



Capacity building of weather and climate services in Myanmar (2012-2019) - experiences and lessons learnt

Reidun Gangstø Skaland, Tor Ivar Mathisen, and Hans Olav Hygen

MET Norway, The Norwegian Meteorological Institute, Oslo, Norway (reidung@met.no)

Myanmar is ranked as one of the most vulnerable countries in the world, in terms of extreme weather events related to climate change such as cyclones, floods, heavy rains, droughts, and extreme temperatures. The country has a humid subtropical climate in the northeast, a monsoon climate with occasional tropical cyclones in the west and a tropical savanna climate in the central, southeastern and southern part of the country. Most of the population lives in climate change exposed areas, such as coastal areas, delta areas and in the dry zone area in central Myanmar.

With the aim to strengthen the capacity in weather forecasting and climate services of Myanmar, the Meteorological Institute of Norway (MET Norway) has since 2012 been involved in a capacity building project at the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology (DMH) in Myanmar, in collaboration with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Center (ADPC). The project has been supported by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), and from 2017 by the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD). MET Norway is also engaged in two similar projects in Southeast Asia, in Bangladesh and Vietnam.

During the project period, obstacles like lack of digitized data, standard data formats, and technical expertise, as well as by poorly developed infrastructure, a limited number of highly skilled staff, and cultural differences have challenged the progress. However, by focusing on building relationships, trust and mutual respect, listening and understanding before proposing, and aiming for providing visibility for our partner, not for us, good progress has been made, step by step. We have implemented open-source tools and had a user-oriented approach with hands-on training. We have also worked to identify synergies across countries to strengthen the regional collaboration between institutes.

The project has led to improved quality of the forecasts and warnings and a strengthened understanding of how the climate and the frequency and intensity of extreme events are changing in Myanmar. Continued capacity building with a high focus on sustainability and independence of DMH, better products and more visibility among the government and the public stakeholders, will in the short and long term make Myanmar more prepared for and able to mitigate impacts of extreme weather and the increased risks of disaster due to climate change.