

Chapter 10

An Analysis of Social Capital and Women's Capacity Building in Myanmar

Kathy Shein and Julia Connell

Abstract From the period 1988 to 2010, there have been approximately 60 international non-government organizations (INGOs) leading humanitarian activities in Burma/Myanmar. To date, very little research has been conducted analyzing either the depth or breadth of network-based social capital or the effectiveness of capacity building programmes of humanitarian INGOs with respect to networking, social entrepreneurship, capacity building and targeted populations, particularly to in relation to disaster related events. Hence, this study aims to go some way towards filling that gap asking “*how can networks promote the building of social capital and women's capacity building in Myanmar*”. Taken into account are the various roles that women within the networks can play as well as the roles of other stakeholders, such as the INGO volunteers, and various governments in the support process. The research question is addressed through case study analysis focusing on a Myanmar based INGO program involved in economic development for women and girls who lost family members and property after Cyclone Nargis hit Labutta in 2008. This chapter focuses on a sample group from the INGO project that included 27 rural villages covering approximately 1,200 households comprising Cyclone Nargis survivors. The women involved were provided with interest free refundable micro loans by the INGO and achieved varying degrees of success which is attributed to their willingness and capacity for networking and the building of social capital in this chapter. Potentially, the findings will provide assistance to other INGO programs operating under similar circumstances. In particular through providing insights into the need for flexibility when delivering programmes that are targeted towards supporting women's capacity building in poor communities.

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Keywords Capacity building • Flexibility • INGO • Myanmar • Networks • Social capital • Women

10.1 Introduction

The United Nations (2013) lists a number of countries within Asia such as Nepal, Myanmar and Afghanistan, as least developed countries (LDCs). The female percentage of the total labour force in Myanmar was last measured at 49.81 % in 2013, according to the World Bank (2013). These figures are measured as the percentage of women who are active in the labour force and aged 15 and older. The level of respect attributed to the status of women in Myanmar varies greatly based on traditional social norms as women do not need to change their name when married, are able to travel alone, manage in-house and outside businesses, be involved in the management and governing system of the country, and are able to keep property under their names throughout their lives (Womack 2008; Nyo 2011). Thus educated women leaders have been involved in social, economic and political platforms since the monarchy periods through the British colonial time till 1962 (Mya and Ko 2011; Amar 2011; Maung 2012).

Cyclone Nargis hit the Myanmar Delta on 2 and 3 May, 2008, affecting about 7 million people and resulting in a death toll of more than 130,000 (Women's Protection Technical Working Group report 2008). The most significant impact of the cyclone was the changed composition of households. Many of the dead were men—because they were fishing at the time the cyclone hit. Afterwards, approximately 14 out of every 100 households were led by women with the majority being widows (Women's Protection Technical Working Group 2009). The majority of women-led households were from low income groups and 60 % of them lived within substandard shelter. Moreover, many of their children 'dropped out' of school due to financial constraints (Women's Protection Technical Working Group 2009) and women's work intensified as they had to take full responsibility for child raising and income generation, having lost their male breadwinner partners (Chelala 1998).

This chapter reports on an INGO project that set out to enable the cyclone affected women to create small businesses appropriate for their local markets so that they could support themselves and their families. During the course of the project 1,420 loans were distributed so the women could start their businesses. Otero (1999) refers to these types of loans as micro financing being the "the provision of financial services to low-income poor and very poor self-employed people". The microfinance movement seeks to challenge traditional economic paradigms and the ways in which individuals and communities think about the provision of financial services to the poor (Payne 2011). Specifically, through creating a means for employment and income generation, microfinance provides the poor with "financial protection from crises and disasters, encourages schooling and empowers the marginalised—especially women" (Turnell et al. 2009, p. 319).

Datta and Gailey (2012) maintain that woman's networks/cooperatives offer self-employment opportunities that can contribute to women's inclusion and empowerment. Further, they argue that entrepreneurial efforts undertaken by women have largely been neglected to date by researchers and policy makers. Given that entrepreneurship is considered to be one of the most important factors contributing to the economic development of society (Rao et al. 2011), women's entrepreneurship is an important part of the economic development process in Myanmar. While frequently used in terms of business ventures, entrepreneurship has increasingly been applied to the context of social problem solving (Noruzi et al. 2010). The term 'social entrepreneurship' refers to the pursuit of economic, social and environmental goals by enterprising ventures, has been created as a response to social and environmental problems (Haugh 2007) which often require fundamental transformation of political, economic and social systems. Dhatta and Gailey (2012) propose that entrepreneurship should be considered a social change activity with a variety of possible outcomes that may or may not be beneficial for women.

This chapter reports on documentary analysis that was undertaken with regard to the INGO project in the disaster hit area of Labutta, Myanmar. It focuses on analysis of the mechanisms that may be used to support the building of networks and social capital within local communities supported by the INGO in question. The purpose of the study is to establish how and whether the women in the sample group have built capacity and the outcomes resulting from this activity.

The chapter is structured as follows: first the study is situated in the literature on networks and social capital. Next, the methodology for the study is outlined, and the findings are presented before the conclusions and implications are discussed.

10.2 Why Focus on Networks and Social Capital?

Social capital research has given the poor a greater voice in the development of a number of World Bank policies. The *World Development Report 2000/2001: Attacking Poverty* (World Bank 2000) provides an example of how qualitative research can help to change the attitudes and policies of an influential development organization, leading it to define poverty more holistically. Based on social capital studies, the report stresses the importance of working with networks of poor people to increase their access to resources and link them to intermediary organizations, institutions and international markets while also facilitating parallel initiatives in good governance and social accountability (Dudwick et al. 2006).

Social capital can be defined as the social networks and norms that mediate development opportunities and outcomes (Dudwick et al. 2006). Sanger and Levin (1992) maintain that social entrepreneurship refers to individuals, groups/teams, networks and communities that band together to create pattern-breaking change. Noruzi et al. (2010) add that the change should be sustainable and large scale focusing on what and/or how governments, non-profits and businesses address significant social problems.

Putnam (1995) examined the general pattern of formulating different types of capital such as the combination of physical capital (resources) and human capital (training), claiming that the skill and productivity of the individual can be enhanced in a particular network or context (Putnam 1995). For instance, the combination of physical capital and human capital with social capital may be a catalyst, resulting in the further generation of physical capital, human capital and other types of capital of individuals, between and among members of different groups (Coleman 1988). Hence, individuals, community and regions may work through their own complex processes when they develop different forms of capital as resources and the potential to reduce poverty (Allahdadi 2011).

The nature of particular networks depends on the context of the society (Chang et al. 2010) and depends on the relationships with other actors within the network, thus flexibility and adaptation are applicable in the participation of every actor (Wilkinson and Young 2002). Network studies have shown that the transfer of knowledge and learning opportunities offers further opportunities with the potential for higher levels of social capacity building (Ahuja 2000, Batjargal 2003).

Capacity-building programmes are vital for low- and middle-income countries such as Myanmar as they can provide an opportunity to analyze interactions and relationship-building supporting a range of participants, in addition to the development of strong channels for knowledge transfer (Brass and Labianca 1999; Baker 2000). Putnam (1995) suggests that social capital facilitates group gathering, cooperation and mutually supportive relations in communities providing access to information, skill sets and enhanced power. As a result, subsequent programmes and their participants will be better equipped to address targeted issues by more effectively managing, accessing and utilizing resources while building capacity.

Ramanadhan et al. (2010) suggests that network-based social capital may be a useful addition to the goals and evaluation of capacity-building programmes. They cite Hawe et al. (1997) who argues that social capital deserves further attention in capacity-building efforts as it leaves the system under intervention with greater ability to tackle current and future issues, as well as those outside the scope of the programme. At a macro level, Myanmar and INGO interventions have been under researched to date, and at a micro level the effectiveness and efficiency of the INGO women's development programs have not benefitted from any academic scrutiny at all. This chapter takes some steps towards assisting that process by identifying some of the most efficient and effective means of network and social capital development.

10.3 Myanmar in Context

Myanmar, was also known as Burma due to colonization by the British in 1885. It officially became the Republic of the Union of Myanmar in 1989 under the military government (Payne 2011). In March 2014 Myanmar carried out its first population and housing census for over 30 years and Spoorenberg (2015) notes that the population is more than 60 million with 135 ethnic groups. There are seven major ethnic groups, namely, Burma, Mon, Rakhine, Shan, Chin, Kayin, Kayah and Kachin and many

subgroups, so the name Myanmar represents all the ethnic groups (Hlaing 2012). The major ethnic group is Bamar and therefore, a widely spoken language is Burmese language. Though there is no official religion, the majority of people are Buddhists and the others are practice Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Paganism (Payne 2011).

Burma was the second richest country in Asia before World War II (Selmier II 2013), but economic development after independence was hindered by the unstable country situation due to ethnic conflict. The economic situation of Myanmar declined during a 26 year 'closed door socialist system' (Chit Swe 2012), becoming one of the Least Developed Countries in 1987 with the designation of the United Nations (Fink 2009). Apart from mismanagement and corruption (Fink 2009), the local currencies were demonetized by the Socialist Government in 1985 and the Burmese people experienced deeper poverty levels, leading to countrywide uprising led by students and the people in 1988 (Fink 2009). The military combated these actions by killing many people, particularly thousands of young university students (Maung 2012).

Thus, Myanmar has a history of foreign occupation, followed by independence, one party rule and political isolation, with an easing of political controls and international engagement taking place within the last 5 years. This has resulted in

...an influx of different types of actors in Myanmar such as international organizations, donors and businesses since the establishment of the elected government of President Thein Sein in 2011 presenting both opportunities and challenges. On the one hand, the opening up of the 'Golden Land' after decades of military rule has helped contribute to the development of dialogue between former warring parties, the establishment of democratic processes and mechanisms, and the inclusion of parties whose voices were formerly not heard. On the other hand, the 'gold rush' of regional and international actors' places new pressure on local actors to meet high demands, update their capacities according to foreign standards and compete with new players. (Gasser et al. 2014, p. 5).

Although a recent report on Myanmar was positive about its integration into the global economy and into the region, it cautioned that growth accompanied by inequality may lead to increases in poverty (Kudo et al. 2014, p. 2). Myanmar also suffers from a number of constraints such as a lack of trained providers and financial resources in the health care system (Safman 2005). For example, the Myanmar government spent just 2.1 % of its 2010 total budget on health, well behind both Cambodia and Laos (Roberts 2010). Thus, poverty has resulted in poor living conditions, lack of basic health information, and inadequate health services meaning that women's health in Myanmar is often poor, particularly for those who live in remote and mountainous areas.

10.4 The Myanmar Government, Donor Agencies and the INGO

The INGO pilot project reported here originated because of a small group of women from the Labutta (in the Delta Region) who stood on the roadside when the then-Prime Minister Thein Sein visited Labutta after Cyclone Nargis disaster in 2008.

The Myanmar Department of Social Welfare, under the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Myanmar, conducted a rapid assessment of the cyclone survivors' livelihood with its counterpart agency—the United Nations Population Fund—UNFPA in late June 2008. Their documents stated that the paddy farms, the fishery businesses and the sea salt industries, which were mainly in Labutta Township, were completely ruined by the cyclone Nargis. As a consequence, the Myanmar Military Government allowed previously blocked international humanitarian agencies to provide international humanitarian assistance to the area.

Since that time, the preliminary discussions concerning capacity building project implementation were conducted between the government and various donor agencies. Under the INGO's women's empowerment program the women and girls affected by the cyclone were targeted as priority groups in Labutta. The bidding results showed that two INGOs, one French and one Swiss won the bids to implement pilot support projects in different villages in Labutta from August 2008 it is the Swiss INGO (referred to only as INGO) that is the focus of this chapter.

10.5 Methodology

The documentary analysis used for this study is undertaken using an adapted 'Input-process-output (IPO) model'. This model is often employed in qualitative economics (Dietzenbacher and Lahr 2004). The concept of the IPO model shows how output from one sector becomes input to another sector to understand how dependent each sector is on the other sector in the relationship. A recent special issue of economic systems research following disasters was dedicated to input–output analysis (see for example Okuyama and Santos (2014) but to date there has been limited application of the IPO model to consider the development of social capital as a productive input for other sectors. The input-process-output model is also applicable for observing a system of organization, particularly an open system which identifies the patterns and vibrant interactions of a system within a transformational process (Robbins and Barnwell 2002) it is applied in this study and integrated with the World Bank (2013) social capital framework (see Fig. 10.1). This framework has been applied in post crisis areas such as Rwanda, Cambodia, Malawi and Zambia.

For this study documentary analysis was undertaken in order to understand how women in the rural villages affected by the cyclone in Labutta created social capital and built capacity during the INGO project period.

As part of the INGO rules and regulations, their project documents and photographs were stored as both hard and soft copies respectively at the INGO's main store for 3 years after the project completion. The document analysis was conducted during April 2014 over a period of 2 weeks in the INGO's office based in Yangon. The majority of the INGO project documents were written in Burmese except for the assessment reports and the final reports of each project which were written in English.

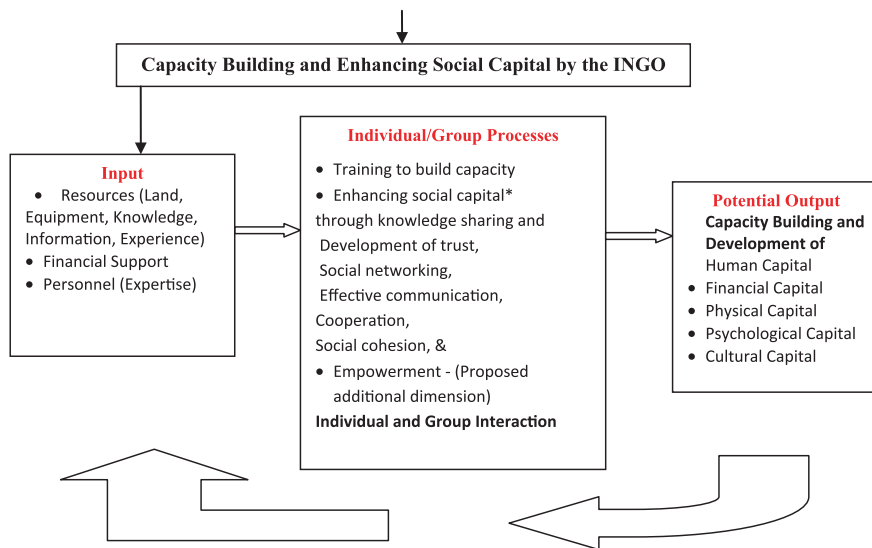


Fig. 10.1 The IPO model integrated with aspects of the world bank social capital framework

The project timeline was a key factor when analyzing the documents, given it took place over 30 months over three phases and was supported by three different donor groups. Each phase of the project required entry and exit assessment in order to identify any changes associated with the women’s situation in relation to the building of social capital, capacity building, networking and financial growth.

The INGO project commenced in August 2008 operating for 5 months as a pilot program. Later, it was implemented as one of the main projects for a period of 25 months. The second INGO project phase commenced in February 2009 for 15 months, and a 10 month project was completed in December 2011 as the final phase—see Fig. 10.2.

The analysis of the first phase of the project identified the social, educational and economic situations of the villages and their inhabitants after the cyclone hit in 2008 and until the INGO commenced the Labutta project in August 2008. The analysis of the main project phase represents the experiences and any changes that occurred throughout the 30 month project period.



Fig. 10.2 Timeline of the Labutta project in Myanmar

Table 10.1 The INGO project documents sourced for the research

Serial no.	Description of documents analyzed	No of documents
01	Project proposals (pilot, second and last phase)	3
02	A set of the detailed implementation plans and project-end reports	3
03	Monthly reports	30
04	A set of the mid-term and year-end joint evaluation reports (donors)	3
05	External evaluation reports	2
06	Final report of three phases	1
07	The women informants files who were voluntarily involved in the interviews in the three villages	15
08	The individual case files of women informants who were voluntarily involved in the focus group discussions in the three villages	30
09	The meeting minutes with local and township level authorities	19
10	The internal monitoring reports of the INGO	15
Total	Total number of documents used for data analysis	121

Source Prepared by the author

For the documentary analysis 121 documents (with serial numbers) concerning the 27 project sites, including photographs, were reviewed as per Table 10.1 below. These documents were sourced from the INGO project offices where it is a requirement that they are kept for 3 years once a project is complete. The documents explain the situational changes through a series of reports about the 27 villages and were used to identify three sample villages to include in this study.

The documentary analysis showed that the 27 project villages were severely affected following the cyclone until approval of aid provision was granted by the Myanmar government in early August 2008. The challenges for the cyclone survivors in all 27 villages related to severe psychological problems due to the death of family members, lost property, lack of financial resources, lack of opportunity to restore livelihoods and/or status as many villagers had little educational, limited access to information, and the new breadwinner roles of women and girls within families.

The process of documentary analysis involved a review of the relevant documents whereby key terms, phrases and indications were examined to find instances where social capital, capacity building and network building appeared evident. Following this stage, documents were analyzed again to determine what activities, events and training reportedly led to these instances of social capital, capacity building and network building and conversely why they may have been absent.

Documentary analysis revealed that eight villages did not receive funds from the INGO, so those eight villages were omitted from the total 27 project's sites when considering the selection process for the villages to be included in this study. Following the project, three villages were selected for the study reported in this chapter—the 'sample villages' comprising what were referred to: as poor

performing, medium performing, and the best performing villages following the INGO interventions. Among the 27 village sites that were included by the INGO, 7 villages were considered best performing, 8 villages were poor performing, and the remaining 12 were rated as medium performing villages. Subsequently, one village from each of those rankings was selected for analysis. Thus the poor performing village is forthwith referred to as V1, the medium performing village V2, and the best performing village V3.

10.6 Background Information on the Case Study Villages

The geographical location of the three sample villages is the same for all and far away from Labutta with poor road infrastructure V1 is situated on the main road to Labutta and the other two villages V2 and V3 are ‘off-road’ villages, which are far more remote than V1. In relation to natural resources, V2 and V3 are surrounded by two streams and have many uncultivated flat lands.

The population of the three villages was not documented officially prior to the cyclone. The Local Authority Office (LAO) in each village issued the population data in the post-cyclone period and this information was considered confidential. The geographical situation and population profile of the V1, V2 and V3 are listed in Table 10.2. Other information such as ethnicity, race, age, education, income, health, etc., was not provided by the local authorities. As per Table 10.2, the V3 population was more than double that of the V1 and V2 according to the post cyclone data from the LAO, whereas the numbers of missing villagers was not announced officially.

Table 10.2 Demographics of the three case study villages

Serial no.	Description	V1 (poor performing)	V2 (medium performing)	V3 (best performing)
01	No of village households	193	210	390
02	Total population	747	775	1,638
03	Male	369	349	808
04	Female	378	426	830
05	Women beneficiaries in the pilot phase	(6 % of total women)	19 (5 % of total women)	n/a
06	Women beneficiaries in the in the 2nd phase	212 (56 % of total women)	426 (100 % of total women)	427 (51 % of total women)
07	Women beneficiaries in the 3rd phase	306 (80 % of total women)	355 (83 % of total women)	533 (64 % of total women)

Source Prepared by the author

10.7 Findings

10.7.1 *The Input-Process-Output (IPO)*

The documentary analysis is presented according to the IPO model discussed earlier. The input section concerns the resources available to the rural women in their village settings (i.e. physical capital) and through the other villagers in their network (i.e. human capital, cultural capital, psychological capital and social capital) as per Table 10.3. This section also includes the INGO's contribution such as the project activities and training for capacity building (i.e. human capital), disbursed financial resources (financial capital) and facilitating meetings to build social capital. From Table 10.3, V1, V2 and V3 differed according to geographical location, population size and resource availability. Moreover, although all the villages received the same input from the INGO, there were different levels of community participation in the project that affected the process and outputs of each as discussed later.

Turning to the process and output sections of the IPO model the evidence indicates that the degree of women's participation in training, the number of trained peer educators, participation in library service and regular meetings was much lower in V1 than it was in V2 and V3 (see Table 10.3).

Table 10.3 Process and output stages of the project case studies

Serial no.	Description of activity	V1 poor	V2 medium	V3 best
01	No of trained peer educators who participated in community work	8	15	15
02	No of cascade training sessions conducted by trained peer educators	4	12	25
03	No of women who attended cascade training by fellow trained peer educators	10	10	10
04	No of rural women who attended cascade training in each village	40	120	250
05	No of rural women volunteers who attended fund management training	10	10	10
06	No of trained rural women working as the fund board members	6	10	10
07	Established and maintained community center as the meeting place for rural women's committee and rural villagers	1	1	1
08	Library service by volunteer women	Once a week	Twice a week	Every day
09	Regular meetings attended by trained peer educators/women from the community fund committee	Once a month	Twice a month	Weekly

Source Prepared by the author

The data from Table 10.3 showed that the INGO provided the same education and training to all the three villages throughout the 30 month project period, although the community participation varied between villages from the commencement to the end of the project. As per Table 10.3 fewer women from V1 attended the INGO's first meeting, whereas the highest attendance of women was from V3. Regarding the women's participation in community development, the INGO trained the same number of peer educators (PE) from three villages, 15 PE each from V2 and V3 conducted a higher number of cascade trainings (12 and 25 sections respectively) to other rural people than that of 8 peer educator women from the V1 who conducted only 4 training sessions a year (see Table 10.3).

10.8 Facilitators and Barriers to the Capacity Building Process

Regarding the village women's participation in the INGO activities, the INGO staff provided more assistance to the women cyclone survivors who had lost their businesses and means of any livelihood, particularly women from V1. Prior to the cyclone approximately 80 % of the V1 women owned property and were financially secure because they were known as 'loan lenders' to other V1 inhabitants as well as inhabitants of other villages in the location. Therefore, they lost more than the sample group villagers who prior to the cyclone possessed few material possessions such as property or finances and subsequently fared worse in the aftermath of the cyclone. This meant that the women of V1 required more counselling sessions and psychological assistance than the women in V2 and V3 who prior to the cyclone were poor labourers. In addition, it appeared that the sense of collective ownership of the women based in V1 was weaker than that of V2 and V3, where more villagers were interested in the collective work/network building of their village. In relation to the social interaction/networks amongst the villagers, the V1 women were more individualistic than the V2/V3 villagers, as the majority of the V1 women did not want to attend meetings and did not want to participate in the small group of five women (small networks) that were facilitated by the INGO. This demonstrated the weak ties relating to the V1 women's social relationships/social capital building, and lack of collective ownership and interest in capacity building.

10.9 Microfinancing

In relation to the microfinance loans, the documentary analysis indicates that two types of loan were applied in the three selected villages. The first type was the individual loan and the second type was the collective loan. The individual loan was disbursed to the individuals, and the collective loan was for a group of five

women who performed collective businesses through sharing equal duties, responsibilities and profit. The documentary analysis indicated that there were no loan defaulters in V3, there were five women who delayed repayment in V2, and 4 loan defaulters in V1.

The collective income generating activities were run by 37 groups of women in V3, 23 groups of women in V2 and only 14 groups of women in the V1 indicating that women from V3 had stronger social ties than those in V2 and V1. Documentary analysis also showed that 88 % of loan beneficiaries in V3 and 83 % in V2 lived without debt, while running their own farming businesses and saved some money to deposit to the bank. In addition, the children of the rural women beneficiaries of the INGO project were able to attend school above the primary level. However, although about 75 % of loan beneficiaries from V1 lived without debt, their daily income was found to be just enough to cover the expenses needed to run their own business and keep their children in school during the project period. Only 10 women of V1 showed evidence of saving any money and depositing it to a bank. Moreover, all the women in the three villages developed individual business plans which showed that the income of the rural women beneficiaries increased over time while they also gained more experience in decision making both with regard to business and household matters. Hence, the micro financing and associated activities led to significant changes in the rural women's life during the project period.

In order to measure the capacity improvement of the individual rural women in the three sample villages, the INGO conducted a pre-assessment test when rural women joined the project as members and a post-test when each project phase was completed. Furthermore, the INGO provided fund management training for rural women before transferring the community funds to support the capacity and capability with regard to financial management of the rural women's committee. Analysis showed that the INGO applied a systematic knowledge sharing process to encourage women to generate income by leading businesses and making decision that produced a sense of ownership as well as working to build capacity for the rural women. Later, the INGO slowly reduced its participation in the project, whereas the women in the rural villages gained more control over and made decisions in relation to the management of their businesses. The deed of transferring funds (micro financing) to the rural women's committee in each village indicated the transparency, accountability and inclusiveness intended for all the women beneficiaries in the village network groups.

The INGO staff led the project activities in a flexible way so that the rural women cyclone survivors could both participate and lead the activities with a sense of ownership. The feedback of the beneficiaries stated in the final report that the consistency in the INGO staffing was the best way of building ongoing social relationships between the staff and rural women while engendering trust which ultimately led to the success of the INGO project as reported by the INGO staff:

...both parties had enough time to prepare the exit plan in each project phase, and were able to re-adjust things when another phase was started in relation to the transitional process of transferring knowledge and building capacity for rural women until rural women

gained the ownership sense. That ownership sense was gradually developed both at the individual and the group levels in each network village. Apart from that, the staff also gained a great experience of tailoring the project flow according to the progressive achievement of the targeted beneficiaries, their families and their communities at large. (INGO Final Report 2012, p. 27).

10.10 Conclusion

Capacity-building programmes have been reported as being vital for the development of low- and middle-income countries (see Ramanadhan et al. 2010) such as Myanmar. Furthermore, participation in such programmes can lead to new networks and access to social capital. However, the documentary analysis presented in this chapter in conjunction with the IPO framework reflects that for those women in the sample group their lifestyle changed in various ways since the INGO first implemented their project in August 2008. Generally, the IPO model is one of the measuring tools used in business to identify economic growth and changes in productivity. In this study, the IPO was used an application tool for analyzing social issues that assists in the measurement of capacity building through various types of capital in relation to the INGO and rural women in the Labutta village networks.

Social capital can be defined as the social networks and norms that mediate development opportunities and outcomes (Dudwick et al. 2006). The social networks and norms in the sample group V1 were different to those of V2 and V3 and did not encourage the enthusiastic participate in attending training, meetings, forming groups or their own businesses in the same way that was being demonstrated in V2 and V3. Based on the documentary analysis, many of the V1 women failed to take up the opportunities offered by the INGO and subsequently did form a few numbers of network groups voluntarily, develop their own businesses, benefit from social capital or training/capacity building opportunities. Conversely, the majority of V2 and V3 women experienced what Putnam (1995) referred to as the combination of physical capital (micro financing) and human capital (INGO training) with social capital (gained from the INGO and the village networks) which resulted in the further generation of physical capital (ability to pay back their loans), human capital (run their own businesses) and other types of capital—gaining a ‘voice’ in the village and in their family situations (as per Coleman 1988). These processes in turn led to successful villages (V2 and V3) being able to reduce poverty (as per Allahdadi 2011), send their children to school and also save money to deposit in the bank.

Follow up interviews encouraged the village women to tell their stories and these help to explain why the V1 women did not participate as fully in the projects as the women from V2 and V3, and in the process losing out on the opportunities to change their lives and build capacity. It appears that they did not fully understand the importance of participation for both their own futures and that of their

children. This study set out to answer the question, *how can networks promote the building of social capital and women's capacity building in Myanmar?* Although the INGO staff led the project activities in a flexible way, so that the women cyclone survivors were provided with the opportunity to participate and lead activities with a sense of ownership, it may be that a future emphasis by INGOs in similar situations needs to be placed on the importance of full participation for network building by beneficiaries. This study has demonstrated that full participation in all aspects of the programme is necessary for both the enhancement of social capital and personal/collective capacity building.

There have been approximately 60 international non-government organizations (INGOs) leading humanitarian activities in Burma/Myanmar from 1988 to 2010. To date they have been subject to little or no research analyzing either the depth or breadth of network based social capital development, or the effectiveness of capacity building programmes. This indicates there is a gap in the literature that this chapter addresses through the case study analysis and in turn it suggests fruitful avenues for future research on the topic.

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