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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AOR	Agreement Officer's Representative
AMCHAM	American Chamber of Commerce Myanmar
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
BLA	Burma Leadership Activity
CAAT	Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand
COP	Chief of Party
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DCOP	Deputy Chief of Party
ETS	Education Testing Service
FERD	Foreign Economic Relations Department
FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions
GOB	Government of Burma
GRE	Graduate Record Examinations
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
IIE	Institute of International Education
KPMG	Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler
LGBTQ	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning
MEL	Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning
MIFER	Ministry of Investment & Foreign Economic Relations
MRS	Myanmar Revenue Service
MYEO	Myanmar Youth Educational Opportunities
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
S-CAR	George Mason University School of Conflict Analysis and Resolution
TEF	Thabyay Education Foundation
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TIP	Training Implementation Plan
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

I. INTRODUCTION

USAID Burma awarded the Institute of International Education (IIE) a \$19 million, five-year cooperative agreement to administer the Lincoln Scholarship Program, which will provide scholarships to around 95 emerging leaders to study for graduate degrees in the U.S. USAID Burma's goal for the Lincoln Scholarship Program is to: *Improve the technical competencies and enhance the leadership potential of Myanmar's next generation of leaders to lead Myanmar along a path of inclusive socio-economic development, advance respect for ethnic and religious diversity in the country, and promote self-reliance and democratic governance.* In addition to receiving graduate degrees in various technical sectors, Lincoln Scholars will also receive training in the U.S. in conflict resolution and leadership.

Presently, Myanmar is at a critical juncture. While the Government of Burma (GOB) is undertaking reforms that could lead to inclusive economic growth and strengthened democracy, the current education system has left the country without experts in critical areas. In 2014, only 7.3 per cent of the population aged 25 and over had graduated from university or a higher level of education. While some progress has been made on this front with scholarship programs supported by the local and international community, much remains to be done to address the deficit of young leaders. Today, academic institutions in Myanmar do not offer studies in subjects related to human and social sciences for example, and those they offer lack specialization and are not multidisciplinary. As a result, Burmese students lack exposure to many areas of knowledge and often pursue studies which do not support the jobs they eventually get with adequate, related technical expertise.

Myanmar not only needs more technical experts, it also needs a "new generation" of leaders who will represent the needs of all communities, including all groups qualified as disadvantaged. Those new leaders should be able to work with fellow leaders from diverse backgrounds with different points of view to promote both economic growth inclusive of all and a pluralistic society that does not sideline disadvantaged groups. Supporting a diverse cross-section of Burmese society to study at U.S. academic institutions is critical to addressing this need. Moreover, creating a core group of diverse and committed young leaders with skills to work toward common goals and resolve differences in a respectful and constructive manner will enable them to lead Burma toward a stable and prosperous future. This ultimate goal will drive all our scholarship activities prior, during and after scholars have conducted their graduate studies in the U.S.

2. COVID-19

COVID-19 emerged as a major challenge for delivery of the Lincoln Scholarship Program during Q2, 2020. IIE worked closely with USAID and Thabyay Education Foundation (TEF) to adapt the Lincoln Scholarship Program. The overall impact of COVID-19 has meant that IIE has had to adjust planned programmatic activities for cohort 1 and 2 of the Lincoln Scholarship Program as well as undertake scenario planning as follows:

2.1 Cohort 1, Pre-Academic-Training Program

Pre-academic-training for cohort 1 scholars was originally designed to be delivered using face-to-face classroom sessions, with scholars living in apartments close to TEF offices. To address the impact of COVID-19, IIE worked with TEF to adapt the pre-academic-training program for cohort 1 as follows:

- **Pre-Academic Training:** All face-to-face classroom sessions were shifted to virtual classrooms using Zoom to adhere to social distancing guidelines. Scholars continue to engage in their pre-academic-training program working from their apartments, completing IELTS training and commencing GRE studies. The DCOP and the Training Officer will work together to assist the scholars with technical needs (internet, Zoom, etc.) to ensure scholars can adjust to online teaching methods. Since the training method was switched to an online platform, the DCOP checks in with the scholars on a weekly basis to ensure their learning experience is not inhibited by any technical issues. A week after switching to online teaching, the DCOP discovered that internet strength was an issue, and she worked with the training officer to resolve the issue. The program provided the scholars with a higher data package immediately. The DCOP checks in with the training officer daily to prevent and identify any potential problems.
- **GRE Testing:** Originally, cohort 1 scholars were scheduled to undertake their GRE exams in Bangkok, Thailand as the only official testing center in Yangon, Myanmar was suspended by Education Testing Services (ETS). Cohort 1 scholars were booked to take GRE tests in Bangkok on May 6 and May 8, but due to Thai Government travel restrictions requiring foreign nationals to have a COVID-19 medical certificate and USD\$100,000 of health insurance to be able to travel, this plan was cancelled. On April 3, ETS issued a notification allowing all individuals that registered for GRE tests to undertake those tests remotely. IIE and TEF are coordinating with ETS to ensure cohort 1 scholars can take their GRE at a secure location in Yangon in early May.
- **Pre-Departure Orientation:** The Lincoln Scholarship Program's pre-departure orientation was planned to take place during Thingyan from April 13-17. The pre-departure orientation will cover program regulations and prepare scholars for their experience with U.S. higher education and culture. IIE decided to shift the pre-departure orientation to the last week of May to give the scholars extra time to prepare for their GRE exams and work on the university placement process.
- **Communicating about COVID-19:** IIE and TEF have proactively communicated with cohort 1 scholars via group emails and individual Zoom meetings to let them know that IIE and TEF are making every effort to enable their pre-academic-training to continue, with a minimum of disruption, while providing them with any support that they require.

2.2 Cohort 2, Outreach and Recruitment

Outreach and recruitment activities for cohort 2, commenced in early February with a full program of events scheduled for all major population centers in Myanmar. The Lincoln Scholarship Program was also planning to hold other events, such as Facebook Live sessions, private sector events with Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler (KPMG), American Chamber of Commerce Myanmar (AMCHAM) and Strategy First University; and, public sector events with the Government of Burma (GoB), in coordination with USAID, the State Department, Fulbright and Humphreys Scholarship Programs. To address the impacts of COVID-19, IIE worked with TEF to adapt outreach and recruitment activities as follows:

- **Recruitment Events:** IIE in consultation with TEF and USAID decided to cancel all face-to-face public events for the month of April, replacing scheduled recruitment events with Facebook Live, Facebook Premiere and Facebook Watch Party sessions.
- **Targeted Advertising:** IIE purchased advertising spots with AMCHAM to promote the Lincoln Scholarship Program to an audience of approximately 15,000 members. TEF has also been promoting Facebook information sessions through targeting of specific townships and cities in Myanmar. IIE's DCOP participated in traditional media interviews with Skynet, Kamayut media and Myanmar National TV.
- **Targeted Networking:** IIE identified and worked with specific groups and/or organizations to promote information about the Lincoln Scholarship Program. For example, the Myanmar Young Entrepreneurs Association, Strategy First University, General Electric (GE) Myanmar, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), AMCHAM, EducationUSA and Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI).

2.3 Lincoln Scholarship Program Scenario Planning for April to December

At the time of writing this report IIE is not able to prepare comprehensive scenario plans for the start of 2020/21 school year due to uncertainties related to air travel and decisions of individual universities with respect to their response to COVID-19. IIE is monitoring the situation and will prepare detailed scenario plans to be included in the Q3, 2020 Progress Report once IIE has more reliable information about international travel and decisions of universities to open or close their facilities for the 2020/2021 semester 1 intake.

IIE is working closely George Mason University and Core Skills, LLC to plan for potential contingency plans for the conflict resolution and leadership trainings in the fall. Additionally, IIE worked with TEF to identify a range of potential issues/risks that need to be resolved with respect to the completion of pre-academic-training for cohort 1, and recruitment and selection for cohort 2. Revised general scenario (activity) plans for cohort 1 and cohort 2 are included in program highlights below.

3. KEY ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

3.1 Administrative Highlights

Administrative and technical activities continued during Q2, 2020 building on works completed in Q1, 2019. Administrative highlights for Q2, 2020 include:

- Lincoln Scholarship Program Local Staffing:
 - Chief of Party, Mr. Robert Letchford arrived in Myanmar on Saturday January 25 and commenced work on Monday January 27, replacing former COP Mr. Patrick Coughlin.
 - Finance and Administrative Manager, Ms. Ngun Tin Sung commenced duties on January 6, 2020.
 - Program Coordinator, Mr. Soe Naing Lin commenced duties on January 6, 2020.
 - Communications Specialist, Mr. Arkar Hien was recruited by IIE as a local communications specialist on a short-term contract (STTA) to support Lincoln Scholarship Program recruitment and outreach activities. With the emergence of COVID-19, the communication specialist who was recruited as a part-time resource, has been utilized on a full-time basis (surge support) to assist with adjustments to Lincoln Scholarship Program outreach and recruitment activities for cohort 2.
- IIE Burma Office Teleworking: Due to the impact of COVID-19 all IIE Burma staff commenced teleworking March 30 and will continue to work from home until April 30, when IIE Burma will review teleworking status.
- IIE Local Staff Registered for Tax Payments: IIE local staff were registered for local pay as you go (PAYE) taxes with the Myanmar Revenue Service (MRS).
- Tax Exemption Letter: IIE was provided a Tax Exemption letter by USAID/Burma from the Ministry of Investment & Foreign Economic Relations (MIFER), Foreign Economic Relations Department with MRS on copy. IIE was subsequently advised that vendors and service providers would not recognize the letter provided by MIFER unless it was acknowledged in writing by MRS. On March 9, 2020 IIE submitted a written request to MRS to request their acknowledgement of the tax exemption letter provided by MIFER on October 18, 2019, so that IIE can lawfully claim tax exemptions in Myanmar. IIE Burma is currently waiting for a response from MRS.
- Local Health, Death and Disability Insurance: IIE completed the selection process for procurement of local health, death, and disability insurance for IIE local staff members. As an interim measure, IIE provided local IIE staff members with temporary access to health insurance through CIGNA international.
- IIE Burma Office Opening in Yangon: On February 7, IIE officially opened its offices located at MICT Park, Yangon, which was attended by USAID, TEF and other offices at MICT park.
- IIE Request for R1 and R2 Accounts: On February 12, IIE sent a request to the AOR to request R1 and R2 TraiNet accounts to enable data entry for J1 visa processing. At the time of writing report, IIE was waiting for USAID to issue R1 and R2 accounts due to the transition to a new system known as TEAMS.
- Visit to Yangon by IIE Grants & Contracts and International Accounting: The planned visit to Myanmar was cancelled due to COVID-19. IIE Grants & Contracts and International Accounting team were not able to book flights and travel safely to Myanmar. As a result, remote online trainings were held as follows:

- March 12, Marking, Branding and Vetting remote training session held to strengthen TEF and IIE staff members capacity to comply with USG requirements for marking, branding, and vetting.
- March 17, IIE Financial Management Overview remote training session held to strengthen IIE staff members capacity to comply with IIE and USG requirements for financial management of the Lincoln Scholarship Program.
- March 31, Procurement and Watchdog¹ (vetting) remote training session held to strengthen IIE staff members capacity to comply with IIE and USG requirements for procurements.

3.1.1 Donor Coordination

IIE continued to work closely with USAID to implement the Lincoln Scholarship Program. Coordination included a range of topics related to selection of cohort 1 and preparations for recruitment of cohort 2.

- **Selection of Cohort 1:** USAID worked together with the Lincoln Scholarship Program to complete selection of the first 17 scholars with selection panel interviews held in Mandalay and Yangon. The AOR and IIE worked closely on an official welcoming event for Cohort 1 held at the Novotel Hotel on February 16, which was attended by USAID, the US Ambassador, TEF, IIE, scholars and mentors.
- **Cohort 2 Recruitment:** In preparation for recruitment of cohort 2, USAID and IIE worked together to review and agree on eligibility criteria, relevant fields of study and a timeline. USAID reviewed all materials produced by IIE and provided valuable comments and suggestions. IIE continues to implement outreach and recruitment activities for cohort 2 and actively updates the AOR on a weekly basis about progress and adjustments made to delivery of recruitment activities for cohort 2 and pre-academic studies for cohort 1 as a result of COVID-19.
- **Government of Burma:** When IIE submitted the proposal for the Lincoln Scholarship Program it was envisioned that IIE would work with USAID to establish a role for GoB in the program. During Q2, IIE continued discussions with USAID about GoB involvement in the Lincoln Scholarship Program and it was agreed that the Lincoln Scholarship Program should coordinate outreach and recruitment with the Fulbright and Humphrey's scholarship programs managed by the State Department. This would then enable a unified approach for working with and sharing information to GoB agencies about USG funded scholarship programs available in Myanmar. IIE worked with the AOR to provide a one-page summary about the Lincoln Scholarship Program, so that the State Department could approach the Myanmar Foreign Economic Relations Department (FERD) with information about all USG funded scholarship programs. IIE worked with the AOR to provide a list of flexible dates to the State Department to enable this recruitment/information event to take place in April or May. At the time of writing this report all face to face meetings have been cancelled due to COVID-19. IIE is continuing to work with the AOR to determine how best to disseminate information about the Lincoln Scholarship Program to interested GoB candidates.
- **Advisory Committee:** As part of IIE's original proposal it was envisioned that an Advisory Committee would be established to provide support and guidance for the implementation of the Lincoln Scholarship Program. It was not possible to establish an Advisory Committee for recruitment of cohort 1 due to the compressed timeframe from inception (August 2019) of the

¹ Watchdog is a vetting service procured by IIE for use across all its projects and programs to ensure compliance with UGS procurement rules and regulations.

Lincoln Scholarship Program to recruitment of cohort 1 (February 2020). IIE has worked with the AOR to revise the outline of the originally proposed Advisory Committee to become an Alumni Committee, with a focus on preparing for the return of Lincoln Scholarship recipients to Myanmar. At the time of writing this report IIE was waiting for feedback from the AOR. The establishment of an Alumni Committee may be delayed due to impacts of COVID-19.

3.2 Program Highlights

3.2.1 Cohort 1 Update

This section describes tasks and/or activities undertaken by IIE in collaboration with USAID to promote and finalize works related to the recruitment and selection, and pre-academic-training for cohort 1.

Cohort 1 Selection Process and Lincoln Scholarship Awards

The selection process for cohort 1 was undertaken from January 3-February 7. The Lincoln Scholarship Program developed a comprehensive selection process, timeline, selection member guidelines, and selection matrix for application review. USAID approved and reviewed all documents and timelines prior to implementation. To conduct a fair and transparent selection process, the program formed two sets of selection teams starting with the third screening stage to in-person interview stage. The selection team members included representatives from TEF (Dr. Zin Mar Oo, Director), IIE (Klihsree Myat, DCOP), USAID (Maureen Seng Taung, AOR), and Ying Lao Noon Vo, who is the Deputy Director of a Civil Society Organization (Salween Institute) and U.S. scholarship alumnus (Burmese Refugees Scholarship Program). The selection members reviewed information forms, essays and recommendation letters of candidates who earned 400 or higher scores on their TOFEL English diagnostic test. 40 applicants were invited to a technical panel interview. In-person interviews were conducted in two locations (Yangon and Mandalay) with representatives from IIE, USAID, and a representative from a respective sector/field as per tables below:

Table 1.0: Technical Interview Panel Members

Name	Title	Location
Pamela Fessenden	USAID, Deputy Mission Director	Mandalay
Paul Pleva	USAID, Economic Growth Director	Yangon
Kay Myat	LSP's DCOP	Yangon and Mandalay
Ying Lao Noon Vo	U.S. Scholarship Alum (Burmese Refugees Scholarship Program)	Yangon
Maw Htun Aung	U.S. Scholarship Alum (Fulbright)	Mandalay
U Tin Htut Oo	Yoma Strategic Holdings Ltd	Yangon
U Nay Win	YMCA – Mandalay	Mandalay

Below is a summary of the main steps completed during the cohort 1 selection process.

1. Document Review (January 4-6): In the first stage of the process, TEF reviewed all 266 submitted applications for completeness and ensured that all supporting documents were received. Seventy-five (75) applicants who submitted incomplete applications or who did not meet general scholarship criteria did not move on to the second stage. A total of 191 applicants were invited to undertake English diagnostic testing.

2. English Diagnostic Test (January 7): 191 applicants that passed the document review stage were invited to undertake a TOEFL-ITP test on the TEF E-learning Platform. The second stage of the selection process eliminated applicants that did not achieve a score of 400 or higher on the TOEFL-ITP test. 177 applicants achieved a score of 400 or higher on the TOEFL-ITP test.
3. Criteria Review (January 14-19): The third stage of the process consisted of a review of the applications, essays, and recommendation letters of all applicants who achieved a score of 400 or higher on the TOEFL-ITP test by the core selection team members to assess which applicants should move to the interview stage. The top forty (40) applicants were selected for background checks and panel interviews from the 177 applicants that passed document review, English diagnostic, and criteria review stages.
4. Background Check (January 20-24): The top 40 applicants who made it past the criteria review stage were then put through an initial screening process to ensure that no one who made it to the interview stage had any hits on a terrorist watch list or local police record. This process included two steps:
 - a. Applicant names were entered into the CSI Watchdog background checking system that IIE uses to vet all domestic and international program participants, hosts, and vendors.
 - b. Candidates were requested to fill out an additional information form that IIE used to vet candidates through channels in Myanmar. The additional information form requested personal information, employment information, dependents, criminal history, police record, and names of references from their place of residence. Lincoln Scholarship Program staff called all references and reviewed police records to ensure that all candidates who move on to the interviews do not have security concerns.
5. Technical Panel Interview (January 27-31): All 40 applicants who were selected for background checks were then invited to participate in in-person interviews by the technical panel (see Table 1.0 above). In person interviews were held in Yangon January 27-28 and Mandalay January 30-31, respectively.
6. Submission of Recommended Final Candidates to USAID (February 3): Based on the results of the in-person interviews, IIE submitted a list of 20 recommended candidates for USAID consideration and approval.
7. Award Announcement (February 7): USAID approved the award of 17 scholarships (see Table 2.0 below), which was announced on February 7, 2020.

Table 2.0: Lincoln Scholarship Cohort 1 Selected Scholars

Scholar Name	AVG Score	Ethnicity	Gender	Field of Study
Scholar	90	Bamar	Female	PP/PA
Scholar	85	Mon-Bamar	Female	PP/PA
Scholar	89	Kayan-Bamar	Male	Agriculture
Scholar	89	Lahu and Akha	Female	Intl. Dev.
Scholar	84	Karen	Female	NRM/Env. Sci
Scholar	82	Karen	Male	PP/PA
Scholar	88	Shan	Female	Poli. Sci.
Scholar	82	Shan	Female	PP/PA
Scholar	92	Mon	Male	Econ/sustainable tourism
Scholar	86	Bamar	Male	Poli. Sci.

Scholar	74	Rakhine	Female	PP/PA/econ
Scholar	80	Mon	Female	Agriculture
Scholar	79	Karen	Male	NRM/Env. Sci
Scholar	81	Shan	Male	Public Health
Scholar	79	Bamar	Female	NRM/Env. Sci

Note: The average score was out of a total of 100, for face to face interviews.

Welcome Cohort 1 to Pre-Academic-Training Program

On February 16, 2020 a welcoming ceremony for cohort 1 was organized at the Novotel Hotel Yangon and was attended by the U.S. Ambassador, Scot Marciel, USAID AOR, Maureen Seng Tung, alternate USAID AOR, Travis Guymon, USAID/Burma Sr. Development Outreach and Communications Advisor, Robin Johnson, TEF colleagues, IIE team, cohort 1 scholars and mentors.



U.S. Ambassador, Scot Marciel

The welcoming event was opened by the U.S. Ambassador, Scot Marciel, who provided his perspective on the importance of higher education, leadership, conflict resolution, and the Lincoln Scholarship Program as an investment in the future of Myanmar by USG. Lincoln Scholarship Program DCOP, Klihsree Myat, provided an overview of the pre-academic-training program planned for the scholars and Zin Mar Oo, Director of TEF, introduced the cohort 1 mentors. At the end of the event all attendees were invited to share snacks and engage with each other, providing time for scholars to meet their mentors and ask IIE and TEF teams questions about their pre-academic-training program.

Pre-Academic Training mentors who studied in the U.S. in the field of study they are interested in.

- The objectives of the Lincoln Scholarship Mentor Program are: To facilitate communication and mentor-to-mentee relationships between Lincoln scholars and professionals who had studied in the U.S.
- To promote professional relationship and intellectual dialogues between mentors and mentees
- To ease educational system transition for Lincoln Scholars
- To offer personal experience studying in the U.S. with Lincoln Scholars

The mentors for Lincoln scholars were chosen based on the following qualifications:

- Professional who is working in a field of study or related field of study as the mentee's
- Familiar with graduate school education in the U.S.
- Dedication to building an inclusive and supportive community
- Respect for all others (values, beliefs, religion, sexual orientation etc.)
- Value the diverse racial, economic, cultural, and religious traits of their mentees

The mentors are matched with up to 2 scholars and are committed to mentor them for one term/cohort with an optional second term/cohort. They are available to answer questions via email regarding studying abroad experience and commit to meeting mentees at least one time each during pre-academic training

period. Ultimately, mentors will encourage mentees to excel, set targets, and challenge them to go further. For cohort 1, we were able to recruit twelve mentors from various fields of study. Of those twelve mentors, six of them are Fulbright alumni and all of them are natives of Myanmar who are working for the development of Myanmar either through CSO/NGO, government affiliated work, and private sector.

1. Frequently Asked Questions

IIE drafted a list of frequently asked questions (FAQs)² to provide to scholars based on IIE’s experience of managing USG funded scholarship programs and its’ knowledge of ADS 252 and 253. IIE’s FAQs were submitted to the AOR on February 7. USAID then provided feedback to which IIE responded on February 17. FAQs were then cleared by the AOR on March 19 and the FAQs were shared with cohort 1 scholars. IIE is still waiting for clarification from USAID about FAQs related to scholars who want to apply for a J2 visa that would enable travel for scholar dependents i.e. spouse and children under 18. At the time of writing this report, USAID was still considering the policy approach they would like to follow with respect to this matter. IIE will continue to update the FAQs and share with cohort 1 scholars in Q3, 2020.

2. IELTS Training and Results

The first five weeks of the pre-academic training was designed to assist cohort 1 scholars to study for TOFEL iBT tests. Unfortunately, just as pre-academic-training for cohort 1 was about to commence the only TOFEL iBT facility in Yangon registered to facilitate TOFEL tests was suspended by ETS (Education Testing Services). Since the IELTS exam is also acceptable to U.S. universities, IIE reached out to the British Council Yangon to arrange IELTS testing for March. Fortunately, TEF’s TOFEL instructors were also qualified to deliver IELTS training and cohort 1 scholars took their exams between March 17-20. IELTS results included four (4) scholars with an overall IELTS band of 7.5, three (3) scholars received an overall IELTS band of 7, six (6) scholars received overall IELTS band of 6.5, and four (4) scholars received overall IELTS band of 6.

U.S. Universities generally prefer scholars to have an overall minimum IELTS score of 6.5 and four (4) cohort 1 scholars only achieved an overall IELTS score of 6. The IIE Placement Team confirmed that they could find universities to accept cohort 1 scholars with overall IELTS scores of 6, but that they may need to undertake further English language studies when they arrive in the U.S. Costs for additional English language training (if required) will be included in scholar Training Implementation Plans (TIPs) that will include detailed budgets for each scholar. TIPs will be given to the AOR for approval once placement has been finalized with relevant universities in the United States. Table 3.0 below provides a complete summary of IELTS results for all cohort 1 scholars:

Table 3.0: Cohort 1, IELTS Exam Results

Scholars' Name	Test Date	Listening	Reading	Writing	Speaking	Overall Band
Scholar	March 19,2020	7	8.5	6.5	6.5	7
Scholar	March 17, 2020	7	6	5.5	7.5	6.5
Scholar	March 18, 2020	6	6	5.5	6.5	6
Scholar	March 17, 2020	7.5	8.5	6.5	8	7.5
Scholar	March 18,2020	7	7	6	7.5	7
Scholar	March 19,2020	7	7.5	6.5	7	7
Scholar	March 19,2020	6	6	5	6	6

² See Annex 9.7, Approved FAQs attached to this report.

Scholar	March 17,2020	5.5	6	5.5	6	6
Scholar	March 19,2020	7.5	7.5	7	7	7.5
Scholar	March 18,2020	6	6.5	5.5	7	6.5
Scholar	March 17,2020	7	5.5	6	7	6.5
Scholar	March 18,2020	6	6	6	7	6.5
Scholar	March 20,2020	8.5	7.5	6.5	7.5	7.5
Scholar	March 20,2020	5.5	6.5	6	6.5	6
Scholar	March 20,2020	7	5.5	6	7	6.5
Scholar	March 20,2020	8.5	7.5	7	7	7.5
Scholar	March 20,2020	6.5	7	6	6.5	6.5

3. GRE Training

Transition from Traditional Classroom to Online Learning Platform

GRE training commenced for cohort 1 the week of March 23, 2020. It was originally envisioned that cohort 1 scholars would continue with traditional classroom training for GRE after completion of IELTS exams on March 20. On March 18, TEF notified IIE that from March 19 all TEF educational programs would be either postponed, cancelled, and/or moved to online learning platforms. The Lincoln Scholarship Program GRE training then moved to an online learning platform utilizing Zoom classroom technology.

GRE Exams in Thailand to Homebased Testing

It was originally planned that cohort 1 scholars would take their GRE exams at a certified ETS center in Bangkok, Thailand in early May 2020. On March 19, the Civil Aviation Authority of Thailand (CAAT) announced that effective March 21 all foreign nationals travelling to Thailand would be required to have the following:

1. A medical certificate issued within 72 hours of flying declaring that the passenger was COVID-19 free.
2. Travel (Health) insurance policy with an insured value of USD\$100,000 and have a specific clause stating that the insurance would cover COVID-19 medical expenses.

In early April 2020 IIE received a notification from ETS that scholars enrolled to take GRE tests would be allowed to complete their GRE through remote testing. To be able to utilize remote testing, it is important to provide scholars with access to a facility that has secure internet connections and a backup power supply. The scholars do not have these facilities in their apartments rented by TEF. IIE and TEF identified that they could rent the suspended TOFEL testing facilities in Yangon to complete GRE tests for cohort 1. The plan at the time of writing this report is to have approximately 5-6 scholars complete their GRE each day from May 4- 9, utilizing the TOFEL testing premises in Yangon. TEF and IIE agreed to pay approximately USD\$400.00 to rent the suspended TOFEL testing facilities, which have a secure internet connection and a backup power supply.

4. University Placement

After cohort 1 scholars completed their IELTS exams on March 20, their results were passed on to the IIE Placement Team who immediately commenced the process of identifying possible institutions that would be suitable for each cohort 1 scholar, based on their IELTS exam results and original application submitted to the Lincoln Scholarship Program. GRE exam results are less important for the placement process and

will be provided to universities in late May 2020. Due to time constraints as a result of the Lincoln Scholarship Program timeline, applications will be submitted to two universities on behalf of each scholar. The IIE Placement team developed a placement submission plan based on the study objectives of each scholar, their IELTS scores, availability of cost-share, and universities willingness to review a late application. Submission plans were shared with scholars on March 31 to ensure that the suggested university programs are in line with scholar study objectives. The IIE Placement Team will adjust as appropriate based on scholar feedback before submitting applications. The remainder of the placement process will take place in April 2020.

On March 18, IIE held a conference call with USAID/Burma to discuss the placement process and answer USAID/Burma questions. The conference call was attended by IIE (Placement Team, Home Office Management, COP, DCOP) and USAID (AOR, Director of Economic Growth Office). The IIE Placement Team explained the placement process to USAID/Burma colleagues and answered their questions. It was also explained that IIE Placement Team would work on behalf of cohort 1 scholars to make applications to universities that offered suitable programs due to the compressed time for recruitment and placement of cohort 1 scholars.

5. COVID-19 Scenario Planning for Cohort 1 Activities

Due to disruptions caused by COVID-19, IIE worked with TEF to prepare revised timelines and/or alternative arrangements that would enable cohort 1 to complete their pre-academic-training and depart for the United States in August 2020. Table 4.0 below provides a summary of revised plans and timeline for complete of cohort 1 related works.

Table 4.0: Revised Plans for Cohort 1 Activities

Lincoln Scholarship Program - Cohort 1		
Phase	Task	Target Completion Date
GRE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual GRE preparation Register for at-home GRE Reserve venue for GRE Check out the venue before first test date 	May 9, 2020
Placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program/institution research Submission Plan Feedback to Placement Team Placement team’s response 	Ongoing
Thingyan (1 week)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate virtual sessions with U.S. team Continue with placement process Stakeholder Compact form Survey 	In progress
Academic sessions (4 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Email instructors about revised plan Revise pre-academic training schedule to reflect change Revise course structure in collaboration with instructors Produce new schedule 	April 20, 20

Visa process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRFI for Lincoln Scholarship Program • AID 1380-1 (Participant - Exchange Visitor Biographical Data) • USAID/Burma Additional Form • Stakeholder Compact (USAID Review) 	May 2020
Predeparture (1 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-departure orientation and U.S. higher education • Last minute preparation 	May 29, 2020 (if leaving in Aug) January 2021 (if deferred to spring)
Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue renting apartments for scholars who cannot go home and need housing • Survey scholars to find out if they will need housing or not • Internet access (TEF is looking into this) 	

3.2.2 Cohort II Update

This section describes tasks and/or activities undertaken by IIE in collaboration with USAID to promote and finalize activities related to the recruitment and selection of cohort 2.

1. Eligibility and Selection Criteria

IIE worked with the AOR to facilitate discussions with USAID to agree on eligibility and selection criteria for cohort 2. The agreed eligibility and selection criteria for cohort 2 is like that for cohort 1, with one major variation - an increase in age from 35 to 40. Considering that we are aiming to select people who have a certain level of maturity and are in mid-level positions in their career, Lincoln Scholarship Program deemed that it was necessary to increase the age limit to 40. Most people who have the qualification and level of experience Lincoln Scholarship Program is looking for are either in their 30s or late 30s. Therefore, the eligibility criteria for the age was changed to 40. Agreed eligibility and selection criteria are:

Eligibility Criteria:

- Be a citizen of Myanmar and currently reside in Myanmar
- Must be 40 years old and under at the time of application
- Have at least the equivalent of a bachelor’s degree from an accredited university with good academic achievement
- Have at least 5 years of work experience
- Must be available to attend pre-academic training in Yangon upon selection

Selection Criteria:

- Clear professional goals in fields relevant to the development of Myanmar
- Demonstrated leadership and contributions to employer organizations and/or community through work performance and personal involvement
- Demonstrated and sustained employment (at least 2 consecutive years) at one organization
- Demonstrated commitment and experience in embracing and fostering open dialogue as well as collaboration across dividing lines

2. Online Application Form

During Q2, 2020 the Lincoln Scholarship Program worked with the IIE Systems Team to update the application form for cohort 2 to reflect new eligibility and selection criteria. The application form was moved to IIE's online application which utilizes the Slate platform so that cohort 2 applicants can apply online. The online application form will go live on April 20. Slate application training for IIE and TEF staff will be undertaken in Q3, 2020. IIE will also be making physical copies of the application form available for Myanmar citizens that have difficulties accessing the internet to complete their online applications.

3. Lincoln Scholarship Program Website

During the next reporting period, IIE will work on updating IIE's website to include a program page for the Lincoln Scholarship Program. Draft webpages were submitted to USAID for approval in February 2020. USAID submitted the draft webpages to the State Department for approval. In the meantime, IIE information on the Lincoln Scholarship Program is available on TEF's website.

4. Social Media Strategy

IIE drafted a social media strategy³ and submitted it for USAID approval in December 2019. Due to changing circumstances caused by COVID-19 and feedback from USAID, IIE revised the social media strategy and resubmitted it to USAID for approval on April 13, 2020. IIE is currently waiting for approval.

5. Outreach and Recruitment Strategy

IIE drafted an outreach and recruitment strategy⁴ to guide cohort 2 recruitment activities to ensure that the Lincoln Scholarship Program received a diverse range of applications from Myanmar's diverse ethnic and religious population. The outreach and recruitment strategy also detailed how the Lincoln Scholarship Program would attract applications from various sectors of the Myanmar economy i.e. private enterprise, public sector (GoB), NGO/CSO and others. IIE submitted the outreach and recruitment strategy to USAID for approval on March 5, 2020. IIE is currently waiting for approval.

6. Cohort 2 - Outreach and Recruitment

In early February, IIE and TEF commenced planning for cohort 2 outreach and recruitment working collaboratively with USAID and applying lessons learned from recruitment of cohort 1. For more information about lessons learned and recommendations to enhance cohort 2 outreach and recruitment please refer to Cohort 1 Applicant Survey Report⁵. Examples of applied lessons learned include utilization of a 3 month period for outreach and recruitment activities, which was limited to a 3 week period for cohort 1, targeting a much larger number of remote and diverse communities in Myanmar, expanded use of social media, targeted networking with GoB through the Foreign Economic Relations Department (FERD) in coordination with USAID and the State Department, private sector groups such as AMCHAM and TEF's own network of contacts throughout Myanmar.

To enhance Cohort 2 outreach and recruitment events, they were split into two sessions as follows:

- Session 1: Lincoln Scholarship Program information about eligibility and selection criteria, dates for submission of applications, required documentation.

³ See Annex 9.8, Draft Social Media Strategy

⁴ See Annex 9.9, Draft Outreach and Recruitment Strategy

⁵ See Annex 9.10, Cohort 1 Applicant Survey Report

- Session 2: Lincoln Scholarship Program information about requirements for essays, referee letters and other aspects of the application process.

By early February, IIE and TEF planned a total of twenty-one (21) face-to-face outreach and recruitment events with other events to be announced, that would have enabled the Lincoln Scholarship Program to deliver information session to a majority of states and regions across Myanmar. Cohort 2 recruitment plans included events to be held in Lashio, Kutkai, Yangon (5 events), Kalay, Kyaing Tone, Taungoo, Sittwe, Hpa-an, Mawlamyaing, Pathein, Maubin, Myintkyina, Yezin, Naypyidaw, Mandalay, Dawei and Myeik.

At the beginning of March, IIE and TEF were still hopeful that all planned face-to-face outreach and recruitment events could be held with four (4) events including: March 5, Lashio; March 6, Kutkai; March 12, Yangon; and, March 14, Kalay detailed in Table 5.0 below. At the same time IIE began work with USAID in coordination with the State Department to organize a unified outreach event in Yezin during the month of April for GoB agencies. This event, which was cancelled, would have provided information about all USG scholarship programs including Lincoln, Fulbright and Humphrey scholarship programs to GoB agencies.

By late March it was clear that outreach and recruitment activities could not continue in the original format due to COVID-19. IIE worked with TEF and USAID to rapidly adjust planned outreach and recruitment activities for cohort 2 to be transitioned to online and social media platforms. For the remainder of the Q2 reporting period, TEF held three (3) Facebook events that included use of Facebook Live, Facebook Watch Party and Facebook Premiere platforms. TEF also utilized its outreach and recruitment budget to fund Facebook advertising to target and promote Lincoln Scholarship Program recruitment events within specific communities. TEF also requested that its network of partners promote the Facebook events. This was done to ensure that plans to target specific communities and groups within those communities were made aware of these events to facilitate their participation. USAID also shared information about these sessions on their social media platforms and shared the Facebook Live event held March 20 on their Facebook page.

Tables 5.0 and 6.0 below summarize the number of participants that attended either field (face to face) or virtual (Facebook) outreach and recruitment activities in Q2 with a total of 2,785 persons (353 field and 2,432⁶ Facebook) who participated in and/or viewed Lincoln Scholarship Program recruitment events.

Table 5.0: Cohort 2, Field Events for Outreach and Recruitment

Event Type	Date	Location	Male	Female	Total Participants
Lincoln Scholarship Information Session & Application Workshop	5-March	Kachin Baptist Association's Hall, Lashio	17	45	62
Lincoln Scholarship Information Session & Application Workshop	6-March	Kutkai Theological College, Kutkai	28	44	72
Lincoln Scholarship Information Session & Application Workshop	12-March	TEF Office, Yangon	41	74	115

⁶ The total number of participants that viewed the Facebook Live session on March 20, was 2,432 with 874 of those participants completing the registration form. Participants that view Facebook Live sessions cannot be forced to register.

Lincoln Scholarship Information Session & Application Workshop	14-March	Mingyi Hotel, Kalay	47	57	104
Total			133	220	353

Table 6.0, Cohort 2, Facebook Events for Outreach and Recruitment

Type of Facebook Event	Date of Event	Targeted Communities	Male	Female	LGBTQI	Total of Registered Participants	# of People Who Viewed Facebook Event
Facebook Live	20-March	Yangon Kyaing Tone	136	185	0	321	1551
Facebook Watch Party	24-March	Taungoo	10	26	0	36	741
Facebook Premiere	30-March	Sittwe Pathein Maubin Hpa-an Mawlamyaing Taunggyi Myintkyina Tedim Hakha Dawei Myeik Naypyitaw YeZin Mandalay Kalaw Myingyan Monywa Pakokku Sagaing Magway	184	331	2	517	140
Total			330	542	2	874	2,432

NOTE: More people viewed Facebook events than registered i.e. total registrations versus total number who viewed event. At the beginning, midpoint and end of each Facebook events participants were encouraged to register, so that data could be collected, but it is not possible to force participants to register as this is a voluntary choice in virtual Facebook events.

Cohort 2 - Revised Schedule of Outreach and Recruitment Events

In response to COVID-19, IIE worked with TEF in Q2 to revise its approach to delivery of information about the Lincoln Scholarship Program. Instead of holding full information sessions as detailed in Tables 5.0 and 6.0 above, the Lincoln Scholarship Program will be posting short five-minute videos on a range of topics. Emails will be sent to everyone who viewed and/or attended outreach and recruitment events to date. This will be done to encourage interested participants to apply for and complete their Lincoln Scholarship applications.

The Lincoln Scholarship Program will be reaching out to various private organizations/companies, heads of training, human resource managers and where possible provide full virtual information sessions for them. We may also have specific information sessions for GoB targeted groups in coordination with USAID and the State Department.

Table 7.0: Revised Schedule of Outreach and Recruitment Events

Date	Topic
Week of April 27, 2020 (5 minutes)	Online information session (TEF Facebook page) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reminder of application availability • Eligibility Requirements • Required Documents
Week of May 4, 2020 (5 minutes)	Online information session (TEF Facebook page) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criteria • Writing Essays • Requesting Recommendation Letters
Week of May 11, 2020 (5 minutes)	Online information session (TEF Facebook page) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slate system • Filling out application • Deadline reminder
Week of May 18, 2020	Online information session (TEF Facebook page) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Diagnostic Test • Registering and paying for the test • Deadline reminder
Week of May 25, 2020	Online information session (TEF Facebook page) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources for English diagnostic test • Address any inquiry questions
Week of June 1, 2020	Online information session (TEF Facebook page) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deadline reminder • Overview of selection stages

Other Outreach and Recruitment Activities

During Q2, in addition to the recruitment and outreach events detailed above, IIE also issued AMCHAM with a purchase order (PO) for the provision of advertising to promote the Lincoln Scholarship Program to its 15,000 private sector members. AMCHAM advertising purchased includes:

- March 19, AMCHAM newsletter
- April 2, AMCHAM Facebook blast
- April 23, AMCHAM newsletter
- May 7, AMCHAM newsletter
- May 21, AMCHAM newsletter

The Lincoln Scholarship Program utilized different media outlets to announce the launch of the scholarship application on April 20. The media outlets include 7 Days News, Eleven Media, Myanmar Times, The Voice Journals, The Mirror (GoB), and The New Light of Myanmar (GoB). Each media outlet has a Facebook page and a website, and IIE will utilize both channels of communication. Additionally, the Lincoln Scholarship Program collaborated with Strategy First University, Yangon Young Entrepreneurs Association, and Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler (KMPG) to advertise the Lincoln Scholarship Program in their newsletters, announcement board, and email alias.

As IIE and TEF move forward we will continue to adapt and revise outreach and recruitment activities to reflect the changing environment with respect to COVID-19, while trying to attract as many applications as possible for cohort 2 from a diverse range of Myanmar citizens that reflects ethnic, religious and regional diversity, as well as ensuring a balance of applicants from the private sector, public sector, NGO/CSO and entrepreneurs.

7. COVID-19 Scenario Planning for Cohort 2 Activities

During Q2, IIE worked with TEF to prepare revised timelines and/or alternative arrangements that would enable cohort 2 recruitment and selection activities to be completed. Table 8.0 below provides a summary of revised plans and timeline for complete of cohort 2 related works.

Table 8.0: Revised Plans for Cohort 2 Activities

Lincoln Scholarship Program - Cohort 2		
Phase	Task	Target Completion Date
Recruitment (2 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual Recruitment Events Recruiting different sectors Revise recruitment plan Recruitment materials (Done) 	May 7, 2020
Application (1 week)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and finalize PDF version Test online application system Test PDF format of application Application launch date (April 20) 	April 15, 2020
Selection members (4 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop profile of selection members Contact/recruit potential selection members Finalize selection members Revise code of conduct 	May 31, 2020
Selection process (8 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review applications Download list of candidates for language test Select candidates for interview (application reading) Schedule candidates for interview Conduct reference check 	August 10, 2020
Interview and Select Candidates (3 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interview candidates Select candidates for the scholarship Send award letter and acceptance form Send IETS and GRE prep materials 	September 11, 2020

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform scholars of pre-academic training format • Include timeline for IELTS and GRE • Include test dates for IELTS and GRE 	
Preacademic Training (6 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send scholars training schedule • IELTS and GRE exam dates • Prep courses will be via google classroom and Zoom 	October 19, 2020

4. MEL ACTIVITIES

Several MEL activities took place during the reporting period including the following:

- Applicant Survey Report: An applicant survey was sent to cohort 1 applicants on January 3 with a closing date of January 7. The purpose of the applicant survey is to assess the outreach, recruitment, and application process from the perspective of those who submitted applications. IIE drafted an applicant survey report and submitted it to the AOR on March 31. Based on the applicant survey report findings, IIE actively incorporated recommendations for strengthening Lincoln Scholarship Program outreach and recruitment events for cohort 2.
- Baseline Survey: A baseline survey has been designed and currently IIE is seeking feedback from subcontractors George Mason University School of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, and CoreSkills LLC. IIE expects to finalize the baseline survey by late April and administer the baseline survey with cohort 1 scholars by early May.
- Pre and Post Tests: IIE in collaboration with TEF designed a series of four (4) pre and post multiple choice questionnaires to measure scholar knowledge increase (Kirkpatrick Level 1 – Reaction) for non IELTS and GRE components of pre-academic-training including: Academic Reading and Writing; Introduction to American Higher Education System and Culture; Computer Skills for Graduate Study; and, Graduate Research and Communication Skills.
- Applicant Database: The MEL Specialist and COP discussed the development of an applicant database to be developed in Q3, which will contribute to robust reporting, filtering data and individual scholar progress tracking. The MEL Specialist has continued to work with TEF to gather all relevant data for reporting to USAID about selection and recruitment processes using Excel spreadsheets.
- Approved MEL Plan for Lincoln Scholarship Program: IIE continued to work with USAID to incorporate feedback and update the Lincoln Scholarship MEL Plan in accordance with USAID requests. On March 19, the AOR approved the Lincoln Scholarship MEL Plan.

5. DELIVERABLES COMPLETED

During this reporting period, the Lincoln Scholarship Program submitted the following deliverables.

- Quarterly Report (Q1), 2019 – Submitted January 31, 2020
- SF 425 – Submitted January 31, 2020
- Accruals Report Q2 FY2020 – Submitted March 16, 2020

6. CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

After the selection of scholars for cohort 1, the Lincoln Scholarship team met to evaluate all aspects of the program from the beginning to the point of selection in order to make improvements. The AOR joined IIE and TEF for the half day evaluation meeting on February 11, 2020. The team meticulously reviewed and evaluated the planning, process, and strategy of the recruitment process, the selection process, and the communication process with all the stakeholders. The outreach and recruitment team at TEF kept detailed notes on all the effort that went into the cohort 1 recruitment and selection process, which helped tremendously with the evaluation. We discussed lessons learned from our experience with cohort 1 and incorporated those lessons into the implementation of cohort 2 planning. Both the Lincoln Scholarship program team and USAID captured lessons learned that could be applied for cohort 2. In addition, the team collectively concluded that it needed to adjust the selection criteria based on the profile that the Lincoln Scholarship Program is seeking. Table 9.0 below lists challenges and solutions identified during the evaluation process.

Table 9.0: Challenges and Solutions

No.	Challenges	Solutions
1	<p>Standardized TOFEL Testing</p> <p>Several cohort 1 applicants were not familiar with use of standardized testing. As a result, when applicants were requested to complete a TOFEL ITP diagnostic through Thabyay eLearning Platform (TeP), it was apparent some applicants were not familiar with the use of such systems. This meant that TEF received many requests for assistance to enable applicants to complete the required TOFEL ITP diagnostic test.</p>	<p>TEF to make more resources available for the short period of time that TOFEL ITP diagnostic testing is to be undertaken so that applicants can complete their diagnostic tests in a timely manner.</p> <p>TEF to draft a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) list to be shared with invited applicants who are requested to complete a TOFEL ITP diagnostic test.</p>
2	<p>Use of Physical Applications Only</p> <p>Due to compressed time for cohort 1 recruitment, in-house downloading and printing 177 applications for the third phase screening process was difficult to complete in time allocated.</p>	<p>Applications for cohort 2 will be online using IIE’s online application system. It is anticipated that there will be a minimal number of physical applications. The online review process means that there should not be a need for large numbers of applications to be printed.</p>

<p>3</p>	<p>Application Review</p> <p>The rotation of application packages took time and caused delays. There was also a risk that some applications could be lost and/or damaged.</p>	<p>Application review will be undertaken online, using IIE’s online application system, which will provide access to specific parts of each application for selection panel members to review through a staged screening and review process.</p> <p>It is expected that a small number of physical applications may be submitted, so printing, screening, and review of those applications should not pose a significant problem.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>Shortlisting of Candidates</p> <p>Due to a very compressed timeframe for cohort 1 recruitment and selection, only 24 hours was allotted to finalize the shortlisted candidates for face to face interviews.</p>	<p>For cohort 2, a longer timeframe has been allocated for recruitment and selection, hence several days will be available to finalize shortlisting of candidates for face to face interviews.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Interview Venues</p> <p>Due to the tight timeline to complete cohort 1 recruitment and selection, venues in Mandalay and Yangon were pre-booked for face-to-face interviews. When surveyed, the majority of candidates preferred their interviews to be in Yangon, which meant some candidates had to travel to Mandalay, when Yangon would have been their first preference.</p>	<p>Based on the experience with cohort 1 and an interview site survey, most of the candidates chose Yangon. As Yangon is the most accessible city in Myanmar it is recommended that all interviews be organized in Yangon for cohort 2.</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Scholar Accommodation for Pre-Academic-Training</p> <p>Renting of shared apartments for cohort 1 scholars was difficult to plan for as total number of scholars and gender mix was not certain.</p>	<p>For cohort 2, this challenge will be overcome as there will be a one (1) month period to arrange accommodations after the announcement of awards. This was not the case for cohort 1, whereby accommodations had to be booked in advance due to compressed timeframe.</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Testing Centers</p> <p>Testing centers in Yangon for GRE & TOEFL iBT were suspended by ETS due to non-compliance with testing center standards.</p>	<p>TOEFL iBT testing was replaced by IELTS testing working with the British Council in Yangon. IELTS test results are acceptable to universities in the United States.</p>

		<p>GRE were to be taken in Bangkok, but due to COVID-19 outbreak, ETS enabled those tests to be taken at home. Cohort 1 will be taken in a secure environment in Yangon to complete GRE tests.</p> <p>Arrangements for cohort 2 GRE testing are ongoing and it is hoped a practical solution can be found by the end of June.</p>
9	<p>Logistics for Outreach and Recruitment Events</p> <p>Logistic planning/details for outreach events in communities, the readiness of the venues, seating arrangements, materials (projector screen/sound system), and refreshments did not always meet Lincoln Scholarship Program requirements.</p>	<p>Where possible Lincoln Scholarship Program (TEF/IIE) staff will visit venues prior to events to ensure that Lincoln Scholarship Program requirements are met. In some cases, where it is possible and funding is available the Lincoln Scholarship Program will use hotel venues, which normally provide an integrated service i.e. equipment, venue, and refreshments.</p>
10	<p>Identification of Qualified Candidates and/or Community Leaders</p> <p>Prior to recruitment events the Lincoln Scholarship Program tries to identify possible scholarship candidates, community leaders and groups that would be a good fit for the Lincoln Scholarship Program. Time taken to identify and invite suitable well qualified persons has taken more time than anticipated.</p>	<p>For cohort 2 outreach and recruitment events, the Lincoln Scholarship Program will conduct demographic mapping for all proposed event location. Information gathered will be used to develop an initial list of invitees for each event.</p>
11	<p>Registration for Outreach and Recruitment Events</p> <p>Not all participants are familiar with RSVP or QR code scanning for pre-registration. As a result, it was difficult to estimate total numbers who wanted to attend Lincoln Scholarship Program recruitment events.</p>	<p>It is recommended that online registration is used for online events. For face to face events, it is recommended that a combination of online and paper registration be used for compliance with USAID policy.</p>

7. SUB-RECIPIENT ACHIEVEMENTS

7.1 Thabyay Education Foundation

The Thabyay Education Foundation (TEF) is a key implementing partner for the Lincoln Scholarship Program.

Cohort 1 Achievements

In Q2 TEF worked with IIE to complete the selection and recruitment process for cohort 1, which ended with seventeen (17) Lincoln Scholarships being awarded. TEF then organized a welcoming event for cohort 1, introduced scholars to their mentors and the pre-academic-training program. Cohort 1 scholars were also provided with accommodations and informed about living arrangements for the period of cohort 1 studies in Yangon. TEF providing training venue and lecturers to provide effective training to cohort 1 scholars for training on standardized tests; IELTS and GRE, which are required for placement in the United States. TEF designed language training courses adapted from its own English for Professional Program (EPP) and graduate studies courses for U.S. academic setting.

TEF also worked tirelessly to adjust the delivery of cohort 1 pre-academic-training due to the outbreak of COVID-19, moving scholars from face to face to ZOOM online virtual learning. TEF also adjusted for TOFEL and GRE testing working with the British Council for IELTS testing and the suspended TOFEL center in Yangon to utilize their facilities for GRE homebased exams in May.

Cohort 2 Achievements

In Q2, TEF worked with IIE to prepare for the recruitment and selection of cohort 2, which included preparations for approximately 21 outreach and recruitment events, brochures, and other promotional materials. A key focus of outreach and recruitment events was to ensure a diverse and inclusive range of Myanmar citizens were targeted. This was achieved through demographic mapping exercise that TEF completed to ensure invitees were well targeted and fitted the Lincoln Scholarship profile. TEF also assisted IIE to identify and attract participants from various sectors of the economy i.e. private enterprise, public sector, NGO/CSOs and GoB. With the outbreak of COVID-19, TEF also worked tirelessly to move planned outreach and recruitment events to a series of Facebook virtual events.

7.2 George Mason University School of Conflict Analysis and Resolution

The George Mason University School of Conflict Analysis and Resolution (S-CAR) will be responsible for developing and implementing a multi-phase training program on conflict resolution for scholars during their program in the U.S. S-CAR's subcontract was fully executed in January 2020. Discussions with S-CAR during this reporting period centered on developing the curriculum for the conflict resolution course and brainstorming ways to coordinate content with CoreSkills, LLC. S-CAR reviewed and provided feedback on the Lincoln Scholarship baseline survey to be completed by all scholars awarded a Lincoln Scholarship. S-CAR is also in discussions with IIE about the possible provision of online theory training for cohort 1 scholars in the fall of 2020, if cohort 1 scholars are not able to depart to the United States due to travel restrictions as a result of COVID-19.

7.3 CoreSkills, LLC

CoreSkills, LLC will be responsible for developing and implementing trainings on leadership and diversity for scholars during their program in the U.S. USAID did not provide approval in the award document for

IIE to issue a sole source subaward with CoreSkills, LLC. On January 24, IIE submitted a request to USAID for approval of a sole source award for CoreSkills, LLC. USAID approval was granted on February 6 and the contract with CoreSkills, LLC was finalized in March. Discussions with CoreSkills, LLC this reporting period centered around finalizing their scope of work and having initial discussions with S-CAR about collaborating on content. CoreSkills reviewed and provided feedback on the Lincoln Scholarship baseline survey to be completed by all scholars awarded a Lincoln Scholarship. CoreSkills is also in discussions with IIE about the possible provision of online theory training for cohort 1 scholars in the fall of 2020, if cohort 1 scholars are not able to depart to the United States due to travel restrictions as a result of COVID-19.

8. PRIORITIES NEXT REPORTING PERIOD (APRIL - JUNE 2020)

8.1 Pre-Academic Training of Cohort I

Training for cohort 1 will continue with the completion of GRE testing now to be held in Yangon in early May. Cohort 1 scholars will then continue with four post graduate training programs as follows:

1. Academic Reading and Writing for Post Graduate Studies
2. American Higher Education System and Culture
3. Graduate Research Skills and Communication
4. Computer Skills for Post Graduate Studies

While cohort 1 scholars are completing pre-academic-training, IIE will work with each scholar to complete required documentation for J1 visa applications and complete medical screening for health insurance.

8.2 Academic Placement of Cohort I

The IIE Placement Team will work with cohort 1 scholars to find suitable placements for scholars based on their fields of study, IELTS and GRE scores. Each scholar will provide feedback on the list of two possible university programs that they received on March 31 before the IIE Placement Teams submits applications. Once admissions decisions are received, scholars will indicate their preferences and a request will be sent to USAID to approve placements before they are finalized with the universities. Once placements have been finalized, USAID will be provided with fully costed Training Implementation Plans (TIPs) for each scholar to be signed by the AOR.

8.3 Recruitment and Selection of Cohort II

IIE will continue to work with TEF and USAID to implement recruitment and selection activities taking into consideration constraints as a result of COVID-19. During the months of April and May, Facebook events will be held, targeted emailing of specific groups and communities and other activities undertaken to promote the Lincoln Scholarship Program. An online application will be made available from April 20 and applications will close June 7. Applications will then be screened for completeness and all applicants that submitted a complete application will be invited to undertake a TOFEL diagnostic test after which all applicants that could not achieve a TOFEL score of 450 will be eliminated. IIE will also work with TEF and USAID to identify and agree on a list of selection panel members.

8.4 J1 Visa Processing

IIE will work with cohort 1 scholars to complete all required documents for J1 visa applicants to be submitted to USAID through the new TEAMS visa system.

8.5 Social Media Strategy

IIE will finalize the social media strategy with USAID and then implement with the establishment of a Facebook page for the Lincoln Scholarship Program.

8.6 Outreach and Recruitment Strategy

IIE will finalize the outreach and recruitment strategy with USAID and then implement taking into consideration impacts of COVID-19.

8.7 Establishing an Alumni Committee

In Q2 IIE had discussed with USAID the possibility of establishing an Alumni Committee, instead of an Advisory Committee. USAID had agreed in principle with this recommended change and a draft Alumni Committee outline was submitted to USAID. Pending feedback and the emergence of COVID-19, IIE will if possible, establish the Alumni Committee.

8.8 MEL Activities

MEL activities for Q3 will include the following:

1. Finalize the baseline survey for the Lincoln Scholarship Program and implement it with cohort 1 scholars.
2. Implement pre and post knowledge tests for cohort 1 pre-academic-training as listed in 8.1 above.
3. Design a database for tracking the progress of scholars awarded a Lincoln Scholarship.

9. ANNEXES

9.1 Monitoring and Evaluation Table

The MEL Plan was approved by the AOR on March 19 and the tables below have been adjusted to include Q2 2020 data. This Q2 report is the first report that includes M&E results and each subsequent quarterly progress report will include quarterly and aggregate results for each reporting year.

Table 10.0: Output Level Indicators

Sr	Performance Indicator	Baseline	Target	Jan to Mar 2020	Comment
1	Output Indicator 1(Custom Indicator): # of Scholarships Awarded	0	95	17	17 scholars are selected in Cohort 1.
2	Output Indicator 2(Custom Indicator): % of Scholars who participate in the required program activities before and during their U.S. program.	0	100%	0	In process
3	Output Indicator 3(Custom Indicator): % Scholars accepted into U.S. universities	0	100%	0	In process
4	Output Indicator 4(Custom Indicator): % of scholars who receive campus visits	0	100%	0	The activities are not started yet
5	Output Indicator 5(Custom Indicator): % of quality applicants	N/A	70%	72%	During the first Cohort, 191 applicants (78 Male, 113 Female) out of 266 met the eligibility criteria of LSP Application.
Mission Objective 2.1: Promote Burma’s transition to a more inclusive and open economy while increasing bilateral trade ICS Goal 2: Our economic and development partnership expands US and Burma prosperity Impact 1: Burmese organizations are more inclusive and open while increasing linkages with the United States Outcome 1: Scholars acquire and learn new skills abroad and return to Burma to contribute to their organizations and communities					
6	Indicator 1.1(Custom Indicator): % of Scholars who indicate learning new skills related to economic development and bilateral trade between US and Burma	To be determined via baseline survey	75%	0	The data is not available yet

7	Output 1.1.1: Standard Indicator EG.6.14 Percent of individuals who complete USG-assisted workforce development programs	0	95%	0	The data is not available yet
8	Output 1.1.2 (Custom Indicator): % of Scholars who are selected from marginalized populations (gender, ethnic, religious, LGBTQ)	0	50%	54%	According to applicant survey, 43% mentioned themselves as Racial or Ethnic Minorities and 11% as Religious Minority
9	Output 1.1.3: Standard Indicator HL.9.4 # of individuals receiving nutrition-related professional training through USG-supported programs	0	4	0	The data is not available yet
10	Indicator 1.2 (Custom Indicator): % of Scholars who increased in their leadership skills as a result of LSP	0	85%	0	The data is not available yet
11	Indicator 1.3(Custom Indicator): % of scholars who increased in their understanding of inclusivity and appreciation for diversity as a result of the leadership training.	To be determined via baseline survey	85%	0	The data is not available yet
12	Indicator 1.4(Custom Indicator): % of scholars who increased in their conflict resolution skills are a result of the training.	To be determined via baseline survey	85%	0	The data is not available yet
13	Indicator 1.5(Custom Indicator): increased % of Scholars who have leadership roles and responsibilities in Burmese organizations	To be determined via baseline survey	50%	0	The data is not available yet
14	Indicator 1.6(Custom Indicator): % of Scholars who report providing training or mentoring their colleagues in Burma	0	50%	0	The data is not available yet
15	Indicator 1.7(Custom Indicator): % of Scholars who report improved understanding of the value and practice of equity and diversity among their colleagues.	To be determined via baseline survey	65%	0	The data is not available yet
16	Indicator 1.8: Standard Indicator EG. 6.15 Percent of individuals with better employment following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs.	To be determined via baseline survey	40%	0	The data is not available yet
17	Indicator 1.9(Custom Indicator): % of Scholars who apply equitable practices in their organizations/ businesses	To be determined	90%	0	The data is not available yet

		via baseline survey			
Impact 2: Alumni networks are active and promote inclusive and open activities in their communities and linkages with the United States					
Outcome 2: Scholars create sustainable alumni networks and linkages with United States					
18	Indicator 2.1(Custom Indicator): % of Scholars who actively participate in alumni activities	0	70%	0	The data is not available yet
19	Indicator 2.2(Custom Indicator): % of Scholars who maintain communication with US counterparts professionally	0	50%	0	The data is not available yet
20	Indicator 2.3(Custom Indicator): # of initiatives launched by alumni to support communities	0	5	0	The data is not available yet
Mission Objective 3.1: Deepen and expand people-to-people ties in order to promote greater understanding of and support for US policies and values					
ICS Goal 3: Our broad engagement builds support for US policies and values and the US as the partner of choice					
Impact 3: Linkages between people and greater understanding of US policies and values in bilateral relations					
Outcome 3: Scholars acquire and learn new skills abroad and return to Burma to contribute to their organizations and communities					
21	Indicator 3.1(Custom Indicator): % of Scholars who indicate learning new skills related to economic engagement and people-to-people ties with the US	To be determined via baseline survey	90%	0	The data is not available yet
22	Output 3.1.1: Standard Indicator E.S.2.2 Number of individuals attending tertiary education institutions with USG scholarship or financial assistance	0	95	0	The data is not available yet
23	Output 3.1.2(Custom Indicator): % of Scholars participating in professional development opportunities in the US	0	50%	0	The data is not available yet

9.2 USAID/Burma Field Visits

This section summarizes field events that were attended by USAID officials during the reporting period, January to March 2020.

Selection Panel in Yangon, January 27-28, 2020

Event Summary

As part of the cohort 1 application selection process, applicants whose applications passed initial document review for a complete application, TOFEL-ITP diagnostic with a score of 400 or higher, essay and recommendation letter review and background checks were then invited to participate in in-person interviews by the technical panel listed in Table 11.0 below.

Table 11.0: Lincoln Scholarship Program Yangon Technical Panel

Name	Title	Location
Paul Pleva	USAID, Economic Growth Director	Yangon
Kay Myat	LSP's DCOP	Yangon
Ying Lao Noon Vo	U.S. Scholarship Alum (Burmese Refugees Scholarship Program)	Yangon
U Tin Htut Oo	Yoma Strategic Holdings Ltd	Yangon

Location

Panel interviews in Yangon were held at the American Center Yangon.

Number of Participants

There was a total of 20 participants that were invited to be interviewed for a Lincoln Scholarship Award in Yangon at the American Center as per the Table 12.0 below:

Table 12.0: Yangon Panel Interviews – Participant Names

# Participants	Location
1	Yangon
2	Yangon
3	Yangon
4	Yangon
5	Yangon
6	Yangon
7	Yangon
8	Yangon
9	Yangon
10	Yangon
11	Yangon
12	Yangon
13	Yangon
14	Yangon
15	Yangon
16	Yangon
17	Yangon

18	Yangon
19	Yangon
20	Yangon

Number of USAID personnel

Two (2) USAID personnel attended selection panel interviews in Yangon as follows:

- Paul Pleva, USAID/Burma, Economic Growth Director
- Maureen, USAID/Burma, AOR Lincoln Scholarship Program

Any comments/observations

N/A

Selection Panel in Mandalay, January 30-31, 2020

Event Summary

As part of the cohort 1 application selection process, applicants whose applications passed initial document review for a complete application, TOFEL-ITP diagnostic with a score of 400 or higher, essay and recommendation letter review and background checks were then invited to participate in in-person interviews by the technical panel listed in Table 13.0 below.

Table 13.0: Lincoln Scholarship Program Yangon Technical Panel

Name	Title	Location
Pamela Fessenden	USAID, Deputy Mission Director	Mandalay
Kay Myat	LSP's DCOP	Mandalay
Maw Htun Aung	U.S. Scholarship Alum (Fulbright)	Mandalay
U Nay Win	YMCA – Mandalay	Mandalay

Location

Panel interviews in Mandalay were held at the Mercure Hotel.

Number of Participants

There was a total of 20 participants that were invited to be interviewed for a Lincoln Scholarship Award in Yangon at the American Center as per Table 14.0 below:

Table 14.0: Yangon Panel Interviews – Participant Names

# Participants	Location
1	Mandalay
2	Mandalay
3	Mandalay
4	Mandalay
5	Mandalay
6	Mandalay
7	Mandalay
8	Mandalay
9	Mandalay

10	Mandalay
11	Mandalay
12	Mandalay
13	Mandalay
14	Mandalay
15	Mandalay
16	Mandalay
17	Mandalay
18	Mandalay
19	Mandalay
20	Mandalay

Number of USAID personnel

Two (2) USAID personnel attended selection panel in Mandalay as follows:

- Pamela Fessenden, USAID/Burma, Deputy Mission Director
- Maureen, USAID/Burma, AOR Lincoln Scholarship Program

Any comments/observations

N/A

Cohort 1 Welcoming Event

Event Summary

On February 16, 2020 a welcoming ceremony for cohort 1 was organized at the Novotel Hotel Yangon and was attended by the U.S. Ambassador, Scot Marciel, USAID AOR, Maureen Seng Tung, alternate USAID AOR, Travis Guyman, USAID/Burma Sr. Development Outreach and Communications Advisor, Robin Johnson, TEF colleagues, IIE team, cohort 1 scholars and mentors.

The welcoming event was opened by the U.S. Ambassador, Scot Marciel, who provided his perspective on the importance of higher education, leadership, conflict resolution, and the Lincoln Scholarship Program as an investment in the future of Myanmar by USG. Lincoln Scholarship Program DCOP, Klihsree Myat, provided an overview of the pre-academic-training program planned for the scholars and Zin Ma Oo, Director of TEF, introduced the cohort 1 mentors. At the end of the event all attendees were invited to share snacks and engage with each other, providing time for scholars to meet their mentors and ask IIE and TEF teams questions about their pre-academic-training program

Location

The event was held at Novotel Yangon.

Number of Participants

There was a total of 50 participants including USAID and U.S. Embassy personnel that attended the welcoming ceremony as per the Table 15.0 below:

Table 15.0: Cohort 1 Welcoming Ceremony – Participant Names

#	Organization Name
1	United States Embassy
2	USAID
3	USAID
4	USAID
5	IIE
6	IIE
7	Thabyay Education Foundation
8	Thabyay Education Foundation
9	IIE
10	IIE
11	Thabyay Education Foundation
12	Thabyay Education Foundation
13	Thabyay Education Foundation
14	Thabyay Education Foundation
15	Scholar
16	Scholar
17	Scholar
18	Scholar
19	Scholar
20	Scholar
21	Scholar
22	Scholar
23	Scholar
24	Scholar
25	Scholar
26	Scholar
27	Scholar
28	Scholar
29	Scholar
30	Scholar
31	Scholar
32	Mentor
33	Mentor
34	Mentor
35	Mentor
36	Mentor
37	Mentor
38	Mentor
39	Mentor
40	Mentor

41	Mentor
42	Mentor
43	Mentor
44	Mentor
45	Mentor
46	Skynet Up to date
47	Skynet Up to date
48	MITV
49	MI Radio
50	Media

Number of USAID personnel

Three (3) USAID personnel and the U.S. Ambassador attended the welcoming ceremony as follows:

- Scot Marciel, U.S. Ambassador, Myanmar
- Robin Johnson, Sr. Development Outreach and Communications Advisor
- Travis Guyman, Alternate USAID AOR (A/AOR)
- Maureen, USAID/Burma, AOR Lincoln Scholarship Program

Any comments/observations

N/A

9.3 Expenditure Summary

Total Estimated Amount/Ceiling Price		\$19,000,000	
Total Obligated Amount		\$3,000,000	
Item Description	Budget	Cumulative Disbursements as of 3/31/2020	Balance
Direct Costs	\$16,607,077	\$469,837	\$16,137,240
Indirect Costs	\$2,392,922	\$233,038	\$2,159,884
Cost-Share	\$1,065,105	\$0	\$1,065,105
Total	\$20,065,105	\$702,875	\$19,362,229

9.4 Environmental Compliance Reporting

As required under section A.13.3 of the agreement, the project has reviewed all ongoing and planned activities and determined that they are within the scope of the approved regulation 216 environmental documentation. IIE, in consultation with the USAID Agreement Officer’s Representative and Mission Environmental Officer, as appropriate, continuously monitor all project activities to ensure there are no adverse environmental impacts. No new environmental impact or compliance issues were identified during the period August 28 to December 31, 2019.

9.5 Annexes Attached to Q2 Progress Report

- 9.6. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- 9.7. Draft Social Media Strategy
- 9.8. Draft Outreach and Recruitment Strategy
- 9.9. Cohort 1 Applicant Survey Report