

**Fourth Higher Education Leadership Program (HELP IV):  
“Education for Wholeness and Transformation”  
Dagon University, Myanmar  
26-28 June 2017**

**Concept Note**

In 2011, Myanmar embarked on a historic path of political and economic reforms, departing from five decades of authoritarian rule. Under the military regime, Myanmar education system had deteriorated that many university graduates could not land suitable jobs. Myanmar universities have lagged behind their ASEAN neighbors. With the end of authoritarian rule, the Myanmar government made reform in higher education a priority. Hence, the challenging work of capacity enhancement of university administrators, faculty members and supporting staff, transforming curricula and exploring new pedagogies, investment in infrastructure and making international connections are now underway. The faculty must be familiar with new technology, innovative teaching methods and assessment criteria; they must be in line with faculty from universities abroad. Myanmar urgently needs well educated citizens with good morale.

In December 2013, Dagon University signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia. The MOU is for the purpose of collaboration in higher education for five years. Dagon University is committed to democratic nation-building. It aims to produce graduates who are creative and adaptive to the changes of the contemporary world. This is aligned to the mission of the United Board for Whole Person Education.

The United Board has been providing support to Dagon University to enhance the capacity of university administrators and senior faculty members in Myanmar, and to support the establishment of the Service-Learning program. This support has enabled Dagon University to implement service-learning and co-organize with the United Board three international conferences (Higher Education Leadership Program, HELP I, II, III) in 2014, 2015 and 2016, respectively. The three conferences were on the themes: “Teaching, Research, and Community Service” (2014); “Autonomy, Accountability, and the New Education Law” (2015); and “Improving Teaching and Learning in Myanmar Universities” (2016). The 3 conferences brought together a combined total of more than 550 administrators from more than 50 institutions in Myanmar.

These conferences were popular among the higher education institutions of Myanmar. From the evaluation feedback on the last conference, participants expressed the need for more training (demonstration workshops). Due to the continuing demand, interest and requests of teachers, Dagon University will again co-organize with the United Board the fourth international conference and workshop: “Higher Education Leadership Program IV (HELP IV): Education for Wholeness and Transformation.” HELP IV is scheduled for June 26-28, 2017 and will include more workshops in transformative teaching, innovative pedagogy and holistic assessment.

**Goals:**

- To expose senior and junior faculty members of higher education institutions in Myanmar to concepts, trends, and practices of transformative teaching, innovative pedagogy, and holistic assessment; and
- To provide Myanmar educators an opportunity to network with and learn from each other and the educators from institutions in the ASEAN.

**Expected Participants:**

Around 150 senior and junior faculty members from various higher education institutions in Myanmar are expected to attend. Majority will be from state universities throughout the country. It will also be open to the private Christian institutions that are serving various ethnic communities across the country. The immediate beneficiaries will be the faculty members who will learn new teaching methods and approaches of teaching and assessment; and the institutions who will feel new energy from the faculty. Eventually the students will be the beneficiaries of improved teaching and learning, and who will be motivated to learn and be ready to serve and engage in building a truly democratic nation.

**Stages or Phases of the project:**

- A. **Preparation:** Writing and submission of proposal to the United Board; meetings for planning; and drafting the program; correspondence with the United Board; securing approval from the Ministry of Education; invitation to the resource persons and the universities, etc.
- B. **Execution:** holding and overseeing the three-day conference and workshop.
- C. **Evaluation:** At the end of the first and second days, participants will be invited to write questions that they wish to be answered by the organizers and/or resource persons the next day. By the end of the third day, a final feedback questionnaire will be distributed for all participants to fill in. The feedback will be the basis for the planning of future programs.

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