

# Democratic Transition, Public Service Reform and National Development in Myanmar

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# Introduction

- \* Sustainability Vs Flexibility in Reform
  - \* Sustainable goal, flexible path
  - \* Flexibility should not derail the path of reform into wilderness
- \* Two Jockeys with a wild horse
  - \* Two successive governments from different backgrounds with different values, experiences, perceptions on reform and paradigms
  - \* U Thein Sein govt. ; conservative, pragmatic, steady and cautious approach, gradual change paradigm; result- decent growth, stability, relative peace and security
  - \* NLD govt. ; over-confident, radical, dynamic and hasty approach, upside-down reform paradigm; result- slow growth, instability, weak in security and stalled peace process

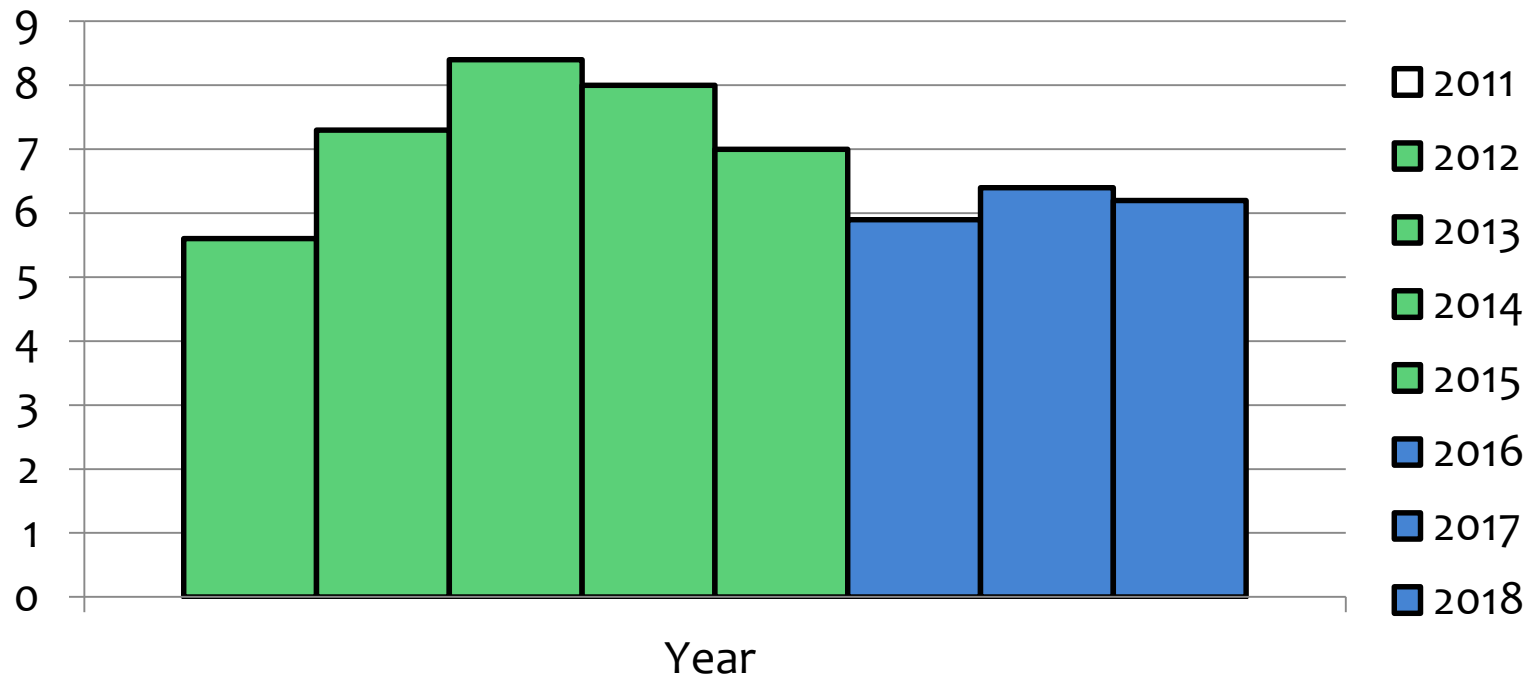
# First Episode of Reform (2011-2016) under U Thein Sein Govt.

- \* Reform Efforts in “Three Waves”
  - \* Four Sectors of reform- Politics, Economy, Administration and Private sector
- \* First Wave (3/2011- Mid 2012)
  - \* Political structure reform
  - \* Situational analysis and policy development
  - \* Liberalization and quick-win reforms
- \* Second Wave (Mid 2012- Mid 2014)
  - \* Strategic planning and implementation for comprehensive development
  - \* Decentralization in public administration
  - \* Political integration and peace process
- \* Third Wave ( Mid 2014- 3/2016)
  - \* Further decentralization and devolution of power
  - \* Enhancing peace efforts (NCA agreement)
- \* Result
  - \* Decent economic growth
  - \* Relative security and stability with relative freedom and democracy
  - \* Public acceptance and aspiration

# Second Episode of Reform (2016-Present) under the NLD Govt.

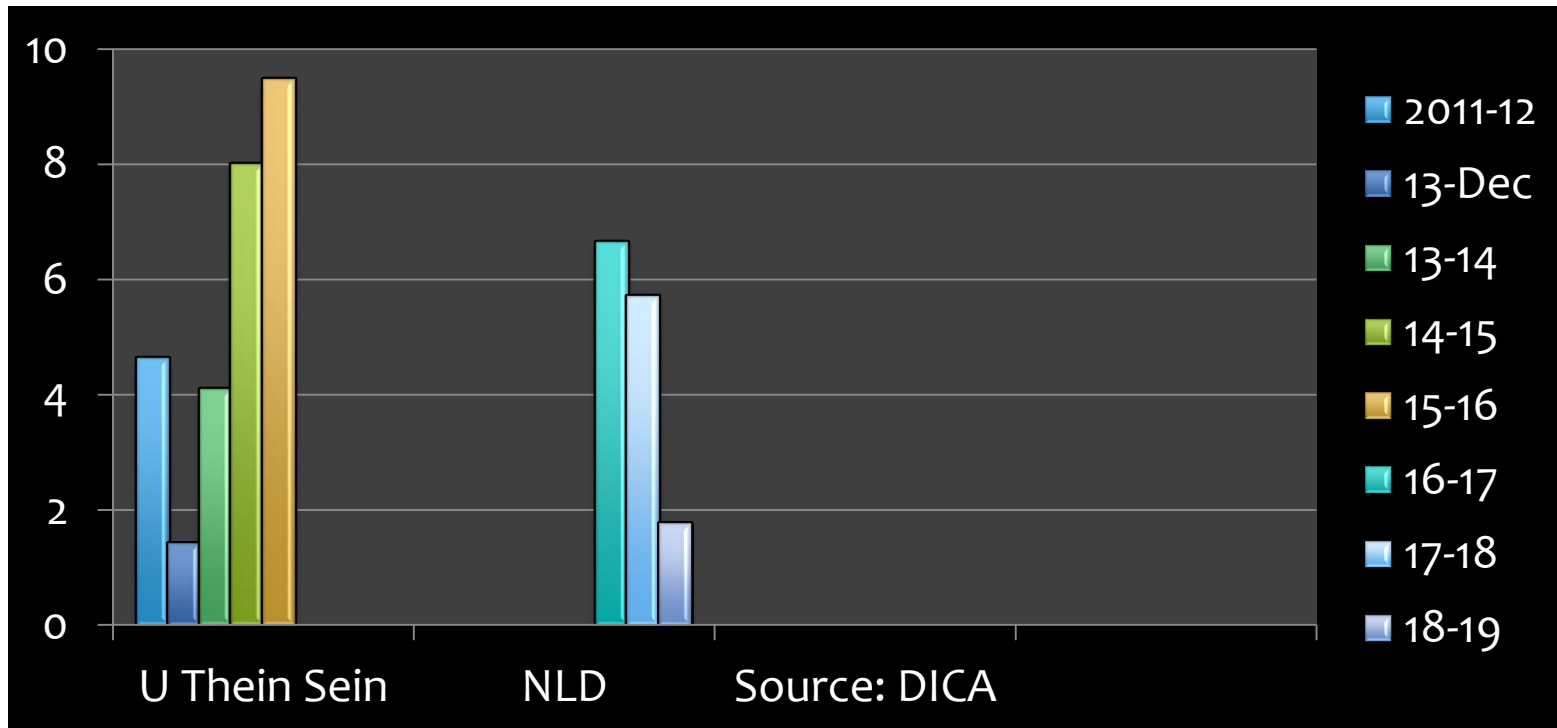
- \* Reform areas and priority
  - \* Peace
  - \* Constitutional amendment
  - \* Socioeconomic development
- \* Drastic and radical measures
  - \* Reduction of the cabinet size with “small government concept”
  - \* Sustainable development policy
  - \* Prudent fiscal policy and tax reform
  - \* National Peace Conferences with political dialogues
  - \* General Administration Department transferred under direct control of President
  - \* Constitutional amendment moves in the end game of election circle
- \* Consequences
  - \* Excessive workloads in ministries, mismanagements, loss of proper control and inspection, corruption
  - \* More centralization at the top, free-wheeling power at the regional level, decentralization of corruption
  - \* Economic slow-down, rising public discontent
  - \* Deterioration of national security and deadlock in peace process
  - \* Hot debates and controversies in constitutional amendment move
  - \* Prospect- political turmoil, security crisis, economic hardship

# GDP Growth Rate



Source: World Bank

# FDI Approved in USD billion



# Conclusion

- \* Inconsistency in policy hampers the momentum of reform
- \* Political and security matters can disrupt socio-economic development efforts
- \* Strong and visionary leadership is needed
- \* National cohesion is essential to possess synergy