



SNAPSHOT

Learning to “Do No Harm” in Burma

Building the conflict sensitivity of civil society leaders.



Photo: CDEC facilitator

Participants learning “Do No Harm” techniques better understand how to integrate development assistance within complex and conflict prone environments.

“I have concrete plans to present Do No Harm materials to my colleagues.”

- Training of Trainers Participant

July 2013 – For decades, communities in Burma have experienced conflict in isolation due to limited international engagement. However, recent political reforms have created an influx in international assistance to these conflict-affected communities. Despite the best of intentions, this assistance has the potential to shift power dynamics and exacerbate local conflict.

Responding to the urgent need to develop conflict sensitivity among aid agencies and civil society organizations working in Burma’s conflict zones, in April 2013, USAID’s Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) provided technical assistance on conflict-sensitive analysis tools to local development partners.

In partnership with Boston-based CDA Collaborative Learning Projects, OTI delivered a six-day Do No Harm training of trainers program with the local organization Comprehensive Development Education Centre. Sixteen community leaders, who had previously received basic Do No Harm training, participated in the program which built their ability to understand and implement Do No Harm’s participatory, community-based conflict analysis.

Participants engaged in a broad range of exercises, and gained practical experience in how to use their new skills to engage others in the process of mitigating conflict during the implementation of development activities. Through the program, the trainers developed strong bonds and skills, which they will share with their communities and hone during an assessment program later in the year.

One participant noted, “I would like to thank OTI for their generous support and contribution to the Do No Harm training of trainers program, which has been a positive learning environment to build the capacity of local Do No Harm practitioners in the future.”

Through this initiative, OTI Burma aims to strengthen local civil society staff when engaging in development assistance and especially the peace and reform processes.

Extending Do No Harm principals through local training will increase the likelihood that growing rate of international assistance will benefit communities in complex environments throughout Burma.

Telling Our Story

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