



**Country: Myanmar**  
**Project Initiation Plan (PIP)**

**Project Title:** Promoting Peace through Electoral Transparency and Inclusivity (PETI)

**Expected UNDAF/CP Outcome(s):** **Outcome 1:** Peace and Governance: Sustaining peace through national reconciliation and building an effective democratic state

**Expected CPD Output(s):** **Output 1.3:** Mechanisms, institutions and capacities strengthened to sustain peace and social cohesion

**Initiation Plan Start/End Dates:** 1 August 2020 – 31 January 2022

**Implementing Partner:** United Nations Development Programme in partnership with UNESCO

**Brief Description**

UNDP provided support for the 2015 Myanmar elections and continued its support to the Union Election Commission (UEC) for the procurement of indelible ink for by-elections in 2017 and 2018. In response to the UEC's request to the United Nations for electoral support in March 2018, the UN deployed an electoral Needs Assessment Mission (NAM) to Myanmar in May 2018. The NAM recommended targeted assistance focused on building the capacity of the UEC through strengthening technical capacity and material support. The PIP has been prepared in line with the NAM recommendations and taking into account the UEC's Strategic Plan 2019-2022, UEC post-election review recommendations, election observer recommendations and the IFES Myanmar electoral integrity assessment report. It takes into consideration existing and planned support of other assistance providers and identifies critical gaps that are fundamental to electoral integrity where no other assistance is currently planned.

The focus of this project is on countering hate speech and disinformation while promoting peaceful and credible elections. It seeks to strengthen critical technical aspects of the electoral process to safeguard integrity and transparency, as well as supporting diversity, inclusivity, and gender equality in candidate nomination processes.

The project will also support the setting up of a multi-stakeholder platform to lead a nationally owned movement that can be sustained beyond the elections. This movement will bring a variety of key national stakeholders such as media and social influencers together to set strategic directions and lead action on promoting diversity, inclusivity, and non-discrimination in Myanmar.

Programme Period:	1 August 2020 to 31 January 2022	Total resources required	\$3,421,553
Atlas Project Number:	00104313	Total allocated resources:	\$3,421,553
Atlas Output ID:	00105949 & 00124797	○ Japan	\$ 1,715,802
Gender Marker:	2	○ PBF	\$ 1,000,606
		○ UNDP (TRAC)	\$ 631,338
		○ UNDP (30084)	\$ 73,807
		Unfunded budget:	-
		In-kind Contributions	_____

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Agreed by UNDP:

Date: 1 August 2020

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## I. PURPOSE AND EXPECTED OUTPUT

While hate speech and disinformation is a larger problem in Myanmar, it particularly presents a risk to peaceful and credible elections. At the same time, grievances about the credibility of elections could also lead to a spike in hate speech and fuel intercommunal tensions.

Myanmar is holding closely contested general elections for national and state/region legislatures in late 2020. In this context of increasing competition, it will be important that the UEC is seen to be developing a level playing field for all political parties and contestants, as well as promoting equal access to the process for voters. Perceptions of transparency and integrity are key for all stakeholders.

The electoral process and the institution responsible for organizing the elections, the Union Election Commission (UEC), is closely scrutinized by all stakeholders as well as formal observer missions. In their analysis of past elections, observer groups highlighted several areas of potential improvement. Areas of critical concern are the transparency of the process and the perception of the integrity. The 2020 Elections will provide a valuable insight for the project as to the current state of the process and pinpoint areas for targeted engagement.

One critical area mentioned by stakeholders is **candidate nomination** and scrutiny, which is important for the credibility and acceptance of electoral results. The scrutiny of candidate nominations takes place in state and district sub-commissions, making adherence to transparent and consistent processes especially important. Stakeholder grievances related to differential treatment, whether real or perceived, could lead to tensions and/or the non-acceptance of results. Such grievances could also potentially lead to a spike in hate speech. In this environment, technical assistance to the UEC could help to prevent the conduct of the elections from becoming a point of tension and contestation, and a trigger of election-related tensions.

**Voter ink** is also a key integrity measure and provides a physical demonstration of the “one person one vote” principle. It acts to prevent electoral fraud (including double voting) but as a visible sign of having voted, it also provides a key outreach message as it is proof that a person has conducted their civic duty by providing a visual “I voted” signal to others. Ink therefore also enhances the transparency of an election, a key consideration for Myanmar.

**Hate speech** is the result of discrimination and intolerance, which are among the root causes of the existing inter-religious and inter-ethnic conflict in Myanmar. The project will address the need for an inclusive and comprehensive response to discrimination in the country by bringing together prominent personalities and leaders of Myanmar society, alongside civil society organizations and representative of groups that are discriminated against, to lead a movement promoting respect for diversity, inclusivity and non-discrimination, and to guide the development of a common vision and comprehensive strategy to support and unify efforts to combat hate-based on ethnicity, religion and gender.

Therefore, the purpose of this Initiation Plan is to counter hate speech and disinformation while promoting peaceful and credible elections aiming at delivering the following key outputs:

- 1) Integrity of the electoral process strengthened through the provision of technical assistance, and material support to the UEC.
- 2) Inclusivity, diversity, and gender equality of the electoral process strengthened
- 3) Nationally owned vision and strategy guides efforts in the promotion of diversity, inclusivity, and non-discrimination in Myanmar

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## II. EXPECTED OUTPUTS

The Project will work to address the following outputs:

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**OUTPUT 1: INTEGRITY OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS STRENGTHENED THROUGH THE PROVISION OF MATERIAL SUPPORT TO THE UEC.**

This output supports the UEC to make transparency improvements through the provision of good quality indelible ink and technical support to results management.

Despite the overall democratic success of the 2015 elections, observer groups highlighted several areas of potential improvement. Areas of critical concern are the perception of the integrity and the transparency of the process. Voter ink is a key integrity measure and is a physical demonstration of the “one person one vote” principle. It acts to prevent electoral fraud (including double voting) but as it is visible for days after an election, it also provides a key outreach message and proof of a person having conducted their civic duty by providing a visual “I voted” signal to others. Through this, ink also enhances the transparency of an election, a key consideration for Myanmar.

UNDP has also been requested by the UEC to support results management through technical assistance.

**Activity Result 1.1: Election process produces increased transparency through provision of voter ink in 2020.****Key activities will include:**

**Activity 1.1.1 Provide** high-quality indelible ink for all polling stations to mark voters’ fingers. The project will ensure that information about the ink is provided to counter false claims of Covid-19 transmission. The project will supply of 113,000 bottles of voter Ink. The level of silver nitrate is to be 20% and supplied in 90ml bottles.

Each bottle is expected to ink about 600 voters and two will be supplied to every polling station. A contingency of 10% has been allocated as standard practice to account for any destruction of ink due to a security incident or accident. The contingency can also be used for by-elections as needed if it is not used in the 2020 election.

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**OUTPUT 2: INCLUSIVITY, DIVERSITY AND GENDER EQUALITY OF THE ELECTORAL PROCESS STRENGTHENED**

This output supports UEC to improve candidate nomination and scrutiny with an emphasis on consistency and transparency in the application of nomination criteria. To further strengthen inclusivity and confidence in the electoral process, UNDP will assist UEC to develop, put together and disseminate information to candidates, including translations in ethnic languages. UNDP will coordinate closely with other assistance providers so that information relevant to candidates such as that on candidate nomination, code of conduct, campaign regulations, electoral offences, mediation committees, electoral disputes, and campaign expenditure are available to state/region sub-commissions to disseminate.

The UEC will be supported to enable all candidates, including particularly women candidates and candidates from ethnic and religious minorities, to better understand and participate in the coming elections. The project will support the UEC to implement its Strategic Plan (2019-2022) and Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment Policy and Action Plan (2019-2022) in areas related to candidate nomination.

UNDP’s Township Democratic Local Governance project (TDLG) has supported the capacity development of women to become Ward and Village Tract Administrators (W/VTAs). Since 2017 their overall number in the country increased from 88 to 108 in 2019. In light of future general elections in Myanmar, UNDP can build on this work and engage with all current W/VTAs to provide basic awareness on the process and requirements to run as a candidate. It is important that this be done as far as possible in advance of an electoral process to plant seeds of Awareness-raising events and session will be accompanied by basic

capacity development interventions (skills trainings such as public presentations skills, etc.) as well as mentoring. The support is intended to increase the knowledge, skills and confidence of W/VTAs to run for elections. To maintain its neutrality, UNDP's support will only be provided until a point when a woman decides to run for elections.

### **Activity Result 2.1: Candidate nomination and scrutiny supported to reduce risk of community grievances becoming a trigger for hate speech and tensions**

#### **Key activities will include:**

**Activity 2.1.1** Develop guidelines & manuals for distribution to potential candidates. Videos and printed material to include an emphasis on gender sensitivity and the promotion of women's participation as candidates.

**Activity 2.1.2** Support the UEC to develop and disseminate information in different languages for candidates and political parties – It will in large part be derived from lessons learned after the election which will provide information to allow for targeted assistance where most needed.

### **Activity Result 2.2: Women W/VTAs better informed and with improved skills to run for elections**

#### **Key activities will include:**

**Activity 2.2.1** Awareness raising and skills training for women W/VTAs

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## **OUTPUT 3: NATIONALLY OWNED VISION AND STRATEGY GUIDES EFFORTS IN THE PROMOTION OF DIVERSITY, INCLUSIVITY, AND NON-DISCRIMINATION IN MYANMAR**

Hate speech is the result of discrimination and intolerance, which are among the root causes of the existing inter-religious and inter-ethnic conflict in Myanmar. The project will address the need for an inclusive and comprehensive response to discrimination in the country by bringing together prominent personalities and leaders of Myanmar society, alongside civil society organizations and representative of groups that are discriminated against, to lead a movement promoting respect for diversity, inclusivity and non-discrimination, and to guide the development of a common vision and comprehensive strategy to support and unify efforts to combat hate-based on ethnicity, religion and gender.

### **Outcome 3.1: A platform to discuss the design and implementation of anti-discrimination strategies is established**

#### **Key activities will include:**

**Activity 3.1.1** Research to map out existing initiatives and actors in anti-discrimination/ countering hate speech, and identify key influencers through social media monitoring

**Activity 3.1.2** Organize platform meetings

**Activity 3.1.3** Consultations and development of draft Platform Strategy and action plan

**Activity 3.1.4** Roundtables for partners and key stakeholders to present strategy and action plan

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### III. STRATEGIC ALIGNMENTS

Linkages to Strategic Plan/SDGs/UNDAF/CPD/Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan (MSDP):

The UNDP Strategic Plan, 2018 – 2021, which is aligned with SDGs states that ‘Inclusive and accountable governance systems and processes are recognized as crucial to sustainable development’. The solutions pathways towards building peaceful, just and inclusive societies that the Election project include strengthening integrity of election process by providing support to the UEC. This would help UEC to make transparency improvement through the provision of good quality indelible ink and technical support to results management. The project will also emphasize on promoting inclusivity, diversity and nondiscrimination by comprehensive strategy to support and unify efforts to combat hate-based on ethnicity, religion and gender.

The government has committed to the vision of building a “peaceful, prosperous and democratic Myanmar, after enduring seven decades of civil war, underdevelopment and social and political stagnation.”<sup>1</sup> More specifically, the UNDAF and CPD include a ‘Peace’ outcome: “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”. Under this outcome, the PIP supports one of the three dimensions of promoting peaceful and inclusive societies by strengthening and removing barriers to entry to Myanmar’s democratic institutions and processes. The PIP also supports MSDP goal by promoting peace and good governance.

#### Link to Electoral Needs Assessment Mission Report

This Project Implementation Plan complies with the scope set out in the Need Assessment Mission to Myanmar Report in 2018. The NAM report also recommended the UN provide targeted and phased technical assistance. Hence, the project is also a direct follow-up of these recommendations.

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### IV. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

#### Implementation and Project Oversight:

In line with the UNDP CPD, the Initiation Plan will be directly implemented by UNDP under Direct Implementation Modality (DIM). Therefore, UNDP will bear full responsibility and accountability to manage the project, achieve project outputs and ensure the efficient use of funds. The size and scope of the project does not require the establishment of a Project Board.

Oversight and quality assurance of the project will be done by the Governance and Sustainable Peace Unit at programme level and the Strategic Management Unit at CO level.

The Project Management function will be jointly performed by the Project Manager and the Project Management Specialist. They will lead the project implementation team, consisting of:

Project Implementation Team (direct hire)		Percentage of time
1	Project Manager (International)	10%
2	Nat’l Project Mgmt. Specialist (Outcome 2 & 3)	100%
5	Project Associate (Outcome 2 & 3)	100%
4	National Project Officer (Outcome 3) (joint w/ UNESCO)	50%

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<sup>1</sup> Draft Myanmar-United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2018 to 2022.

**Funding arrangements:** Donor contributions will be considered as specific and earmarked contributions to the Initiation Plan and formalized through individual cost-sharing agreements with UNDP. Japan will fund output 1 and PBF will fund output 2 and 3.

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## **V. MONITORING**

In accordance with UNDP's programming policies and procedures, the project will be monitored through the following:

- Activation of Issue Log in Atlas updated by Project Manager on a quarterly basis to facilitate tracking and resolution of potential problems or request for change;
- Activation of Risk Log based on risk analysis and updated quarterly by the Project Manager based on review of external environment that may affect implementation;
- Activation of Lessons Learned Log and updated quarterly by Project Manager to ensure ongoing learning and adaptation, and to facilitate the preparation of the Lessons Learned Report at the end of the project;
- Activation of monitoring schedule plan in Atlas, and updating quarterly to track key management actions/events; and
- Progress report shall be prepared by the Project Manager by the end of 2020 and shared with CO management, annual report for 2021 and final report at the end of the project period.

VI. **WORK PLAN (PERIOD: MAXIMUM 18 MONTHS)**

EXPECTED OUTPUTS And baseline, indicators including annual targets	PLANNED ACTIVITIES List activity results and associated actions	TIMEFRAME							RESPONSIBLE PARTY	PLANNED BUDGET		
		2020		2021				2022		Funding Source	Budget Description	Amount (USD)
		Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1				
<p><b>Output 1:</b> Integrity of the electoral process strengthened through the provision of material support to the UEC</p> <p><b>Indicators:</b> Number of complaints about the quality of ink and its use.</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 2015 Election Observer Reports Targets: 0 complaints about the quality/use of the ink</p>	<b>Activity 1.1 Procure quality indelible ink for all polling stations</b>								UNDP	Japan	72300-Materials and goods	1,326,620
										Japan	74700-Transport, shipping and handle	89,377
		x	x							UNDP	74700-Transport, shipping and handle	434,718
										UNDP	74100- Professional service	51,806
										UNDP	74500-Miscellaneous Expense	51,755
	Coordination levy (1%)	x						UNDP		74500-Miscellaneous Expenses	16,528	
	General Management Services( 8%)	x	x						Japan	75100- General Management Services	125,838	
	Coordination levy on (1% of programme, direct cost and GMS)	x	x							64397-Services to Project	157,439.00	
	Direct Project Cost (31%)	x	x						UNDP	64300-Services to Project	166,866	
	<b>Total Output 1</b>											<b>2,420,947</b>



<p><b>Output 2:</b> Inclusivity, diversity and gender equality of the electoral process strengthened</p> <p><b>Indicators:</b></p> <p>1 - Reduction of complaints on Candidate nomination process compared with the number of complaints during the 2015 election</p> <p>2 - Greater number of W/VTAs running for election compared with the number of W/VTAs during the 2015 election</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> 1 - Number of nomination</p>	<p><b>Activity 2.1 technical assistance to review &amp; improve candidate nomination and scrutiny procedures and support to reduce risk of community grievances becoming trigger for hate speech and actions</b></p>			x	x	x	x		<p>UNDP</p>	<p>PBF</p>	71200-International Consultants	135,000		
												71300/71600-Local Consultants/Travel	54,913	
												71400- Contractual Services-Individual	45,000	
												71600-Travel	1,200	
												72500 - Supplies, Commodities, Material	12,000	
		<p><b>Activity 2.4 Women W/VTAs better informed and with improved skills to run for elections</b></p>											74200-Audio Visual & Print Prod Costs	24,239
													74215- Promotional Materials and Dist	21,000
													74500-Miscellaneous Expenses	4,500
													74720- Distribution cost	32,000
														75700-Training, Workshops and Confer

<p>complaints in 2020 election.</p> <p>2 - Number of W/VTAs running for election in 2020</p> <p><b>Targets:</b></p> <p>1 - 50% reduction in complaints about candidate nomination process compared with the number of complaints during the 2015 election</p> <p>2 - 20% increase in number of W/VTA candidates compared with the number of W/VTAs during the 2015 election</p>													
<b>Total Output 2</b>												<b>364,852</b>	
<p><b>Output 3:</b> Nationally owned vision and strategy guides</p>	<p><b>Activity 3.1 A platform to discuss the design and implementation of anti-</b></p>			x	x	x	x		UNDP	PBF	72500 - Supplies, Commodities, Material	4,300	
											72200/72800 - Equipment, Vehicles, and Furniture	6,500	

<p>efforts in the promotion of diversity, inclusivity and nondiscrimination in Myanmar</p> <p><b>Indicators:</b> Establishment and operationalization of a national level platform of/on ..what? Please elaborate</p> <p><b>Baseline:</b> No national level platform exists</p> <p><b>Targets:</b> A national level platform is functional established and operational.</p>	<b>discrimination strategies is established</b>										72100- Contractual services	185,392
											71600-Travel	13,500
	Project Management Personnel cost			x	x	x	x	x	UNDP	PBF	71400 - Contractual Services - Individ	146,503
				x	x	x	x	x	UNDP	PBF	71200-International Consultants	50,000
	Monitoring and Evaluation, knowledge management			x	x	x	x	x	UNDP	PBF	71300/71600-Local Consultants/Travel	30,842
	Independent Final Evaluation						x	x	UNDP	PBF	71200-International Consultants	22,000
	Direct Project Costs (13.5% )			x	x	x	x	x	UNDP	PBF	64300-Staff Mgmt Costs - IP Staff	111,257
General Management Services ( 7% )			x	x	x	x	x	UNDP	PBF	75100- General Management Services	65,460	
<b>Total Output 3</b>											<b>635,754</b>	
<b>Total PBF</b>											<b>1,000,606</b>	
<b>Grand Total</b>											<b>3,421,553</b>	

VII. ANNEX 1 – RISK LOG

Risk	Likelihood	Severity	Mitigation plan
Covid-19 leads to social media narrative around ink as a carrier for Covid-19	Medium	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laboratory testing on Voter ink to determine scientific facts</li> <li>• Production of information in Myanmar language for the UEC to use if needed.</li> <li>• Request the UEC used COVID mitigation measures in all polling stations.</li> </ul>
Covid-19 removes the ability to conduct face to face events	High	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Candidate information can be developed for social media platforms to remove face-to-face contact if necessary.</li> <li>• Components can be held in 2021 after the 2020 elections.</li> </ul>
Delays in recruiting suitable project staff due to travel restrictions with COVID-19.	Medium	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of materials and specifications can be done from home-based work. Although this will limit the effectiveness of the capacity development with the UEC. Moving activities to the post-election period will allow a longer period to produce results and allow staff to visit</li> </ul>
Finalization of manuals and outreach materials for the UEC is delayed due to slow approval processes.	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CTA will work on revising existing material where possible to avoid a lengthy approval period. As soon as funding is received the UEC will be asked to confirm the outline of the products to ensure that the approach is agreed before development. Elements of the project that cannot be completed for the 2020 elections, will be revised to support future processes.</li> </ul>
The engagement of partners and national ownership of the project is weak.	Low	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNESCO, UNDP and the project team will maintain close working relationships and build trust with partners (Mol, Myanmar Press, Council and UEC).</li> <li>• The Steering Committee, composed of UNESCO, UNDP, MOI and UEC will meet regularly and be kept updated by the project coordinator.</li> </ul>
The role of the UN in relation to the project and its different outcome areas is not well understood by external stakeholders and could be politicised.	Medium	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong national ownership of the project.</li> <li>• UN communications team is aware of the objectives of the project and the UN's supporting role in it to reduce any disinformation.</li> <li>• Ensure that the multistakeholder platform has a good communications strategy that is implemented in a timely manner.</li> </ul>
CSO and NGO partners in the project and individuals participating in the multi-stakeholder platform are perceived as partial.	Low	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection criteria and vetting process to be put in place to ensure those with a track record of impartiality are selected.</li> </ul>

