

Press Release

New handbook to help businesses prevent and combat corruption

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Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business (MCRB) has today published '**Business Integrity: A Handbook for Myanmar Businesses**', a guide intended to help owners and managers of businesses in Myanmar who want to resist corrupt practices and reduce exposure to the risks that corruption creates. The handbook has been published in collaboration with the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), Union of Myanmar Federation of Chambers of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI), and the UN Development Programme (UNDP).

This Handbook, available in English and Myanmar, aims to provide guidance for businesses in Myanmar to support their anti-corruption programmes, drawing on inspiration from examples in Myanmar and elsewhere. It is structured around the eight principles for companies to take action to combat corruption issued by the Anti-Corruption Commission in 2018. These are:

1. Strong, effective policy and support from top-level management to fight corruption
2. Risk assessment to effectively identify and evaluate exposure to corruption
3. Enhanced and detailed measures for high-risk and vulnerable areas
4. Application of anti-corruption measures to business partners
5. Accurate books and accounting records
6. Human resource management policies complementary to anti-corruption measures
7. Establish trustworthy reporting mechanisms to report suspected corrupt behavior
8. Periodic review and evaluation of anticorruption prevention measures

The Handbook gives suggestions to companies on how they can individually put those eight principles into practice, and how they can collectively work with others to do so. Also included are additional resources such as guidelines for a company's codes of conduct, and gift policy.

Chairman of the Anti-Corruption Commission U Aung Kyi, [introducing the new guide](#), said '*This Handbook produced by MCRB explains exactly how to ensure greater business integrity and I encourage you all to read it*'.

Vicky Bowman, MCRB Director said, "*While the government should lead in preventing and taking action against corruption, business also has a role. Companies can be part of the solution and work with others to promote good business practices, be transparent and advocate for reform, including of red tape. This is also good for business. Companies with strong anti-corruption controls will find it easier to attract business partners and investors*".

U Zaw Min Win, Chairman, UMFCCI said, “*This Handbook gives us the thoughtful readers “inspiration on how to apply the principles in ACC Notification 14/2018 into practice, and how best to work with other businesses, and also with the government to achieve collective action to combat corruption”.*

Background

1. Publication of the Handbook has been supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) under the FairBiz programme funded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Prosperity Fund. Research and writing of this guide was undertaken by MCRB. Some of the contents in the guide draw on the ‘Good Governance Toolkit for Myanmar Businesses’ developed in 2016 by the FCO. Myanmar case studies have been collected from conversations with businesses in Myanmar over the last five years. In December 2018, MCRB, together with the ACC, DICA and UMFCCI organised [a workshop on combatting corruption](#) as part of MCRB’s [Responsible Business seminar](#) series. MCRB’s [Pwint Thit Sa/Transparency in Myanmar Enterprises](#) report is an annual benchmark of Myanmar company governance and disclosure, including of anti-corruption controls.
2. Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business (MCRB) is a Yangon-based initiative funded by the UK, Norway, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Ireland, based on a collaboration between the UK-based Institute for Human Rights and Business, and the Danish Institute for Human Rights. The Centre was established in 2013 to provide an effective and legitimate platform for the creation of knowledge, capacity and dialogue concerning responsible business in Myanmar, based on local needs and international standards, which results in more responsible business practices. It is a neutral platform working with business, civil society and government. (www.mcrb.org.mm)
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