



**STATUS UPDATE FOR SECU CASE # SECU0010 RELATED TO THE “RIDGE TO REEF” PROJECT
IN TANINTHARYI, MYANMAR**

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on SECU’s ability to conduct its investigation related to the UNDP “Ridge to Reef” project located in Tanintharyi, Myanmar (Case #SECU0010). SECU is issuing this public update to inform stakeholders as to the current status of the case and SECU’s approach to the compliance review moving forward.

SECU was originally scheduled to depart in mid-February for its second field-visit, to Myanmar and Thailand. The purpose of this mission was to meet with stakeholders including the complainant communities and their representatives, Conservation Alliance Tanawthari (CAT), the Karen National Union (KNU), UNDP Staff, additional affected communities, and other experts and stakeholders. Unfortunately, in the days leading up to SECU’s scheduled departure, it became clear that the risks surrounding the Coronavirus were significant and difficult to assess, including the risk of infection, quarantine, and flight cancelations.

As a result, the SECU team canceled its mission in February. Currently it is unknown when SECU will be able to reschedule this field mission, which is essential to finalizing the fact-gathering stage of the investigation that will inform SECU’s findings and recommendations in its report.

To date, SECU has gathered and analyzed project-related documents and conducted a field visit in July 2019 where it interviewed a number of stakeholders including national government representatives in Nay Pyi Taw, the complainant communities and their representatives in Tanintharyi, UNDP staff in Yangon, and other experts and stakeholders.

In the meantime, SECU would like to remind this project’s stakeholders of the following:

- SECU understands that the project activity, as originally designed and described in the Project Document, remains suspended pending the results of the SECU investigation. This suspension was a proactive decision the Country Office took in response to the SECU compliance review. For information about the current status of the project, SECU directs interested parties to the UNDP Myanmar Country Office directly. If you do not have direct contact information for individuals in the Country Office, please write us at secuhotline@undp.org for assistance.

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- SECU does not view the delay in its compliance review caused by COVID-19 as an impediment to the Country Office and Complainants opening or continuing a line of communication with each other in a manner consistent with the UNDP Social and Environmental Standards (SES), and 'applicable law' including the higher of applicable national laws and relevant international treaties and norms, such as the UN-DRIP.

SECU is regularly assessing the feasibility of safe and effective travel to Myanmar in order to complete the fact-gathering requirements outlined in the investigation's Terms of Reference (TOR) at the earliest possible date. If SECU is unable to make concrete travel plans by 31 August 2020 to be completed before the end of 2020, SECU will assess possible amendments to the TOR, including suggestions from the Country Office and Complainants, that would allow SECU to complete the investigation and issue a final report in line with its mandate.

For any questions related to the status of SECU0010, please email paul.goodwin@undp.org, anne.perrault@undp.org and richard.bissell@undp.org.