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### *Joint Press Release*

## **Living Conditions in Myanmar Have Improved, According to Joint Report**

NAY PYI TAW – 29 June 2018 -- Indicators of living conditions in Myanmar have improved in the last decade and especially in the past two years, according to the Key Indicators Report from the Myanmar Living Conditions Survey. The Central Statistical Organization, in collaboration with the UNDP and the World Bank, launched here today this first report drawing from results of the survey.

The report reflects clear changes in living conditions, especially lighting, education, goods ownership, and the use of technology. At the union level, the rise of solar technology and an expansion of the public grid have changed the way that households light their homes and allow households to use a greater array of home appliances. The public electrical grid increased from supplying 34 percent of households in 2015 to covering 42 percent in 2017. In rural Myanmar, middle school enrollment rates increased from 47 to 68 percent between 2010 and 2017. A rise in the ownership and use of cell phones has increased connectivity, with 82 percent of households reported owning at least one mobile phone, most likely a smartphone.

*“The government departments and agencies should analyze the data from this report systematically and use in formulating and implementing policy for the development of the country and for enhancing wellbeing of people. The data from this report can help identify strengths and weaknesses of our interventions as well as areas for improvement, so more efforts can be put into those areas and the ministries can review their allocations of budgets and resources. Implementation research is very important as it can reflect the real situations and provide data for addressing weaknesses and making improvements. I would like to call for contributing to betterment of the country and the people by using the data produced by different surveys including this one in development of frameworks, road maps and plans,”* said **H.E. Dr. Myint Htwe, Union Minister of the Ministry of Health and Sports**, during his opening remarks at the launch event on behalf of U Soe Win, Union Minister of Planning and Finance.

Dr. Win Myat Aye, Union Minister of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, stated in his speech, *“This report can contribute to enhancing transparency and can help to*

*know what people have and what they lack. Also, it can help the government know what they should strive for and the people what they should demand from the government.”*

The report also shows that progress in education, water and sanitation and housing continues to lag in some parts of the country and for some indicators. For example, one in ten children of primary school age in Shan, Mon and Rakhine states are not in school. In the area of water and sanitation, the use of surface water for drinking remains high in Ayeyarwady and Rakhine.

*“This report updates our understanding of shared prosperity in Myanmar, showing where progress has been made and highlighting areas that have seen less progress. For example, we see that many households have switched from candles to grid and solar energy for lighting, but that grid access remains predominantly concentrated in urban areas. Focused attention will be needed to ensure that all households and people are able to benefit from development,” said **Gevorg Sargsyan, World Bank Head of Office for Myanmar.** “The report’s launch during the finalization of the Myanmar Sustainable Development Plan makes it even more relevant, and it can inform actions for the future.”*

*“UNDP is very pleased to have supported the Government of Myanmar in this effort. The survey shows how reliable data can inform evidence-based policy making and provide insights into the real living conditions of people across the country.” said **Peter Batchelor, Country Director of UNDP Myanmar.** “It can highlight those parts of the country that are the most vulnerable, where people are being left behind and where extra efforts are needed to promote more inclusive development.*

The Myanmar Living Conditions Survey is a comprehensive assessment of the well-being of the people of Myanmar. It provides reliable, accurate, and up-to-date data that can be used to inform policies for the future development of the country and to monitor the Sustainable Development Goals within the context of the 2030 Agenda.

The report is the first in a series that will analyze the Myanmar Living Conditions Survey. Further reports will be released later in 2018.

[Link to MLCS KI report]

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