

Promotion Disability Access in Myanmar Elections (PDAME)

Final Report (July 2015 - April 2017)



Disability Inclusive Elections

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Submitted by
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Acknowledgement

We, Myanmar Independent Living Initiative (MILI), would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all of our supporters, additionally special thanks to IFES, UK aid, Australian Aid and Swiss Agency for development and Cooperation SDC for full funding support for this project. We are very glad to work together with all of them and appreciate for their support which makes effective and critical changes on inclusion of disabled people in political sector. Their kind support to MILI is gratefully acknowledged in our hearts deeply.

With your support, daily lives of PWDs in Myanmar had critical effect as others citizens by consideration on the political participation of voters with disabilities in previous elections through this project.

Abstract

This final report covers the initiative implementation of political participation of PWDs with 3 phases namely 1) Before 2015 General Election 2) After 2015 General Election and 3) 2017 By-Election. During first period, we had newly challenges and difficulties to overcome physical and attitudinal barriers to participate a small portion on Electoral Cycle. But, that time is the initiative and starting point for future achievement for voters with disabilities in Myanmar to get basic citizens' rights. During post-election in 2015, disability policy toolkit was developed and made advocacy trips to State and Region Parliaments to introduce the disability inclusive policy toolkit to MPs and to force them to raise 11 priorities issues in parliament. During By-Election 2017, the access for voters with disabilities becomes highest potential in history and disability inclusive elections' movements were well known and appreciated between stakeholders of Elections.

Brief Introduction on Myanmar Independent Living Initiative (MILI)

Myanmar Independent Living Initiative – MILI (Registration No. 2116) is a self-help organization of persons with disabilities that has been promoting the equal rights, inclusion and independent living of people with multiple types of disabilities in Myanmar. The head office is based in Yangon city and there are 29-local branch offices operating with 3,658 disabled members. MILI works for elections, business, education, employment, arts, disaster risk reduction and inclusive development of people with disability. MILI is the first disabled people's organization who engaged in political and electoral process of the nation, and has been working for equal access to political life since 2012 focusing on the activities such as advocacy to election management body, making poll worker manual inclusive, working for pilot accessible polling stations, voter education campaigns for PWDs, production of awareness materials, capacity

building to political parties and disability organizations. Moreover, MILI has involved in developing the Union Election Commission’s Strategic Plan (2014-18), amending election regulations and implementing voter list registration pilot project in together with other civil society organizations in Myanmar.

Objective of the Project

1. Increased access to the electoral process for persons with disabilities by fostering inclusiveness and improved accessibility throughout the electoral cycle, particularly at the polling station
 - ✓ Nowadays, PWDs faced many challenges in their daily life on accessing public building, public transportation and services implemented by our government. If we walk future without forcing and advocating Government to consider for citizens’ rights of PWDs, they will face discrimination and physical & attitudinal barriers and unable to fully participate as a part of our society.
 - ✓ Elections have unique opportunities and huge changes for PWDs on public attitude on capability of PWDs and for improving full participation of PWDs in election process. As consequences, PWDs can be fully recognized as one of the citizens who got their right fully by raising voices and priority areas of PWDs in political area. That is why political participation can offer basic changes for now and coming futures not only for all citizens but also for citizens with disabilities.

Project information and resources	
Project Title	Promoting Disability Access in Myanmar Elections
Project Duration	July 2015 to April 2017
Project Location	(14) States and Regions of Myanmar namely Yangon, Mandalay, Ayeyarwaddy , Pago, Magway, Sagaing , Tanintharyi , Kachin , Kayar , Kayin , Chin ,Mon , Rakhine ,Shan.
Target Groups of Project	(1) Members of UEC (2) Civil Society Organizations (3) Political Parties (4) PWDs and their families (5) General Public (6) Members of Parliaments
Final beneficiaries of Project	PWD and their groups
Project’s Objectives	Increased access to the electoral process for persons with disabilities by fostering inclusiveness and improved accessibility throughout the electoral cycle, particularly at the polling station
Project Implementing Organization	Myanmar Independent Living Initiative(MILI)
External Stakeholders who involved , collaborated and supported	Union Election Commission Department of Social Welfare Parliament
Human Resources	(1) Project Team (2) MILI’s Supporting Team

Summary of activities

A. Before 2015 General Election

I. Capacity building/Conduct advocacy with other DPOs and MILI's Branches on advocacy skills

1.1 Organize one three-day TOT training for 20 participants at national level.

- To improve and build capacity for 20 disabled people on advocacy skill and increase their awareness on election.
- Three-day TOT training on disability inclusive election was held from 28th to 30 July, 2015 and 20 persons with disabilities joined on that training
- Participants started to understand their rights to vote and to be elected and improved their interest on political and advocacy issues.

1.2 Support to 5 DPOs and/or MILI's Branches to re-organize advocacy trainings with election management bodies, local authorities and election focused CSOs at the township level through applying the knowledge and skills gained in the TOT

- To distribute voter education information to general public by using knowledge from TOT training and to increase their advocacy skills on political issue.
- Voter education programs were re-organize in some areas of the country and 566 citizens got knowledge on election.
- Some groups and DPOs who were not selected for 5 areas did the voter education programs their own plan through their own interest raising between PWDs themselves.

Date	Township	Male	Female	Total
25.08.2015	Megyaungye, Magway Division	79	41	120
28.08.2015	Nga Pu Taw, Ayarwaddy Division	56	15	71
29.08.2015	Shwe Pyi Thar, Yangon Division	31	31	62
30.08.2015	Yekyi, Ayarwaddy Division	63	17	80
31.08.2015	Ngathinechaung, Ayarwaddy Division	75	30	105
06.09.2015	Yekyi, Ayarwaddy Division(2 nd time)	59	7	66
26.09.2015	Hlaing Thar Yar, Yangon Division	48	14	62
			Total	566

1.3 Collect the feedback, achievement, recommendation and challenges from those training and make a common policy document for continuous advocacy process. This document will provide the basis for the recommendations made in the Disability Rights Public Policy Platform

- To be used as a continuous advocacy tool on Disability Rights Public Policy Platform
- Policy guide book on disability inclusive election was developed and use as a reference in future.
- The guide book wasn't printed out in hard copies.

1.4 Coordination meeting with DPOs to share information and collaborate between DPOs on 2015 General Election

- To share information on Disability Inclusive Election and got more collaboration between DPOs
- One- day coordination meeting was conducted on 10th October 2015 with 20 representatives from DPOs.



3-day TOT training



Advocacy and VE training for EMB(Magway)



Coordination Meeting with DPOs



II. Training for EMBs, particularly for poll workers

2.1 Develop new chapter in existing UEC poll worker training manual on disability access.

- To aware how to assist voters with disability and to know how to set up accessible model polling stations by polling station officers.
- Polling worker manual which included two page descriptions for voters with disabilities was developed to set up accessible polling stations and to assist voters with disability on Election Day as a result of advocacy trips to Union Election Commission, Naypyidaw.
- Through this inclusion in polling worker manual, some Sub-UEC members accepted that they need to consider PWDs for elections.

2.2 Participate and involve in poll worker training at Nay Pyi Taw to influence for disability access and conduct simulation exercises

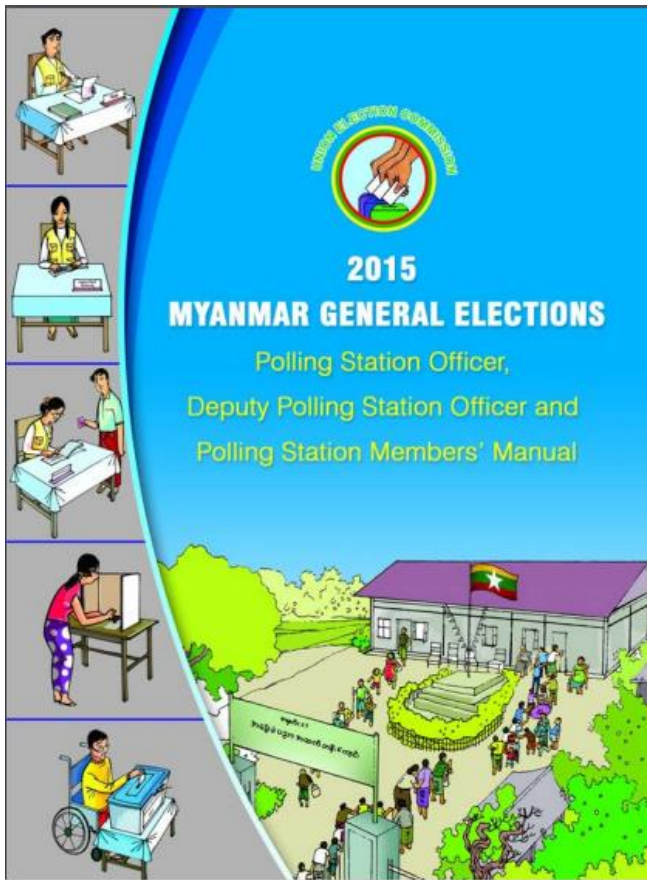
- To advocate on disability issue and change their attitude in dealing with PWDs.
- Some key stakeholders of polling stations from all region of Myanmar get disability awareness and know well how to assist disabled voters.
- It is very effective to be able to participate in national and regional polling worker trainings because it made us comfort relation with UEC in easy and efficient implementation of our movements.

No.	Date	No of training	Responsible persons	Venue
1.	5,08,2015	1/2015	U Saw Thet Aung,Daw Theint Theint Phooe	Naypyidaw
2.	12,08,2015	2/2015	U Aung Ko Myint ,Daw Theint Theint Phooe, Saw Thet Aung	Naypyidaw
3.	19,08,2015	3/2015	U Nay Lin Soe,Daw Theint Theint Phooe, Saw Thet Aung	Naypyidaw
4.	24,08,2015	4/2015	Daw Yu Ya Thu,Daw Theint Theint Phooe	Naypyidaw
5.	25,10,2015	Regional level	Daw Soe Moe Oo , Daw Aye Chan May	Apyouke ,Yangon
6.	27,10,2015	Regional level	Daw Soe Moe Oo , Daw Aye Chan May	Okkan,Yangon
7.	29,10,2015	Regional level	Daw Soe Moe Oo , Daw Aye Chan May	Htikeyyi ,Yangon

2.3 Advocate with UEC for People with disabilities to be included as poll workers and encourage people with disabilities to apply. Use anecdotal evidence from interviews to establish baseline.

- To advocate public and key stakeholders of election bodies that PWDs have their full right to participate in political sectors.
- General public and key stakeholders got the new attitude to be put on people with disabilities.

State or Division	Township	Responsible Person	Contact No
Yangon	Kyee Myin Dine Shwe Pyi Thar Hlaing Thar Yar	U Aung Lwin Oo U Khin AungThan UPyae Phyo Aung	09255884053 09788343242 0997641652
Ayarwaddy	Yekyi	U Hla Myo Aung	09789066151
Mandalay	Pyin Oo Lwin	U Than Lin	09444045934



Poll Worker Training



Disabled volunteer in polling station(Yekyi)

III. Promote disability access in polling stations and materials.

3.1 Conduct advocacy with EMBs for ground floor access and low voting booths, ballot boxes, portable ramps. Advocate for pilot of 3 model polling stations in total in either Yangon or Mandalay.(Model Polling stations)

- To advocate UEC on disability inclusive accessible model polling stations and provide recommendations to UEC on potential locations for pilot based on where high numbers of MILI’s membership resides.
- Advocate with UEC and got a commitment to set up model polling stations .We get a permission to set up total 18 model accessible polling stations around country
- For the very first time in history of Myanmar elections, there was model polling stations where voters with visually impaired get the right to choice and they can vote independently for the first time at some accessible model polling stations.

Number of Accessible model polling stations cooperated by UEC and DPOs

State or Region	Township	No of Polling Stations	Name of Polling Station
Yangon Region	Mayangone	1	No(20) Station, Basis Education Primary School (11), 2 Ward
	Kyeemyindine	1	No(2) Station, Mageetantaung(East) Ward
	Sanchaung	1	No (1) Station, Montlattsauingone(north) Ward
	Dagon	1	No(2) Station, Pyi Lane(West) Ward
	Shwepyithar	2	No (1) Station, 10 Ward No (2) Station,13 Ward
	Hlaing Thar Yar	1	No(8) Station, 9 Ward
Ayarwaddy Region	Yekyi	1	No(3) Station, Aung San Ward,Payargeegone,Basic Post Primary School
	Ngathinechaung	1	No (67) Station,National Therater,Myoma Ward
Kachin State	Myitkyeenar	2	No(67) & (68)Station, Myothitgee Ward, Basic Education Post Primary School (Aye Myat Thar Yar)
Magway Region	Pakkoku	1	No(4) Station,Mya Kan Thar, 15 Ward
	Meikhtila	2	No(1) Station,Bawathit School for the Blind No (2) Station, Shae Saung School for the Blind
Mandalay Region	Chan Mya Thar Si Pyin Oo Lwin	1	No(2) Station,Chan Mya Thar See,857 South Ward, Myat Saw Nyi Naung Dammayone
		1	No(1) Station,Part (1) ,11 Ward,Yaynge village
Sagaing Region	Sagaing	1	No(1) Station, Myothit Ward, Basic Education Primary School(12)
	Monywar	1	No (2) Station ,Myothit Ward
			Total 18 polling stations at 15 townships

3.2 Produce voter education materials (brochure and poster) describing how to vote and any assistance they have the right to ask for such as not waiting in line or someone helping you mark your ballot.

- To raise public awareness on disability inclusive election and stimulate public including PWDs to vote on Election Day.
- Disability inclusive voter education materials were developed and distributed to public. Public got high awareness through this voter education materials and disabled citizen became more encourage to know their rights and vote on E-day through these materials
- We distributed VE materials to MILI’s branch offices also. In some remote areas, PWDs made voter education program and participated as observers by themselves on referencing these materials they received.

No.	Item	Total number
1.	Poster (how to vote by PWDs)	319
2.	Palm flats (how to vote by PWDs)	5000
3.	Palm flats (Needs of PWDs)	5000
4.	Stickers	1000
5.	Books <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How to vote guide book 2. Poll worker manual book 3. Awareness raising book on disability inclusive election 4. Disability inclusive election booklet 	1,200 1,100
6.	Video clip(Precious ballot) English and Myanmar version	1,200
7.	Project Palm flats with Myanmar and English version	2,000

3.3 Produce audio version of brochure and poster to read on programs.

- To aware and get knowledge on voter education for PWDs and general public who lives in rural areas where there is no electricity to access information through electronic devices except radio.
- Radio programs on voter education were produced and transmitted through five radio stations namely City FM, FM Bagan, Thazin FM, MRTV and Mandalay FM radio stations.

- These programs were really effective for PWDs and public who lives in rural areas where there is no electricity to access information through electronic devices except radio and got their good feedbacks for our programs back through some survey on radio programs.

3.4 Produce a 10-minute maximum video with two parts. First part encourages people with disabilities to vote and the second part shows a simulation of an accessible polling station

- To aware and encourage PWDs to vote and show the accessibility status of polling station which is easy to vote by all
- 15 minutes awareness raising video was made by (40) casts with the kind help of UEC, DSW and DPOs from 15 to 17 September 2015.
- The song included in this video which is created and sung by disabled people themselves was very appreciated by audiences and this video was well appreciated by public and the information included in this video which tends to get by public was fully achieved.

3.5 Attend national and regional voter education meetings and advocate for disability mainstreaming

- To get more collaboration between UEC members, DPOs and CSOs which are working on election filed actively.
- Got more collaboration between stakeholders and became easier to implement disability inclusive election activities between UEC, CSOs and DPOs.

No.	Date	Venue	Particular	Cooperated organizations
1.	10.10.2015	MILI head office	Coordination meeting between MILI and DPOs	Mary Chapman School for the deaf, School for the Blind(Monywar),School for the Blind (Pyin Oo Lwin) , Saint Mary (Blind School), Mandalay School for the Deaf, Smile World, Training School for the disabled adult, Linn Yaung Chi , Myanmar National Association of the Blind (MNAB), Myanmar Christian Fellowship of the Blind (MCFB), Department of Social Welfare. Male 13 Female 7
2.	13.10.2015	UEC, Naypyidaw	Coordination meeting between MILI and UEC	Members of UEC
3.	20.07.2015	Yangon	7 th Coordination and Cooperation meeting between UEC and Civil Societies	IFES , UEC and CSOs

4.	25.07.2015	Yangon	One day TOT training	IFES and CSOs
5.	27.07.2015	Yangon	Workshop on Election Security and the role of Civil Society	TSI and CSOs
6.	31.08.2015	Yangon	8 th Coordination and Cooperation meeting between UEC and Civil Societies	IFES , UEC and CSOs
7.	20.10.2015	Yangon	9 th Coordination and Cooperation meeting between UEC and Civil Societies	IFES , UEC and CSOs
8.	20.11.2015	Oakpho township	Trip to meet with Saw Thura Aung, member of parliament with disability	MILI members
9.	12.1.2016	Yangon	Post-Election lesson learned conference	IFES , UEC and CSOs
10.	29.2.2016-1.3.2016	Yangon	National Multi-Stakeholder Post Election Conference	UEC, CSOs, Political Parties, IFES

3.6 Develop braille template for voters with visually impaired to use in accessible model polling stations

- To be able to vote independently by voters with disability and to have a right to choice as they wish by visually impaired people.
- Braille template for ballot was designed and developed with the cooperation of MILI and technician from DSW
- For the first time in Myanmar Election history, braille template was developed and interested by stakeholders and opened the way of disability inclusive election.

Training on how to vote with braille template	
5.11.2015	School for the Blind (Pyin OO Lwin) School for the Blind(Pakkoku) School for the Blind (Monywar)
6.11.2015	Myanmar Fellowship of the Blind Saint's Mary School for the Blind School for the Blind(Meikhtila) School for the Blind(Myitkyeena)
7.11.2015	School for the Blind(Kyee Myin Dine) School for the Blind(Sagaing)



VE materials



Awareness Video



Braille Template for Sagaing state



Training on how to vote with braille template



Model Polling Station at Yekyi



Visit to U Mhone Aung , MP of Oakpho township

IV. Raise public awareness on disability access in elections

4.1 Conduct Awareness Theater with the cars in Yangon downtown

- To raise public awareness on disability issue and to encourage general public to vote on Election Day.
- Awareness Theater with car was conducted for 3 days around Yangon downtown.
- Public aware to vote on Election Day and got the awareness on disability issue through artistic abilities of disabled artists.

4.2 Palm flats Campaigns on disability inclusive election

- To raise public awareness on disability issue and to encourage public to vote on E day.
- 5 palm-flat campaigns were conducted and raised public awareness on DIE.

Palm-flats Campaigns on disability inclusive election		
No.	Date	Townships
1.	26.08.2015	Megyaungye, Magway Division
2.	29.08.2015	Ngaputaaw , Ayarwaddy Division
3.	30.08.2015	Shwepyithar, Yangon Division
4.	31.08.2015	Yekyi, Ayarwaddy Division
5.	1.09.2015	Ngathinechaung, Ayarwaddy Division



Mobile Theater Awareness Campaign at Ygn



Palm-flat campaign at Yekyi

V. Disability Related Workshop/Forum/Coordination meeting for stakeholders

5.1 Hold forum with candidates and present policy platforms with other DPOs and MILI’s branches (one in Yangon and one in Mandalay)

- To share experiences on disability issue between candidates, representatives from media and DPOs and to be able to consider more and more on disabled issue in coming developing processes.
- About 100 people on policy platform got the disability awareness and got the new attitude to treat on PWDs and be able to consider disabled issue when they involve in Parliament.
- We experienced some candidates are very much interested in disability issue and some parties have statement on disability issue on their manual and they were reminded and gave commitment on their statement. They were really impressed on disability issue and had desire to consider on disabled citizens through forum with candidates.

No.	Date	Venue	No of candidates, Media and DPOs who attend forums	Candidates who win in 2015 General Election
1.	23.10.2015	Park Royal Hotel, Yangon	(36) Candidates ,16 media , 10 DPOs members , 13 Parties, 2 Individual	Dr. May Win Myint (NLD-PP) Naw Hla Hla Soe(NLD-NP)
2.	26.10.2015	Dingar Hotel, Mandalay	(23) Candidates , 14 media 12 DPOs members , (8) Parties	Dr.Aung Naing(NLD-PP) U Nyein Thit/U Thaung Htun(NLD-PP) Dr.Sai Hla Thein(NLD-PP) Dr.Than Win (NLD-NP) U Myo Naing(NLD-PP)

5.2. Coordination Meeting with UEC

- To get collaboration between UEC and DPOs and to discuss some facts for disability inclusive election for 2015 General Election
- On 13rd October 2015, coordination meeting was conducted in Naypyidaw and discussed inclusive activities for coming 2015 General Election.



Coordination Meeting with UEC



Coordination Meeting with UEC



Forum with candidates at Ygn



Forum with candidates with Mdy

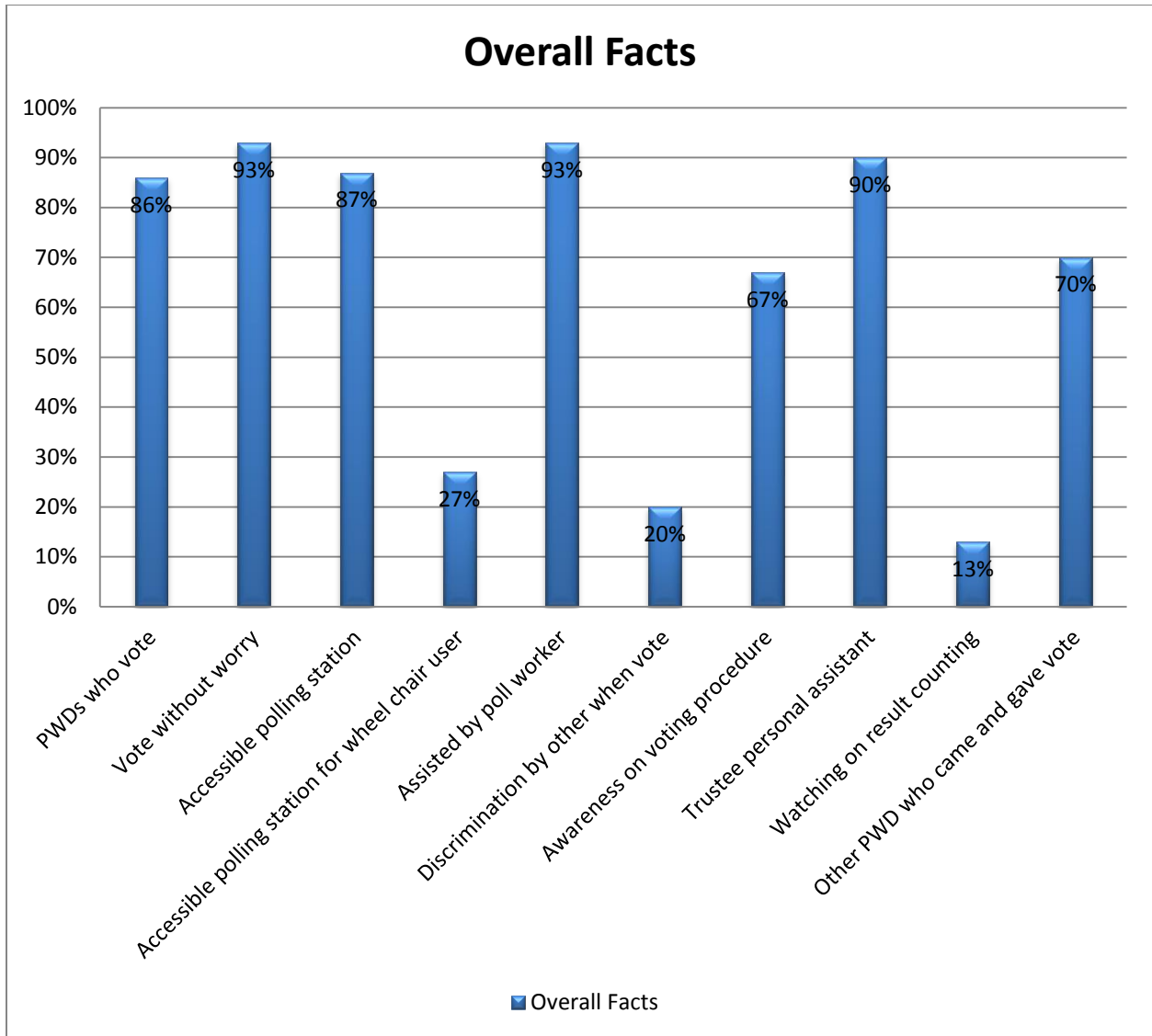
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VI. Project Monitoring and Evaluation

- To monitor and evaluate the project activities, outputs and impacts.
- First, second and third monitoring and evaluation trips were conducted with following methodologies.

No.	M & E trip	Areas	Particular
1.	1 st M & E trip	Yekyi ,Ngathinechaung,Naputaw,Shwepyithar,Megyaungye townships	Monitoring trip for areas which re-organize disabilities inclusive voter education programs
2.	2 nd M & E trip	Shwepyithar,Sanchaung,Monywar,Pyin Oo Lwin,Myit Kyee Nar, Yekyi and Ngathinechaung townships	Monitoring trip on accessible model polling stations
3.	3 rd M & E trip	Mayangone,Mandalay	Monitoring meeting with Parliaments who join on forum with candidates in Yangon and Mandalay
		Lamine,Oakkan,Mawbbi	Monitoring trip to DPOs who participated as observers in 2015 general election
		UEC,Naypyidaw	Monitoring meeting with members of UEC

Overall Facts on Disability Inclusive Election, Myanmar (2015)



Data were collected from mini survey which were conducted by total (466) voters with disabilities from (13) areas around the country.

No	Sate & Region	Branch Office Name	Respondent
1	Magway Region	Megyaungye	40
2	Magway Region	Magway	23
3	Rakhine state	Mrauk U	47
4	Sagaing Region	Chatthin	49
5	Ayeyarwaddy Region	Ngaputtaw	37
6	Yangon Region	Head Office	16

7	Ayeyarwaddy Region	Ye Kyi	10
8	Ayeyarwaddy Region	War Kel Ma	52
9	Ayeyarwaddy Region	Thar Paung	21
10	Bago Region	Taungoo	43
11	Bago Region	Kyoe Pin Gout	46
12	Mon State	La Mine	33
13	Nay Pyi Taw Region	Nay Pyi Taw	49
		Total	466

Regarding to the survey, it has revealed that:

- 85% have voted in 2015 election
- 317 participants out of 399 respondents do not feel discriminated during voting period
- 290 participants respond that there is no easy physical access to the polling centers
- 105 respondents out of 350 participants mentioned that they did not formally know the process of voting
- 370 respondent out of 395 said they have been helped by the polling staff