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Myanmar Voter List Update

A key component of credible, inclusive and transparent elections is a quality voter list.

For Myanmar's 2010 elections and 2012 by-elections, the voter list was decentralized and largely typed or hand written at the local level. There was a short voter list display and there was poor voter turnout to check the voter list. In 2014, the Union Electoral Commission (UEC) committed to improving the national voter list through a national voter list update by developing the first ever digitized and centralized voter database.

This voter list update process represents the first time in Myanmar's history that such a large computerized and centralized database of names in Myanmar script has been created. It is available online and via mobile phones. Complying with chapter six of the electoral law, the data used to compile the list was based on household lists and logbooks received from the Ministry of Immigration and Population and the General Administrative Department and input by over 2,000 trained data entry officers.

The lists and logbooks were not regularly updated. For this reason the national voter list update included a two part list verification process. The first verification occurred during the preliminary display phase from April to June 2015 and the second during the national voter list display, which is a legal requirement before a general election and took place from September 14-27, 2015.

Each ward/village tract sub-commission was responsible for displaying its list of voters at a place that was easily accessible to all voters. Often this would be at the local sub-commission office, but it could also be at other public buildings or accessible venues. Sometimes a list was shown in more than one place, particularly if it helped voters to attend the display within their own village. Individuals could also check the website <https://checkvoterlist.uecmyanmar.org> and file a correction form at their local sub-commission during official display periods.

Following the display periods, over 6.5 million correction forms were entered into the voter list. The lists should be printed and double checked vis-à-vis the approved correction forms. The list was finalized for printing by the week of October 26. Sub-commissions will print their own lists for the polling stations.

Voter awareness and education campaigns were conducted around each of the displays. The UEC distributed over 4,676,600 election pamphlets and 558,857 motivational and informational posters throughout Myanmar. For the national display the UEC also used mass media, including television, radio and billboard advertisements. Voter education materials were translated into 16 different ethnic languages.

A UEC Facebook campaign was also conducted to target young urban voters, with over 300,000 people reached through this page. Regular stakeholder meetings were held between the UEC and civil society organizations and political parties in all states/regions to coordinate the dissemination of voter education materials.

If a voter finds that there are small errors on the voter list, such as incorrectly typed names or addresses with missing house numbers, they will still be able to vote on Election Day and the errors will be corrected on the voter list for future displays.