

Education policy reform is crucial to protect violence against women

October 10, 2019

Although it is important to change all sectors to advocate for eliminating violence against women, the reform of the education policy is crucial, reported by Women Safer (Women Safety at School) published by Myanmar Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS).

Policies should be issued stating that sexual harassment and violence are totally unacceptable; schools need to strengthen their strategies to address their responses to these issues. Responses include examining the security conditions of the way going to schools; transferring cases and providing counseling if found behavioral change because of sexual violence; providing trainings to create a safe school environment; and providing comprehensive sexual and reproductive health curriculum.

The paper recommended that teachers should also receive trainings related to violence issues; school-based counseling practices; specific services for women (including gender-segregated toilets, bazaars, women's schools, and teaching with female teachers). It is important to conduct discussions on violence against women with parents and teachers; as well as with government officials and the community.

According to government officials' press release, there have been 2,344 child rape cases in Nay Pyi Taw and States/Regions between 2017 to June 2019. In Myanmar, the number of child rape cases has increased in recent years; and the case of three-year old student 'Victoria' case from Wisdom Hill Private Primary School was widely spread nationwide. Such cases are alarming, and it is urgent to take preventive measures in order to deter sexual harassment and violence, and to dispel child rape cases.

Shwe Lay





Photo: Si Thu

Myanmar's Genuine Peace and Women's Participation

October 4, 2019

Myanmar, a war-torn country, is still impacted by armed conflicts which have been ongoing for over 70 years. Particularly, the elderly, women, and children have suffered from conflict, and there is still no security and protection scheme for them.

Why is it important to involve women in the peace process?

“Women’s rights should be respected and promoted in Democracy practices, which values inherent human rights and freedom”, stated Dr. Salai Hlyan Hmone, in his book, “Building the principles and concepts of Union based on Democracy and Federal”. More than half of Myanmar’s population is women; and women are the majority group suffering from the impacts of armed-conflicts. Undoubtedly, it is paramount to promote women’s participation in the peace process. Yet, women in Myanmar have not been able to participate in the nation’s peace process adequately and meaningfully.

Peace Conferences and Women’s Participation

At Law Khee Lar Conference, ethnic armed groups agreed upon 30% of women’s participation at all levels of political dialogue. However, no women were involved in signing the National Ceasefire Agreement (NCA). Women participated 7% in Union Conference, 13% in the first round of the 21st century Panglong Conference, 15% in the second round of the 21st century Panglong Conference, and 17% in the third round of the 21st century Panglong Conference. Although participation of women has increased in the stages of the Peace Conference, there is more work required to reach the 30% quota.

What are the challenges to participate women in the peace process?

A ceremony was held on September 21 for the “International Day of Peace”; this event increased the meaningful participation of women in the peace process. When referring to “women’s involvement”, it is needed to be meaningful participation and involvement in decision-making role. Many challenges still remain to realize full participation in the current situation. For instance, the organizations attending the 21st

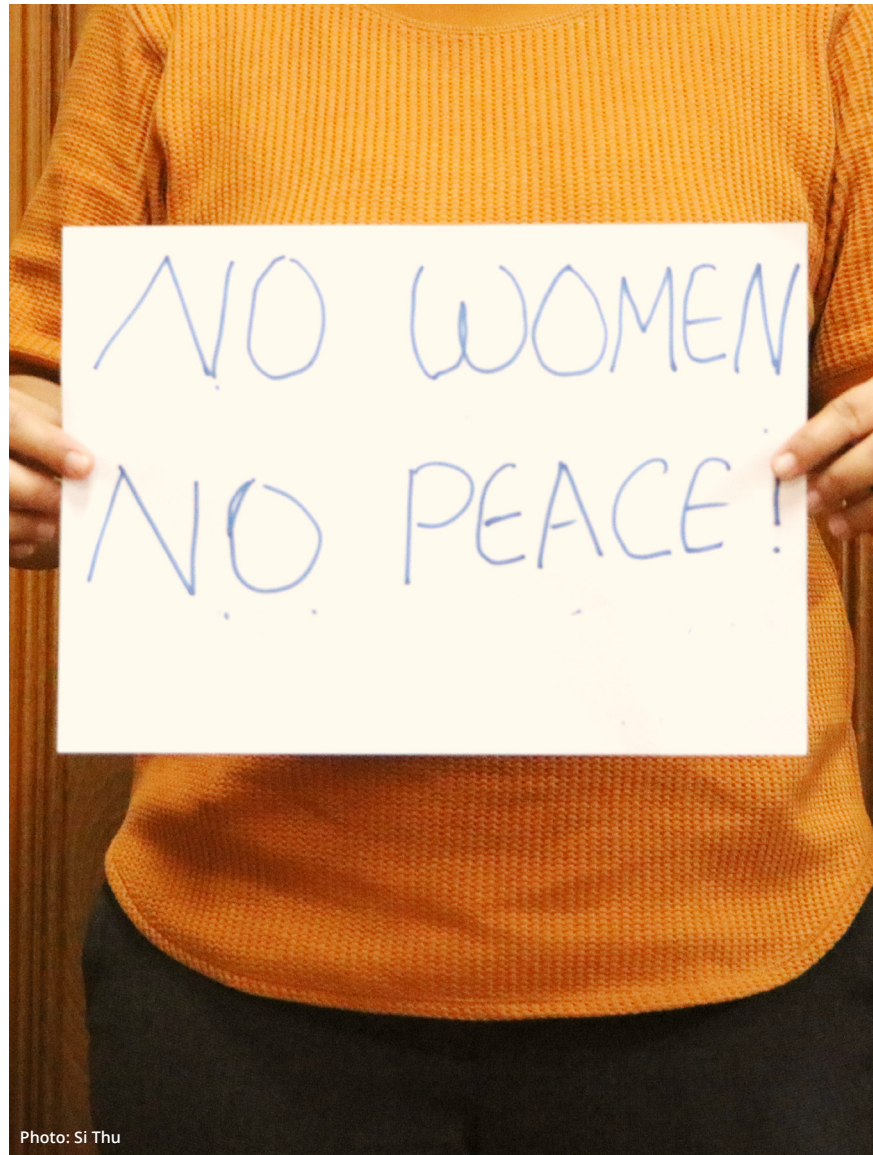


Photo: Si Thu

Century Conference, which plays a key role in the peace process, are led by men, and it is challenging for women to participate in an official capacity. The challenges and limitations experienced by women throughout their lives become a factor, and they often lose interest to taking part in politics and the peace-making process. Further, women cannot access information about the peace process, which is a key factor which deters them from participating in peace dialogues. Thus, awareness-raising is needed to empower women to participate in the peace process in a meaningful way.

Genuine peace and women's participation

Women’s participation in every step of the peace process is important in order to sustain a genuine peace. A sustainable peace cannot be achieved if women’s meaningful participation is lacking. The government and respective civil society organizations should develop strategic action plans, to increase women’s involvement in peace building; 17% is the current rate of participation, and to have meaningful participation, the target is 30% overall.

Shwe Lay



Photo:- Women's league of Burma Facebook

Recommendations to Develop the Women, Peace, and Security National Level Action Plan

September 26, 2019

Women's League of Burma (WLB) advocated for three basic concepts to be included in developing the National action plan for women, peace, and security.

In that National action plan, WLB recommended the inclusion of basic concepts such as participation of women in conflict areas; and prevention, relief, and rehabilitation of women against violence. The statement was released at the international Day of Peace event which was organized by WLB.

Naw Hser Hser, General Secretary of the Women's League of Burma said at the ceremony, "We aim to support an effort in order to ensure the emergence of the National Action Plan; then, to find a solution, we can make a discussion on "Together for Peace: Security for All" for our Women's forum for Peace, this year. It is the responsibility of government, but we are now preparing for the plan how to support and point out the mechanism, and a way to be

noticed by the government".

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 is the legal mechanism related to sexual violence against women occurring during armed conflicts. This is the first Security Council's resolution for the issues of Female, Peace, and Security. Myanmar is also responsible to implement the action plan included in that resolution. When implementing the resolution, it is imperative to develop a National Action Plan. Naw Hser Hser mentioned at the ceremony that she urges the responsible officials to initiate the development of National Action Plan.

She said, "We will keep on it step-by-step. We will go forward to emerge the National Action Plan with all people who should be involved."

At the two-day ceremony, participants mainly discussed the challenges to women's peace and security in conflict areas and post-conflict areas, and the role and opinions of women involved in the peace process.

Shwe Lay

October 16, 2019

A 20 year old Myanmar girl served as Norwegian Ambassador (Yangon) for a day.

Ma Aye Eaindray Maung took the role of ambassador at the Norwegian Embassy as part of the Plan International's "Girls Takeover" on October 10, released by the Norwegian Embassy (Yangon) on October 15.

Ma Aye Eaindray Maung said "It has been a very hectic day with ten meetings, but I like it. I want to work in diplomacy and it has been inspiring to be at an embassy with a female leader. I also want to encourage girls to be leaders".

Although there are many barriers for women in Myanmar, she encouraged young women not to be afraid of barriers and grab opportunities. Ma Aye Eaindray Maung is a second year International Relations student at Yangon University.

Norwegian Ambassador, Tone Tinnes, said "Aye did a fantastic job as Ambassador. She is a prime example of Myanmar's next generation of future female leaders. I think she represents many young women in Myanmar who want to be more visible in political life and in leadership roles".

Ma Aye Eaindray Maung participated in an election meeting with Heads of Missions in Yangon and contributed to the campaign meeting for Norway's candidacy for the UN Security Council. She also met with Norwegian Church Aid and made decisions about content for their social media pages.

"Girls Takeover" calls for social and political action to inspire young girls worldwide to pursue leadership roles.

Shwe Lay

A 20 year old Myanmar girl served as Norwegian Ambassador (Yangon) for a day



Photo:Royal Norwegian Embassy in Yangon Facebook



Photo:Royal Norwegian Embassy in Yangon Facebook



Photo:Royal Norwegian Embassy in Yangon Facebook



World Famous Quotes

“Women, Peace and Security is one of our biggest opportunities to create a pathway to peace – for ourselves and for the world, for today and in the future.”

..... Sahana Dharmapuri (Gender Advisor)

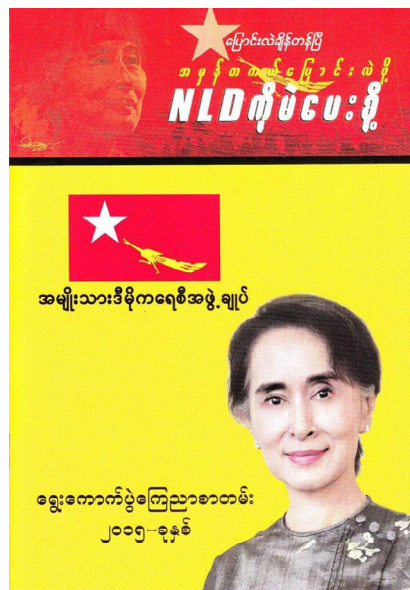
Photo: <https://www.wilsoncenter.org>

How did the NLD’s Election Manifesto make a commitment to promote the role of women’s development?

October 9, 2019

Before the 2015 general election, some major parties announced their respective election manifestos. Each party described their policies regarding politics, economics, and social sector reform which they planned to implement if they won the election and took the government’s administration role. Election manifestos were also parties’ election pledge. In the 2015 election, the National League for Democracy (NLD), which is the ruling government, had issued their election manifesto with the catch-phrase "Time for Change".

The NLD’s election declaration includes 13 areas for development; women’s development initiatives are included in number 9. The policies regarding women’s development in the election declaration are described below:



1. To ensure that the enacted law for women can get equal opportunity among men for administration, business, and social sectors.
2. Take action to end all forms of abuse, oppression to Women, insecurity, and violence. It will help women to understand the laws that protect them and increase their knowledge.
3. It will help to understand the laws to prevent loss of property rights in the family.
4. To ensure equal access to do the same work and no discrimination to give promotion.
5. No discrimination for equal access to education and school entry requirements.
6. During pregnancy and delivery period, women will receive health care by the state. Women who are employed must enjoy the right to retire in accordance with the law.

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