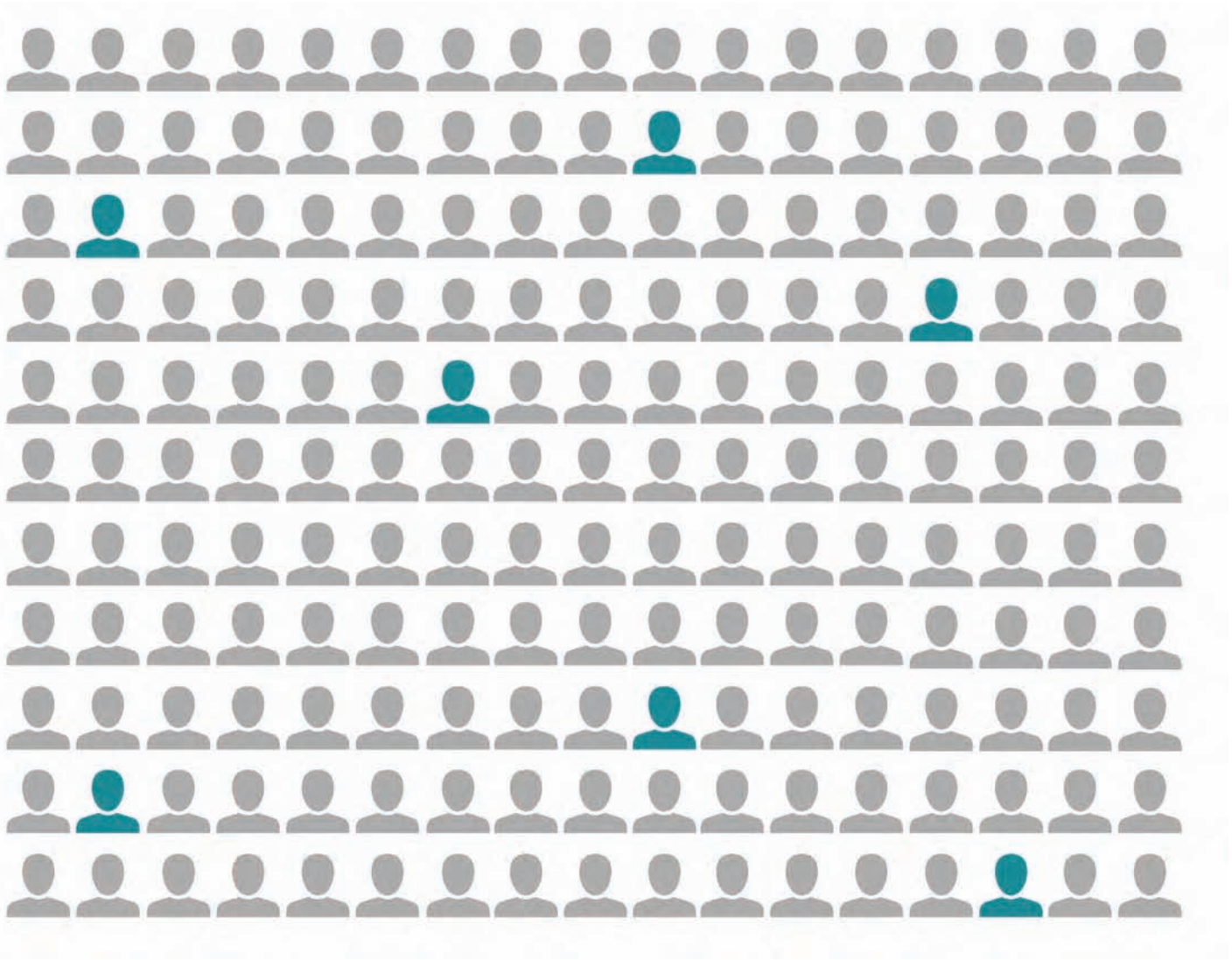


THE WOMEN ARE READY

An opportunity to transform peace in Myanmar

THE WOMEN ARE READY

An opportunity to transform peace in Myanmar

"The on-going exclusion of women and omission of gender analyses poses a substantial risk to achieving sustainable peace in Myanmar."

Discussion Paper No. 1, January 2016

INCLUSION OF WOMEN IN THE NATIONWIDE CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT NEGOTIATIONS

GOVERNMENT OF MYANMAR

0% Union Peacemaking Central Committee (UPCC)

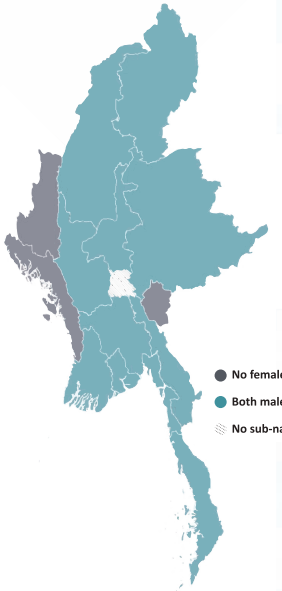
4% Union Peacemaking Working Committee (UPWC)

ETHNIC ARMED ORGANISATIONS

6% Nationwide Ceasefire Coordination Team (NCCT)

13% Senior Delegation (SD)

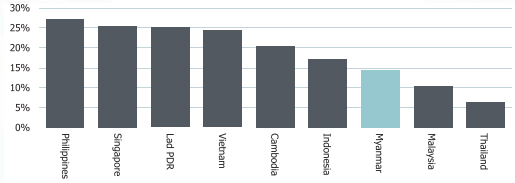
POLITICS & SECURITY



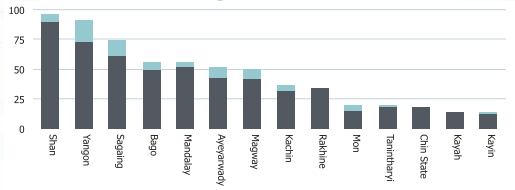
3 of 14 States and Regions have no elected women in parliament in 2016.

Women's Inclusion in ASEAN National-Level Parliaments (2015)*

* Figures for Myanmar reflect outcomes from November 2015 general election.

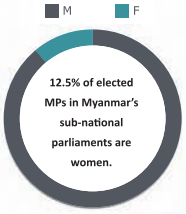


Women's Inclusion in Myanmar's State & Region Parliaments (2016)



Currently no reliable data available on the number of women in the Tatmadaw.

3.4% of police officials are women in the Myanmar Police Force (2015).



At 14.5%, Myanmar has one of the lowest levels of women's inclusion in National-level parliaments in the ASEAN region.

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PEACE SUPPORT FUND

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PRACTICAL STEPS TO TAKE NOW

"A failure to include women is a waste of resources and a wasted opportunity to use all possible factors to create sustainable peace."

OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier

To the Government of Myanmar, EAOs, NGOs, INGOs, and donors:

1. Challenge and transform the views and behaviours of men which are a barrier to the participation of women in the peace process and gender equality in Myanmar by:
    a. Implementing programs and activities that seek to transform the views and behaviours of men and boys.
    b. Ensuring that peace process programming, support and technical advice is inclusive of gender perspectives.
2. Provide funding for childcare and/or salary support to ensure that women who are expected to be the primary care givers for family and children have the time and opportunity to participate in the peace process events, meetings and conventions.
3. Ensure that women and girls are not constructed as victims of conflict by assuring that protection frame works empower women rather than silence them.
4. Ensure that gender-based violence (GBV) response programs address all forms of GBV based oninternational standards and are not limited to 'sexual violence in conflict'.

To the Government of Myanmar and EAOs:

5. Implement the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), ratified by Myanmar in 1997, and adopt gender inclusion policies and quotas to guarantee the participation of women in the peace process and political entities by:
    a. Creating a quota to guarantee a minimum of 30% of women in peace process entities (Joint Monitoring Committees, Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee, EAO coordination bodies and in political entities (Upper/Lower House).
    b. Creating a formal space for women's peace forums and organisations to regularly input policy recommendations into the peace process.

To the Government of Myanmar:

6. Build system-wide and non-discriminatory health and justice systems to prevent and respond to GBV by:
    a. Passing the Prevention and Protection of Violence Against Women Bill.
    b. Improving sex-disaggregated data collection systems to enhance understanding of the causes of GBV.
    c. Using data, analysis and international best practise to improve GBV prevention and response services.
    d. Ensuring services build on the experience and expertise women's organisations in responding to GBV.

To donors, multi-donor trust funds, and international non-governmental organisations:

7. Ensure that a minimum of 15% of all funding (UN policy standard) is directed to projects whose main objective is to 'address women's specific needs, advance gender equality, or empower women'.
8. Make funding of all peace process activities contingent on the: a) participation of girls and women; and b) integration of gender perspectives across all project activities.
9. Support the development of local organisations by:
    a. Providing longer-term and core-funding support to local organisations.
    b. Creating reporting requirements/ structures that are user-friendly and accessible.
    c. Funding the secondment of Gender, Peace and Security Advisors.

These recommendations reflect findings of the research in "The women are ready: an opportunity to transform peace in Myanmar", PSF Discussion Paper No 1. We encourage your input and feedback on these suggestions. Please submit comments to caitlin.williscroft@peacesupportfund.org.

PEACE SUPPORT FUND

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Representatives from the Government's Union Peace-making Working Committee, left, and Ethnic Armed Organisations, right, shake hands during a meeting at the Myanmar Peace Center Wednesday, 22 July 2015, in Yangon.

Acknowledgements

This *Discussion Paper* is being released shortly after the 15th anniversary of United Nations Security Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Appreciation is extended to those who gave their time to be interviewed for this *Paper* as well as those who provided peer reviews and fact checking. The methodology is outlined in Annex 1. It has been informed by two significant rounds of research and analysis including:

- **Phase I:** Kerstin Duell, Sille Jansen and Naw Eh Mwee conducted interviews, a desk review and prepared an initial outline paper from November 2014 to April 2015.
- **Phase II:** Cate Buchanan further developed the document in the role of chief editor, conducting a literature review, co-ordinating a peer review, drafting and substantive editing from June to October 2015. During this time, Caitlin Williscroft from the Peace Support Fund (PSF) provided detailed substantive editing, fact checking, drafting support and led the preparation of this *Paper*. Jenny Hedström provided an additional substantive peer review and fact check. Erin Kamler provided copy-editing support.

Peer Review:

- A peer review was undertaken to further refine the analysis and recommendations presented in this *Paper.* Reviewers included Jenny Hedström (Independent Consultant) and Paul Minoletti (Independent Consultant). Naw Tin Thet Sann and Elizabeth Armstrong provided additional substantive review from the PSF. In addition, the Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process (AGIPP) Steering Committee provided a collective peer review through a facilitated discussion. This included May Sabe Phyu (Gender Equality Network, GEN) and Nang Phyu Phyu Lin (Independent Consultant and co-Chair of GEN); Mu Gloria and Thin Thin Aung (Women's League of Burma, WLB); Ban Seng Bu (Nyein [Shalom] Foundation) and Mi Kun Chan Non (Mon Women's Network, MWN). Additional fact checking on individual sections was also provided by Alexandra Robinson (UN Population Fund, UNFPA). Individuals, who wish to remain anonymous, provided translation, facilitation and logistics support in Shan, Mon, and Rakhine states. Zoe Disselkoen and Thiri Swe from the PSF provided invaluable logistics support throughout Phase I. Finally, thank you to Leigh Mitchell for all his help with graphics.

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To the reader: Share your feedback with us

This *Discussion Paper* is not a definitive statement. It offers a first step in a difficult conversation and asks the following questions: how and where can women stake more claims to political space in Myanmar? What underlying factors need to be addressed to transform the status of women in Myanmar? In the context of a complex and long peace process set within multiple economic, social and political reforms, what strategies could be considered to ensure the substantive participation of women, and with what evidence? Each section of the paper closes with a set of questions to prompt discussion and debate. Readers are asked to share their views on these and other issues. These questions will be the starting points for the meetings to be convened in 2016. Contact the Peace Support Fund with your comments and ideas regarding this *Discussion Paper* (caitlin.williscroft@peacesupportfund.org).

Myanmar President U Thein Sein is seated at center while representatives of the Government and Ethnic Armed Organisations sign an agreement on the draft of a Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement, Tuesday, 31 March 31 2015, in Yangon.

DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- Why has the participation of women been minimal in the peace process thus far?
- What do you think are the main obstacles to women's participation in peacebuilding?
- How does your organisation address Women, Peace and Security issues?
- How can more women be included in the negotiating parties for the political dialogue?
- What implications might there be if women's exclusion continues in the peace process?
- How can WPS principles and policies be operationalised in Myanmar in order to substantially enhance gender inclusion?
- What structural impediments do women, particularly women from ethnic minorities, experience with regards to participation in peacebuilding?
- How can stakeholders engage in overcoming the factors outlined in this *Discussion Paper*?
- How are state level obstacles to women's participation in peacebuilding different than those at the national level?
- Which strategies are most relevant to your organisation?
- How can stakeholders collaborate on forwarding the women, peace and security agenda?
- What are the longer-term consequences of overlooking the participation of women in the peace process and peacebuilding?

Acronyms

AGIPP	Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process
ALP	Arakan Liberation Party
BPFA	Beijing Platform for Action (1995)
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CNF	Chin National Front
CSFOP	Civil Society Forum on Peace
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration
DSW	Department of Social Welfare
EAO	Ethnic Armed Organisation
EPRP	Ethnic Peace Resources Project GBV Gender-based violence
GDI	Gender and Development Institute
GEN	Gender Equality Network
GONGOs	Government organised NGOs GSA Gender Situation Analysis
INGOs	International non-governmental organisations
IPSG	International Peace Support Group
JPF	Joint Peace Fund
KNU	Karen National Union
MNCWA	Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs
MPC	Myanmar Peace Centre
MPF	Myanmar Police Force
MSWRR	Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement
NAP	National Action Plan
NCA	Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement
NCCT	Nationwide Ceasefire Coordination Team
NSPAW	National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women
PoVAW	Law on Protection and Prevention of Violence against Women
PSF	Peace Support Fund
PSG	Peace Support Group
SD	Senior Delegation
SSR	Security Sector Reform
UNFC	United Nationalities Federal Council
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UPCC	Union Peacemaking Central Committee
UPR	Universal Periodic Review
UPWC	Union Peace-making Working Committee
WIN-Peace	Women-in-Peace
WLB	Women's League of Burma
WON	Women's Organisations Network
WPS	Women, Peace and Security

Introduction

"When we, the Women's League of Burma, met with the Myanmar Peace Centre, we asked them questions about women, and what they plan to do for women, and about legal issues, how to make laws stronger for women. There are so many things they need to address! It is so important that women are part of the political dialogue. But there is a long way to go, and we have many challenges ahead." [1]

—Tin Tin Nyo, Women's League of Burma

"We ask women to take part in the meeting but they don't show up and anyway, what would they be doing in the meeting?" [2]

—Respondent from Mon State

After four years of negotiation, the Government of Myanmar and some of the Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs) signed a Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) in October 2015.[3] Reflecting on either side of the negotiation table, one conclusion is evident: there were few women participating in the NCA process. The Government's negotiation team, represented in direct talks by the Union Peace-making Working Committee (UPWC), comprised 52 members, of which two were women. In the negotiating team for the EAOs, two of the fifteen-strong delegation in the final stage of the talks, were women.[4] Why are there so few women participating in Myanmar's peace process? Why are gender considerations absent from substantive negotiation discussions? Which factors impede the substantive participation of women in peace talks and peacebuilding in Myanmar? How can a multiplicity of stakeholders undertake strategies to foster the meaningful participation of women in Myanmar's peace architecture?

To address these questions, this *Discussion Paper* outlines the status of women's participation and gender in the Myanmar peace process to date, identifies factors that act as a barrier to their participation, and finally proposes some areas of strategic intervention that could address them. Section 1 looks at the leading stakeholders—Government, Ethnic Armed Organisations, civil society, and international actors—and how they shape the peace process and gender equality more broadly. Subsequently, Section 2 details eight key factors that inhibit the participation of women in the peace process and peacebuilding in Myanmar. These eight inter-related factors provide insight into the multiplicity of overt and subtle barriers that prevent women from participating in the peace architecture and public spaces more broadly. This *Discussion Paper* concludes in Section 3 by proposing eight strategic areas of intervention in order to address the underlying factors—discussed in Section 2—that inhibit the full and substantive participation of women in the peace process.

This Discussion Paper is a concise overview, inclusive of key analysis and recommendations, based on extensive research undertaken. This *Paper* is not exhaustive. It provides a nuanced

"We ask women to take part in the meeting but they don't show up and anyway, what would they be doing in the meeting?"

"There were few women participating in the NCA process"

DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- Why has the participation of women been minimal in the peace process thus far?
- What do you think are the main obstacles to women's participation in peacebuilding?
- How does your organisation address Women, Peace and Security issues?

overview of women's participation in Myanmar's peace process up to the NCA signing ceremony in October 2015. The methodology is explained in Annex 1. This is the first instalment of the PSF's "Contributions to Sustainable Peace Series" (see Annex 2 for more information).

The PSF invites readers to reflect on the ways in which the participation of women is limited in the peace process and how to undertake strategies to counter this exclusion. To foster discussion, at the end of each section are boxes that contain 'discussion starter questions'.

Section 1: A gendered assessment of Myanmar's peace process actors

" We met with the [government's chief negotiator]...and then we [talked] about women's participation and then he said that next time he [would] bring his wife. Then they [laughed] every time we [spoke] to them... nearly everyone at the Myanmar Peace Centre says the same words...'The military [is] asking for 25 per cent in the Parliament and women [are] also [asking] for 30 per cent. So where does that leave us [men]', they joke, 'how about [quotas] for us [men]'?"[5]

—Central Committee member, Women's League of Burma

In 2011, President U Thein Sein invited Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs) to participate in a three-step plan for peace: bi-lateral ceasefires, nationwide ceasefire and political dialogue.[6] This invitation came at the same time as Myanmar's ambitious political and economic reform agenda was launched. Fourteen EAOs signed bi-lateral ceasefires with the Government, and in preparation for the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) negotiations, EAOs formed a collective negotiation bloc, the Nationwide Ceasefire Coordination Team (NCCT).[7]

During nine rounds of formal NCA talks from November 2013-August 2015, the process never meaningfully managed to foster the participation of women or include gender perspectives in substantive issues (see Annex 3 for an overview of Women in Union-level ceasefire negotiations and related processes). The on-going exclusion of women and omission of gender analyses poses a substantial risk to achieving lasting peace in Myanmar.[8] This

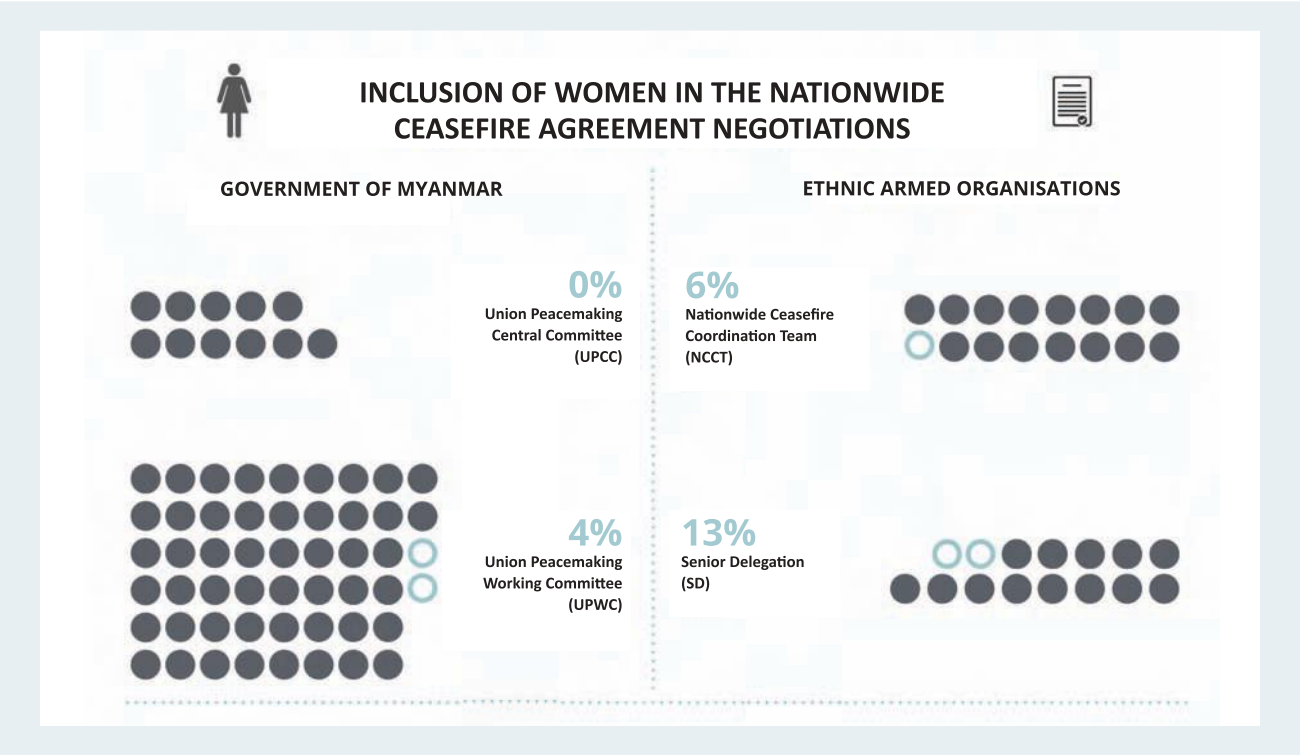
" During nine rounds of formal NCA talks from November 2013-August 2015, the process never meaningfully managed to foster the participation of women or include gender perspectives in substantive issues."

section discusses the leading policy actors involved in the peace process—Government, EAOs, civil society, international community—and reflects on the extent to which their values and actions are inclusive of gender perspectives.

Government of Myanmar

The Government of Myanmar's peace negotiation architecture operated through two main committees: the Union Peacemaking Central Committee (UPCC) and the Union Peace-making Working Committee (UPWC). Both were advised and supported by the Myanmar Peace Centre (MPC). U Aung Min, former major General, led the UPWC. All three Vice- Chairpersons of the UPWC were men.[9] The male dominance of the Government's negotiation structure is representative of the legacy of military-rule, which largely barred women's participation, and broader socio-cultural norms that inhibit women from accessing public leadership roles.

The UPWC comprised 52 members, two of which were female parliamentarians: Daw Doi Bu and Mi Yin Chan. Daw Doi Bu



represented N'Jang Yang in Kachin state; and Mi Yin Chan was from Mon State's Ye town. Views differ on their appointment. Some contend that both women were selected to tick the 'ethnic' and 'woman' boxes at the same time.[10] However, such views detract from the capacity and skill these women brought to the negotiation table and demonstrate how the skills of women are often unduly scrutinised in comparison to their male counterparts.

The primary state peace institution is the MPC. To date, the MPC has not integrated substantive gender perspectives into its activities; nor do women feature prominently in its leadership. Several women's organisations and donors have reportedly recommended the appointment of a Gender, Peace and Security Adviser, which the MPC has not yet taken forward.[11] A decision for the MPC to diversify its leadership would also send a signal that it recognised the participation of women as critical to the achievement of sustainable peace.

"The negotiation table is a microcosm of underlying socio-cultural norms that inhibit the ascension of women into leadership roles."

Other actors related to the Government have an important stake in securing the participation of women in the peace process. In the 1990s, the Government of Myanmar established departments, referred to as government organised NGOs (GONGOs) to focus on women's 'issues'. Among these were the Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association, the Myanmar Women Entrepreneurs' Association, Myanmar National Committee for Women Affairs, and the Myanmar National Working Committee for Women Affairs. These entities are likely to maintain the status quo on gender attitudes, rather than advocate for a stronger role for women in the peace process. Initially, donors supported GONGOs, as they were the exclusive implementing agencies related to the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of*

Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).[12] However, GONGOs are no longer solely tasked with the Convention's implementation as other key civil society organisations have emerged, diversifying options for donor support.

Ethnic Armed Organisations

EAOs party to the peace process were, as of June 2015, represented by the Senior Delegation (SD)—which replaced the NCCT.[13] The SD included two women, Naw Zipporah Sein of the Karen National Union (KNU) and Saw Mra Raza Linn of the Arakan Liberation Party (ALP). Leaders selected to sit on the SD were drawn from the highest ranks of their respective organisations. The male dominance of EAOs—like the Myanmar Armed Forces (Tatmadaw)—is reflected at the negotiation table, which is a microcosm of underlying socio-cultural norms that inhibit the ascension of women into leadership roles.

When the SD elected Naw Zipporah Sein, Vice-Chairperson of the KNU, as its leader, the visibility of women in the peace process changed significantly. Naw Zipporah Sein has an extensive background serving in the KNU and dedicating herself to women's rights—she was a founding member of the Women's League of Burma (WLB).[14]

Another important stakeholder is the United Nationalities Federal Council (UNFC), which provides a coordinating alliance for the EAOs. Its senior committee comprises leaders from some EAOs; there are currently no women represented in the 2014-2016 term of the UNFC Central Executive Committee.[15]

The Pyidaungsu Institute for Peace and Dialogue, the Centre for Development and Ethnic Studies, and the Ethnic Nationalities Affairs Centre all fulfil important functions in advising the armed groups on political matters.[16] However, there remains ample scope for these entities to systematically address Women, Peace and Security (WPS) policy concerns. Like other actors, these institutes have a vital role in securing the foundations for inclusive peace.

"In June 2015, WLB and other women's organisations gained support from the SD to negotiate the inclusion of a minimum 30% quota for women's participation in the process. It remains to be determined if and how this will be integrated into political dialogue."

Civil society

Civil society currently leads in promoting and producing policy and advocacy strategies to secure the inclusion of women in Myanmar's peace process.[17] Women's mobilisation was a response to their subordination in Myanmar's democracy and ethnic movements. Like other pro-democracy movements in Asia, men—Bama men in particular—have dominated Myanmar's movement.[18] Women participating in ethnic rights and democracy movements were often relegated to supportive tasks, unable to voice their concerns or access leadership roles.[19] Inspired by the global feminist movement rooted in the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA), women started to question their subordination within these movements, leading to the formation of a multiplicity of women's organisations in exile.[20] The exile based women's movement culminated in the formation of the WLB in the belief that more could be achieved together. [21] WLB is rooted in feminist principles and has been

implementing peace and reconciliation initiatives since the early 2000s.[22]

Women's organisations play a critical role in documenting the lived experiences of women, particularly in conflict-affected areas, that are otherwise silenced. For instance, the release of *"License to Rape"* by the Shan Women's Action Network —a member of WLB—garnered national and international attention.[23] This report documented sexual violence committed by the (Tatmadaw), demonstrating how such violence is used as a method to subjugate ethnic women. As a result of this report, the international community recognised sexual violence committed by the Tatmadaw for the first time. Moreover, this seminal moment led to the formation of other women's organisations that sought to document gender-based violence (GBV).[24]

The WLB has consistently lobbied for a gender inclusive peace process in Myanmar, having met with lead government negotiator, U Aung Min, and invited men from the NCCT and UNFC to discuss women's rights and gender equality.[25] WLB and other women's organisations, in June 2015, gained support from the SD to negotiate the inclusion of a minimum 30% quota for women's participation in the process; however, it remains to be determined if and how this will be integrated into the forthcoming political dialogue.[26] Like the initial subordination of women in the democracy movement, WLB used policy and advocacy strategies—inclusion techniques based on international best practices—in response to the near absence of women in the peace process.

"Applying a gendered lens of analysis to Myanmar's rapidly expanding civil society is necessary to ensure that it does not transform into another space where women are overlooked, silenced and marginalised."

The formation of other organisations—such as the Gender Equality Network (GEN) and Women's Organisations Network (WON)—are shifting the epicentre of organisation from Chiang Mai, Thailand to Yangon.[27] GEN grew out of the Women's Protection Technical Working Group, which was created in response to Cyclone Nargis in 2008.[28] WON emerged alongside GEN, and has a dedicated sub-network called Women in Peace (WIN-Peace). WON has played a critical role in building the capacity of peace process parties on the policy agenda known as Women, Peace and Security (WPS). For example, WON has trained members of the NCCT on UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and Members of Parliament on CEDAW.

Beyond women's rights and network organisations, dedicated peace and security organisations play a significant role in forwarding the WPS agenda. For example, Nyein (Shalom) Foundation, has evolved to include gender power analysis across its peacebuilding programmes, a shift that is perhaps reflective of its all-women leadership. Since 2012, Shalom has been implementing a dedicated WPS 'Coaching Programme', an initiative it has undertaken in collaboration with Swisspeace and UN Women.

Shalom was instrumental in brokering peace during the state level peace negotiations between the Kachin Independence Organisation and the Government in 2000.[29] In the NCA process, Shalom has provided direct support and technical advice to the NCCT. Ja Nan Lathaw, Shalom's Director, was co-facilitator of the NCA talks with an MPC counterpart; and Nang Raw Zakhung, Shalom's Deputy

Director, is technical adviser to the NCCT. The involvement of these two women demonstrates the exceptional capacity that exists in civil society.

Other important civil society peace and security organisations include Metta Development Foundation and the Ethnic Peace Resources Project (EPRP), which emerged out of the Myanmar Peace Support Initiative (MPSI). Metta does not explicitly list gender as a core theme, but importantly, the organisation uses locally informed approaches to peace. EPRP seeks to address the socio-religious norms that inhibit women from participating in the peace process.

Few organisations in Myanmar exist that focus on the nexus of women's rights, gender justice and peacebuilding. Three, in particular, stand out at the national level: WIN-Peace, the Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process (AGIPP) and the Civil Society Forum on Peace (CSFOP). WIN-Peace aims to work at the intersection of women's rights and peacebuilding. CSFOP was established in 2012 to increase public participation and awareness of the peace process. It has established a gender working group, though this group has yet to fully commence operations.

AGIPP was formed in 2014 by WON, GEN, WLB, Gender and Development Institute (GDI), Shalom, and others.[30] These groups assessed the value and drawbacks of uniting and found there was a real need for a policy-advocacy network dedicated to securing the participation of women in the peace process and ensuring that gender issues were included in the peace process and its outcomes. AGIPP commenced operations in October 2015 and offers a powerful platform for leading civil society organisations to come together and coordinate efforts to counter the systemic exclusion of women.[31]

Overall, civil society—women's organisations and organisations that integrate gendered power analysis in their organisation—has been leading efforts for greater participation of women in the peace process in Myanmar, building on their historical role of bringing issues, such as GBV, to the fore that are otherwise overlooked or silenced. Applying a gendered lens of analysis to Myanmar's rapidly expanding civil society is necessary to ensure that it does not transform into another space where women are overlooked, silenced and marginalised.[32]

International actors

Donors in Myanmar are supporting the WPS agenda, notably by funding the implementation of activities that reduce the barriers to women's public participation. It is important that donors dedicate funds to activities that lift the WPS agenda, ensuring that non-gender related projects substantively address gender issues rather than merely tick a 'box'. Mindful that a major obstacle to new organisations is lack of sustainable project-based support, the PSF is supporting AGIPP. This will help ensure that this emerging policy actor has the core support necessary to thrive.

In addition to the work of donors, UN Women has championed the inclusion of gender issues—women's participation, GBV, women ceasefire monitors—in the NCA draft agreement. These issues, however, did not get included in the final NCA. They have also engaged the Government of Myanmar in a number of discussions in order to assess their interest in developing a WPS National Action Plan (NAP) for Myanmar.[33] Other UN agencies, such as United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) focus on the UNSCR 1325 pillars that relate to 'protection' and 'relief and recovery'—both central to fostering women's participation in the peace process.

"Women's organisations have been leading the policy and advocacy on gender justice and inclusive peacebuilding."

The International Peace Support Group (IPSG) convenes a monthly meeting where international NGOs (INGOs) meet and exchange information on the peace process. The group is yet to prioritise WPS and gender inclusion. In practice, the IPSG could consider including an agenda item related to WPS and gender inclusion to prompt critical discussion on these issues in the coming period. The power of role modelling opportunities by the IPSG is valuable to consider.

Notably, some INGOs are undertaking innovations in the area of policy research. Trocaire, Action Aid, Oxfam and CARE Myanmar have jointly established a research series examining the dearth of women in public life in Myanmar to inform their own programming.[34] This collaboration provides a solid model of how INGOs can contribute and coordinate in this area. Others, such as Swisspeace, have established collaborations with Shalom, GDI, and UN Women to undertake similar programming.

Two armed groups, the KNU and Chin National Front (CNF), have signed Geneva Call's Deed of Commitment—a commitment

AP Photo/Aung Shine Oo

on the part of armed groups to uphold the principles of international humanitarian and human rights law—*For the Prohibition of Sexual Violence in Situations of Armed Conflict and Towards the Elimination of Gender Discrimination*. Geneva Call regards the gender-related deed as a "door opener" to discuss other issues such as landmines.[35] In this sense, gender is a 'stepping stone' issue. A primary concern raised by women's rights advocates is that women were not adequately involved in Geneva Call's process. Concerns were also echoed that the negotiation of such deeds might also have a disempowering effect.[36] Section 3 offers a host of strategies— rooted in international best practice—that international actors can consider in their programming and policy.

Overall, analysis in this section finds that whilst many stakeholders are yet to fully and strategically integrate gender concerns into their work, there are nascent indications that this is emerging. For example, WLB is working with EAOs to back a gender quota in the political dialogue, recognition that formal inclusion techniques are required to overcome barriers to women's participation. As outlined in this section, women's organisations have been leading the policy and advocacy on gender justice and inclusive peacebuilding. In doing so, they have brought the exclusion of women's participation and gender issues in the NCA process to the fore. However, until all actors comprehensively address gender issues in their entities, it is unlikely that an effective WPS agenda will be fully realised.

DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- How can more women be included in the negotiating parties for the political dialogue?
- What implications might there be if women's exclusion continues in the peace process?
- How can WPS principles and policies be operationalised in Myanmar in order to substantially enhance gender inclusion?

Photo, left: Myanmar President U Thein Sein, center, shakes hand with a foreign diplomat during the signing ceremony of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement at the Myanmar International Convention Center Thursday, 15 October 2015, in Nay Pyi Taw.

WPS ESSENTIAL 1:

International standards related to Women, Peace and Security

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, CEDAW (1979)[37]

CEDAW is a single, comprehensive international legal instrument to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women. It is often referred to as an international bill of rights for women as it focuses on three main areas: civil rights and the legal status of women; reproductive rights; and cultural factors influencing gender relations. Importantly, the application of CEDAW requires states to address discrimination against women in the public and private sphere and does not permit any legal derogation even during states of emergency or conflict.

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, BPFA (1995)[38]

BPFA is regarded as the most comprehensive global policy framework related to gender equality, development and peace. It links to CEDAW via 12 priority areas for systematic action to eliminate discrimination against women. It is reviewed within the UN Commission on the Status of Women every five years.[39]

The eight 'Women, Peace, and Security' United Nations Security Council Resolutions

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, UNSCR 1325 (2000)[40]

UNSCR 1325 calls on all actors involved in violent conflict and its resolution to undertake measures to eliminate gender-based violence; end impunity for perpetrators of such violence; improve the inclusion of women in decision- making in all aspects of peacebuilding including negotiations; and integrate gender perspectives in peacekeeping missions. It has led to the agreement of some 50 National Action Plans (NAPs) globally.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1820, UNSCR 1820 (2008)[41]

UNSCR 1820 urges states to recognise the use of sexual violence as a "tool" of war and to prosecute perpetrators of such violence, regarding them as war crimes and crimes against humanity. It also stresses the need to exclude crimes of sexual violence from amnesty provisions in peace agreements and any peacebuilding measures.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1888, UNSCR 1888 (2009)[42]

UNSCR 1888 urged the Secretary General to appoint a Special Rapporteur to provide leadership, co-ordination and advocacy to implement UNSCR 1325 and 1820 and to work through the existing inter-agency initiative, the United Nations Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict. The resolution urges States to pursue legal and judicial reform to bring perpetrators of sexual violence to account and facilitate appropriate redress by victims and survivors.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1889, UNSCR 1889 (2009)[43]

UNSCR 1889 aims to strengthen the implementation and monitoring of UNSCR 1325. It calls for the development of indicators and reporting, increasing women's participation, and strengthening law enforcement and ending impunity.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1960, UNSCR 1960 (2010)[44]

UNSCR 1960 was passed due to concern about slow progress on the issue of "sexual violence in conflict". It mandated the creation of a monitoring and reporting mechanism for this one form of violence during violent conflict.[45]

United Nations Security Council Resolution 2106, UNSCR 2106 (2013)[46]

UNSCR 2106 is the sixth resolution on WPS and the fourth one focused on "sexual violence in conflict". As with other resolutions it posits that ending impunity is key. Importantly, it reiterates the centrality of gender equality and women's empowerment in making progress on preventing sexual violence, and all forms of violence against women.[47]

United Nations Security Council Resolution 2122, UNSCR 2122 (2013)

UNSCR 2122 aims to re-balance the "protection" focus of the WPS resolutions up to this point by reiterating that women's empowerment and decision- making are critical for any progress towards gender equality. It strategically re-sets the emphasis that has built up in successive resolutions related to "sexual violence in conflict" over all other forms of violence against women. It assigns greater systematic responsibility on States, the UN and envoys and mediators to include substantively women in peace processes. It also urges changes in the Council's working methods.

United Nations Security Council Resolution 2242, UNSCR 2242 (2015)[48]

UNSCR 2242 emphasises the importance of including gender perspectives in addressing violent extremism and concern about the rising numbers of displaced people. Notably, the resolution draws attention to train mediators on gender inclusive peace processes, recognition of the evidence-based link between the participation of women and sustainable peace.

UN Indicators on women, peace and security (2010)[49]

In 2010, the UN Secretary General issued a set of 26 indicators in response to UNSCR 1889. These aim to better measure, track and document implementation of the WPS agenda. These indicators are of direct relevance to a range of entities in the shaping of policies and programme design.[50]

General Recommendation Number 30 on women in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations, Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (GR30)[51]

Fundamentally, GR 30 issued by the CEDAW Committee of experts, affirms that the obligations of CEDAW apply even in war-affected states. This GR is one of the most significant developments in the WPS agenda. It is also notable because it places pressure on non-state armed groups to respect CEDAW.

Women, Peace and Security - National Action Plans (NAPs)

As part of implementing the WPS UNSCRs and BPFA, NAPs have emerged as a prominent policy instrument in the last 15 years. Nearly 50 states have developed WPS NAPs. As a result, solid evidence now exists about what makes such plans most effective: dedicated budgets, cross-government engagement and collaboration, substantive civil society involvement, periodic evaluation and reframing informed by evidence and context.[52]

Section 2: Factors inhibiting the participation of women in the peace process

"I really want to laugh when you are talking about gender again and again."[53]

—Anonymous NGO leader

This section discusses some of the most prominent factors undermining women's participation in the peace process and public life in Myanmar, more broadly. Transforming Myanmar's peace process requires stakeholders to carefully consider how to overcome the eight factors below.

Factor 1: Socio-cultural gender norms and expectations

"In our culture, women are considered to be only homemakers. They are not people who take initiative or lead in the community. We need to fight to change this."[54]

—Khin Khin Kyu

Strong social norms that discriminate against women remain entrenched in all cultures and religions across Myanmar.[55] These norms and expectations regarding the roles of women and girls sustain the view that women are inferior to men, which in turn limits the participation of women in decision-making. In 2008, the Experts Committee on the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW) noted concerns over:

"the persistence of adverse cultural norms, practices and traditions as well as patriarchal attitudes and deep- rooted stereotypes regarding the roles, responsibilities and identities of women and men in all spheres of life, especially within some ethnic groups. The CEDAW Committee has expressed concern that such customs and practices perpetuate discrimination against women and girls, and that they are reflected in their disadvantageous and unequal status in many areas, including in public life and decision-making and in marriage and family relations, and the persistence of violence against women."[56]

Customary laws, rooted in cultural norms and practices, vary among ethnic groups and provide a cultural 'roadmap' for regulating social behaviour and overcoming conflicts related to women's rights in marriage, divorce, custody of children, inheritance, adultery, and a range of other issues. Drawing heavily on religious values, traditions and customs, customary law, or 'family law,' as it is sometimes called, is practised by Hindus, Christians, Muslims and Buddhists.[57]

Women's groups hold that laws related to marriage in Myanmar— the Myanmar Buddhist Woman Special Marriage and Succession Act 1954, the Islamic Law, the Christian Marriage Act, and the Hindu Customary Law—incorporate restrictive gender stereotypes that exacerbate women's vulnerability to suffer violence and discrimination while failing to protect

"...we [women] always keep alive in us the religious feeling that we are "below" mankind."

women from abuse and exploitation.[58] Furthermore, in Chin, Kachin, Palaung and Shan culture, inheritance laws inhibit women from inheriting property, making men the exclusive beneficiaries of property inheritance.[59] Moreover, under Buddhist customary law, a woman cannot refuse to return to her husband if he demands it.[60]

Furthermore, research on the roles of women in Myanmar culture shows that Buddhists (including Bama, Mon, Rakhine as well as Karen, Shan and others) uphold the concept of male power—also known as 'pone' or 'hpon'. Mi Mi Khaing, an early pioneer of scholarship on Myanmar women, explained, *"...we [women] always keep alive in us the religious feeling that we are "below" mankind. It is not so much a feeling that women are a lower race as that a man has the nobility of manhood in him. We call it "Hpon", the glory, the holiness of a man, and we respect this not with subservience but with the same feelings as we respect monks and parents."*[61]

Revering men is time consuming as it often involves ascribing to socially assigned responsibilities for the household and family. For example, in some families, men's and women's clothes are washed separately; the same iron cannot strike both of their clothing. Women's clothes are also to be hung at a lower level than men's. These and other customary practices remind women, on a daily basis, of their inferior status and reinforce their role as the protectors of men's 'pone.'[62]

Cultural and religious norms present in Myanmar inform ideals surrounding femininity and masculinity. A proverb in Myanmar states that 'the sun does not rise with the hen's crowing; only when the cock crows the sun will rise.'[63] This proverb implies how the ideal leader is a man in the community, the head of the household, the protector of the family, and has the final say in decision-making. In contrast, the ideal woman is quiet and skillful at household chores. The implication is *"government and political processes are seen as 'off-limits' for women."*[64] Thus, analysis of notions of masculinity and femininity provides helpful hints into the factors that contribute to the low participation of women in public leadership roles.

> *"In our culture, women are considered to be only homemakers. They are not people who take initiative or lead in the community. We need to fight to change this."*

Gender roles—and associated understandings of masculinity and femininity—are not stagnant; they are dynamic, though the underlying socio-cultural norms regarding the roles of men and women continue to inhibit the access women have vis-à-vis public decision-making—as illustrated in the minimal representation of women in the NCA negotiations.

Factor 2: Women's triple load

"I believe women would do equally well in politics if they were encouraged and supported by their husbands."[65]

—Naw Zipporah Sein, KNU Vice-Chairperson

Another complex factor inhibiting women's participation in the peace process is the disproportionately heavy labour loads in the private sphere that women are expected to carry. As with Factor 1, socio-cultural norms hold women responsible for childcare, care of parents and in-laws and household maintenance. These expected roles limit the ability of women to enter the labour force and participate in public life.[66]

In 2012-2013, the Government spent less than 0.01% of total GDP on social security.[67] The absence of a welfare system in Myanmar means that the majority of the population relies on informal coping mechanisms.[68] Gender norms hold women primarily responsible for upholding this informal welfare system. In households that require two incomes for family survival, men are generally not expected to look after the household, children, or parents, in addition to working outside the home. Not surprisingly, the gendered nature of women's work, and the heavy household burden they must shoulder serves as an impediment to the time and energy women are able to allocate to peacebuilding involvement in Myanmar.[69]

Many women who participate in activities 'outside the household' such as in the paid labour force and/or community, face repercussions. These women effectively transgress the boundaries of their expected roles. Mon women, for example, who engage in activities outside the home are often referred to as 'ducks' as if to evoke the notion that ducks do not take care of their children very well.[70] Indeed, the triple load impedes the participation of women in Myanmar's peace process, thus overcoming this barrier by using practical strategies such as childcare support and flexible- working arrangements are recommended.

Factor 3: Negotiating multiple identities—ethnicity, class and gender

In Myanmar, women across ethnic identities, including the dominant Bama identity, are held responsible for matters of cultural continuity, including aspects of child-rearing, linguistic maintenance, and the upholding of traditions.[71] When women resist these expectations in political movements, they often meet resentment from their colleagues who suggest that it is the women's duty to uphold ethnic identity in order to advance democratic goals. Women who challenge the status quo (particularly regarding gender norms) are seen as detrimental to the advancement of the democratic movement.[72] In the words of one woman activist, reflecting on the internal struggle in the 1990s within the pro-democracy movement in exile, when women started to mobilise around their rights as women: *"...there was always that phrase, saying over and over again, 'we are fighting for democracy, we are fighting together, don't divide the democracy movement' ...Over and over and over and over again."*[73] The expected subordination of gender to ethnic and democracy concerns impedes the integration of gender into substantive peace negotiations.

Class issues both exacerbate and mitigate circumstances of gendered oppression. For example, women from wealthy, influential families interviewed for this study often perceived themselves as having never experienced gender-based discrimination, suggesting that women from a higher class see themselves as equals to their male counterparts.

> *"[We were told] over and over again we are fighting together, don't divide the democracy movement."*

Another aspect of identity that women negotiate is related to their 'victimhood'. Often discussions of 'women in peace processes' cast women as being passive victims in need of protection. International actors, scholars, 'experts' and other 'outsiders' frequently perceive women in Myanmar as victims.[74] The tendency to equate and conflate 'women as victims' can

"Developing alternative frameworks of 'protection' that serve to empower women, rather than silence, control or dismiss them, is critical in the Myanmar context."

have the effect of pushing 'protection' concerns to the fore and political participation to the background, which inadvertently silences women from speaking on their own behalf. In Myanmar, rights abuses are more acute in war zones and areas of chronic insecurity. Here, women are at an elevated risk of being subject to victimisation that relates to their gendered identity: rape, sexual abuse etc.[75] Developing alternative frameworks of 'protection' that serve to empower women, rather than silence, control or dismiss them, is critical in the Myanmar context. In short, bringing women's protection to the fore can be detrimental to securing the foundations for effective participation of women in the peace process and peacebuilding.

Factor 4: Gendered leadership cultures in Myanmar

The above three factors culminate in sustaining the view that men possess 'natural' leadership skills in Myanmar. Under this natural leadership of men narrative, women feel pressure to constantly prove their value and skills in order to participate in decision-making activities.[76] Even highly skilled and confident women find few opportunities to lead as they are silenced by both subtle and overt sexist views and comments.[77] For instance, when the Women's League of Burma (WLB) approached the Government in 2011 to advocate for women's inclusion in the ceasefire negotiations, *"the response was that the government's chief negotiator would bring his wife, suggesting that if women wanted to be involved they would have to talk to her and let the men talk politics."*[78]

Women who attempt to 'go against the grain' by undertaking leadership positions are frequently accused of not being 'authentic' as a woman, wife, mother and daughter. In other words: men are culturally exempt from having to uphold standards of masculinity that relate to their public personas, whereas women must 'choose' between public and private life. Additionally women frequently feel that one aspect of their life—public and private—suffers as a result of involvement in the other. This culturally constructed, mandated 'choice' chips away at women's confidence to engage in public life.[79]

To overcome this barrier to women's participation, senior women can be supported with tailored training support. For younger women, carefully designed skills and mentoring training opportunities should be consistently offered. Moreover, projects and programming that promote alternative models of masculinity are critical. International actors can model alternative gender frameworks by providing appropriate maternity and paternity coverage for their staff and devising flexible family-friendly working arrangements.

"Women who attempt to 'go against the grain' by undertaking leadership positions are frequently accused of not being 'authentic' as a woman, wife, mother and daughter."

Factor 5: The paradox of the 'high status' of women

While the previous four factors show that underlying norms inhibit the public participation of women, there still remains a notion in Myanmar that women enjoy an elevated status in social and political affairs.

Across Asia, systems of patriarchy impede women from fully participating in public life, and in formal and informal politics more broadly.[80] The claim, often made by observers, that women in Southeast Asian societies enjoy a 'high status' is weakened by persistent and ubiquitous gender disparities.[81]

> *"The CEDAW Committee has urged the Government to undertake reforms so that it fully complies with the Convention."*

In Myanmar, the notion that women enjoy an elevated status in social and political affairs has been woven into its historical narrative. Beginning in the colonial era and continuing through to post-colonialism and into the subsequent brief parliamentary period, women were often portrayed as active, 'autonomous' agents in public life.[82] Indeed, political parties throughout each of these periods invoked the concept of women's 'high status' as a way of incentivising women to accept political agendas and frameworks and, in so doing, advance their respective interests. Women, however, made very few gains from this rhetoric.[83]

Examining the contemporary period, we see that successive governments have perpetuated the illusion of the 'high status' of women in numerous official documents and statements. One example of this can be seen in statements made by the Department of Social Welfare (DSW), which serves as the Government's focal point on gender issues and the status of women. The DSW is situated within the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement (MSWRR), and led by Minister Dr. Daw Myat Myat Ohn Khin and Deputy Minister Daw Su Su Hlaing. Under the DSW, the Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs (MNCWA) functions as the leading body to implement state policies. The MNCWA's website states:

"...the status of Myanmar women has always been high since the days of the Myanmar Kings. They enjoy equal rights as men... In Myanmar family, the husband provides the financial needs... the women may go out to work for the social development; they still have the major responsibility to look after the family. One must be careful not to go against the cultural norms and values attached to our families."[84]

The 'high status' of women narrative is further illustrated through a statement made by a Government spokesperson during the last CEDAW reporting session: "Myanmar women enjoy equality with men in social status and share opportunities and responsibilities in social, economic and political activities and this unique trait of Myanmar society should be maintained and sustained to enhance partnership and equality between men and women..."[85]

This narrative inhibits the Government of Myanmar from undertaking consistent policy reforms that would provide a robust legal and political background to bolster the participation of women in public life—and by extension, the peace process. Inconsistent policy developments related to establishing gender equality are outlined below.

While Myanmar became party to CEDAW in 1997—the pre-eminent international treaty on women's rights—the Government has yet to fully adhere to the Convention.[86] The CEDAW Committee has urged the Government to undertake reforms so that it fully complies with the Convention and has called upon the Government to create action plans to implement UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and 1820 to address violations carried out by the Tatmadaw against ethnic women.[87]

Civil society's shadow reporting, led by WLB, challenges the Government narrative. Their reports detail evidence of widespread gender-based violence (GBV) inflicted on women from ethnic areas by the Tatmadaw.[88] The Government of Myanmar has opposed such recommendations on the premise that women enjoy a high status in the country.[89]

Furthermore, during the last Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Myanmar in 2011, the Government argued that legal provisions, in addition to traditional and cultural practices, protect women and girls from discrimination and abuses.[90] Submissions to the UPR from civil society actors provided different perspectives, exposing widespread GBV in areas of armed conflict. In response to these reports, the Troika review forwarded recommendations on how to end sexual violence and the impunity of its perpetrators in Myanmar.[91]

In their recommendations, the Troika overlooked the link between women's participation in decision-making and the prevention of GBV, reinforcing the view that women are passive victims, rather than active agents of social and political change. Over-emphasis on protection can subtly and perversely undermine the participation of women in Myanmar's peace process

"Over-emphasis on protection can subtly undermine the participation of women in Myanmar's peace process because women are not constructed as agents, but victims of conflict."

because women are not constructed as agents, but victims of conflict.

While adherence to international convention and human rights review processes remain an obstacle, other legal measures have begun to take root in Myanmar. The MSWRR formally endorsed the Gender Situation Analysis report (GSA) 2015, written jointly with the UN Myanmar Country Office Gender Theme Group, which provides detailed analysis across six critical areas.[92] The GSA provides a context analysis to inform developments such as the implementation of the National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women 2013-2022 (NSPAW). The NSPAW provides a plan to advance the status of women in Myanmar across 12 priority areas, which are aligned with the Beijing Platform for Action (BFPA), except in the area of armed conflict, which NSPAW has reframed as 'women and emergencies'. This reconfiguration reflects the Government of Myanmar's reluctance to acknowledge the existence of armed conflict in policy documents. The NSPAW has yet to be disseminated at state and regional levels and remains a policy framework without a dedicated implementation budget.

Other positive legal developments have taken place in the arena of women's rights legislation. In July 2015, a 19-chapter National Law on Protection and Prevention of Violence against Women (PoVAW) was

drafted—the first law in Myanmar designed to comprehensively prevent GBV. The Gender Equality Network (GEN) and the UN played a key role in advising and drafting elements of the law for the MSWRR. The law stipulates penalties against GBV that reflect the realities of women in civil society more accurately than the previous legislation which had a more narrow focus on the need to protect women from sexual violence. Civil society organisations, INGOs and UN agencies have expressed support for the draft law, highlighting the need to protect women's sexual and reproductive rights and address issues of GBV.[93] The final draft is still undergoing review by the Law Drafting Working Committee and the MSWRR (at December 2015). Overall, the PoVAW represents a crucial commitment to improve the status of women in Myanmar. The necessity of the law becomes even more salient in light of on-going GBV.

Furthermore, concurrent to positive developments such as the NSPAW and GSA, are the creation of laws that promote discrimination against women, such as the Four Laws on Race and Religion (the Religious Conversion Law, Inter-faith Marriage Law, Population Control Law, and Monogamy Law). These four laws were introduced in 2014 by the Association for the Protection of Race and Religion (Ma Ba Tha) and signed into law by President U Thein Sein in August 2015.

> *"The NSPAW has yet to be disseminated at state and regional levels and remains a policy framework without a dedicated implementation budget."*

The introduction of these laws is problematic for women's rights in Myanmar. They restrict women's freedoms and human rights by imposing a *"patriarchal concept of marriage that assumes women pass from property of the father to the husband, violates the right to exercise freely and without fear of intimidation their belief, religion, choice of partner and sexuality and has the potential to violate their freedom of expression, association and movement."*[94] Combined, these laws severely restrict women's freedoms and human rights, therefore understanding their nuances is paramount to understanding the ways in which they exacerbate gender inequality in Myanmar.

The disparity between emerging gains in gender equality and the entrenched nature of gender discrimination is reflected in the 2008 Constitution.[95] The Constitution makes claims to the advancement of gender equality (sections 347 and 348), while simultaneously undermining these claims (section 352).[96] Furthermore, the Constitution stipulates that those appointed to senior government posts must be 'well acquaonted' with military affairs, largely disqualifying women from reaching these position as they were prevented from joining the military until 2013.

Positive developments such as the PoVAW, the NSPAW and the GSA cannot fully take root when adherence to international gender treaties remains partial. Added to this, the creation of laws that hinder gender equality impact the peace process as they contribute to reinforcing the socio- cultural norms that limit the role of women to the private sphere. Inconsistent policy and invoking the 'high status' of women narrative serves as an impediment to the substantive participation of women in the peace process and politics more broadly.

Factor 6: Gender-based violence

"If you beat your wife until her bones are broken, she will love you more."[97]

—Myanmar proverb

Gender based-violence (GBV) and the threat of GBV both pose barriers to the participation of women in the peace process and peacebuilding. Given the dearth of empirical data available on GBV in Myanmar, civil society organisations have begun leading this research agenda. Studies have suggested that intimate partner violence, sexual harassment and other forms of GBV are fueled by a broader climate of impunity.

In Myanmar, the narrow focus on 'sexual violence in conflict' appears to many in the peacebuilding community, as a separate, logical and leading strategic focus. In other words, the focus on sexual violence can sometimes occur to the detriment of focusing on all forms of GBV. This should in no way minimise the importance of combating sexual violence. Indeed, such violence against women and girls has been proven to be a deeply entrenched problem occurring in Myanmar's conflict areas.[98] Rather than segmenting these forms of violence, the peace and security community should be mindful of addressing all forms of GBV, including GBV committed against men. Sexual violence is rooted in underlying societal structures that perpetuates its existence. The analysis of sexual violence within GBV enables this understanding.

While considerable attention has been directed toward sexual violence inflicted by the Tatmadaw, very little is known about the perpetration of such violence by non-state armed actors. Sexual violence committed by non-state armed groups is often perceived as a matter for the community, rather than a matter to be addressed by 'outsiders'.

Future research needs to look at the problem of GBV in all its forms, including all types of perpetrators and as well as those it is perpetrated against—men as well as women. This means looking at various age groups, and a broad spectrum of political, social and cultural groups, regardless of the implications that obtaining this knowledge may have.

"The peace and security community should be mindful of addressing all forms of GBV, including GBV committed against men."

Survivors of GBV have diverse experiences and, subsequently, diverse needs. Cases are reported where a woman who has been violated is expected and/or forced to marry her perpetrator.[99] In some instances women are forced to give their newborn children to the perpetrator of the rape.[100] Lesbian and transgender survivors face further societal stigma.[101] Women who are violated by a man from their own ethnic group are commonly subjected to heightened stigma for dishonouring the 'sanctity' of the group. While evidence of GBV committed by the Tatmadaw has been reported, the pervasiveness of GBV perpetrated by EAOs is unknown.

Furthermore, in areas of active armed conflict and in rural regions, women face on-going actual or perceived threats of violence, preventing them from physically travelling even short distances to participate in public life. For instance, defenders of women's rights have reported gender-based harassment in their public activities.[102] This violence—and threat of

violence—undermines women's ability to participate effectively in peacebuilding activities.

Factor 7: Broader human security issues

Another obstacle to achieving sustainable peace in Myanmar is the entrenched and evolving war economy. Protracted armed conflict has created an environment conducive to human security challenges, including communal violence, transnational crime in illicit drugs, counterfeit products, arms, wildlife and other natural resources, and human trafficking.[103]

While Myanmar has committed to a drug-free Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the pressure to meet this target "... has only intensified the use of criminalization and eradication measures and made drug users more vulnerable to human rights abuses and the region's unforgiving criminalization regimes."[104] Little research has explored the gendered nature and impacts of drug use and addiction in Myanmar. Women's organisations are increasingly at the forefront of addressing this challenge, which underscores the gendered impacts of this problem, and the need for gender-sensitive responses.[105] Understanding the nature and scale of this problem is an important step in addressing drug-related harms and GBV as inter-related concerns.[106]

In the context of widespread material insecurity and violent conflict, the lines between trafficking and voluntary migration are blurred.[107] Myanmar's underdevelopment, compounded by waves of forced displacement, have pushed millions of people to leave the country and those who are not able to attain refugee status often enter 'illicit' vocations, particularly in Thailand. Many of these jobs are in 'feminised' sectors, including domestic service, childcare, and sex work, leaving women from Myanmar exposed to exploitation in unsafe, unregulated and perilous working conditions—some of which are criminalised.

"Little research has explored the gendered nature and impacts of drug use and addiction in Myanmar."

"If you beat your wife until her bones are broken,she will love you more."

Myanmar is a major source country for human trafficking in the region.[108] The gender dimensions—both in contexts of labour and sex trafficking—are stark.[109] Ethnic women have been documented as having been smuggled to China as 'forced brides', sex workers, or domestic workers, increasing their risk of exploitation, violence and abuse.[110]

Myanmar is the only country in Southeast Asia, and one of only a very small number of countries worldwide, in which military spending is greater than combined government spending on health, education and social services.[111] Myanmar's failure to provide basic services to its citizens has been especially acute in ethnic border areas affected by violent conflict. Setting the foundations for sustainable peace will require that the Government and other relevant actors meet the basic needs and rights of citizens from all of the nation's regions. Furthermore, integrating gendered perspectives into these challenges show the differentiated experiences of men and women—across class and ethnic lines—and the need to have women participating in peacebuilding initiatives to overcome these human security issues.

Factor 8: Underrepresentation of women in politics and the security sector

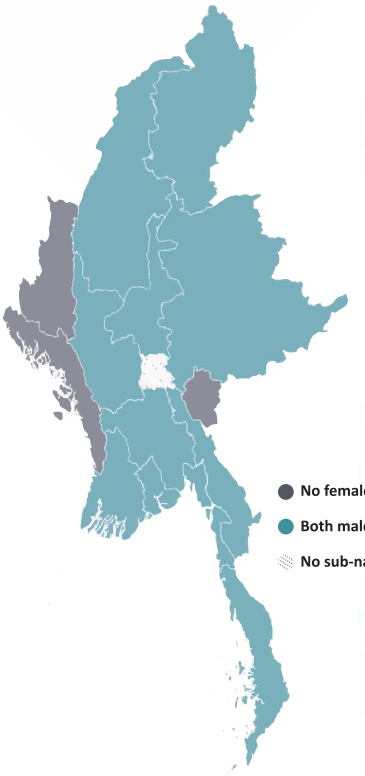
"All the leaders in the country are generals, and all the generals are men"[112]

—Former commander, All Burma Students' Democratic Front

The factors outlined above all contribute to Myanmar having the lowest representation of women in politics of all ASEAN countries.[113] Up to 2010, there were no women in the national parliament. After the 2010 General Elections, women comprised 5.8% of parliamentarians at the national level. At the time, Myanmar had the lowest representation of women in national level parliaments in the ASEAN region. As a result of the 2015 General Election, women now make up 14.5% of parliamentarians at the national level. The underrepresentation of women in public life is a result of socio-cultural norms and leadership cultures in Myanmar that deem men leaders and women followers.

The Tatmadaw, which constitutionally reserves 25% of the seats in both houses, appointed two female army officers to the Pyithu Hluttaw in January 2014. These women replaced two lower-ranking male army officers.[114] Prior to 2013, when the military announced its decision to recruit women into its ranks for the first time in 50 years, male military officers had a guaranteed pipeline into public office.[115]

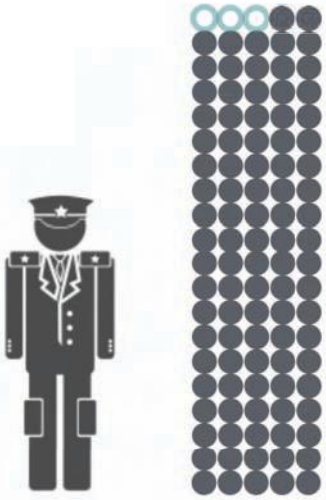
The result of the near absence of women in the national parliament is that women are also underrepresented in ministerial positions. Post 2010 General Elections, women held two of the 36 ministerial positions: the Minister for Education and Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MSWRR).[116] Futhermore, post-2010, women's involvement in decision-making processes was even lower at the sub-national level: in only 25 of the 883



3 of 14

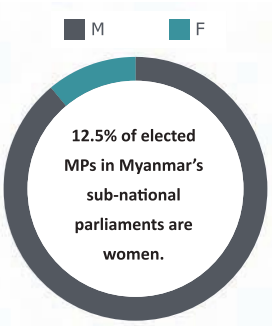
States and Regions have no elected women in parliament in 2016.

- No female inclusion
- Both male and female inclusion
- No sub-national inclusion



3.4%

of police officials are women in the Myanmar Police Force (2015).



At 14.5%, Myanmar has one of the lowest levels of women's inclusion in National-level parliaments in the ASEAN region.

MPs across all states and regions were women (2.8%) while women comprised four of the 169 state and region ministers (2.3%).[117] Notably, the portfolio these women held largely reflected feminised sectors such as welfare.

> *"The result of the near absence of women in the national parliament is that women are also underrepresented in ministerial positions."*

The percentage of elected women MPs is in sub-national parliaments increased to 12.5% following the 2015 General Elections. The question of whether women represent 'women's interests' when they assume senior positions in public life has been the subject of scrutiny.[118] Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, is the most prominent example of someone challenging this trend. Her presence alone, however, does not guarantee political influence for women in the parliament, nor concerns of women nationwide.

The lack of diversity of parliamentarians across the age spectrum is another obstacle to authentic representation. Political parties include few younger or middle-aged members serving in important positions as hierarchical order favours older men.[119] Improving the diversity of the national and sub-national governance is, therefore, paramount to ensuring that those in power represent the authentic needs of the population.

Notably, several high calibre women from the women's rights movement stood for parliament in Myanmar's national election in November 2015. As well a national Women's Party emerged in October 2014.[120] These trends provide embryonic indications of an important shift in women's access to public space that will be worth observing closely.

In addition to politics, women in Myanmar are under-represented in the security sector as the mere presence of women in this arena has been curtailed by successive periods of military rule. Securing space for women in the peace process is difficult given that men have dominated senior-ranking military and EAO positions. Thus, the male dominance in the security sector is another element inhibiting the full participation of women in Myanmar's peace process.

Due to the opaque nature of the military regime, there has been—and remains—a lack of reliable data about the size of the Tatmadaw and the presence of women within it. The ban on women's occupation of combat roles, in place for over 50 years, was lifted in 2013.[121] During the 1950s, women were recruited as officers in the infantry and air force. The Tatmadaw ended this pioneering initiative after the coup of 1962.[122] Now, new female recruits are subject to higher entry criteria than their male counterparts. Given their structural exclusion from the Tatmadaw, women often undertake classically feminine 'support roles'—as nurses, administrative staff, and so on. Notably, there are a very small number of women occupying senior positions.

The Myanmar Police Force (MPF) is increasingly the focus of Security Sector Reform (SSR) initiatives in Myanmar.[123] Currently, the MPF is estimated to include 75,000 personnel.[124] Women comprise 3.4% of police personnel with 2% of mid- level positions held by women.[125] Building a gender responsive police service—both in name and in substance—would require not focusing only on the numbers and roles of women involved in the force, but also on

the capacity of the organisation to provide responsible, gender-inclusive policing. Comprehensive global guidance, including examples of good practice from other countries, can inform these processes.[126]

> *"All the leaders in the country are generals, and all the generals are men."*

Historically, successive military governments have developed a number of intelligence services within the state security apparatus, including in the army, police, navy and air force.[127] No data is available on the women who occupy roles in these agencies. Another element that is understood to be central to effective security sector transformation involves prison reform—Myanmar's prisons are being reformed slowly.[128] GBV, torture and harassment are all established features of Myanmar's prison system that will require concerted attention and gender inclusive reform.[129]

Armed groups in Myanmar are reluctant to disclose sensitive information regarding troop strength, weaponry, and personnel capacity, as this information could represent a form of leverage in ongoing peace negotiations. Thus, data on women's roles within EAOs will likely continue to be obscured. Greater clarity on the contributions of women to EAOs is necessary because the international evidence base affirms that Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration (DDR) is a process that often renders women invisible in peace processes.[130]

In Myanmar, seminal work has been undertaken to illuminate the hidden but essential contributions women have made to armed groups.[131] This analysis finds that though women's involvement is curtailed starkly along gendered lines, women's roles have been many, and their labour essential to the workings of armed groups.[132] To improve the status of women in EAOs, women's organisations have tried to empower female combatants through work with both male and female soldiers, as well as with the armed leadership on issues of gender equality.

Overall, across several security apparatuses, women are underrepresented. Understanding and recognising the diverse contributions of women is necessary in order for them to access leadership roles. The underrepresentation of women in public life gives helpful clues to understanding the dearth of women's participation in the current peace talks.

DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- What structural impediments do women, particularly women from ethnic minorities, experience with regards to participation in peacebuilding?
- How can stakeholders engage in overcoming the factors outlined in this Discussion Paper?
- How are state level obstacles to women's participation in peacebuilding different than those at the national level?

WPS ESSENTIAL 2:

Gender quotas in peace processes—summary of evidence

Transitions, harbouring the potential to transform political systems, create platforms for men and women to challenge gender discrimination and for women to assume leadership positions in post-war governance.[133] In particular, ceasefire and peace negotiations provide opportunities to develop and promote a range of measures that has the possibility to enhance women's equality and human rights in the post-war period. Importantly, research shows a clear link between women's substantive participation in peace processes and an improved role and status for women in the aftermath of violent conflict.[134] In other words, gender-inclusive peace processes will result in strengthening the conditions for women's equality in post-war states.[135]

In order to enhance the prospects of women's participation, mechanisms such as targets for gender balance in formal peace process delegations, including the negotiations, technical and observation teams, can be applied.[136] Quotas can also be set for witnesses, mediators and signatories of peace agreements.[137] Beyond the peace agreement, quotas are important in new or reformed governance and constitutional reform processes, and can be enshrined in legislation as part of the peace agreement to enhance women's political representation.[138] Quotas are consistent with international legal frameworks, including CEDAW, and are meant to: *"accelerate the improvement of the position of women to achieve their de facto or substantive equality with men, and to effect the structural, social and cultural changes necessary to correct past and current forms and effects of discrimination against women, as well as to provide them with compensation."*[139] Strategies such as quotas are often labelled special temporary measures because they are not intended to be in place indefinitely.

Quotas are important because they have demonstrated to be "the single most effective tool for 'fast-tracking' women's representation."[140] The idea behind quotas is to make reform processes and governance bodies more representative by creating equal opportunities for participation.

There are three types of quotas:[141]

1. **Legislated candidate quotas**

These regulate the ways in which political parties design their list of candidate standing for elections (example: Albania: at least 30% of names and one of the first three names on the candidate list must be from each gender).

2. **Legislated 'reserved seats'**

These refer to seats set aside for a specific group people, such as women or minority groups (example: In Afghanistan: 68 of the 249 total seats in the Lower House reserved for women; 3 of these for ethnic minorities).

3. **Party quotas**

These quotas are not enshrined in any legislation and refer to the gender composition of candidate lists (example: In Sweden, most political parties mandate through voluntary, internal regulations, a zipper list system in which every other candidate on the candidate list is a woman).

Certain types of electoral system have been shown to have a positive impact on women's political participation. Broadly classified, there are three types of electoral systems in use today: proportional representation, plurality/majority and mixed systems (which is a combination of the other two systems). Research suggests that proportional representation systems with closed lists and large districts are more beneficial for women's political participation.[142]

Section 3: Strategies to enhance women's contribution to sustainable peace in Myanmar

"There are so many women who are actively involved in the education sector by inspiring young people to love their people [...] there are also women who work in health, transportation and communication sectors, carrying and delivering messages. In the past, a lot of women were involved in military operations and some even became officers and colonels."[143]
—Naw Zipporah Sein, Vice-Chairperson, Karen National Union

Currently, the peace process in Myanmar resembles others where "women's groups gravitate around the peace talks without an established channel to influence them."[144] This section concludes with a set of recommendations for a diversity of actors—Government, Ethnic Armed Organisations (EAOs), donors, INGOs, NGOs, civil society, and many more—that provide an over-arching framework for engaging stakeholders in a series of meetings organised by the Peace Support Fund (PSF). These suggestions are clustered around a set of policy aims and approaches.

Strategy 1: See the opportunity

Apply gendered power analysis—In recent decades, feminist scholars have urged the application of a 'gender lens' to policy, programming and research.[145] Undertaking a gendered power analysis entails examining how gender feeds its broader structures of power. Peace processes are ultimately about power, though it is uncommon for gender relations to be consistently considered a form of power

"Women's groups gravitate around the peace talks without an established channel to influence them."

for analysis. A gender power analysis shows that peace processes have the potential to reinforce existing power structures by upholding the influence of recognised elite (male) stakeholders.[146] There is now ample practical guidance, as well as scholarly reflection, on how to undertake a gendered power analysis and integrate analysis into programming and research.[147]

Engage and transform the views and behaviours of men and boys—Respondents for this paper revealed that the attitudes of men—reflective of socio-cultural norms discussed in Section 2—are an obstacle to women accessing leadership roles in the public sphere. Therefore, engaging with the views of men regarding the roles and capacity of men and women as leaders can complement the structural levers— like gender quotas, discussed below undertaken to counter the exclusion of women in decision-making. In other words: if male leaders remain impervious to the participation of women in the peace process, little progress will be made. Engaging men, and younger generations, is a process that donors can support, and organisations can integrate into their Women, Peace, and Security programming. Stakeholders are encouraged to conduct nuanced analysis and assessment of

Myanmar WPS Policy Framework

Strategy	Policy approach
See the opportunity	• Apply gendered power analysis • Engage and transform the views and behaviours of men and boys • Transcend men as the norm in the peace process • Identify capability-based expertise
Adopt new techniques and mechanisms	• Implement inclusion policies and quotas for women's participation in the peace process and political entities • Create gender and/or women's caucuses in state and national parliaments • Recognise and reduce the triple load for women • Capitalise on women's local knowledge and networks • Support the development of networks and local organisations • Coordinate and support Women's Peace Forums • Fund gender justice-related policy proposals
Change international support and engagement	• Implement gender justice-related allocations across international donor funds and coordination mechanisms • Provide long term and more geographically diverse funding • Ensure consistency of message • Promote women in leadership positions in the international community
Strengthen health and justice systems	• Build system-wide responses and strengthening • Ensure non-discriminatory approaches to survivors of violence • Support legal reform and implementation of the anti-violence against women law
Foster inclusive inter- and intra- faith dialogue	• Implement gender inclusive interfaith dialogue • Promote religious leaders as gender equality champions
Enhance the quality of gender capacity development	• Invest in skills and leadership development • Support gender inclusive training for existing negotiators and advisers • Fund Gender, Peace and Security Advisers • Support and train women as ceasefire monitors
Strengthen normative policy development and adherence	• Support Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan and related policy frameworks • Improve treaty reporting
Address knowledge and analysis gaps	• Improve information accessibility and availability • Invest in knowledge gaps with gendered analysis (gender-inclusive security sector policy in Myanmar; female-headed households; violent conflict and migration; drug addiction and gender; gendered analysis of socio-economic obstacles, opportunities and rights; gender-sensitive public service delivery; gender-sensitive revenue collection; masculinities; gender-inclusive language and measures in peace agreements; Myanmar specific WPS indicators; gender- based violence and accountability; constitutional reform and opportunities for women's rights; truth seeking and gender justice; and natural resource management.

Extracted from the PSF *Discussion Paper. "The women are ready: an opportunity to transform peace in Myanmar"* (2016).

leadership cultures, masculinities and femininities, to inform interventions so that they are relevant and tailored to context.[148]

Transcend men as the norm in the peace process—Entry into positions of authority and decision-making in Myanmar across ethnicity and social class is disproportionately available to men over women, regardless of competency or experience—as evidenced by research in this paper.[149] Interviewees consistently noted that men are rarely expected to prove their expertise or the value of their contributions in the peace process; their involvement is unquestioned and not clearly rooted in skill or personal calibre. Applying a gendered lens (as above) to the peace process in Myanmar thus far renders male domination visible and ultimately unsustainable. Transforming the peace process in Myanmar will involve moving beyond men as the 'norm' in peace processes to accession of both male and female participation based on expertise and capacity.

> *"Myanmar can draw on the well-defined international evidence base on what constitutes an effective 'special temporary measures', such as gender quotas."*

Identify capability-based expertise— Many capable women are available to participate in the peace process, which could facilitate a shift away from men as central agents in the peace process and women as distant, passive observers. To locate female expertise entails seeing Myanmar's growing civil society as an asset, as a source of diversity for the peace process and democratic transition, and as a vibrant place for identifying women with demonstrable negotiating skills, critical thinking, and preparedness to consider and compromise alternate perspectives: leading qualities of deft negotiators.

> *"Engaging with the views of men regarding the roles and capacity of men and women as leaders can complement gender quotas."*

Strategy 2: Adopt new techniques and mechanisms

Implement inclusion policies and quotas for women's participation in the peace process and political entities—Women active in peacebuilding in Myanmar have reported that their male colleagues use the absence of formal gender inclusion policies as the reason that 'it is not possible to include you'.[150] Negotiating explicit policies with a range of political entities is, therefore, necessary to transcend exclusion. These policies should include affirmative action policies such as gender quotas. Essential 'ingredients' of inclusion policies include carefully drafted language to ensure goals are expressed as minimums and not maximums (e.g. at least 30% women); on-going support such as coaching and training to ensure women can confidently navigate new institutions; gender or women's caucuses; constitutional guarantee; and most fundamentally—political commitment of the leadership of the entity. Myanmar can draw on the well-defined international evidence base on what constitutes an effective 'special temporary measure/s', such as gender quotas .[151] Without these structural levers, the likelihood of women's participation naturally evolving in the appropriate direction (significant increase in women's roles and presence) is very low. WPS

Essential 2 provides a succinct overview of quotas.

Create gender and/or women's caucuses in state and national parliaments—Neither national nor state level parliaments have dedicated gender or women's caucuses at present. These mechanisms can be established using different modalities and accessible guidance is available for Myanmar.[152] The 'value added' for inclusive peacebuilding is that such caucuses provide professional and personal support for networking and collective consideration of how to develop and implement gender-inclusive policy. Support can be directed in the form of funding and initial mobilisation (e.g. dedicating a programme officer to mobilise interested parliamentarians). There are also opportunities for donors to support international exchanges between women to enhance understanding of how caucuses can strategically forward gender equality issues.

> *"Locating smaller organisations working in less accessible and sub-national levels of the country is important for supporting women's capacity to engage in peacebuilding."*

Recognise and reduce the triple load for women—The disproportionate burden and expectations—the 'triple load'—on women over men to manage households, raise children and care for family members has a powerful deleterious impact on women's time and energy.[153] In general, women, unlike men who are exempt from the triple load, have limited availability to participate in unpredictable or lengthy peace process related meetings.[154] Practically transforming this pressure on women can be as simple as ensuring that women have salary support and/or an allowance to facilitate care for family members to enable their full focus. Policies can also include avoiding asking women to travel out of the country for undefined periods of time to training courses on other continents.

> *"Abundant international evidence points to the value of women's local knowledge in effective implementation of peace process implementation challenges."*

Capitalise on women's local knowledge and networks—The involvement of women organisation's in local peacebuilding and community cohesion is an asset for the peace process in Myanmar, particularly as these organisations have been running such programmes for over a decade and hold a considerable degree of trust from communities. However, as in many nations, their knowledge and involvement is often dismissed as *'grassroots'* and limited to 'social issues'. Abundant international evidence points to the value of women's local knowledge in effective implementation of peace process implementation challenges such as the design of reintegration packages, rebuilding of infrastructure and absorbing displaced people back into community life.[155]

Support the development of networks and local organisations—In Myanmar networks such as the Women's League of Burma (WLB), Gender Equality Network (GEN), Women's Organisation Network (WON), and Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process (AGIPP) have strengths in community mobilisation, policy development, and capacity building. These networks offer a way for smaller, local organisations to access funding and receive practical organisational development

support. Several judicious funding options exist for donor support to networks. For example, donors could also consider easing the burden of complicated reporting to increase accessibility of funds for smaller organisations through simplified templates, roving advisers that provide technical support, additional grants to build organisational capacity, and more. Locating smaller organisations working in less accessible and sub-national levels of the country is important for supporting women's capacity to engage in peacebuilding . Overall, ensuring a diversity of women's organisations grow across the country is a cardinal contribution to pluralism within Myanmar's democratic transition and peace process.

Coordinate and support Women's Peace Forums—In peace processes elsewhere, women have organised alternate consultative mechanisms to counter their exclusion. With timely support from international actors, such forums run parallel to peace talks and provide a means for women to articulate tangible policy suggestions and concerns; critique the text of agreements (when available); and engage facilitators, mediators and advisers. Two caveats are important to consider. First, such forums should not be understood nor operate as a substitute for women's direct participation in peace processes. The evidence base is increasingly clear in this area: the more women involved in formal peace processes, the more gender concerns are taken into account.[156] Second, forums must connect to the main talks through a formally agreed process. Examples of how such forums have been successfully organised elsewhere is available for guidance.[157]

Fund gender justice-related policy proposals—Supporting a host of organisations across Myanmar to develop policy suggestions is essential to foster an inclusive peace process. For example, there will be a number of policy briefs flowing into the market place of ideas in the coming period.[158] If local, state and national processes have diverse ideas to draw upon, it is paramount that more entities are supported in articulating their visions and channels exist for proposals to reach decision-makers for gender-inclusive peace.

> *"With few women in leadership roles in international entities operating in Myanmar, there is room for improvement in the coming years."*

Strategy 3: Change international support and engagement

Implement gender justice-related allocations across international donor funds and coordination mechanisms—International actors working in or around the peace process can enhance their approaches and coordination strategies on women's participation and inclusion. Donors and funds such as the Joint Peace Fund (JPF) could employ the UN policy standard that at least 15% of funds are 'dedicated to projects whose principal objective (consistent with existing mandates) is to address women's specific needs, advance gender equality or empower women'.[159] Similarly, the donor Peace Support Group (PSG) and the International Peace Support Group (IPSG) could consider periodic sessions to identify innovation in this area through the inclusion of a standing agenda item on gender inclusion and WPS. Donors could also create funding criteria related to the participation of women and girls, in addition to the inclusion of gender perspectives.

Provide long term and more geographically diverse funding—The preference to fund more established entities—often with a Yangon presence—provides certain assurances for donors and international actors, meaning that risk-adverse donors often overlook smaller and less established organisations. Longer term and core funding for smaller organisations is critical for organisational development as funding awarded for short-term projects renders organisational development challenging.[160] One potential mechanism worth exploring is channelling financial support to a Gender Equality Fund, which could incentivise clearer allocation of resources by donors and ease the accessibility barriers that smaller, non-English speaking organisations face in seeking donor funds.[161]

Ensure consistency of message—This paper revealed concern around the leadership implications when international actors do not explicitly name women's exclusion, gender-based violence (GBV) and human rights violations in their engagement with the Government and others. Clearer understanding of why international actors remain silent on these issues is useful. Informants urged a consistency in messaging and actions from international actors to ensure that addressing all forms of exclusion, violence, intimidation and harassment of women is non-negotiable.

Promote women in leadership positions in the international community—The symbolism and effect of role modelling is now well documented in the evidence base about which factors lead organisations to include more women in senior roles.[162] With few women in leadership roles in international entities operating in Myanmar, there is room for improvement in the coming years.

"Non-discriminatory, multifaceted and sector-wide initiatives are pivotal in reducing existing violence, preventing future violence and responding to survivors of violence."

Strategy 4: Strengthen health and justice systems

Build system-wide responses and strengthening—In Myanmar, women's rights organisations are spearheading research to better understand the burden of violence against women and girls and the pervasiveness of GBV. Better data collection and analysis—combined with improved policy—by national and local actors stands to inform better services and policy in the years ahead. A key question for civilian protection is how response mechanisms can be improved, particularly in conflict-affected areas. Developing system-wide responses is critical due to the multiple and largely disconnected, health and justice systems and services across the country.[163] One Stop Shops—centres that provides holistic medical care, legal protection, and social services to respond to GBV—is an option for Myanmar. There is good practice in this area from which to draw upon.[164] Prior to adopting such a model, critical analysis of how these Shops operate in other countries is required. There is also opportunity to capitalise on existing civil society supported health and justice systems to ensure that interventions are culturally appropriate and leverage existing knowledge. What is clear is that non-discriminatory, multifaceted and sector-wide initiatives are pivotal in reducing existing violence, preventing future violence and responding to survivors of violence.[165]

Ensure non-discriminatory approaches to survivors of violence—International responses to violence and human rights abuses are frequently inconsistent, manifesting in vertical responses that focus on sexual violence in war and conflict

separately from the ubiquitous reality of GBV.[166] An unintended consequence of vertical policymaking is the production of hierarchies between survivors and victims of disease, violence, torture and abuse. Policy-making that narrowly focuses on 'sexual violence in conflict' to the exclusion of wider health, justice and women's rights considerations is hard to justify in the context of limited resources and macro- goals of elevating the status of women sustainably. Equal caution is required to avoid reinforcing gendered stereotypes that relegate women to victims in need of protection.[167]

Support legal reform and implementation of the anti-violence against women law—The international community ought to publicly support the passage of the Prevention and Protection of Violence Against Women Bill. Ensuring the law is adequately disseminated and available in multiple languages is critical. It is equally important to ensure that these materials are distributed to police stations, schools, health clinics, churches, temples and mosques.

Strategy 5: Foster inclusive inter- and intra- faith dialogue

Implement gender inclusive interfaith dialogue—The value of inter- and intra- faith dialogue for promoting durable peace and social cohesion in Myanmar has been put forward.[168] With the rise in inter-communal violence and growing religious tensions, dialogue is increasingly timely. While inter-faith dialogues are a mechanism to overcome inter-communal violence, they are not a panacea as they can simultaneously exacerbate pre- existing gender challenges, particularly if male dominated. Intra-faith dialogue is a mechanism worth exploring to tackle the presence of unequal gender norms within different religions.

"It is important to deepen such training efforts and to offer various tiers to ensure more senior women deepen skills and that a younger cadre of women receive quality training and mentoring."

Promote religious leaders as gender equality champions—The power of role modelling applies equally to religious leaders, particularly vis-à-vis their potential to provide powerful conceptual and moral signals regarding the status of women. Efforts to nurture potential religious leaders and organisers are a contribution to peacebuilding and social cohesion.[169] There are nascent indications of women's organisations leading interventions in the area of religious leaders as gender equality.[170] Efforts should be made to leverage on pre-existing activities to avoid displacement and duplication.

Strategy 6: Enhance the quality of gender capacity development

Invest in skills and leadership development—In recent years there has been an array of training initiatives for women across Myanmar to build WPS related capacity.[171] It is important to deepen such training efforts and to offer various tiers to ensure more senior women deepen skills and that a younger cadre of women receive quality training and mentoring. This will require organisations, particularly INGOs, to collaborate more on the content and the intentions of their training suites. It will also require alignment to emerging national priorities in this area.[172] Donors and INGOs ought to prioritise accessibility in the design and implementation of their training suites to avoid lengthy trainings in which women

cannot attend due to their triple loads.[173] Expecting women, especially those with children, to attend training sessions for weeks at a time in distant locations is problematic for a host of reasons.[174]

Support gender inclusive training for existing negotiators and advisers —A wide range of initiatives are underway that provide advice and training to negotiating parties in Myanmar. The extent to which these trainings incorporate gender perspective is unknown, particularly as these initiatives are often outside the realm of formal diplomacy. Donors can be particularly proactive in this area by improving the quality of gender-inclusive advice to negotiating parties in the peace process. Importantly, introducing 'gender' or 'women' as a stand-alone item is an unsustainable method that is unlikely to improve the participation of women or inclusion of gender issues in peace processes. International support could also begin to clarify to peace parties what gender inclusive policy options and implementation look likes ahead of the political dialogue rather than providing reactionary advice or support.

Fund Gender, Peace and Security Advisers— Expert Gender, Peace and Security Advisers (individuals with gender, peace and security knowledge in equal measure) are leading mechanisms to provide astute, timely advice and support for gender inclusion in peace processes. Given the complexity of the peace process in Myanmar, the multiplicity of actors and the steep exclusion of women and gender perspectives, this is a context where it is appropriate to deploy senior and highly experienced advisers. Donors and INGOs can deploy or support advisers to: negotiation teams, organisations in supportive roles or in organisations yet to substantively integrate gender concerns across their work. Establishing 'roving gender advisers' is an innovative option that provides senior capacity to a range of civil society organisations.

> *"Donors can improve the quality of gender-inclusive advice to negotiating parties in the peace process."*

Support and train women as ceasefire monitors—Ensuring roles and participation of women in local monitoring panels and teams, as well as the national monitoring processes, is a clear measure of gender inclusivity. It is important to support and train women in these roles to ensure they are empowered to come forward and equally report on violations. Women's local presence and community engagement is a robust ceasefire monitoring mechanism and a way to ensure that monitoring addresses the complexities of WPS in different states, regions and communities.

Strategy 7: Strengthen normative policy development and adherence

Support Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan and related policy frameworks—In the coming period there will be growing focus on Myanmar's WPS National Action Plan (NAP). With a diversity of states having agreed such plans there is an abundance of material available to draw on in identifying good practice.[175] In the Asia region, a leading example of good practice is the Philippines NAP.[176] Central elements of good practice include linking NAPs to existing policy frameworks related to peace and security such as the finalised framework for the political dialogue in Myanmar and the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW) implementation

and related laws (e.g. the National Strategic Plan for Advancement of Women, Protection and Prevention of Violence Against Women Bill). Dedicated budgets are essential as NAPs without these have floundered. Linking NAPs to other plans related to violence against women is also critical to reduce the participation and protection schism mentioned in this paper. Evidence also shows that externally driven NAPs are lacklustre; as such, international actors are encouraged to resist the temptation to 'projectise' a NAP onto Myanmar. Women's mobilising and inputs at the local, state and national level is central for developing a meaningful NAP. There are powerful examples for how this has been done elsewhere that can provide inspiration in Myanmar.[177]

Improve treaty reporting—The CEDAW reporting procedure and the Universal Period Review (UPR), both of which will take place in 2015/2016, offers an excellent opportunity to draw international and national attention to the on-going exclusion of women from peacebuilding in Myanmar. WLB and WON are collaborating to produce a shadow report to submit to the CEDAW Committee in early 2016. This report will likely unveil the glaring disconnect between the official statements coming from Government and those reported by civil society.[178] The UPR was undertaken in November 2015. It is hoped that the final report provides a policy 'hook' for arguing that women's exclusion from the peace process is a human rights concern.

Strategy 8: Address knowledge and analysis gaps

Improve information accessibility and availability—Since 2011, there has been a raft of articles, studies, papers, and reports related to peace and security concerns in Myanmar. A sub-section of this analysis relates to women's rights and gender. While much of this material remains in English, information is increasingly available in other languages.[179] Organisations and donors can contribute to accessibility by insisting that reports or studies on this topic are at minimum available in Burmese, which is a starting point—not an end point—for linguistic accessibility. Organisation and donors can also reflect on how knowledge is disseminated—holding public talks or workshops with wider audiences with relevant translation is effective to foster discussion and validate findings. Scholars also have an active choice in how they publish: choosing either journals locked behind paywalls, or books with prohibitive prices, or open source journals and books at accessible prices for the general public.

> *"Women's local presence and community engagement is a robust ceasefire monitoring mechanism."*

Invest in knowledge gaps with gendered analysis—A critical assessment of knowledge gaps is one of the aims of this Discussion Paper and the forthcoming exchange meetings. Notably a knowledge gap is not the same as a research gap. Information may be available to inform policy or programming, but is not accessible if locked behind a paywall. Research may also be inaccessible because it is targeted at academics and not suited to the information needs of policymakers. Assessing what existing research could be made more accessible is a first task. Second is a strategic reflection to chart what knowledge is missing or poorly developed to better understand women's substantive participation and gender nclusion in peacebuilding. Some of the following areas could be relevant foci:

- *Gender-inclusive security sector policy in Myanmar:* The centrality of cogent analysis on gender perspectives and priorities related to Security Sector Reform (SSR), Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) and Armed Violence Reduction and Prevention cannot be overstated. Whilst there are some evolving plans in this area, this is a major knowledge gap in Myanmar and significant policy relevant research is a pressing priority. Questions to explore include, if there are SSR engagements beginning in Myanmar, how have gender perspectives and priorities been included in process and project design? Whilst DDR includes a final 'R', reintegration (which includes a focus on rehabilitation) receives markedly less attention than disarmament and demobilisation.[180] How can DDR progammes effectively target women combatants? Holistic examination of recovery and rehabilitation in all its aspects—medical, social, psychological— is also encouraged.[181]
- *Female-headed households:* Violent conflict sharply increases female-headed households due to the gendered patterns of men taking on combative roles. In the context of Myanmar, the number of female headed-household is exacerbated by migration and internal displacement. Further research is needed to understand how families process and cope with war-related trauma in the context of poor to non-existent mental health services[182] An additional focus in this area could also be the prevalence of women-led villages, particularly in the eastern part of Myanmar.[183]
- *Violent conflict and migration:* The direct (e.g. injury, displacement) and indirect effects (e.g. poverty, low-quality/non-existent public services, and abuse and exploitation of civilians by armed actors) of conflict have been a driver of migration patterns in and out of Myanmar. The nature of the relationship between conflict and migration is still a matter of some disagreement in research on Myanmar, leaving ample opportunity to address knowledge gaps in this thematic area.[184]
- *Drug addiction and gender:* Certain areas of violent conflict (most notably Kachin State and northern Shan State) have high rates of drug addiction (heroin, methamphetamine) and the majority of addicts are male. Notably, the economic and social pressures on women from these households are acute.[185] The traffic and trade in illicit drugs is connected to the complex war economy in Myanmar. Understanding the complex intersection of war economies, drugs, and gender is required.
- *Gendered analysis of socio-economic obstacles, opportunities and rights:* Elucidating the complexity of socio-economic obstacles such as the lack identification documents, disparities in wages and work opportunities, access to basic services, vulnerability to trafficking and economic migration, all have direct relevance to peacebuilding. This could also be combined with or be the subject of a separate focus on gendered analysis of spending related to the public sector.
- *Gender-sensitive public service delivery:* Improved services in war-affected areas is a leading priority for a range of actors, particularly in a context such as Myanmar where less than 3% of GDP was spent on health care and education combined in 2014.[186] For lasting peace and meaningful development relevant governance actors need to improve and provide better basic services and infrastructure. Applying a gender lens to this is essential to address the specific needs of women and men in relation

to more effective provision of basic public services. When displaced persons and refugees start to voluntarily return—as opposed to forced return—to Myanmar, essential services will become a central issue.[187] What would gender sensitive programming for returning displaced people look like in Myanmar? How can some of the good practice developed by women's organisations in internally displaced persons and refugee camps be transferred in such processes?

- *Gender-sensitive revenue collection:* Decision-making in Myanmar (by both Government and EAOs) on how best to raise and allocate revenues has paid little attention to issues of gender equality. Incorporating such concerns in these discussions requires considering questions such as: How do the preferences and needs of male and female citizens differ with regard to how much is allocated to various sectors and programmes? How do the preferences of male and female citizens differ regarding how best to raise revenues? Who participates in budget decision- making, and what is the nature of their participation?[188]
- *Masculinities:* Critical analysis is needed to fully understand the breadth of norms surrounding masculinities in Myanmar. How do men across a range of institutions, cultures and classes in Myanmar perceive their gendered identity? The global alliance of men mobilising for gender equality, MenEngage, offers helpful guidelines for a diversity of sectors, particularly related to research and evaluation that are relevance to policy research in this area.[189] An exploration into masculinity inevitably requires interrogation on femininity, as the two are inter-dependant.
- *Gender-inclusive language and measures in peace agreements:* The invisibility of women's needs and gender perspectives in peace agreements is increasingly scrutinised.[190] As a contribution to advance thinking in this regard, examples of gender-inclusive language and measures in future agreements is helpful. Ensuring thematic areas of future agreements are inclusive of operational indicators is essential (see below).
- *Myanmar specific WPS indicators:* The development of country-specific WPS indicators is a useful policy contribution. The starting point for such work is to be found in the 26 indicators developed in 2010 by the UN.[191] Ensuring that data collected to measure indicators is disaggregated along self-identified gender, ethnic and religious lines is also crucial. Conceptualising what these would include in the Myanmar context is also directly relevant to the development of a WPS NAP.
- *Gender-based violence and accountability:* Peace agreements ought to explicitly address the transformation of the misuse of force and cessation of violence— including all forms of violence against women as discussed in Section 2.[192] In Myanmar this will undoubtedly be an issue that requires constant vigilance and visibility in the political dialogue

> *"Donors and funds such as the Joint Peace Fund (JPF) could employ the UN policy standard that at least 15% of funds are dedicated to projects whose principal objective (consistent with existing mandates) is to address women's specific needs, advance gender equality or empower women."*

process and an area where clear guidance to the parties will be needed. This could include agreed definitions of forms of violence; clear description of mitigating strategies; text suggestions; indicators for measuring implementation and effect; exploring men's victimisation in this area, and more.

- *Constitutional reform and opportunities for women's rights:* While the Government of Myanmar claims that men and women are equal; the work of others—particularly civil society—demonstrates otherwise. Peace negotiations and the transitional process in Myanmar will potentially include constitutional reform, providing an opportunity to remedy the problematic content as it relates to the status of women. Again there is evidence-based guidance to draw on to frame such research.[193] Carefully crafted quotas to guarantee the substantive participation of women in politics, government and decision-making bodies are best included in constitutions. This is because constitutions provide a more durable long-lasting expression, and framework, of values and beliefs.
- *Truth seeking and gender justice:* Overcoming decades of protracted conflict in Myanmar will require a transitional justice process that addresses past human rights abuses and reconciles past divisions. Feminist analysis of transitional justice posits that even when women experience similar violations to men, the impacts are differential because of women's pre-existing subordinate social, political and legal status.[194] Whether Myanmar opts for truth telling, a tribunal, grassroots dialogue or a hybrid model, there are opportunities to guarantee the participation of women in the design phase and establish minimum standards that guarantee women sit as commissioners and judges.[195] Building structures to address gender related crimes during transitional justice processes also strengthens gender justice writ large by ensuring gender crimes are on par with non-gender ones.
- *Natural resource management:* Women's contributions and expertise associated with natural resource management are an important asset for the sustainable development of Myanmar. Given the linkages between the duration of armed conflict in Myanmar, resource extraction, corruption and poor governance, more equitable and sustainable management of natural resources will be a key theme within the peace process. There is increasing awareness of the significance of applying a gendered lens to women's contributions in this area.[196]

DISCUSSION STARTERS:

- Which strategies are most relevant to your organisation?
- How can stakeholders collaborate on forwarding the women, peace and security agenda?
- What are the longer-term consequences of overlooking the participation of women in the peace process and peacebuilding?

Photo, right: Naw Zipporah Sein, Vice-Chairperson of the Karen National Union, speaks during a peace meeting between the Government's Union Peace-Making Working Committee and Ethnic Armed Organisations at the Myanmar Peace Center Wednesday, 22 July 2015, in Yangon

AP Photo/Khin Maung Win

Annex 1: Methodology

This Discussion Paper is the result of extensive research and analysis conducted in two main phases. The first began in December 2014 with a desk review. Interviews were subsequently conducted between early January and late February 2015 in Yangon, and in Mon, Shan and Rakhine as well as in Chiang Mai. Kerstin Duell, Sille Jansen and Naw Eh Mwee conducted the first desk review and interviews. This is referred to as Phase I.

The second phase of research and analysis occurred from June 2015 to publication in October 2015. Cate Buchanan was contracted as chief editor. This included undertaking a detailed literature review, substance editing and rewriting, writing new sections of the paper including recommendations, fact checking and coordinating a peer review. Caitlin Williscroft from the PSF also provided substantive editing, fact checking, redrafting and led preparation of this *Paper*. Jenny Hedström provided an additional substantive peer review and fact check. Erin Kamler provided copy-editing support. This is referred to as Phase II.

Phase I: The three researchers conducted 72 interviews with 77 people in total (28 interviews in Yangon, 20 interviews with 25 people in Shan State, 13 interviews in Rakhine State, six interviews in Mon State and five interviews in Chiang Mai). The interviews followed a semi- structured approach, lasting approximately 1-1.5 hours. These are all noted in references as numbered interviews. Most respondents were directors or senior leaders of national and local organisations. Respondents were given the choice to self-identify their ethnicity. As the focus of the Discussion Paper is primarily on women's participation in the national peace process, women from ethnic groups were the main group interviewed for this study.

Phase II: As noted above a detailed second phase of work was undertaken on the paper. This also included a peer review. A peer review was undertaken to further refine the analysis and suggestions by drawing on the expertise of local, national, and international actors. This was conducted in late July 2015 and included: Jenny Hedström (Independent Consultant, PhD candidate at Monash University) and Paul Minoletti (Independent Consultant). In addition, the Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process's (AGIPP) Steering Committee provided a collective peer review through a facilitated discussion in early August 2015.

In Phase II, a further review of literature was undertaken including grey literature (INGO, UN, NGO reports, studies, briefing papers etc.). Databases were searched in July and August 2015 including: World Wide Political Science Abstracts, Proquest Central, J-STOR, Women's Studies International and Google Scholar. The following search terms were used: 'peacebuilding AND Burma OR Myanmar', 'status AND women AND Burma or Myanmar', 'gender AND Burma OR Myanmar', 'gender AND peace AND Burma OR Myanmar', 'women AND peace AND Burma OR Myanmar', 'peace process AND Burma or Myanmar', 'gender AND equality AND Burma OR Myanmar', 'women AND security AND Burma OR Myanmar'.

Annex 2: About the 'Contributions to Sustainable Peace Series'

The 'Contributions to Sustainable Peace' series will develop out of an iterative participatory two-step process with a Discussion Paper first developed to inform and frame a set of subsequent consultative meetings in 2016. Meetings will facilitate discussions that are inclusive and between relevant local, national and international actors actively involved in peace and security issues in Myanmar.

This first Discussion Paper focuses on the state of play related to women's participation in the national peace process. Critically, this paper does not claim to be a definitive or authoritative assessment of all efforts in this area, nor cover the nuances of women's mobilising at the local and state levels. Rather it seeks to spark a discussion about what can be done to transform the low levels of women's substantive participation in peacebuilding writ large, focusing on the national peace process in particular.

The Discussion Paper is being released shortly after the 15th anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security unanimously agreed in 2000 (UNSCR 1325). The PSF places a high priority on integrating gender perspectives and women's inclusion into its own work as well as the programming it supports. The PSF's current donors—the Governments of the United Kingdom (UK) and Australia—have detailed policy frameworks in place to guide this commitment. The International Development (Gender Equality) Act (May 2014) places a legal obligation on all facets of the UK Government to include gender equality as a core consideration in international development and humanitarian assistance.[197] Australia too has fulsome commitments in this regard. The 2012 Australian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (2012-2018) illustrates a comprehensive whole-of-government approach.[198] The Swedish Government's NAP on 1325 was launched in 2009. Subsequently, in 2015, Sweden adopted a feminist foreign policy where "equality between women and men is a fundamental aim."[199] Choosing to focus on women's participation in the peace process for the first Discussion Paper in this series is thus indicative of these commitments.

Annex 3: Women in Union-level ceasefire negotiations and related processes

Event (speech, round of talks, conference etc).	Commentary	References to women's participation and % of women's inclusion
Bilateral ceasefire agreements between government and various EAOs.	17 bilateral ceasefire agreements concluded at the sub-national level through the 1990s.	No significant references to women or gender in the ceasefire text/s.[200] Women not included in the negotiations in any significant number.
Speeches by President U Thein Sein delivered to parliament. 30 March 2011 and 18 August 2011.	Proposed peace talks with the outlawed EAOs. Invited the political exiles back into the country.	No reference made to women's participation or gender inequality.
First Ethnic Armed Organisations conference 30 October-2 November 2013, Laiza, Kachin State.	Significant advance in agreeing unified positions on issues such as a proposal for a federal union army; 16 of 17 EAOs present (except the Restoration Council of the Shan State, RCSS) signed an agreement to work together on 'single- text document of NCA'. The Nationwide Ceasefire Coordination Team (NCCT) was formed at this conference.[201]	The only woman on the NCCT was Saw Mra Raza Linn of the Arakan Liberation Party (ALP); 6.25% women's inclusion.

Event (speech, round of talks, conference etc).	Commentary	References to women's participation and % of women's inclusion
First formal round of ceasefire talks occurred in 2013 between the NCCT and the UPWC. 1. 4-5 November 2013, Myitkyina, Kachin State.	Round 1: Ethnic leaders presented to their Laiza 11-point common position and the Government team put forward the "Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement between Ethnic Armed Organisations and the Republic of the Union of Myanmar" draft.[202]	NCA text only available to those involved in the talks. Unclear how or if gender perspectives are being taken into account. Women's inclusion was 6.25% on the NCCT; 3.8% on the UPWC. Two women were involved as facilitators and technical advisers to the NCCT.
Second Ethnic Armed Organisations conference. 20-25 January 2014, Law Khee Lar, Karen State.	EAOs discussed integration of the following principles into the NCA: national equality, self-determination, and a union federal army.[203]	Saw Mra Raza Linn remains the only woman in the NCCT. Women's inclusion remained at 6.25% on the NCCT.[204]
Five formal rounds of ceasefire talks occur. 2. 9-10 March 2014, Yangon. 3. 5-8 April 2014, Yangon. 4. 21-23 May 2014, Yangon. 5. 15-17 August 2014, Yangon. 6. 22-26 September 2014, Yangon.	Round 2: UPWC and NCCT discuss draft ceasefire agreement.[205] Round 3: Agreement reached on first full draft of NCA text. Round 4: NCCT and UPWC further discuss NCA text. Tensions high as a result of clashes between government and KIO in April. Round 5: NCCT agrees on inclusion the UPWC's three core principles in the NCA: non- disintegration of the Union, national solidarity, and perpetuation of sovereignty. Round 6: No further developments.	NCA text still remains available only to those involved in the talks. Unclear how or if gender perspectives are being taken into account. Women's inclusion still 6.25% on the NCCT; 3.8% on the UPWC. Two women involved as facilitators and technical advisers to the NCCT. For the September round of the talks, the Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process (AGIPP) puts forward a memo on gendered language in the NCA.

Event (speech, round of talks, conference etc).	Commentary	References to women's participation and % of women's inclusion
Deed of Commitment signing ceremony 12 February 2015. Held on the 68th anniversary of the historic Panglong conference of 1947.[206]	In an attempt to overcome the growing stalemate in the NCA negotiations a 'Deed of Commitment for Peace and National Reconciliation' was signed by the President, Union Ministers, Ethnic Affairs Ministers, Tatmadaw representatives, political parties, and four EAOs (KNU, K/K PC, DKBA, RCSS). The document is noteworthy as it is the first time the Government commits to federalism formally on paper and to holding inclusive political dialogue to resolve grievances politically rather than by force.[207]	Deed of Commitment includes no reference to gender inequality as a feature or factor in peace and national reconciliation. There were 11 signatories in total: all men. Women's inclusion was 0%.
Seventh round of formal ceasefire talks. 7. 17-22 March and 30-31 March 2015, Yangon	Round 7: Five individuals each from the UPWC and the NCCT sign 'an approval reached on a draft agreement'. This is then further discussed among the EAOs and amended.[208] The NCCT signatories were signing as individual EAOs, not on behalf of the NCCT.	There were 10 signatories in total: all men.[209] Women's inclusion was 0%.
Third Ethnic Armed Organisations conference. 2-7 June 2015, Law Khee Lar, Karen State.	NCCT agrees to convene a new negotiation team, the Senior Delegation (SD), comprising 14 members. Naw Zipporah Sein, Vice-Chairperson of the KNU, is selected to lead the SD. A mandate given to the SD to advance discussions in the final round of NCA talks related to a minimum 30% quota for women in the political dialogue.[210]	Women's inclusion on the SD was 13.3%.[211]

Event (speech, round of talks, conference etc).	Commentary	References to women's participation and % of women's inclusion
Eighth, and ninth formal round of ceasefire talks. 8. 22-24 July 2015, Yangon. 9. 6-7 August 2015, Yangon.	Following the Law Khee Lar meeting, the UPWC and the newly established SD meets three times in July and August. Round 8: Agreement reached between UPWC and SD on 10 of 13 proposed changes to NCA text. No progress on inclusivity of signatories issue. Round 9: Agreement on outstanding three changes to NCA reached between the UPWC and the SD.	Deed of Commitment includes no reference to gender inequality as a feature or factor in peace and national reconciliation. There were 11 signatories in total: all men. Women's inclusion was 0%.
Fourth summit of the EAO. 21-24 August 2015, Chiang Mai.	Representatives of five major EAOs chosen to continue negotiations with the Government on the final sticking point related to who will sign the NCA.	No new developments
SD meeting with the President. 10 September 2015, Nay Pyi Taw.	As above.	As above.
EAO summit. 28-30 September 2015, Chiang Mai.	7 groups (KNU, CNF, ALP, DKBA, KNU/ KNLA-PC, ABSDF, Pa'o National Liberation Organisation) publicly announce that they will sign the NCA.	As above
NCA Signing Ceremony 15 October 2015, Naw Pyi Taw.	Eight EAOs (ABSDF, ALP, CNF, DKBA, KNLA-PC, KNU, PNLO, RCSS/SSA-S) accepted the Government's invitation to sign the NCA.	Zero out of 10 Government signatories of NCA were female, 0%. One out of 24 EAO signatories of NCA were female, 4%. Two women of 20 were included as witness signatories, 10%. Zero out of six international witnesses were female, 0%.

End Notes

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40. http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1325
41. http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1820
42. http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1888
43. http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/1889
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83. For further background see: Ikeya, 2011; Harriden, 2012; Ikeya, 2005/2006.

84. MNCWA webpage, Status of Women Myanmar. Page updated August 2001. Accessed 15 September 2015.

85. Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Combined second and third periodic reports of States parties. 2007. 4 September. CEDAW/C/MMr/3.

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"enjoy equal rights as prescribed by the law". The policy incongruity is expressed most vividly in Section 352: "The Union shall, upon specified qualifications being fulfilled, in appointing or assigning duties to civil service personnel, not discriminate for or against any citizen of the republic of the Union of Myanmar, based on race, birth, religion, and sex. However, nothing in this Section shall prevent appointment of men to the positions that are suitable for men only".

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166. Buchanan, Cate (Editor). 2014. Gun Violence, Disability and Recovery. Sydney: Surviving Gun Violence Project.

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172. Gender Equality Network, 2013 a; Maber, 2014.

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174. For example, a participant at a three-week training (in mid-2015) in Europe is stuck there as her passport was stolen. She is officially stateless so is unable to acquire new identity documents. While this is a more unique example and could have equally happened to a man thus is not gender specific. The main point is the level of caution required in this area when people do not have the necessary ID documents.

175. Forty-nine NAPs at 15 September 2015. WILPF collates all the NAPs on their website, see www.peacewomen.org/member-states Accessed 23 July 2015. For good practice analysis see: Dharmaprui, 2011; Institute for Inclusive Security, 2014; Irish Joint Consortium on Gender Based Violence, no date.

176. For more see: http://actionplans.inclusivesecurity.rg/countries/the-philippines/

177. For example see Dionisio, Josephine C and Mavic Cabrera-Balleza. No date. Towards full implementation of UN SCR 1325 in the Philippines: Crafting a National Action Plan for Women and peacebuilding. related: To commence discussion on this in Myanmar AGIPP will conduct consultations in late 2015/16 on components such an NAP ought to include, along with suggestions on how the development process could be conceptualised. Following this consultative process, AGIPP will publish and circulate a policy brief.

178. For the 2011 State report see www.upr-info.org/sites/default/files/document/myanmar/session_10_-_january_2011/ahrcwg-610mmr1e.pdf. For the shadow report from civil society see www.upr-info.org/en/review/Myanmar/Session-10---January-2011/Civil-society-and-

other- submissions#top.

179. AGIPP will be releasing an annotated bibliography in 2016. The bibliography will be available in English and Burmese, and updated annually. Concurrently, the Alliance will be translating a number of international resources each year to slowly improve analysis available in Myanmar language. For a broader bibliography related to Myanmar see Selth, Andrew. 2015. Burma (Myanmar) since the 1988 uprising: A select bibliography, 2nd Edition. Brisbane: Griffith Asia Institute.

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181. Martz, Erin (Editor). 2010. Trauma Rehabilitation After War and Conflict: Community and Individual Perspectives. Portland: Springer.

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183. A rich starting point for understanding the gendered consequences of 'missing men' is put forward in Karen Human rights Group. 2006. Dignity in the shadow of oppression: The abuse and agency of Karen women under militarisation. See also: Karen Women's Organisation. 2010. Walking Among Sharp Knives. Mae Sariang: KWO

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185. Minoletti, 2014, 27-28.

186. World Bank, 2014.

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190. Bell, Christine. 2005. Women address the problems of peace agreements. In Coomeraswamy, radhika and Dilrukshi Fonseka (Editors). Women, peacemaking and constitutions. New Delhi: Women Unlimited. Available as a Transitional Justice, Institute research Paper No. 11-03; Bell, Christine and O'Rourke, Catherine. 2010. Peace Agreements or Pieces of Paper? The Impact of UNSC Resolution 1325 On Peace Processes and their Agreements.International and Comparative Law Quarterly, 59 (4), 941-980; Shorter open source version: Bell, Christine and O'Rourke, Catherine. 2011. UN Security Council 1325 and Peace Negotiations and Agreements. Women at the Peace Table Asia Pacific Opinion Piece Series Number 4. Geneva: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue; Buchanan, Cate and Antonia Potter Prentice et al. 2012. From clause to effect: including women's rights and gender in peace agreements. Geneva: Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, December; UN Women, 2012; Stone, Laurel Anne. 2014. Women Transforming Conflict: A Quantitative Analysis of Female Peacemaking. Social Science research Network; UN Mediation Support Unit, Department for Political Affairs. 2014. Tips for drafting gender-relevant provisions in peace agreements. An MSU working draft. May. UN DPA: New york.

191. Annex 2 to track implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), July 2011.

192. All forms of violence includes sexual, physical, economic, and psychological forms of violence.

193. Dobrowolsky, Alexandra and Vivien Hart. 2003. Women making constitutions: New politics and comparative perspectives. New york: Palgrave MacMillian; Brandt, Michele, Jill Cottrell, yash Ghai and Anthony regan. 2011. Constitution-making and reform: Options for the process. Geneva: Interpeace. International IDEA is developing a gender audit tool for constitutional reform, which will be released in

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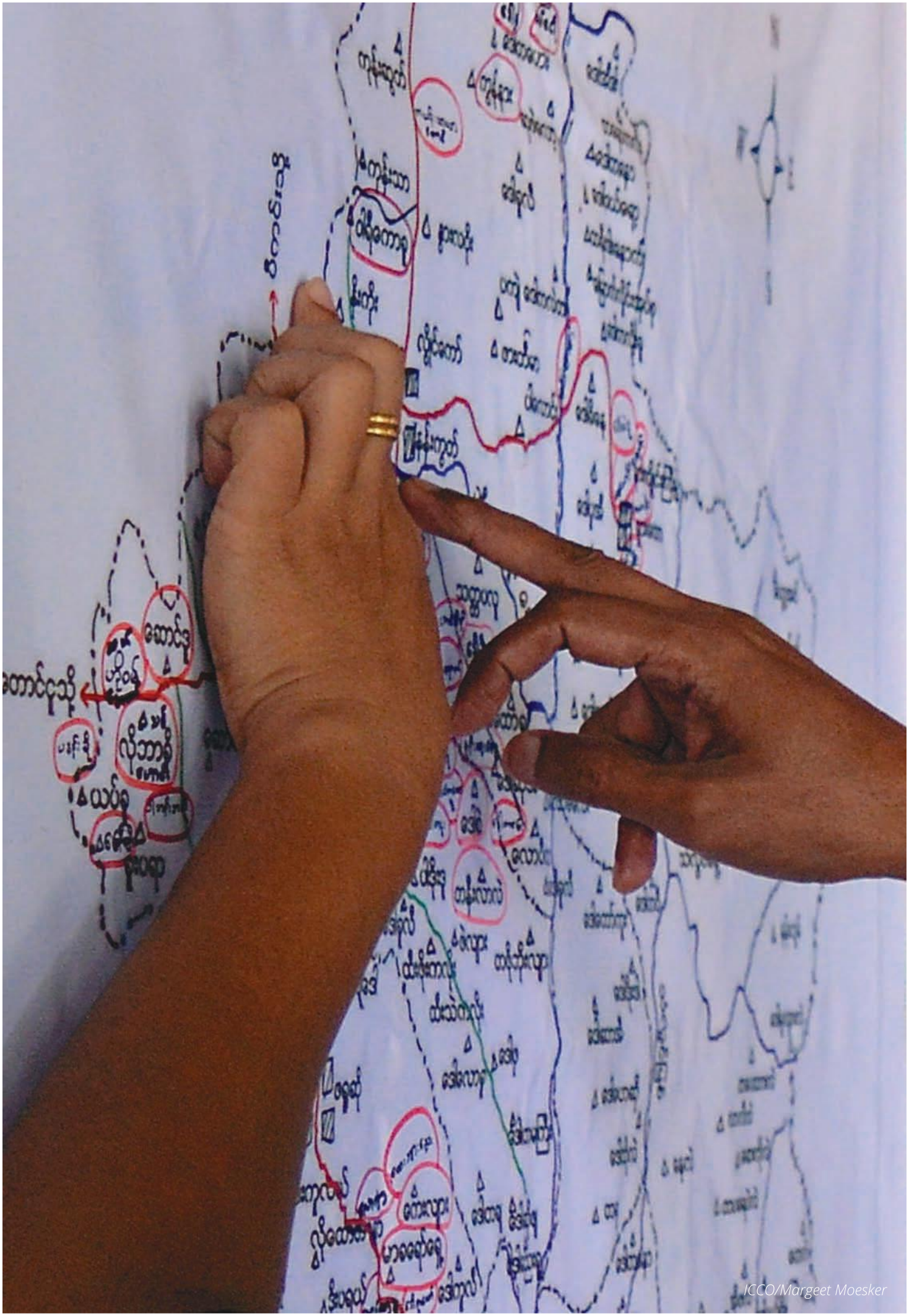

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