Integrated Household Living Conditions Assessment Project (IHLCA)

MYA/01/005

COMPLETION OF IHLCA PROJECT REPORT

31 September

Content

I.   INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

The Integrated Household Living Conditions Assessment Project was operational from January 2009 to September 2013. It was directly executed and implemented by UNDP in collaboration with Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development. From January 2013, activities related to the Integrated Household Conditions Living Assessment Project were placed under the Democratic Governance, Development Effectiveness Output of UNDP Myanmar's new Country Programme Action Plan (2013-2015).

The Swedish International Development Cooperation (SIDA) provided US$ 725,342 between January 2010 and September 2013 for the Human Development Initiative-IHCLA 2 and for the development of six thematic studies based on the IHCLA data. This report to SIDA consists of a narrative report describing the activities conducted and the results and impact achieved and a financial report explaining how the funds provided were spent.

II.   PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

The overall objective of this project was that to better understand the situation of the population in relation to poverty, vulnerability and inequality using the results of the Integrated Household Living Conditions Assessment 2 (IHCLA 2).

The objectives of the IHCLA 2 survey were:

- To obtain an accurate and holistic assessment of population well-being by measuring a number of indicators related to living conditions from an integrated perspective;

- To provide reliable and updated data for identifying different levels of poverty in order to help better focus programmatic interventions and prioritize budget allocations;

- To provide quantitative and qualitative data for better understanding of the dimensions of well-being and poverty in Myanmar and the endogenous and exogenous factors behind the observed patterns and trends in living conditions;

- To provide inter-temporal data and information for monitoring progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and other national and international targets;

- To develop a rigorous and standardized methodology for establishing a framework for monitoring living conditions and conducting future time-trend analysis.

III.   MAIN PROJECT ACTIVITIES:

The project conducted two rounds of the survey, interviewing 18,660 households nationwide. The same sampling units were used as in the first IHLCA survey (2004-05), in order to facilitate a comparison between the two surveys. To avoid the impact of seasonality, distorting the results, two rounds took place in December 2009 (after harvest) and May 2010 (before harvest time).

The IHLCA 2 used the same survey design and approach which was used in the IHLCA 1. The methodology used, measured consumption expenditure. This is deemed as the most suitable measurement to take, in countries with characteristics such as Myanmar where there are large portions of the population in rural areas that produce for self-consumption, and where there is limited surplus production that can be traded. In order to determine the food poverty line, calorie requirements are used. After the overall poverty line was calculated, it was used to determine the satisfaction of basic needs in the commodity sphere. The questionnaires used in the survey also contain information on access to productive assets, labour market attachment data, durable consumption and other socio-economic indicators. In future, the survey can be replicated for inter-temporal analysis with few modifications to the methodology.

The data collection was done with local enumerators, supervisors and field coordinators and in conjunction with the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development through the Central Statistics Office. The local enumerators were trained to conduct 19,000 interviews in different local languages, to check and consolidate the forms.

Basic computer hardware and software for the data processing of the survey were set up in Naypyidaw and in 17 states and regional data processing centres. Staff from the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development based in the regions and states were trained on census and survey data processing software. Once trained, they entered the data collected by the enumerators. Once entered, the data was verified at the UNDP offices in Naypyitaw and Yangon. A management information system was set up in the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development's, Planning Department and UNDP in order to retrieve and analyse the data for the development of not only the poverty data but for use in long term policy making.

The data was then analyzed and a comprehensive set of poverty indicators was produced. The IHCLA 2 established that the official 2009/ 2010 poverty line for Myanmar was 376,151 Kyats per year. Using that data, the poverty incidence in Myanmar is 25.6%. Five reports were then produced from this data. These reports were approved by the Government of Myanmar in March 2011 and they covered the following:
- Poverty Profile;
- Millennium Development Goal Data

- Poverty Dynamics;
- Technical Report;
- Quality Report.

In order to improve the accessibility of the data all the IHCLA 2 reports were translated into the Myanmar language. A decision was also taken to translate the IHCLA 1 reports into Myanmar. These reports were the:
- Poverty Profile (2004-2005);
- MDG Relevant Information Report (2004-2005)
- Technical Report (2004-2005)
- Qualitative Study On Household Living Conditions in Myanmar (2004-2005)
- Analysis of data sources and gaps for monitoring living conditions in Myanmar (2010).

The poverty data and information which were derived from the IHCLA 2 were disseminated through a series of national and state/regional sensitization workshops. The objective of the workshops was to raise awareness of the level and nature of poverty. The participants in these workshops were decision makers and high level officials of the relevant Ministries, donors and UN agencies. The Ministries represented included the Ministries of National Planning and Economic Development, Health, Education, Population, Labour, Agriculture and Irrigation, Border Affairs, Livestock and Fisheries, etc. The following table gives details of the workshops held:

Workshop	Venue Place	Date	Number of Participants
National Level	Nay Pyi Taw	6 June 2011	118
Yangon Region	Yangon	9 June 2011	160
Sagaing Region	Monywar	31 January 2012	181
Mandalay Region	Mandalay	2 February 2012	213
Bago Region	Bago	8 February 2012	150
Mon State	Mawlamyaing	15 February 2012	117
Kayin State	Pha-an	17 February 2012	116
Ayeyarwaddy Region	Pathein	29 February 2012	130
Magway Region	Magway	8 March 2012	198

Shan State	Taunggyi	14 March 2012	238
Kayah State	Loikaw	21 March 2012	130
Rakhine State	Sittwe	4 April 2012	113
Kachine State	Myitkyina	26 April 2012	155
Tanintharyi Region	Dawei	3 May 2012	99
Chin State	Hakha	10 May 2012	93

Following the completion of the national and state/regional dissemination workshops, the IHLCA Technical Unit prepared a report describing what had happened in the dissemination workshops. Further efforts were also made to disseminate the IHCLA data and reports through both the UNDP Myanmar Website (http://www.mm.undp.org) and the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development website (https://www.mnped.gov.mm). In July 2012, all representatives of the Pyithu Hluttaw and Amyothar Hluttaw received copies from the Ministry of Planning of the reports on the Poverty Profile, the MDG Data Report and Poverty Dynamic reports and a booklet of selected and relevant national poverty indicators in English and Myanmar.

Using the IHCLA data, thematic reports were commissioned covering the following topics:
1. Transport infrastructure and trade in Myanmar
2. Access to finance in Myanmar
3. The role of remittances for poor and non-poor rural and urban households in Myanmar
4. Regional development potentials and strategies reports for Bago Region
5. Regional development potentials and strategies reports for Ayeyarwaddy Region
6. Regional development potentials and strategies reports for Magway Region
7. Regional development potentials and strategies reports for Mon State
8. Regional development potentials and strategies reports for Chin State
9. Regional development potentials and strategies reports for Mandalay Region
10. Regional development potentials and strategies reports for Shan State
11. Causes of poverty and potential strategies for poverty reduction in Myanmar

IV.   ADDITIONAL PROJECT ACTIVITIES:
Support to the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to calculate the Purchasing Power Parity:
The IHLCA project helped the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development staff to collect basic commodity price data for the National International Comparison Programme. Training was provided to the Ministry staff on how to collect and enter the data. The Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development's, Planning

Department successfully conducted the data collection and data entry process of ICP household items prices in December 2011 and sent it to the ADB.

V. RESULTS AND IMPACT OF ACTIVITIES.

The principal result is that the IHCLA 2 was successfully conducted and the data used to determine the poverty profile in Myanmar. The main findings of the data and analysis were as follows:

➢ **Poverty:** The incidence of poverty is declining in both rural and urban areas. The decline in the incidence of poverty is slower amongst the rural population compared to the urban population. 87% of food poverty is in rural areas. Over half of the poor in Myanmar live in four states (Ayeyarwady, Mandalay, Shan and Rakhine); 73% of the population of Chin State are poor although the state's contribution to the total number of poor people across the country is low due to its low population.

➢ **Malnutrition:** The drop in moderate malnutrition was very low. There are no differences in malnutrition according to gender. There are strong differences in malnutrition between rural and urban dwellers and high levels of malnutrition in Rakhine (53%) and Shan (61%).

➢ **Equity and Distribution:** The distribution of expenditure in consumption of the country has high levels of equity. The Gini coefficient is around 0.2. This is very low.

➢ **Comparison between IHCLA 1 and IHCLA 2:** The comparison between both IHCLA surveys shows an improvement in the consumption patterns of the population. For example: the share of households with TV increased 2.5 times amongst the poorest 10% of the population.

➢ **Household Economic Activity:** The average farm size is 2.7 hectares. Poorer households have 40% smaller farms. In comparison to 2005, there is no change in land holdings. Landlessness affects 24% of those involved in agriculture.

➢ **Labour Market:** Participation in the labour market is high (67%). There are large gender differences, male participation is 82% and female participation is 54%.

The full set of reports and findings are enclosed in the attached CD.

The IHCLA project has also built sustainable capacity in terms of human resources and infrastructure in the Planning Department of the Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development to enable the department to conduct future surveys. This capacity has been built both in Naypwidaw and in the states and regions. A list of the IT

infrastructure procured under the project to assist the Ministry in entering, storing and analyzing the data is listed in Annex 2.

Finally, the extensive distribution of the results of the IHCLA has created a greater awareness of the different dimensions of poverty in Myanmar. It is anticipated that this data and understanding will impact upon existing planning processes in Myanmar such as the development of the 20 year National Comprehensive Development Plan and the State/ Region National Comprehensive Development Plans.

VI. EVALUATION:

UNDP MYANMAR is in the process of contracting a consultant to evaluate the IHCLA project. The final evaluation will be shared with SIDA in due course.

VII. FINANCIAL EXPENDITURE:

(a) IHLCA Budget and Expenditure from UNDP Core Fund (US$):

Year	Budget	Expenditure	%
2009	500,000	443,511	88.7
2010	896,000	869,622	97.1
2011	607,400	566,471	93.3
2012	400,000	382,764	95.7
Total	**2,403,400**	**2,262,368**	**94.1**

(b) SIDA Budget and Expenditure (US$)

Year	Budget	Expenditure	Balance	%
2010-2013	725,342	501,881.85 (4621.29 for support cost 2013 is not reflect yet)	223,460.15	69.19%

ANNEX 1: List of international and national consultants contracted to carry out IHLCA activities using SIDA Funds

Name of Consultant	Output	Year
1. International		
Mr. Sten Valentin Backlind	IHLCA - Technical and Quality Reports	2010-11
Mr. Paul Shaffer	IHLCA – Poverty Profile, MDG Data Report and Poverty Dynamic Reports	2010-11
Mr. Sultan Ahmad	Conduct of Purchasing Power Parity Price survey in Myanmar	2011
Mr. Hans Pettersson	IHLCA-2 Survey Design	2010
Mr. Viet Quang Vu	Preparation of SNA for HUEM survey	2011
Mr. Lars Johan Soderberg	Establishment of IHLCA Data base	2011
Mr. Anders Engvall	Access to Finance in Myanmar (Thematic study)	2012-13
Mr. Anders Engvall	Transport Infrastructure and Trade in Myanmar (Thematic study)	2012-13
Mr. Udaya R. Wagle	The Role of Remittances (Thematic study)	2012-13
Mr. Stephan Schmitt Degenhardt	A regional perspective on poverty in Myanmar and Causes of poverty and potential strategies for poverty reduction (Thematic study)	2013
2. National		
Daw San Kyi and Daw Myo new	Conduct of Purchasing Power Parity Price survey in Myanmar	2011-12
Daw Dolly Kyaw U San Thein Daw Khin Pwint Oo	Regional Development Potentials and Strategies on 7 States and Regions (Thematic study on Bago, Mandalay, Ayeyarwaddy, Magway, Shan, Chin and Mon)	2012-13

Annex 2: Equipment Purchased

The IHLCA project decentralized the data entry task to 17 State/ Regional data processing centers. Analysis was done in Nay Pyi Taw. To achieve these data processing task, the IHLCA project procured the following IT equipment and software.

IT equipment: 4 Server computers, 177 Desktop Computers, 26 computer Laptops, 26 Printers, 180 UPS and one Scanner Machine

Software: Arcview9, TNTMips, two Small Business Server OS and one SPSS Statistical package

Office equipment: 4 Copier Machines, 1 Generator, 2 Projectors and one Riso graph machine