



TERMS OF REFERENCE

RFP: High frequency panel dataset of macroeconomic indicators

Assignment Title	High frequency panel dataset of macroeconomic indicators
Project	Economic Empowerment of Women and Youth in Myanmar
Type of Contract	Professional Contract for Services
Contract Period	Approximately 132 work days, 10 July 2021-31 December 2021
Supervisor	The Country Economist and The Head of Observatory
Location	Yangon
Country	Myanmar

A. BACKGROUND

The 1st February 2021 coup d'état has led to violence and oppression and is likely to quickly increase the risks of various economic emergencies in Myanmar. The recent and impressive economic growth that was achieved prior to the coup is at significant risk, and the ongoing crisis is “adversely affecting the workers, producers, business owners, domestic and international investors in an unprecedented manner”, as stated by UN special envoy for Myanmar.¹ The takeover paved the way for violent military and police crackdowns against protesters. Within a period of two months, more than 700 people are reported to have been killed and thousands detained. Moreover, the economy is facing significant risks of a collapse; in the East Asia and Pacific Economic Update (April 2021), the World Bank projected an economic contraction of 10 percent in 2021 due to a combination of substantial employment and income losses, government relief not matching earning losses, stimulus not offsetting output shortfalls and public investment not being accelerated and scaled up.² Recent media reports have highlighted a range of stress points emerging concurrently and stifling economic activities, including a virtual standstill in banking operations since 1 February, which has adversely impacted business operations and credit. Furthermore, around 80 percent of Myanmar’s trade is seaborne and UNDP estimates that the trade volume in ports has dropped by between 55 and 64 percent in the two months following the military takeover, due to delays in government clearance, logistical disruptions on account of political unrest and shipping lines temporarily suspending work, amongst other factors.³ All these reports indicate that Myanmar is approaching the point of economic collapse.

Prior to the coup, Myanmar was facing a severe socio-economic knockback as a result of COVID-19 restrictions. A previously prepared, but not published, UNDP survey on the impact of COVID-19 on entrepreneurs shows that entrepreneurs faced tremendous challenges as working capital and cash flow had dried up due to reduced sales revenues. On top of this, the coup has now imposed additional challenges, generated unprecedented economic uncertainties and vitiated the operating environment including such as limited access to cash after ATM closures, internet cut offs, night raids and crackdowns on protesters by security forces.

¹ UN special envoy for Myanmar, Christine Schraner Burgener <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/03/1086572>

² <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/eap/publication/uneven-recovery-east-asia-and-pacific-economic-update-april-2021>

³ https://www.asia-pacific.undp.org/content/rbap/en/home/library/democratic_governance/covid-19-coup-d-etat-and-poverty-impact-on-myanmar.html

While anyone operating in Myanmar can see and feel the immense strain that businesses are facing, there is an absence of national, systematic data collection and publication on basic economic parameters such as inflation, trade and exchange rates, agricultural and industrial production, services sector, job losses, migration etc. The government institutions that normally regularly monitor these types of data such as the Central Statistical Organisation, the Central Bank and the Ministry of Planning, Finance and Industry are stymied in the current environment, impacting regular and reliable data collection which may benefit from additional channels of validation.

In this data vacuum that is caused by the military coup, UNDP will contribute to the continuation of collecting reliable national-level data on economic developments. The intention of doing so is to build a multi-stakeholder platform which can generate alternative, regular, credible data sources and present a viable repository of data to inform the positions of development partners, civil society organisations, regional organisations and key international stakeholders on preventative actions. Currently, UNDP is planning for at least three different nation-wide data analysis projects to be published on the same publicly available platform. The first is a nation-wide household socio-economic vulnerability survey which is already undertaken to assess the impacts of the military coup on households. The second is a survey of the impact of the military takeover on entrepreneurs and the third is the project which is outlined in this ToR.

A high frequency panel dataset of macro-economic indicators.

UNDP intends to track macro-economic indicators on a monthly basis to monitor nation-wide developments in inflation, trade, production, tourism etc. The aim is for the data to be collected from a panel of experts across Myanmar on a monthly basis, with the same respondents being contacted every time. The panel should be representative across industries (agriculture, manufacturing, construction etc). The data collection will continue at least until end of 2021, with the potential of extension and/or increased frequency. The data collected in this panel will be publicly available on a UNDP led online platform (referred to as the Observatory). These indicators could be used to provide a dashboard of data giving an important reference point on the overall state of the economy and its stress points.

The methodology for recruiting the panel of experts should ideally:

- be done in a systematic way such that the combined panel is representative, as much as possible, of the overall economy; and
- be disclosed in detail on the UNDP's webpage, without revealing the names of the recruited experts or in other ways jeopardizing their anonymity.

UNDP welcomes creative suggestions from the service provider on how to achieve these goals, and will have detailed discussions with the service provider on the methodology for recruiting the panel before selecting the service provider.

The safety of UNDP partners is of highest priority. UNDP will give full flexibility to the contracted service provider to determine the visibility and credits in this undertaking. For the same reasons, it is of utmost importance to UNDP that the respondents will be assured anonymity. It will be the responsibility of the service provider to anonymise the data. If the service provider at any point suspects that a respondent's identity can be revealed from the data, it is the responsibility of the service provider to immediately alert the UNDP on this matter, after which UNDP will consider excluding this datapoint from the sample.

In the case that the service provider can no longer collect the data from the panel, the service provider will be required to hand-over the relevant contacts and materials for data collection and recording to the UNDP, to enable UNDP to resume data collection from the same panel.

UNDP reserves its right to opt out of the contract with the service provider if the pilot data collection does not yield usable results, or if any concerns are raised regarding the safety of partners involved.

B. SCOPE OF WORK, OUTPUTS AND DELIVERABLES

Under the direct supervision of the UNDP Myanmar economist, and with technical oversight and coordination support of SIG colleagues and the Head of the Observatory, the survey firm (i.e. Service Provider) will work in close collaboration and under the guidance of the UNDP Economist.

To track developments on macro-economic indicators such as production, inflation and trade from a representative sample of sample of ~50-100 experts will be recruited. The objective of this panel data is:

- i) to be a publicly available source of reliable nation-wide data in the data vacuum that has followed the military coup; and
- ii) to timely inform civil society organisations, development partners and the world about economic developments in Myanmar.

The project will be administered by UNDP and a service provider. It will include but not necessarily be limited to the following steps:

- Development of the scope of work together with the UNDP Economist which will include a full disclosure of how the representative sampling is conducted, the approach to questionnaire design, procedures, protocols for listing, quality assurance and data entry.
- Provide inputs and support finalization of the questionnaire developed by UNDP, including its translation, and support to UNDP in its consultations with data users.
- Provide trained personnel (survey teams) for calling respondents to be conducted either remotely or be located within its premises as the situation might permit.
- Development of a Data Entry Programme, and provision of personnel for data entry.
- Conduct a pilot data collection on a smaller sample of ~10 experts, to make sure that the questionnaire yields variation in variables.
- Adjust the questions based on the outcome of the survey before conducting the full data collection from ~100 experts.
- By the end of each survey round, provide a report with tables outlining the data collected in each survey round.

The service provider may be asked to collaborate with other UNDP implementing partners on how to present the data on the UNDP platform.

Table: Deliverables and payment

No	Deliverables	Timeline	Payment*
1	Signing contract, completion of kick off meeting, submission of planning and finalization of questionnaire.	10 July 2021	10%
2	Completed training, data collection and evaluation report of the pilot.	10 Aug 2021	10%
3	If pilot is successful, complete first round of full data collection.	10 Sep 2021	35%
4	2 nd round of data collection completed.	10 Oct 2021	25%
5	3 rd round of data collection completed.	10 Nov 2021	10%
6	4 th round of data collection completed.	20 Dec 2021	10%

C. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

- The company/firm will report to the CO Economist and the Head of the Observatory and obtain certificate of acceptance of outputs from the CO Economist.
- The service provider will work, on a day to day basis, in close coordination with the UNDP Team, under the overall guidance of the CO Economist.
- UNDP will facilitate access to stakeholders and would support in the administrative and logistical preparation of visits and meetings
- The service provider is expected to arrange and cover the costs of transportation and accommodations, the printing and completion of survey materials, the use of data analysis software, and other logistics associated with the assignment
- The company/firm will closely work with Project Manager, Economic Empowerment of Women and Youth in Myanmar

D. DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT

The service provider will be for approximately 132 days between 10 July – 31 December 2021

E. LOCATION OF WORK

Yangon, Myanmar

F. QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED

See selection criteria below:

Criteria for Selecting the Best Offer

Summary of Technical Proposal Evaluation Forms		Score Weight	Points Obtainable
1.	Expertise of Firm / Organization	35%	350
2.	Proposed Methodology, Approach and Implementation Plan	35%	350
3.	Management Structure and Key Personnel	30%	300
	Total		1000

Technical Proposal Evaluation Form 1	Points obtainable
--------------------------------------	-------------------

Expertise of the Firm/Organization		
1.1	Reputation of Organization and Staff / Credibility / Reliability / Industry Standing	40
1.2	General Organizational Capability which is likely to affect implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - financial stability - loose consortium, holding company or one firm - age/size of the firm - strength of project management support - project financing capacity - project management controls 	80
1.3	Extent to which any work would be subcontracted (subcontracting carries additional risks which may affect project implementation, but properly done it offers a chance to access specialised skills.)	20
1.4	Quality assurance procedures, warranty	30
1.5	Relevance of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specialised Knowledge - Experience on Similar Programme / Projects with the Government and Private Sector of Myanmar - Experience in delivering contracts with UN agencies 	180
Total Part 1		350

Technical Proposal Evaluation Form 2		Points Obtainable
Proposed Methodology, Approach and Implementation Plan		
2.1	Context: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what degree does the Proposer understand the task and objectives? - Does the proposal demonstrate an understanding of the project environment and has this been properly used in the preparation of the proposal? 	80
		40
		40
2.2	Methodology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To what degree does the Proposer's approach to delivery of the project meet requirements? - To what degree is the Proposer's approach to delivery of the project strategic and effective? 	170
		70
		100
2.3	Planning and Delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is the scope of task well defined and does it correspond to the TOR? - Is the presentation clear and is the sequence of activities and the planning logical, realistic and promise efficient implementation to the project? 	100
		50
		50
Total Part 2		350

Technical Proposal Evaluation Form 3	Points Obtainable
---	----------------------

Management Structure and Key Personnel			
3.1	Does the management structure support effective and efficient delivery?		50
3.2	Qualifications of Team Leader (1 person only)	Sub-Score	100
	Professional Experience in the area of specialization, including international experience and complex work	30	
	Sound knowledge in the area of specialisation	30	
	Team leading and project management experience	20	
	Language qualifications, including English and Myanmar language abilities	20	
3.2	Qualifications of Team Members	Sub-Score	150
	Professional Experience in the area of specialisation	50	
	Knowledge in the area of specialisation	50	
	Successful performance record, demonstrating analytical and strategic thinking skills	30	
	Language qualifications, including English and Myanmar language abilities	20	
Total Part 3			300