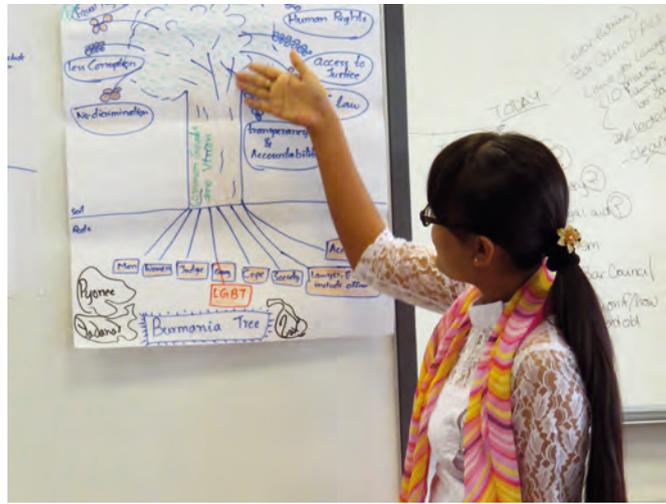


# IBJ's Singapore Hub

## *Fruitful Partnerships and Successful Myanmar Legal Training*

*The week-long Legal Aid Systems Training for Myanmar was conducted in successful collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) on the IBJ-MFA Joint Training Program*



A Lawyer from the Myanmar Legal Aid Network participates in the SJTC training program

The Singapore Justice Training Centre (SJTC) has become IBJ's first regional hub, extending its reach and influence through South, East, and Southeast Asia. IBJ was one of the first NGOs invited to work in Singapore under the government's International Organizations Development Scheme of the Economic Development Board (EDB). The SJTC was established in 2010 with the help of a generous donation from the Lien Centre for Social Innovation. IBJ has developed numerous partnerships with private and public entities, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Singapore Cooperation Program (SCP), the Law

Society of Singapore (LSS), academic institutions, and leading international and regional law firms to lead trainings and other events. The SJTC has been crucial in bringing together lawyers, judges and government officials from across the region.

In May 2013, the SJTC conducted two back-to-back events: the Regional Legal Aid Forum on the 14th of May, and the Legal Aid Systems Training for Myanmar on the 15th to the 18th of May. Supported by SingTel, the Regional Legal Aid Forum brought together 80 participants and 17 speakers and panelists from Myanmar, China, India, Australia, Malaysia and Singapore. Topics included Myanmar

legal developments, legal aid systems across the Asia-Pacific region, and the promotion of pro bono work and corporate engagement. The numerous participants from law firms and bar associations in the region shared experiences, challenges and best practices to improve access to criminal legal aid.

The week-long Legal Aid Systems Training for Myanmar was conducted with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) on the IBJ-MFA Joint Training Program. Seventeen senior government officials and lawyers from civil society attended and this marked an unprecedented step for Myanmar towards integrating legal aid into their criminal justice system. The Myanmar government delegation was comprised of officials from the Union Attorney-General's Office, the Supreme Court of the Union, the Myanmar Police Force, and lawyers from the Myanmar Legal Aid Network (MLAW). The training was attended by legal experts from diverse backgrounds, including law professors, presidents and senior members of regional law societies, senior lawyers and consultants, and inspirational legal aid lawyers around the world steered by IBJ's core team.



Professor Christie Warren speaking at the Myanmar Legal Aid Training

During the training week, the Myanmar delegation was hosted by the British High Commissioner, the Spanish Ambassador, and top international law firms for various aspects of the training program. The Myanmar delegation also spent a day with senior prison officers from Changi Prison, who shared their experience with prison management and the rehabilitation of offenders.

Sessions for skills training and capacity building were hosted by the National University of Singapore's Lee

Kuan Yew School of Public Policy, Clifford Chance, and Shearman & Sterling. This proved to be a unique platform for open discussion and meaningful engagement between government officials and young lawyers.

This ground-breaking event heralded an exciting start for Myanmar projects by IBJ. Overwhelmingly positive feedback was received from participants who suggested that more should be done to pave the future path for Myanmar's legal aid system. IBJ is committed to further closer engagement with all stakeholders to promote criminal legal aid in Myanmar.

The SJTC's other major achievement in its third year was the launch of 50 eLearning modules. The modules are specific to seven ASEAN countries: Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Myanmar, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam, as well as India. The topics include rights of the accused, rights and obligations of defense attorneys, attorney-client relations, presumption of innocence,

defense strategies, evidence, cross-examination, complaint procedures, pre-trial detention and preventing investigative and other torture.

To ensure the accuracy of the modules, the SJTC has leveraged its relationships with international law firms to engage the services of lawyers within specific countries to review the material.

With these modules, the SJTC is helping an ever-expanding group of lawyers from around the world increase its skills and knowledge through an accessible on-demand training platform. This serves to fulfill IBJ's mission of providing ordinary citizens with early access to competent counsel.



Participants of the Myanmar Legal Aid Training