



# ANNUAL REPORT 2018 MYANMAR





*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

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# FOREWORD

It gives us great pleasure to present the UNDP Myanmar Annual Report for 2018. The year was a significant one for both UNDP and Myanmar. We finalised our new Country Programme Document (CPD) 2018-2022, which is closely aligned with the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP). During 2018, Myanmar continued to navigate multiple transitions – towards peace, democracy, and an open market economy. These transitions are occurring in a complex development context where high concentrations of poverty in rural areas contrast with high headline growth figures and accelerated development in urban centres.

At the same time, armed conflict and displacement are still occurring in many parts of the country and frequent natural disasters pose an increasing risk to reverse development gains. In this context, we continued to provide support to these multiple transitions, and to the Government of Myanmar's (GoM) efforts to develop and implement a broad range of policies, programmes and projects.

During 2018, we started to implement our new country programme. The country programme has two main outcomes – governance and sustainable peace, and sustainable and inclusive growth. Both outcomes are closely aligned with national priorities and the MSDP, which in turn is inspired by the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The first outcome has focused on strengthening key governance institutions at both union and sub-national levels (e.g. parliament) to make them more democratic, transparent, and responsive to peoples' needs. The second outcome has focused on promoting more inclusive and sustainable growth, and strengthening Myanmar's ability to adapt to, or respond to, the impacts of climate change. An important element of our

work during 2018 was to support Myanmar's efforts to translate, localize and implement the SDGs, within the framework of the MSDP.

The Rakhine State crisis, linked to the exodus of hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims to Bangladesh, had our full attention in 2018. Together with UN Women, and with significant funding from the Government of Japan, we initiated the development of a new area-based programme in Rakhine, focused on women's economic empowerment and inclusive growth benefitting all communities. Following the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) between the UNDP, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the GoM in June 2018 to support the return of refugees from Bangladesh, we have worked together with UNHCR to develop and implement a new joint humanitarian-development programme in northern Rakhine.

During 2018, our office took an active part in the global reform of the United Nations (UN) Development System. After nearly 40 years, the functions of UN Resident Coordinator (RC), and UNDP Resident Representative (RR) were de-linked, and a new RR (former Country Director Peter Batchelor) was appointed to lead UNDP Myanmar. We will, however, continue to play an important role in supporting the overall UN Development System, for example through our 'integrator' role.

Also, our office underwent a significant change management exercise, aimed at aligning the office, and our staffing, with the new country programme.

So, what will 2019 bring? We will continue to support the GoM in its efforts to implement the MSDP, thereby promoting more inclusive and sustainable development. Reform of the UN Development System will continue and all UN agencies in Myanmar will make efforts to move more staff and resources to Nay Pyi Taw, now that we have a new UN office in the capital. With our local and international partners, and with the support of our donors, and based on our history of more than 50 years in Myanmar, we intend to keep playing our part in moving Myanmar forward, towards a more peaceful and sustainable future for all.

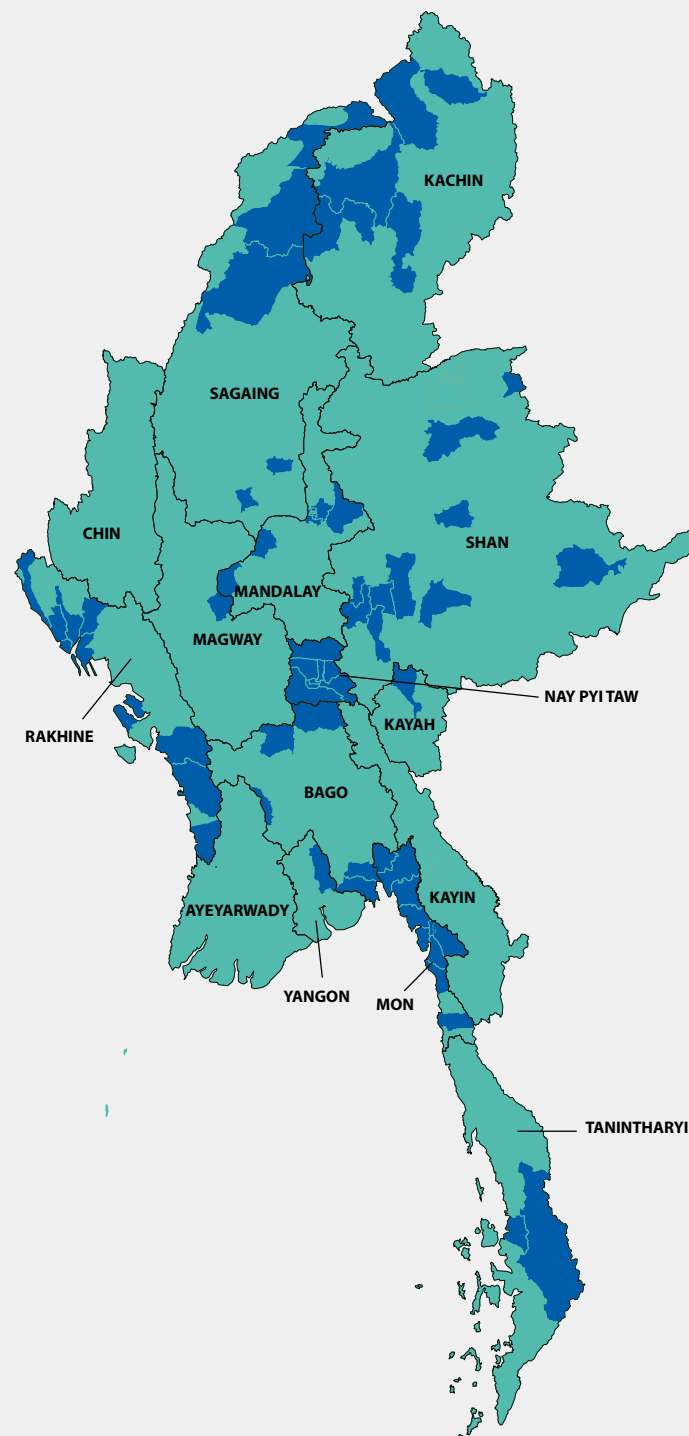


**Knut Ostby**  
*UN Resident and Humanitarian  
Coordinator and UNDP Resident  
Representative a.i.*

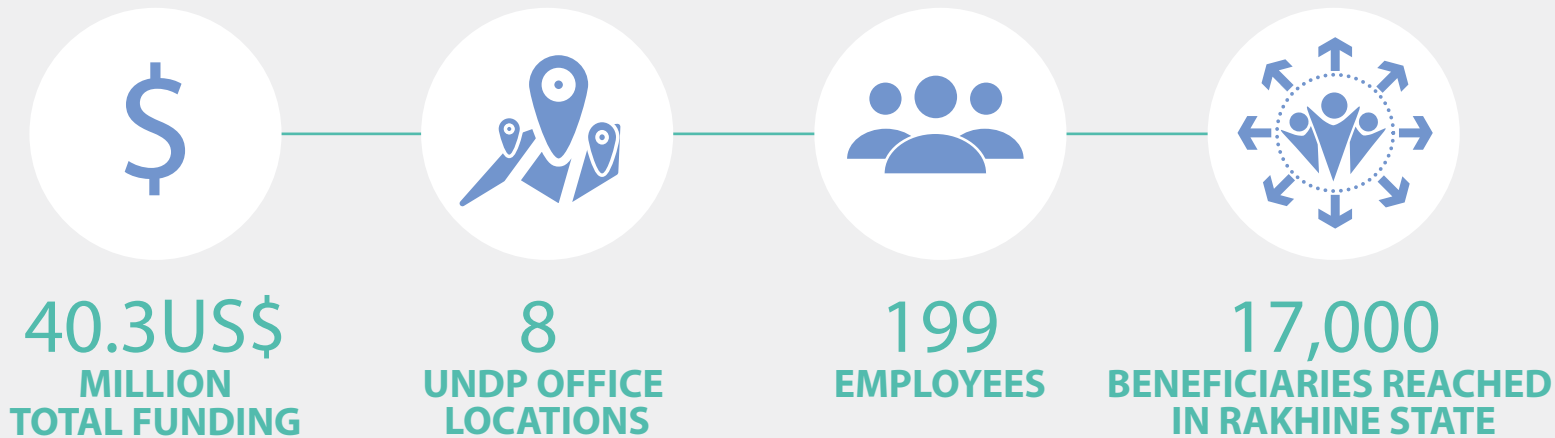


**Peter Batchelor**  
*UNDP Country Director and  
Resident Representative a.i.*

UNDP supports activities in  
**56 townships in  
10 States/Regions**



# UNDP IN A SNAPSHOT



## PARTNERSHIPS



10

GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES

16

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS



8

CENTRAL OFFICES/ INDEPENDENT  
COMMISSION AND BOARDS



UNION SUPREME COURT  
UNION AND SUBNATIONAL  
PARLIAMENTS



22

IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS INCLUDING  
NGOs/CSOs, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES



10

JOINT PROGRAMMES  
WITH UN AGENCIES



1

PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIP



*Female Member of Parliament sharing her thoughts during Hluttaw Development Session held in Nay Pyi Taw.*

Photo: Yamon Phu Thit





# STRATEGIC FOCUS

**The strategic focus of the UNDP country programme is to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs within its framework, while addressing the challenges of multiple transitions. In 2018, UNDP operationalised a new country programme closely anchored to national priorities that will help UNDP to achieve a substantial impact in the years to come.**

Peace, governance, environment and sustainable development are closely interrelated. To achieve lasting peace, political dialogue, trust building and constitutional reforms are needed. Pressing questions regarding national identity, citizenship and control over natural resources need to be addressed. The GoM is committed to strengthening the country's democratic institutions by promoting accountability and transparency, and improving capacities for service delivery, integrated policy planning, coordination and analysis.

The justice sector faces institutional capacity challenges and is focused on justice reform, strengthening the rule of law and improving access to justice for all. The country has ratified several international conventions concerning human rights, notably on women, children, persons with disabilities and trafficking. Women continue to be underrepresented in

governance institutions across all three branches of government especially at senior levels. The situation in Rakhine State is complex, and the GoM established an Advisory Commission chaired by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in September 2016. Delivering support in Rakhine is a priority.

On the economic front, while Myanmar maintains 'relatively strong growth momentum by regional and global standards' it has been afflicted with macro-economic volatility and downside risks.<sup>1</sup> A concern is that this growth is concentrated in a small number of urban areas (poverty in rural areas is still much higher than in urban areas), and that much of this growth is disproportionately dependent on extractive industries (e.g. oil and gas), which does not create jobs for communities and places a burden on the environment.



## **A strong partnership**

UNDP enjoys a strong relationship with the Government of Myanmar at all levels (Union, State/Region, and township.)

This comparative advantage has put us in a unique position that enables us to support the emergence of stronger democratic institutions and a more inclusive State, with improved capacity to deliver quality services to all its people.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/myanmar/publication/myanmar-economic-monitor-december-2018>



*Photo caption:  
UNDP conducted its first  
Country Programme  
Board Meeting with  
counterparts from Union  
Government, Hluttaws,  
State and Region  
governments and donors  
to discuss how UNDP  
can better contribute  
towards the implemen-  
tation of the MSDP.*

Deforestation, large-scale mining and increasing urbanization threaten the sustainability of natural resources. Much of the country's population and economic activities are concentrated in disaster risk-prone coastal areas and the environmentally stressed central dry zone, which have high levels of poverty and a low capacity to respond. Myanmar's vulnerability to damaging earthquakes poses additional risks, especially in the rapidly growing urban economic hubs. The country's level of earthquake preparedness needs to be strengthened.

Myanmar ranks 148 out of 189 countries in the Human Development Index (2018). This is slightly higher than in recent years, but still lower than other neighbouring Least Developed Countries (LDCs). It is also clear that the economic gains of recent years have not proportionately benefitted poor states such as Chin and Rakhine. This needs to change.

## ALIGNMENT OF COUNTRY PROGRAMME AND MSDP

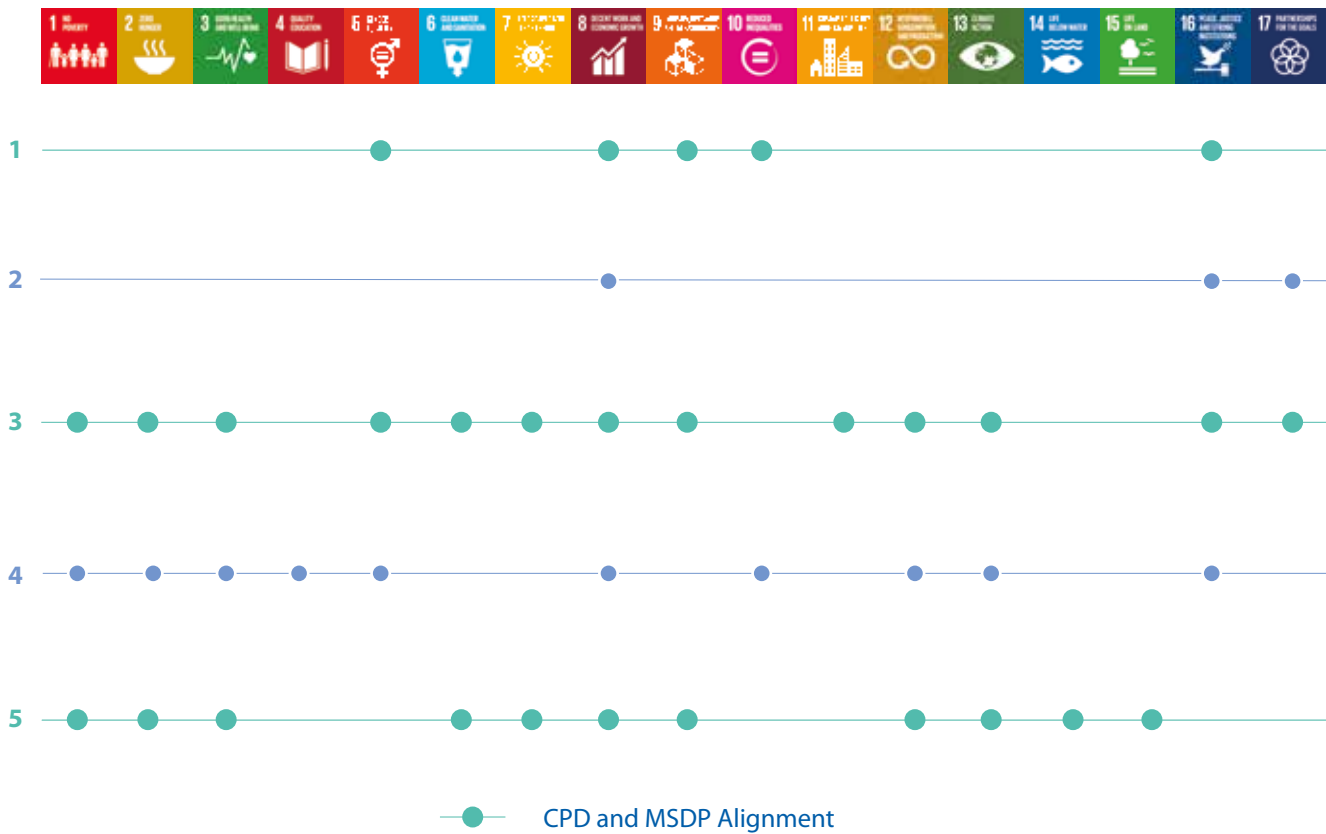
The MSDP 2018-2030 is Myanmar's long-term vision on how the country should be transformed into a peaceful, prosperous and democratic nation. It adopts all 17 SDGs of the 2030 Agenda and 79 out of 169 SDG targets. The plan is aligned with the 2016 national economic policy and is supported by 151 action plans, that address issues ranging from peace and reconciliation to the environment and cross-cutting themes like gender equality.

The UNDP in Myanmar is guided in its operations by the UNDP Strategic Plan 2018-2021, the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), and the CPD 2018-2022. As the Country Programme is following the long-term SDGs agenda the MSDP is aligned with the SDGs and UNDP follows the MSDP roadmap. The CPD aligns very closely with 3 out of 5 of the goals of the MSDP:

- Goal 1:** Peace, National Reconciliation, Security and Good Governance
- Goal 3:** Job Creation and Private Sector Led Growth
- Goal 5:** Natural Resources and the Environment for Posterity of the Nation

# UNDP COUNTRY PROGRAMME ALIGNMENT WITH SDGs AND MYANMAR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PLAN (GOAL 1, 3, 5)

MYANMAR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PLAN



## CPD Outcome 1

Peace and Governance: People in Myanmar live in a more peaceful and inclusive society, governed by more democratic and accountable institutions, and benefit from strengthened human rights and rule of law protection

## CPD Outcome 2

Planet and Prosperity: By 2022, Myanmar becomes more resilient to climate and disaster risk with efficient environmental governance and sustainable use of natural resources



The Country Programme for 2018-2022 covers the following areas:

- Effective public institutions enabled to develop and implement evidence-based policies and systems that respond to the needs of the people
- Improved civil service policies and systems, and enhanced strategic human resources management
- Mechanisms, institutions and capacities strengthened to sustain peace and social cohesion
- Enhanced accountability, integrity and oversight towards strengthening legitimacy of the state and promoting access to justice and human rights

- Promoting inclusive, resilient and sustainable environmental management building upon and leveraging vertical funds and programmes
- Inclusive financial growth and employment creation

In line with the principle of leaving no one behind, the new country programme focuses on strengthening the ability of national counterparts to address the needs of the vulnerable, defined as those exposed to conflict/violence, climate and disaster risks and those marginalized by inadequate economic opportunities and poor public service delivery.

Programme Areas	Focus Area
Governance and Sustainable Peace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Core Government Functions and Parliamentary Processes</li> <li>• Public Administration Reform</li> <li>• Anti-Corruption and Accountability, Parliamentary Oversight and Representation, Rule of Law</li> <li>• Local Governance, Institution Strengthening, Fiscal Decentralization, Public Financial Management Systems, and Participatory and Responsive Development Planning</li> <li>• Sustaining Peace, Strengthening Capacities of Women and Youth to Contribute to Community Cohesion and Sustaining Peace</li> <li>• Institutional, Financial and Technical Capacity Building Support</li> <li>• Aid Coordination</li> </ul>
Sustainable Inclusive Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Governance; Environmental Policy</li> <li>• Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation</li> <li>• Biodiversity conservation, Integrated Land and Seascape Management</li> <li>• Building resilience and Disaster Risk Reduction</li> <li>• Rural Renewable Energy</li> <li>• Building Capacity of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, Livelihoods and Women's Economic Empowerment</li> </ul>

The UNDP approach is area-based, which is critical in attesting the intended impacts on institutional effectiveness and responsiveness to the needs of the targeted beneficiaries. The area-based model involves all UNDP projects in specific geographic locations to demonstrate the combined effect of all Country Programme components towards unlocking the country's development potential and meeting needs of the people and communities. The selection of the States/Regions UNDP works in is based on previous experience and new opportunities for scaled-up SDG-related programming.

The UNDP Country Office (CO) in Myanmar went through significant change in 2018. Prompted by lessons learned from the previous country programme, and by wider UN and UNDP reform efforts, the CO was restructured. This operation led to the recruitment of 117 new staff, the setup of a new office in Nay Pyi Taw (as part of a one UN office), development of a new Country Programme (2018-2022), and the roll-out of 5 new flagship projects.

UNDP also evaluated the way it works. This not only led to the introduction of the area-based approach and five flagship projects, but also to more flexibility, integration and expansion of partnerships with a wide range of partners. In addition, UNDP's programme support services have become more effective and efficient. UNDP has one eye firmly on the future. As part of its commitment to national ownership and sustainability, but also to be able to grow its portfolio of projects, UNDP is focusing on building the capacities of its national staff and local partners.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES

UNDP's activities are ultimately aimed at improving the lives of all people in Myanmar. So, what will in broad strokes be the result of the new Country Programme? Two major outcomes are expected at the end of the five-year cycle:

- **CPD Outcome 1 – Peace and Governance:**  
People in Myanmar live in a more peaceful and inclusive society, governed by more democratic and accountable institutions, and benefit from strengthened human rights and rule of law protection.
- **CPD Outcome 2 – Planet and Prosperity:**  
By 2022, Myanmar becomes more resilient to climate and disaster risk with efficient environmental governance and sustainable use of natural resources.

With the groundwork UNDP has laid in the past year, full support to the GoM can be given to bring peace and sustainable development to all communities across Myanmar.



**5**  
new flagship  
projects  
rolled out.

# FIVE FLAGSHIP PROJECTS

## **SUPPORT TO EFFECTIVE & RESPONSIVE INSTITUTIONS PROJECT (SERIP)**

SERIP is a 5-year initiative that aims to strengthen the effectiveness of state executive and legislative institutions in understanding the needs and aspirations of the people of Myanmar. SERIP ensures SDG indicators are included in the MSDP implementation framework to enhance the government's monitoring of how its policies contribute to achievement of the SDGs. The project ensures stronger linkages between union and subnational institutions on strengthening core government functions to facilitate effective policy making and public service delivery. SERIP is organized into four key intervention areas: data for development, policy management, parliamentary law-making, and sub-national governance.

## **STRENGTHENING ACCOUNTABILITY AND RULE OF LAW (SARL)**

SARL aims to assist the GoM in strengthening accountability, access to justice and rule of law systems. The project works across all levels of the three branches of government. UNDP supports a strengthened Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) and Union, Region and State parliaments will be supported to strengthen oversight and to increase their capacity. SARL will also work to improve the justice and human rights sector with the Union Attorney General's Office (UAGO), the Office of the Supreme Court of the Union and the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC).







## **LEADERSHIP, EFFECTIVENESS, ADAPTABILITY AND PROFESSIONALISM IN MYANMAR'S CIVIL SERVICE (LEAP)**

LEAP enables fundamental change in Myanmar's Civil Service through a close partnership with the Union Civil Service Board (UCSB). The project aims to support the GoM to achieve its vision of an "ethical, merit based, inclusive and responsive Civil Service promoting public participation and strengthening the trust of the people" by enabling the Myanmar Civil Service to be more people, service and results oriented. It will do so through reviewing and modernizing civil service regulation and systems; introducing management practices that promote meritocracy, ethics, transparency and accountability and inclusivity; improving service delivery through enhanced performance and motivation; and contributing to decentralizing civil service management practices in the form of pilots at national and sub-national levels.



## **TOWNSHIP DEMOCRATIC LOCAL GOVERNANCE (TDLG)**

TDLG supports democratic local governance by giving local people a voice to influence annual township planning and budgeting through elected representatives. The project contributes to the development of a democratic local governance policy framework for the GoM, to advance its decentralization agenda. The overall objective of providing grants to townships is to assist putting in place a responsive township administration that effectively and efficiently provides basic services to its people in an inclusive, accountable and transparent manner. The key focus areas of this project are local governance, institutional development, fiscal decentralization, public financial management systems, and participatory and responsive development planning.



## **GOVERNANCE FOR RESILIENCE AND SUSTAINABILITY PROJECT (GRSP)**

GRSP will assist Myanmar in implementing recent policy reforms related to environmental governance, climate change and disaster risk reduction (DRR), to ensure that economic growth in Myanmar is more inclusive, resilient and sustainable. UNDP recognizes that Myanmar's environmental assets present unique opportunities for green economic development, which can directly support women's economic empowerment and community resilience. GRSP is a national project, with a focus on Sagaing Region, Bago Region, Rakhine State and Shan State.

UNDP organized a Youth Engagement Conference on SDG Goal 16 with more than 140 young people from different States and Regions of Myanmar.



# ACHIEVEMENTS: PEACE AND GOVERNANCE

**To achieve sustainable development and durable peace, effective national and sub-national democratic institutions are key. In 2018 UNDP supported the GoM in monitoring the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA), strengthening governance institutions and mitigating the conflict risks posed by inequality and exclusion.**

Goal 1 of the government's MSDP is to foster Peace, National Reconciliation, Security and Good Governance. Peace and security are key for the country to be able to promote development for all the Myanmar people and achieving the SDGs, while good governance not only guarantees that all citizens are treated equally and fairly under the law, but also that everybody can engage with the government and benefit from the delivery of public services. UNDP's governance interventions therefore aim at increasing the ability of the people to engage with government, which also is a strategy that is highlighted in the MSDP.

## **SUPPORTING MYANMAR'S PEACE PROCESS THROUGH THE UN SUPPORT PLATFORM**

After a long history of conflict in Myanmar, the Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee (JMC) represented

the first joint and subnational institution in safeguarding the NCA. The UN's and UNDP's support to establish a UN Platform followed the request of the State Counsellor in 2016. The JMC plays an active role in monitoring, reporting on and negotiating a resolution to conflict between signatories to the NCA. It contributes to the process of trust building and decision making across and between Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs), government, the military and communities.

In 2018 UNDP continued to support the JMC to focus on three priority areas that included strengthening the administrative capacities of JMC's technical secretariat, development of a technical assistance plan for the JMC, that coordinates technical support expertise, and exposure to international comparative experience, including on key ceasefire interface issues such as gender and human rights protection, as



The Joint Ceasefire  
Monitoring Committee  
resolved

**57%**  
of complaints in 2018.





*Photo caption:  
A participant reading  
information at the  
Township Plan Public  
Presentation in  
Thandwe, Rakhine.*

well as the functioning of JMC's national and sub-national committees and Monitoring, Verification and Conflict Resolution (MVR).

The JMC 'platform' facilitated support to the JMC in areas such as the disengagement of troops and insider mediation by drawing upon substantive technical inputs from the UN system in Myanmar, the UN Peacebuilding Support Office, the Mediation Support Unit of the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) and Clingendael, the Netherlands Institute of International Relations.

The JMC Support Platform concluded in 2018 and is currently being evaluated. Among the positive developments is that many complaints received by the JMC were resolved, demonstrating that the MVR mechanism is becoming effective despite the challenges inherent to the very complex peace process.

Another positive development is that the JMC-State Committees are now conducting regular public consultations at the village level. Army commanders and former combatants are wearing the same blue JMC vest, having been briefed on their joint responsibility

to implement the military code of conduct, which includes the protection of civilians. The JMC has demonstrated by its actions that joint decision making among former combatants is possible, albeit cumbersome and at times problematic.

## **PROMOTING EQUITABLE AND CONFLICT-SENSITIVE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Local governance is a cornerstone of Myanmar's transition. It is important to ensure that people in all states and regions can access government services and, through their representatives, participate in local development planning.

In 2018 UNDP worked in close collaboration with State/Region governments and township administrations in Bago State, Mon State and Rakhine State to support an inclusive, participatory and evidence-based planning model together with a formula-based township development grant in 14 townships. As a result of this successful planning model, the Rakhine State Government expressed willingness to use this approach of formula-based allocation in townships currently not supported by UNDP.

UNDP's local governance work helped improve the quality of service delivery to local communities and increased the ability of people to engage with the government. Through the provision of grants, Township Administrations are better able to exercise democratic principles, creating an environment where people's voices are represented, views of women are systematically included in planning processes, and public resources are used in an effective and transparent way.

UNDP promoted opportunities to strengthen democratic and social accountability by supporting Ward and Village Tract Administrators (W/VTAs) to provide upward and downward information between communities and township administrations. In Mon State UNDP's local governance work also helped foster cooperation between local administrations and Ethnic Armed Organizations (the Karen National Union - KNU and the New Mon State Party - NMSP) in the annual township planning process and coordination meetings on service delivery.

In close cooperation with the General Administration Department (GAD), UNDP provided support towards increasing both the capacities of women W/VTAs and their overall number in the country, that increased from 88 in 2017 to 109 women W/VTAs in 2018. To promote this joint objective, leadership trainings for women 10-household leaders were conducted with the aim to empower them to eventually stand for elections to become W/VTAs. An annual workshop for current women W/VTAs provided them with networking opportunities so that they can better perform their tasks at the local level and effectively play their role as the link between communities and township administrations.

### **PROMOTING ACCESS TO JUSTICE, INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS AND ADHERENCE TO THE RULE OF LAW**

In a truly democratic society all people are treated equally and fairly under the law. UNDP supports the strengthening of the Myanmar justice sector to administer justice according to the rule of law and human rights. Access to accountable justice services

will be improved through the launch of the UNDP-supported Guidelines on Fair Trial Standards by the UAGO. These guidelines set out the official position on the fundamental due process rights for persons accused of crimes.

UNDP strengthened coordination among justice sector agencies to increase access to justice and expand legal awareness and trainings. UNDP also supported the Rule of Law Centres in conducting sessions on rule of law principles and specialized training courses that reached 3750 local community leaders and law professionals, fostered the establishment of 14 legal organisations and convened 6,200 representatives to develop strategies to respond to local justice issues.

In addition, a Case Information System was developed for the Supreme Court. The system is accessible online and provides real time information on court cases that are filed at the lower courts.

In collaboration with UNHCR, UNDP completed a comprehensive study on the status of Housing, Land and Property (HLP) rights of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Kachin State. The result of the study was the development of a counselling guide that helps legal aid providers to advise and support IDPs.

UNDP also kick-started a cooperation with the MNHRC. Together, a conference on Business and Human Rights was organized. In addition, for the first time a formal Capacity Assessment of the MNHRC was completed in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the Asia Pacific Forum on Human Rights Institutions.



The number of female Village Tract/Ward Administrators, that link communities and the government, **has increased from 88 in 2017 to 109 in 2018.**



Photo: Yamon Phu Thit

*Photo caption:  
Members of Parliament  
from State and Region  
Hluttaws attending  
a learning session to  
develop their skills  
and knowledge to  
better serve the needs  
of people in their  
constituencies.*

## **ENHANCING GOOD GOVERNANCE, INSTITUTIONAL PERFORMANCE AND IMPROVING THE EFFICIENCY OF ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION MAKING**

In 2018 UNDP supported the GoM to build more democratic and accountable institutions across all three branches of government. Building on the technical advice provided by UNDP, the President's Office endorsed the establishment of Corruption Prevention Units (CPU) in the ACC and most line ministries to improve oversight and accountability.

UNDP supported the ACC to lead a national effort to tackle high-level corruption and to promote transparency and accountability. To support the integrity of public institutions, UNDP initiated a process with

CPU to apply a Corruption Risk Assessment tool and supported the ACC in finalizing its Code of Conduct. A Business Sector Dialogue on integrity and corruption in the business sector was held by the ACC in Magwe, involving 430 officials from regional government, parliament, the justice sector, civil society and media. The dialogue was part of a regional UNDP-initiative aimed at creating a conducive business environment in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Promoting meritocracy, integrity and strengthening human resources management are the pillars of UNDP's support for Myanmar's Civil Service Reform (CSR). A policy paper on civil service governance was submitted for review and a Code of Values for the UCSB was drafted in 2018. The new Human Resource



Management System, including a competency framework and toolkit was developed to improve recruitment, promotion, posting, performance evaluation and planning. The Senior and Executive Leadership System was designed for its adoption.

A Motivation Survey instrument for civil servants was adapted for Myanmar with support of UNDP, and approved by the ASEAN in October 2018. The first-ever Public Perception Survey of Government Services is ongoing. To accelerate reform efforts in the civil service the President's Office approved the establishment of the CSR Steering Committee.

UNDP supported government institutions to have access to accurate, comprehensive and harmonized data needed for decision-making and monitoring. In order to promote the use of data for development planning, UNDP supported the Central Statistical Organization to prepare a key indicator report of the Myanmar Living Conditions Survey (MLCS). This will help the GoM to update poverty and socio-economic data.

UNDP also provided support in drafting a National Indicator Framework (NIF) for the MSDP. The NIF will bring more coherence to the existing plans and strategies of the government, and will also help measure progress towards achieving SDGs. UNDP was able to bring together government/development partners across 12 thematic areas, integrating SDG indicators into MSDP strategies.

UNDP provided support for the implementation of the National Strategy for the Development of Statistics for improved evidence-based policy development and monitoring of SDG implementation. The new Statistics Law of 2018 created a strong link between data production, planning and policy formulation.

To help them function more effectively and inclusively, UNDP supported Union and State/Region Parliaments in passing robust and people-centered legislation.

The inquiry methodology has been introduced to committees of the Union and all 14 Region/State parliaments to exercise oversight of other institutions, to investigate matters of public concern, to meaningfully engage a range of stakeholders, and to trigger revisions of laws and regulations. As a result, the Amyotha Hluttaw's (Upper House) Agriculture Committee introduced the first-ever committee oversight inquiry in the history of Myanmar, with UNDP support. Similar inquiries have been launched in Mon State and Rakhine State Parliaments.

UNDP supported the revision of plenary/committee rules and business processes to become more transparent and accessible to all MPs. All 3 Union-level and 8 Region and State Hluttaws introduced tools to allow MPs to better participate in plenary sessions. Being informed about session calendars, business papers and likely agenda items beforehand allows MPs to better prepare and debate bills, proposals and questions. This will ultimately lead to better decisions being made.



All 3 Union-level and 8 Region and State Hluttaws introduced tools to allow MPs to better participate in plenary sessions.



*Ma Thuzar Htay works alongside her mother in their home in Chauk Township, Dry Zone of Myanmar where UNDP is helping communities cope with the impacts of climate change.*

Photo: Salla Huusko





# ACHIEVEMENTS: PLANET AND PROSPERITY

**In a rapidly growing economy rich in natural resources and vulnerable to a wide range of hazards, addressing economic, social and environmental impacts of development, building resilience through implementation of climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies is essential. UNDP supported the Government of Myanmar with policy and technical advice, workshops and trainings.**

Goal 5 of the MSDP concerns natural resources and the environment. Myanmar is extremely vulnerable to natural disasters and climate change. On the other hand, the country's rich biodiversity can provide positive development benefits if protected from the threats of overexploitation and managed sustainably.

## ENSURING A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT AND FUNCTIONING ECOSYSTEMS

In 2018, significant policy and legal progress was made. UNDP supported the consultation process to ensure stakeholder participation and technical inputs into the formulation of the new Conservation of Biodiversity and Protected Areas Law (CBPA), and associated draft Rules. Additionally, UNDP supported the adoption of the National Environmental Policy of Myanmar by the Cabinet. UNDP undertook

community consultations to inform the draft National REDD+ Strategy. UN-REDD is a collaborative programme of the FAO, UNDP and UNEP aimed at reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

The progress made in 2018 reflects UNDP's commitment to supporting sustainable management and use of Myanmar's natural resources. This includes promoting the participation and rights of local communities in environmental and natural resources governance arrangements.

With UNDP's technical leadership, Myanmar submitted its 6th National Report (6NR), which brings together concrete measures being undertaken for the implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD). The CBD is a legally binding treaty with the overall objective of encouraging actions for



The new Conservation of Biodiversity and Protected Areas Law was passed in 2018.

“Forests can grow and flourish without human beings but human beings cannot survive without trees. So forest conservation means protecting the natural resources and human beings.”

U Kyaw Zeya, director of Tanintharyi Region Forestry Department

*Photo caption:  
UNDP is helping communities in the Dry Zone of Myanmar cope with the impacts of climate change and to reduce the vulnerability of local farmers.*

a sustainable future. The 6NR assessment takes stock of Myanmar's progress towards biodiversity conservation targets and provides updated baseline data for ongoing conservation efforts. It assesses the 61 targets laid down in the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) and the implementation of 163 actions/measures under the NBSAP. It also encompasses an accounting of Myanmar's contribution to 20 global Aichi Biodiversity Targets and an update on the status of biodiversity. Recommendations in 6NR will assist Myanmar in the future implementation of its NBSAP and biodiversity conservation. With regards to gender and biodiversity the report shows

that while women often have prominent roles in organized community user groups, gender inequality remains a significant issue.

UNDP continues to work with the Environmental Conservation Department to support implementation of the new National Environment Policy (NEP), endorsed in 2018, including through development of the first National Environmental Master Plan. On a strategic, national level UNDP supported the inclusion of environment and climate change in the MSDP and the draft Indicator Framework that will inform the design of sectoral and ministerial subnational policies and programmes.

UNDP supported the promulgation of the CBPA Law in 2018. This Law is expected to boost efforts by communities on conservation and management of natural resources and will support community livelihoods and income diversification, reducing the dependence on forest resources. Also, management plans in 3 national parks in Kachin State and Sagaing Region, currently awaiting endorsement by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation (MoNREC), will involve communities and help reduce threats faced by protected areas, including those posed by the illegal wildlife trade, mining and logging.



Photo: Andrea Egan



## THE LINK BETWEEN PEACE, INEQUALITY, EXCLUSION AND VULNERABILITY

If the conflict risks posed by inequality, exclusion and vulnerability linked to climate change, disaster risk and natural resource management are mitigated through effective national and sub-national institutions and governance mechanisms, durable peace will be achieved in Myanmar. This, in short, is the overarching philosophy behind UNDP's support of the goals 1, 3 and 5 of the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan.

### INCREASING CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND SHIFTING TO LOW CARBON GROWTH

UNDP's programming approach to resilience building is anchored in provision of strategic support to governments, institutions and communities to better prepare and respond to crises, reduce disaster risks as well as mitigate and adapt to climate change shocks. Mainstreaming resilience building and fostering inclusive development, to address the underlying drivers of conflict, and building sustainable peace are key aspects of the area-based programming approach.

Myanmar is earthquake prone and vulnerable to recurrent and widespread monsoon flooding. In 2018 UNDP supported resilience building initiatives to mitigate climate and disaster risks. With UNDP technical support a National Earthquake Preparedness and Response Plan and a Yangon Region Earthquake Preparedness and Response Plan were drafted. In the most at-risk regions and states community awareness programmes on earthquake preparedness were run.

When exceptionally heavy rains caused flooding and destruction of monsoon paddy rice in Mon State in June 2018, UNDP supported the Union and Mon State Government to respond to this disaster. Over 1,500 farmers received help to irrigate replanted paddy fields, to ensure the season's crops weren't completely lost. Through a training programme on Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA), conducted with staff of key ministries, UNDP helped lay the foundation for longer term recovery efforts and more efficient responses to recurring natural disasters.

Working closely with national stakeholders and rural communities, UNDP has reduced vulnerability of farmers in Myanmar's dry zone region to drought spells and erratic rainfall, and enhanced community resilience to disaster and climate change shocks from and improved food and water insecurity. Climate and Disaster Risk Reduction was ensured through improved risk communication and disaster management plans for 75 villages in 5 townships, each with their own climate risk information sub-committees.



**+1,500**  
farmers received help  
to irrigate replanted  
paddy fields.

## INCREASED WATER AND FOOD SECURITY IN THE DRY ZONE



Photo: Andrea Egan

“I am so happy now - because I can harvest two more crops from the same plot of land. If one crop fails, I can still harvest the other two.”

Daw Win May

The dry zone is one of the most climate sensitive and natural resource poor regions in Myanmar. The zone covers about 10% of Myanmar's total land area and houses a population of 18 million people (34% of the total population), making it the country's third most densely populated area. Across the dry zone water is scarce, vegetation cover is thin, and soil is degraded due to severe erosion.

To build the resilience of the people living in the dry zone, the Myanmar Government, with support from UNDP and the Adaptation Fund, is implementing a

project to improve access to fresh water, strengthen agricultural practices, diversify income sources, enhance climate risk information dissemination and actively involve communities in long term solutions.

Four years into the project, communities in the dry zone are reaping the benefits. UNDP supported the protection and rehabilitation of over 8,062 hectares of degraded land in 5 townships (Shwebo, Monywa, Myingyan, Nyaung U and Chauk), and demonstrated soil conservation practices on 1,600 ha of land. Approximately 17,680 households benefitted from climate-resilient

agriculture practices and 7,197 households benefitted from climate-resilient livestock production practices.

The project provided 12 deep tubes wells, 20 shallow tube wells, 56 communal water tanks and rehabilitated 136 water retention ponds. New local water groups (38) were established and capacitated to operate and maintain this infrastructure sustainably.

Daw Win May, a 32-year old farmer in the Dry Zone of Myanmar, has been running her family's farm for the past five years. Located in the Kyauk Kan village of

Myingyan Township, her family primarily raises groundnuts, using a traditional monocropping system. Groundnuts are important as an edible oil and food crop in the country. Thousands of smallholder farmers in Myanmar grow groundnuts for household food and as a cash crop.

*"I was so lost and even thinking of giving up farming because I did not know how to do better and enhance my income," says Daw Win May.*

Daw Win May was one of the several farmers in the Dry Zone who participated in a series of trainings on climate-resilient agriculture practices - including varietal selection of crops, seed banking, water-saving techniques, inter-cropping and fruit tree production. Through these trainings, farmers learnt new techniques, as a result of which they are now able to adapt to the changing climatic conditions.

*"I am so happy now, because I can harvest two more crops from the same plot of land. If one crop fails, I can still harvest the other two,"* Daw Win May says, as she proudly displays the grains from last season's harvest.

Overall, 38% of households indicated that their food security/income has increased because of the project, including introduction of drought-resistant crop varieties and diversified farming practices, as well as provision of drought-tolerant livestock species and associated animal husbandry practices.

*“I would like to urge Myanmar citizens to participate for the current and future sustainable development of our country by changing your daily lifestyles in order to support environmental conservation.”*

President U Win Myint at the launch of the National Environmental Policy

## **CREATE AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT WHICH SUPPORTS ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATIVE START-UPS**

UNDP signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Ooredoo Myanmar in order to leverage mobile technology for innovative solutions to achievement of SDGs with a focus on women and youth. The partnership yielded Myanmar's biggest hackathon in Yangon and Mandalay (See: Partnerships) and several innovative digital solutions for improving rural development and promoting women's empowerment.

In partnership with UNCTAD, under its flagship entrepreneurship training programme Empretec, UNDP launched a pilot initiative to train 20 promising young innovators and entrepreneurs from the hackathon. They were provided with best in class entrepreneurship training with a follow-on package of mentorship, business development and incubation services, offered by Ooredoo and UNDP in partnership with Impact Hub.



*Female law officers at the launching ceremony of Rule of Law Programme in Rakhine State.*





# MAINSTREAMING GENDER EQUALITY AND CONFLICT SENSITIVITY

**UNDP helped the government and local communities to be better prepared for natural disasters and climate change; empowered women to play a more equal role in Myanmar society and operated in a conflict sensitive way by ensuring in-depth context and programme analysis during design and implementation.**

## GENDER EQUALITY

UNDP is committed to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in all the work it does. This is done through targeted gender-specific interventions and by addressing gender concerns in developing, planning, implementing and evaluating all policies and programmes. To achieve this, UNDP relies on gender analysis and sex-disaggregated data and pursues integrated, cross-sectoral approaches that help address interconnected development challenges, as gender equality is a precondition and accelerator for achieving the SDGs.

In 2017, in collaboration with the Ministry of Planning and Finance, UNDP started a research and policy development initiative titled "Gender Equality in Public Administration" (GEPA). As a first step, the comprehensive GEPA study was completed in 2018. Over 500 civil servants contributed to the study, which covered civil service-related targets from the Myanmar's National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (2013-2022) as well as issues such as women's care responsibilities, working conditions, maternity/paternity leave and career advancement.



**800**

women lawyers,  
law teachers  
and community  
representatives were  
trained on rule of law,  
human rights and  
Sexual and Gender  
Based Violence.

### UNDP focuses on four priority areas:

- Removing structural barriers to women's economic empowerment, including women's disproportionate burden of unpaid care work;
- Preventing and responding to gender-based violence;
- Promoting women's participation and leadership in all forms of decision-making;
- Strengthening gender-responsive strategies in crisis (conflict and disaster) prevention, preparedness and recovery

The results of the study are important. Not only for the public debate, but also because the report will serve as the basis for the UCSB's Action Plan on Gender, Diversity and Inclusivity. This plan will be developed in 2019 with the support of LEAP.

Under UNDP's local governance activities gender equality and women empowerment in township annual planning processes has been supported through

the introduction of a model that allows for more participation of local stakeholders. Approximately 30% of the participants in the annual township planning processes supported by UNDP are now women. To further enhance women's participation in local governance UNDP provided trainings to female W/VTAs and 10 Household leaders and organized the annual workshop for 107 females W/VTAs from all over the country.

## SUPPORTING WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION



“I am popular in my community as I have done a lot of social and community work and my father-in-law also used to be an administrator. Therefore, although my opponent, who is a business man, canvassed for votes by using his money, the constituents voted for me.”

Daw Kyi Chan

In Myanmar only 109 out of 16,829 village tract administrators are female. One of them is Daw Kyi Chan (47), a mother of three children. She is the VTA of Kawt Hlaing Village Tract and the only female VTA in Yae Township. She was elected during the 2017 by-election and started working as an administrator in July 2017.

Daw Kyi Chan's office is open every day except Sunday. She makes field visits with

household leaders and manages public complaints. Most of the complaints are related to saving and lending and loan groups. She considers the construction of a local market and leading communities to help them to prevent fires her biggest achievements.

Daw Kyi Chan is positive about the capacity building program of UNDP. “I feel very encouraged. It inspires me to run for the next W/

VTA election or to run for a seat in parliament. My husband understands me and supports me a lot, including by helping with housework. My message to female 10 household leaders in the village tract? I want them to work hard. If they want to be elected as VTA in 2020 W/VTA election, I will step back. But if all the candidates are men, I won't step back and I will continue to fight to win. I wish for more women to become VTAs in Yae Township in the future.”



*Photo caption:  
A female law officer  
leading a group  
discussion on improving  
the quality of criminal  
prosecution process  
in alignment with  
principles outlined in the  
Fair Trial Guidebook.*

UNDP has supported women's access to justice. In 2018, 227 female judges, law officers, deputy township administrators and court staff were trained on rule of law, human rights, gender and fair trial standards. UNDP supported the Union Attorney General Office in the production of Fair Trial Standards, including a chapter on the Protection of the Rights of Women.

Gender equality and the empowerment of women are also promoted through the Rule of Law Centres, under which more than 800 women lawyers, law teachers and community representatives were trained on rule of law, human rights and Sexual & Gender Based Violence (SGBV). In addition, mobile trainings on rule of law, human rights and gender were conducted for IDPs in camps in Kachin State. UNDP supported a local legal aid provider, Legal Clinic Myanmar, to raise awareness on SGBV and provide legal assistance to survivors in Rakhine State.

Gender considerations ran through all the field activities of the Sustainable and Inclusive Growth programming as well. For example, out of the 10,112 people provided with various training through UNDP's climate adaptation programming in the Dry Zone of Myanmar-project in 2018, 32% were women.

Through advocacy work UNDP contributed to the inclusion of an annex on gender and biodiversity in the government's 6th National Report on the Convention on Biological Diversity, which shows that while women have often prominent roles in community groups, gender inequality remains a significant issue. One of the 23 principles of the new NEP, to which UNDP contributed as well, addresses the relevance of gender equality and women's empowerment in environmental protection and management.



*Photo caption:  
Series of workshops and  
training were held for  
UNDP staff and partners  
to build capacity  
building skills training in  
conflict sensitivity.*

## CONFLICT SENSITIVITY

Conflict-affected contexts are characterized by factors that divide people and issues that connect and unify. These factors are different in every context and must be thoroughly analysed in order to be able to design, manage and adapt programmes and behaviour in a conflict-sensitive way.

Upon entering a context, UNDP becomes part of its conflict dynamics because its development programmes introduce new resources and opportunities into the Myanmar environment that inevitably change the power dynamics within, and between, communities. Being conflict sensitive requires UNDP to design, manage and adapt its programmes and behaviour accordingly to avoid unintentionally feeding into further division, and if possible, to maximize the potential contribution to strengthening social cohesion and peace.

In short, conflict sensitivity is a way of working that requires UNDP to;

- Understand the context in which UNDP is operating, particularly to understand intra- and intergroup tensions and the most important divisive issues with a potential for conflict, and the “connecting” issues with the potential to mitigate conflict and strengthen social cohesion;
- Understand how the UNDP programme and behaviour interact with and change that conflict context and vice versa;
- Act upon that understanding in order to avoid unintentionally feeding into further division, and to maximize the potential contribution to strengthen social cohesion and peace;

Based on the above requirements, UNDP programming is informed by in-depth and localised context and conflict analyses that are participatory, inclusive and robust enough to account for the critical contextual diversity throughout Myanmar. This aligns with the UNDP Country programme 2018 -2022 and MSDP 2018 – 2030, specifically Goal 1 strategy 1.2: Promote equitable and conflict-sensitive socio-economic development throughout all States and Regions.

In 2018, UNDP conducted periodic context reviews/updates and risk analysis in project areas such as Rakhine to gain in-depth understanding of the relationship between UNDP interventions and the context and its plethora of different actors – ranging from government officials and EAOs, that are signatories of the NCA, to communities and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs).



UNDP also performed a rapid conflict sensitivity mapping and screening for ten projects, including the Rakhine Area-based Programme (RABP). The rapid assessment revealed areas for improvement that UNDP could then act upon by organising orientation sessions and induction workshops for existing and new UNDP staff.

A comprehensive capacity building effort for UNDP staff, implementing partners and government counterparts was launched in November 2018. By the end of the year, 15 UNDP and IPs personnel had been interviewed to gauge their levels of conflict sensitivity awareness and capacity needs, and a one-day conflict sensitivity session for the RABP-team in Sittwe was conducted. Livelihood forum members drawn from four livelihood project locations/townships in Rakhine in turn participated in a two-day conflict sensitivity session.

UNDP projects operating in mixed controlled areas have subsequently designed project-specific EAO strategies to inform their engagement. For instance, the TDLG project used this framework to design their own EAO strategy, to support the engagement of EAOs participating in the project's township planning and budgeting processes in mixed controlled townships in Mon State. In addition, the UN-REDD Programme has also tailored its own EAOs strategy to support the consultation process in the formulation of the National strategy on REDD+ for Myanmar.



Photo: Stacey Winston

Reflecting on 2018, it is increasingly becoming clear that the concept of conflict sensitivity provides a useful entry point and an opportunity to work with stakeholders in a neutral manner, especially in ethnically diverse communities.

In 2018 the greater investment in periodic context review has proven fruitful in the rapidly evolving Myanmar context and support offered through area-based and integrated programming has been more effective than stand-alone actions. In addition, the involvement of national stakeholders in conflict sensitivity activities and studies has promoted ownership of the process and the results.

*Photo caption:  
Women participants  
at the Livelihoods  
forum in a village of  
Rakhine. UNDP supports  
livelihood activities to  
strengthen the inclusive  
development and em-  
powerment of women,  
community resilience  
and peacebuilding  
opportunities with UN  
Women and partners.*



# MOU SIGNING CEREMONY BETWEEN UNDP AND OOREDOO MYANMAR

The Strand Hotel | 9<sup>th</sup> Nov 2018

Photo: Sandra Barrows



*MoU signing ceremony with UNDP and Ooredoo to enter into a two-year partnership undertaking catalytic joint activities to unlock the potential of digital technologies for the achievement of SDGs with a focus on women and youth.*

# PARTNERSHIPS

**UNDP applies a wide range of approaches and partnerships to support the achievement of national SDGs. In 2018, UNDP expanded its partnerships to scale up national ownership and institutional strengthening, while delivering real results for the most vulnerable communities.**

Working with the UN family, UNDP addressed several common development challenges in 2018 through joint programmes with UNFPA, OHCHR, UNHCR, UN Women, FAO, and UNEP. These collaborative efforts targeted climate change, displacement, strengthening national statistical and data systems and frameworks, fostering women's economic development, tackling gender-based violence, improving access to justice, and safeguarding land and property rights.

Together with its humanitarian partners, UNDP is working on sustainable development interventions where humanitarian, peace and development issues meet. Looking through this lens, UNDP tries to address issues such as displacement, social cohesion and resilience in Rakhine and Kachin State by improving the living standards for displaced persons. UNDP's convening role facilitates identifying and linking up humanitarian, peace and development partners with key government priorities and bringing world class technical expertise and leadership to Myanmar.



With total of  
22 I/NGOs and  
government partners  
UNDP is stronger than  
ever before.

## PARTNERSHIP GOALS:

- To be a relevant and valued development partner for Myanmar.
- To provide high quality technical assistance, working with partners to influence policy, build capacity, and be accountable and transparent in delivering programmes that contribute to the implementation of the MSDP.
- To be the partner of choice for Myanmar in working on poverty and inequality, democratic governance and peacebuilding, sustainable and inclusive growth, climate change, resilience building and DRR.
- To convene partnerships that focus on leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind geographically, socio-economically and during crises.

## COLLABORATING ON STRENGTHENING THE CIVIL SERVICE

Building a strong, professional and merit based civil service is a key priority for Myanmar and UNDP. A new partnership between UNDP, the New Zealand State Services Commission and the UCSB focuses on enhancing public sector performance, transparency, integrity and inclusiveness to support Myanmar civil society reform.

## IMPROVING THE RULE OF LAW

Improving rule of law and access to justice requires institutional support. In partnership with the Federal Court of Australia's Business Intelligence Unit, the Supreme Court of Myanmar participated in awareness raising related to data analysis and reporting.

Development of Myanmar's Union Hluttaw committee structure provides opportunities for diverse partnerships. Australia's House of Representatives continues to step up and second experienced parliament staff members to provide support. The HoR also

## AN APP TO BATTLE STIGMAS SURROUNDING SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Sexual violence against women and girls is a silent public health emergency in Myanmar—one compounded by social taboos which prevent survivors from seeking help. Marital rape is legal. Sexual assault, particularly by domestic partners, largely goes unpunished.

Khine Lwin Myint, 22, has come up with an idea which she thinks can begin to chip away at the culture of impunity. Khine is the co-founder of DIVAS, a start-up which recently won first prize in the Women's Empowerment category at a Hackathon supported by UNDP and Ooredoo Myanmar. "Me and my team want to help the victims of sexual assault as much as we can," she says.

'To Lon May' (For Our Women) is a ground-breaking Burmese-language mobile app that Khine and her two partners developed to help survivors of sexual assault and to raise public awareness of the issues associated with it. It will show women how to get information, counselling, healthcare, and how to talk to law enforcement.

*"It's important for me. Most of our people think that these cases are shameful for victims," she says. "People criticize the victims based on their beliefs and own judgement. We must let them know, and make them accept, that this is not victim's fault."*

DIVAS received a cash prize for meeting start-up costs along with technical and



Photo: Yamon Phu Thit

commercial assistance from Ooredoo, while UNDP sponsored an incubation program in collaboration with Impact Hub and provided USD \$5000 as in-kind support for each winning team.

*"Within one year, we plan to launch support services for survivors of sexual assault by focusing on campaigns for students. In the future, we plan to add preventative services for girls and women," Khine says.*



supports the Leadership Programme for Speakers and Deputy Speakers of Region and State Hluttaws.

**PARTNERING WITH I/NGOs**

Reaching the most vulnerable and communities in need is best achieved in partnership with national organizations. In 2018, UNDP expanded its partnerships to support programme implementation working with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and local governments to ensure that UNDP’s activities are inclusive and support the needs expressed by communities. Supported by international NGOs, UNDP helps to build the capacity of national NGOs aiming to improve Myanmar’s civil society sustainability. With 20 I/NGO partners and 6 government implementing partners UNDP is stronger than ever before.

**PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS**

In 2018 UNDP forged its first private-sector partnership. A MoU was signed with Ooredoo, one of the leading telecom operators in Myanmar (see the story on the next page). The collaboration will enable the CO to leverage innovations in digital technology to promote sustainable development.



Photo: Sandra Barrows

Photo caption:  
Three winning teams  
at the award ceremony  
of Hackathon 2018  
organized by Ooredoo  
Myanmar and UNDP.

UNDP plans to build on the successful pilot programme and expand the partnership with Ooredoo in 2019. UNDP aims to provide a package of support services to farming communities and strengthen agri-value chains in the dry zone. UNDP also plans to enhance the capacity of micro, small and medium enterprises to help them unlock Myanmar’s productive potential and achieve inclusive growth in the country.

**'IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS/RESPONSIBLE PARTIES**





From  
People of Japan



Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.

ကျပ်နိုင်ငံအစိုးရ၏၊ ဆောက်ပံ့ကူညီမှုဖြင့် ရခိုင်ပြည်နယ်အစိုးရနှင့်  
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Midwives at the opening ceremony of Standard Sub-Health Centre with Staff House in Kha Maung Tone Village, Thandwe Township, Rakhine State constructed under TDLG project.



# AREA-BASED PROGRAMMING

**Development challenges are often complex and never isolated. UNDP has therefore developed a programming approach that addresses interconnected issues in a given geographic area in a coordinated way.**

Instead of establishing separate projects to support development in specific geographic areas, UNDP has adopted the area-based model where all its existing CPD flagship projects can contribute one programme to demonstrate the multiplier effect of all UNDP Country Programme components. This integrated approach is designed to break silos and strengthen horizontal linkages across state and non-state actors as well as vertical linkages across administrations at district, township, state and union level.

This interconnectedness allows the partners operating in a geographic area to collaborate more effectively with UNDP and its partners. UNDP uses its trusted relationship with the government to provide entry and access for other partners, particularly I/NGOs and CSOs, to engage and collaborate. Collectively, the platform partners can accelerate

solutions to multi-dimensional, development challenges. This serves as an effective vehicle to capitalize on the network effects of the platform and encourage a variety of transactions or exchanges between different stakeholders that are necessary to identify integrated solutions to address the complex development problems that require simultaneous interventions.

UNDP uses the area-based programme approach in a select geographic area to simultaneously address a wide range of development issues across several sectors, including local governance, rule of law, democratic processes, women's economic empowerment, livelihoods and social cohesion. By addressing these issues in an integrated way and alongside other humanitarian and peace actors, synergies emerge that lead to greater impact and sustainability.

*"We have seen remarkable outputs in the first year, so that the Rakhine State Government has already recommended that UNDP should not only continue this TDLG project approach in the existing 5 project Townships, but that it should also expand to other Townships in Rakhine State in the 2019-2020 fiscal year."*

*H.E. U Kyaw Aye Thein  
(Rakhine State Finance,  
Revenue, Planning and  
Economics Minister)*



# FEMALE LOCAL DEMOCRACY TRAILBLAZERS IN RAKHINE STATE

Daw Saw Yee and Daw Ohn Shwe have many things in common, but until recently their paths had not crossed. Both in their 50s, their communities elected these two bright women to village tract administrators in January 2018. This is the second time Daw Ohn Shwe has been elected village tract administrator of the Muslim community of Kyaung Tike, in the township of Thandwe, where she is the only woman among 72 village tract and ward administrators. Daw Saw Yee is the only female village tract or ward administrator among the 53 in Ramree township.

Women are under-represented in the political arena in most countries, but in Myanmar the situation is particularly pressing. UNDP has been working during the last few years with female local administrators who, like them, are trying to address the strong barriers for their participation in local governance.

In Rakhine the TDLG, as part of a larger joint programme with UN Women, aims to address the complex development challenges and the inequalities faced by women. By providing discretionary grants,

UNDP is assisting townships to put in place a responsive township administration that effectively and efficiently provides basic services to its people in an inclusive, accountable and transparent manner.

Daw Ohn Shwe: *“The participatory township planning workshops have brought people together from the township departments, state government representatives, civil society and Hluttaw members, to identify public service gaps and needs of the communities. In our township this has resulted in an investment for local development of 696,102,000 Myanmar Kyats (around 450,000 US dollars) for the 2018/2019 fiscal year.”*

Daw Saw Yee’s experience is similar. She insists that *“to openly discuss with the township officials was a very useful experience and exercise”*. Following this open process, participants were listened to and agreed to use the grant to build one bridge, construct two roads and renew one water pond. Daw Saw Yee’s community will be better connected to key public services such as health centres and schools, and will improve its access to water.



Daw Saw Yee, 54 years old, ward 3 administrator from Ramree, Rakhine State at her office. She was elected ward administrator in January 2018.

Photo: UNDP/Nyi Nyi Thit

Daw Saw Yee and Daw Ohn Shwe know the task ahead is not trouble-free. But when their communities will look into the past a few years from now, they would like to be remembered as the women that pioneered participation and inclusion, by representing the voices of their communities, and as authentic and true trailblazers of gender equality and local democracy in Rakhine State.

## RAKHINE AREA-BASED PROGRAMME (RABP)

In 2018 the UNDP Myanmar country office decided to initiate a support platform to help implement the 2030 Agenda, and address the complexities and overlapping development challenges in Rakhine State in a conflict sensitive and flexible manner using the Area-based programme approach.

The RABP platform supports joint planning, implementation, financing, monitoring, risk management and reporting. Together with UNHCR, UN Women, and the RC's Office, the platform is supported by Japan and Canada. It also ensures national ownership at the union and state levels to ensure sustainability and accountability.

The platform is designed to deliver integrated solutions and combine a humanitarian response with a developmental approach that addresses the key issues of poverty, vulnerability, exclusion, inter-communal conflict, weakness of the social contract between the state and the people, and augment



Photo: Rachel Govoni

resilience in local communities and institutions in tandem. It has also taken women's empowerment and gender equality as a core element of building community resilience and of promoting peaceful and sustainable development.

UNDP hopes to continue to scale up and replicate the platform model in other States and Regions.

*Photo caption:  
A surveyor collecting  
data from a local  
resident for the Rakhine  
Joint Assessment.*

## SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITIES TO REBUILD INFRASTRUCTURE

With support from UNDP, People for People, a local civil society organization based in Rakhine, organised eight village tract-level Livelihood Recovery Forums (LRFs) in Mrauk U and Ponnagyun Townships. The forums brought together leaders from different ethnic communities to discuss local infrastructure in need of rehabilitation. The process involved a number of meetings in which all the communities participated. Women sub-groups were formed and cash for work workers from all villages selected. Under facilitation of Village Tract Administrators the forums identified and implemented 27 infrastructure rehabilitation projects. The projects employed over 1,500 workers from all communities, of which over 40% were women.

*A young female participant at the Youth  
Engagement Conference on SDG Goal 16.*

Photo: Sandra Barrows

# PRIORITIES FOR 2019

**Working in a country in transition is challenging, but with effective partnerships and trust, UNDP continues to make progress. In 2018 most of UNDP's plans were implemented as envisioned and many targets were met. Sometimes interventions turned out differently than expected. UNDP aims to learn from these experiences and will take the lessons learned and the best practices from successful projects forward into 2019, to increase the positive impact UNDP's work has on the lives of Myanmar's people.**

UNDP has taken a few measures to remain sensitive, responsive and informed in 2018:

- Increased emphasis on **integrated programming** to promote linkages and synergies of UNDP interventions across different areas of work.
- A **strong field presence** to enable UNDP to deliver expanded programming and more co-ordinated UN support in the regions and states. By strengthening the field offices and enhancing staff capacity UNDP was able to collaborate more efficiently with regional and local authorities in governance and development projects.
- Expanded partnerships and facilitation platforms across the humanitarian, peace and development nexus allows UNDP and the UN Country Team to support the government to deliver on complex multi-dimensional solutions that focus on sustainable development.
- Improved understanding of conflict dynamics and the context in which UNDP is operating, and how its programme and behaviour interact with and change the conflict context, helped avoiding unintended consequences and maximized UNDP's contribution to strengthening social cohesion and peace.



**UNDP went through a change process in 2018.**

We hired 117 new staff and launched 5 new flagship projects.



In 2019 the UNDP Country Office will continue to work on the 6 existing environment and climate change projects and the 5 flagship projects rolled out in 2018 while launching 3 new and exciting projects on promoting *Women's Empowerment and Resilient Inclusive Communities in Rakhine*; *Myanmar Rural Renewable Energy Project*; and *Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment*. UNDP will focus on the following 5 areas:

1. **Effective public institutions enabled to develop and implement evidence-based policies and systems that respond to the needs of the people:** Support for SDG integration and evidence based participatory planning; Building capacity of government policymakers and stakeholders in policy process; Production of Myanmar SDG report; Strengthening statistical training center; Support revision of Hluttaw strategic plan

and M&E framework and mechanisms for inclusive management of parliamentary business.

2. **Improved civil service policies and systems and enhanced strategic human resources management:** Amendments to Civil Service Personnel Law/Rules; Multi-year Action Plan for implementation of Human Resource Management System; Development of Training methodology, modules and ToT materials; Enhancing Civil Service Personnel Code of Conduct; and Improving internal mechanisms for complaints and grievances.
3. **Enhanced accountability, integrity and oversight towards strengthening legitimacy of the State and promoting access to justice and human rights:** ACC's Code of Conduct Implementation Plan and conduct of a comprehensive capacity assessment; Introduction of corruption risk assessments and setting up CPU in various government agencies; Promoting a fair business environment; Promoting awareness on rule of law, due processes, fair trials, housing, land and property rights, as well as business and human rights; Evaluation of Union Attorney General Office's Strategic Plan; Support the development of the MNHRC's Strategic Plan; and Conflict Sensitivity training.
4. **Strengthening environmental management and DRR as the basis for inclusive, resilient and sustainable development:** Implementing the new National Environmental Policy and the commitment to mainstreaming environment and climate issues through the MSDP; Supporting institutional development to ensure application of

*Photo caption:  
Panel members at the  
MoU Signing Ceremony  
of UNDP and Ooredoo  
Myanmar in Yangon.*



Photo: Sandra Barrows



Photo: Yamon Phu Thit

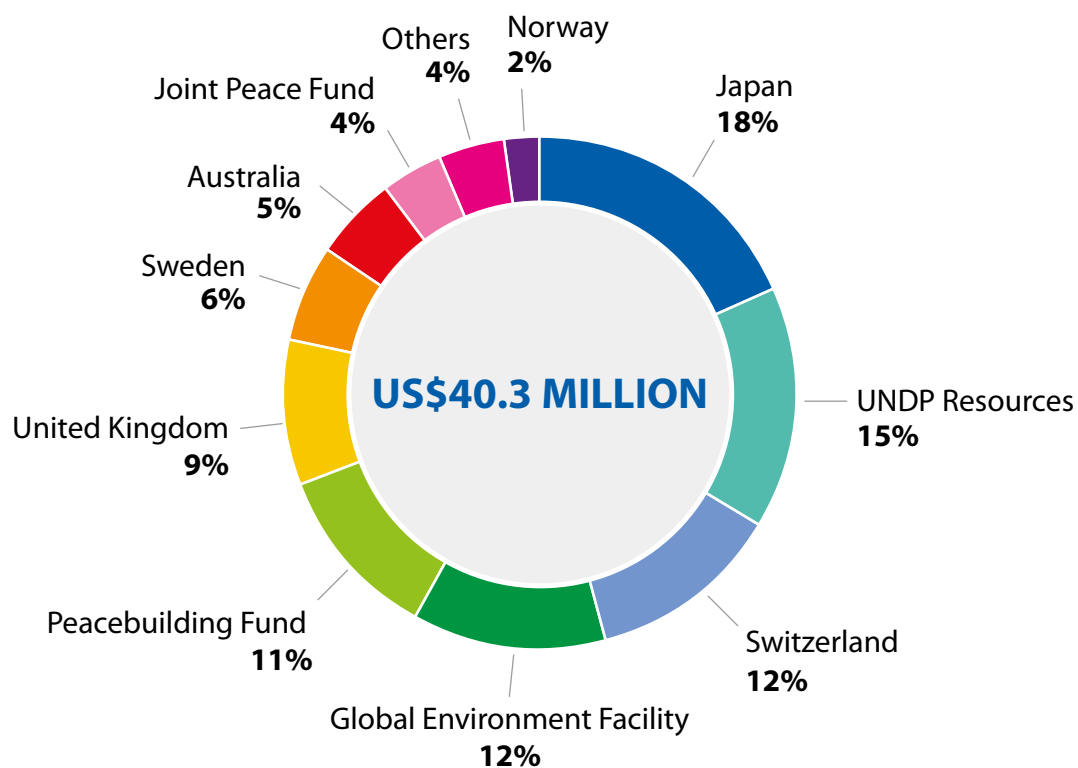
environmental regulations; Strengthened national policies relating to Protected Area management and expanding biodiversity conservation efforts; Legal and policy framework for REDD+ implementation adopted; Strengthened stakeholder representation and engagement in UN-REDD; Promotion of green investment; Climate-resilient agriculture and livestock practices enhanced in Myanmar's Dry Zone and micro-watersheds are protected and rehabilitated; Developing National/Subnational Earthquake Preparedness and Response Plan, Myanmar Earthquake Resilience Strategy, and National Disaster Recovery Guidelines; and Earthquake simulation and trainings conducted. The Myanmar Rural Renewable Energy Development (RURED) Project which is under final GEF endorsement process, capacity seeks to address the twin challenges of

exceptionally low electrification rate in Myanmar, as well as the unsustainably high dependence on high-emission fossil fuels in the country's energy mix, by means of supporting improvements in the country's rural energy infrastructure.

5. **Promoting Economic Empowerment of Women and Youth in Myanmar:** Inclusive economic growth led by dynamic Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) is a key driver of structural transformation, creation of jobs and poverty reduction in Myanmar. targeted capacity building of MSMEs in select states and regions; facilitating market linkages for the agro-based MSMEs in the dry zone in strategic partnership with key relevant stakeholders and private sector entities.

*Photo caption:  
Female participant presenting at the Workshop on Development of National Earthquake Preparedness and Response Plan.*

# FUNDING SOURCES



Donor	USD in million		
Japan	7.2	Sweden	2.6
UNDP Resources	6.1	Australia	1.9
Switzerland	5.0	Joint Peace Fund	1.8
Global Environment Facility	5.0	Others	1.5
Peacebuilding Fund	4.5	Norway	1.0
United Kingdom	3.7		



From  
the People of Japan



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
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Swiss Agency for Development  
and Cooperation SDC



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Ministry for Foreign  
Affairs of Finland



# PUBLICATIONS



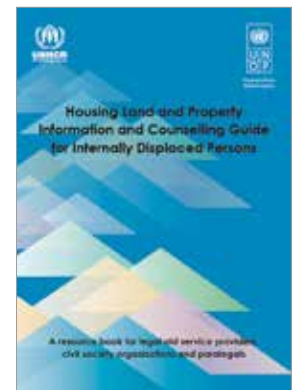
**Measuring Myanmar's Starting Point for the Sustainable Development Goals: SDG Baseline Indicator Report**



**Myanmar Living Conditions Survey 2017: Key Indicators Report**



**Fair Trial Standards Guidebook**



**Housing, Land and Property Information - Counselling Guide for Internally Displaced Persons**



**Situational Analysis of Myanmar's Region and State Hluttaws**



**Earthquake Simulation Exercise Booklet for Schools**



**School Safety Handbook for Earthquake**



**Sixth National Report on Biodiversity to Convention on Biological Diversity**

# LIST OF ACRONYMS

<b>ACC</b>	Anti-Corruption Commission
<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
<b>CBPA</b>	Conservation of Biodiversity and Protected Areas
<b>CBD</b>	Convention on Biological Diversity
<b>CO</b>	Country Office
<b>CPD</b>	Country Programme Document
<b>CPU</b>	Corruption Prevention Unit
<b>CRA</b>	Corruption Risk Assessment
<b>CSO</b>	Central Statistical Organization. Also: Civil Society Organization
<b>CSR</b>	Civil Service Reform
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster Risk Reduction
<b>EAO</b>	Ethnic Armed Organization
<b>FAO</b>	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
<b>GEPA</b>	Gender Equality in Public Administration
<b>GoM</b>	Government of Myanmar
<b>GRSP</b>	Governance for Resilience and Sustainability Project
<b>IDPs</b>	Internally Displaced Persons
<b>JMC</b>	Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee
<b>KNU</b>	Karen National Union
<b>LDC</b>	Least Developed Country
<b>LEAP</b>	Leadership, Effectiveness, Adaptability and Professionalism in Myanmar's Civil Service
<b>MLCS</b>	Myanmar Living Conditions Survey
<b>MNHRC</b>	Myanmar National Human Rights Commission
<b>MoNREC</b>	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation
<b>MOU</b>	Memorandum of Understanding
<b>MSDP</b>	Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan
<b>MVR</b>	Monitoring, Verification and Conflict Resolution
<b>NBSAP</b>	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
<b>NCA</b>	Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement
<b>NEP</b>	National Environmental Policy
<b>NIF</b>	National Indicator Framework
<b>NMSP</b>	New Mon State Party

<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>PDNA</b>	Post Disaster Needs Assessment
<b>RABP</b>	Rakhine Area Based Programme
<b>RC</b>	Resident Coordinator
<b>RR</b>	Resident Representative
<b>RSG</b>	Rakhine State Government
<b>SARL</b>	Strengthening Accountability and Rule of Law
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>SERIP</b>	Support to Effective & Responsive Institutions Project
<b>SGBV</b>	Sexual & Gender Based Violence
<b>TDLG</b>	Township Democratic Local Governance
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>UAGO</b>	Union Attorney General's Office
<b>UNCTAD</b>	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
<b>UNDAF</b>	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
<b>UNEP</b>	United Nations Environment Programme
<b>UNFPA</b>	United Nations Population Fund
<b>UNHCR</b>	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UN-REDD</b>	United Nations Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
<b>USCB</b>	Union Civil Service Board
<b>W/VTa</b>	Ward/village tract administrator







*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

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