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Q1: Respondent details

Name	Ann Katsiak
Organization	Nathan Associates Inc.
Email Address	AKatsiak@nathaninc.com
Phone Number	N/A

Q2: Country or Customs territory   UNITED STATES

Q3: Organization   Public sector

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Q4: Title of case story

A Trade Portal Improves Transparency for Imports and Exports in Myanmar

Q5: Case story focus   Trade Facilitation.

Q6: Case story abstract

The Trade Portal and Trade Repository is the first web page in Myanmar (with access by cell phones) to provide comprehensive and detailed information, legislation, processes and forms for exporting and importing, with information available at the 10-digit HS line level, meeting a requirement of the World Trade Organization (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement. This easy format provides necessary information to small and medium enterprises that cannot cover informational costs or consultants as easily as large businesses. This smart website leverages the record-breaking expansion of smart cell phone usage.

Q7: Who provided funding?   Other (please specify) USAID

Q8: Project/Programme type   Single country

Q9: **Your text case story**

After decades of economic mismanagement and isolation, Myanmar is starting to modernize its economic governance structures and improve its business environment. The landslide victory of the National League for Democracy (NLD) was a historic milestone for Myanmar's trajectory toward a committed economic partner in the multilateral trading system (MTS).

To facilitate trade and enhance transparency, USAID's Private Sector Development Activity has successfully supported the development, testing and launch of a Trade Portal and Trade Repository (www.myanmartradeportal.gov.mm). The Trade Portal and Trade Repository website officially launched on May 26, 2016.

Prior to the portal, foreign and domestic businesses and citizens faced difficulty in finding applicable laws, regulations and information related to the import and export process in Myanmar. This gap posed challenges for effective and fair enforcement of the law, and it provided opportunities for arbitrary application and corruption—particularly in the issuance of import and export licenses. This lack of legal transparency and participation in the import and export process raised risks for investors and traders and provided a weak foundation for the rule of law.

With the development of the Trade Portal, USAID has helped to enhance economic transparency. USAID worked closely with the Ministry of Commerce to provide a vast amount of information via the Trade Portal. Information included laws related to trade, tariff rates, import and export licensing requirements, as well as processes and forms related to import and export.

The Trade Portal contributes to meeting transparency requirements embodied in agreements with the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). It helps to meet one of the major requirements of the new WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, notably the article that requires publication of import and export regulations online. It also meets ASEAN's requirement of establishing a National Trade Repository (NTR). Most importantly, the Trade Portal helps advance a rules-based trading system in Myanmar that can help attract increased foreign investors and thereby drive economic growth and reduce poverty.

Q10: **Lessons learnt**

The efficient development and planning process for the Trade Portal, led by the Ministry of Commerce and supported by USAID, allowed for the successful and timely launch of the Portal. Specifically, success stemmed from the coordination between and feedback from a variety of key stakeholders, particularly Myanmar government officials from relevant ministries. This portal was the first time of previously opaque government policies and procedures had been made public in a user-friendly way, providing businesses and traders from all countries with the core information needed to import and export.