

CSR AND RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS

MCRB defines Corporate Social Responsibility as “the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society”. This is in line with the definition adopted by the EU in its October 2011 policy on CSR. We take the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the UN Global Compact and the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises as important reference points.

WHAT DOES A ‘RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS’ LOOK LIKE?

Every business is different. However MCRB believes that some characteristics of a responsible business include:

- ✓ Obeying the law
- ✓ Respecting human rights
- ✓ Having a commitment to avoid corruption and not pay bribes or tea money
- ✓ Paying taxes
- ✓ Respecting its employees
- ✓ Respecting the environment
- ✓ Treating other businesses responsibly
- ✓ Treating its customers responsibly
- ✓ Being transparent
- ✓ Responding to and engaging with stakeholders

Some businesses take their social responsibility a step further by making social investments or having other CSR or philanthropic programmes.

BACKGROUND

The Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business (MCRB) is a Yangon-based initiative funded by the UK, Denmark, Norway, Switzerland, Netherlands and Ireland, based on a collaboration between the UK based Institute of 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.

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Myanmar Centre for
Responsible Business



Founders



THE DANISH
INSTITUTE FOR
HUMAN RIGHTS

Current Core Funders



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera



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PWINT THIT SA (TIME) PROJECT

The Pwint Thit Sa Project, also known as Transparency in Myanmar Enterprises (TiME) is intended to encourage increased transparency by Myanmar businesses in the areas of anti-corruption, organizational transparency, and human rights, health, safety and the environment. The projects rates companies on the basis of their published information, using a framework based on Transparency International's 'Transparency in Corporate Reporting'.

In 2015, the project researched 100 leading Myanmar companies to see how much information was provided on the company's official website or social media pages. The companies for this research project were mainly selected from the Top 100 income tax payers and Top 100 commercial tax payers' lists published by the Internal Revenue Department (IRD). Only local companies were chosen. Other large, leading, local companies not on those two lists were also added. Following initial research by MCRB, companies were consulted on the information that MCRB had found on their websites. They were encouraged to publish more information, and adopt relevant policies where they did not already have them. After a final check of their websites, a results table was published in July. The process will be repeated in 2016. The report is available on our website.



PWINT THIT SA PROJECT
Transparency in Myanmar Enterprises

OUTREACH PROGRAM



Our core activities

MCRB seeks to develop evidence-based knowledge about responsible business, in a participatory manner. We want to build a shared understanding of the facts, needs and priorities for responsible business in Myanmar and provide a platform for dialogue between business, civil society and government.

We help these players build their capacity to fulfill their respective roles and responsibilities in implementing responsible business practices in Myanmar. We also engage in advocacy on policy and regulatory issues, such as environmental and social impact assessments (ESIA) and CSR programmes.

We provide (free) initial advice to foreign investors about the business and human rights landscape of Myanmar. We put businesses - foreign and Myanmar - in contact with relevant local stakeholders and initiatives, as well as suggest professional services that can help them deepen their understanding.

In January 2014, MCRB agreed a partnership with Myanmar Business Coalition on Aid to establish a CSR network beyond Yangon that will work with local businesses, mainly SMEs, to increase their understanding of CSR. We hope this will lead to the building of local and national coalitions for responsible business.

SECTOR-WIDE IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Sector-Wide Impact Assessments (SWIA) build on well-established processes and procedures of environmental impact assessments (EIA) and social impact assessments (SIA) as well as human rights impact assessments (HRIA) that are grounded in the EIA/SIA methodologies but look at potential impacts through the prism of human rights.

Existing impact assessment approaches are used to understand the potential impacts of specific projects at particular sites in order to prevent or mitigate negative impacts as a project is designed and developed. The SWIA process builds on these methodologies, but instead of being project specific, takes a broader, forward-looking approach to potential investments from local or foreign businesses. Each SWIA will look at the impacts an entire business sector can have on society, with a particular focus on human rights. It is intended that each completed SWIA will be a public document, unlike many project-based impact assessments. It is hoped that the results of each SWIA will inform future impact assessments undertaken by companies.

MCRB has conducted SWIAs on the Oil and Gas Sector (2014), Tourism (2015) and ICT (2015) and is about to embark on a Mining SWIA for publication in 2016. These sectors have been chosen according to their relevance to Myanmar's economic development, their potential impacts, and the cross-cutting issues they raise of interest to other sectors. All reports are available on our website.



Sector-Wide Impact Assessments