



SNAPSHOT

Making government more democratic, transparent, and accountable



Photo: Thiha Swe, DAI

Discussing MoIP's strengths and opportunities

"We like this idea and we know we need to change."

- A Senior Manager in the MOIP

Telling Our Story

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Burmese Officials Learn to Better Serve the Public

Burma's transition to democracy is evident in new laws and freedoms, but old ways of doing business continue to slow reform and distance citizens from their government. Burmese citizens needing support from governmental offices are often met with outmoded and archaic systems and bureaucracies that have not kept pace with reforms.

In response to citizens' need to have a more responsive and democratic civil administration, on July 30 to 31, USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives (USAID/OTI) supported a Burmese non-governmental organization to facilitate a workshop for the Ministry of Immigration and Population (MoIP) on establishing transparent and democratic organizational systems reflective of Burma's transition.

Some Burmese government ministries, especially those directly serving the public, have begun to see the need to alter their operational structures to reflect the government's increasing interest in serving the population. Unfortunately, government leaders and civil servants have limited experience designing and working in organizational structures that are open and accountable to the citizens they serve. Reform-minded leaders need assistance to make their offices responsive to the aspirations of the Burmese people and reflective of Burma's nascent democratic transition.

In partnership with Sagawa Development Consultancy Company, USAID/OTI delivered a two-day workshop on Positive Organizational Change for 30 senior managers in the MoIP. The workshop explained the dynamics of organizational change and how leaders using effective facilitation for this change can create a more effective and transparent public administration process.

Sagawa's lead consultant, Ms. Chaw Su, noted "I am very optimistic about the genuine interests of the top leaders. Their opening speech empowered and encouraged the group to fully participate in the workshop, bringing their best ideas to the table so that we can initiate a positive change process within the ministry."

"We like this idea and we know we need to change", said a participating senior MoIP staff person. Through this initiative, MoIP will be a role model for other government institutions interested in demonstrating that reforms must go beyond legal revisions and must include institutional change for more accountable and democratic governance.

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