



PRESS RELEASE

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Senior Washington Official from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Visits Burma to Discuss Programs

Rangoon – From October 25 through 29, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Asia Bureau Deputy Assistant Administrator, Mr. Gregory Beck, travelled to Burma to meet with senior government officials and other assistance stakeholders to discuss USAID programs in country. Mr. Beck is the most senior USAID official to have met with government ministers in more than 20 years. Responding to the opportunity for engagement, Mr. Beck discussed current USAID assistance programs with government officials, learned of their interests and priorities, and discussed possible opportunities for future programs. While in country, Mr. Beck met with the three ministers directly associated with USAID programs, including the Minister of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, U Aung Kyi; the Minister of Health, Dr. Pe Thet Khin; and the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, U Ohn Than. In addition, Mr. Beck met with the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, U Maung Myint, to thank him for his ministry's future cooperation in executing visas and travel requests.

During his visit, Mr. Beck also introduced "Shae Thot" (the "Way Forward"), a new, five-year USAID program that will provide humanitarian assistance to 24 townships and approximately 2,500 villages located in six divisions in the Dry Zone and in Shan State, Bago and Rangoon. Pact, a non-profit organization headquartered in Washington, D.C., will implement the program through a unique partnership of organizations that brings more than 40 collective years of experience working in country. Implementing partners include: Marie Stopes International, the United Nations Development Programme, Cooperazione e Sviluppo (Cooperation and Development), UN-HABITAT, and Myanmar Survey Research. Together these organizations will provide resources and technical assistance to strengthen the innate capacities of local communities, encouraging community participation and sustainable solutions in the areas of maternal and child health, livelihoods, food security, and water, sanitation, and hygiene.

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