

FAST FACTS

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Public Administration Responsiveness in Myanmar (2013-2015)

Myanmar is at an historic stage in its development. The adoption of a new Constitution in 2008 signaled a transition from military to civilian rule; contested elections in 2012, a move towards democracy; and the launch of a series of far-reaching political, social and economic reforms, a move towards peace and sustainable development. In recognition of the vital role of the public sector in facilitating Myanmar's transformation, the President launched a 'third wave' of reforms, following the political, and social and economic waves. The 'third wave' focuses on Myanmar's public administration.

Building on our extensive experience across the globe on strengthening core public administration functions, UNDP is supporting Myanmar to improve the capacity of its public administration to be accountable and responsive to the needs of the people, and strengthen service provision. Under UNDP's Democratic Governance Pillar, our work on public administration focuses on:

Public Administration Reforms: supporting the advancement, coordination and implementation of public administrative policies and programs

The Civil Service: supporting the training and establishment of a professional, transparent and representative civil service.



Figure 1 Director Generals Explain Reform Challenges at the Executive Management Course, 2014.

National Policy Priorities

"In order to help achieve economic growth and raise the living standard for all citizens, the government is striving to foster good governance and promote clean government throughout the country."- President U Thein Sein, Speech at the Myanmar Development Cooperation, January 2014

The overarching vision for the third wave of reforms stems from the Framework for Economic and Social Reforms 2012-2015 (FESR), which stresses the importance of 'Effective and Efficient Government.' The FESR points to the need to:

- restructure core institutions
- streamline administrative functions
- control corruption
- ensure participation and consultation,
- improve transparency and access to information.

The President and senior cabinet ministers have also tabled key reform issues such as promoting a professional civil service and decentralization in a number of public speeches and policy statements. There is currently no single policy document reflecting on reform priorities.

Our Partners

- **Government Partners:** Office of the President, Union Civil Service Board (UCSB), including Central Institutes of Civil Service (Civil Service Training Institutes) and ASEAN Resource Centre; Ministry of Home Affairs, General Administration Department and Institute of Development Administration.
- **Donors:** UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, Australia, Denmark

Capacities to advance public administrative policies and programs

UNDP works with our partners in government to promote innovations in public administration and effective coordination of overall public administration reforms.

Transforming the public administration in Myanmar will take time, however, there is also need to demonstrate results and show evidence of change. The Government of Myanmar has therefore emphasised 'quick win' reforms which can have a clear and measurable impact on government efficiency and effectiveness and the inclusion of people in decision

making now, and lead to more comprehensive reform efforts later.

UNDP is supporting different government agencies to coordinate with each other as they pursue their own reform efforts. This will help ensure that agencies can share lessons and good practices, that efforts do not contradict each other or overlap, and that all Ministries can respond effectively to the President's drive to reform.

As part of this, UNDP is also proposing and designing specific activities that the government can undertake which will improve understanding of, and enthusiasm for, reform efforts and ensure that the benefits of reforms can be demonstrated to the people of Myanmar. These include reviewing the structures of government institutions and the way different government functions are carried out, or improving how the government communicates about its reforms.

Actions include:

- Technical assistance on the planning, sequencing and prioritisation of public administration reform process.
- Supporting Secretariat functions for the reforms, by providing technical advice and logistical assistance.
- Improving understanding of different dimensions of reform by facilitating discussions, and providing trainings.
- Implementing specific 'pilot' activities such as conducting analysis and making recommendations about how Ministries are organised.

Matters of Fact

- The President has appointed a Minister who has a specific portfolio on administrative reforms.
- There are 32 Ministries in Myanmar, each with between 2 and 10 departments; many with offices or staff down to the township level.
- Information about the composition of the civil service is not kept centrally, but by each Ministry, with some information gathered by the Central Statistical Organisation.
- The Union Civil Service Board will train over 22,730 government workers in 2014- the majority of those trained will be teachers, but the number also includes staff of the judiciary and the parliaments, as well as health workers. In ASEAN's cooperation on 'Civil Service Matters', Myanmar leads in civil service training.
- In 2009, the number of women in senior positions in government was an average of 32%, with the proportion varying in different Ministries.



Figure 2 Directors present to each other about people-centred governance at the UCSB senior management course

A Professional, Transparent and Representative Civil Service

UNDP works with the Union Civil Service Board to increase government capacity to promote ethics and integrity in the civil service, as well as to promote equality and equal opportunities in the civil service (for example, of women.)

UNDP also works to strengthen Union Civil Service Board capacity to be transparent and open about their processes and decision making, for example through e-government strategies, website development and computer training.

Lastly, UNDP helps to improve the quality of training provided to civil servants, including leadership skills, by improving training content and curriculum, teaching and learning styles, and the training environment.

Actions include:

- Technical assistance to develop strategies, policies, guidelines and codes of conduct
- Perception surveys of civil servants and officials
- Training needs assessment, review and re-design of training curricula, and training of trainers
- Training on administrative reforms, management and civil service ethics
- Leadership schemes for government officials
- Exchanges and study tours to enhance regional cooperation on civil service matters.

For more information, visit:

www.mm.undp.org or contact

Thin Thin Aung

Public Administration, Programme Specialist

thin.thin@undp.org



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