**Insein**	Kan Nar (Middle) (W)	15,390	24,866	
Northern District	**Insein**	Kwet Thit (W)	2,449	27,315	
Northern District	**Insein**	Pauk Taw (W)	4,876	32,191	
Northern District	**Insein**	Zay Kone (West) (W)	2,101	34,292	
Northern District	**Insein**	Zay Kone (East) (W)	9,327	43,619	
Northern District	**Insein**	Pein Hne Kone (W)	8,233	51,852	
Northern District	**Insein**	Myo Thit ((Ka)/Kha) (W)	18,491	70,343	
Northern District	**Insein**	Myo Thit (Ga) (W)	7,869	78,212	
Northern District	**Insein**	Kyo Kone (West) (W)	12,256	90,468	
Northern District	**Insein**	Kyo Kone (East) (W)	16,270	106,738	
Northern District	**Insein**	Saw Bwar Gyi Kone (W)	20,811	127,549	
Northern District	**Insein**	Nant Thar Kone (W)	12,304	139,853	
Northern District	**Insein**	Taung Thu Kone (W)	19,350	159,203	
Northern District	**Insein**	Ywar Ma (East) (W)	16,376	175,579	
Northern District	**Insein**	Ywar Ma (Middle) (W)	10,904	186,483	
Northern District	**Insein**	Ywar Ma (West) (W)	30,704	217,187	
Northern District	**Insein**	Hpawt Kan (W)	23,992	241,179	
Northern District	**Insein**	Sint Ngu (W)	22,861	264,040	
Northern District	**Insein**	Aung San (W)	18,555	282,595	
Northern District	**Insein**	Da Nyin Kone/Ta Nyin Kone (W)	22,688	305,283	

Appendix 6. Sample Description of the 2019 MDRN Survey

Sample Description of 2019 MDRN Survey			
Gender	Male 50.7%, Female 49.3%		
Age	18-29: 17.5% 30-39: 22.9% 40-49: 19.0% 50-59: 23.1% Over 60: 17.3% No Data: 0.2%		
District	Eastern 30.9% Western 13.4% Southern 18.6% Northern 37.1%		
Education	Secondary School: 42.1% High School: 30.7% University: 27.0% No Data: 0.2%		
Job	Retired Dependent 40.8% Business Owner 29.7% Company Staff 10.1% Vendor 6.8% Day Laborer 4.9% Student 3.5% Civil Servant 3.3% Religious Teacher 0.4% No Answer 0.2%		
Income	Below 1 lakh 3.5% Between 1 and 3 lakh 38.1% Between 3 and 6 lakh 40.6% Between 6 and 9 lakh 10.1% Above 9 lakh 10.1% Decline to answer 2.1% No Answer 0.4%		

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