

From Scarcity to Overload: *Finding “Good Enough” Public Information in Myanmar’s Transition*

Information Symposium Program Agenda

28th-29th January 2016

The Strand Hotel
Yangon, Myanmar



Information Symposium

From Scarcity to Overload

Finding “Good Enough” Public Information in Myanmar’s Transition

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Please join the Facebook Group for the Information Symposium:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/MyanmarInformationSymposium/>

Myanmar faces staggering challenges as it seeks to “catch-up” in the world’s most economically competitive region. Myanmar is already leaping the digital divide through the opening of its telecommunications market. The leap presents both enormous risks and opportunities in every sector of Myanmar. Critical to achieving opportunities and avoiding risks will be Myanmar’s capacity to harness the power of digital information for social good, particularly trustworthy information for peace building, democratic reform, and economic development, providing its citizens with easy access to reliable and credible information to inform their democratic participation and build a peaceful prosperous nation.

This symposium brings together practitioners and academics to discuss both the challenges and opportunities presented by the rapidly changing contexts within Myanmar. Participants and panelists will work together to define the challenges that civil society, government, professional and other researchers face in gathering and generating evidence about Myanmar’s complex social, political, cultural and economic context. Participants and panelists will also have the opportunity to share strategies for leveraging information for social transformation. Participants can contribute to a conference report, build professional and organizational networks, and create greater public awareness of information problems and solutions.

Symposium organizers can be reached here:

Myanmar Book Aid Preservation Foundation

No. 55, Baho Road, Corner of Baho & Ahlone Road,

Ahlone Township,

Yangon, Myanmar

Tel. 951-2314-708 (direct line)

959-2592-97595, 7314 7732

Email: info@myanmarbook.com or tascha@uw.edu

Facebook Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MyanmarInformationSymposium/>

Fact Sheet about the Information Symposium

- **What is the Information Symposium?**

The Information Symposium, *From Scarcity to Overload: Finding “Good Enough” Public Information in Myanmar’s Transition in Yangon, Myanmar*, will feature plenary panel discussions, keynote speakers, breakout discussions, and a Marketplace of Ideas, on January 28-29, 2016, in Yangon, Myanmar at the Strand Hotel. It is the first ever event that brings together all of the stakeholders working in the information society. Participants will gather to discuss the opportunities and challenges they currently face.

- **Who is participating in this symposium?**

Participants include information providers, information users, and information distributors. There will be representatives from the information and communications technology (ICT) sector, media, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs), academia and research organizations, government, and librarians and information professionals.

- **Who is organizing this Information Symposium?**

The Myanmar Book Aid Preservation Foundation ([MBAPF](#)), Enlightened Research Myanmar ([EMR](#)), the University of Washington’s (UW) Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies ([JSIS](#)) and the Technology & Social Change Group ([TASCHA](#)) at the UW’s Information School. Support comes from the United States Agency for International Development ([USAID](#)), [Microsoft](#), the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#), and [The Asia Foundation](#).

- **Is this Information Symposium part of a larger project?**

Yes, the Information Symposium is part of a larger project supported by USAID, Microsoft, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Tableau Foundation, implemented by the Myanmar Book Aid and Preservation Foundation, Enlightened Myanmar Research, and the University of Washington. The project, [Information Strategies for Societies in Transition](#), was developed to address the challenges Myanmar faces as it seeks to “catch-up” in the world’s most economically competitive region. The larger project has four major components: (1) building organizational capacity in civil society, political parties, the media, government ministries, and think tanks to design and implement effective and transparent information solutions; (2) developing and implementing mobile information literacy curricula; (3) growing the capacity of libraries to serve as trustworthy information hubs; and (4) piloting new platforms that tackle digital and information challenges in Myanmar.

- **How do you see Myanmar’s information society developing in next 5 years?**

With rapidly expanding and cheaper mobile phone usage, it is the perfect time to provide proper training to make effective use of the internet and digital devices so that people will be well-equipped

to use these new information and technology channels. We found out that the most effective way of giving training is to work through “infomediaries” who work with users in local environments, in their own languages, using their understanding of the community, and its needs to develop their own training based on the mobile information literacy curriculum we developed. Our primary ‘infomediary’ partners are libraries and librarians.

- **Why do you highlight the important role of librarians in the 21st century information society?**

Librarians and libraries play a central role in providing accurate and timely information using digital devices and the internet. Getting accurate information in real time and using government online services are crucial in the 21st century information society. Myanmar is in a good position for librarians to play a strong role in the information society, given that there are over 6,000 public libraries around the country.

- **How can I find out more about the Information Symposium and the project?**

You can visit our website <http://tascha.uw.edu/projects/information-strategies-for-societies-in-transition/>, or the Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/MyanmarInformationSymposium/>. Inquiries can be directed to info@myanmarbook.com, operation@myanmarbook.com, or call (09) 5070 825, 5092 680 (Myanmar phone number).

Symposium Sponsors & Organizers

- **About United States Agency for International Development (USAID)**

<http://www.usaid.gov/>

USAID is the lead U.S. Government agency that works to end extreme global poverty and enable resilient, democratic societies to realize their potential.

- **About Microsoft**

<http://www.pil-network.com/>

Microsoft is the leading platform and productivity company for the mobile-first, cloud-first world, and its mission is to empower every person and every organization on the planet to achieve more. Microsoft refers to Microsoft Corp. and its affiliates, including Microsoft Mobile Oy, a subsidiary of Microsoft. Microsoft Mobile Oy develops, manufactures and distributes Lumia and Asha and Nokia X mobile phones and other devices.

- **About the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**

<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/>

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. In developing countries, it focuses on improving people’s health and giving them the chance to lift themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty. In

the United States, it seeks to ensure that all people—especially those with the fewest resources—have access to the opportunities they need to succeed in school and life. Based in Seattle, Washington, the foundation is led by CEO Dr. Susan Desmond-Hellmann and Co-chair William H. Gates Sr., under the direction of Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett.

- **About The Asia Foundation**

<http://asiafoundation.org/>

The Asia Foundation is a nonprofit international development organization committed to improving lives across a dynamic and developing Asia. Informed by six decades of experience and deep local expertise, our programs address critical issues affecting Asia in the 21st century – governance and law, economic development, women’s empowerment, environment, and regional cooperation. In addition, our Books for Asia and professional exchange programs are among the ways we support Asia’s continued development as a peaceful, just and thriving region of the world. Headquartered in San Francisco, The Asia Foundation works through a network of offices in 18 Asian countries and in Washington, DC. Working with public and private partners, the Foundation receives funding from diverse group of bilateral and multilateral development agencies, foundations, corporations, and individuals.

- **About Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies (JSIS)**

<http://jsis.washington.edu/>

The Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies (JSIS) combines the social sciences, humanities, and professional fields to enhance our understanding of our increasingly interconnected globe. The school is named for late Senator Henry M. Jackson, in recognition of his interest and support for the school and for the field of international affairs. The Jackson School’s commitment to regional, cross-cultural, and comparative studies extends well beyond the boundaries of its many formal academic programs. The school has eight Title VI National Resource Centers (NRCs)—Canadian Studies; East Asia Center; Center for West European Studies; International Studies; Middle East Studies; Ellison Center for Russian, East European & Central Asian Studies; South Asian Studies; and Southeast Asian Studies—Devoted to outreach and public education activities. Each NRC receives Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships, awarded to graduate students throughout the University. The Jackson School is the number one recipient of NRC and FLAS awards in the country.

- **About the Technology & Social Change Group (TASCHA)**

<http://tascha.uw.edu/>

The Technology & Social Change Group (TASCHA) at the University of Washington Information School explores the design, use, and effects of information and communication technologies in communities facing social and economic challenges. With experience in over 50 countries, TASCHA brings together a multidisciplinary network of researchers, practitioners, and policy experts to advance knowledge, create public resources, and improve policy and program design. Our purpose? To spark innovation and opportunities for those who need it most.

- **About the Myanmar Book Aid and Preservation Foundation (MBAPF)**

<http://www.myanmarbook.com/>

The Myanmar Book Aid and Preservation Foundation (MBAPF) was founded in 2002 by a group of committed librarians, business and civic leaders with the goal of promoting knowledge and learning among Myanmar people, especially those in disadvantaged communities. MBAPF works in conjunction with government ministries, local and international non-governmental organizations to assist libraries with training and donations of printed and digital material, and the preservation of Myanmar historical and contemporary print culture. So far, MBAPF had contributed over One Million of books and had trained over (300) librarians on 21st century library services. MBAPF has launched Beyond Access Myanmar project since 2013 by partnering with international consortia Beyond Access group, Ministry of Information and Ooredoo by giving internet access and digital devices. MBAPF also partnered with University of Washington to conduct Digital Information Literacy trainings across the country.

- **About Enlightened Myanmar Research (EMR)**

<http://www.emrmyanmar.org/>

Enlightened Myanmar Research (EMR) is an accredited non-profit research organization dedicated to doing socioeconomic research, political economy analyses, social assessments, and other development-related studies in order to provide information and evidence-based recommendations for different stakeholders such as: international and local organizations in various development fields, civil society organizations, political parties, media, private sector, parliament, and government agencies supporting equitable, inclusive and feasible policies and programs. EMR has been extending its role in promoting political awareness and participations of citizens and civil society organizations through providing reliable and trustworthy information on political parties and elections, parliamentary performance, and essential development policy issues. As a current foundation step, EMR has been developing, in partnership with the University of Washington, an information mechanism which includes three main functions- collecting information, analyzing and distributions to the public through different methods such as website, social media and other electronic instant communication means such as text messages and applications. Meanwhile, EMR has been using other conventional measures such as providing social research trainings to local CSOs, political parties and elected MPs in order to promote practices of collecting reliable evidences and using these evidences in developing and evaluating policies.

Marketplace of Ideas

There are many individuals and organizations from all sectors of society seeking solutions to the many information challenges in Myanmar. **The Marketplace of Ideas** at the Information Symposium is an opportunity for these organizations and individuals to share their projects and ideas with participants attending the symposium. The Marketplace is an important opportunity for networking and building partnerships. **The Marketplace of Ideas** takes place during scheduled breaks during the two-day symposium, including:

Day 1: 28th January 2016

- 8:30 – 9:00 am
- 10:45 – 11:00 am
- Lunchtime
- 2:45 – 3:00 pm
- 5:00 – 7:00 pm

Day 2: 29th January 2016

- 9:00 – 9:15 am
- Lunchtime
- 2:45 – 3:00 pm

Marketplace Participants

The Asia Foundation

<http://asiafoundation.org/>

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PEN Myanmar

<http://www.pen-international.org/centres/myanmar-centre/>

PEN Myanmar is an association of writers who believe in freedom of expression and share the desire to promote literature. PEN Myanmar was established in November 2013. Its constitution was drafted based on the PEN International Constitution and received unanimous approval from all PEN centers worldwide at the 79th PEN International Congress on 12 October 2013. Founded in 1921, PEN International is a global community of writers now spans more than 100 countries. PEN International is a non-political organisation which holds Special Consultative Status at the UN and Associate Status at UNESCO.

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Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI)

<http://a4ai.org/>

The Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI) is the world's broadest technology sector coalition, working to drive down the cost of Internet access for 300 million people across 5 countries. Our 70+ members include private sector, public sector, and civil society organisations. Our mission is to reduce the price of broadband to the UN target of less than 5% of average monthly income through policy and regulatory reform, and to enable billions more users to come online.

University of Washington

<http://www.uw.edu/>

The University of Washington is one of the world's preeminent public universities. Our impact on individuals, on our region, and on the world is profound — whether we are launching young people into a boundless future or confronting the grand challenges of our time through undaunted research and scholarship. Ranked number 10 in the world in Shanghai Jiao Tong University rankings and educating more than 54,000 students annually, our students and faculty work together to turn ideas into impact and in the process transform lives and our world. For more about our impact on the world, every day. So what defines us — the students, faculty and community members at the University of Washington? Above all, it's our belief in possibility and our unshakable optimism. It's a connection to others, both near and far. It's a hunger that pushes us to tackle challenges and pursue progress. It's the conviction that together we can create a world of good. Join us on the journey.

Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies (JSIS)

<http://jsis.washington.edu/>

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IREX

<http://irex.org/>

IREX is a non-profit international development and education organization based in Washington, DC and working in more than 120 countries. IREX programs develop leaders, promote quality education and access to information, and strengthen communities and institutions that advance positive change. IREX's Beyond Access initiative is making information work for more people. Through its projects around the world, Beyond Access partners with governments, NGOs, local organizations, and international donors to help communities create their own sustainable information hubs through libraries — hubs that support literacy, information access and the opportunities that come along with them.

UNU Institute on Computing and Society (UNU-CS)

<http://cs.unu.edu/>

UNU-CS is a new research institute at the intersections of information and communication technologies and international development (ICTD) focusing on the key challenges faced by developing societies through high-impact innovations in computing and communication technologies.

The Tableau Foundation

<http://www.tableaufoundation.org/>

We believe in using data to make a difference in the world. We are employees and partners of Tableau Software who care deeply about improving the world around us. We believe data can unlock innovation and drive collaboration to help solve some of the world's most pressing challenges. Our grants have spawned

collaborations between Tableau employees, customers, and partners as well as universities and other private and public institutions. We have seen first-hand how data can drive the kind of innovation needed to move from alleviating the symptoms of the world's problems to actually solving them.

Ooredoo Myanmar

<http://www.ooredoo.com.mm/>

Ooredoo, the mobile telecom operator bringing crystal clear voice calls and fast internet to Myanmar, announced the availability of its life-enriching services in August 2014. In June 2013 Ooredoo was awarded a licence to operate in Myanmar. The past twelve months have been spent laying the foundations for Ooredoo to become an integral part of the nation's daily life. Ooredoo Myanmar offers a wide range of life-enriching, exciting and customer-friendly mobile communication services through its next generation network. These services provide a platform for human growth and empowerment and are designed to help people achieve their full potential and businesses run more efficiently.

TSI

The Serenity Initiatives (TSI) has done Capacity Development Training around the country for the past three year years. Last year, TSI created a website named Myanmar Electoral Resource and Information Network (MERIN) to update election and related information daily. TSI publishes election and related books into ethnic minority languages and distribute them for free, and owns a small library and that consists of about a thousand books.

Myanmar ICT for Development Organization (MIDO)

<http://myanmarido.org/>

Myanmar ICT for Development Organization (MIDO), founded in 2012, is a local civil society organization focusing on ICT for Development and for social change. Since the founding and until now, MIDO has been involved in ICT4D notable initiatives such as: Building Community Information Centers, advocacy works on ICT related laws and regulations, Kyeet Election Monitoring crowd-sourced app, Panzagar (Anti-Hate speech Initiative), and Community Information Management and numerous other ICT4D programmes.

Yone Kyi Yar Knowledge Propagation Society

This is the non-profit organization established by active young members from different fields. The purpose of this reading club is to share the knowledge, ideas and opinions between each other. The main activity of this club is to read the selected book weekly and make a discussion to get the different and various views upon the selected book we read. Every interesting person is cordially invited.

eLibrary Myanmar Project EIFL

<http://www.eifl.net/eifl-in-action/e-library-myanmar-project>

EIFL (Electronic Information for Libraries) is a not-for-profit organization that works with libraries to enable access to knowledge in developing and transition economy countries in Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe and Latin America. In a highly networked digital world our activities help people to access and use information for education, learning, research and sustainable community development. EIFL enables access to knowledge through libraries in developing and transition countries to support sustainable development.

Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU)

<http://www.themimu.info/>

The Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU) is a service to the UN Country Team and Humanitarian Country Team, under the management of the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator. Its purpose is to improve the capacity for analysis and decision making by a wide variety of stakeholders - including the United Nations, the Humanitarian Country Team, non-governmental organizations, donors and other actors, both inside and outside of Myanmar, through strengthening the coordination, collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of information. MIMU maintains a common data and information repository with data from various sources on all sectors, countrywide, at the lowest administrative unit for which it is available. This information is then made widely accessible to UN, NGO, donor and Government stakeholders in the form of maps, databases and other tools which support the coordination, planning and implementation of humanitarian and development activities. This unique position - as an independent but broadly-owned service - also allows the MIMU to play an important role in promoting standards which enable better sharing, mapping and storage of different types of data. The generous support of our current donors, the European Union (EU), and the Government of Canada enables the MIMU to provide all of its services free of charge. The Unit, originally established in 2007, receives administrative support from UNDP.

Agenda

Day 1 (28 January 2016)

8:30 am	Registration
9:00 am	Welcome by EMR and MBAPF
9:15 am	Welcome & Opening Remarks
9:30 am	<p>Panel 1: What Makes Information “Good Enough”? Moderated by: U Pe Myint, Author</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reorienting State Media and Transition - H.E U Ye Htut, Union Minister, Ministry of Information • The Knowledge Sector, Information Gaps, and Research Uptake - Ms. Kim Ninh, Country Director, The Asia Foundation • The Bridge to Universities - Dr. Chaw Chaw Sein, Professor, International Relations and Political Science, Yangon University • What You Don't Know about Facebook - Daniel Arnaudo, Senior Research Fellow, University of Washington
10:45am	Coffee Break
11:00 am	<p>Panel 2: Information Access, Literacy, and Competency in a Transitional Landscape Moderated by: U Thiha Saw, Chairman, Myanmar Journalism Institute</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The “Transition,” the 2015 Digital Landscape, and “Competency” - Thaung Su Nyein, CEO, Information Matrix Co., Ltd. • Access for All - Dr. Tun Thura Thet, CEO, MIT • The View from the PEN: Writers in the Transition - Dr. Ma Thidar (Sanchaung), President, PEN Myanmar
12:30 pm	<p>Lunch & Keynote Speech Deputy Minister U Thaung Tin, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Digital Transition)</p>
1:30 pm	<p>Panel 3: How Historical Scarcity Still Matters Moderated by Dr. Aung Tun Thet, Presidential Economic Adviser</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Barriers, and Opportunities for New Library Services - Dr. Thant Thaw Kaung, Executive Director, MBAPF • Countering Hate Speech - Nay Phone Latt, Adviser, MIDO • Practical Challenges and Opportunities in a Transitional Information Environment - Ye Myat Thu, CEO, Alpha Computer • A View from the Private Sector - U Aung Min, Director, MMRD
2:45 pm	Coffee Break
3:00 pm	Break-Out Sessions on Information Strategies
4:15 pm	Reports Back from Break-Out Sessions
5:00 pm	Reception Hosted by The Asia Foundation

Day 2: Friday, 29th January 2016

9:00 am	Coffee
9:15 am	Recap of Previous Day
9:30 am	<p>Panel 4: Citizen Information Challenges Moderated by: U Ko Ko, CEO, Yangon Media Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Challenges in an Environment of Trust Scarcity - Myat The Thitsar, Executive Director, Enlightened Myanmar Research (EMR) • Representatives of the Media - Zeya Thu, Dy. Chief Editor, The Voice Journal • View on How A4AI can Bridge the Information Barriers - Dr. Basheerhamad Shadrach, Asia Coordinator, A4AI • Capacity Building for Mobile Information Literacy - Zaw Htet Aung, Director, Yone Kyi Yar Knowledge Propagation Society, Mandalay
10:45 am	<p>Panel 5: Information Disconnect Between International and Local Actors Moderated by: Rosie (Lei) Zhang, Deputy Director for Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges and Opportunities of Beyond Access Myanmar - Ari Katz, IREX • Role of Libraries to Overcome the Challenges - Fiona Bradley, Manager, Development Programmes, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) • U Shwe Thein, Land Core Group • Aung Naing Oo, Myanmar Peace Centre
12:30 pm	<p>Lunch & Keynote Speech Jennefer Nicholson, the Secretary General, IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions)</p>
1:30 pm	<p>Panel 6: Role of Information Strategies in the 2015 General Election Moderated by: Mary Callahan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MERIN Eperience - U Kap No, the Director, Myanmar Electoral Resource and Information Network (MERIN) • Stakeholder Feedback on Election Information Mechanism - Myat The Thitsar, Executive Director, Enlightened Myanmar Research (EMR) • Lessons from Election Observation - Sai Ye Kyaw Swar Myint, Director, People Alliance for Credible Elections (PACE) • Disseminating Democratic Election Results - Soe Lin Htoot, Executive Director, Myanma Fifth Estate
2:45 pm	Coffee Break
3:00 pm	Break-Out Sessions
4:15 pm	Reports Back from Break-Out Sessions
4:45 pm	Closing Remarks

Panelist Biographies

Day 1 (28 January 2016)

Panel 1: What Makes Information “Good Enough”?

Moderator: U Pe Myint: Author and journalist

U Pe Myint graduated from the Institute of Medicine, Yangon. [M.B., B.S.]. After this, he practiced medicine for 10 years, then turned to full-time writing. He has since published 45 books of fiction and non-fiction; translated works and original writings. He won the National Award for Literature (Short Story) in 1995 for "Human Parts for Sale and Other Stories". He has worked as editor of several journals and magazines, including the "Literature Journal", the "Tidal Wave" magazine, and "Your Life" magazine. He is the founding member and editor-in-chief of the "People's Age" journal (2010-13), a weekly news magazine focusing on Myanmar politics. He is also the founding member and editor of "The People's Affairs" Myanmar politics journal. He is a member of Myanmar Press Council (Interim) since its formation in September 2012, and was in charge of the Complaints Committee from 2013 to 2015. He is Chairman of Nobel-Myanmar Literary Festival Organizing Committee, Vice-president of Myanmar News Media Council and Chairman of Myanmar Literature Development Association.

H.E U Ye Htut: Minister of Information

H.E U Ye Htut is the incumbent Minister for the Ministry of Information of Myanmar, and spokesperson for the President. Previously, he was Deputy Minister and Director General at the Department of Information and Public Relations. He has also previously served as a Lieutenant Colonel in Myanmar's Army.

Ms. Kim N. B. Ninh: Country Director, The Asia Foundation

Kim N. B. Ninh is The Asia Foundation's country representative in Myanmar. Dr. Ninh was formerly The Asia Foundation's country representative in Vietnam between 2005 and 2013. Her primary programming areas are governance, decentralization, and socio-economic development. Her academic work includes international relations, security issues, and political culture. Dr. Ninh has experience in designing, evaluating, and managing programs at the country-specific level, as well as in multi-country efforts. Her area of expertise is East and Southeast Asia. Dr. Ninh received her B.A. in political science and English from the University of California, Berkeley; and her M.A. in international relations and Ph.D. in political science from Yale University.

Dr. Chaw ChawSein: Professor and Head, International Relations, University of Yangon

Chaw ChawSein has been Head of the International Relations Department, University of Yangon and since 2006. She was promoted to the post of Professor in 2011 and now taking charge of both International Relations and Political Science at Yangon University. She also works as a member of Myanmar ISIS, an independent think tank and participates in international conferences jointly held by Myanmar ISIS and international partners. She works closely with the National Defense University, the Ministry of Defense by supervising theses and giving lectures. Chaw ChawSein obtained her PhD Degree in International Relations from Yangon University in 2004 and her research and interests is on China-Myanmar relations. Chaw

ChawSein has written articles on Myanmar police reform, decentralization for current Myanmar reform process; BCIM integration; Myanmar education reform.

Daniel Arnaudo: Senior Research Fellow, Center for Global Studies, University of Washington

Mr. Arnaudo is a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Washington's Center for Global Studies working on UW's Information Strategies for Societies in Transition project in Myanmar. His research focuses on internet governance, cybersecurity, and information and communication technologies for development (ICT4D). He earned masters' degrees in Information Management and International Studies at UW by completing a thesis on Brazil and its Bill of Rights for the internet, the Marco Civil. In past he has worked for the Arms Control Association, the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and the Carter Center, and consulted for a wide range of organizations including Microsoft, the Center on International Cooperation at New York University, and NASA.

Panel 2: Information Access, Literacy, and Competency in a Transitional Landscape

Moderator: U Thiha Saw: Executive Director, Myanmar Journalism Institute

U Thiha Saw is the Executive Director of the Myanmar Journalism Institute, while also serving as President, Myanmar Journalists Association, General Secretary of the Myanmar Press Council and President of the Myanmar US Friendship Association. He has also served as Editorial Director of the Myanmar Times, was Publisher and Chief Editor of the Myanmar Freedom, Chief Editor of the Open News Weekly Journal and Myanmar Dana Business Magazine, and was Editor of the International News Desk at the New Agency of Burma. He has a Bachelor's of Science in Physics and a degree in Law from Rangoon University, as well as a Diploma in Journalism from the International Institute for Journalism in Berlin, and was a Humphrey Fellow at the College of Journalism at the University of Maryland.

Thaung Su Nyein: CEO, Information Matrix

Mr. Thaung Su Nyein is CEO of Information Matrix, a successful technology and media entrepreneur. He grew up in Europe and the United States, but returned to Myanmar in 2000 to pursue his dream of running an Internet business. The company today is active in media, IT and services sectors. The media division publishes one of the leading newspapers called 7Day News, Internet Journal and People Magazine. The IT division works in e-government and e-education. He leads a very capable, youthful and energetic team of over 400 staff, dedicated to the corporate vision of doing everything in an innovative way for the future. Mr. Thaung Su Nyein also serves on the Executive Committees of several NGO sectoral associations, such as Myanmar Young Entrepreneurs Association, Myanmar Computer Professionals Association, Myanmar Computer Federation and the UMFCCI. As part of his company's CSR activities, he also leads a non-profit organization called Hero Foundation.

Dr. Tun Thura Thet: Joint Secretary, Myanmar Computer Federation (MCF)

Dr. Tun is the Joint Secretary of Myanmar Computer Federation (MCF), the federation of computer industrial associations and professional associations. He is also chairing Myanmar Software Industry Development Committee (SIDC) of MCF. He is also a visiting lecturer at the MBA program at the Institute of Economics, the Ministry of Education. He is also the CEO of Myanmar Information Technology Pte., Ltd (MIT), the leading system integration company in Myanmar. MIT was founded in 1997 and has obtained the major market share for the software and ICT services in banking sector, retail sector, hospitality sector, health care sector,

trading/ distribution sector and public sector. He is also the director and co-founder of Myanmar ICT Park. He has obtained his PhD in 2009, MSC in 2005, MBA in 2000, and BCom in 1995 from the Nan Yang Technological University of Singapore, Institute of Economics, and Curtin University of Technology respectively.

Dr. Ma Thida (Sanchaung): President, PEN Myanmar

Ma Thida is a Burmese medical doctor, writer, human rights activist and former prisoner of conscience. She has published under the pseudonym Suragamika which means "brave traveler". In Myanmar, Thida is best known as a leading intellectual, whose books deal with the country's political situation. She has worked as an editor at a Burmese monthly youth magazine called ShweAmyutay and a weekly newspaper called Pae Tin Tharn. She had been working at Muslim Free Hospital, which provides free services to the poor, for more than a decade. Now she is volunteering at a free clinic run by a local NGO, FFSS.

Keynote Speech

U Thaug Tin: Deputy Minister, Ministry of Communication and Information Technology (Digital Transition)

Mr. Thaug Tin joined Ministry of Communication & Information Technology of Myanmar in August 2012 as the Deputy Minister. There, he initiated and implemented telecom reform plan for Myanmar. According to the telecom liberalization plan, his team successfully selected two international telecom operators through a transparent, open and fair tendering process. He set up the independent telecommunication commission. He has been taking care of the corporatization project of the incumbent operator (Myanmar Posts and Telecom), e-government project and national satellite system project for Myanmar. He established a private IT company "Knowledge Management & Dedication Co., Ltd (KMD)" in 1990 and served as the Chairman and CEO until 2012. He also actively involved in several social and professional organizations; lecturer at University of Computer Studies (1984-1990), Secretary of Myanmar Computer Federation (2000-2012), Vice President of Union of Myanmar Chambers of Commerce and Industry (2005-2012), and Country representative for Asean Business Advisory Council (2005-2012). He holds a M.Sc. in Computer Science from University of Computer Studies, Yangon and Bachelor degree in Electronic & Communication Engineering from Rangoon Institute of Technology. He is an alumnus of Harvard Kennedy School Executive Education program.

Panel 3: How Historical Scarcity Still Matters

Moderator: Dr. Aung Tun Thet: President's Economic Advisor

Dr. Aung Tun Thet is currently the President's Economic Advisor, Chairman of the Myanmar Development Institute (MDI), Vice Chairman of the President's National Economic and Social Advisory Council (NESAC). In addition he is a member of the Myanmar Investment Commission (MIC), an Honorary Professor at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada, Governing Board Member of the UNESO-India Mahatma Gandhi Institute for Peace, New Delhi, India and chairs the local network of the UN Global Compact. Previously, he was a Senior Advisor of the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office in Yangon, and also served as Principal Officer at the UN System Staff College in Turin Italy, and as a Senior Advisor for UNICEF. He was Director General of the Ministry of Health's Department of Planning and Statistics and a member of the Department of Commerce at the Yangon University of Economics. Aung Tun Thet has a Bachelor of Commerce degree from Rangoon University, a Master of Science in Operations Research from

the University of Warwick, and a Ph.D. in Management Sciences from the University of Manchester. He is also a post-doctoral fellow at the University of Marburg.

Dr. Thant Thaw Kaung: Executive Director, Myanmar Book Aid and Preservation Foundation (MBAPF)

Dr. Thant Thaw Kaung works as founder and CEO of Myanmar Book Centre Co., Ltd which is the leading book importer and distributor of books on Myanmar and educational books since 1996. Thant has been working as Executive Director of Myanmar Book Aid and Preservation Foundation since 2006 which gives support to public libraries with books, internet, and digital devices and also gives training to librarians. Thant also leads to preserve old text from rare manuscripts such as old palm-leafs and paper folded manuscripts. Thant received “Ching-lin Tien Fellowship” from The Asia Foundation and also received prestigious “International Freedom to Publish Award” from American Publishers Association. Thant is also on the board of Yangon Heritage Trust to preserve heritage buildings in Yangon.

U Nay Phone Latt: Executive Director, Myanmar ICT for Development Organization (MIDO)

Executive Director of Myanmar ICT for Development Organization (MIDO), a civil society which focuses on ICT4D and also a secretary of PEN Myanmar. From 2008 to 2012, he was detained at Hpa-An Prison and was listed as a political prisoner by Assistance Association for Political Prisoners of Burma for his blogging during the Saffron Revolution of 2007. Honored with the “Cyber-dissident” award presented by Reporters Without Borders, PEN Barbara Gold Smith Freedom to Write Award in 2010, and was an honorary Fellow in Writing of the International Writing Program 2012 at the University of Iowa. Listed in the TIME 100 the most influential people in the world in 2010 under the Hero category. One of the Editors of Dwave Journal published by NLD and an initiator of (Panzagar) Flower Speech - Anti Hate Speech Campaign.

U Ye Myat Thu: CEO, Alpha Computer

U Ye Myat Thu is CEO of Alpha Computer of Mandalay, which he has run since 1998. He is also Associate Secretary of Mandalay Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry, a chairman of MBA Alumni Association Mandalay University, an EC member of Myanmar Computer Federation, UMFCCL and IPA Myanmar MCIA, a director at Myanmar Egress, Yatanarpon Cyber Corporation, and NAG. He also worked as an associate secretary for the formation of e-Government in Mandalay Region, and as a chairman for Myanmar Computer Industry Association from 2004 to 2009. He has a bachelor’s and master’s degree in Physics and MBA from Mandalay University. In 2009, he was rewarded National ICT award 2009 (mobile) for his invention of Tipitaka pocket. In 2005, he worked with his friends to create Zawgyi Myanmar font system and involved in Myanmar language-related computer works.

U Aung Min: Director, Myanmar Marketing Research and Development, Ltd (MMRD)

Aung Min has over 20 years of experience in developing, analyzing and managing research related to economy and industrial development, social issues, and has led over 200 business, industry, and social research projects in MMRD. He holds MBA from Yangon Institute of Economics in 1998 and B.Sc. in Mathematics from Yangon Arts and Science University in 1979. He is Joint Secretary of the Trade Information and Trade Promotion Working Committee, National Export Strategy, Ministry of Commerce and led Trade Information Working Group. He is also lecturer of Trade Training Institute jointly organized by Ministry of Commerce and JICA. He manages to produce monthly UMFCCL Business Magazine and quarterly Myanmar Industrial Digest since 2005. He contributed more than 300 articles of economic and business in periodical

journals and magazines in Business Magazine, Industrial Digest and International Economic Journal. He was author of a book titled, Asian Currency Crisis, in Myanmar language published in 1998.

Day 2 (29 January 2016)

Panel 4: Citizen Information Challenges

Moderator: U Ko Ko: Chairman, Yangon Media Group

U Ko Ko is the chairman of Yangon Media Group and publisher of the Yangon Times. He is closely engaged in the transition now underway in his country's media and developing the capacity for change to meet the new opportunities for free expression. As a leader of Myanmar Writers and Journalists Association, he is also involved in drafting a new press law and developing plans to create a national press council. He holds a Bachelors in Mechanical Engineering from the Rangoon Technical University.

Myat The Thitsar: Executive Director, Enlightened Myanmar Research

Myat The Thitsar is one of the core founders and currently serving as an Executive Director of Enlightened Myanmar Research (EMR) which is a non-profit research organization mainly conducting social science researches, which are supportive for developing policies and policy framework for development projects in Myanmar. In addition, she is also teaching International Relations (IR) in Social Sciences classes at Myanmar Egress Capacity Development Center. She holds a Master Degree in International Relations. She graduated from California State University- Fresno in 2008. She earned her Bachelor of Arts (Hons.) degree in International Relations from Yadanabon University, Mandalay in 2004.

U Zeya Thu: Director, The Voice

Zeya Thu is Director, Deputy Chief Editor and columnist of a leading news publication called 'The Voice' based in Myanmar. Analyst and educator, he is co-founder of Myanmar Development Partners, a Myanmar-based research and consultancy firm. Author of four books, he regularly comments on development issues including politics, economy and media. He has a Masters in International Development Studies from Chulalongkorn University of Thailand, and teaches development, journalism and leadership. Zeya Thu talks at Expert Talk Shows and seminars on key Myanmar affairs including politics, economy and foreign affairs. He is the joint secretary of Board of Directors at Myanmar Journalism Institute, an independent institution providing quality journalism education in Myanmar.

Dr. Basheerhamad Shadrach: Asia Coordinator, A4AI

Basheerhamad Shadrach is the Asia Coordinator for the World Wide Web Foundation for its Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI) program. In this capacity, Shadrach helps to build coalitions of private, public and civil society organizations to advance the shared aim of affordable access to both mobile and fixed-line internet in Asia. Shadrach also consults for the Global Libraries Program of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in their program in India. Until recently, Shadrach served as the Global CEO of the Telecentre.org Foundation. In his nearly three-decade long career since 1986, Shadrach has managed ICT4D programs in over thirty nations around the world. In partnership with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), Shadrach has also launched the Telecentre Women: Digital Literacy Campaign which has been recognized for offering digital skills to over 1 Million women worldwide in March 2014. For his thesis on measuring the impact of rural information access initiatives, Shadrach was awarded a PhD by Loughborough University in the UK.

U Zaw Htet Aung: Founder, Yone Kyi Yar Knowledge Propagation Society

After receiving a Bachelor's degree in English, from Mandalay University, he worked as a project engineer at Citi Bank in Singapore for 3 years and as a network engineer at Nera Telecommunications for 2 years in Singapore. He has a MBA from Mandalay University. Zaw Htet Aung is one of the founders and the trainers of Yone Kyi Yar Knowledge Propagation Society, a Mandalay based NGO with the mission of promoting a democratic, intelligent and knowledge based society in Myanmar. His focus of study is on public policy, public administration, and joined the University of Washington for a fellowship program training regarding the Digital Information Literacy at Seattle, Washington.

Panel 5: Information Disconnect Between International and Local

Actors

Moderator: Rosie (Lei) Zhang: Deputy Director for Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business (MCRB)

Rosie (Lei) Zhang is currently Deputy Director at the Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business. She earned an MBA at Harvard University in 2015 where she was a Mason Fellow. Prior to Harvard University, Rosie served in several executive positions in Asia operations and change management for corporate and foundation. Rosie is a deeply committed leader incorporate social responsibility with strong field knowledge in China and Asia. In the past 11 years, she conducted social and labor assessments/ to 500+ manufacturers in 16 Asian countries, interviewed 10,000+ workers and advised 100+ public and private sector clients in corporate governance, productivity development, EHS, labor relations, and crisis management. She was appointed by the global governance Board to become the first female Asian COO of the International Council of Toy Industries (ICTI) CARE Foundation, based in Hong Kong. She earned a degree in Public International Law and International Business Law from East China University of Political Science and Law.

Ari Katz: Director, International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX)

Ari Katz is IREX's Regional Director for the Beyond Access program in Asia, where he currently works on public library modernization efforts in Myanmar, Philippines and Bangladesh. Currently based in Bangkok, Thailand, Ari has worked at IREX's Center for Collaborative Technology for more than a decade, designing and leading programs that support public access to information globally. Ari has also managed education technology programs in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. Ari is a graduate of Boston University and received his master's at the Institute of Development Studies, UK.

Fiona Bradley: Manager, Development Programmes, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)

Fiona Bradley manages IFLA's Action for Development through Libraries Programme (ALP) that includes the Building Strong Library Associations programme, the International Advocacy programme, and supports IFLA's work on the UN post-2015 development agenda advocating for access to information. At IFLA she has focused on capacity building projects in countries spanning every region across the world. Prior to joining IFLA, she worked as a librarian in special and academic libraries in Australia at the University of Technology Sydney and national multicultural broadcaster, Special Broadcasting Service. She worked across a wide range of library service areas including management, research and repository services, emerging technologies, community information, and information literacy. She holds a BA in Political Science and History from the University of Western Australia, a Master of Information Management and Master of Arts (Research) both from Curtin University. (UNITED KINGDOM)

U Shwe Thein: Chair, Land Core Group

U Shwe Thein holds a M. Sc. (Forestry) from Australian National University, Canberra, Australia in 1989. He is currently working as Policy and Communication Coordinator, CARE Myanmar as well as leading Land Core Group as a chair. Land Core Group is promoting land use rights of smallholders including ethnic minority and women through program including evidence-based research, land rights and land laws awareness training, legal aid and policy change advocacy. He is leading various national level advocacy initiatives. He served for Myanmar government for over 18 years as a forester. He has over 15 years NGO service in various capacities of project – program designing and management.

U Aung Naing Oo: Associate Director, Peace Dialogue Programme, Myanmar Peace Center

Aung Naing Oo is currently the Director of Peace Dialogue Program at Myanmar Peace Center. The MPC, led by Union Minister and Myanmar's Chief Negotiator U Aung Min, was established by the President of Myanmar in order to spearhead the negotiations with armed ethnic groups. He is a founder of the Vahu Development Institute that trains Myanmar civil society and political leaders in Thailand. He was also the Deputy-director of the Institute and the CDCE Program based at Chiang Mai University in northern Thailand. He teaches advocacy and peace building issues at CDCE program and several training institutions in Myanmar. He left Myanmar following the 1988 uprising to join the rebels. He became the longest-serving Foreign Affairs Secretary of the All Burma Students Democratic Front and was the headmaster of the Jungle University the ABSDF established to provide informal education to exiled students in the jungle. He also published two books entitled "Dialogue" in 2002 and "Compromising with the Burmese generals" in 2004. He is the facilitator from the side of the government in ceasefire and political negotiations. He has B.A from Yangon University and MPA from Harvard Kennedy School. He has also diplomas on diplomacy from University of New South Wales, Australia and DDR and SSR training program certificates from Spain and USA.

Keynote Speech

Jennefer Nicholson: Secretary General, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)

As the Secretary General of IFLA (since 2008) she is responsible for the strategic direction and operational and financial management of IFLA, its Foundation and holding companies. Prior to joining IFLA she worked with the Australian Government on media and content policy, and a major national broadband strategy, and was on a number of government and industry advisory bodies in the cultural, education and training, and library association sectors. This all adds up to a deep appreciation of the value to individuals and society of good access to information and a will to act to enable that.

Panel 6: Role of Information Strategies in the 2015 General Election

Moderator: Mary P. Callahan: Associate Professor, Jackson School of International Studies, University of Washington

Mary P. Callahan is associate professor in the Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies at the University of Washington. Among her publications include *Making Enemies: War and State Building in Burma* (2003), *Political Authority in Burma's Ethnic Minority States: Devolution, Occupation and Coexistence* (2007), "The Generals Loosen Their Grip," *Journal of Democracy* (2012), "Ethnicity without Meaning, Data

Without Context: The 2014 Census, Identity and Citizenship in Myanmar” (Transnational Institute, 2014) and “National Security and the Military in Post-Junta, Constitutional Myanmar” (Sasakawa Foundation, 2015). Since 2013, Callahan has been based in Yangon, Myanmar, where she has consulted on issues related to governance, the 2015 general elections and the peace process and ongoing conflicts. She recently served as advisor to the senior leadership of The Carter Center electoral observation team in Myanmar during the November 8, 2015, election. She received her Ph.D. in Government from Cornell University in 1996.

U Kap No: Director, Myanmar Electoral Resource and Information Network (MERIN)

Kap No is the Director of the Myanmar Electoral Resource and Information Network (MERIN). Other positions he holds include Vice President of the Tedim Association, Treasurer of Chin Advocacy Network (CAN), and Director of The Serenity Initiatives (TSI). He was also the President of the Environment Conservation and Community Development Society (ECODS) from 2010-2012. He holds a BA and an MBA.

U Sai Ye Kyaw Swar Myint (Ko Sai): Executive Director, People’s Alliance for Credible Elections (PACE)

Sai Ye Kyaw Swar Myint (Ko Sai) is the Executive Director of the People’s Alliance for Credible Elections (PACE) and Board member of Tagaung Institute of Political Studies (TIPS). He was born in 1977 in a small town of eastern Shan State and brought up in Bago. From 2011 to 2013, he was working as Political Engagement Director at Yangon School of Political Science. In 2010, he was involved as a Political Parties and Campaign Analyst in Election Observation Project, organized by Shalom (Nyein) Foundation. Besides that project, he was also involved in Civic Education Program as a curriculum development consultant and trainer in 2011. After finishing his post-graduate diploma in Engineering Geology at Yangon University, he worked as a Geotechnical Engineer in Singapore for three years and left his career in 2009. In 1998, together with several friends, he established a library called *Cosmopolitan Library* in Bago taking part in youth and student movements.

Soe Lin Htoot: Founder, Myanma Fifth Estate

Soe Lin Htoot is the founder of Myanma Fifth Estate. He was previously a Senior Program Officer at IFLES, where he also served previously as a Program Officer. He was also a Communications Officer for the Burnet Institute for Medical Research and Public Health, and has a Bachelor’s degree in Computer Technology from the University of Computer Studies.