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Quarterly Report

**US-ASEAN Connectivity through Trade and
Investment (US-ACTI)**

July – September 2015

Quarterly Report

US-ASEAN Connectivity through Trade and Investment (US-ACTI)

Compiled for

USAID/RDM Asia and
The ASEAN Secretariat

Under Contract

AID-486-C-13-00004

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October 2015

This publication was produced by Nathan Associates Inc. for review by the United States Agency for International Development

List of Abbreviations

ABC	ASEAN Business Club
AEC	ASEAN Economic Community
AMS	ASEAN Member States
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASW	ASEAN Single Window
ASWSC	ASEAN Single Window Steering Committee
AWEN	ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs' Network
COFTAM	Committee for the Coordination of Financial Sector Technical Assistance to Myanmar
ERA	Economic Reform and ASEAN Integration Program
DRI	Department of Research and Innovation
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
GWIAI	GREAT Women in ASEAN Initiative
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IPM	Information Process Modeling
IPR	Intellectual Property Rights
MACCS	Myanmar Automated Customs Clearance System
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NSW	National Single Window
OCP	Operational Certification Procedures
PKI	Public Key Infrastructure
PLF	Protocol for the Legal Framework
SAPSMED	Strategic Action Plan for SME Development
SC-AROO	Sub-Committee on ATIGA Rules of Origin
SEWA	Self-Employed Women's Association
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SMEWG	SME Working Group
TELSOM	ASEAN Telecommunications and Information Technology Senior Officials Meeting
T&I	Trade and Investment
TBT	Technical Barriers to Trade
TWG	Technical Working Group
US-ABC	US-ASEAN Business Council
US-ACTI	US-ASEAN Connectivity through Trade and Investment
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USPTO	United States Patent and Trademark Office
WTO	World Trade Organization

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Introduction and Summary

US-ASEAN Connectivity through Trade and Investment (US-ACTI) is a five-year project of the U.S. government to increase economic engagement and cooperation with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). US-ACTI supports ASEAN in establishing the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) in the areas of customs modernization, trade and investment facilitation, small and medium-sized enterprise development, clean and efficient energy, and information and communication technologies. These are priority areas under the ASEAN-U.S. Trade and Investment Framework Arrangement, Enhanced Economic Engagement (E3) Initiative, and the Enhanced Partnership Plan of Action. The project works with the ASEAN Secretariat, member states, U.S. government agencies, the private sector, and other stakeholders as the region moves towards its goal of establishing the ASEAN Economic Community. At the same time the project works to deepen the ASEAN-U.S. economic relationship.

US-ACTI supports ASEAN through five work streams:

- **ASEAN Single Window:** By establishing the ASEAN Single Window (ASW) and the contributing National Single Windows to electronically exchange trade transaction information, ASEAN is accelerating cargo clearance and lowering trade costs. US-ACTI supports the technical and legal development of the ASW, along with public outreach.
- **Trade and Investment Facilitation:** By facilitating trade and investment ASEAN establishes a more level playing field particularly for SMEs, lowers costs, and boosts consumer confidence. US-ACTI supports standards harmonization, trade transparency, services liberalization, and investment facilitation.
- **Small and Medium Enterprise Development:** ASEAN's small and medium enterprise (SME) development program encourages more inclusive economic growth. US-ACTI supports this effort with a special focus on women and young entrepreneurs, and firms in Cambodia, Laos, Burma, and Vietnam, to further bridge the development gap.
- **Energy:** By promoting the use of sustainable energy and energy efficient technologies, ASEAN improves the environment in the region and the wellbeing of ASEAN citizens. US-ACTI focuses on implementing the ASEAN-US energy work program.
- **Information and Communications Technology for Development:** By promoting greater broadband access and implementing the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Master Plan, ASEAN seeks to bridge the digital divide and support more equitable development. US-ACTI is focusing on technical and financial issues related to broadband expansion in primarily rural areas as well as information security and e-commerce.

In the third calendar quarter of 2015, US-ACTI's regional program accomplished the following major items:

- Completed the messaging guidelines and message structure for the exchange of certificates of origin under the ASW.

- Began testing of the ASEAN Single Window messaging system in preparation for live operation by the end of 2015.
- Conducted ASW briefings for SMEs and ASW/NSW stakeholders
- Delivered an SME workshop in Hanoi, Vietnam, to strengthen the knowledge and skills of Vietnamese to make them more competitive in regional and global markets.
- Assisted the ASEAN Secretariat in drafting the implementation plans for the ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development 2016-2025 (SAPSMED).
- Completed development of the ASEAN SME Academy and began uploading content in preparation for its launch in the next quarter.
- In collaboration with the ASEAN Business Club, convened the conference on “Building Linkages: Expanding Options for ASEAN SME Access to Finance”.
- Organized a workshop on using TV white space technology combined with dynamic frequency allocation to expand access to broadband networks.
- With the U.S.-ASEAN Business Council, held a back-to-back workshop on the challenges facing ASEAN in promoting e-commerce.

During the quarter, the US-ACTI Economic Reform for ASEAN Integration program in Burma implemented the following activities:

- Moved forward key next steps on developing the Burma Trade Portal and Trade Repository, including hiring consultants to customize the software to be more effective in Burma and plans for the purchase of equipment for running the Portal.
- Completed the procurement and installation of all the hardware equipment for the office of TBT Enquiry Point for Department of Research and Innovation, Ministry of Science and Technology.
- Launched a series of economic reform and growth dynamic studies designed to help the USAID Mission to Burma provide advice and assistance to the new government that will be established in 2016.
- Supported seven Burmese IPR experts to attend a “Roundtable for Judiciary on IPR and Enforcement” and follow-on meetings with IPR experts conducted by the USPTO in Alexandria, Virginia.
- Completed a mapping of Burmese organizations supporting women’s entrepreneurship.
- Conducted a workshop on “Economic Empowerment for Grassroots Women in Myanmar: Local and Regional Experiences” as part of the visit by the Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) of India to Burma
- Conducted four activities to engage with Burmese businesses and civil society on how best to accelerate the use of ICT for inclusive development.
- Conducted a two-day 3D Printing Workshop.

Status of Activities and Progress

This document summarizes the US-ACTI project's activities and progress during the third calendar quarter of 2015 (July through September) by Work Stream showing how these activities are fulfilling ASEAN's long-term objectives and generating results.

Work Stream 1: ASEAN Single Window

The World Bank Doing Business Report 2015, published on 29 October 2014, states that the average import clearance time in ASEAN improved slightly to 17.4 days but was still well below the global average.

The ASEAN Single Window (ASW) is a central part of ASEAN's effort to stimulate the free flow of goods in the single market and production base of the ASEAN Economic Community. It allows the electronic exchange of shipment information between traders and governments and between ex-

porting and importing countries.

The ASW consists of national electronic trade clearance systems, National Single Windows (NSWs), that will use a regional platform to exchange information on shipments and shippers. NSWs are now operational in seven ASEAN Member States with NSWs under design or pending in the rest. NSWs enable a single submission of data and information, a single and synchronous processing of data and information and a single decision-making for customs clearance of cargo. This process helps expedite customs clearance, reduces transaction time and costs, and contributes to increased efficiency and competitiveness.

NSW Status	ASEAN Member States
Operational	Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Singapore, Vietnam
Development	
Design	Cambodia, Laos
Pending	Burma

When operational at the end of 2015, the ASW will support accelerated imports and exports, improved enforcement of and compliance with regulations at the border, and reduced trade transaction costs. ASW will help to facilitate ASEAN's participation in global and regional supply chains using the ASW as an interface with trading partners' systems while potentially saving regional consumers billions of dollars through improved trade facilitation.

The value of trade between ASEAN and the United States is currently estimated at \$219 billion in 2014 to a region with GDP of over \$2.4 trillion. A more integrated ASEAN enhances U.S. business opportunities in Southeast Asia. ASEAN is enjoying a period of high growth and resilient economies. Foreign direct investment is pouring in, keen to capture the opportunity. The region attracted an estimated \$136 billion in foreign investment in 2014. ASEAN also has a strong manufacturing story, given that China is becoming increasingly expensive, and it has a strong and growing investment story in fixed assets such as infrastructure. In addition, foreign companies are also attracted by the integration of ASEAN—the combination of 10 relatively

small markets into one large one of 625 million people—through interventions such as the ASEAN Single Window and other features of the ASEAN Economic Community. By helping ASEAN to fully complete and operate the ASW, US-ACTI's assistance will benefit all companies, whether from ASEAN or the United States, involved in import-export in Southeast Asia. In a rapidly integrating and growing region, such technical assistance has the potential to bolster U.S. investments and businesses while assisting ASEAN economies.

Over the life of the project US-ACTI is assisting ASEAN to:

- Complete the basic ASW architecture and begin live operation by the end of 2015;
- Provide assistance to expand the scope of the ASW over time;
- Finalize and adopt the necessary regional legal reforms to operate the ASW;
- Incorporate ASW-transferred information into risk management systems; and
- Expand the public-private dialogue on the ASW and trade facilitation.

In this reporting period, US-ACTI focused its efforts on the development of the ASW software system and working to establish the necessary legal environment for the ASW.

Development of the ASW Software System

ASEAN is committed to commencing live operation of the ASW in 2015. US-ACTI is working with the ASW Steering Committee and its working groups to make this happen. US-ACTI has assisted the Working Group on Technical Matters for the ASW (TWG) in the design and now implementation of a work program to enable live operation by the end of 2015. The approach recognizes that not all ASEAN Member States (AMS) are prepared for live operation of the ASW. Moreover, even the AMS that are ready to exchange live data are only ready to do so for a limited number of trade forms. Thus US-ACTI has proposed and ASEAN has accepted a staged approach to the implementation of the ASW. Under this approach, the exchange-ready AMS will launch the ASW to exchange the ATIGA certificate of origin in 2015 while other AMS develop their NSWs. US-ACTI is working with all AMS to identify additional documents for exchange over the ASW beginning in 2016. Under this approach, it is expected that five AMS (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam) will start to go live at the end of 2015 with two more AMS joining in the first half of 2016 (Brunei and the Philippines).

Development of the ASW Messaging Environment: At the end of the first calendar quarter of 2015, US-ACTI hired Axway Pte. Ltd, Singapore, to design, develop, and implement the messaging software for the ASEAN Single Window. The certificate of origin XML schema and messaging guidelines was presented to the ASW TWG during the 32nd ASW TWG Meeting in July 2015 and endorsed by the ASW Steering Committee (ASWSC) during the 15th ASWSC Meeting in September 2015.

During this quarter, Axway and US-ACTI completed the installation of the ASW gateway software in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam and began the testing of the complete certificate of origin messaging system (end-to-end testing.)

Member states began the Phase 1 (Round 1) end-to-end testing period on 24 August and ended this round on September 18, 2015. The e-ATIGA Form D was successfully exchanged between Indonesia and Vietnam with confirmation receipts provided by the appropriate Customs and Issuing agency experts. There were no outstanding issues for exchange between these countries, though there are some in-country systems that need upgrading. Indonesia and Vietnam sent e-ATIGA Form D messages to Malaysia. However, there was an issue with Malaysia receiving these e-ATIGA Form D's into their Customs Portal. Thailand and Singapore spent Round 1 completing enhancements to their in-country systems and resolving issues associated with connectivity testing.

Phase (1) Round 2 started on 21 September 2015 and will end by 16 October 2015. The target date to start the Parallel Testing (Phase 2) is 26 October 2015. The Parallel Testing (Phase 2) will be completed by 24 December 2015, and the subsequent live operation is expected to start by 30 December 2015.

Public Key Infrastructure and Mutual Recognition of Digital Certificates: Recognizing the importance of data security in the ASW platform, US-ACTI worked closely with the TWG to determine the best way to encrypt the system. Initially, the ASW will use standard internet encryption (https) but the RFP calls for the system to be designed to support the use of Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) in the future as was decided through a series of workshops sponsored by US-ACTI. At the ASW 32st TWG Meeting in July 2015, US-ACTI presented the PKI requirement analysis paper, which provides a balanced analysis of which environment PKI for mutual recognition would be required. The PKI paper included the need for a mutual recognition agreement for the ASW PKI implementation, AMS challenges in implementing Mutual Recognition of Digital Certificates for PKI, AMS readiness matrix for PKI implementation, and Axway's PKI capability for secure cross-border exchange.

ASW Expansion: In September 2014, US-ACTI launched the Information Process Modeling (IPM) study for the ASW. This study will prepare the way for the addition of four priority forms to the ASW after live operation commences in 2015. The priority forms are: ocean booking confirmation, loading confirmation, pre-departure cargo report, and sanitary and phytosanitary certificates. A separate effort will be conducted to prepare for the exchange of export declaration information. Following a workshop held in January, AMS have provided further input to the consultants on the proposed data elements of the priority forms and the consultants prepared a revised proposal for both the data elements and the messaging guidelines for the priority documents, which were presented during the IPM Data Harmonization Workshop held in July 2015.

During the workshop, participants' inputs focused on confidentiality and privacy issues related to sharing information from transport documents to other actors in the importing country. Furthermore, Member State participants shared their views to push for the electronic bill of lading to expedite the transmission of advance information about freight papers to support Member States risk management and for taxation purposes. US-ACTI's IPM Team provided a readiness assessment questionnaire for Member States to complete by the 2nd week of August 2015. This

readiness assessment will be incorporated as part of the draft final report, which will include recommendations on making a decision as to whether or not to proceed with the exchange of the identified four documents.

ASW Sustainability: As part of the planning for live operation of the ASW, US-ACTI analyzed the ability of the ASEAN Secretariat to house the servers to be used for ASW regional services. The study recommended that the servers not be hosted at the ASEAN Secretariat due to the inadequate level of infrastructure in the building. The ASW Steering Committee has agreed that the servers should be hosted in a data center in Indonesia. Last quarter, US-ACTI submitted a revised “Assessment Study on the Viability of the ASEAN Secretariat to Host the ASW Servers” to the ASEAN Secretariat. It included three data center proposals for co-location and disaster recovery management services to Member States for their informed decision, which finally agreed to co-locate the ASW servers to data center providers. During this quarter the revised study was endorsed by the ASWSC during the 15th ASWSC Meeting in September 2015.

Results

- Approval of the certificate of origin XML schema and messaging guidelines by the ASW TWG and the ASWSC.
- Completion of the ASW gateway software installation in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- Completion of Round 1 of end-to-end testing of the ASW messaging software and the launch of Round 2.

Next steps

- US-ACTI will continue to support the implementation and expansion of the ASW enabling infrastructure to allow the participation of other Member States in the live data exchange of ATIGA Form D.
- US-ACTI will assist ASEAN Member States to establish the ASW Project Management Office in managing and implementing ASW-related projects within ASEAN over the long-term. This includes providing assistance to ASEAN in addressing the issue of financial sustainability of the system and for the training of ASEC staff indicated in the Project Management Office study that will manage the ASW regional operations services.
- US-ACTI will provide capacity building activities to assist AMS in establishing a mutual recognition agreement that is technology-neutral for effective domestic and cross-border electronic authentication of cross-border messages.
- US-ACTI will continue assisting the TWG to finalize the data harmonization, and key documents such as the message implementation guide and process specifications of the additional documents to be exchanged using the ASW enabling infrastructure. Upon the directive of AMS on the recommendations of the IPM study, US-ACTI will collaborate with ASEAN Secretariat to identify the appropriate bodies to work with on the agreed

additional cross-border documents to be exchanged using the ASW enabling infrastructure.

Establishment of the ASW Legal and Regulatory Environment

After the completion of the Protocol for the Legal Framework (PLF) for the ASEAN Single Window in 2014, US-ACTI has continued to support the Secretariat in its effort to have the PLF signed. Vietnam was the 10th country to sign the PLF, signing in September. US-ACTI is working with AMS to promote the adoption of necessary internal legal reforms to implement the PLF. US-ACTI is also supporting the Sub-committee on the ATIGA Rules of Origin (SC-AROO) to amend the Operational Certification Procedures (OCP) for the ATIGA certificate of origin to permit the electronic exchange of the certificate of origin through the ASW.

Operational Certification Procedures for the ATIGA Certificate of Origin: ASEAN has been working for some time to modify the existing OCP to allow for the electronic exchange of certificates of origin through the ASW. US-ACTI has supported the SC-AROO at meetings in Vientiane and Siem Reap and in a joint meeting with the ASW TWG to better understand the changes needed the OCP to support the ASW. Through these meetings, US-ACTI has provided a new approach to revising the OCP that minimizes the changes to the existing document but would permit the exchange of certificates under the ASW.



Dennis Pantastico, US-ACTI ASW Lead, speaks at the Joint SCAROO-TWG Workshop on finalizing the OCP for ATIGA Form D in Manila, Philippines

During this quarter US-ACTI conducted two-day Joint SCAROO-TWG Workshop in July. This workshop helped Member State representatives understand and finalize the proposed amendments of the OCP for e-ATIGA Form D in preparation for the ASW live operation by December 2015. The draft OCP was significantly revised during the meeting and it was agreed that the revised draft would be presented at the next SC-AROO meeting for consideration and acceptance. US-ACTI has been asked to provide support to the SC-AROO meeting in Hanoi this October when the revised OCP will be re-

viewed. This assistance will help AMS finalize the OCP to allow acceptance of electronic ATIGA CO Form D.

Results

- US-ACTI completed the two-day Joint SCAROO TWG Workshop in Manila, Philippines in July 2015.

Next steps

- Continuing work with SC-AROO to support the adoption of a revised OCP in time to permit the live operation of the ASW by the end of 2015.

ASW Public Outreach

As part of the ASW public outreach plan for 2015 to raise ASW awareness for SMEs, US-ACTI is organizing a series of workshops in cooperation with the ASW Technical Working Group Meetings. These workshops include briefings for SMEs on the value proposition of the ASW and will be coordinated with AMS TWG representatives and national level SME working group.

Philippines SME ASW Workshop: During this quarter, US-ACTI conducted an ASW briefing in Manila, Philippines to help SMEs and the government officials of the Philippines to understand the benefits of the ASW enabling infrastructure in improving supply chain management that spans all movement of cross-border goods from point of origin to point of consumption. Mr. Sergio Ortiz-Luis Jr., Philippine Exporters Federation President opened the workshop, and the US-ACTI ASW Lead presented the ASW overview. The Department of Trade and Industry officials presented both the USAID Philippines' Trade developed projects Tariff Finder and the National Trade Repository Project, which were informative and appreciated by the participants. There were interesting questions raised on the scope and business process flow of the e-ATIGA Form D and technical and business readiness requirements of Philippines to join the ASW. The ASW Steering Committee Chair provided responses to the questions related to specific to NSW implementation.

Results

- US-ACTI conducted an ASW Briefing for SMEs and government officials in the Philippines in September 2015.

Next steps

- Conduct the ASW Symposium II in November 2015 bringing together private and public sector stakeholders to discuss the future of the ASW.
- Conduct PLF workshops with additional AMS as requested to support the implementation of the agreement.
- Offer additional workshops for SME on the use of the ASW.

Work Stream 2: Trade and Investment Facilitation

With a population of over 620 million and a combined GDP of over \$2.4 trillion, ASEAN is the United State's third largest export market in Asia.

The Trade and Investment Facilitation work stream of US-ACTI is designed to boost economic growth and regional integration through the provision of technical assistance to reduce trade and investment barriers. US-ACTI focuses its interventions in three areas: Trade in Goods, Trade in Services, and Investment. US-ACTI's support to ASEAN to liberalize trade in goods supports increased transparency in regulations, increased cooperation on standards, improved operation of rules of origin, and closer cooperation on trade nomenclature.

In the area of services, US-ACTI provides support to ASEAN to adopt a new ASEAN Trade in Services Agreement with a special focus on the adoption of modern negotiation methodologies. In the area of investment, US-ACTI is helping ASEAN better understand its existing commitments and to develop a long-term plan for investment liberalization.

In this reporting period, US-ACTP's Trade and Investment Facilitation work stream did not organize any workshops but prepared for a significant number of events scheduled for the fourth calendar quarter:

- Presentation of study on ASEAN Services Liberalization Beyond 2015: Assessment and Recommendations to the Coordinating Committee on Services, 2 October 2015
- ASEAN-US Trade and Environment Dialogue: Workshop on Combatting Illegal, Un-registered and Unreported Fishing, 5-6 November 2015
- U.S.-ASEAN Traditional Medicines and Health Supplements Good Manufacturing Practices Workshop, 18-20 November 2015
- In Vitro Diagnostic Medical Device Regulation Harmonization Workshop, 2-3 December 2015.
- Workshop on ASEAN Economic Community and the Judiciary, 3-4 December 2015

Work Stream 3: SME Development

US-ACTP's SME activities improve the capacity of ASEAN entrepreneurs, especially women and youth, to create and operate SMEs and thus promote equitable, inclusive development. In accordance with the ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development 2010-2015 and in close collaboration with the ASEAN SME Working Group, US-ACTP's SME support is focused on:

SMEs account for between 30 and 53% of the output of ASEAN and account for between 50 and 85% of employment.

- Access to regional and international markets;
- Access to information, including improvement in IT skills;
- Access to finance; and
- Support for women and youth entrepreneurs

Support is tailored to meet the needs of the less-developed ASEAN Member States at the national level to help bridge the regional development gap and promote greater integration and participation in the ASEAN Economic Community. US-ACTI support leverages expertise and resources from "ASEAN-helps-ASEAN" sources, public-private engagements, and other development programming.

To support ASEAN SMEs, USAID and the ASEAN Committee of the U.S.-ASEAN Business Council (US-ABC) in March of 2014 formed a partnership called the U.S.-ASEAN Business Alliance for Competitive SMEs. The Business Alliance combines the efforts of USAID and major U.S. corporations to develop the capacity and boost competitiveness of SMEs in the ASEAN

region. The Business Alliance will use training programs, mentorship opportunities, and cloud technology to support SMEs. US-ACTI is implementing USAID's contribution to the Business Alliance.

During this quarter US-ACTI has focused on seminars to increase access to markets, access to information and technology tools through the implementation of the ASEAN Online SME Academy, and access to finance through the launch of the SME access to finance grants program.

Access to Regional and International Markets

As previously mentioned, the US-ASEAN Business Alliance is co-implemented by the USAID and US-ASEAN Business Council through its ASEAN Committee. US-ABC corporate participants offering expertise and/or financial support for Business Alliance activities so far included P&G, UPS, HP, Microsoft, Baker & McKenzie, Citibank, eBay, FedEx, Google, IBM, MasterCard, Motorola, Nike, PayPal, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Qualcomm, Seagate, and VISA. Several more corporate partners are expected to provide support for the activities.

A key component of the Business Alliance is the provision of information, training and mentoring services to develop ASEAN SMEs' capacity to participate in inter-firm linkages and strategic supplier partnerships and, opportunities permitting, to integrate into U.S., regional and global supply chains. To this end, the Business Alliance is implementing a three-step program. The first step was to organize large workshops to transfer information, knowledge, and skills from MNCs to SMEs. This quarter, US-ACTI continued work with the Business Alliance to implement follow-on, sector-specific trainings.

U.S.-ASEAN Business Alliance –Workshop on Improving SME Access to Regional and Global Markets: To foster inter-firm linkages and strategic supplier partnerships, US-ACTI along with the US-ASEAN Business Alliance for Competitive SMEs implemented a one-day broad-based training on global supply chain integration in Hanoi. The training succeeded in transferring knowledge and skills from MNCs to SMEs on global and regional trends trade, digital technology, branding, supply partnerships, and logistics.



Mr. Hoang Quang Phong of the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry opens the Business Alliance SME workshop in Hanoi.

The workshop was held in September 2015 and was attended by 135 Vietnamese SMEs owners, of which 87 were women entrepreneurs. Key presentations were made by Federal Express, Microsoft, MasterCard and Baker & McKenzie. Most of the speakers delivered their presentations and discussions in Vietnamese to make it easier for the local audience to understand the materials and to raise questions. The workshop drew significant attention from local media outlets. US-ACTI will share the feedback received from participants with the SME Working Group (SMEWG) in our collaborative efforts to en-

hance SME development as guided by the ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development 2016-2025.

ASEAN Strategic Action Plan for SME Development 2016-2025 (SAPSMED): At the request of the SMEWG Chairperson, US-ACTI assisted the ASEAN Secretariat in drafting the implementation plans for the SAPSMED. Discussions focused on the proposed implementation schedules for the five Strategic Goals – namely: (i) Promote Productivity, Technology and Innovation; (ii) Increase Access to Finance; (iii) Enhance Market Access and Internationalization; (iv) Enhance Policy and Regulatory Environment; and (v) Promote Entrepreneurship and Human Capital Development. The finalized draft implementation schedules, which provide detailed guidance for the implementation of initiatives planned for the action lines in the SAPSMED, will be tabled for the consideration and approval of the ASEAN SMEWG at its meeting in Yogyakarta in November 2015.

Results

- Provided training to 155 SMEs at a workshop in Hanoi.
- Supported the development of a draft implementation plan for ASEAN SAPSMED 2016-2025.

Next Steps

- US-ACTI will use participant feedback to identify issues and priorities for future programming to target the needs of SME exporters in specific markets, as well as to identify SMEs that are ready to participate in more advanced training on supply-chain linkages.

Access to Information

Access to relevant and useful information and use of ICT and technology tools are the prerequisites in today's business. In this focus area, US-ACTI and the Business Alliance are jointly developing the ASEAN SME Academy (Academy). The Academy provides regional SMEs and their enablers with training materials (such as how-to guides and interactive e-learning modules) and business information and tools developed by Business Alliance firms and other partners. It adds value to existing resources through the customization of uploaded information and training materials to better meet the specific development needs of ASEAN SMEs and their enablers, including trade and business associations, business development service providers and SME support agencies in ASEAN.

ASEAN Online SME Academy: Last year, US-ACTI launched its effort to develop an online resource to support SME development in the region under the umbrella of the Business Alliance. In this quarter, US-ACTI continued the development and design of the ASEAN SME Academy and moved forward with plans for its launch.

Last quarter, US-ACTI hired a US-based company to design and implement the Academy platform. This quarter, the US-ACTI team continued working on the structure, components (e.g.,

management, finance/accounting, technology, marketing, trade/logistics, human resources, and operations), and levels of technicality of the contents (e.g., start-up, expanding, and ready to export or already exporting) to be uploaded on to the Academy platform. Meanwhile, the team continued working with contractor to improve various other features of the Academy (including the look and feel of the mobile platform) and evaluating the existing content provided by U.S. companies. US-ACTI's contractor for the Academy provided a first and second beta versions of the platform for both PC and mobile applications. US-ACTI has begun populating and testing the platform. The platform was presented to the ASEAN Economic Ministers by the US-ASEAN Business Council on 24 August 2015. The ASEAN SME Academy will be soft launched around the time of the ASEAN Summit with a formal launch event to be held in early 2016.



The ASEAN SME Academy is an online training tool that will be launched in November 2015.

Results

- The software for the ASEAN SME Academy has been developed and course content and SME resources are being uploaded.

Next Steps

- More contents will be uploaded and US-ABC will reach out to more U.S. companies for content contribution.
- The Academy will be launched in November 2015 to US-ACTI's database of SMEs.
- A launch event will be held in early 2016 that will include training of trainers in the use of the Academy.

Access to Finance

SMEs throughout ASEAN often list access to finance, particularly lending from banks, as one of their most serious obstacles to expansion and growth. At the same time banks in the region state that they are interested in making loans to SMEs but that they find it difficult to significantly expand their lending while meeting their own lending criteria. ASEAN has expressed a desire to support SME development and, in particular, to facilitate greater SME access to finance.

SME Finance Grant Program: Last quarter, USAID and the ASEAN Business Club (ABC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding to launch a public-private partnership to identify actionable solutions to the problem of SME access to finance on a regional level. US-ACTI developed the concept and will implement the partnership for USAID. During this quarter, US-ACTI worked with the ASEAN SME Working Group and the ASEAN Business Club to launch a grant competition for policy studies on key aspects of the SME access to finance puzzle. The studies must be designed to lead either to concrete proposals for action at the ASEAN level to

address access to finance issues, including those relating to financial literacy, or to implementable pilot programs by financial institutions in the region.



Representatives of banks speak to researchers and organizations interested in applying to the USAID-ABC grant program.

In September 2015, US-ACTI collaborated with the ASEAN Business Club and the ASEAN SME Working Group to convene a conference on “Building Linkages: Expanding Options for ASEAN SME Access to Finance” as the precursor to launching the research grant program on SME access to finance. The purpose of the conference was to refine the request for grant applications and to provide opportunities for researchers to better understand the challenges that financial institutions face in making loans to SMEs. Most of the 23 men and 20 women who attended the conference were researchers from

the ASEAN Member States, and the remainder came from the regional financial institutions and the ASEAN SME Working Group. During the conference, participants and speakers discussed the challenges in SME finance in the banking sector, and researchers exchanged experiences on their previous research efforts and findings relating to SME access to finance. Participants were also provided with information on the next steps and the related procedures of this activity. At the end of September 2015, US-ACTI sent out the Request for Applications to the research institutions and individual researchers with applications due by 30 October 2015.

Results

- US-ACTI conducted the conference on “Building Linkages: Expanding Options for ASEAN SME Access to Finance” in September 2015 in Bangkok, Thailand to support the SME Finance Research Grant Program.

Next Steps

- US-ACTI will continue working with the ASEAN Business Club to implement the research grant program, with grants expected to be issued by the end of 2015.
- US-ACTI is providing input to the ASEAN Secretariat for the establishment of the ASEAN Working Group on Financial Inclusion.

Women and Youth Entrepreneurs

US-ACTI has continued to support women and young SME entrepreneurs. This support is delivered in part through sustained collaboration with the ASEAN Women Entrepreneurs’ Network (AWEN). US-ACTI helped to launch the AWEN last year and is supporting its growth and interaction with other ASEAN entities such as the SME Working Group. Through assistance to the SME Working Group from US-ACTI, promotion of ASEAN women and young entrepreneurs through various activities has been incorporated and scheduled for implementa-

tion in the ASEAN SAPSMED 2016-2025. AWEN is one of the key contributors to those activities, which include, among others, the gradual development of the GREAT Women in ASEAN Initiative (GWIAI) as a regional platform for women empowerment and competitive supply chain integration in ASEAN.

GREAT Women in ASEAN Initiative: As part of US-ACTI's efforts to promote women's entrepreneurship through AWEN, US-ACTI began working with a group of women entrepreneurs from the Philippines in late 2014 to explore replication of the GREAT Women initiative in Cambodia, Laos, Burma and Vietnam as well as elsewhere in ASEAN. The purpose of this initiative is to provide improved marketing opportunities for women-owned firms and expand opportunities for women as both workers and business leaders.



Former Malaysia Deputy Prime Minister, YAB Tan Sri Dato' Muhyiddin Yassin (center), with U.S. Ambassador to ASEAN, Ms. Nina Hachigian (right) officially launch the GREAT Women in ASEAN Initiative in Kuala Lumpur.

Last quarter US-ACTI supported a series of follow-up activities in the development and regionalization of the GREAT Women in ASEAN initiative in line with the discussion and agreements at the Business Alliance Meeting on GREAT Women—ASEAN Collection convened in Bangkok in March 2015. The premiere event was the launching by U.S. Ambassador to ASEAN Nina Hachigian of the GREAT Women in ASEAN Initiative core product groups during the ASEAN SME Showcase and Conference 2015, which was held in Malaysia in May 2015.

This quarter US-ACTI engaged consultant, Dr. Thomas G. Aquino, to draft the strategic plan on governance structure of the GWIAI. Dr. Aquino will work with US-ACTI's SME Development Lead and the ECHOSi Foundation and GW team of the Philippines. The draft strategic plan will be discussed and presented at the Workshop on Governance Structure of the GWIAI in Bangkok, Thailand 30 November – 1 December 2015. The workshop will be used to revise the strategic plan and mobilize stakeholder collaboration for the progressive development of GWIAI as a regional platform for gender empowerment and development, and competitive supply-chain development and integration in ASEAN.

Results

None

Next Steps

- Development of a multi-sector work plan in support of the GREAT Women in ASEAN initiative.

Work Stream 4: Energy

While ASEAN is accelerating the consolidation of an ASEAN Economic Community by the end of 2015, it is important to ensure that development is sustainable through, among others, mitigating greenhouse gas emission. ASEAN has emphasized the need to

ASEAN energy use per capita has increased by nearly 35% over the past 10 years

strengthen energy efficiency, renewable energy development, such as bio-fuels, and promote open trade, facilitation and cooperation in the renewable and clean energy sector and related industries as well as investment in the requisite infrastructure for clean power development.

ASEAN-U.S. energy cooperation aims to accelerate the deployment of clean energy technologies in the region. To this end, US-ACTI, working closely with the Department of Energy, supports implementation of the U.S.-ASEAN Energy Cooperation Work Plan 2012-2014 and ASEAN institutional capacity-building.

In this reporting period, US-ACTI finalized the tool to examine the impact of climate change and hydropower projects.

Study Impact of Climate Change on Hydropower: At the request of ASEAN, the Study of Potential Climate Change Impacts on Hydropower and Policy Implications was presented to the 22nd Renewable Energy – Sub-Sector Network (RE-SSN) meeting in Rangoon, Burma in March 2015. As part of the preparation of the study tool, three pilot assessments on hydropower plants in the Philippines, Vietnam and Lao PDR were conducted. The results of the pilot tests and the application of the assessment framework from the Philippines and Vietnam were presented in a workshop in Burma. Based on comments during the workshop, the analytical framework and tool were revised this quarter.

As an outcome of the RE-SSN meeting, the ASEAN Centre for Energy requested that US-ACTI conduct additional analyses of hydropower projects in other countries. During this quarter, US-ACTI prepared to conduct two more climate change impact assessment on the Sungai Perak Hydroelectric Scheme in Malaysia and the Chulabhorn Dam in Thailand. The assessment will be conducted during the week of 26 October 2015.

Results

- None

Next Steps

- Conduct hydropower project assessments in Malaysia and Thailand
- Dissemination of the final study and the assessment framework to ASEAN member states

Work Stream 5: ICT and Development

In support of the ASEAN ICT Masterplan, US-ACTI provides technical assistance at the regional level to achieve an improved enabling environment for ICT, broadband, and emerging technologies as well as improved accessibility, affordability, and utilization of broadband in ASEAN Member States.

ASEAN had over 160 million wireless broadband connections in 2013, a 48% increase over 2012

US-ACTI is focusing its support on expanding broadband access in underserved areas, particularly rural areas. Support will be provided to address technical and financial issues. During this quarter, a meeting was held between the United States and the ASEAN Telecommunications and Information Technology Senior Officials Meeting (TELSOM) to plan for a formal dialogue to be held in November of 2015 and to review US-ACTI's proposed 2015 work program. This work program was accepted at that meeting and two workshops were implemented under it during this quarter.

Broadband Expansion and Dynamic Frequency Allocation Workshop: In September 2015, the US-ACTI, in collaboration with the Lao Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications and the ASEAN Senior Officials for Telecommunications and Information Technology, organized a workshop for 32 government officials, 26 men and 6 women, from around ASEAN to explore options for expanding broadband access to underserved communities. A significant part of the program focused on how the radio frequency spectrum could be more effectively used to provide ICT services. Speakers included representatives from the Federal Communications Commission, Alliance for Affordable Internet, Dynamic Spectrum Alliance, and Microsoft in addition to project consultants. The workshop included a discussion of USAID-funded pilot projects in the use of TV White Space for broadband expansion in Indonesia and the Philippines. The Indonesia representative presented the case study that had previously been prepared under US-ACTI.



David Townsend, in the upper right, leads a discussion about opportunities focusing TV White Space technology to promote rural wireless broadband expansion.

Given the clear interest of the ASEAN participants in promoting more efficient use of the radio spectrum, US-ACTI will work with ASEAN to develop an extended work program to coordinate frequency allocation on a regional basis as part of its 2016 annual work plan.

Workshop on Promoting e-Commerce Development in ASEAN: US-ACTI, in collaboration with the US-ASEAN Business Council, the Vietnam Ministry of Information and Communications of Vietnam and the TELSOM, conducted a workshop on “Promoting e-Commerce in ASEAN” in September 2015 in Ninh Binh, Vietnam. The workshop, which was held back-to-back with the TELSOM retreat, was attended by 24 participants, 17 men and 7 women, from a

majority of the ASEAN Member States, representing both TELSOM and the ASEAN Small and Medium Enterprises Working Group.



Steve Rynecki, right, and other speakers at the e-commerce workshop in Ninh Binh, Vietnam discuss barriers to expansion of e-commerce in ASEAN.

Participants discussed the barriers to expansion of e-commerce in ASEAN and the steps that governments and ASEAN could take to address some of those barriers. A key conclusion of the Conference was that e-commerce is an inherently cross-sectoral activity with policies from multiple government agencies having an impact on the growth of e-commerce. Any effort to promote e-commerce in the region will require significant coordination across ASEAN sectoral bodies, and an important element of a long-run strategy to support e-commerce would be to

promote greater understanding of the complexity of the e-commerce ecosystem and the need for policy coordination across Ministries. Such efforts should be implemented in partnership with the private sector. US-ACTI and ASEC will use the recommendations produced by the workshop to develop recommendations for US-ACTI's work plan for 2016 on e-commerce issues.

Results

- Conducted a workshop on Broadband Expansion and Dynamic Frequency Allocation in Laos in September 2015.
- Conducted a workshop on Promoting e-Commerce Development in ASEAN in Vietnam in September 2015.

Next steps

- Develop a program to promote sharing of information on frequency utilization among ASEAN Member States to promote dynamic frequency allocation.
- Implement a coalition to promote e-commerce in collaboration with the private sector.

Implementation Issues and Recommendations

US-ACTP's contract was modified in September to include special provisions for the approval of work in Burma. These provisions may slow the implementation of project activities and procedures need to be put in place to avoid any delays.

Appendix 1 – M&E Indicator Reporting

Annual Reporting

Indicators	FY14 Target	FY14 Actual	FY15 Target	FY15 YTD Actual	FY15 Q1 Actual	FY15 Q2 Actual	FY15 Q3 Actual	FY15 Q4 Actual	Comments
Work Stream 1: ASEAN Single Window									
Indicator OC1: Number of guidelines, policies, or directives adopted by ASEAN reflecting ACTI inputs (custom)	1	1	3	3	0	0	1	2	FY15 Q4: ASW Governance Structure and ASW Data Co-Hosting Service
Indicator OC2: Number of AMS implementing guidelines, policies, or directives reflecting ACTI inputs (custom)	2	0	10	10	0	0	0	10	10 AMS signed the PLF
Indicator 1.1.1: Number of AMS participating in the ASW (custom)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Assume ASW operational by late 2015
Indicator 1.1.2: Number of messages transmitted over the ASW (custom)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Assume ASW operational by late 2015
Indicator 1.2.1: Number of AMS integrating ASW data into risk management systems (custom)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Assume ASW operational by late 2015
Work Stream 2: Trade and Investment Facilitation									
Indicator OC1: Number of guidelines, policies, or directives adopted by ASEAN re-	0	0	2	2	0	1	0	1	Medical Device Directives adopted

Indicators	FY14 Target	FY14 Actual	FY15 Target	FY15 YTD Actual	FY15 Q1 Actual	FY15 Q2 Actual	FY15 Q3 Actual	FY15 Q4 Actual	Comments
flecting ACTI inputs (custom)									
Indicator OC2: Number of AMS implementing guidelines, policies, or directives reflecting ACTI inputs (custom)	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	Medical Devices Directives signed in Dec 2014 is expected to be implemented by 2016
Indicator OT3: Number of completed activities implementing agreed U.S.-ASEAN work programs and objectives (custom)	6	7	5	5	2	1	2	0	FY15 Q1: 1. Workshop on Medical Device 2. Trade in Services Workshops FY15 Q2: 1. Workshop on Medical Devices FY15 Q3: 1. Workshops on Medical Devices in Hanoi and the Philippines
Work Stream 3: Small and Medium Enterprises									
Indicator 3.1.1: Number of women entrepreneurs obtaining investors or financial services from financial institutions participating in ACTI activities (custom)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Activity will begin in FY2016
Indicator 3.1.2: Number of SME owners and SME enablers receiving BDS training (custom)	Total: 400	Total: 1,008	Total: 500	Total: 160	Total: 129	Total: 0	Total: 0	Total: 31	More workshops were held as PPP events, reducing BDS training.
	Female:	Female:	Female:	Female:	Female:	Female:	Female:	Female:	

Indicators	FY14 Target	FY14 Actual	FY15 Target	FY15 YTD Actual	FY15 Q1 Actual	FY15 Q2 Actual	FY15 Q3 Actual	FY15 Q4 Actual	Comments
	200	657	250	91	75	0	0	16	
Indicator 3.1.3: Number of individuals completing ASEAN Online Academy courses (custom)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Activity will begin in early FY2016
Indicator 3.1.4 Number of people benefitting from U.S. government-supported Public-Private Partnerships (Foreign Assistance F standard indicator PPP 2)	Total: 600	Total: 812	Total: 600	Total: 1925	Total: 1237	Total: 440	Total: 114	Total: 134	Substantially exceeded target due to a shift in focus toward PPP events
	Female: 300	Female: 412	Female: 300	Female: 966	Female: 584	Female: 248	Female: 52	Female: 82	
Work Stream 4: Energy									
Indicator OT3: Number of completed activities implementing agreed U.S.-ASEAN work programs and objectives (custom)	2	1	2	1	0	1	0	0	Additional studies on the impact of climate change on hydropower plants delayed to FY16 Q1
Work Stream 4: ICT									
Indicator 5.1.1: Number of workshops or trainings presenting information on technologies and policies that allow for expanded rural broadband (custom)	0	0	1	2	0	0	0	2	1. Wireless Broadband & Dynamic Frequency Allocation. 2. Promoting e-commerce in ASEAN.

Indicators	Work Stream	FY14 Target	FY14 Actual	FY15 Target	FY15 YTD Actual	FY15 Q1 Actual	FY15 Q2 Actual	FY15 Q3 Actual	FY15 Q4 Actual	Comments
Crosscutting Indicators Applicable to All Work Streams										
Indicator OT1: Person hours of training in trade and investment capacity building supported by U.S. government assistance (Foreign Assistance F standard indicator 4.2.1–19)	Total	11,660	17,452	19,560	11,694	4,206	4,482	1,932	1,074	Fell short of target. Some major activities were postponed.
	ASW	700	672	800	1,110	408	432	0	270	
	T&I	7,000	5,250	7,000	2,754	1,506	0	1,248	0	
	SME	3,600	12,400	10,800	7,656	2,292	3,876	684	804	
	Energy	360	216	360	174	0	174	0	0	No activity in FY15 Q4
	ICT	0	0	600	0	0	0	0	0	No training activity in FY15 as workshops were focused on developing consensus on issues.
Indicator OT2: Percentage of workshop or training participants whose capacity has increased as a result of ACTI training/workshops (custom)	Average	80%	89%	80%	67%	86%	58%	63%	44%	The project is reviewing the level of training provide and the methodology used to collect this data.
	ASW	80%	84%	80%	68%	85%	40%	N/A	61%	
	T&I	80%	89%	80%	88%	91%	N/A	84%	N/A	No activity in FY15 Q4
	SME	80%	89%	80%	65%	82%	86%	41%	26%	
	Energy	80%	93%	80%	47%	N/A	47%	N/A	N/A	No activity in FY15 Q4

Indicators	Work Stream	FY14 Target	FY14 Actual	FY15 Target	FY15 YTD Actual	FY15 Q1 Actual	FY15 Q2 Actual	FY15 Q3 Actual	FY15 Q4 Actual	Comments
	ICT	80%	N/A	80%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	No activity in FY15 Q4
Indicator OT4: Number of training days provided to executive branch personnel with USG assistance (Foreign Assistance F standard indicator 2.2.2-6)	-	-	-	45	55	-	-	-	55	At the request of ASEAN, the project organized more training events than originally planned
Indicator OT5: Number of technical meetings held with U.S. government support among U.S government and Asian counterparts to strengthen mutual cooperation (custom)	-	-	-	45	52	-	-	-	52	More meetings were called requiring support from the project than originally expected.
Indicator IT1: Number of days of technical assistance (TA) on trade and investment environment provided to counterparts or stakeholders (Foreign Assistance F standard indicator 4.2.1-20)	Total	940	1,305	990	1416	375	330	403	308	ACTI under estimated available inputs in the SME, energy, and ICT activities for FY15. Future targets will need to be revised.
	ASW	340	486	340	385	113	86	81	105	
	T&I	250	314	300	278	89	48	71	70	
	SME	250	369	250	574	121	156	191	106	

Indicators	Work Stream	FY14 Target	FY14 Actual	FY15 Target	FY15 YTD Actual	FY15 Q1 Actual	FY15 Q2 Actual	FY15 Q3 Actual	FY15 Q4 Actual	Comments
	Energy	50	52	50	85	38	15	28	4	
	ICT	50	84	50	94	14	25	32	23	
Indicator IT2: Number of studies completed on trade and investment related issues (custom)	Total	11	8	11	12	2	1	4	5	
	ASW	6	2	6	5	0	1	0	4	FY15 Year 2 Q2: Cambodia Legal Gap Analysis. FY15 Year 2 Q4: PLF ASW Regional Legal Agreement; IPM; Co-location Service for ASW and ASW Governance Structure Study. PKI analysis report pending approval. OCP for E-ATIGA Form D waiting for approval from SCAROO.
	T&I	0	0	1	3	0	0	2	1	FY15 Q3: ASEAN Multi-year. FY15 Q4: Study on Services
	SME	4	5	2	2	2	0	0	0	FY15 Q1: 1. Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Mainstreaming – Post-2015 Policy in ASEAN: Part 1. 2. Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Mainstreaming – Post-2015 Policy in ASEAN: Part 2.
	Energy	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0

Indicators	Work Stream	FY14 Target	FY14 Actual	FY15 Target	FY15 YTD Actual	FY15 Q1 Actual	FY15 Q2 Actual	FY15 Q3 Actual	FY15 Q4 Actual	Comments
	ICT	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	FY15 Q3: Case Study on TV White Space in Indonesia

Appendix 2 – Reference Data

Reference Data	Baseline (October 2013)	October 2014	October 2015
Reference Data 1: Overall Project Reference -Ranking of the ASEAN Member States in the World Bank Ease of Doing Business index (Source: World Bank Doing Business 2014 and 2015)	Avg. ASEAN Rankings 2013 - 2014: 88.9/189 countries CLMV: 144.3/189 countries	Avg. ASEAN Rankings 2014 - 2015: 89.3/189 countries CLMV: 134.5/189 countries	Avg. ASEAN Rankings 2015 - 2016: 88.2/189 countries CLMV: 129.5/189 countries
Reference Data 2: ASW – World Bank Doing Business “Time to import” indicator (Source: World Bank Doing Business 2014 and 2015)	Avg. Time to Import: 17.5 days CLMV: 24.5 days Avg. Time to Export/Import: 17.4 days	Avg. Time to Import: 17.4 days CLMV: 23.3 days Avg. Time to Export/Import: 17.1 days	Avg. Time to Import: 6.15 days CLMV: 7.5 days Avg. Time to Export/Import: 6.09 days
Reference Data 3: Trade and Investment (Source: ASEAN Community in Figures – Special Edition, ASEAN Statistics)			
a. ASEAN total volume of trade	(US\$ billion 2012) \$2,476.4	(US\$ million 2013) \$2,511.5	(US\$ million 2014) \$2,528.9
b. ASEAN Foreign Direct Investment	(US\$ billion for 2012) \$115.5	(US\$ billion for 2013) \$117.9	(US\$ billion as of June 2015) \$138.2
Reference Data 4: Energy –Total Primary Energy Supply/Real GDP	0.457 toe/1000 2005 USD 2012 ¹	0.442 toe/1000 2005 USD 2013 ²	Update not Available
Reference Data 5: Fixed and Wireless Broadband Subscriptions per 100 population	21.3 per 100 population 2012 ³	29.8 per 100 population 2013 ⁴	33.4 per 100 population 2014 ⁵

¹ Key World Energy Statistics, as of 2013 by International Energy Agency. (Data exclude Lao PDR as it is not listed by IEA)

² Key World Energy Statistics, as of 2014 by International Energy Agency. (Data exclude Lao PDR)

³ International Telecommunications Union Data as of April 2014

⁴ International Telecommunications Union Data as of October 2014

⁵ International Telecommunications Union Data as of October 2015

Appendix 3 – Success Story

Success Stories/Lessons Learned Template

One Story Per Template

Please provide the following data:

***Headline (Maximum 300 characters):** A good headline or title is simple, jargon free, and has impact; it summarizes the story in a nutshell; include action verbs that bring the story to life.

Bridging the Gap: Expanding Options for ASEAN SME Finance

***Body Copy (maximum 1.5 pages Times New Roman 12pt font):** The first paragraphs should showcase the challenge encountered and the context of the foreign assistance program. Presenting a conflict or sharing a first person account are two good ways to grab the reader's attention. Continue by describing what actions were taken and finally describing the end result. What changed for the person or community? What was learned? How did this make a difference in the community or to the country overall? If this story is relating to a "best practice", what were the innovations in planning, implementation or partnering that made it different? If this story is about an evaluation, what program adjustments were made?

Through the late 1990s and early 2000, Southeast Asian economies have survived a number of economic crises. Thanks to the many vendors and other small businesses that unexpectedly appeared at many street corners of the region at that time, these economies have done more than survive. Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) have helped make Southeast Asia one of the fastest growing economic regions in the world.

While the importance of small businesses is undeniable, SMEs face a host of challenges. Among a number of challenges, SMEs have often listed access to finance, particularly lending from banks, as one of their most serious obstacles to their expansion and growth. At the same time banks in the region state that they are interested in making loans to SMEs but that they find it difficult to significantly expand their lending while meeting their own lending criteria.

The U.S. Agency of International Development (USAID), through its ASEAN Connectivity through Trade and Investment (US-ACTI) project, and the ASEAN Business Club (ABC) are addressing this finance challenge through a public-private partnership launched in 2015. Working with the ASEAN SME Working Group, US-ACTI and ABC are conducting a grant competition for policy studies on the SME access to finance issue. Researchers, applicants, and organizations from all ASEAN Member States were encouraged to participate.

“We know that entrepreneurship is one of the most powerful ways to unlock economic potential and lift people out of poverty to create a more secure and prosperous future for all,” said Dr. Michael Yates, former Director of the USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia speaking at the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the ABC and USAID, earlier in 2015. “That’s why we are pleased to partner with the

ASEAN Business Club to promote an environment where small businesses can more easily access finance for growth to help them thrive in an integrated ASEAN Economic Community.”

For the purpose of educating potential grantees on the objectives of the grant program and to provide input from bankers on their challenges in lending to SMEs, US-ACTI and the ABC, organized a workshop entitled ‘Building Linkages: Expanding Options for ASEAN SME Finance’ on September 21, 2015 in Bangkok, Thailand. Attended by more than 40 participants from ASEAN Member States representing the banking industry, researchers, and government ministries focused on SME development, the workshop provided an overview of current conditions and the variety of challenges faced by SMEs in the region. The workshop also encouraged researchers not only to recognize challenges that may hamper SMEs to grow despite some of them having an access to microfinance institutes, but to also work with the bank and financial institutes to bridge this gap.

Workshop participants also heard from the banking industry about its challenges in providing lending services to small businesses that often fail to meet their underwriting standards. It was emphasized that SMEs need to enter the formal sector by becoming licensed and paying their taxes is a requirement for participation in the banking sector. Another key takeaway from the bankers was that SMEs should approach banks that focus on their business, market segment, etc. It could be concluded that while the banks need customers and have money to lend to the SMEs, SMEs must acquire the knowledge needed to enable them to meet the underwriting requirements to access financing.

Through discussion sessions, workshop participants came to the consensus that ‘SME Access to Finance’ has been thoroughly studied. The challenge for potential grantees is to identify study topics that are focused on solutions and implementation. Suggestions for policies to create an environment that enables innovative approaches to bank lending and that better enable SMEs to meet the requirements of banks are also of interest. Innovative approaches to SME financing should be a key component of grant proposals.

Looking towards the future, this program and the potential solutions it may generate could contribute to preserving and expanding SMEs as the backbone of the Southeast Asian economy.

***Pullout Quote (one sentence):** Please provide a quote that represents and summarizes the story.

“We know that entrepreneurship is one of the most powerful ways to unlock economic potential and lift people out of poverty to create a more secure and prosperous future for all. That’s why we are pleased to partner with the ASEAN Business Club to promote an environment where small businesses can more easily access finance for growth to help them thrive in an integrated ASEAN Economic Community.” **(Dr. Michael Yates – former Director of the USAID Regional Development Mission for Asia)**

***Background Information (one paragraph):** If relevant indicate whether this story is about a presidential initiative, Key Issue(s). Please in one or two sentences explain why this is important to the intended beneficiaries and addresses USG priorities.

Small businesses are the core of the ASEAN economy, employing more than half of all workers. By supporting the research grant program for ASEAN SME access to finance, USAID is promoting economic growth, equitable development and the expansion of the region as a market for trade and investment, creating opportunities for citizens of ASEAN and the United States.

***Project Name and Point of Contact:** Please Provide the Project Name and the Individual who can be contacted to provide additional information about this story if required.

ASEAN Connectivity through Trade and Investment (ACTI) Project,
Mr. Tim Buehrer (Chief of Party): Tbuehrer@nathaninc.com and
Ms. Thitapha Wattanapruttipaisan (SME Lead): thitapha_watt@yahoo.com;
ThitaphaW@kenan-asia.org

Appendix 4 - Burma Economic Reform and ASEAN Integration Program

The US-ACTI Economic Reform and ASEAN Integration (US-ACTI-ERA) program seeks to accelerate inclusive, private-sector-led economic development in Burma, to build stronger U.S.-Burma economic relations and to facilitate integrating Burma into regional and international markets. Although the program must remain flexible to address opportunities for reform, it focuses on supporting legal and regulatory reforms, capacity building and training in the Government and private sector, and enhancing the effectiveness of policy dialogue between the Government and business and civil society. Its activities are driven by Burma's commitments to the ASEAN Economic Community, U.S.-ASEAN Expanded Economic Engagement and the U.S.-Burma Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA), as well as broader international best practices where applicable.

During this quarter, US-ACTI-ERA worked with the Ministry of Commerce, the Union Attorney General's Office, the Ministry of Health's Food and Drug Administration, and the Ministry of Information and Communications Technology to support improvements in Burma's economic governance. Key accomplishments included:

- Moved forward key next steps on developing the Burma Trade Portal and Trade Repository, including hiring consultants to customize the software to be more effective in Burma and plans for the purchase of equipment for running the Portal.
- Completed the procurement and installation of all the hardware equipment for the office of TBT Enquiry Point for Department of Research and Innovation, Ministry of Science and Technology.
- Supported seven Burmese IPR experts to attend a "Roundtable for Judiciary on IPR and Enforcement" and follow-on meetings with IPR experts conducted by the USPTO in Alexandria, Virginia.
- Conducted a workshop on "Economic Empowerment for Grassroots Women in Myanmar: Local and Regional Experiences."
- Conducted four activities to engage with Burmese businesses and civil society on how best to accelerate the use of ICT for inclusive development.
- Conducted a two-day 3D Printing Workshop.

Looking toward the future, the USAID Mission to Burma has awarded the contract for the new Private Sector Development Activity that will be taking over primary responsibility for work on economic governance for USAID. US-ACTI-ERA's country lead is the Chief of Party for the new project and the two projects are working on ensuring a smooth transition.

Work Stream 1: The National Single Window and Technical Assistance to Customs

The Department of Customs leads the development of Burma's National Single Window (NSW) and the integration of the NSW into the ASEAN Single Window (ASW). The NSW is being developed as part of the automation of the customs clearance system (Burma Automated Customs Clearance System, or MACCS), with major support from JICA and Japan's Customs Office. The current Government plan is for the design phase of MACCS to be completed by the end of 2015, with pilot implementation during the first six months of 2016 moving into full implementation into 2017. MACCS will include software that will allow implementation of the NSW, but the Japanese project will not support automation, streamlining, or training for implementing nontariff measures applied to trade at the border by other government agencies outside of Customs nor provide support to extend MACCS to border checkpoints beyond of Rangoon and Thilawa.

US-ACTI-ERA did not do any work in this area in this quarter.

Work Stream 2: Trade and Responsible Investment Reform and Facilitation

Burma moved forward to advance efforts to liberalize, streamline, and increase awareness of trade and responsible investment policies, and to develop processes and capacity to facilitate more effective implementation of such policies. It is stepping up its commitment to meet requirements in international treaties, including the WTO and AEC that will require a range of legal reforms and implementation capacities, many of which are not well known among government officials, parliament or the private sector. While progress has been made, newly approved legislation and improvements in practice were slower than many expected – a number of draft legislative reforms were developed in 2014 but not yet approved by the Government nor Parliament.

US-ACTI-ERA focuses on training in best practices for government and non-government officials involved with key trade and responsible investment policies and in developing processes and approaches that create a culture of transparency that will hopefully provide a foundation for more open policy making and access to information on policy implementation.

Support Development of the Myanmar Trade Portal: US-ACTI-ERA continued to support the Ministry of Commerce in developing the Myanmar Trade Portal and Trade Repository, two related priority initiatives to increase the transparency of trade procedures and regulations in Burma. Given the difficulty in Burma to find and understand procedures for exporting and importing goods, one of US-ACTI-ERA's highest priorities is to support the development of a Myanmar Trade Portal website as a breakthrough in transparency by making such information readily available to traders and the public.

Earlier in 2015, US-ACTI-ERA and the USAID-funded LUNA II project organized a study mission to Vientiane, Laos for 10 Burmese participants from the Ministry of Commerce (MOC) to better understand the development and operation of the Lao Trade Portal (LTP). During this quarter USACTI-ERA hired consultants to customize the software trade portal software to be

more effective in Burma and began the process of purchasing equipment for running the portal.

Results

- US-ACTI-ERA hired consultants to customize the MTP software.

Next Steps

- Finalize the customization of the MTP software and purchase equipment
- Begin to populate the MTP database

Providing Support to Modernize Burma’s Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) System and National Quality Infrastructure – Burma has accelerated its development of the legislation, institutional capacity and public awareness needed to create a modern National Quality Infrastructure in line with international requirements and best practices. A strong NQI provides a backbone of well-known product standards, accredited labs and conformity assessment procedures, efficiently implemented technical regulations, and reliable measurements.

The Ministry of Science and Technology’s Department for Research and Innovation (DRI), formerly the Myanmar Scientific and Technology Research Department (MSTRD), leads the government’s work on standards and quality. ACTI-ERA has provided intensive TA support to the DRI and through DRI to other relevant government agencies and private-sector stakeholders, focusing on trainings on international best practices, comments and recommendations on draft legislation, and developing a functional TBT Enquiry Point.

This quarter, US-ACTI-ERA completed the procurement and installation of all the hardware equipment for the office of TBT Enquiry Point for DRI. As well, in previous quarters TBT-EP staff have been trained, an operations manual has been developed, and training and organization has been provided for contact points in around 10 other ministries with TBT responsibilities. This office will be the focus of the Government of Burma’s efforts to increase transparency in standards development. In future quarters, US-ACTI-ERA will provide additional training to the staff of the TBT Enquiry Point.

Results

- Completed the procurement and installation of the TBT Enquiry Point for DRI.

Next Steps

- Finalize the Code of Practice for Technical Regulations and support its implementation

Economic Reform and Growth Dynamics Studies: The USAID Mission to Burma has asked US-ACTI-ERA to support a comprehensive series of studies of economic reform and growth dynamics in Burma, including economic, governance and political dynamics. The studies, as currently conceived, will systematically benchmark the current state of the economic and political

environment and then assess the driving forces underpinning the dynamics of change in Burma over the next 5-10 years, concluding with the key issues constraining development and recommendations for reforms and capacity building needed to spur strong, inclusive growth. This exercise will be the primary activity of US-ACTI-ERA for the rest of 2015 and the beginning of 2016.

Last quarter, US-ACTI-ERA brought three consultants on board to begin work on the studies. The lead consultant for the overall exercise will be Ms. Lynn Salinger who has a strong background on labor and agriculture issues and who will prepare a study on labor. She was joined in that quarter by Mr Sean Turnell on financial markets and Mr. Jared Bissinger on local economic governance.

During this quarter, those consultants are continuing their work on economic reform and growth dynamics studies. Ms. Salinger traveled to Rangoon to hold initial meetings with experts including the Head of the ILO, an economic modeler from the University of California-Berkeley with experience conducting research on Burma and three local expatriate experts on economic governance. Mr. Turnell was in Rangoon for other purposes but briefed the US-ACTI-ERA team and USAID on his work, as further discussed below. Scopes of work were approved for Bruce Bolnick (macroeconomics), David Madden and Solomon Moore (innovation and economic growth), Zynap Akalin (trade), Portia Hunt (comparative growth experiences), David Roland-Holst (economic modeling), and Tyler Biggs and Manju Shah (industry and FDI). Additional studies are being considered. The table below summarizes the current plans for papers.

Economic Topics	Political Economic Topics
Macroeconomic overview (Bolnick)	Local economic governance (Bissinger)
Financial markets (Turnell)	Comparative growth experiences (Hunt)
Innovation & economic growth (Madden and Moore)	Commercial law & regulatory ecosystem (TBD)
Trade structure & dynamics (Akalin)	Post-conflict growth & political economy (TBD)
Labor markets (Salinger)	
Industry and foreign direct investment (Biggs & Shah)	
Trade integration impacts (TBD)	
General equilibrium modeling (Roland-Holst)	
Agriculture (Salinger)	

Results

- None

Next Steps

- Prepare scopes of work for additional economic growth and development dynamics studies and identify consultants to contribute to the overall analysis of the Burmese economy.
- Complete the full set of studies and present them to USAID in early 2016.

Intellectual Property Rights: Strengthening Burma’s intellectual property regime is an important element of developing a strong foundation for a private-sector-led economy spurred by domestic innovation along with foreign and domestic investment. During this quarter, US-ACTI-ERA supported seven Burmese IPR experts to attend a “Roundtable for Judiciary on IPR Issues and Enforcement” in September 2015 in Alexandria, Virginia organized by the Regional Intellectual Property Attaché for Southeast Asia and the US-PTO Global Intellectual Property Academy, followed by an additional two days of programming with the broader IPR community around the Washington area. The program included participants from a number of ASEAN countries. The Burmese delegation included 4 judges from courts that are most likely to hear IPR cases, the lead technical officer for IPR in the Government, and two senior private IPR lawyers. As new draft IPR laws move into Parliament, hopefully providing relatively soon a solid legal basis for IPR protection in Burma for the first time, US-ACTI-ERA and its successor the USAID Private Sector Development Activity will build upon these “foundation” activities with more systematic and on-going technical assistance.

Results

- Supported seven Burmese IPR experts to attend a “Roundtable for Judiciary on IPR and Enforcement.”

Next Steps

- None. Further activity in this area will be handled by the Private Sector Development Activity.

Financial Sector Development - The financial sector is one of the most repressed economic sectors in Burma, creating a major constraint to more dynamic, inclusive growth. Earlier this year, US-ACTI-ERA hired Professor Sean Turnell, a leading expert on Burma, to write a paper on financial market developments in Myanmar as part of the economic reform and growth dynamics studies program. This quarter, Professor Turnell came to Burma and met with a range of leading financial-market specialists to discuss developments in the evolving financial sector. This included a discussion at the U.S. Embassy with COFTAM on development finance, a multi-donor and government working group, an informal discussion group with five micro-finance institutions, and meetings with Yoma Bank, KBZ Bank, and ANZ Bank. It included also a discussion with USAID-Burma and the USAID-funded Private Sector Development Activity on possible new programming activities.

Results

- None

Next Steps

- Sean Turnell will complete a paper on financial markets as part of the economic reform and growth dynamics studies.

Developing Sanitary and Phytosanitary (SPS) Measures and Modernizing the Food Law:

There are increasing demands by the public for improving food safety in Burma, and the Ministry of Health is moving to modernize an outdated 1997 Food Law. Building upon an initial stakeholder workshop in February 2015 on the need for modernizing the Food Law in Burma, this quarter, US-ACTI-ERA supported the Burmese Food and Drug Administration to organize a meeting with the recently assigned Government drafting team to facilitate their working through key principles and approaches for each section of a structured outline for a new draft law. Technical advice was provided by US-ACTI-ERA's food safety expert, Digby Gascoine. The meeting was opened by the Head of the FDA and chaired by the Head of the Food Safety Division. The FDA plans to flesh out the results of this meeting to develop a first draft over the next several weeks. Further steps over the next six months will include another meeting with the drafting team to develop a solid second draft followed by a series of consultation meetings to gain input from key stakeholders. The goal is to have a well-vetted draft Food Law ready for consideration as the new Government and Parliament are formed in the spring of 2016.

Results

- None

Next Steps

- US-ACTI-ERA will provide support for the drafting of a new food safety law.

Work Stream 3: SME Development in Burma

Mapping the Ecosystem for Women's Economic Empowerment in Burma – Last quarter, US-ACTI-ERA completed a draft Mapping of Burma's Ecosystem for Supporting Women in Business for initial comment. This quarter, US-ACTI-ERA and Project Hub released the "Mapping Yangon's Emerging Startup System Report" on the Project Hub webpage and Facebook. The report is also available on Dropbox at:

<https://www.dropbox.com/1/NxrBxUxeoGcGl6lJ5IVdQo>.

This report focuses on the environment for and dynamism of new and innovative businesses in Rangoon that have started up over the last several years since the economic opening. The report uses a well-developed methodology to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the current situation, both in terms of actual experiences by startups and relative to the broader ecosystem for startups, including recommendations for priority areas that would improve that ecosystem. US-ACTI-ERA will also conduct several policy dialogues with the Rangoon authorities and elsewhere to raise awareness of the importance of encouraging new business startups throughout the country. This will serve as a foundation for further work in this important area.

Results

- Mapping Yangon's Emerging Startup System Report completed and socialized.

Next Steps

- The Private Sector Development Activity will take over this topic.

Self-Employed Women’s Association: Over the past year, US-ACTI-ERA has been working with India’s Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) to develop a program to bring the knowledge and experience that SEWA has developed to Burma. Founded in 1972, SEWA has organized more than 1.8 million women into cooperatives, enterprises, and self-help groups for the purpose of pooling resources, building capacity (especially financial literacy and management skills), advocating on behalf of shared interests, and developing solutions to the problems that women working in the informal sector face every day.

This quarter, US-ACTI-ERA and SEWA supported nearly 70 women entrepreneurs, social enterprise workers, and advocates for grassroots women to participate in a day-long workshop entitled “Economic Empowerment for Grassroots Women in Myanmar: Local and Regional Experiences” in Rangoon. The workshop featured a series of rich, action-oriented presentations from representatives of SEWA, and was opened by the USAID-Burma Mission Director. A number of Burmese enterprises also contributed to the program, relating their experiences of building grassroots women into their business models. During open discussion, workshop participants related the key challenges they face to the topics raised by SEWA. In addition to constant deficits in access to finance, they also cited issues of access to markets, quality control, registration of enterprises, and prohibitive conditions for accessing property. In addition to the workshop, over the course of a week, the SEWA team met with a range of Burmese women and self-help groups, including a site visit to a village. This will be followed up with a “reverse” exchange study mission for Burmese women leaders to learn about SEWA’s experiences in India.

Over the past six months, US-ACTI-ERA has been mapping the “Ecosystem for Women’s Entrepreneurism in Burma” as part of a larger ASEAN and APEC effort to support women’s economic empowerment. The draft report was presented at the workshop and distributed for discussion. This served as a further catalyst for networking among Burmese women empowerment groups.

Results

- Brought representatives from India’s Self-Employed Women’s Association to Burma to examine how the lessons learned in promoting women’s economic empowerment in India can be transferred to Burma.
- Conducted the workshop on “Economic Empowerment for Grassroots Women in Myanmar: Local and Regional Experiences” as well as four days of meetings with Burmese women and self-help groups.
- Completed the draft Ecosystem for Women’s Entrepreneurism in Burma.

Next Steps

- Organize a return trip of Burmese women entrepreneurs to India to learn first hand about SEWA's activities and programs.

Work Stream 5: Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Development

A half century of isolation has left Burma far behind in ICT, the backbone of a modern, dynamic economy and society. The successful award of two major contracts to build a wireless system reaching throughout the country was a major step forward early in 2014. US-ACTI-ERA is working with the U.S. private-sector to support the massive ICT modernization effort that is needed in Burma and to explore ways to use the rapidly improving ICT environment to advance inclusive development.

Development of U.S. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Council for Burma: Burma is moving into the use of smart phones by a majority of its citizens faster than any other developing country. This provides many opportunities for using technology to leap-frog development challenges. With US-ACTI-ERA support, the U.S. ICT Council for Myanmar with participation by three of its members – Cisco, Google and Microsoft – conducted four activities over two days to engage with Burmese businesses and civil society on how best to accelerate the use of ICT for inclusive development. These included a meeting with leaders from a range of medium-sized businesses that use ICT through the Union of Myanmar Federation of Commerce and Industry (UMFCCI) and a separate half-day workshop with around 60 SMEs interested in utilizing ICT more effectively co-organized with Building Markets, both in Rangoon. The Council also met with around fifty civil-society representatives at the U.S. Jefferson Center in Mandalay, followed by a meeting with around twenty-five ICT and related business leaders at the Mandalay Region Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Results

- Conducted four activities to engage with Burmese businesses and civil society on how best to accelerate the use of ICT for inclusive development.

Next Steps

- US-ACTI-ERA will support staffing for the ICT Council for the rest of 2015 but further Council events will be supported by the Private Sector Development Activity.

3D Printer and Product Design Workshop – In recent years, 3D printing has emerged from being a hobbyist activity to become the foundation of a thriving industry that enables rapid prototyping of physical products, customized manufacturing of components and much more efficient industrial design. Organizations in Burma have yet to adopt 3D printing at a commercial scale and most of the owners and few have been exposed to 3D printers in practice.

During this quarter, US-ACTI-ERA supported a 3D printer and product design workshop at Phandeyar – Innovation Lab in Yangon. The workshop was attended by around 25 partici-

pants specially selected to have practical experience in both hardware and software IT. The objectives of the workshop included (1) introducing 3D printing to companies and organizations that will have applications in the Burmese market, such as manufacturing, architecture, healthcare, and digital media; (2) raising awareness amongst startups in Burma of the potential for 3D printing to use as a prototyping tool in designing and producing physical products; and (3) helping to develop the skills and capacity of the startup community, particularly in the area of product design. The program was facilitated on a pro bono basis by an overseas Burmese living in Los Angeles with extensive experience in industrial design and prototyping.

Results

- Conducted a two-day 3D Printing Workshop.

Next Steps

- None. Additional work with Phandeeyar will be taken over by the Private Sector Development Activity, which will include a larger and longer Hardware Hack Week in October.

Appendix 5 – Summary Report on the Value to Support to the Government of Burma

Assistance to the Government of Burma

Reporting Period	Awardee/Recipient	Number of Recipients	Summary and Justification	Type of Assistance to GoB	*Value	Percentage of GOB Assistance to Activity Amount
Regional Support						
7/1/15-9/30/15	Ms. Yi Yin Lwin, Staff Officer, & Ms. Lay Lay Su, Assistant Director, Burma Ministry of Commerce	2	Joint TWG/SCAROO Workshop on e-OCP - US-ACTI conducted the Joint SC-AROO TWG Workshop on e-OCP for e-ATIGA Form D on 4-5 July 2015 in Manila, Philippines. The aim of this workshop was to help AMS understand, discuss, and expedite the amendments of the Operational Certification Procedures (OCP) for e-ATIGA Form D in preparation for the ASW live operation by December 2015.	Technical Assistance/Training/Travel	██████	10%
7/1/15-9/30/15	Mr. Soe Naing, Director, Mr. Si Thu Aung, Staff Officer, & Ms. Wut Yee Phyo, Deputy Staff Officer, Ministry of Information and Communications Technology	3	Broadband Technology and Dynamic Frequency Allocation Workshop - US-ACTI conducted the Rural Wireless Broadband Conference in Vientiane, Laos on 7-8 September 2015. The event aimed to share experience about wireless broadband solutions, generate enthusiasm for continuing progress, and facilitate further trials and deployments of rural wireless broadband solutions in ASEAN.	Technical Assistance/Training/Travel	██████	10%
7/1/15-9/30/15	Ms. Kyi Lin Khine, SME Working Group	1	e-Commerce Workshop - TELSOM - US-ACTI conducted the Workshop on Promoting e-Commerce in ASEAN in Ninh Binh City, Vietnam on September 14, 2015. This event was held back-to-back with the TELSOM-ATRC Retreat and aimed to identify the challenges faced by e-commerce companies in the region and opportunities to develop regional and national policy regimes to promote e-commerce.	Training/Travel/Per Diem	██████	10%
Burma Specific Support						
7/1/15-9/30/15	Ministry of Health, Food and Drug Administration		Food Policy Consultancy - US-ACTI-ERA hired Mr. Digby Gascoine to provide technical assistance to support the modernization of Burma's Food Law through providing intensive support for modernizing the Food Law and developing a plan for upgrading the institutional and human resource capacities in the government and non-government sectors.	Technical Assistance/Training	██████	100%
7/1/15-9/30/15	Ms. Tin New Soe, Director, International Relation and Research Department, Supreme Court of the Union; Ms. Aye Aye Maw, Deputy District Judge, Western Yangon District Court; Mr. Kyaw Kyaw, Deputy District Judge, Manda-	5	USPTO Judicial Workshop - US-ACTI-ERA supported five (5) GOB and two (2) private sector participants to travel to the US from 9-15 September 2015 to attend the USPTO's Roundtable for Judiciary on Intellectual Property rights Issues and Enforcement. This was an opportunity to further expose Burmese judges to international best practices for enforcement of intellectual property rights through the courts.	Travel/Per Diem	██████	71%

	lay District Court; Mr. Min Thant, Staff Officer, Law and Procedure Department, Supreme Court of the Union; Ms. Moe Moe Thwe, Deputy Director, Head of IP Office, IP Section, Ministry of Science and Technology					
7/1/15-9/30/15	Ministry of Science and Technology, Department of Research and Innovation		Technical Barriers to Trade - Enquiry Point Equipment Procurement - US-ACTI-ERA supported the procurement and installation of IT and office equipment for the Ministry of Science and Technology - Department of Research and Innovation's (DRI) Technical Barriers to Trade - Enquiry Point. The TBT-EP provides a centralized place for communicating information on TBT issues from throughout the Government and private-sector initiatives such as development of product quality standards, and information on the TBT environment for importers and in export markets.	Equipment	██████████	100%
7/1/15-9/30/15	Ministry of Commerce		Software Customization for Myanmar Trade Portal (MTP) or National Trade Repository - US-ACTI-ERA hired eight (8) Burmese IT consultants to provide software customization service for an online based MTP. The consultants customized the software to serve these two main purposes: 1) to upgrade the software from the Laos Trade Portal with more cutting edge technology including mobile capability, and 2) to make it better suitable for Burmese context and more accessible by mobile application or device.	Technical Assistance	██████████	100%