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UNFPA – Country programmes and related matters

United Nations Population Fund

Country programme document for Myanmar

Proposed indicative UNFPA assistance: \$20.0 million: \$10.5 million from regular resources and \$ 9.5 million through co-financing modalities and/or other resources, including regular resources

Programme period: Five years (2018-2022)

Cycle of assistance: Fourth

Category per decision 2013/31: Orange

Proposed indicative assistance (in millions of \$):

Strategic plan outcome areas		Regular resources	Other resources	Total
Outcome 1	Sexual and reproductive health	5.5	4.5	10.0
Outcome 3	Gender equality and women's empowerment	2.0	3.0	5.0
Outcome 4	Population dynamics	1.5	2.0	3.5
Programme coordination and assistance		1.5	0	1.5
Total		10.5	9.5	20.0



I. Programme rationale

1. Myanmar has undergone unprecedented political change over the last seven years. A landslide victory for the National League for Democracy in the November 2015 general election increased expectations for political change and accelerated the transformation towards democratization. The transition raised hopes for peace. In October 2015, roughly half of the ethnic armed organizations signed a Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement with the Government; setting in motion a national peace dialogue and a nationally-led ceasefire monitoring mechanism, ultimately to reform Myanmar's constitution.
2. Yet, Myanmar remains a fragile country in the region with a history of socioeconomic and political exclusion, deep-rooted intercommunal tensions, ongoing fighting and high vulnerability to natural disasters. Over 0.5 million people in Kachin and the Northern Shan States are displaced; millions more are affected by protracted armed conflict and chronic poverty. In Rakhine State, over one million Muslims live without citizenship and in worsening conditions, prompting the new Government to set up a Rakhine Advisory Commission; the interim report of which the Government has welcomed.
3. Myanmar is the largest country in mainland Southeast Asia, with 51.5 million people. Young people make up nearly 30 per cent of the population, while 70 per cent live in rural areas. Myanmar has a population with diverse ethnic, linguistic and religious affiliations and is rich in natural resources. It has the potential to deliver economic prosperity, with an average annual economic growth rate of 8.2 per cent for the medium-term. It is expected to graduate from Least Developed Country status in 2021. This prospect is constrained by a history of isolation and socioeconomic inequalities; a 26 per cent poverty rate (the highest in the subregion); a limited implementation capacity; and a lack of opportunities.
4. Only half of women are in the workforce, compared to 85 per cent of men. Some 3.7 million new jobs are required to ensure employment for Myanmar's large youth population. The capacity of young people remains limited, with final secondary school attendance low at 20 per cent. While HIV prevalence among the adult population is declining, it is increasing among young people through injectable drug use, adding vulnerabilities and risks, including physical violence and unwanted adolescent pregnancies. Out of an assessment of 70 Youth Information Corners in health facilities, only 29 were operational. Expanding such facilities through providing a comprehensive sexuality education will enable young people to be safe and healthy. A comprehensive national youth policy, now in process, will give this impetus.
5. A recent survey result revealed that 21 per cent of married women have experienced gender-based violence. In emergency settings, other studies showed this figure was higher, prompting the Government and UNFPA set up a multi-donor Women and Girls First Initiative that integrates sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, gender equality into all sectors.
6. In 2013, Myanmar joined the Family Planning 2020 global partnership, promising to halve the unmet need for family planning, increase access to modern contraceptives and promote voluntary choice in family planning. Supportive policies ensued, notably the National Strategic Plan for Reproductive Health and a National Health Plan providing open support for sexual reproductive health and reproductive rights.
7. The out-of-pocket health expenditure is 70 per cent and maternal mortality is high at 282 deaths per 100,000 live births, with significant regional disparities. The stock-out of maternal life-saving commodities in public facilities is high and stood at 25.8 per cent in 2016. The capacity of the health system is weak and low public trust is a major barrier. Improved trust and equipped health systems will enhance the quality of client care and increase facility-based births, currently at 37 per cent. This will increase access and reduce the unmet need that stand at 16 per cent thereby increasing the all-methods contraceptive prevalence rate, now at 52.2 per cent. Furthermore, if midwifery is recognized, midwives would stay in the system and proportion of skilled birth attendants (currently 60 per cent) would increase.

8. In 2014, the Government undertook the first population and housing census in 30 years. While coverage was almost 98 per cent, a large Muslim minority group in one area was not counted because its members were not free to self-identify their ethnicity, as they wanted to do. The census results showed large inequalities, disparities and significant development needs. UNFPA's work on population data, gender and youth will build on these results.

9. Myanmar is a signatory to the International Conference on Population Development Programme of Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and a Member State that participates in the Universal Periodic Review. The country programme will be rights-based and framed around the Sustainable Development Goals with a focus on the principle of "leaving no one behind". Special attention will be paid to vulnerable groups, including women, girls, adolescents and youth, persons with disabilities, older persons, ethnic and religious minorities, key affected populations for HIV and sexually transmitted infections and those in humanitarian and conflict-affected settings.

II. Programme priorities and partnerships

10. The proposed country programme for 2018-2022 is informed by Myanmar's economic policy, sector development priorities and strategies, and the United National Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2018-2022. It will support the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals on eradicating poverty; good health and well-being; quality education; gender equality; reduced inequalities; and peace and partnerships. The aim is to increase universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, reduce preventable maternal deaths, advance gender equity on gender-based violence, evidence-based planning and decision-making and ensure adequate resources for sustainability.

11. The new country programme will be implemented in a framework that interlinks humanitarian, development and peace support, where youth will be central in all components. Youth issues will be mainstreamed, adding focus to an integrated approach. Interventions are designed to foster inclusivity, build trust and the participation of diverse groups, including among themselves.

12. UNFPA will work with a range of Government and civil society entities, including the Ministries of Health and Sports; Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement; Labour, Immigration and Population and Planning and Finance; international and national non-governmental organizations; academic institutions and other United Nations agencies. New partners will include the Ministries of Education; Home Affairs; the Office of the Attorney General; the Ministry of Ethnic Affairs; Religious Affairs and Culture; the Office of the Union Supreme Court; Myanmar Human Rights Commission; Union of Myanmar Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Myanmar National Reconciliation and Peace Centre; peace actors, ethnic, health and other national organizations; academic and research institutions, parliamentarians and religious, ethnic and community leaders.

13. A UNFPA national and subnational presence will remain in Nay Pyi Taw, Yangon, Kachin, Rakhine, Shan States, and in the Southeast, areas which have a fragile environment and are designated as United Nations focus areas. UNFPA will contribute to the United Nations Country Team of 16 agencies through joint initiatives.

A. Outcome 1: Sexual and reproductive health

14. Output 1: Strengthened capacities to deliver sexual and reproductive health information and services that reach women, youth, adolescents, minorities and other vulnerable and marginalized groups, including those affected by conflict and disasters. UNFPA support in sexual and reproductive health will focus on assisting the Government to develop strong, resilient service-delivery systems, where sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights are adequately reflected in universal health coverage. Upstream work to strengthen the enabling environment will include advocacy and technical support for policy and legal frameworks that support reproductive rights and advocacy for increased Government financing of contraceptive commodities.

15. Attention will go to strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Health and Sports to generate and use available qualitative and quantitative data to improve strategies and service delivery. This will assist in identifying inequalities and changing patterns of demand in order to address barriers and make services more accessible and responsive to people's needs.

16. Advocacy and technical support to further develop and professionalize midwifery will be prioritized. The curriculum will be upgraded to Bachelor level according to Association of Southeast Asian Nations standards as developed with UNFPA support; and career pathways and a midwifery policy will be developed.

17. Systems strengthening will improve the enabling environment and provide better options for women in under-served areas, including conflict-affected areas. This will expand choices and promote women's autonomy. This will include technical assistance and capacity building for the sexual and reproductive health logistics management information system, which will be merged when the "essential drug" logistics management information system is operational; supporting roll-out of the national Maternal Death Surveillance and Response System; and supporting emergency preparedness and response using mobile clinics and protocols for maternal and reproductive health, family planning, sexually transmitted infections/HIV and gender-based violence.

18. The availability of youth-friendly information and services will be increased, enabling adolescents and youth to realize their reproductive rights and end harmful practices. This will involve: (a) advocating and providing technical assistance for the revision and implementation of gender transformative and age-appropriate comprehensive sexuality education in-school and out-of-school; (b) advocating and providing technical support for expanding Youth Information Corners to strengthen adolescent and youth-friendly services in public and private health services, and (c) marketing an innovative mobile application for sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, with an in-built feedback loop for receiving demand-side information.

B. Outcome 3: Gender equality and women's empowerment

19. Output 1: Strengthened capacities to formulate and implement multi sectoral, rights-based policies and interventions that prevent and mitigate the impact of gender-based violence, especially among the marginalized, the vulnerable and young people. UNFPA will help to build the capacity of national and subnational institutions to: (a) strengthen and review policies, structures and systems for compliance with international human rights instruments; (b) support implementation of emerging laws, policies and protocols on gender-based violence, gender equality, women's empowerment and sexual and reproductive rights; (c) support community mobilization on human rights, including on reproductive rights, to enable women and girls to challenge gender discriminatory sociocultural norms to effect changes; (d) develop a costed National Youth Action Plan for the National Youth Policy, focusing on protection, civic and political participation and peace-building; (e) support national platforms for adolescent and youth participation; and (f) invest in collecting, analysing and disseminating data on gender-based violence, advocating for its use in policy and decision making.

20. UNFPA support with the Government, and civil society will be channelled through the Women and Girls First Initiative. This combines prevention and response to violence against women and girls with improving their sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, in development, humanitarian and peace-building contexts. This will be guided by the global Essential Services Package for Women and Girls, United Nations Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 2250 (2015) and the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women. UNFPA will contribute to monitoring the recommendations of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Universal Periodic Review and other policies on sexual and reproductive health and rights and gender-based violence.

C. Outcome 4: Population dynamics

21. Output 1: National and subnational stakeholders have capacity to use census and other population data to advocate for and formulate policies and plans, especially for women, girls and adolescents and youth, which are inclusive, conflict sensitive and promote resilience. Data availability has increased dramatically in recent years, particularly with the undertaking of the population and housing census in 2014. Utilization of data for national development planning and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is identified as a key cross-cutting issue in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework. Building on the census, UNFPA will work with the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population to address capacity gaps in data utilization. UNFPA will support development and dissemination of census-related policy briefs for senior officials and policy-makers, and support training of officials in Government ministries, members of civil society organizations, political and community leaders and ethnic representatives at all levels in the analysis and use of census data for policy improvement and service delivery, identifying exclusions and inequalities.

22. Demographic capacity will be strengthened by working with universities to align the demographic studies' curriculum with international standards and increase institutional capacities for producing, processing, analysing, disseminating and using population data.

23. UNFPA will also provide technical assistance to the Central Statistical Organization to develop standards for harmonizing data collection and processing to improve the National Statistical System as part of the National Statistical Development Strategy. Support will also be provided to develop databases with a small area, disaggregated by gender and age and for use at the national and subnational levels and in all conflict-affected areas.

24. Advocacy and targeted assistance will focus on developing a strategy to capitalize on the double demographic dividend with the full participation of women, adolescents and youth. This work will involve the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, Ministry of Planning and Finance, the Union of Myanmar Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other key stakeholders.

III. Programme and risk management

25. Key line ministries will primarily implement the proposed country programme at the union and subregional levels, and they will select implementing partners in coordination with the Foreign Economic Relations Department of the Ministry of Planning and Finance, the governmental coordinating body for international assistance. Competitive processes will be applied to select non-governmental implementing partners, based on efficiency, effectiveness, a capacity to deliver and strong monitoring systems. National capacity building and sustainability will be promoted.

26. Myanmar's highly complex fabric of multiple distinct armed conflicts and a simultaneous risk of intercommunal violence require careful conflict analysis to ensure that all assistance complies with the Do No Harm approach and is conflict sensitive. UNFPA will conduct periodic conflict analyses for risk mitigation measures and effective programme delivery.

27. UNFPA will strengthen its preparedness and emergency contingency planning, including full compliance of Minimum Preparedness Actions for timely and effective response to affected populations in emergencies, particularly women and girls.

28. Addressing the humanitarian, development and peace nexus, UNFPA, together with United Nations in-country, will identify underlying vulnerabilities for pre-emptive response, and scale-up efforts to build community resilience. The human resources realignment proposal has been approved to ensure the adequate skill set required in the context of programme implementation.

29. This country programme document outlines UNFPA contributions to national results, and serves as the primary unit of accountability to the Executive Board for results alignment and resources assigned to the programme at the country level. Accountabilities of managers at the country, regional and headquarters levels with

respect to country programmes are prescribed in the UNFPA programme and operations policies and procedures and in the internal control framework.

IV. Monitoring and evaluation

30. UNFPA will develop and implement a costed monitoring plan that will assign clear roles and responsibilities to monitoring all indicators in the results and resources framework. A dedicated national officer will coordinate this effort, with technical support from the UNFPA Asia and Pacific Regional Office. Five per cent of regular resources will be allocated to monitoring and evaluation activities, including training costs.

31. UNFPA will coordinate with the Central Statistical Organization to identify data gaps, utilize data, and address the availability of sex and age-disaggregated population data, thus strengthening the monitoring of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

32. The internal capacity of UNFPA and its implementing partners will be strengthened in results-based management to maximize the impact and use of evaluation tools. Joint monitoring reviews and evaluations will be undertaken with the Government and other partners. UNFPA will aim for joint financial monitoring and assurance activities with all its partners, using the Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers.

33. Regarding activities at the subnational level, UNFPA sub-offices will monitor regular field activities and provide quality assurance in line with the results framework.

34. Given the size of the country programme, an evaluation is planned in 2021. UNFPA senior management will provide a management response to all evaluations and track the response in the system.

RESULTS AND RESOURCES FRAMEWORK FOR MYANMAR (2018-2022)

<p>National priority: Attain a better quality of life of the people of Myanmar by contributing to improve reproductive health status of women, men and adolescents and youth</p> <p>UNDAF outcome: Support all people in Myanmar to reach their full potential by addressing vulnerability and discrimination through more inclusive and equitable access to social services and development of human capital</p> <p>Indicator: Maternal mortality ratio. <i>Baseline:</i> 282 per 100,000 births; <i>Target:</i> 200/100,000 births</p>				
UNFPA strategic plan outcome	Country programme outputs	Output indicators, baselines and targets	Partner contributions	Indicative resources
<p>Outcome 1: Sexual and reproductive health</p> <p><u>Outcome indicator:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contraceptive Prevalence Rate <p><i>Baseline:</i> 52.2%; <i>Target:</i> 60%</p>	<p><u>Output 1:</u> Strengthened capacities to deliver sexual and reproductive health information and services that reach women, youth, adolescents, minorities and other vulnerable and marginalized groups, including those affected by conflict and disasters</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government budget allocation for family planning commodities procurement and Supply Chain Management to the department of public health <i>Baseline:</i> \$3 million; <i>Target:</i> \$10 million The proportion of townships (in top quintile for high maternal mortality ratio) that have functional Maternal Death Surveillance and Response Systems in place <i>Baseline:</i> 0%; <i>Target:</i> 70 % Rights based, gender responsive, Comprehensive Sexuality Education module, aligned with international standards, adopted by the Government of Myanmar for young people in and out of school <i>Baseline:</i> No; <i>Target:</i> Yes 	<p>Ministries of: Health and Sports; Education; Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement; Planning and Finance; Myanmar National Reconciliation and Peace Centre; international and national non-governmental organizations; United Nations organizations</p>	<p>\$10 million (\$5.5 million from regular resources and \$4.5 million from other resources)</p>
<p>National priority: All women in Myanmar are empowered and able to fully enjoy their rights with the support of the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar. Enabling systems, structures and practices are created for the advancement of women, gender equality and the realization of women's rights.</p> <p>UNDAF outcome: Realizing a peaceful and inclusive society, strengthening democratic and accountable institutions, and ensuring access to justice and human rights for all</p> <p>Indicator: Social Institution and Gender Index. <i>Baseline:</i> 8 out of 9; <i>Target:</i> 5 out of 9</p>				
<p>Outcome 3: Gender equality and women's empowerment</p> <p><u>Outcome indicator:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of women aged 15–49 who think that a husband/partner is justified in hitting or beating his wife/partner under certain circumstances <p><i>Baseline:</i> 51 %; <i>Target:</i> 30 %</p>	<p><u>Output 1:</u> Strengthened capacities to formulate and implement multisectoral, rights-based policies and interventions that prevent and mitigate the impact of gender-based violence, especially among the marginalized, the vulnerable and young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of sectoral and intersectoral gender-based violence response and prevention guidelines (including youth specific) adopted <i>Baseline:</i> 1; <i>Target:</i> 7 Functioning national mechanism to monitor gender-based violence human rights violations, accessible to decision-makers and civil society <i>Baseline:</i> No; <i>Target:</i> Yes Costed Youth Policy Action Plan with intergovernmental coordination mechanism and accountability framework, developed with youth participation <i>Baseline:</i> No; <i>Target:</i> Yes 	<p>Ministries of: Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement; Health and Sports; Home Affairs; Office of the Attorney General; Office of the Union Supreme Court; parliamentarians; Myanmar National Reconciliation and Peace Centre; and United Nations organizations</p>	<p>\$5 million (\$2 million regular resources and \$3 million other resources)</p>

<p>National priority: Myanmar national statistical system to produce timely and reliable national statistical information in accordance with internationally accepted methodological standards</p> <p>UNDAF outcome: Achieving prosperity through inclusive and shared sustainable growth, decent work, safe migration, as well as sustainable and resilient rural and urban development</p> <p>Indicator: Functioning national statistics cluster on improving population and demographic statistic <i>Baseline: No; Target: Yes</i></p>				
<p>Outcome 4: Population dynamics</p> <p><u>Outcome indicator:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of key sectors in which the national statistical authorities have institutional capacity to analyse and use disaggregated data on (a) adolescents and youth, and (b) gender-based violence <p><i>Baseline: 2; Target: 6</i></p>	<p><u>Output 1:</u> National and subnational stakeholders have capacity to use census and other population data to advocate for and formulate policies and plans, especially for women, girls, adolescents and youth, that are inclusive, conflict-sensitive and promote resilience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards adopted for quality and harmonization in data gathering and processing by the national statistical system to capture socioeconomic disparities, including in all conflict-affected areas <i>Baseline: No; Target: Yes</i> Strategy for reaping double (youth and gender) demographic dividend adopted by the Government of Myanmar and implemented, including youth participation for peacebuilding and areas affected by conflict and intercommunal tensions <i>Baseline: No; Target: Yes</i> Number of universities using revised demography curriculum that conforms with international standards <i>Baseline: 0; Target: 3</i> Number of International Conference on Population and Development and census-related policy briefs developed and disseminated <i>Baseline: 4; Target: 14</i> 	<p>Ministries of: Labour, Immigration and Population; Planning and Finance; Education; Ethnic Affairs; Religious Affairs and Culture; Union of Myanmar Chamber of Commerce and Industry; United Nations organizations</p>	<p>\$3.5 million (\$1.5 million regular resources and \$2.0 million other resources)</p>