of the MPT towers are found in urban areas and along the country’s main transport routes; provision is much poorer in the rural, mountain and peripheral regions. This is reflected in the low level of household mobile phone ownership, but it is also noticeable that the number of households with mobile phones in border regions (especially to China and Thailand) is very high along stretches with higher population densities. As regards the distribution of the towers owned by private providers (Telenor and Ooredoo), it is noticeable that preference was given first to urban and densely populated areas.

**MOBILE COMMUNICATION**

The use of mobile communications shows Myanmar-specific traits:

- The main user group is the young and educated population, particularly the 18-34 age group and university graduates (Thaw Tar Min/Fife/Bohlin 2014: 15).
- Many users share a mobile phone with family members and friends, largely on account of the high purchase costs of handsets and expensive phone tariffs.
- The main motive for having a mobile phone is for use in emergencies (96%), convenience (95%), communication (94%), time-saving (92%) and direct access to information (90%) (Thaw Tar Min/Fife/Bohlin 2014: 11).
- The predominant forms of use are voice calling (83%), texting (52%) and social networking (43%) (Thaw Tar Min/Fife/Bohlin 2014: 13) – a user preference which reflects and compensates for the difficult and expensive general transport situation in Myanmar.
- When asked about the most important functions and services that should be further expanded, community information is the first preference (40%); almost one third of respondents would like to see the expansion of healthcare services via mobile phone, a further 23% mention job opportunities and 6% want to see a rollout of mobile money transfer services (Thaw Tar Min/Fife/Bohlin 2014: 13).

As regards the further expansion of mobile communications services in particular, the providers are pursuing different strategies: due to the inadequate UMTS infrastructure, 3G is available only to a very limited extent and LTE (1800 MHz) is still in its infancy. In cooperation with France Telecom/Orange, MPT launched international roaming services for GSM and WCDMA in 2014 (Thaw Tar Min/Fife/Bohlin 2014: 5/6). ‘Telenor has intended to implement 2G network in rural areas and both 2G and 3G networks in urban centers. ... Ooredoo has decided to jump directly to 3G networks, providing both 3G and 4G networks in urban areas and 3G in rural areas’ (Thaw Tar Min/Fife/Bohlin 2014: 6).

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