

Corruption Prevention through Education

Before discussing the topic on **Corruption Prevention through Education**, a brief background on institutional arrangement based on policy framework and legal framework will be presented.

A new law for anti-bribery and corruption was enacted in September 2013. The Suppression of Corruption Act, 1948 was repealed by Anti-Corruption Law, 2013. The stipulation of the objectives of Anti- Corruption Law in Section 4, to create clean government and good governance, to protect state-owned properties, community and rights and benefits of the citizens not to affect from corruption and to take effective action against offenders of corruption, is a clear message to the world that Myanmar is dedicated to combat corruption as national duty.

The formation of the Anti-Corruption Commission was mandated under Section 5 of the Law. The 15-member Commission, including the chairman and the secretary, was formed on 25 February 2014. The institutional arrangement under the Anti-Corruption Law includes also the formation of the office of the Commission. It was formed under Section 36 of Anti-Corruption Law on 28 August 2014 with the strength of about 160 numbers of staff.

As the Anti-Corruption Commission is a first and newly-established body in the present era, publicizing of the Commission was first made on 11 April 2014 in public media. A press release was issued in order to let the public aware the existence of the Commission and also the mandated responsibilities of the Commission. Another press

statement was released on 18 September 2014. These press releases are effective in public awareness to some extent.

After fully equipped with both hardware and software infrastructures, the educative talks in public sector took place. The operationalization of Section 16 (i) of Anti-Corruption Law followed afterwards. Section 16 and Section 17 of the Anti-Corruption Law have stated duties, functions and power of the Commission. Section 16 (i), (j) and (k) mandated the Commission for preventive measures against corruption. One of the functions as expressed in Section 16 (i) is to advise government departments, government organizations and government economic enterprises in drawing work programs and projects to combat corruption.

The members of the Commission were formed into small groups to take part in educative talks at the union ministries. During the period of 26 January 2015 to 23 February 2015, educative talks on Anti-Corruption Law were held in 20 union ministries separately. Altogether 6316 numbers of public servants- an average of 315 numbers- attended the talks. It is thus witnessing the interest of the public sector in combating corruption.

Not only at the union level, but also at the levels of states and regions, programs for educative talks on Anti-Corruption Law were formulated and implemented during the period of 1 June 2015 to 28 July 2015. With the cooperation of the respective governments, the members of the Commission were again formed into small groups and travelled across the country to all 14 States and Regions and actively took part in the educative talks. It is noted in some places that also some NGOs and civil societies attended in such talks. Peoples' participation in such anti-corruption program is found out to be

higher in states and regions, because the educative talk in Magway Region has drawn the interest of 900 participants; in Ayeyawady and Bago Regions, about 700 participants each; in Kachin, Chin and Shan(East) more than 650 participants each and in Mon and Kayin States about 500 participants each.

Moreover, the Commission, in collaboration with Union Public Service Commission, has undertaken to give lectures on anti-corruption in regular training courses for public officials, both senior level as well as new recruits, at Central Institute of Civil Services.

Under Section 16(j), the Commission has the function of adopting and carrying out suitable measures in preventing corruption, increasing good and upright mindset of persons in authority and public participation in combating corruption. Under Section 16(k) of the Law, the Commission can, if necessary, assign its duties to officials and staff of relevant government departments, government organizations and local administrative organizations with relevant approval in combating corruption.

At this juncture, it is worth noting that the establishment of complaint mechanism for public service delivery in ministries and delivery units led by deputy ministers at each State and Region are also complementing mechanisms for transparency. The more government processes are transparent; the less possibility of bribery and corruption is expected. With the aim to provide public services more efficiently and transparently, 'One Stop Shop' (OSS) offices are being established in States and Divisions by arranging service-providing agencies together in one place.

It is also worth noting the Action Committee against Bribery chaired by the Vice President of the Union, which has existed since 2012 before the formation of the Anti-Corruption Commission. This Committee takes action against bribery of civil servants under the Civil Services Personnel Law. Altogether 450 civil servants have been taken action.

To date, Myanmar has more than 170 new laws within the period of 5 years from 2011 to 2015. Besides Anti-Corruption Law 2013, there are new laws in which provisions relevant to bribery and corruption are stipulated. These laws include, but not limited to, Civil Services Personnel Law, Foreign Investment Law, Myanmar Citizens Investment Law, Myanmar Special Economic Zones Law, Competition Law, Consumer Protection Law, Anti-Money Laundering Law, Electronic Translation Law, Electricity Law, etc.

If there are relevant laws and regulations in place, prevention of corruption by means of law enforcement is an effective tool for anti-corruption. Nevertheless, education can also play a vital role in preventing corruption. It can minimize corruption risks.

Last but not least, SEA-PAC portal can be one of the tools for educative programs for preventing corruption.

Our action plan under the administrative reform has work plans such as continuation of educative talks in union ministers and states and regions in line with the Anti - Corruption Law, using all-inclusive approach; more educative programs for general public with the participation from them; programs for private sector participation; and stronger bilateral, regional and international cooperation.