THE ROLES OF SOCIAL CAPITAL IN THE EMERGENCE OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN FRAGILE ENVIRONMENT: CASE OF CHIN STATE IN MYANMAR

PHWE YU MON

MASTER OF ARTS

IN

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL INNOVATION

MAE FAH LUANG UNIVERSITY

2024

THE ROLES OF SOCIAL CAPITAL IN THE EMERGENCE OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE IN FRAGILE ENVIRONMENT: CASE OF CHIN STATE IN MYANMAR

PHWE YU MON

THIS THESIS IS A PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS
IN
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL INNOVATION
MAE FAH LUANG UNIVERSITY
2024

THESIS APPROVAL

MAE FAH LUANG UNIVERSITY

FOR

MASTER OF ARTS IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Thesis Title: The Roles of Social Capital in the Emergence of Local Governance in Fragile Environment: Case of Chin State in Myanmar

Author: Phwe Yu Mon

Examination Committee:

Nichan Singhaputargun, Ph. D.	Chairperson
Thanikun Chantra, Ph. D.	Member
Yared Akarapattananukul, Ph. D.	Member

Advisor:

.... Advisor

(Thanikun Chantra, Ph. D.)

Dean:

....

(Thanikun Chantra, Ph. D.)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thesis Title	The Roles of Social Capital in the Emergence of Local Governance in Fragile Environment: Case of Chin State in Myanmar
Author	Phwe Yu Mon
Degree	Master of Arts (International Development)
Advisor	Thanikun Chantra, Ph. D.

ABSTRACT

The 2021 military coup in Myanmar triggered profound political turmoil, severely weakening state administrative capacity and depriving citizens of essential public services and political representation. Chin State, one of the regions most actively resisting the military regime, has witnessed the rapid emergence of localized governance structures. This research explores how social capitals contribute to the formation and functioning of local governance amid fragility. Using qualitative interviews and literature review, the study investigates the mechanisms of grassroots governance and the impact of the fragile environment on the social capital–governance relationship. Findings reveal that township- and tribe-based administrative bodies have taken on governance functions, such as justice, public service delivery, and defense, grounded in principles of self-determination. Social trust enhances civic engagement and legitimacy, while norms of reciprocity and diaspora support mobilize vital resources. Social networks enable coordination and resilience. However, the study also highlights risks of exclusion and internal power struggles that challenge social cohesion. Overall, the research underscores the critical yet complex role of social capital in shaping inclusive, community-led governance in conflict-affected and institutionally fragile contexts.

Keywords: Social Capital, Local Governance, Fragility, Chin State, Myanmar

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Myanmar, also known as Burma, boasts a rich cultural legacy, a varied populace, and intricate socio-political dynamics. Situated in Southeast Asia and bordered by Bangladesh, India, China, Laos, and Thailand, it has a population of over 51.4 million as per the 2014 census (UNFPA, 2016). The nation is ethnically diverse, with more than 100 distinct ethnic groups. While the Bamar (or Burman) people constitute the largest ethnic group, significant minorities include the Shan, Karen, Rakhine, Chin, Kachin, among others. This diversity adds to the country's cultural tapestry but has also been a source of ethnic tensions and conflicts. Myanmar's political history is complex, characterized by periods of monarchy, colonial domination, military rule, endeavors towards democratic governance and attempts military dictatorship.

Myanmar gained independence from Britain in the early morning of January 1948. Before the colonization under Britain, Myanmar was never a state or nation, and every ethnicity had their own rules and governance. The territory of Myanmar's map before independence was not like current map as each ethnicity has its own territory and governance. For instance, Shan, Rakhine, Kachin, Chin, etc. ethnicities were with their own rules and their tribe ruling structure. During the colonial period, Britain colonized and ruled by diving into two parts such as hilly region and lower part of Myanmar. Before transferring independence, Burmese independence leaders had serious discussion due to white paper, a statement of policy on the future of Burma issued by the British government on 17 May 1945, which clearly mentioned about independence of hilly regions with self-determination. British called a condition to Burmese independence leaders, saying that to have independence in both hilly region and lower part of Myanmar, the agreement on how to become independence state and future of Burma between all relevant leaders from ethnic regions was required. Without any agreement between Burmese Independence leaders and ethnic leaders, British will not give independence to all territory. Due to such condition, the Burmese leader,

General Aung San, had two meetings with Chin, Kachin and Shan at Panglong township and made Panglong Agreement. It underpinned on "spirit" of Panglong which means all ethnicities will build together a State and nation with unity among diversity with the political agreement. According to the agreement, any ethnic has a right to sperate from a nation if they do not want to be part of the country anymore (Walton, 2008). However, as soon as receiving independence from Britain, the country shredded into civil wars. One of the main reasons was General Aung San, who gained lots of trust from all ethnic leaders, killed in 1947 so the Panglong promises were not implemented since the drafting 1947 constitution and militarization and burmanization started to seed as soon as gaining independence (Silverstein, 1959). Starting from that initial point, Myanmar faced with fragility by having series of wars and conflicts such as ideological conflicts, armed struggles and militarization process. There was the first coup in 1962 led by General Ne Win. He ruled the country as Burmese Way to Socialism, under the guidance of the Burma Socialist Program Party. Due to public dissatisfaction and growing economic problem in the country, demonstration against the regime started in the mid of 1987 which led to nationwide student uprising in March 1988. From that case, nationwide uprising led by university students joined by different layers of working class, against to step down the socialist regime happened in 1988 (Egreteau, 2017). As a result of it, Burmese way of socialism, Ne Win regime, collapsed and the military seized power again and cracked down on demonstration; but the military promised that multiparty democratic elections would be conducted and transferred the power by calling parliament. However, the 1991 general elections resulted in a winning of the National League of Democracy (NLD) led by Nobel Prize Winner Aung Sann Su Kyi. But, Than Shwe, a leader of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) led by the Burmese military, broke the promise of transferring power to elected party and rejected to call National Assembly, so another coup had happened. After nearly two-decade rules by the Burmese military, the 2008 constitution was adopted. In 2010, Myanmar went through a regime transition from absolute military regime to a quasi-civilian regime purportedly aspiring to transition to liberal democracy. Yet, the regime transition was uneven and partial, with the military securing a quota in parliament's membership occupied by military generals (UNDP, 2015). The transition was led by President Thein Sein, signaled in the beginning by

releasing many political prisoners, embarking on peace dialogues, setting up sustainable development agenda, inviting international investments and opening new diplomatic ties with international communities (ACDD, 2018).

Under the transition led by President Thein Sein, local governance has emerged for the first time in Myanmar as a focal point for political reform under the Thein Sein government, which assumed office in early 2011. The local governance was always particularly a tool for exerting strict control and exploitation over the population through a variety of measures before 2011. In colonial time, the British expanded their bureaucratic-administrative system in the core regions of British Burma, while allowing frontier areas to maintain their traditional forms of governance through agreements with local tribe chiefs and clans. The administrative structures established by the British aimed at controlling the local population and exploiting human and natural resources (UNDP, 2015). Following independence, the state authorities by different regimes largely inherited and maintained the remnants of the colonial system, including its hierarchical and centralized features, where power was concentrated at the center and marginalized the periphery. President Thein Sein underscored the significance of sub-national governance levels—such as States/Regions, districts, and townships—in both the reform process and Myanmar's economic advancement during a widely discussed policy speech to the Union Legislature in June 2012. The role of local governance was reiterated and elaborated upon in subsequent addresses by the President. In a similar speech in December 2013, he underscored the duties of lower tiers of government, and once more in January 2014, he urged cooperation among different government levels to pursue a development strategy centered around the needs of the people (UNDP, 2015). The President regularly addresses the nation via monthly radio broadcasts to announce new reform measures and consistently emphasizes the importance of local governance in these efforts.

Myanmar's 2008 Constitution marked a significant move towards political decentralization by establishing 15 state/region governments with legislative and administrative authority. However, the Constitution does not include provisions for establishing local self-government below the regional and state levels, whether in rural or urban areas. Public administration at the local level is addressed only briefly in the Constitution, indicating that the management of district and township levels shall be

entrusted to Civil Services personnel (Section 288), and the management of wards or village-tracts shall be assigned, according to the law, to individuals respected for their integrity by the community (Section 289). However, the Constitution does not address the potential establishment of elected bodies at the local level; it does not explicitly state whether ward and village tract administrators can be elected, a point that was discussed and agreed upon by the Union legislature during the amendment of the 1907 Ward and Village Tract Administration Act in early 2012 (UNDP, 2015). Under the 2012 Ward or Village Tract Administration Law, Ward/Village Tract Administrators play a crucial role in supporting local governance by assisting in maintaining law and order, monitoring development projects, and facilitating poverty reduction efforts, as well as overseeing tasks such as birth and death registration and collecting land revenue (Chung, 2019). Previously, these administrators were appointed indirectly by General Administrative Department (GAD) township administrators. It means that following the military's seizure of state power in 1988, the establishment of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) ensued, tasked with assuming governmental functions. SLORC also instituted administrative entities at various tiers, delegated authority to departments wielding administrative power pursuant to Law No. 8/88 and restructured the General Administration Department (GAD) within the Ministry of Home Affairs (UNDP, 2015). However, amendments to the law in 2016 introduced changes to the election process, allowing for direct elections through a voting system involving household leaders (ACDD, 2018).

However, Myanmar's decade-long hybrid democracy and reform process has ended with the attempt of coup by Senior General Min Aung Hlaing leading the Burmese military regime refusing the November 2020 general election results. In the early morning of 1st Feb 2021, the military seized the power by overthrowing the elected President, State Counsellor Aung Sann Suu Kyi including other top leaders of NLD party and prominent civil society leaders. The Vice President nominated by the military in the previous term, a former General Myint Swe as an Acting President announced 'State of Emergency' and transferred 'Legislative, Judicial and Executive Powers' to the Commander-in-Chief by exercising Article 417 and 418 (a) by justifying with election fraud which is likely to lose stability and unity in Myanmar as many parties and citizens are dissatisfied on it (The Gobal New Light of Myanmar, 2021).

The condition of 'State of Emergency' was intentionally misinterpreted while made and procedure of identifying 'State of Emergency' was manipulated its own 2008 constitution which provides impunity, privilege, and entrenchment the power of the military appointing 25% of all seats in both national and state and regional parliaments from the military institution.

The governance landscape in Myanmar has been tumultuous and intricate since February 2021. Following the assumption of leadership by Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, head of the Tatmadaw, widespread opposition and a significant uprising spearheaded by the Civil Disobedience Movement ensued. In response to the coup, ousted Members of Parliament formed the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH), later establishing the National Unity Government (NUG), which many Myanmar citizens regard as the legitimate governing body. Compounding the situation is the ongoing armed conflict between the Tatmadaw and various Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs) in ethnic Burman areas. Consequently, Myanmar's governance landscape remains fiercely contested, with the military regime endeavoring to strengthen its authority amidst resistance from pro-democracy movements and armed factions. This has led to political instability and a worsening human rights situation in the country.

Following the coup, the breakdown of State Administrative Council (SAC) operations and service provision in rural areas of the lowland, Dry Zone regions, Karenni and Chin State of Myanmar has led to the emergence of various new governance entities, frequently associated with resistance factions, stepping in to undertake administrative and service delivery responsibilities (Clapp & Hein, 2023). In regions where opposition to the military regime is strong, such as parts of Sagaing Region and Chin State, new administrative entities have swiftly emerged, even in areas not previously under the governance of ethnic armed organizations. Like other states and regions, Chin State also in response to the illegitimate takeover of power of the military, various civil society groups, community leaders, and local administrations in Chin State have mobilized to assert their autonomy and reject the authority of the military regime.

1.1.1 Profile of Chin State

Located in the southern part of northwestern Myanmar, Chin State shares borders with Bangladesh and India to the west, Rakhine State to the south, and Magwe and Sagaing Divisions to the east. Referred to as the "Chin Hills," it is characterized by its mountainous terrain, with elevations ranging from 5000 to 8000 feet on average. Home to estimated 465,000 populations of Chin ethnicity (UNDP, 2014), who are of Sino-Tibetan descent, the state is part of a mountain chain that extends from western Burma through to Mizoram in northeast India (where they are associated with groups like the Mizos and Kuki) and certain areas of Bangladesh. Although the term "Chin" generally encompasses various ethnic groups in Myanmar, they exhibit ethnic and linguistic diversity, including the Asho, Cho, Khumi, Kuki, Laimi, Lushai, and Zomi among others. Each ethnic group within Chin State speaks its own language, all of which are classified under the Tibeto-Burman language family (Sakhong, 2023). The church holds a significant role within Chin culture and society. Christianity serves as a unifying factor among the diverse tribal groups, bringing together the entire Chin ethnic community (Sakhong, 2023).

Among the Chin, the concept of a "tribal group" denotes a social unit consisting of multiple families, clans, or generations, as well as individuals such as slaves, dependents, or adopted outsiders. Essentially, it represents a community of individuals who share ancestry and migrated together to a specific location after their original homeland in the Chindwin Valley was no longer inhabitable (Sakhong, 2003). In Chin culture, the term "tribe" does not denote shared ancestry or familial connections, but rather signifies a social collective of individuals belonging to the same ethnic group, who have settled in a particular geographical area (Sakhong, 2003). The Chin term "phunglam," which translates to "ways of life," originates from the root word "phung," meaning "culture." The significance of "phung" carries strong religious connotations, almost synonymous with religion itself. Chin people express their religious adherence through phrases like "Lai phung in kan rak um!" meaning "We practiced Chin traditional religion!" or "We lived according to Chin traditional ways of life!" Similarly, "Krifa phung in kan um!" signifies "We are Christians!" (Sakhong, 2003). In this context, the Chin concept of "religion" closely aligns with Clifford Geertz's definition of "religion as a cultural system" (Geertz 197; see in Sakhong, 2003). When a group or

community collectively practices the same system of symbols, they not only share a common faith but also adopt similar "ways of life." This concept, known as "phunglam" among the Chin, encompasses the powerful, pervasive, and enduring moods and motivations that shape both tradition and lifestyle, while also forming the basis of social values. This inclusive definition is both functional and well-organized. Its inclusivity proves advantageous when dealing with tribal societies, where religious, social, cultural, and political aspects are deeply intertwined and inseparable. Overall, Chin society is really rooted in social structure, tribal relations, religious and community sense.

As like other regions and states, when the 1ˢᵗ Feb 2021 coup happened, Chin people also involved in peaceful protest against the military coup (Pauli, 2024). Following the 2021 coup, the violent suppression of peaceful protests prompted numerous civilians to become armed and defend themselves. Consequently, tensions escalated as numerous new local resistance factions and armed groups emerged, collectively known as the Chinland Defense Forces. Among these groups, the Chin National Front, founded in 1988, a longstanding armed organization known for its resistance against Myanmar's central government, garnered substantial public backing. In 2023, these armed factions achieved notable advancements by securing control over resources, territory, transportation routes, and infrastructure across urban and rural regions. Furthermore, the situation in Chin State is compounded by ongoing ethnic conflicts and historical grievances against the central government. The coup has exacerbated tensions and raised concerns about the protection of ethnic minority rights and the preservation of cultural heritage in the region. Furthermore, the public service sector and government employees strongly supported and joined the widespread Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) in Chin State. CDM comprises people joining in the movement of boycott against cooperation, collaboration with military and in Myanmar context, public servants refuse to go to work under the military regime. Those CDM, joining with the democratic forces, had established essential public services along with their own alternative local governance and administration bodies with the support of local communities in their located townships accordingly to fill the gap and to provide service deliveries. The movement, CDM, is becoming one of the key factors to collapse public administration and governance operation in Chin State. In the meantime, Chin

State has become a fragile region as armed clashes between Chin resistance forces and State Administration Council (SAC) forces have been increased and more frequent across the state. This produced over 60,000 refugees fleeing to India-Myanmar border while over 65,000 local population become Internal Displaced Persons (IDP) (Pauli, 2024). In the absence of governance functions by the SAC, alternative governance structures have emerged in Chin State. Local communities, ethnic organizations, and civil society groups have taken on greater roles in administering public services and maintaining order within their respective areas. In this newly emergence local governance, interesting point is that how kind of rich in culture, tribal, social networks, norms, and traditional society of Chin State is playing a crucial role in emerging local governance in fragile environment. Overall, governance in Chin State after the February 1st coup is characterized by a complex interplay of resistance against the military regime, efforts to maintain local autonomy, and challenges related to ethnic tensions and conflict. Despite these challenges, local communities continue to strive for democratic governance and the protection of their rights and identities.

1.1.2 Statement of the Problem

The political turmoil sparked by the attempted military coup in 2021 has introduced a new dimension of conflict in the nation, leading to a decline in the capacity of state administration and denying citizens access to crucial political services and public goods vital for their daily existence and the preservation of law and order. In response to the void left by the crisis in administration, democratic groups such as National Unity Government (NUG), elected candidates, civil society leaders, CDMers and public who support the revolution, have established local administrative structures across the resistance strongholds in Myanmar. The Chin State has been one of the most contested states against the junta, where new administrative bodies and local governance quickly emerged by forming several committees such as service delivery, education and health care, agriculture, judiciary, humanitarian and livelihood and agriculture, etc. (Pauli, 2024). In the mid of 2022, Public Administration Bodies (PABs) and Chin Defense Forces (CDF) are governing with their local governance structure in most of the rural areas in Chin State in which social capital such as reciprocity practices, trust, forming networks, is playing crucial role in the emergence of local governance.

However, social capital's influence in the emergence of local governance in fragile environment like Myanmar remains understudied and poorly understood. Existing research often pays attention the complex interactions between social capital dynamic and governance process in stable contexts, overlooking its relevance in contexts characterized by conflict, displacement, and socio-political upheaval. There is a need for in-depth study that explores the relationship between social capital and the emergence of local governance in fragile environments, examining the mechanisms through which social networks, norms, reciprocity practices and trust influence formation of governance structure, people participation, service delivery and resilient governance system.

By addressing this gap in the literature, this paper seeks to provide insights into the potential of social capital to promote inclusive local governance processes and mitigate the impacts of fragility on local communities. The findings will have implications for academia, policy makers, practitioner and development workers seeking to support bottom-up approaches to address population's needs in fragile environments, emphasizing the importance of investing in social cohesion, trust-building, cultural and traditional practices, and grassroots empowerment as foundations for sustainable development.

1.2 Research Objectives

1.2.1   To identify the key mechanisms of emerging local governance at the local level in fragile environment in Chin State.

1.2.2   To explore how social capital contributes to the emergence of local governance structure and administration in a fragile environment in Chin State.

1.2.3   To examine how the fragile environment impacts the relationship between social capital and local governance in Chin State.

1.3 Research Questions

1.3.1 What are the key mechanisms of emerging local governance at the local level in fragile environment in Chin State?

1.3.2 How does social capital contribute to the emergence of local governance structure and administration in fragile environment in Chin State?

1.3.3 How does the fragile environment impact the relationship between social capital and local governance in Chin State?

1.4 Scope of the Study

To achieve objectives of the study and to answer the above research questions on the relationship between social capital and emergence of local governance in the fragile environment, Chin State and its local governance are selected as the site of this study for several reasons. The first justification is that Chin State is a place to diverse tribe communities, each with its own social networks and kinship ties. Unlike other states that still have strong local government, these networks play an important role in providing social support, facilitating collaborative and collective actions, and transmitting cultural traditions and values. The second reason of selecting Chin State for this study is because of the difficult and complicated relationship between Chin people and central State. Chin State situated in Chin Hill, part of Zomia where is to refuge to free from state control, subject-making and being governed in state-making process (Scott, 2009). Every regime, from colonial time to previous hybrid regime, military-civil rule till 2020, there was always limited access such as unable to reach of governing power of central authority, service delivery and transportation, etc. to that periphery area, Chin State. The people from Chin state spend their daily life with their customary rules, regulations and practices, traditional values, and social networking. The third reason is happening fragility in Chin state, such as political instability, economic vulnerability, and collapse government institutions. Therefore, after collapsing state centrality because of the Feb 2021 coup, there is an emergence of local governance across Chin State which is quite significant in conflict context.

In addition, the period for this research study is from 1ˢᵗ Feb 2021 till the current period as there was significant political landscape has changed due to the coup by the military on 1ˢᵗ Feb 2021. To respond to the military coup, there was nationwide peaceful protest and Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) led by public servants nationwide. Particularly in Chin State, the highest number of public servants such as from education, health, public administration, and other public service sectors joined CDM. As a result of it, almost all government institutions have collapsed in both urban and rural areas, particularly in Chin State. Moreover, to response to the military's serious atrocities against its own population, Chin State is where the first state took arm and emerged several Chin Defense Forces against the military rule. So, after the 1ˢᵗ Feb 2021, the significant political landscape has changed which has caused political instability, wars, stopping public service deliveries, collapsed institutions and populations forced isolation from economic trade, health and education access, restriction to travel, etc. Amid from this fragility, self-governance led by local communities, tribe leaders, youth and different stakeholders tried to establish local governance across Chin State providing service deliveries, conducting humanitarian works for IDPs, enhancing community resilience and local livelihood. So, choosing this period is significant for this research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Social Capital

2.1.1 Definition of Social Capital

In recent times, the idea of social capital has gained widespread popularity and has transitioned from a concept within sociological theory to common language. It has been widely promoted as a remedy for various societal issues, often portrayed as a panacea for numerous challenges faced by communities. Despite increased scholarly attention, a key challenge with the social capital concept is the lack of agreement on its measurement. However, despite varied definitions, most scholars acknowledge three fundamental elements: trust, reciprocity norms, and social networks. Nearly 100 years ago, Louis Hanifan (1916) defined social capital as the goodwill, camaraderie, mutual empathy, and social interactions within a group of individuals and families forming a social entity. Since then, various academic fields have embraced the concept, which generally explores how engagement and active participation in groups can yield beneficial outcomes for both individuals and communities .

Adler and Kwon define social capitals as "A resource for individual and collective actors created by the configuration and content of the network of their more or less durable social relations" (Adler & Kwon, 2002). Pierre Bourdieut also argues as "the aggregate of the actual or po- tential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition" (Bourdieu, 1985). He conceptualized social capital as part of a quartet of capitals, including economic, cultural, and symbolic, which collectively shape individuals' paths in social life. According to Bourdieu (1985), social capital comprises the tangible or potential assets associated with maintaining enduring networks of connections characterized by mutual familiarity or acknowledgment. He approaches the concept with an instrumental perspective, emphasizing the advantages individuals gain through involvement in groups and the intentional cultivation of social connections to create this valuable asset. Similarly, Coleman (1988) have utilized Bourdieu's

definition to examine the impact of social capital on individual achievements. He concentrated on how social capital and the structural frameworks of interpersonal relationships could be transformed into tangible assets accessible to individuals (Coleman, 1988). Lin (2001) expanded on the concept of social capital by linking it to networks of connections, describing it as assets inherent within an individual's social networks, which can be utilized or activated through the connections within those networks (Lin, 2001).

On the other hand, other scholars define that social capital pertains to the attributes of communities and is considered an overarching concept. Putnam's examination of social capital contrasts with the perspectives of Bourdieu and Coleman, who view social capital more as a type of individual asset. In contrast, Putnam sees it as a collective benefit that can be enhanced through regular engagement and participation by members of society. Putnam (1993), for instance, has defined social capital as a feature of communities, while Newton has stated that social capital is fundamentally a societal characteristic rather than an individual one, emphasizing the need to examine it as a collective phenomenon rather than on an individual level (Newton, 2001). Robert Putnam (1995) gained considerable recognition for popularizing this idea through his piece in the Journal of Democracy titled "Bowling Alone," which he subsequently developed into a book of the same name. He explored the importance of social capital in generating benefits that go beyond individual gains, especially within local communities and neighborhoods (Putnam, 1995). Collaboration among individuals is more feasible within a community endowed with a significant reservoir of social capital, manifested through established norms of reciprocity and active civic networks. Putnam (1995) mentions the definition of social capitals as - "Social capital here refers to features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions." Fukuyama (1995) examines as "The ability of people to work together for common purpose in groups and organizations." Lake and Huckfeldt (1998) define as "Social Capital is created through the patterns of interdependence and social interaction that occur within a population." Moreover, Field (2004) said that social capital is "A way of conceptualizing the intangible resources of community, shared values and trust upon which we draw in daily life."

To summarize, the concept of social has developed significantly overtime, moving from a theoretical concept in sociology to a widely acknowledged term in everyday language. Although definitions and perspectives among scholars vary differently, there is a common recognition of its fundamental elements: trust, reciprocity norms, and social networks. Scholars such as Louis Hanifan (1916), Pierre Bourdieu (1985), James Coleman (1988), and Robert Putnam have contributed significantly to shaping understanding of social capital, focusing on its role in fostering cohesion, cooperation, and collective benefits within communities (Putnam, 1993, 1995). While some regard social capital primarily as an individual asset, others perceive it as a broader societal attribute, emphasizing its capacity to facilitate collective actions, improve effectiveness, and cultivate common values and confidence. The ongoing examination and application of social capital hold promise for offering valuable insights into addressing diverse societal dilemmas and promoting the welfare of communities in the times ahead.

The following discussion will present three main components of social capital such as trust, norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement (social networks). Firstly, literatures on trust will mainly be presented, followed by norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement (social networks).

2.1.1.1 Trust

Trust is an essential component of social capital (Putnam, 1993). As Kenneth Arrow (see in Putnam 1993) has observed, "Virtually every commercial transaction has within itself an element of trust, certainly any transaction conducted over a period of time." Social trust has historically played a vital role in fostering economic vitality and effective governance. Collaboration is frequently necessary across various sectors, such as between different branches of government, within businesses, among political entities, and between public and private entities. Higher levels of trust within a community correlate with increased cooperation. However, this trust is not unfounded but is based on expectations regarding the behavior of other individuals. Gambetta describes social trust as "the confidence an individual has in the likelihood that another individual or group will undertake actions, including sharing information, that will be beneficial or at least not harmful to them, thus enabling the formation of a cooperative relationship" (Gambetta, 1988). Newton (2001) also defines

social trust as a belief or confidence in the reliability of individuals within societies and various entities like neighborhoods, communities, and nations. In essence, it reflects an individual's expectation that others will not cause them harm or suffering. In intricate modern environments, social trust can stem from two interconnected origins: norms of reciprocity and networks of civic involvement (Putnam, 1993).

2.1.1.2 Norms of Reciprocity

According to James Coleman, social norms entail the transfer of authority over an action from the individual performing it to others, often due to the action's impact, whether positive or negative, on others (Coleman, 1988). Gouldner (1960) elucidates norms of reciprocity by stating that individuals are inclined to assist those who have previously aided them, and they refrain from causing harm to those who have extended help to them. Marques (2004) views reciprocity as the collective ethical consciousness of humanity, embodying the societal, communal, and even small-group standards for responding to actions, whether they involve offenses or expressions of sympathy. He likens reciprocity to a tradition of gift exchange between the giver and the recipient, where the giver initiates an unbalanced relationship and anticipates the recipient's response. This dynamic creates a connection among individuals through a mutual exchange of favors.

In contrast, Putnam (1993) defines norms as those supporting social trust develop because they reduce transaction costs and promote cooperation. Description of norms of reciprocity explained by Putnam as "I will do this for you without expecting anything specific back from you, in the confident expectation that someone else will do something for me down the road" (Putnam, 2000). Reciprocity, the most significant of norms, underlying on social trust, comes in two forms: balanced and generalized. Balanced reciprocity involves an immediate exchange of items of similar value, like colleagues exchanging gifts or politicians engaging in logrolling. Generalized reciprocity entails an ongoing exchange relationship where one party may give without immediate repayment, but with the expectation of future reciprocity. The practice of generalized reciprocity plays a crucial role in fostering social capital. Societies that adhere to this norm can effectively mitigate opportunism and address challenges related to collective action (Putnam, 1993). Reciprocity formed the foundation of similar self-help organizations in medieval Italy's northern communal republics. These associations

alleviated citizens' security concerns. Additionally, mutual aid societies emerged in the nineteenth century to tackle economic insecurities. In Putnam's perspective, norms of reciprocity represent a form of positive exchange that fosters collaboration and establishes mutual obligations among peers, thus shaping societal relationships (Weiner, 1980).

2.1.1.3 Network of Civic Engagement (Social Network)

Every society, regardless of its characteristics such as modernity, political structure, or economic system, is defined by networks of interpersonal communication and exchange, which can be both formal and informal. Putnam (1993) classified social networks by focusing on the horizontal and vertical characteristics of organizations. In a horizontal network, all members are treated equally, regardless of their status or power, emphasizing the importance of each individual (Putnam, 1993). A vertical network denotes an imbalanced connection between groups or institutions, where members are bound by hierarchical and dependent associations (Putnam, 1993).

Furthermore, civic engagement networks can also be classified into formal and informal categories (Foley & Edwards, 1999). Formal networks entail relationships among individuals that are legally organized and often governed by laws or regulations. All members are required to adhere to these regulations and actively fulfill their responsibilities. In contrast, informal networks, or soft networks, are characterized by flexible and weak connections (Perez- Dias, 2002). They lack a permanent structure and are less organized and defined. Generally, they connect individuals through social relations such as family, relatives, friends, neighbors, colleagues at work, and community members (Putnam, 2000). Participants in such networks often share similar social statuses and exhibit a strong sense of intimacy, emotional closeness, and expectation of long-term connections. Overall, these three indicators, trust, norms of reciprocity and network of engagement are crucial components of social capitals.

2.2 Fragility (Fragile Environment)

2.2.1 Definition of Fragility (Fragile Environment)

According to Fragile States Index Report (2023), 82 countries out of 179 countries worldwide, 30 countries are in alert, high alert and very high alert stages are falling into the category as fragile context considering as fragile states. Myanmar is a at 12 stage falling category into high alert rank (Fund for Peace, 2023). According to OECD report (2022) outlines that 1.9 billion people are living in fragile contexts which account for 24 % of global population in which 73% are in extreme poor condition. The report highlights that we are now in the "age of crisis' in which conflicts includes Covid 19, Russia's invasion to Ukraine, civil wars and climate changes deriving from multidimensional fragility which is a spectrum of intensity across six dimensions: political, economic, political, security, societal and human and environmental (OECD, 2022).

Before going to explore literature on fragile state, the definition of state will be defined in this literature. The conventional understanding of a state revolves around four key attributes: defined territory, population, government, and recognition by other states (Osaghae, 2007). A state is expected to excel in all these aspects by establishing strong and efficient institutions, effectively controlling and defending its territory, maintaining a stable and cohesive population, exercising sovereign and legitimate power within its borders, and ensuring the well-being of its citizens while also garnering recognition and respect from other states as a credible member of the global community (Osaghae, 2007). Weber defined the "state" as an entity that possesses a monopoly over the legitimate use of physical force within its borders to enforce its order. In this view, the state has both the means and the authority to monopolize the legitimate use of force, even if this authority is not necessarily derived from popular approval. In contrast, according to Locke, the state serves as a mechanism for fulfilling a social contract. Combining these perspectives, the "core" functions of a state can be defined as maintaining a monopoly over the use of force and carrying out the functions of a welfare state . If a state is unable to perform these core functions, it is categorized as "failed" or "fragile," depending on the extent of its incapacity.

The definitions on fragile states are often imprecise and vary across disciplines and contexts. In political science literature, fragility is often defined as state weakness that political institutions are incapable to handle certain situations and unable to perform its duties such as unable to protect and to deliver basic public goods and services to their citizens or population. Rotberg (2003) analyzes fragile state as weak governance, lack of legitimacy and incapability to regulate laws and orders in the context of contemporary challenge as terrorism. Similarly, Stweart and Brown (2009) defines fragility that are due to three failure conditions such as authority failure, service entitlement failure and legitimacy failure. As an impact, those fragile states experience frequent political instability including domestic conflicts, civil unrest, and insurgencies. Similarly, Brinkerhoff (2007) examined fragile states in which governments are lack of capacities to ensure fundamental security for their citizens, fail to deliver essential services and economic opportunities, and struggle to practice legitimacy to receive trust from their own population. Fearon and Laitin (2003) also argue that fragile states typically experience of having limited state capacity and low levels of legitimacy which facing high levels of violence and conflicts. For example, in Afghanistan, due to internal conflicts, political instability and weak governance including corruption and lack of transparency and other societal conflict and civil unrest, the country's weak institutions, ongoing insurgency and dependence on international aids create the state as highly fragile.

Moreover, Fragile economies often exhibit low levels of resilience, inadequate infrastructure, and limited access to essential services (The World Bank, 1992). "Greed and Grievance" by Paul Collier (2004) is a seminal work that examines the causes of civil war, particularly in fragile states. The theory posits that while both greed and grievance can contribute to conflict, it is the combination of economic greed and political grievance that often precipitates violent conflict. Collier and Hoeffler (2004) distinguishes between two primary motivations for conflict: greed-driven and grievance-driven. Greed-driven conflicts stem from economic motives, such as the desire to control valuable natural resources or illicit trade routes. Grievance-driven conflicts, on the other hand, arise from political grievances, such as discrimination, marginalization, or exclusion from political power (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004). In fragile states, where institutions are weak and governance is ineffective, both greed and

grievance can become exacerbated, leading to a higher likelihood of conflict. Collier's analysis suggests that while economic factors such as natural resource abundance can create opportunities for greed-driven conflicts, it is often political grievances, such as ethnic or religious discrimination, that serve as the underlying drivers of conflict (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004).

From societal and human point of view, citizens in fragile states often belong to polarized groups based on ethnicity, religion, or social class, with a history marked by distrust, grievances, and possibly violent conflicts. These states struggle with a lack of ability to cooperate, compromise, and build trust among their citizens. When these deficiencies in capacity are significant, states tend to drift towards failure, collapse, crisis, and conflict. Social divisions based on ethnicity, religion, or other identity factors can contribute to fragility by fueling tensions and conflicts within society. Discrimination, marginalization, and exclusion of certain groups from political or economic opportunities can further deepen social divisions. Fragility frequently results in the disintegration of social structures, the decline of social unity, and the weakening of trust among community members (Putnam, 2001). The social consequences of fragility encompass heightened divisions within society, ethnic strife, displacement, and livelihoods being compromised or lost (Gurr, 1970).

Overall, a fragile state is characterized by several key factors. Firstly, there is a breakdown of law and order, where state institutions lose their monopoly on the legitimate use of force, leading to the inability to protect citizens or, in some cases, the misuse of these institutions to oppress or terrorize citizens. Secondly, there is a weak or disintegrated capacity to meet citizen's needs and provide basic public services, ensure welfare, or support normal economic activity. Internationally, there is often a lack of a credible representation of the state beyond its borders. The term "fragile state" is typically reserved for extreme cases of collapse, such as Somalia, where civil and social authority have completely disintegrated. However, many countries fall short of this extreme scenario and vary in the degree to which they fail to provide for citizen welfare, ensure basic security, or facilitate equitable economic growth. At the opposite end of the spectrum, states may be considered fragile rather than failed, exhibiting institutional weaknesses and capacity gaps that are common among many poor countries (Brinkerhoff, 2007). In general, the concept of fragile states encapsulates the

various deficiencies and challenges that states have been characterized by over time, including terms like weak, ineffective, overly developed, lacking legitimacy, impoverished, insignificant, disconnected, rogue, collapsed, or failed. Each of these labels seeks to highlight particular shortcomings or issues within these states (Osaghae, 2005).

Based on those literatures, following the 2021 coup, Myanmar has faced significant challenges in terms of authority failure, legitimacy failure, and service entitlement failure, contributing to its status as a fragile state (Stewart & Brown, 2009). Firstly, in term of authority failure, the coup led to the collapse of the civilian government, resulting the military seizing control and undermining the authority of elected leaders. After the Feb 2021, nationwide uprising happened across the country against the military's action on overthrowing the elected government and detaining leaders of the State, such as State Counsellor Aung San Su Kyi and President Win Myint including other top leaders of NLD party, student leaders and civil society leaders. However, 2021 attempted coup meets with the highest peak of revolution and armed struggles leading by public across the country, particularly its own majority Burmese people against the military regime. Sagaing, Magway and Mandalay are the prominent revolutionary armed resistance regions, and the military has been losing the control of territory. According to the data of UN Special Envoy, over 70 % of territory is being controlled by the local defense forces (Special Advisory Council for Myanmar, 2024). The military's assertion of power has led to a breakdown in governance structures, with widespread protests and civil disobedience challenging the legitimacy of the military regime (ibid). For instance, banking system, supply chains, education system, health system have collapsed while armed conflict across the country is rising and the military is losing its territory control, authority and legitimacy (ibid). The centralization of authority in the hands of the military has marginalized democratic institutions, and eroded the rule of law, leading to a lack of effective governance and accountability.

In addition, there is also legitimacy failure. The military's actions have sparked international condemnation and undermined its legitimacy both domestically and internationally (Eichensehr, 2021). The coup has been met with widespread opposition from the public, civil society groups, and ethnic minority populations, further

delegitimizing the military regime. The lack of popular support for the military-led government has eroded trust in state institutions and exacerbated social divisions, undermining efforts to achieve stability and reconciliation. The political crisis has disrupted essential services and public infrastructure, leading to shortages of food, medicine, and other necessities. The breakdown of governance structures has hindered the effective delivery of public services, including healthcare, education, and social welfare programs (Kim, 2021). Vulnerable populations, including internally displaced persons and ethnic minorities, have been disproportionately affected by service entitlement failures, exacerbating social inequalities, and increasing social tensions. According to UNHCR, total of over 2.5 million people are being Internal Displaced Person (IDP) while 59,500 population are being refugees in the neighboring countries due to conflicts between military and local armed resistance groups or Ethnic Revolutionary Organizations (ERO) (UNHCR, 2024).

Overall, Myanmar's status as a fragile state is characterized by authority failure, legitimacy failure, and service entitlement failure, highlighting the urgent need for inclusive dialogue, political reconciliation, and meaningful reforms to address the root causes of instability and restore democratic governance.

2.2.2 Causes of Fragility

Fragility can refer to various contexts, including political, social, or economic. Each context has different causes influencing to its fragility. While there are several causes of fragility, classification can be analyzed into two, external factors and internal factors. External factors mean causes which derive from international or outside threats while internal factors can be defined as threats derive from inside the country or state. The following will firstly present literatures on external factors, followed internal factors.

2.2.2.1 External Factors

Despite the concept of fragility gained attention from academia and peace and conflict practitioners society around in the 1990s, Osaghae (2007) argues that the concept of fragility stems from historical events. These include the replacement of colonialism with a global capitalist system, which led to the establishment of international institutions. These institutions supported processes that trapped third world countries in the global economy, fostering economic inequality and dependence.

The process started at independence in which process de-colonization process were started; meanwhile colonized countries were against colonial states by mobilizing nationalism with both violence and non-violence means. During in this period, several states fall into fragile states and recognized as structural vulnerabilities: fragile and weak institutions, authoritarian inclinations, economic frailty, disputed national identity, ongoing armed conflicts, separatist movements, excessive reliance on foreign aid, and vulnerability to external disruptions (Osaghae, 2007). For instance, Myanmar had never a state like current nation before colonization after which a new state emerged along with ethnic and religious conflicts and ideological conflicts leading to unable to start state building process, instead leading to civil wars and fragile state till today by-passing different regimes. During the second phase of engagement in the circumstances of the Cold War, spanning from the late 1980s to the present, there has been a noticeable decline in the economic well-being of many developing nations and their ability to foster sustainable development. Consequently, states have become more susceptible to external disruptions and interventions (Herbst, 1996). The rise of (neo)-liberalism ushered in a new dominant and interventionist global order, characterized by a prevalent practice of coercing non-conforming states to comply with established norms. States aim to replicate the characteristics of the liberal state by implementing political, economic, and social reforms mandated as conditions and standards by institutions like the World Bank, IMF, and the international development community, and sometimes through military intervention (Osaghae, 2007). This dominant nature of global politics, which has prompted reactionary movements worldwide, including terrorism, also prioritizes the maintenance of global peace and security as a primary goal of interventions. Some states, communities, and regions have become an intolerable strain on the global economy. These entities lack the ability and willingness to reform their practices and instead rely on others for sustenance. Allowing them to persist as burdens would pose a significant risk to the overall health and future of the global economy (Kothari, 1989). External forces such as international system, capitalism and its institutions shaped states and their social formations into being fragile states in the Third World countries.

Moreover, international system, particularly capitalism, shaped the state structure. The inability to effectively integrate or adjust the transferred state structures

to fit the conditions of the colony and post-colonial era is believed to have resulted in a disjointed relationship between the state and society, where the state appeared detached from society, resembling a balloon hovering above it (Hydén, 1980). Osaghae (2007) argued that this was the context within which fragile state evolved. The problems arrived from the nature of the colonial state itself. Young (1994) claimed that it stayed detached from the indigenous or native society and imposed its authority through force and oppression, prioritizing the basic elements of maintaining law and order necessary for economic exploitation and supporting the interests of European settlers. Another problem arose from due to the dynamics of the relationship between the state and the (native) society, along with the irregularities in the migration of state institutions from Europe, scholars contend that it became unfeasible for the indigenous population to integrate with the state, which they viewed as foreign and primarily serving the interests of the colonizer rather than those of the colonized (Ake, 1985). These problems gave rise to legitimacy crisis which trapped state the colonial state and its-post-colonial successor. Colonialism undoubtedly established conditions that led to unintended consequences and disruptions, which over time, particularly since independence, have tended to undermine rather than fortify the state (Bose, 2004). States have been focal points for grassroots movements led by coalitions of citizens and civil society, aiming to reclaim and revitalize the state by taking ownership and making it an effective driver of development. In Africa, these movements have been categorized as either anti-colonial or anti-authoritarian state liberation movements (Ekeh, 1997). The goal of these movements is to reshape the state into a partner rather than a hindrance in the process of democratization and development (Nzongola-Ntalaja & Lee, 1998).

2.2.2.2 Internal Factors

While some scholars claim fragile states due to outbreak of civil wars derived from ethnic and religious conflicts, grievances, and international system, Fearon and Laitin (2003) argued that outbreak of state instability, being fragile state, is not due to the end of colonization and end of the Cold War which happened changes in the international system, ethnic division and tension or religious diversity or cultural demography and strong ethnocentric and political grievances alone. But the conditions favor insurgency leading to civil wars which conditions consist of poverty characteristic of financially and bureaucratically weak states and conducive to rebel recruitment,

along with political instability, challenging geography, and large populations, are influential factors (Fearon & Laitin, 2003). By both political such as state capacity and economic factors such as economic incentives, outbreak of civil wars happened leading to fragile context. Collier (2000) argues that the causes of outbreak of the conflicts leading to fragile states is not much related with grievances but mainly related with economic conditions or incentives of rebel groups. However, original perceptions rooted in grievance, without financial and military feasibility, rebels cannot do well out of wars (Collier, 2000).

Going to in-depth analysis, Gurr (1970) developed theory by claiming that conflicts, violence or outbreak of civil wars happened due to the motives behind individuals engage in rebellion and insurgency. The analysis is that people rebel when they have significant experience between their expectations or aspirations and their real experiences or opportunities. Gurr (1970) said that this perceived relative deprivation, whether real or imagined, can lead individuals to join rebel movements as a means of addressing their grievances and seeking change. Gurr (1970) explores three main factors that influence to the likelihood of rebellion. The first is structural factors which consist socioeconomic disparities, political exclusion, and other system inequalities which create situations of injustice and discontent among marginalized groups. The second factor is grievances deriving from injustices, discriminations, and oppression by the state or other majority or dominant groups that drive to rebellion. The last, not the least, is mobilization to actors or agents who play crucial role in mobilizing individuals to join their movements by utilizing their grievances in terms of collective identity, ideology, racism, or nationalism. Similarly, Stewart (2008) claimed in his book, "Horizontal Inequalities and Conflict: Explaining Group Violence in Multiethnic Societies", that horizontal inequalities in society cause violent conflicts and state instabilities. Horizontal inequalities denote variations in socioeconomic and political results among diverse ethnic, religious, or social groups within a society, despite having equal legal and political rights. Stewart (2008) contends that these disparities, especially if perceived as unfair or discriminatory, have the potential to ignite grievances and tensions within marginalized groups, resulting in intergroup violence and conflicts.

In conclusion, the fragility of states can be attributed to a combination of external and internal factors. External factors, such as historical processes driven by colonialism and globalization, have shaped the structural vulnerabilities of many nations, trapping them in cycles of economic inequality and dependence. These external forces have also influenced the nature of state structures and their relationships with society, contributing to legitimacy crises and ongoing challenges in state-building efforts. Internally, factors such as poverty, political instability, ethnic tensions, and grievances play significant roles in fostering conditions conducive to insurgency and civil conflict. The perceived gap between expectations and opportunities, as well as horizontal inequalities among diverse groups within societies, can fuel grievances and tensions, leading to violence and state fragility.

2.3 Local Governance

2.3.1 Local Governance: Definitions and Perceptions

The term "governance" is employed in discussions about attaining diverse development objectives like alleviating poverty, enhancing healthcare and education provisions, and managing natural resources effectively. Development endeavors falter when resources are not allocated efficiently and responsively. But what does exactly "governance," mean and what is governance at the local level?

The World Bank initially defined governance as the "exercise of authority, control, management, power of government" (The World Bank, 1992). However, for its purposes, a more pertinent definition emerged, emphasizing governance as "the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development" (The World Bank, 1992).

The initial definition of governance provided by the World Bank emphasizes the exercise of political power in managing a country's affairs. However, the World Bank's intention placed greater emphasis on governance in terms of managing economic and social resources of a country for the purpose of development. This broader perspective suggests that effective governance involves not only political

decision-making but also the efficient and equitable management of a nation's resources to foster development and progress.

The World Bank's definition of governance faced significant criticism from various scholars like Hyden (1980), raised several objections to it. The first argument was that the definition was essentially an effort to impose a Western liberal democratic model on developing countries. This criticism suggests that the definition failed to account for the diverse political, cultural, and historical contexts of different nations, and instead sought to promote a one-size-fits-all approach based on Western ideals (Wilson, 2000). Secondly, others contended that the definition masked a neo-liberal perspective on the public sector. They argued that it effectively advocated for a leaner and more efficient government, aligning with the needs of capitalist development. This interpretation suggests that the World Bank's definition of governance was influenced by neoliberal economic principles that prioritize privatization, deregulation, and market-oriented policies. Overall, these criticisms highlight concerns about the World Bank's definition of governance, questioning its universality, cultural sensitivity, and underlying ideological biases.

Indeed, the World Bank's concept of governance brought a shift to a broader consideration of democratic practices, inclusivity, and the role of non-state actors, rather from a narrow emphasis on state-led development. By expanding the scope of governance to encompass a range of factors beyond just government actions, such as the needs of excluded populations and democratic practices, the discourse surrounding governance became more comprehensive and inclusive. However, this broadening of the concept also led to substantial debate and disagreement. Different stakeholders hold varying conceptions of governance, often reflecting their perspectives, interests, and ideologies. As a result, reaching a consensus on a single definition of governance has proven elusive. The ongoing debate surrounding governance reflects the complexity and dynamism of the concept, as well as the diverse contexts in which it is applied. While the lack of a unified definition may present challenges, it also underscores the richness and plurality of approaches to understanding and practicing governance in different settings.

Another comprehensive definition of governance adopted by Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) is that the governance encompasses the exercise of

economic, political, and administrative authority, as well as the utilization of institutions to allocate resources and manage affairs within a society (Kyed & Engberg-Pedersen, 2008). This definition encompasses both the political aspect, concerning legitimacy, and the technocratic aspect, concerning effectiveness, of governance. It transcends the traditional view of governance as solely the domain of state and formal government institutions. Other scholars see governance include not only governing by formal institutions or groups but also involving the process in which the role to citizen participation in decision making process is crucial. Keohane and Nye (2003) argued that governance is "the process and institutions, both formal and informal, that guide and restrain the collective activities of a group". USAID (2007) defines governance as "pertain to the ability of government to develop an efficient, effective, and accountable public management process that is open to citizen participation and that strengthens rather than weakens of a democratic system of government".

While discussing about governance, the role of local governance as decentralization process plays crucial in different sectors. Despite the concept of local governance has existed since the dawn of human history, it has only recently become a prominent topic in academic and practical literature discussions. Shah (2006) argued that local governance involves both the direct and indirect contributions of official local government institutions and administrative structures, as well as the influence of informal norms, networks, community groups, and neighborhood associations in facilitating collective efforts. It establishes the framework for interactions between citizens and between citizens and the state, collective decision-making processes, and the provision of local public services. Local governance encompasses the multifaceted goals of dynamic, thriving, and environmentally sustainable self-governing communities (Shad, 2006). Effective local governance goes beyond merely delivering various local services; it also entails safeguarding the well-being and freedoms of residents, fostering opportunities for democratic engagement and public discourse, promoting market-driven and ecologically sound local development, and facilitating outcomes that enhance residents' overall quality of life (Shad, 2006). Understanding this comprehensive concept of local governance is crucial for establishing a framework that is responsive, responsible, and accountable. This involves delivering services that align with citizens' preferences, ensuring efficiency in service delivery, and maintaining

accountability through a rights-based approach. Such analysis is vital because it signifies a shift from the traditional role of local government to one that is more citizen-centric and effective (Shad, 2006).

All definitions of local governance agree that it encompasses the utilization of authority and the mechanisms by which important choices are made within a community. Governance goes beyond the mere structure and operation of institutions; it also encompasses their efficiency. Furthermore, these definitions emphasize the involvement of various actors from civil society, especially at the grassroots level, alongside state entities.

2.3.2 Establishment of Local Governance Functions in Fragile States

The goal of governance reforms in developing nations should be a targeted set of functions that are sufficient to significantly enhance political and administrative systems while considering the unique circumstances of each nation, rather than a broad, idealized vision of good governance (Brinkerhoff & Johnson, 2009). Brinkerhoff (2007) stated that fundamental functions of the governance system include security assurance, effective and efficient provision of basic public sector services, and facilitation of political involvement and public sector accountability.

Similarly, other scholars also contend that three factors important for the successful governance system, namely Effectiveness, Security, and Legitimacy (Khalaf, 2015). Effectiveness means the provision of fundamental services and basic needs such as food, water, employment, and energy in a regular and equitable manner. In fragile states, a crucial first step toward local governance reform is enhancing the local provision of essential services (Price, 2017). The legitimacy of the state and local government institutions can be increased by providing services that help the needy population. On the other hand, service delivery can serve as a starting point for enhancing the capabilities of local service providers and stimulating democratic engagement among citizens by rallying them around calls for services and involvement in planning procedures. Therefore, improving the ability to provide fundamental services has been the main approach to tackling fragility (Grandvoinnet et al., 2015). The Security to safeguarding civilian life is achieved by organizing, maintaining, and overseeing the police, judicial systems, and armed forces.

A complex system of endogenous and exogenous institutions, norms, and ideas regarding the social compact that governs state-society relations are referred to as legitimacy. Legitimacy in conflict is correlated with the ability to provide security and essential services in a way that is accountable to the local populace (Khalaf, 2015). On the other hand, political legitimacy refers to the extent to which decision-makers at various levels of governance—national, state, or local—are perceived as genuinely representing the interests of the citizens (Grandvoinnet et al., 2015). Fragile and conflict-affected contexts are characterized by a breakdown in trust and social cohesion, exacerbating tensions and perpetuating violence. Restoring relationships within society is a prerequisite for rebuilding social and institutional ties and reinstating trust (Grandvoinnet et al., 2015). In fragile and conflict-affected states, addressing issues of trust, legitimacy, and justice through social accountability often takes precedence over matters of service delivery. This prioritization recognizes that state-building efforts face greater challenges without a semblance of a social contract to underpin state-society interactions (Grandvoinnet et al., 2015).

During times of conflict, state failure leads to a shift in governance dynamics from centralized state institutions to alternative local actors. With the absence or breakdown of state authority, citizens are often left to navigate governance challenges themselves. In such situations, local groups, religious authorities, tribes, and clans often step in to fill the sovereignty gap, assuming roles in decision-making, conflict resolution, and resource allocation at the grassroots level. This phenomenon reflects a broader trend of decentralized governance and the emergence of local mechanisms to address governance needs in the absence of a functioning state.

2.3.3 The Benefits of Local Governance in Fragile Environment

Establishment of a viable governance structure takes longer time more than it is expected (Coffé & Geys, 2005). In developing countries, where the institutional disciplines are lack and in fragile states, the restoration of governance needs to focus on the facilitating conditions necessary for the effectiveness local government institutions. In the short term, people desire a state that can offer fundamental public goods like security. Stability can be aided by addressing the daily needs and goals of people through local building. Thus, the local governance mechanism had numerous benefits in restoration of stability and rehabilitation of conflict-affected areas.

Firstly, basic public service delivery improvements can be swiftly accomplished in nations with an existing, but deteriorated or damaged, infrastructure base by providing rehabilitation and expanding services to underprivileged or unserved people. Small-scale initiatives can be completed quickly and using labor from the area, which strengthens their credibility (Brinkerhoff, 2009). Secondly, local governments have a vital role to play in addressing ethnic and regional inequities by promoting inclusive governance, implementing targeted policies and programs, fostering social cohesion, and empowering marginalized communities. Stability, particularly in the countries with abundant natural resources, depends on both centralized revenue transfer and some degree of autonomy. For instance, the effective implementation of special autonomy provisions for regions like Aceh and Papua, alongside credible decentralization measures across Indonesia, play a crucial role in managing various forces of socio-political, ethnic, economic, and territorial fragmentation within the country (Sukma, 2003).

Thirdly, participatory local governance fosters open dialogue, problem-solving, and conflict resolution at a manageable level, addressing shared community concerns. Through engaging in public discussions, voting on issues like education and infrastructure, managing finances, and evaluating outcomes, residents develop valuable skills. Decentralization allows locals to cultivate democratic leadership abilities, with some individuals eventually seeking local political positions, thus enriching the pool of community leaders. Moreover, there's a potential upward mobility as leaders with enhanced democratic skills from decentralized governance pursue higher political positions (Brinkerhoff, 2009). However, the acquisition of skills and capacities is influenced by existing power dynamics at both local and national levels.

Moreover, in post-conflict societies, local governance has the potential to foster political stability by diversifying the sources of political authority. This helps prevent the emergence of zero-sum, winner-takes-all scenarios that often destabilize emerging governments. Local governments operate within smaller jurisdictions and involve fewer stakeholders, resulting in quicker feedback loops compared to higher levels of government. This rapid feedback mechanism can accelerate the process of learning and adaptation. As local authorities accumulate knowledge and experience, reformers can

continuously refine their strategies and tactics based on this learning, leading to more effective governance practices over time.

Finally, another beneficial characteristic of local governance in post-conflicts stabilization and reconstruction is the legitimacy. In certain instances, diaspora reformers aspiring for political positions may face challenges due to their perceived lack of connections and legitimacy among the population of their homeland. They might be viewed with resentment for having left for more comfortable and secure environments or for securing employment with international salaries and benefits. By focusing on governance restoration at the local level, there's a greater chance of identifying and collaborating with emerging leaders or long-standing traditional figures who have strong local ties and did not leave the country. These local leaders are often dedicated to enhancing conditions within their communities rather than seeking revenge against members of the previous regime or accruing personal wealth and influence (Brinkerhoff, 2009).

2.3.4 Service Delivery in Local Governance Reform

Improving the provision of essential services not only benefits citizens directly but also plays a vital role in the long-term process of state building. By ensuring reliable access to services, the state can rebuild its legitimacy and foster greater civic engagement among its citizens. This enhances trust in government institutions and promotes active participation in the development and governance processes, ultimately contributing to the overall stability and effectiveness of the state (Arandel et al., 2015).

Enhancing the local provision of essential services such as healthcare, education, water, sanitation, and personal security serves as a crucial starting point for revitalizing local governance. The quality and accessibility of essential services like healthcare and primary education are crucial indicators of governance effectiveness. These services form a fundamental part of the social contract between the government and its citizens. When the public has access to high-quality services, it signifies good governance and helps sustain support for government initiatives, as it demonstrates the government's commitment to meeting the needs of its people (Kyed & Engberg-Pedersen, 2008).

On the other hand, improved services have the potential to enhance the well-being of impoverished populations, consequently bolstering the legitimacy of both the

state and local government institutions. Moreover, focusing on service delivery can serve as a catalyst for building the capacity of local service providers and mobilizing democratic engagement among citizens. By rallying communities around demands for improved services and fostering participation in planning processes, service delivery becomes a key driver for local democratic action and governance reform.

To achieve this goal, an integrative approach is essential. Beyond simply ensuring service delivery, this approach considers political and institutional factors from the outset, which can lay the foundation for long-term local governance reform and state-building. An integrative approach involves interventions at three levels: policymaking, capacity-building of local service providers, and empowerment of citizens to demand services through awareness and mobilization (Albrecht, 2013). The balance and emphasis of these interventions should be tailored to the specific context of local governance and the degree of state fragility. Crucially, this approach requires donors to make sustained, long-term investments (Price, 2017). In Somalia, clan elders and traditional authorities, often connected to warlords, have caused conflicts and human rights abuses but also manage most crimes through customary courts. The Danish Refugee Council in Somaliland engages with elders, considering them pivotal in reducing conflicts, leading to effective human rights training, consultations, and revisions of customary law. Collaboration among elders, local governments, civil society, and police has decreased conflicts and enabled education and health projects in previously troubled areas (Kyed & Engberg-Pedersen, 2008). In other instances, Khalaf (2015) stated that although Syria lacks a functioning government in many areas, it still exhibits elements of governance and then suggested the emergence of a 'Hybrid Governance' in Syria, where state-building and civil society actors work to reconstruct or reform governance with or without formal structures. She argues that international interventions cannot effectively address this fragility unless they comprehend the nuanced governance dynamics on the ground in Syria (Khalaf, 2015).

However, it's crucial to examine how service delivery addresses inequalities in fragile contexts, as certain groups of citizens may face greater disadvantages in accessing basic services due to costs or availability constraints imposed by the state (Wennmann, 2010). This attention is necessary to ensure equitable access to essential services for all citizens, particularly those who are marginalized or disadvantaged.

To summarize, local governance encompasses the management of economic, political, and administrative authority at the local level, aiming to address diverse development objectives. Initially defined by the World Bank, governance underwent criticism for its Western-centric perspective, prompting a shift towards broader inclusivity, democratic practices, and acknowledgment of non-state actors. Local governance, an integral component, involves both formal institutions and informal networks, facilitating collective efforts, decision-making processes, and service provision. Various definitions highlight the involvement of civil society alongside state entities, emphasizing efficiency, inclusivity, and accountability. In fragile states, establishing effective local governance functions is paramount for enhancing political and administrative systems. Scholars emphasize the importance of effectiveness, security, and legitimacy in governance systems, with a focus on providing essential services, ensuring security, and rebuilding trust within communities. Decentralization often occurs in conflict-ridden areas, with alternative local actors assuming governance roles in the absence of a functioning state. The benefits of local governance include swift improvements in public service delivery, addressing regional inequities, fostering democratic engagement, diversifying sources of political authority, and enhancing legitimacy. Additionally, local governance plays a crucial role in post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction by focusing on service delivery, capacity-building, and empowerment, ultimately contributing to long-term state-building efforts, and promoting equity among citizens.

To conclude literature review, the research will concentrate on exploring the role of social capital as trust, norms of reciprocity, and networks of civic engagement, conceptualized by Putnam (1995), within the fragile environment of Myanmar following the events of February 21st, 2021. The concept of fragility will be considered from Stewart and Brown (2009) who define fragility as three failure condition such as authority failure, service entitlement failure and legitimacy failure. These three failures result political instability including domestic conflicts, civil unrest, and insurgencies. Moreover, the research will explore the process of local governance emergence in Chin State which includes the roles of local government institutions and administrative structures with informal norms, networks, community groups, and neighborhood

associations (Shah, 2006). The overarching goals of local governance include fostering dynamic, thriving, and environmentally sustainable self-governing communities.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study emphasizing on " The Roles of Social Capital in the Emergence of Local Governance in Fragile Environment, Case of Chin State in Myanmar", focuses on understanding of how social capitals influences to the emergence of local governance structure, identifying the key mechanisms through which social capital strengthen local governance at the local level in fragile environment and examining the fragile environment impact the relationship between social capital and local governance in Chin State. In order to achieve the research objectives, the research questions needed to be answered with insightful information from both primary and secondary sources of data. The people's opinions, practices and perspectives on their social norms and believes in their daily lives and how the way they understand the relationship between social capitals and local governance in fragile context was taken into consideration. So, this research was conducted by applying qualitative approach and interpretivism. Lamont (2020) said that research agenda under interpretivism explores to assimilate ideas, culture, identities, and norms in social science. Moreover, Alshequeeti (2014) argued that the qualitative approach could describe the realities by developing in-depth understanding on human perspectives and daily life of the people. Opting for a qualitative approach enables a thorough exploration of context-specific social phenomena. Grbich (2010) mentioned that qualitative research acknowledges the influence participants' values, ideologies, and belief systems, regarding "subjectivity" as an asset rather than a limitation.

3.2 Research Site

The research was conducted in Chin State, Myanmar. Chin State is in western Myanmar, bordering India and Bangladesh. The Chin State, previously known as the Chin Hills, was designated as a special administrative division of Burma on January 4,

1948. It was later upgraded to the status of a fully recognized state on January 4, 1974. There are total of 465,000 population according UNDP governance mapping (2014). The Chin state has three districts—Min- dat district, Hakadistrict andFalam district and nine townships—Tonzang, Tiddim, Falam, Thantlang, Haka, Paletwa, Matu- pi, Mindat and Kanpalet. The region is commonly known for its diverse tribe communities and characterized by rugged terrain, dense forests, and mountainous landscapes. Traditional agriculture, including rice cultivation and shifting cultivation (slash-and-burn agriculture), is a primary economic activity in Chin State.

Chin State has been also affected by military regime leading to ethnic tension and discrimination and conflicts resulting to displacement, human rights abuses, and socio-political instability. The region also faces socio-economic obstacles such as limited access to education, healthcare, and economic opportunities along the history and the region as considered as remote and periphery area. Moreover, Feb 2021 coup makes the state to worsen situation and collapse of the GAD structures and service delivery. However, local administration or self-governance are being replaced by local community based on their local norms, customary rules and practices and social networks.

3.3 Data Collection

To receive required data to answer the research questions and to meet the research objectives, qualitative data were collected by conducting desk review and in-depth interviews. The desk review was mainly conducted data from media reports, scholarly and journal articles, government reports and other secondary sources such as NGO project reports, research reports, published books and other available online materials, including news, interviews, and videos.

In addition, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews to attain sufficient data to answer the research questions. The interview method is identified as one of the techniques which could explore a work with empirical strength and textural depth and provide insightful information which we have known little about the situations or process (Lilleker, 2003). In the process of interviews, the researcher applied semi-structure interview. Britten (1995) noted that a "semi-structured interview" involves a

flexible approach with open-ended questions, allowing interviewees to elaborate on ideas in depth. This format often encouraged a conversational style, leading to a more fluid exchange of questions and discussions. Furthermore, occasional probing was utilized through follow-up questions to receive comprehensive information relevant to the research.

In order to get access easily, Lamont (2020) said that knowing to whom the interviewer wants to interview is easy to get access. I have wider networks in Chin state as I have been working for Chin State for over 4 years. From my existing network, I applied snowballing method to get trustful and reliable access for interviews. Due to accessibility and according to my research scope to meet my research objectives, data were collected by diving into three main parts involving 3 townships as Chin State has 9 townships. They were total of 20 persons from different sectors be interviewed. The lists are as follow:

1. Local Administration Department (Local Government Bodies)

5 Public administration staff from Public Administration Bodies from different townships

2. Service Delivery

1) 2 staff/committee members from Education under Public Administration Bodies

2) 2 medical persons from health sector under Public Administration Bodies

3. Local CSOs/CBOs organization or social networks

1) 2 from social networks or community-based organizations or civil society organizations

2) 2 religious' leaders

3) 2 Humanitarian workers

4. Community

1) 3 tribe leaders/ village/ community leaders

2) 2 community members

The interviews took place in Burmese language via telephone due to unable to travel to research site due to the current situation. During interviews, note taking was

conducted with the consent of interviewees, then transcribed into Burmese for academic reasons of the study.

3.4 Data Analysis

In this study, thematic analysis was used for qualitative data analysis collected by interviews. Thematic Analysis (TA) is an analytical approach used to identify important patterns of meaning within qualitative datasets (Braun & and Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis offered assistance in identifying the most prominent themes or patterns evident within a qualitative dataset. For thematic analysis, ATLAS.ti, computer-assisted software, was used to identify the themes and patterns which could explain the 'factors of social capitals in the emergence local governance' in Chin State.

3.5 Conceptual Framework

This study focuses on exploring the roles of social capital such as trust, norms of reciprocity, and networks of civic engagement, as conceptualized by Putnam, within the fragile context of Myanmar following the events of February 21st, 2021. It aimed to analyze the context deeply, examining how political instability, institutional collapse, and social division have affected the region. Additionally, the study investigated the process of local governance emergence in Chin State, considering the influence of social capital and external factors such as diaspora communities and other domestic groups. Furthermore, the research delved into the mechanisms through which social capital contributes to the establishment of local governance structures and examine the relationship between social capital and the formation process of local government. The study assessed how community resilience is fostered through service delivery to address societal needs, and it was analyzed the practices of people participation and effective decision-making in the governing and administrative processes within communities. Specifically, the study concentrated on local governance at the township and sub-township levels in Chin State. The following provided analytical framework will be utilized to comprehend the impact of social capital on the emergence of local

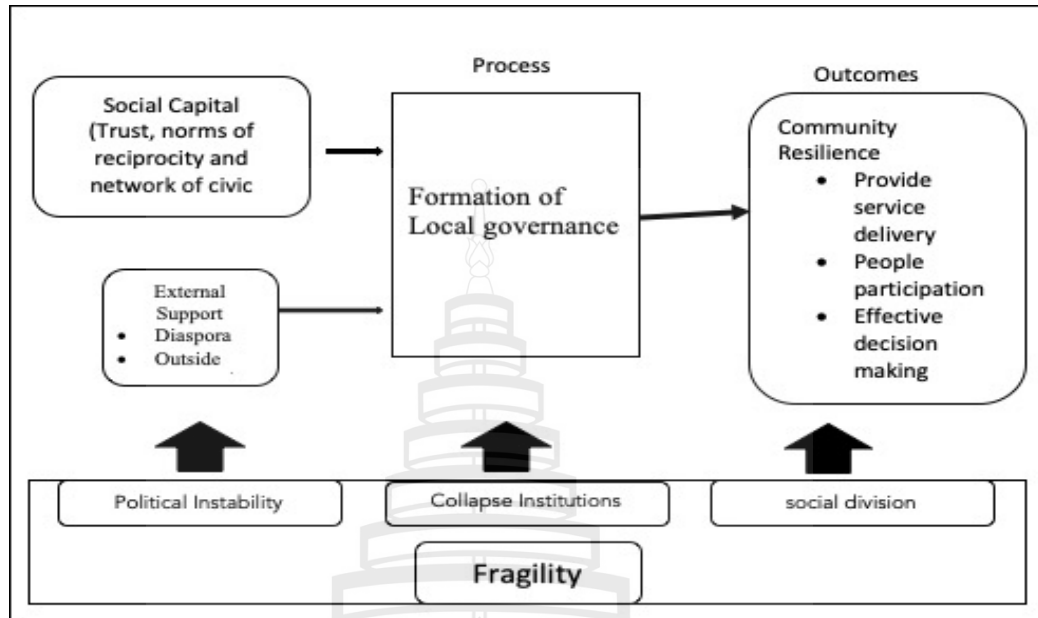governance and its role in promoting community resilience within a fragile environment.

Figure 3.1 Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This research investigates the roles of social capital in the development of local governance within the fragile environment of Chin State, Myanmar. It highlights essential components that elucidate the mechanisms of emerging local governance, the influence of social capital on governance structures, and the effects of fragility on the interaction between social capital and local governance. The study focuses on the roles played by various actors, institutions, trust, norms, and social organizations in shaping local governance amidst instability.

To provide context, it is necessary to revisit the research questions that guided the data collection process, which included literature reviews and in-depth interviews. These questions are:

1. What are the key mechanisms through which local governance emerges at the local level in a fragile environment such as Chin State?

2. How does social capital influence the formation and functioning of local governance structures and administrative processes in such a fragile context?

3. In what ways does the fragile environment affect the interplay between social capital and local governance in Chin State?

The presentation of the research findings will be organized into four distinct sections. The first section will provide an overview of the overarching factors and fragility that drive the emergence of new local governance structures in Chin State. This includes examining the socio-political and economic conditions that contribute to the development of local governance within a fragile context. The second section will delve into the mechanisms of local governance formation in Chin State. This analysis will highlight the processes, institutions, and interactions that facilitate the emergence of governance structures at the local level.

The third section will focus specifically on the role of social capital in the formation and functioning of local governance structures. It will explore how trust, norms of reciprocity and social networks and community organizations contribute to

the establishment and operation of local governance in Chin State. Following this, the fourth section will address the impact of fragility on the relationship between social capital and governance. This part of the study will investigate how communities in Chin State adapt and respond to the challenges posed by fragility, including how they leverage social capital to enhance their resilience and sustain governance structures including both the challenges and opportunities presented by this relationship. Through this structured approach, the research aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the interplay between social capital and local governance in Chin State, and how the broader context of fragility shapes these dynamics.

4.1 Overarching Factors of Fragility and Emerging Local Governance in Chin State, Myanmar

The emergence of local governance in Chin State, Myanmar, can be traced back to the coup on February 1, 2021, which occurred against a backdrop of long-standing social, political, economic, cultural, and religious grievances rooted in ethnic and belief-based discrimination. The military coup marked the end of Myanmar's decade-long experiment with hybrid democracy and reform, which had been interrupted by Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and the Burmese military's rejection of the results of the November 2020 general election.

4.1.1 Political Instability

Following the coup on February 1, 2021, political instability has proliferated across Myanmar, including in Chin State, due to widespread repression. When the regime consolidates power through coercion and repression in an attempt to legitimize, the general populace and revolutionary groups respond by delegitimizing the regime and refusing to be governed by it. This contesting has led to the emergence of local governance through processes of legitimization and delegitimization. While the military regime has sought to extend its authority and control through various repressive measures, the general populace and revolutionary forces persistently employ diverse strategies and actions to challenge the regime and build their own systems of governance.

To legitimize and consolidate its authority, the regime initially undertook a series of legal amendments aimed at suppressing dissent and curtailing freedoms. Among these amendments were changes to the Penal Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure (No.5/2021 and No.6/2021) (State Administration Council, 2021), designed to restrict freedom of expression and criminalize disloyalty to the military regime. Additionally, the State Administration Council (SAC) revised the Electronic Transaction Law (No.7/2021) (State Administration Council, 2021) to control the flow of information, grant military access to personal data, and criminalize criticism of the junta. The controversial Ward and Village Tract Administration Law (No.3/2021) (State Administration Council, 2021) was also reinstated, mandating that individuals register with authorities for overnight stays in areas where they do not reside, thereby increasing surveillance of people's movements (The Gobal New Light of Myanmar, 2021).

In response to widespread anti-coup demonstrations, including those in Chin State, the SAC escalated its repressive measures. Peaceful protests were met with severe violence, including the use of tear gas, rubber bullets, and mass arrests. Reports indicate arbitrary detentions and excessive use of force by security personnel (UNHR Report, 2021)As the military's violent crackdown intensified, the township of Mindat in Chin State, which had initially engaged in non-violent protest, became the first to take up arms in resistance, using traditional weapons known as Tumi from March 2021 onward.

The transition from peaceful protests to armed resistance was driven by the junta's severe repression, which included extrajudicial executions, the use of civilians as human shields, arson, and the burning of villages. According to a report by the Institute of Chin Affairs released in February 2025, nearly 1000 people were killed, and 3,479 buildings, including houses, churches, schools, and hospitals were destroyed in Chin State (ICS & Nyan Cooridor, 2024). Additionally, more than 130,000 people were displaced, with 65,000 fleeing as refugees to Mizoram, India, near the Myanmar-India border (ICS & Nyan Cooridor, 2024)

To counter the growing resistance, the military regime swiftly implemented a set of repressive tactics known as the "four-cut strategy." This strategy, derived from the Myanmar Army's operational doctrine, aims to undermine opposition resources and

logistical capabilities by disrupting access to essential supplies, support, communication, and funding (UNHCR, 2024). Historically, the four-cut strategy was used by the military in the 1960s against the Karen National Union (KNU) and the Communist Party of Burma (CPB) in the Bago and Ayeyarwady regions (Nyana et al., 2024).

The SAC's application of this strategy involved stringent regulations on travel and the transportation of goods, including food and medicine, by establishing numerous security checkpoints where travelers were required to present their National Identity Cards. An interviewee from Matupi township reported that acquiring basic necessities such as rice was heavily regulated, with traders required to submit purchase lists to the military for approval, further restricting local access to essential items. Inspections of mobile phones were also used to accuse individuals of affiliations with resistance groups. The study finds that the disruption of transportation and the imposition of mobile and internet shutdowns have severely impacted local markets, agricultural production, and supply chains, leading to significant economic decline in the region.

4.1.2 Collapse Existing Governance Institutions

Following the military coup and ongoing repression led by the State Administration Council (SAC), the established governance institutions in Chin State faced significant challenges, particularly with Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) and armed resistance.

4.1.2.1 Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM)

The population widely called for the resignation of the military regime and lost trust in the institutions operated under it. As a result, residents mobilized government staff to join Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), which involves non-cooperation and withdrawal from public institutions under the military regime. A significant portion of government employees in Chin State participated in the CDM. In Chin State, over seventy percent of government employees have joined in the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) (Benezer, 2021). This movement, which began two days after the military coup, was initially led by health workers across Myanmar. Many of these workers expressed their opposition to the military regime by wearing red ribbons or abandoning their jobs. According to an interviewee, a CDMer from Tedim,

"Before the coup, I worked in the judiciary department, but I could not continue under this repressive regime that is killing our own people. We used to have freedom before, and dreams but now, our every individual's life is deteriorated under the coup, and there is no future for our children. So, a few days after the coup, I joined Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) by withdrawing from my position under this military regime."

(CDMer, Local Public Administration Staff, July 2024)

Despite significant pressure from senior officials urging civil servants to resume their duties, the CDM continues to gain momentum in Chin State. One interviewee, former healthcare worker from Kanpanlet noted:

"The authorities threatened me significantly and charged me under Section 505 for joining the CDM. At that time, I had to constantly move from one place to another place to avoid capture."

(Healthcare worker, Public Administration Staff, July 2024)

As of the latest reports, more than 14,591 out of 20,000 government staff members in Chin State have joined the movement (Benezer, 2021). These civil servants, including those in critical areas such as health, banking, education, environment, and natural resource management, have ceased their official duties, further contributing to the collapse of governance structures. The absence of these key personnel has hindered the delivery of essential services and exacerbated administrative inefficiencies.

4.1.2.2 Rise of Armed Resistance

Chin State has undergone a significant shift from peaceful protests and non-violent movements to armed resistance and efforts to establish alternative local governance structures. The SAC's violent crackdown on peaceful protests led to the emergence of newly formed armed resistance groups known as the Chin Defense Forces (CDF), and the creation of local governance structures based on tribal affiliations and geographic locations. According to public administration officer from Kanpalet:

"We just realized that the military would never relinquish power after their brutal cracked down on our peaceful protest, not just in Chin but also across the

country. So, we took armed resistance. We have no choice to survive because we have never known peace under this military regime, which has oppressed us for more than 70 years. We are never safe; and we live in constant fear of being arrested or killed when our doors are knocked. Armed struggle is our way of defending ourselves, as no-one else can ensure our safety. We are forced into this situation."

(Public Administration Staff from Kanpalet, July 2024)

There are 28 armed groups, including the Chin Defense Forces (CDF), that have emerged, along with a long-standing armed organization known as the Chin National Army (CNA) (ICS & Nyan Cooridor, 2024); however, all these armed groups did not form or involve in local governance establishment process. Within three years, over 70 % of the territory are controlled by CDF and CAN (Irrawaddy, 2022). One interviewee from Tedim remarked that while the SAC can control in the city, they even cannot extend their influence beyond the towns.

"Everywhere outside of the town is under the control by our public administration and governance functions"

(Public Administration Staff, July 2024)

In 2022, seventeen armed groups, including the Chin Defense Forces (CDF) and the Chin National Front (CNF), formed the Chinland Joint Defense Committee (CJDC) to pursue military cooperation and establish a regional government for Chin State. However, political disagreements among these groups led to the dissolution of the CJDC. Some tribal-based groups aligned with the CNF to create the Chinland Council (CC) as the Chin State government, while most township-based groups formed the Chin Brotherhood (CB). This rivalry has increased tensions in Chin State, resulting in clashes and conflicts that divide the local population between the CC and CB.

4.1.3 Social Division

Fragile situation in Chin State also led to social division, primarily stemming from normative and trust issues. When the coup, a new social norm emerged, which is perceived as moral standard. According to this norm, individuals affiliated with or working under the military regime are considered morally unacceptable because they

are seen as supporting or endorsing the regime's violence against the people. This moral divide has become a significant rift among the population.

The regime's use of violence and repression has further exacerbated this divide, creating an environment of fear and distrust. This social norm is particularly evident in the context of the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM). Those who continue to work under the military regime or use goods and services from businesses affiliated with the regime face social punishment and boycott. A community member from Matupi highlighted this issue, noting:

"Some government servants are coming from Burma areas. Most Chin people joined the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM). The few who have not joined are from Burmese areas, and we cannot be sure whether they are providing information to the SAC. Therefore, we strongly urge them to leave Chin State."

(Community member, Matupi Township, July 2024)

Another factor contributing to social division is the conflict among revolutionary groups over territorial claims, clashes and power struggles. As previously mentioned, the Chin ethnic identity encompasses over 53 tribes, each with its own distinct language, customs, and traditional practices. Every tribe has historically inhabited specific territories passed down from their ancestors. The emergence of armed resistance groups, based on tribal affiliations and sometimes on geographic locations where a number of tribes coexist, has led to disputes over governance. When establishing parallel governance structures, questions arise about which groups should hold power over others. Territorial claims have also resulted in social division and clashed between armed groups. Recently, there have been conflicts between various armed factions in Mutipi Township (Irrawaddy, 2024).

The emergence of new local governance structures in Chin State can be understood within the context of the military regime's attempts to legitimize its authority through repressive measures, which have resulted in significant political instability. The Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) and armed resistance have played crucial roles in establishing alternative governance frameworks in response to the regime's oppression. These efforts are motivated by the need to counteract the

regime's repressive tactics and create functional governance systems in areas that are increasingly beyond the military's control.

4.2 Mechanisms of Local Governance Formation in Chin State

In the process of establishing local governance, the research revealed that Chin State has experienced two phases of local governance development since the Feb 2021 coup.

4.2.1 National Level Initiative

The first phase began with a call from the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) at the national level in March 2021, urging the nation to establish its own self-governing structures and administrative systems (No.1/2021) (CRPH, 2021). Although the CRPH did not provide specific instructions or clear guidelines on how to set up alternative governance, local governance structures began to emerge in nearly all townships in Chin State. This marked the initial phase of establishing local governance at the township level, a trend observed throughout 2021 in Chin State and other regions. However, the formation of these local governance administrations was short-lived due to the lack of a proper constitution, clear guidelines, leadership, and territorial control. Consequently, most local administrations in townships were dissolved after only a few months. One interviewee involved in public administration from Mindat noted:

"After the CRPH called for self-governance nationwide, Mindat township, like other townships, formed a public administration committee. However, it did not function effectively due to the lack of territorial control, a proper administrative structure, constitution, and formal committees and departments to lead the administration."

(Public Administration Staff, Mindat Township, July 2024)

On the other hand, several leading political units have formed in various states to create a national-level political unit representing their respective states. While numerous self-organized administrative bodies have emerged at the township level to unify opposition efforts and shape the vision for a democratic state, a significant

political body called the Interim Chin National Consultative Council (ICNCC) was established in April 2021 to manage Chin State-level administration (ICNCC, 2021)Like other interim consultative councils, the ICNCC has achieved international recognition as the federal unit representing Chin State, with acknowledgment from the National Unity Government (NUG) (ICNCC, 2021).

The ICNCC is considered one of the earliest emerging federal units in Chin State. The ICNCC was formed with four main groups: the Chin National Front (CNF), Members of Parliament (MPs), Political Parties, and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). Despite its role as an interim political body for governing Chin State, the ICNCC has faced significant challenges, identified in this study as follows:

1. Lack of Grassroots Inclusion: The ICNCC has failed to effectively include grassroots actors and groups actively involved in the revolution against the coup. For example, armed resistance groups like the Chin Defense Forces (CDF) and local public administration entities, which address daily political issues and public affairs on the ground, have not been represented within the ICNCC. Consequently, the ICNCC has struggled to extend its political influence effectively.

2. Top-Down Approach: The ICNCC's top-down strategy stands in contrast to the many bottom-up local governance bodies that have developed in response to the lack of public administration throughout Chin State. The disconnect between the ICNCC's central strategy and the grassroots local governance structures has impeded overall governance coordination.

3. Limited Progress on Political Agreements: There has been minimal progress on political agreements among ICNCC members regarding the development of the Chinland Charter, which is intended to serve as a political for Chin State.

Although these national body (CRPH) and regional body (ICNCC) still exist at union and regional levels, they cannot contribute to the development of local governance in Chin State. When urgent needs arise, such as those in public administration, education, and IDP support, local communities and stakeholders from townships and villages started to establish local governance structures across Chin State.

4.2.2 Bottom-Up Local Governance Initiative

This second wave of public administration was initiated separately from the first wave by local leaders, including political activists, student leaders, armed groups, CDMers, community leaders and other tribal leaders. For example, in Mindat and Kanpalet townships, civilian-led public administrations were formed to fill the gap in public management, service delivery, and conflict resolution. The study found that local governance in the nine townships across Chin State primarily emerged from local communities and township-level structures, each affiliated with various Chin resistance groups although there is no solely representing local governance body covering the whole Chin State. Local governance emerged based on territorial controlled areas by different local armed groups.

On the other hand, two other forms of public administration also exist in urban areas which are under the control of the SAC regime. In contrast, another public administration operates in Paletwa Township, Chin State, under the United League of Arakan (ULA/AA) following their territorial control of Paletwa from the SAC. However, in Paletwa township, there is local governance structures, such as the Daai Local Council which emerged from local communities like other townships in Chin State, continue to function within certain communities. The research identified two main public administrations across Chin State, each led by different groups except in Paletwa township, as outlined below:

1. SAC's public administration in Urban area

The SAC's governance functions are currently limited to urban areas, primarily in the cities of Chin State. However, the functioning of public administration differs significantly from the pre-coup situation. By July 2021, staff from the General Administration Department (GAD) at all levels, from village to township, had joined the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), and many others resigned from their positions. As a result, even in urban areas, military personnel largely hold administrative roles, with oversight from regional Tatmadaw commanders. The SAC administration in these urban areas operates primarily in education, with a few schools open, some hospitals running, and a few government banks functioning. One CSO member from Hakha noted:

"Compared to other townships, Hakha is the capital city of Chin State. The SAC's administration is still functioning in the urban area of Hakha, but only in schools, hospitals, and government-run banks. Other aspects of public administration, such as trade, forestry, and other services, have completely stopped."

(CSO member, Hakha Township, July 2024)

In areas controlled by the SAC, many residents have fled because they could not access basic necessities, such as food. For example, in Matupi Township, people rely on the government's water supply, which is sourced from the mountains and is difficult to access. However, since the SAC administration is unable to provide this service, local communities have had to organize independently by collecting money from each household to fund water supply arrangements. One community member from Matupi shared;

"We left our town even though our family didn't want to. When we needed to buy rice or other essentials, we had to submit a purchase list to the traders, who then had to seek permission from an SAC officer. Sometimes, they asked many questions and denied us permission. Even the rice we were allowed to buy was rationed according to the number of family members."

(Community member, Matupi Township, July 2024)

2. Local Governance in Resistance-Controlled Area

There are numerous local governance bodies according to township-based and tribal-based structure respectively when there were public administration gaps after collapse of GAD structure in rural areas due to resigning and joining CDM by public servants in Chin State and in addition to that resistance groups gained more and more territorial control in their own related areas. Generally, the research revealed that there are two forms of local governance structures under resistance-controlled areas such as township-based governance structure and tribe-based governance structure.
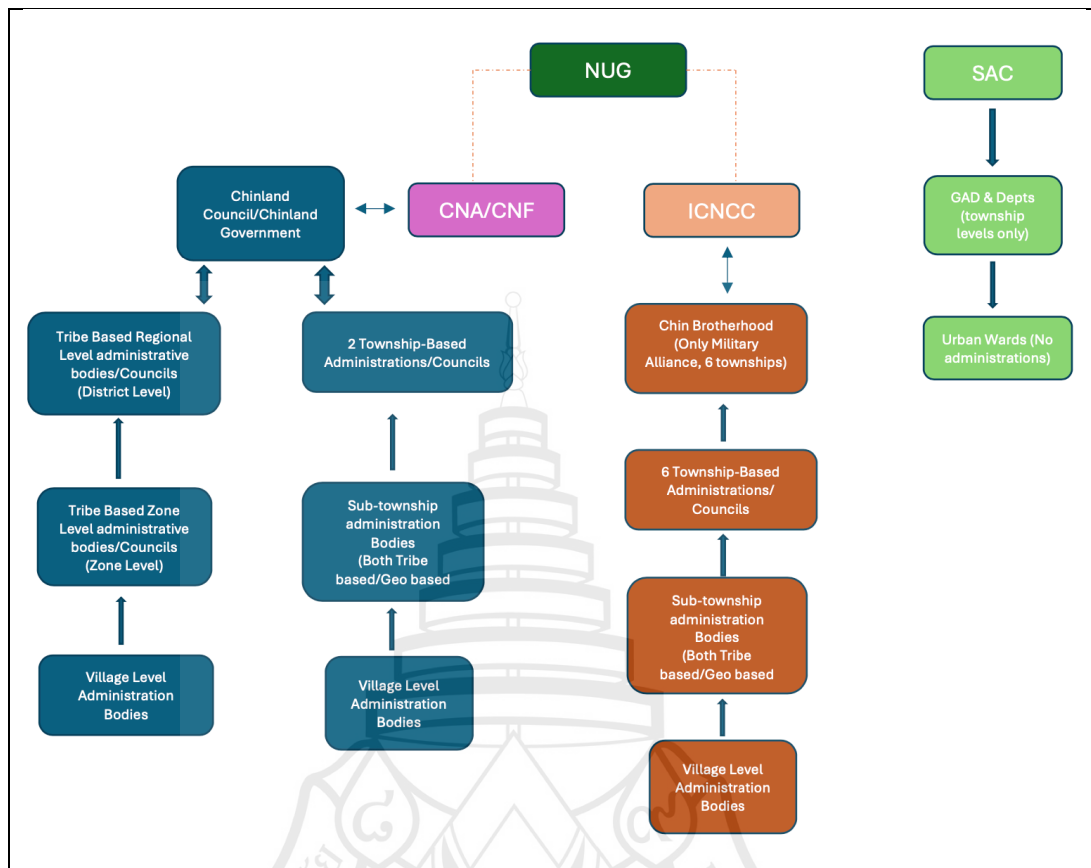
Figure 4.1 Emerging Local Governance in Chin State

The township-based governance structure aligns with the pre-coup system and maintains consistency at both the sub-township and village levels. There are 9 township-based administrations, of which 8 township-based administrations are called according to township names, while Falam township is named Chin National Organization (Falam). Despite governance structures being like previous GAD structures based on geographic location and identified township-based, local communities were re-modified according to their tribal groups and geographic location. For example, there are some other townships, such as Kanpalet, have five regions, organized by regions based on the habitual residence of tribe groups such as Daai, Upu, Yindu, and Muun tribes, while mountain ranges organize tribe-based administration zones. A public adminstator from Kanpetlet said that –

"We re-defied territorial region according to tribal names before colonial time as per local people's wish, and our local administration structure emerged from

the bottom, and based on that, we established the structure of Kanpetlet local governance structure."

(Public Administration Staff, Kanpetlet Township, July 2024)

On the other hand, another newly emerge distinct local governance structure is tribe-based administration across Chin State. There are total of 8 tribe-based administrations in 9 townships of Chin State. Although those tribal groups are within 9 townships, they established their own tribe-based administrations as the same tribes live in different townships. The tribe-based administrative units structure as regional-level administration (district level), zonal administration (where villages are grouped), and village-level administration which reflect self-rule for particularly group. In some areas of tribe-based administration, a direct link exists between the regional administration and the village.

The study found ongoing discussions about creating a single government body for Chin State, initiated by the CJDC, which initially focused on military actions. However, due to repeated disagreements on governance, the CJDC was dissolved. While some tribe-based armed groups joined the CNF to establish the Chinland Council (CC) as the Chinland Government, most aligned with their township administrations to form the Chin Brotherhood (CB), which remains focused on military objectives. The CC includes tribe-based and two township-based administrations, while six townships are part of the Chin brotherhood. Local administrations operate independently at the township and regional levels with no coordination. At the national level, the CC connects with the CNA/CNF, while the Chin Brotherhood is allied with the ICNCC, linking to the NUG and NUCC.
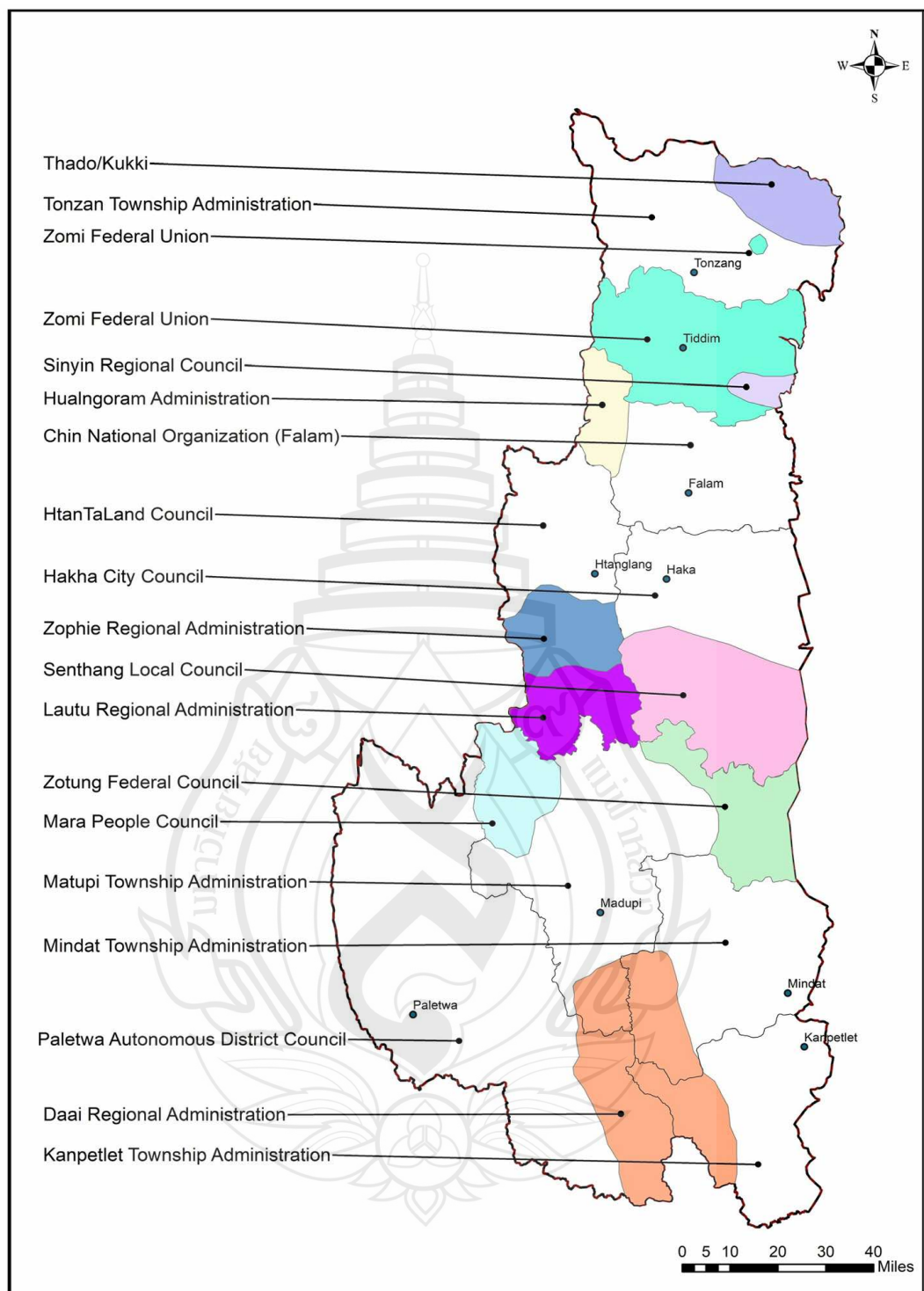
Figure 4.2 Map of Emerging Local Governance in Chin State

4.2.3 Functions of Emerging Local Governance in Chin State

In addition to the local government formation, township or regional councils or administrative bodies have been established according to their territory across Chin

State. These councils emerged during the revolutionary period with the goal of developing township constitutions and polices. Their aim was to create a platform for active engagement in political matters at the township level, intending to pave the way for the formation of the Chin State government. The township or local council oversees the administration, defense, and judiciary sectors of the township or their territorial areas and serves as the platform for policymaking that guides the entire region's administration, defense, and other departments. Public administration focuses on providing healthcare, education, local transportation, and managing internally displaced persons (IDPs). The judiciary aims to uphold the rule of law and resolve disputes, while defense is essential for maintaining territorial control against State Administrative Council (SAC) forces and ensuring local security. Governance structures vary by township, with some administrations operating under armed groups and others maintaining a separation of powers, particularly regarding defense. For example, towns like Kanpatlet and Mindat practice defense matters under civilian governance technically. Meanwhile, the Hakha City Council exemplifies a balanced model with equal authority across public administration, judiciary, and defense. However, most townships, such as Mindat, Kanpatlet, and Matupi, incorporate the judiciary as a department within public administration, functioning alongside other departments like finance and police.

A member of the Tonzang Township administration detailed the composition of the Township council:

"To clarify the structure, the township council functions as a political body similar to a parliament, while the township administration operates like a government by involving relevant stakeholders and experts through elections and nomination."

(Public Administration Staff, Tonzang Township, July 2024)

Initially, the establishment of public administration bodies lacked a robust focus on inclusivity and representation. However, following a year of revolution, a shift towards a more democratic approach to selecting members emerged.

In every village, a village-level administrator or administrative officer is chosen through democratic local elections. At the sub-township level, administrators are selected during a meeting that includes all village administrators from the area. The

individual who receives the most votes in this assembly takes on administrative duties. However, at the township level, the process differs. While some council members are elected through formal elections with representatives from their communities, the majority of members consist of young individuals who are willing to take on risks and responsibilities. City or regional council members are elected during a general assembly, which typically occurs once every one or two years, depending on the local constitution. During these general assemblies or meetings, important decisions, such as the approval of township or regional constitutions, are discussed and voted on.

4.3 Social Capitals in Emerging Local Governance in Chin State

4.3.1 Trust

4.3.1.1 Social Trust

This research discovered that social trust plays a crucial role in the emergence of local governance, particularly in contexts characterized by fragility, limited resources, and significant oppression by military regime. Within this framework, the study highlighted that local governance has developed with social capital playing a significant role in facilitation and contribution. Gambetta (1998) defined social trust as an individual's belief or confidence in one another and in members of societies and organizations such as neighborhoods, communities, or local institutions. This sense of belief and confidence is particularly evident in the current context of Chin State, especially in the development of emerging local governance.

1. Engaging in Voluntary Works

Fennema and Tille (2001) explained that one of the main sources of social trust can be measured by how much community members are participating or engaging in voluntary associations. Moreover, they believe that involvement in voluntary works enables members to develop their trust in each other; as a result, this involvement creates more collaboration among community members and gains more trust in each other. The study revealed that this kind of voluntary spirit, active participation in voluntary work, and enhancing collaborative actions have been significantly seen in the process of emerging local governance in Chin State. When

collective needs such as education, healthcare, humanitarian aid (IDPs), and security concerns, community members from each village discussed the issues and set up plans for each issue among community members. For education, village and township level administrations generally divided resources sharing while township administration tried to develop general guidelines related to education and take responsibility for teacher training, textbooks, and a certain amount of teacher salaries contribution. Meanwhile, every village contributes teacher salaries and other expenses, accommodation, food and education materials. One teacher from Teddim said that

"All family members from the village gather often and discuss children's education and how each family can support children's education by supporting as much as we can. It has been nearly 4 years, and we are running as a self-initiative or self-funded education." (Teacher, Teddim Township, July 2024)

The engagement in voluntary work by Chin communities takes many forms. Due to limited resources for public administration, services, and other community affairs, various Chin groups conducted fundraising efforts, with many young people participating in different roles such as fundraisers, accountants, cooks, announcers, and event organizers. Additionally, the study revealed that when internally displaced persons (IDPs) need temporary shelter or when school buildings are required in villages, community members contribute materials by, for example, cutting trees from the forest, and they voluntarily build houses and schools.

2. Enabling Effective Conflict Resolution

Moreover, social trust facilitates the resolution of conflicts at the local level, especially in situations when formal judicial systems collapse and emerge as a new mechanism. In many townships, disputes – particularly those related to land ownership, resource distribution, or community boundaries – are resolved through mediation and negotiation processes that depend on trusted community leaders. Elders and respected tribe leaders, who are viewed as impartial and fair, are often called upon to mediate conflicts. In areas with strong social trust, mediators and negotiators were more likely to take roles in conflict resolutions as most cases were dissolved at the community level, although there are some cases, such as theft or stolen cases, that presented to the township judiciary. This process is mainly evident in Chin State, where customary laws and traditional conflict resolution mechanisms are relied on in the

process of establishing a judiciary system in the Chin community. Social trust in these traditional leaders and systems ensures that conflicts can be resolved without escalating violence or requiring external intervention. Local regulations and conflict resolution mechanisms are based on traditional practice, social norms and new regulations set by resistance governance institutions. In the system, tribal leaders play prominent roles in the decision-making process at the local level, particularly when it comes to resolving land disputes and social affairs. For example, when disputes between community members appear, the first thing is conflict resolution committee was established from which the assigned person locally called as "Aung Ta Man" is sent to both parties to have initial agreement and ground rules to resolve the conflict. In the process, community gave authorization and trust to the committee members in which elders, tribe leaders and well-reputative community members are involved. One of the community leaders from Matupi said that –

"We use our own traditional practices mostly to resolve the disputes. Every tribe has their own norms and customary practices and knowledge to settle the dispute."

(Community leader, Matupi Township, July 2024)

In the central plain region, the approach to regulations and conflict resolution is shaped by a combination of traditional practices and formal regulations established by local Public Administration Boards (PABs) and the Chin Defense Forces (CDF). This hybrid system aims to address disputes within the community but can sometimes create challenges.

When parties involved in a disagreement find themselves at an impasse regarding a decision, the case is escalated through a series of levels, ultimately reaching the township-level judiciary department, which serves as the highest authority for judicial matters in the area. However, this sequential approach to conflict resolution presents a significant hurdle for individuals who wish to appeal decisions, as there is currently no definitive final appeal process in place. This lack of a conclusive appellate system underscores the struggles faced within the judiciary framework in the region.

On the other hand, the study also identified that some traditional and customary practices can perpetuate injustices, particularly concerning modern

principles of gender equality. A notable example of this is found in the Chin customary practice, which dictates that women are not entitled to inherit property upon the death of their husbands. This practice not only restricts the rights of women but also contributes to broader issues of gender inequality within the community. As a result, there are numerous cases that highlight the urgent need for addressing women's rights and promoting equality in inheritance and property ownership.

4.3.1.2 Political Trust

Political trust is typically described as a belief that political institutions and incumbents will perform their functions and responsibilities efficiently and that the outputs of institutions' policies and administration will benefit the majority – if not all members of society (Anderson & Lotempio, 2002). Political Trust can be generally divided into two categories: trust in political institutions (Damico et al., 2000) such as parliament and government and trust in political incumbents such as the president, political authorities, and other political actors (Shi, 2001). Political trust also underpins values, norms, and beliefs (Putnam, 1993). The study found that how these factors as political trust influence in the process of emerging local governance in Chin State can be seen in the following.

1. Decline and Rise of Political Trust and Legitimacy

Damico et al. (2000) stated that political trust strengthens the legitimacy and effectiveness of government institutions. However, not all governments can gain their citizens' trust, and there are instances where people may distrust their government entirely (Damico et al., 2000). Without political trust, governments can face significant challenges, such as undermining political stability and increasing pressure on the populace. The study found that the military coup on February 1, 2021, led to an immediate and widespread erosion of political trust in the central government and in the military-authorized political institutions in Chin State, similar to other ethnic minority regions that have a history of distrust towards the military and central authorities for over 70 years. A community member from Teddim said that –

"We were under the military regime for over 70 years. We no longer accept military rule again, and we don't give any legitimacy to it. That is why we are against the rule on whatever means."

(Community Member, Teddim Township, July 2024)

On the other hand, legitimacy is a virtue of resistance institutions when its people in their constituencies have strong beliefs and faith in the institutions and authorities (Weber, 1964). Local participation and robust for armed resistance are key factors contributing to significant territorial gains in Chin State.

In the aftermath of the state institutions' collapse in 2021, local communities—from villages to townships—recognized the urgent need to establish their own public administration. Despite facing significant challenges, they took decisive action to assert their governance. The study found that one of the important factors in the emergence of local governance in Chin State after the coup was the restoration of political trust within communities. The military's violence and oppression created a deep rapture in trust in the central state apparatus. In response, the communities construct their own local governance system at different levels, from village to regional level, based on solidarity, shared ethnic identity according to the same tribes and Chin identity, and resistance to military rule.

The study found that there are interrelated factors emerging parallel local governance in Chin State.

1) Ethnic and Tribal Identity: Trust and Collective Identity Among the Oppressed

For the Chin ethnic people, the military's historical oppression and marginalization of ethnic minorities had already fostered a deep sense of mistrust. The coup further intensified this distrust toward political institutions and actors, prompting the Chin people to construct their own political institutions based on their beliefs and norms.

Ethnic solidarity played a crucial role in the emergence of local governance. Chin ethnic identity was central to the movement's goal of overthrowing the regime and securing the rights and self-determination of the Chin people. However, rather than unifying under a single Chin identity, the resistance was often organized

around tribal or geographic identities, with different groups prioritizing their own interests while striving for broader unity. Chin State is home to multiple tribal groups under the Chin ethnic umbrella, and resistance efforts were generally organized along tribal or geographic lines, with each group operating with a degree of self-reliance as mentioned in the section of formation in local governance.

The formation of local defense forces and governance structures was largely based on tribal or geographic identities, with each group organizing at the township level. These tribal- or geographic-based local administrations gained the trust of local communities and the diaspora, fostering a robust network of support. This support manifested through financial contributions, in-kind donations, active participation in decision-making processes, and the provision of legitimacy to the emerging local administrations. As a result, despite limited resources, these public administrations were able to operate effectively, delivering services in areas such as service provision, the judiciary, and defense.

Regarding the legitimacy of the newly established public administrations, the study found that formal elections played a limited role in conferring legitimacy due to the current political context. However, elections do occur at the village level, where village heads are elected based on households rather than individuals. At the sub-township or regional level, administrators are elected through meetings attended by all regional village administrators. The candidate receiving the highest number of votes assumes the administrative role. At the township or zone level, only a portion of the executives or council members are elected during township or zone-level conferences, with representatives rather than the general public casting votes. General assembly or council meetings are held every two years or according to the constitution of each township or zone.

For the remaining roles in public administration, individuals are recruited based on their expertise, reputation, or willingness to take on risks and responsibilities. Across all townships and tribal regions, a uniform set of criteria governs the selection of public administration members. Principally, candidates must have actively participated in the revolution and must support its cause. Government employees are expected to engage in the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM). While

some townships have established minimum age requirements for public servants, others do not specify a minimum service experience.

The study found that legitimacy, in the current context, derives primarily from political trust within the general public, based on their norms, beliefs, and shared commitment to the revolutionary cause. Additionally, legitimacy is linked to the performance of the administrative committees. To date, the public has yet questioned the performance of local administrations, as they understand the limitations of resources. It is difficult to measure performance, as service delivery and welfare provision are constrained by these limitations. The general public recognizes that resources are scarce and shared across communities. A CSO leader from Hakha said that -

"Normally, the effectiveness of local governance is measured by how much local administrators can show in terms of service provision and welfare delivery. However, in the current context, both the public administration and the people understand the difficulties faced by all actors—limited resources and other obstacles. It creates a unique dynamic, and it will be interesting to see how long people can sustain their resilience in this situation."

(CSO leader, Hakha Township, July 2024)

4.3.2 Norms of Reciprocity

The study identified that the primary challenge for public administration is the limited financial resources needed to meet public needs, as there are insufficient income sources and institutions, relying mainly on personal contributions from citizens. In Chin State, local governance depends on public administrators and responsible individuals who leverage their social capital, particularly norms of reciprocity. According to Putnam (1993), these norms are essential for promoting political participation and improving institutional performance. He emphasized that norms of reciprocity can be evaluated through positive attitudes, volunteering experiences, and the willingness to confront injustice. In Chin State, local governance operates with public administrators and responsible individuals utilizing their own social capital, particularly the norms of reciprocity. In terms of the practices surrounding norms of reciprocity, the following factors are observed in this study:

4.3.2.1 Technical and Resource Sharing

In the face of the economic hardships caused by the coup and the subsequent budget cuts imposed by the SAC regime in Chin State, communities relied on the principle of reciprocity to sustain themselves. This involved resource pooling and collective action, resulting in functional local governance. Resources such as labor and food were exchanged based on need rather than monetary value. This approach is evident in various sectors, including healthcare, education, internally displaced person (IDP) management, livelihoods, and public administration. In education and healthcare, teachers and qualified healthcare professionals—such as doctors, nurses, and technicians—fulfill their roles. In exchange for their services, local communities and diaspora members support them with contributions that are not fixed salaries.

Public servants in these sectors, working in their respective townships, sub-townships, or villages, often volunteer their services rather than receiving payment based on their technical expertise. The general public contributes food, cash, or other resources to the extent they can. Individuals with expertise in financial management take on responsibilities in the finance department, while those with legal backgrounds serve as judges. A public healthcare personnel from Kanpatlet remarked,

"I used to work as a public health officer before the coup in 2021. After joining the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM), I am currently working in the health department of Kinpatlet Township, taking responsibility for public health awareness in many villages. This work is completely voluntary, and to support myself, I have returned to working on my farm."

(Healthcare worker, Kanpatlet Township, July 2024)

For example; in a remote village in Mindat township, a small hospital was initiated by a Christian leader after many IDPs and CDMs fled there due to the coup. With no public healthcare, the hospital aimed to provide emergency services. The community came together, with CDM workers from the electricity department building a small dam to supply power, while doctors and nurses volunteered to operate the hospital, making it a crucial healthcare resource for those in need.

4.3.2.2 Reciprocity and Resource Mobilization

The public administration and the provision of services to the public rely on three primary sources of financial resources.

The first and most significant source is the financial contributions from diaspora communities around the world, including those in the USA, Europe, Malaysia, Singapore, and other countries. These contributions are typically collected based on the diaspora communities' tribal affiliation, township, or specific needs, such as education, health, internally displaced persons (IDPs), or defense-related matters. Additionally, fundraising efforts are organized around specific issues or events, which may vary depending on the township and its needs.

The second source of revenue is taxation, although the ability to collect taxes is limited in many areas due to the displacement of people—particularly IDPs—or their migration to larger cities such as Yangon and Mandalay for security or economic reasons. Taxation is regulated on a township-by-township basis, with policies differing from one township to another. One interviewee from Kanpatlet explained:

"We have a draft taxation policy, which has not yet been finalized. As a pilot project last year, we attempted to collect taxes based on household situations and incomes. However, it was not successful because the revolution has been ongoing for nearly four years now, and people have no income. Instead, they are contributing in other ways, such as supporting education, healthcare, and defense groups. We were only able to collect taxes from one region, even though Kanpatlet township has five regions."

(Finance Staff, Public Administration, Kanpatlet Township, July 2024)

The research also found that taxes are sometimes collected at checkpoints or from passengers and vehicles passing through trade routes. However, these collections are not enforced by quotas or coercion; rather, they are solicited as voluntary donations based on individuals' capacity to contribute.

The third source of funding comes from in-kind contributions. While townships facilitate education and healthcare services, the resources needed to operate schools, such as teacher salaries and other operational costs, are typically provided by local villages and communities. These contributions are not funneled through the

township level but are directly managed by village committees. In addition to funding for education and health services, local communities also provide in-kind support, such as food, to local defense forces, teachers, and healthcare workers.

Overall, the norms of reciprocity serve as human capital by facilitating the exchange of technical knowledge and experiences. Additionally, financial contributions from both international and local communities support local governance in Chin State.

4.3.3 Civic Engagement or Social Networks

Networks of civic engagement are interpersonal relationships which can be created by association with others both in forms of personal civil life and within a group of people. Several social networks were formed across Chin State after the Feb 2021 coup happened to organize political movements, campaigns, advocacy and humanitarian supports from which moving step to armed resistance and establishing local governance. There are several social networks in community, township, regional, national level and international levels. These all are emergence in terms of ethnicity based such as Chin identity at the beginning and later it gradually emerges in term of their tribal identity to respond the military regime; on the other hand, working to construct their own system.

4.3.3.1 Roles of Rural, Urban and International Organizations and Networks

Following the coup on February 1st, various groups and networks emerged, connecting across different layers of society in addition to existing organizations such as civil society groups, student unions, and labor unions across the country, including in Chin State. For instance, in urban cities like Yangon and Mandalay, Chin youth networks played a leading role in establishing the "General Strike Committee of Nationalities (GSCN)" on February 11, 2021. The GSCN organized and strategized numerous political campaigns, statements, and other forms of political activism.

In Chin State, many Chin student unions, civil society organizations, voluntary and charitable associations, religious youth groups, and public servants mobilized within their communities—from villages to cities—and organized a series of political campaigns and protests. As these networks grew, people became increasingly connected, leading to more creative activities. The movement evolved from peaceful

protests to armed resistance, with these organizations, networks, and groups playing significant roles particularly for emerging local governance in Chin State.

Several youth leaders from urban areas such as Yangon and Mandalay, who are typically well-educated individuals—lawyers, NGO workers, and company employees—returned to their hometowns to lead various forms of resistance in which most of them are currently leading functions of public administration. They took on different roles, including defense, public administration, logistical support, healthcare, and finance. Urban and rural youth collaborated closely, each taking on leadership roles. A student union leader from Teddim stated -

"From the protests to running public administration, I mobilized youth and the public through several existing youth, women, and voluntary groups. I have strong connections with them. Whatever activities we engaged in—such as voluntary road construction, charity work, or other public initiatives—we always worked together even before the coup. After the coup, they all participated by taking on different roles; some joined defense efforts while others, particularly well-educated youth, assumed roles in humanitarian sectors, education, or public administration. This we can say because of unite of rural and urban people working together."

(Student leader, CSO member, Teddim Township, July 2024)

Civic engagement networks can be classified into two categories: formal and informal networks (Foley & Edwards, 1999). A formal network refers to a legally organized relationship between individuals, binding its members through laws or regulations. All participants are required to adhere to these regulations and fulfill their responsibilities. In contrast, informal networks, sometimes referred to as soft networks (Perez-Dias, 2002), are characterized by loose and flexible connections. They lack a permanent structure and are less organized. Typically, they link individuals through social connections such as family, friends, neighbors, colleagues, and community members. The study found that both formal and informal networks, groups, and organizations are actively engaged in supporting and operating local governance in Chin State. Formal networks, such as the Chin Health Organization and various other groups, are well-structured with clear visions, missions, guidelines, and activities. These organizations were established in response to the needs of the people during the

crisis following the coup. They focus on capacity building for public administration staff and provide technical support by collaborating with different national and international organizations. Their operations mainly rely on external funding sources, such as international grants, as well as contributions from local communities and the Chin diaspora.

On the other hand, informal networks, community-based organizations, and groups who are running as lose structure and voluntary base, provide emergency and immediate support to communities in need. Examples include responses to COVID-19, urgent humanitarian needs, livelihood assistance, healthcare, and educational support. These informal networks serve as essential mobilizers within communities, bridging gaps between local-residents and various organizations and political bodies.

While established organizations work to support and fill gaps in public administration through regular consultation and coordination, informal networks play a crucial role in mobilizing resources and creating connections among communities, public administration, and regional, national, and international organizations and agencies. For instance, in efforts related to capacity building for teachers and curriculum development, public administration at the regional or township levels collaborates with the National Unity Government and formal educational institutions to secure financial and technical resources. Meanwhile, informal networks gather data on teachers, mobilize resources, arrange logistics, and organize community meetings focused on the education sector.

4.3.3.2 Networks of Civic Engagement for Democracy

Some scholars argue that networks of civic engagement are essential to democracy (Verba et al., 1995). The promotion of democratic values and civil movements has led to the emergence of local governance structures. Local civil society organizations practice checks and balances to maintain civic space, even during critical times. In certain townships or regions in Chin State, the study revealed that military-affiliated bodies, such as Civil Defense Forces (CDFs), wield more influence than civic organizations in public administration, often justifying this control by citing the need to address territorial security and military actions. As a consequence, tensions have arisen, leading to a division of public administration in Mindat Township. To mitigate military influence in public administration, informal networks and groups have

organized a series of public discussions and developed a public administration manual that reflects and incorporates the voices of the community.

Additionally, to establish checks and balances and to amplify public input in the administrative process, local Chin human rights organizations conduct governance training, seminars, and workshops with community leaders, informal groups, community-based organizations, and public administration officials. These gatherings provide opportunities for dialogue and discussion about the challenges and obstacles faced in public administration.

4.3.3.3 Roles of Religious Institutions

Religious institutions play a significant role in the development of local governance, especially in humanitarian efforts and conflict resolution. They provide space in their buildings for internally displaced persons (IDPs), offering food, healthcare, and temporary shelters. In areas lacking school facilities, these institutions often create educational spaces for children. Typically, they collaborate with other humanitarian actors, local communities, public administration bodies, and civil society organizations. Religious leaders are frequently appointed by public authorities and communities to lead emergency response efforts. Additionally, religious institutions are crucial in negotiations, such as securing the release of individuals arrested by the State Administration Council (SAC) forces. In urban areas controlled by the SAC, access to food, healthcare, travel, and livelihood activities is severely restricted. Residents are often perceived as supporters of the Chin Defense Forces or other revolutionary groups, leading to close surveillance of their activities.

4.4 The Impact of Fragility on Social Capital and Local Governance Relationships

4.4.1 Community Resilience

4.4.1.1 Service Delivery

In terms of public services, public administration across the state aims to provide education, health care, local transportation, humanitarian services, and the promotion of the rule of law. However, due to limited resources and funding,

administrations face challenges in fulfilling their duties, particularly in providing welfare services. Nevertheless, rural resilience contributes significantly to the effective functioning of administration, especially in the areas of education and healthcare provision.

1. Community-based Education Service

In the current fragile context, access to education for children and young people faces significant obstacles. However, former teachers, education workers, voluntary associations, and communities have initiated a self-sustaining education system using their own resources as their resilience. When they gain control of a territory, they utilize existing school buildings; if no school building exists in their community, they build one voluntarily. CDM teachers and young graduates work as teachers on a voluntary basis. Teachers are paid at subsistence level out of communal funds with salaries supplemented by a range of in-kind assistance from their village in coordination with local administration authorities, and they also engage in reciprocal practices, such as helping farm the teachers' lands.

Regarding teaching materials, resources, guidelines, and assessments, the Chin State-level National Education Committees—comprised of education experts, CDM professors, and civil society organizations—have formulated and developed education policies and guidelines that reference the Ministry of Education of the National Unity Government (NUG). However, there is no financial or technical support from the national level.

At the township level, the administration offers support for teacher training, provides materials, and allocates a specific amount of financial assistance for education-related meetings. Teacher training is mainly organized by civil society organizations working in the education sector. Despite severe challenges, local communities and civil society organizations are finding alternative and adaptive ways to continue education for children in this fragile context. For example, Chin State has experienced internet and phone line access cuts, and there is a shortage of qualified teachers. To address this, new teachers are being trained online by local civil society organizations in collaboration with educational institutions from other states and regions. Due to the lack of internet access in Chin State, many teachers traveled to border areas to attend intensive training sessions. Upon returning, they organized

extensive training for their fellow teachers. Currently, there are no high schools or higher education institutions, such as colleges and universities, in Chin State. An education worker from Htantalan township stated –

"When we started to open education, we faced numerous challenges that still exist. However, from elementary schools to high schools, we have been able to establish them primarily with strong community support, including financial, material, and labor contributions."

(Education Worker, Htantalan Township, July 2024)

2. Health Provision

The collapse of public administration has significantly affected healthcare services in Chin State. Despite challenges and shortages of human resources and medical supplies, healthcare primarily relies on a civil society organization known as the Chin Health Organization (CHO). Established by Chin CDM (Civil Disobedience Movement) doctors, nurses, and healthcare workers, CHO aims to fill gaps in the healthcare sector following the coup. It collaborates closely with township and village-level administrations to provide essential healthcare services, with a particular focus on public health initiatives.

Local administrations have covertly set up their own hospitals in certain resistance areas, such as Mindat. However, many medical groups function as mobile health services, primarily staffed by CDM medical personnel. Health resources are shared across various townships, allowing local administrators and resistance forces to coordinate the movement of health professionals from areas with a higher concentration of staff to those in greater need. For major medical operations, residents often have to travel to other states and regions, such as Yangon, Mandalay, Sagaing, or even the India border.

The mechanisms for providing healthcare services in Chin State are consistently threatened by the SAC's frequent military operations, which include indiscriminate airstrikes and the burning of villages. Additionally, logistical challenges related to the notorious "Four Cuts" counterinsurgency strategy employed by the SAC have resulted in ongoing shortages of medical supplies, undermining the ability to support resistance forces effectively.

4.4.2 People Participation and Effective Decision Making

In the context of fragility, local population's involvement and decision making in public affairs are significantly observed. They do self-organizing such as constructing new roads or repairing roads for transportation as the SAC troops block most roads. While building the roads, all community members gathered and provided free labor and contributed resources that they gained from their forests.

Chin state also faces the need of humanitarian aids which are also able to address with local community's participation as they accept as this struggle need to be address by helping together rather than following international humanitarian models of having IDP camps or centers. This kind of solidarity has been seen as norms of Chin society. When conflicts are escalated, many residents flee to their relatives. At that time, host communities gathered and supported emergency aid such as rice, chickens, vegetables, and other daily basics shared for their use. This kind of contribution is not only material but also mental support. One of the religious leaders from Htantalan said that -

"When Htantalan was burnt down, a lot of IDPs moved to our village. All family members from the village gave food, blankets, clothes, and other necessities including houses built by community members together. Still, those IDPs lost all of their belongings and left behind everything and came to refuge in our village, so they were fragile mentally. So, we all gathered, prayed, and shared our feelings at night. In this way, we tried to show them solidarity, empathy, and sympathy."

(Religious leader, Htatalan Township, July 2024)

The local population's participation in public affairs is not only by contribution labor and sharing materials but also by leading and initiating local governance processes. All members from village to township levels involve in local governance administrations' work since decision making process. These are all voluntary and collaborative means for showing solidarity and messaging we are in oneness or one spirit to pass this challenging period. One of the respondents said –

"We all understand that this kind of public administration has popped up based on the needs of communities. During the absence of everything in the current situation,

even young people, CDM, and CDF are sacrificing their jobs, lives, and all their belongings, and also community people are contributing all that they have to have our freedom. So, everyone understands that we are on this journey together."

(Community member, Mindat Township, 2024)

4.4.3 Livelihood Adaptation

To cope with the new security context, the local population has changed their livelihood strategy. In Chin State, which is a hilly region, local residents relied primarily on traditional farming until 2010. After reforms began in 2010, the population gradually shifted their agricultural practices from traditional plantations to cash crops, such as coffee and elephant foot yam, which became the main sources of income from exports to China and Japan.

However, the coup in February 2021 created significant obstacles for their agricultural products to reach buyers, as roads were blocked, transportation costs increased, and products were seized by the State Administration Council (SAC) forces. The community realized that these challenges would persist in the long term, and many residents were left hungry facing the "four cuts" strategy (targeting food, finance, intelligence, and recruits). Consequently, the local population returned to traditional practices to ensure their own food security. With income shortages and blocked transportation for basic food supplies, many households focused on growing three main forms of crops: vegetables in home gardens and long-term staples like corn, rice, and potatoes, depending on the soil conditions. Their agricultural approach shifted from cash-based production aimed at generating income to self-sufficient food production.

An interview with a representative from the livelihood department under Mindat public administration revealed:

"Villagers know what they need to grow for food. Sometimes, as an administration, we have consulted with villagers about returning to traditional farming. However, they understood this need even before we initiated the consultation. They realize that this situation may persist for a long time, so we must grow our own food."

(Public Administration Staff, Mindat Township, 2024)

There is a seed shortage for these crops, but many villages maintain traditional farming practices and preserve seeds for cultivation. Additionally, local administrations have supported farmers through seed exchanges and strategies for food production. For instance, while the southern part of Chin State can grow rice, other areas cannot, producing only certain edible crops. Consequently, villagers exchange products among different townships and regions. Furthermore, rice from the Yaw region in Sagaing, a neighboring state, has been sent to Chin State via jungle routes. One interviewee from Matupi stated:

"We do not have money, but we survive. We do not worry about food because every household has land, and we grow our own food and share it with each other."

(Community Member, Mindat Township, 2024)

The study also found that remittances from family members and relatives living abroad are a primary source of income for certain needs, such as education and healthcare. This situation has prompted many young adults to migrate to foreign countries for work, sending remittances back to their families.

4.4.4 Challenges of Local Governance

The first issue is security challenges. Although the majority of rural areas and some major cities are fully under the control of resistance groups, airstrikes from the State Administration Council (SAC) pose a significant and unavoidable threat. For example, a public hospital in Mindat Township was targeted by airstrikes, resulting in the deaths of 4 individuals and 15 injuries (Myanmar Now, 2024). Many civilian locations, including hospitals, schools, churches, and private residences, have also been attacked.

The second issue involves the political struggles among different groups, particularly between the Chin Brotherhood (CB) and the Chinland Council (CC). These conflicts hinder the progress of local governance in Chin State. While local governance has emerged organically from the grassroots level with public participation, political and military tensions among various factions in Chin State create obstacles for establishing a regional government. These tensions also have a ripple effect, impacting governance at both township and village levels. For instance, due to power struggles and disagreements over uniting to form a Chin State government, some public

administration at the township and regional levels has split into two factions. Some community members wish to align with CB, while others prefer to ally with CC. This division has led to a decline in public support for the leadership involved in establishing Chin self-determination. One interviewee from the healthcare department of Kanpatlat Public Administration remarked -

"Our township administration is a founding member of Chin Brotherhood; however, due to significant tension and conflicts at the Chin State level, there are voices in the community suggesting that Kanpetlat should also align with the Chinland Council. These internal conflicts are causing a decline in public support and trust in administrative matters."

(Healthcare worker, Kanpatlet Township, July 2024)

The third obstacle is the limited financial resources available to local public administration, which hampers the provision of public welfare services. Despite the significant role of social capital in the current functioning of local governance, the ongoing fragility and wartime conditions mean there is inadequate income—such as taxation—to support public administration. As a result, public healthcare, education, environmental conservation, and the rule of law are only marginally operational instead of being robustly supported. All financial resources for operating public administration come from public contributions and diaspora support. However, after four years of resistance, local populations face severe economic challenges, and contributions from diaspora Chin communities are also declining. This raises a pressing question about how long practices of public reciprocity, in-kind donations, and other financial contributions can be sustained to support public administration.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of Findings

The emergence of local governance in Chin State, Myanmar, followed the military coup on February 1, 2021, which ended a decade of hybrid democracy. The coup was met with heavy oppression, including violent crackdowns on peaceful protests, leading to armed resistance and the formation of new governance structures. The Civil Disobedience Movement saw significant participation from government employees, contributing to the collapse of existing institutions. The regime's repressive tactics and violent response have exacerbated social divisions and distrust among the population, further fueled by territorial conflicts among revolutionary groups. Ultimately, these developments reflect the regime's failed attempts to legitimize its authority amid ongoing political instability.

The research on local governance in Chin State post-February 2021 coup reveals two phases of development. The first phase initiated in March 2021 with a call from the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw (CRPH) for self-governing structures. Despite the emergence of local governance in many townships, these efforts were short-lived due to a lack of a constitution, clear guidelines, and leadership. Additionally, the Interim Chin National Consultative Council (ICNCC) was established in April 2021 to oversee Chin State administration but faced challenges, including limited grassroots involvement and a top-down approach. Both the CRPH and ICNCC have not effectively supported local governance in Chin State.

The second wave of public administration in Chin State emerged independently from the first wave, led by local leaders such as political activists and community leaders, alongside armed groups. Two forms of public administration exist: SAC governance functions, limited to urban areas, and resistance group administrations, mostly in rural areas. These structures arose following the General Administration Department's (GAD) collapse due to public servants joining the Civil Disobedience

Movement (CDM). There are two main forms of public administration, which are township-based and tribe-based public administration. The township-based local governance system includes nine township-based administrations, most named after their townships, with Falam township referred to as Chin National Organization (Falam). Additionally, tribe-based administrations have developed across Chin State, despite existing within the nine townships, leading to a total of 17 new public administrations. Two major alliances related to governance and military affairs have formed: Chinland Council (CC), primarily comprising tribe-based administrations, and Chinbrotherhood (CB), mainly consisting of township administrations.

Township or regional councils have been established in Chin State to develop local constitutions and policies during the revolutionary period. These councils aim to facilitate political engagement at the township level and contribute to forming the Chin State government. They oversee administration, defense, and judiciary sectors, serving as a platform for regional policymaking. Initially, these bodies lacked inclusivity, but after a year of revolution, a shift towards a more democratic member selection process emerged.

There are three main sectors in defining social capital which are trust, norms of reciprocity and civic engagement or social network. Firstly, the finding revealed the importance of social and political trust in the functioning of local governance in Chin State. Social trust, defined as confidence among community members, fosters collaboration and conflict resolution through voluntary associations and trusted leaders. The study highlights how community participation in addressing collective needs, such as education and security, enhances this trust. In addition, political trust is crucial for the legitimacy of government institutions. A military coup in February 2021 severely eroded political trust in Chin State, complicating governance. Ethnic solidarity emerged as a key factor in local resistance movements, though identities often divided efforts along tribal or geographic lines, leading to power struggles and weakened public trust.

Moreover, emerging local governance in Chin State relies on public administrators and community members utilizing social capital, particularly reciprocity, to overcome economic hardships imposed by the coup and budget cuts. Communities engage in resource pooling and collective action, emphasizing the exchange of labor and food based on need rather than monetary value. Public servants

often volunteer their services instead of receiving payment. The financial resources for public administration come from three main sources: contributions from diaspora communities, limited tax revenue due to displacement, and in-kind contributions from local villages, which support essential services like education and healthcare.

In addition, after the February 2021 coup in Chin State, various social networks emerged to organize political movements, advocacy, and humanitarian support, leading to armed resistance and local governance establishment. These networks developed initially around Chin identity and later expanded to include tribal identities in response to the military regime. They are categorized into formal networks, like the Chin Health Organization, which offer structured support and capacity building, and informal networks that provide immediate assistance to communities. Local civil society organizations maintain civic engagement, while religious institutions play crucial roles in humanitarian efforts and negotiations, including securing the release of those arrested by military forces.

The study also found that fragility impacts social capital and local governance, enhancing community resilience, participation, and effective decision-making. Community-based education and healthcare have emerged as key resilience strategies. Former educators and voluntary associations have created a self-sustaining education system, supported by township administrations through teacher training and financial assistance. In healthcare, the collapse of public administration has led to reliance on the Chin Health Organization (CHO), founded by Civil Disobedience Movement members, to address public health needs despite significant challenges like resource and supply shortages. Community involvement in public affairs is prominent, with locals actively participating in decision-making and governance, emphasizing solidarity over traditional international aid models. This has resulted in a shift in livelihood strategies, as residents have adapted from traditional farming practices typical in Chin State's hilly terrain.

However, fragility in the region has also led to various conflicts and challenges. The first issue is security; although resistance groups control most rural areas and some cities, airstrikes from the State Administration Council (SAC) pose a significant threat. Political struggles impede local governance progress, particularly between the Chin Brotherhood (CB) and the Chinland Council (CC). While governance has emerged

organically from grassroots efforts, tensions among factions obstruct establishing a regional government, affecting township and village governance as well. Additionally, limited financial resources hinder public welfare services, leading to inadequate support for healthcare, education, environmental conservation, and the rule of law. While social capital plays a crucial role in local governance, ongoing fragility also poses significant challenges.

5.2 Theoretical Discussion

The research findings regarding fragility and its causes in Chin State align with the theory proposed by Stewart and Brown (2009), which identifies three failure conditions: authority failure, service entitlement failure, and legitimacy failure. These failures have significantly affected the fragility in Chin State. In this study, the fragility primarily arises from the authorities' attempts to govern following the coup on February 1. This effort to assert authority faced strong resistance from the public, and the authorities consistently failed to provide essential services. As a result, political instability in Chin State emerged due to failures in authority, service delivery, and legitimacy. This argument is further supported by Brinkerhoff (2007), who asserts that fragile states lack the capacity to ensure fundamental security for their citizens, fail to deliver essential services, and struggle to establish legitimacy, which is necessary for gaining the trust of their population. These factors contribute to political instability.

Additionally, Stewart and Brown (2009) theorize that state failures lead to political instability, which may manifest as domestic conflict, civil unrest, and insurgencies. This framework is applicable to the fragility of Chin State, where widespread civil unrest includes not only national protests but also significant pressure from the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM)—a movement in which public servants refuse to work under the military regime. The protests and the CDM have fueled anger toward the regime, eventually escalating into armed resistance in Chin State. Thus, political instability accompanies civil unrest and insurgencies (Stewart and Brown, 2009). Moreover, citizens in fragile states are often divided into polarized groups based on ethnicity, religion, or social class, historically characterized by distrust, grievances,

and potential violence. These states commonly struggle to foster cooperation, compromise, and trust among their citizens (Stewart & Brown, 2009). This scenario is evident in this research of Chin State's fragility, where conflicts have intensified polarization, creating divisions and distrust among community members, regardless of their affiliations. Consequently, individuals associated with the military or perceived to be affiliated face punitive measures. This dynamic contributes to social division, not just between the military and civilians but also among different tribes, as tribalism heightens suspicion and tension. This situation aligns with the assertions of Stewart and Brown (2009) and reflects Gurr's (1970) argument that discrimination, marginalization, and exclusion of specific groups from political or economic opportunities can worsen social divisions. Fragility often leads to the disintegration of social structures, the decline of social cohesion, and the erosion of trust among community members (Putnam, 2000). The societal consequences of fragility include heightened divisions, ethnic conflict, displacement, and compromised or lost livelihoods.

The emergence of local governance in fragile environments aligns with Shad's (2006) concept of local governance, which emphasizes both the direct and indirect contributions of official local government institutions and administrative structures, as well as the influence of informal norms, networks, community groups, and neighborhood associations in facilitating collective efforts. Following the collapse of the local governance structure in Chin State after the February 2021 coup, two phases of local governance emerged, particularly influenced by informal norms, networks, community groups, and neighborhood associations. As Shad (2006) stated, this framework establishes interactions between citizens, collective decision-making processes, and the provision of local public services. Local governance aims to create dynamic, thriving, and environmentally sustainable self-governing communities.

In Chin State, the second wave of public administration arose through the leadership of political activists and community leaders alongside armed groups. This development was rooted in the interaction between citizens, collective decision-making processes, and public service provision. There are two specific forms of public administration: township-based and tribe-based systems. Additionally, local governance in Chin State has sought to provide public administration, judiciary services, and defense while focusing on public affairs through decision-making and

community participation, thereby promoting security. These conditions reflect Shad's argument that understanding the comprehensive concept of local governance is essential for creating a responsive, responsible, and accountable framework. This involves delivering services that meet citizens' preferences, ensuring efficiency in service delivery, and maintaining accountability through a rights-based approach. Such an analysis signifies a shift from the traditional role of local government to one that is more citizen-centric and effective (Shad, 2006).

In the context of emerging local governance, social capital—defined as trust, norms of reciprocity, and civic engagement—plays a critical role. Putnam (1995) described social capital as "features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions." Findings reveal the importance of social and political trust in the functioning of local governance in Chin State. Social trust, defined as the confidence among community members, fosters collaboration and conflict resolution through voluntary associations and trusted leaders. The study highlights how community participation in addressing collective needs, such as education and security, enhances this trust. This echoes Putnam's (1995) concept of social trust as an individual's belief in one another and in the members of neighborhoods, communities, or local institutions. This sense of belief and confidence is particularly evident in the current context of Chin State, especially with the development of emerging local governance.

Political trust is also crucial for the legitimacy of government institutions. The military coup in February 2021 significantly eroded political trust in Chin State, complicating governance efforts. Ethnic solidarity became a key factor in local resistance movements, although identities often divided these efforts along tribal or geographic lines, leading to power struggles and weakened public trust. Putnam (1995) argued that political trust underpins values, norms, and beliefs, suggesting that political trust influences the emerging local governance in Chin State. This notion is further supported by Anderson and Lotempio (2002), who contend that political trust is generally understood as the belief that political institutions and their leaders will perform their functions and responsibilities efficiently, and that the outputs of such institutions' policies and administrations will benefit the majority—if not all—members of society.

Moreover, emerging local governance in Chin State relies on public administrators and community members utilizing social capital, particularly reciprocity, to overcome economic hardships imposed by the coup and budget cuts. This aligns with Putnam's (1993) description of norms of reciprocity, wherein community members contribute to and help one another without expecting anything specific in return. Societies that adhere to this norm can effectively mitigate opportunism and address challenges related to collective action (Putnam, 1993). The research indicates that communities engage in resource pooling and collective action, emphasizing the exchange of labor and food based on need rather than monetary value. Public servants often volunteer their services instead of receiving payment. The financial resources for public administration come from three main sources: contributions from diaspora communities, limited tax revenue due to displacement, and in-kind contributions from local villages, which support essential services like education and healthcare.

Following the February 2021 coup in Chin State, various social networks emerged to organize political movements, advocacy, and humanitarian support, which have led to armed resistance and the establishment of local governance. Initially, these networks developed around Chin identity but later expanded to include tribal identities in response to the military regime.

These networks can be categorized into formal organizations, such as the Chin Health Organization, which provide structured support and capacity building, and informal networks that offer immediate assistance to communities. Local civil society organizations foster civic engagement, while religious institutions play crucial roles in humanitarian efforts and negotiations, including securing the release of individuals arrested by military forces. This situation aligns with the concept of social networks as defined by Putnam (2000), who noted that community members connect individuals through various social relations, including family, relatives, friends, neighbors, colleagues at work, and fellow community members. Participants in these networks often share similar social statuses and exhibit a strong sense of intimacy, emotional closeness, and an expectation of long-term connections.

Overall, the research was designed with above theoretical building blocks used as theoretical lenses to analyze the ground situation in the current complex fragile

context. The theoretical lenses helped the research to explore and reflect in-depth analysis on understanding overall root causes of fragility, the role of social capital transforming fragility to emerging local governance and the impact of fragility to community resilience through the social capital.

The social capital significantly influences emerging local governance in fragile environments characterized by political instability, institutional collapse, and social division. Its positive contributions include community resilience, increased citizen participation, effective decision-making, and adaptation of livelihoods. However, social capital also has its limitations and cannot address certain challenges. These include conflicts between different tribes, power struggles that lead to clashes, external threats, and limited financial resources needed to support wider populations. Despite these drawbacks, the role of social capital remains evident and significant, particularly during critical wartime situations. It can facilitate the functioning of public administration, even with minimal resources, through the accumulation of social capital.

5.3 Recommendations

The research titled "The Role of Social Capital in the Emergence of Local Governance in Fragile Environment: A Case of Chin State in Myanmar" emphasizes the critical role social capital plays in fostering local governance, even amidst fragility. The study identifies key factors contributing to this fragility, including political instability, the breakdown of public institutions, and social divisions. These issues lead to a clash between delegitimized authority and competing claims of legitimacy, resulting in grievances that can escalate into protests or armed resistance. As a response, local communities are establishing their own governance systems using their available resources and social capital. However, this emergence of local governance also highlights a certain degree of social division, particularly as various tribes engage in power struggles. The findings of the research shed light on the power dynamics between the central state and peripheral populations, illustrating how communities are building their governance systems from the ground up, handling public administration, judiciary

matters, and defense. Moreover, the new governance structures are often organized based on geographic and tribal lines, showcasing a self-governing model.

The findings and analysis suggest that, while the degree of fragility in Chin society is significant and poses substantial challenges, there exists a strong foundation of social capital that plays a vital role in advancing local governance and enhancing community resilience. This critical asset should be recognized as a key strength capable of contributing to positive outcomes, even in the face of ongoing difficulties.

By acknowledging the inherent differences and diversity within Chin society, social capital can serve as a unifying force to support collective progress. Furthermore, the analysis highlights that local communities in Chin State continue to encounter difficulties in leveraging their social capital to build sustainable governance structures. These efforts warrant recognition and support from international stakeholders, which should be tailored to align with the specific local contexts.

Furthermore, a significant territory of Chin State is under the control of Chin Defence Forces (CDF) and management of local governance. In this context, the general elections proposed by the State Administration Council (SAC)—which assumed power through a military coup and ongoing repression—are unlikely to reflect the genuine aspirations of the Chin population. The people of Chin State have demonstrated a clear pursuit of self-determination, and any attempts to assert electoral legitimacy without acknowledging the current realities on the ground may not be regarded as credible by the local population.

In addition, the findings and analysis of the research are valuable for future researchers aiming to delve deeper into this emerging phase and its potential for effective governance, as well as how these dynamics might lead toward federalism, a long-standing demand from ethnic groups in Myanmar. Additionally, the research highlights how emerging local governance operates in fragile conditions where resources and opportunities are limited. It provides an in-depth examination of foundational resources such as trust, norms of reciprocity, and social networks within communities. The findings emphasize the significance of collective determination for freedom, democracy, and self-determination, showcasing how social capital enables communities to develop their own governance structures. Future studies could focus on

understanding the situations in which people unite for their freedom and the circumstances that may lead to a breakdown of cooperation in the face of oppression.

The study also explores the impact of fragility on the relationship between social capital and local governance functions, analyzing outcomes related to service delivery, public participation, and livelihood adaptation. However, challenges persist due to power struggles among different tribes at the regional level, fueled by a political vacuum. Despite community contributions and active engagement, these power dynamics can complicate the quest for unity. The research reflects on the notion that while unity is crucial for achieving collective objectives, a lack of recognition and respect for the existence of other groups or tribes can lead to further conflicts and fragility. Hence, future research should investigate the persistent conflicts rooted in tribalism and the ongoing power struggles that challenge unity among ethnic groups.

5.4 Conclusion

The research aimed to explore "The Role of Social Capital in the Emerging Local Governance in Fragile Environments in Myanmar: A Case of Chin State," focusing on how social capital—such as trust, norms of reciprocity, and social networks—contributes to the emerging process of local governance in a context of fragility, characterized by political instability, the collapse of governance institutions, and social divisions in a historically marginalized region. The research identified the key mechanisms of emerging local governance at the local level in the fragile environment of Chin State, explored the role of social capital in developing local governance structures and administration in this fragile context, and examined how the fragile environment impacts the relationship between social capital and local governance in Chin State. Through a combination of literature reviews and qualitative interviews, the research demonstrated that social capital plays a significant role in developing administrative structures and facilitating local governance in Chin State.

Key findings show that Chin State exists in a fragile context due to the 2021 coup, which has led to political instability, the collapse of governance institutions, and social division. The fragility stage has reached a point of contestation between the

population's delegitimization of the military regime and their efforts to build legitimacy through public protests, civil disobedience movements, and armed resistance. As a result of this fragility, governance functions and public services have effectively ceased. To address the governance and public service gap, alongside territorial claims, local governance has emerged to provide public administration, judiciary, and defense in typically two forms: township-based and tribe-based public administration, rooted in self-determination within their own territories.

In this emerging process, social capital plays a crucial role in fostering trust, norms of reciprocity, and civic engagement or social networks. The research finds that social trust—confidence in one another—significantly enhances volunteer work and collaboration for community benefit, as well as reliance on the judiciary system through traditional conflict resolution mechanisms that align with the existing rules and orders of newly established governance institutions. Furthermore, political trust lends legitimacy to emerging local leaders and agencies. Amid fragility, norms of reciprocity serve as a crucial resource, particularly for technical and financial support from the Chin diaspora, as well as in-kind contributions from local residents based on their tribal or Chin ethnic identity. In this process, social networks facilitate the necessary coordination, technical support, networking, and resources to empower local governance in Chin State.

Additionally, the research indicates that, as a consequence of fragility, the relationship between social capital and local governance in Chin State has also affected service delivery, particularly in education and health provisions, as well as effective people's participation and livelihood adaptation, contributing to community resilience. Moreover, the study revealed that while social capital has fostered the emergence and functioning of self-determined local governance with public participation in decision-making processes, it has also led to power struggles stemming from exclusionary practices that undermine trust within communities.

Furthermore, the study opens the door to further exploration of the dynamics between different tribes and the transition from emerging local governance to good governance that leads to peaceful and sustainable conditions, particularly in post-conflict and transitional settings. Future research could explore strategies for strengthening and bridging social capital in regions with deep ethnic divisions.

In sum, social capital plays a significant role in establishing local governance, particularly in unstable, unpredictable, and fragile situations. However, careful attention is needed by key stakeholders to harness this positive contribution of social capital to build better, more effective governance mechanisms instead of leading to division and conflicts in Chin State. The research findings recommend that fostering social capital alongside the development of formal governance mechanisms will be key to achieving sustainable and inclusive governance in the future of Chin State.

REFERENCES

ACDD. (2018). *Grassroots Democracy: Analysis of the Ward or Village Tract Administration Law - Progressive Voice*. https://progressivevoicemyanmar.org/2018/05/13/grassroots-democracy-analysis-of-the-ward-or-village-tract-administration-law/

Adler, P. S., & Kwon, S. W. (2002). Social Capital: Prospects for a new concept. *Academy of Managment Review*, *27*(1).

Ake, C. (1985). *Political Economy of Nigeria*. Longman.

Albrecht, P. (2013). *Local Actors and Service Delivery in Fragile Situations | DIIS*. https://www.diis.dk/en/research/local-actors-and-service-delivery-in-fragile-situations

Alshenqeeti, H. (2014). Interviewing as a Data Collection Method: A Critical Review. *English Linguistics Research*, *3*(1), p39. https://doi.org/10.5430/elr.v3n1p39

Anderson, C. J., & Lotempio, A. J. (2002). Winning, Losing and Political Trust in America. *British Journal of Political Science*, *32*(2), 335–351.

Arandel, C., Brinkerhoff, D. W., & Bell, M. M. (2015). Reducing Fragility through Strengthening Local Governance in Guinea. *Third World Quarterly*, *36*(5).

Benezer, S. (2021). *More than 72 pc of civil servants join CDM in Chin State*. Burma News International. https://www.bnionline.net/en/news/more-72-pc-civil-servants-join-cdm-chin-state

Bose, S. (2004). Decolonization and State Building in South Asia. *Journal of International Affairs*, *58*(1), 95–114.

Bourdieu, P. (1985). The Forms of Capital. In *The Sociology of Economic Life* (bcNewPutPuGPC). Routledge.

Braun, V., & and Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77–101. https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Brinkerhoff, D. W. (Ed.). (2007). Governance in Post-Conflict Societies. *Taylor & Francis.*, 4.

Brinkerhoff, D. W., & Johnson, R. W. (2009). Decentralized local governance in fragile states: Learning from Iraq. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, *75*(4), 585–607. https://doi.org/10.1177/0020852309349424

Britten, N. (1995). Qualitative Interivews in Medical Research. *BMJ: British Medical Journal*, *311*(6999), 251–253.

Chung, H. (2019). *Local Governance Sector—Myanmar Case Study* [Sub-National Government-Myanmar Case Study]. CurbingCorruption. https://curbingcorruption.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/191016-CurbingCorruption-Myanmar-research-report-Heesu-Chung.pdf

Clapp, P. A., & Hein, A. (2023). *Amid the Fight for Myanmar, Federalism Rises from the Grass Roots*. United States Institute of Peace. https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/05/amid-fight-myanmar-federalism-rises-grass-roots

Coffé, H., & Geys, B. (2005). Institutional Performance And Social Capital: An Application To The Local Government Level. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, *27*(5), 485–501. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0735-2166.2005.00249.x

Coleman, J. S. (1988). Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital. *American Journal of Sociology*, *94*, S95–S120.

Collier, P., & Hoeffler, A. (2004). Greed and grievance in civil war. *Oxford Economic Papers*, *56*(4), 563–595. https://doi.org/10.1093/oep/gpf064

CRPH. (2021). *CRPH, International Relations Office Announcement No. (1/2021)—* ပြည်ထောင်စုသမ္မတမြန်မာနိုင်ငံတော်. https://crphmyanmar.org/publications/crph-international-relations-office-announcement-no-1-2021/

Damico, A. J., Conway, M. M., & Damico, S. B. (2000). Patterns of Political Trust and Mistrust: Three Moments in the Lives of Democratic Citizens. *Polity*, *32*(3), 377–400.

Egreteau, R. (2017). *Parliamentary development in Myanmar: An Overview of the Union Parliament, 2011-2016*. The Asia Foundation.

Eichensehr, K. E. (2021). Military coup in Burma draws international condemnation and pressure. *American Journal of International Law*, *115*(3), 558–567.

Ekeh, P. P. (1997). The concept of second liberation and the prospects of democracy in Africa: A Nigerian context. In *Dilemmas of Democratization in Nigeria* (pp. 83–110). CASS (Center for Advanced Social Science).

Fearon, J. D., & Laitin, D. D. (2003). Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War. *American Political Science Review*, *97*(01), 75–90. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0003055403000534

Foley, M. W., & Edwards, B. (1999). Is it Time to Disinvest in Social Capital? *Journal of Public Policy*, *19*(2), 141–173.

Fund for Peace. (2023). *Fragile States Index 2023: Annual Report*. Fund for Peace. https://fragilestatesindex.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/FSI-2023-Report_final.pdf

Gambetta, D. (1988). *Can We Trust Trust?* Basil Blackwell.

Gouldner, A. W. (1960). The norm of reciprocity: A preliminary statement. *American Sociological Review*, 181–178.

Grandvoinnet, H., Aslam, G., & Raha, S. (2015). *Opening the black box: The contextual drivers of social accountability*. World Bank Publications.

Grbich, C. (2010). Qualitative data analysis. In *Researching Practice* (pp. 173–183). Brill.

Gurr, T. R. (1970). *Why men rebel*. Routledge.

Hanifan, L. J. (1916). The Rural School Community Center. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *67*(1).

Herbst, J. (1996). Responding to state failure in Africa. *International Security*, *21*(3), 120–144.

Hydén, G. (1980). *Beyond Ujamaa in Tanzania: Underdevelopment and an uncaptured peasantry*. University of California Press.

ICNCC. (2021). *Interim Chin National Consultative Council*. https://icncc.site/

ICS, & Nyan Cooridor. (2024). *Power Dynamic Analysis: Chinland*. Institute of Chinland Studies.

Irrawaddy, T. (2022, September 8). Interview | Around 70% of Western Myanmar's Chin State Controlled by Resistance. *The Irrawaddy*. https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/around-70-of-western-myanmars-chin-state-controlled-by-resistance.html

Irrawaddy, T. (2024, June 20). Two Fighters Killed as Rival Myanmar Resistance Groups Clash in Chin State. *The Irrawaddy*. https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/two-fighters-killed-as-rival-myanmar-resistance-groups-clash-in-chin-state.html

Keohane, R. O., & Nye, J. S. (2003). Governance in a globalizing world. In *Power and governance in a partially globalized world* (pp. 193–218). Routledge.

Khalaf, R. (2015). Governance without government in Syria: Civil society and state building during conflict. *Syria Studies*, *7*(3), 37–72.

Kim, J. (2021). Navigating political upheaval: Rebel governance and trust dynamics in post-coup Myanmar. *International Growth Centre*. https://www.theigc.org/blogs/navigating-political-upheaval-rebel-governance-and-trust-dynamics-post-coup-myanmar

Kothari, R. (1989). *State against democracy: In search of humane governance*. New Horizons Press.

Kyed, H. M., & Engberg-Pedersen, L. (2008). Local Governance in Fragile States. *Danish Institute of International Studies*, 4.

Lamont, C. (2020). *Research Methods in Politics and International Relations*. SAGE Publications.

Lilleker, D. G. (2003). Interviewing the political elite: Navigating a potential manifield. *Politics*, *23*(3), 207–214.

Lin, N. (2001). *Social Capital: A theory of social structure and action*. Cambridge University Press.

Marques, R. (2004). From Charis to Antidosis: The reciprocity thesis revisited. In *Networks, Trust and Social Capital* (pp. 15–46).

Myanmar Now. (2024). *Myanmar military continues airstrikes on hospitals and clinics in Chin State*. https://myanmar-now.org/en/news/myanmar-military-continues-airstrikes-on-hospitals-and-clinics-in-chin-state/?tztc=1

Newton, K. (2001). Trust, Social Capital, Civil Society, and Democracy. *International Political Science Review*, *22*(2), 201–214.

Nyana, K., Aung, A., Phan, J., & Mon, T. (2024). Collectivism and Everyday Resistance in Anyar. In C. Jaquet (Ed.), *Defiance, civil resistance and experiences of violence under military rule in Myanmar* (pp. 203–247). Institut de recherche sur l'Asie du Sud-Est contemporaine. https://doi.org/10.4000/12m2b

Nzongola-Ntalaja, G., & Lee, M. C. (1998). *The State and Democracy in Africa*. Africa World Press.

OECD. (2022). *States of Fragility 2022*. OECD. https://doi.org/10.1787/c7fedf5e-en

Osaghae, E. E. (2005). The state of Africa's second liberation. *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, *7*(1), 1–20.

Osaghae, E. E. (2007). Fragile States. *Development in Practice*, *17*(4–5), 691–699.

Pauli, T. C. (2024, February 8). Myanmar: Resistance and the Cost of the Coup in Chin State. *The Asia Foundation*. https://asiafoundation.org/myanmar-resistance-and-the-cost-of-the-coup-in-chin-state/

Perez- Dias, V. (2002). *From Civil War to Civil Society: Social Capital in Spain from the 1930s to the 1990s*. Oxford University Press.

Price, R. (2017). *Local Governance in Conflict-affected Contexts* (K4D Helpdesk Report No. 234).

Putnam, R. (1993). *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton University Press.

Putnam, R. (1995). Bowling Alone. *Journal of Democracy*, *6*(1).

Putnam, R. (2000). *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. Simon & Schuster.

Rotberg, R. I. (2003). Failed States, Collapsed States, Weak States: Causes and Indicators. In *State Failure and State Weakness in a time of terror*. Brookings Institution Press.

Sakhong, L. H. (2023). *In Search of Chin Identity: A Study in Religion, Politics and Ethnic Identity in Burma*. NIAS Press.

Scott, J. C. (2009). *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*. Yale University Press.

Shah, A. (2006). *Local Governance in Developing Countries*. Wrold Bank Publications.

Shi, T. (2001). Cultural Values and Political Trust: A Comparison of the People's Republic of China and Taiwan. *Comparative Politics*, *33*(4), 401–419.

Silverstein, J. (1959). The federal dilemma in Burma. *Far Eastern Survey*, *28*(7), 97–105.

Special Advisory Council for Myanmar. (2024). *Effective Control In Myanmar: 2024 Update*. https://specialadvisorycouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/SAC-M-Effective_Control-in-Myanmar-2024-Update-ENGLISH.pdf

Stewart, F. (2008). *Horizontal Inequalities and Conflict: Explaining Group Violence in Multiethnic Societies*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Stewart, F., & Brown, G. (2009). *Fragile States* (No. Wroking Paper No.51; CRISE Working Paper). CRISE, Department of International Development, University of Oxford.

Sukma, R. (2003). Democratic Governance and Security in Indonesia. *Japanese Journal of Political Science*, *4*(2).

The Gobal New Light of Myanmar. (2021). The Gobal New Light of Myanmar, Tuesday 2 February 2021. *The Global New Light of Myanmar*. https://www.burmalibrary.org/en/the-global-new-light-of-myanmar-tuesday-2-february-2021

The World Bank. (1992). *Governance and Development* [The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development]. https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/604951468739447676/pdf/multi-page.pdf

UNDP. (2014). *Local Governance Mapping: Highlights—Chin State*. UNDP Myanmar. https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/migration/mm/UNDP_MM_FF_Mapping-Highlights-Chin-State-July-2014.pdf

UNDP. (2015). *Mapping the State of Local Governance in Myanmar*. UNDP Myanmar. https://www.undp.org/myanmar/publications/mapping-state-local-governance-myanmar-background-and-methodology

UNFPA. (2016). *The 2014 Myanmar Population and Housing Census: Thematic Report On Population Dynamics* (Census Report No. Volume 4-E). Department of Population, Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population. https://myanmar.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/4E_Population%20Dynamics.pdf

UNHCR. (2024). *Myanmar UNHCR Displacement Overview 25 Mar 2024*. UNHCR Operational Data Portal. https://data.unhcr.org/en/documents/details/107567

Walton, M. J. (2008). Ethnicity, Conflict, and History in Burma: The Myths of Panglong. *Asian Survey*, *48*(6), 889–910.

Weiner, A. B. (1980). Reproduction: A Replacement for Reciprocity. *American Ethnologist*, *7*(1), 71–85.

Wennmann, A. (2010). *Grasping the Strengths of Fragile States: Aid Effectiveness between 'Top-Down' and 'Bottom-Up' Statebuilding* (No. 6; CCDP Working Paper). Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies. https://repository.graduateinstitute.ch/record/4064

Wilson, R. H. (2000). Understanding Local Governance: An International Perspective. *Revista de Administracao de Empresas*, *40*, 51–63.

Young, T. K. (1994). *The Health of Native Americans: Toward a biocultural epidemiology*. Oxford University Press.

CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME   Phwe Yu Mon

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

2019   Master of International Relations

                                  Australian National University

2019   Graduate Diploma in International Affairs

                                  Australian National University.

2008   Bachelor of Science in Engineering in Cosmetic
                                  Technology

                                  Yangon University and Dagon University

WORK EXPERIENCE

2020 – 2021   Consortium Project Manager and Technical Advisor
                                  (Peace), United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (World
                                  Vision)

2018 – 2019   Librarian, Mainland Southeast Asian Unit, National
                                  Library of Australia (Canberra)

2014 – 2017   Program Manager, Spirit in Education Movement (SEM)

2013– 2014   Governance Training Officer, Global Platform
                                  (Actionaid Myanmar)

2012 – 2015   Country Coordinator (2012-2013)/ Regional Coordinator
                                  (2013 – 2014) ASEAN Youth Forum (ASEAN Youth
                                  Movement)