

LEARNING BRIEF

MYANMAR WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS MENTORING PROGRAM



Based on the Program Evaluation
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*Myanmar MPs and Minister for Defence, Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds,
Parliament of Australia, 2019*

Background

From 2017, International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) and Akhaya Women have together implemented Myanmar's first structured women's political mentoring program. The program responded to the growing evidence base that calls for sustained, tailored support to women once they achieve elected office to ensure their voices are heard and to increase their influence.¹

The program involved matching women Members of Parliament (MPs) who have a commitment to gender equality, with experienced Australian women MPs and former MPs, who share that commitment. The initial 2017 pilot involved six pairs. Following positive findings in the pilot evaluation², a second cohort commenced in 2019 involving another six pairs.

The program was co-funded by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), and the Government of the Netherlands through IWDA's regional Women's Action for Voice and Empowerment (WAVE) Program.

The program contributed to IWDA's strategy for promoting women's political leadership in the Asia and Pacific region³ and Akhaya's strategy for the empowerment of change agents in Myanmar.⁴ Following the successful pilot in Myanmar, the model has since been piloted in Timor-Leste by IWDA and Caucus Foundation.

This Learning Brief is based on the findings from an independent evaluation of the programs in both Myanmar and Timor-Leste. Regarding the Myanmar program, the evaluation involved 29 interviews with Myanmar MPs, Australian MPs, Myanmar political party representatives, DFAT staff and other key stakeholders.



*Daw Nan Htwe Htu MP and Former Senator Penny Wright, Napyidaw, 2017.
Photo: Shwe Wutt Hmon*

¹ Overseas Development Institute, 2015, Women's voice and leadership in decision-making: Assessing the evidence.

² Newstone Global Consulting, Learning Review: Myanmar Women Parliamentarians Mentoring Pilot Program, August 2018, https://iwda.org.au/assets/files/IWDA-Myanmar-Women-Parliamentarians-Mentoring-Pilot_Learning-Brief.pdf.

³ IWDA, WAVE Women's Political Leadership Strategy, May 2018, https://iwda.org.au/assets/files/WAVE_WPLStrategy.pdf.

⁴ Akhaya, Strategic Direction (2020 - 2023), www.akhaya.org/en/strategy.

Context

The 2015 elections in Myanmar presented an enormous opportunity for improving women's political participation at the highest levels of government, as the number of women MPs more than doubled to 67 women or 10.2% of the National Parliament. However, the existence of deeply entrenched social and cultural norms has meant that women MPs continue to face considerable discrimination. Gendered norms and stereotypes cast doubt on women's leadership capabilities. Men are seen as being endowed with natural leadership skills, while women parliamentarians – who are as well as, or better educated, than their male peers⁵ – have their capabilities more closely scrutinised.

Women MPs face wide-ranging challenges, including:

- receiving less respect than their male peers and being subjected to disparaging remarks and sexual harassment;
- facing gender stereotypes that women parliamentarians should limit their policy focus to social issues;
- having limited access to informal networks and relationships in the parliament;
- managing family commitments, including residing in Naypyidaw for the majority of the year, with no access to childcare facilities;
- facing disproportionate financial constraints given limited personal resources (relative to their male counterparts) to supplement MPs' low salary, the absence of parliamentary budgets for research and administration and low allocations of campaign finances from political parties; and
- navigating harmful gender norms, such as expectations that women cannot travel safely alone, making it difficult to maintain connections to their constituencies, particularly in remote areas.⁶

5 Latt, S, Ninh, K, Myint, M & Lee, S, 2017, Women's Political Participation in Myanmar: Experiences of Women Parliamentarians 2011-2016, The Asia Foundation & Phan Tee Eain.

6 Netina Tan, Paul Minoletti, Elin Bjarnegård and Aye Lei Tun, 2020, Party Building and Candidate Selection – Intraparty Politics and Promoting Gender Equality In Myanmar; Latt, S, Ninh, K, Myint, M & Lee, S, 2017, Women's Political Participation in Myanmar: Experiences of Women Parliamentarians 2011-2016, The Asia Foundation & Phan Tee Eain; UNDP, 2016, Survey of Myanmar Members of Parliament: Reflections from the First Hluttaw; Mulder, S, McDiarmid, T & Vettori, L, 2019, Public Perceptions of Women as Political Leaders: A Multi-Country Study, Synthesis Report, International Women's Development Agency.

Mentoring approach

IWDA and Akhaya's mentoring approach draws on the experiences of EMILY's List Australia and Akhaya's experience in women's leadership mentoring in Myanmar. The approach is based on principles of mutual learning and has an embedded gender equality focus.

Selection criteria were developed aimed at selecting MPs committed to gender equality. The mentoring process commences with an initial visit and face-face interaction. Myanmar MPs are supported to identify their preferred Australian MPs as part of a 'self-matching' process. MPs are then encouraged to communicate on a monthly basis through online platforms. Drawing on Akhaya's expertise in women's leadership mentoring, Akhaya staff provide technical support, including on gender equality policy and legal reform, and translation support where required. A detailed mentoring handbook is used to support the partnerships.⁷ Political advisers monitor and encourage communication between the MPs.

Following the semi-structured one-year partnership, the MPs are then encouraged to continue their relationship informally with ongoing translation support.

Principles

- **Mutual learning:** Supporting mentoring partnerships that involve mutual learning and respect requires being sensitive to the power dynamics in the relationship. Both mentee and mentor bring different skills and experience to the partnership.
- **Shared commitment to gender equality:** Recruiting mentees and mentors with a commitment to gender equality increases the positive outcomes for women beyond the program and more systemically.
- **Non-partisan:** Ensuring broad representation across a range of political parties improves cross-party parliamentary networking.
- **Face-to-face, self-matching:** The matching of MPs is undertaken face-to-face. Mentees are supported to identify their preferred mentor. If a relationship is not going well, a 'rematch' will be done quickly.
- **Formal:** Signing a mentoring agreement that identifies goals and 'ground rules' for their partnership sets a clear and solid foundation.
- **Confidential:** Ensuring confidentiality is crucial for building a sense of trust.
- **Ongoing communication:** Regular communication (at least once a month) is critical. Ongoing conversations take place through phone calls, email and social media.
- **Translated:** Facilitating communication through skilled and experienced translation support is essential to ensure effective communication and relationship building.
- **Supported:** Providing external support is critical. Regular follow-ups are undertaken by experienced political advisers and Akhaya and IWDA staff with both the Myanmar and Australian MPs.

⁷ Leonie Morgan AM and Cherry Zahau, 2019, Women Supporting Women: Myanmar Women Parliamentarians Mentoring Program – Mentoring Handbook, https://iwda.org.au/assets/files/Mentoring-Handbook-English_FINAL.pdf.

The evaluation identified three distinctive features that set this program apart from other similar mentoring initiatives⁸:

1. A gender equality focus is embedded in all aspects of the mentoring process – including participant selection, the focus of professional development activities, joint implementation by a local women's rights organisation, Akhaya, and the engagement of experienced political advisers.
2. The approach is adaptive and developmental. IWDA and Akhaya adapted and responded quickly as specific professional development gaps emerged and when MPs came forward with new ideas. The resourcing of IWD events and COVID-19 responses led by the Myanmar MPs is evidence of IWDA and Akhaya responding to MP requests and supporting MPs' increased engagement with their constituencies.
3. The approach is localised, and builds from the commitment, expertise and skills of highly experienced local partners and political advisers. Prior to this program, Akhaya was one of the first organisations in Myanmar to introduce the concept of mentoring to women's leadership programming. Akhaya staff developed their understanding of the political mentoring model during the pilot and then took on a more strategic role in the second cohort.

“It is not just about a one-off meeting with other women, but really getting to the core of what makes (politics) a challenge for women. I am learning from X just as much as I am responding to her questions about dealing with male dominance.

— Australian MP, first cohort



Judith Graley MP and Lway Nan Moe MP, Myanmar Parliament, 2017

⁸ For a recent critique of political mentoring programs see: Elise Howard, Julien Barbara and Sonia Palmieri, 2020, Mentoring to Support Women's Leadership; Policy Brief No. 1, ANU College of Asia & the Pacific.

The participating MPs

In the pilot program, of the 22 expressions of interest received, six Myanmar MPs were selected representing four major political parties – Arakan National Party, National League for Democracy (NLD), Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD) and Ta'ang National Party.

For the second cohort, 27 Myanmar women MPs expressed interest in participating. The Joint Coordination Committee on Hluttaw Development (JCC), the parliamentary committee charged with MP professional development, become involved in MP selection. The JCC nominated five MPs from the NLD and one from the SNLD. Further, the JCC nominated two parliamentary staff to join the exchange to Australia.

The Australian MPs selected included representation from the three major political parties (the Australian Labor Party, the Liberal Party and the Greens), from both state and federal levels of government for the first cohort; and from the federal government for the second cohort.



Myanmar MPs, Parliament of Australia, 2019

Key activities

- **Face-face interaction:** The first cohort MPs met with their Australian partners on three occasions: during the visit by Australian MPs to Myanmar; when these MPs visited Australia; and finally, when some Australian MPs visited Myanmar for matching with second cohort MPs. The second cohort Myanmar MPs met with their Australian partners during their visit to Australia.
- **Exposure visits:** These visits included: exposure to national and state level parliaments, including attendance at parliamentary sessions; political and cultural briefings; meetings with MPs and other political leaders; training sessions and meetings with civil society organisations.
- **Skills building:** Formal training sessions were incorporated into the visit itineraries, and informal skills-sharing and professional development occurred through the MP-MP communication. The first and second cohort MPs received public speaking training. The first cohort MPs also benefitted from skills building sessions on continuous campaigning and the use of social media.
- **Partnership agreements:** At their introductory meetings where the MPs shared information about themselves, the MPs were matched based on the Myanmar MPs' preferences, and formal goals and commitments were documented in a partnership agreement.
- **Ongoing communication:** all MPs agreed to communicate on a monthly basis using online platforms with a focus on the goals developed for each partnership. While the regularity of communication varied, overall, a steady exchange of support and ideas between the MPs occurred. The fact that some relationships have continued beyond the formal one year program cycle, is a credit to the program.
- **MP led constituency-based events:** Based on a request from the Myanmar MPs themselves, the MPs were supported to hold International Women's Day events in their constituencies in 2018 and 2019. Akhaya provided well-received technical support, including campaign ideas and tools to promote to constituents, such as a mobile phone safety application for women and girls. In 2020, the program supported the Myanmar MPs to hold gender-sensitive COVID-19 initiatives in their constituencies.



Dr Kyi Moet Moet Lwin MP, COVID-19 response, 2020



Daw Nan Htwe Htun MP, COVID-19 response, 2020

“When COVID-19 started, I talked with my Australian Mentor. She asked me whether increasing domestic violence is an issue in Myanmar. This [encouraged me] to check with the women from my constituency.”

— Myanmar MP, second cohort

Program level results

Practical political skills:

- The program equipped Myanmar MPs with practical political skills, particularly public speaking skills and continuous campaigning. There is evidence of the MPs applying these skills, including greater preparation in advance of public speaking events and engaging at the constituency level on a more regular basis.
- The Myanmar MPs reported developing an understanding of mentoring principles and shared their interest in mentoring less experienced women in their own political parties in the future.
- The Australian MPs reported they gained practical skills such as cross-cultural communication skills. This was particularly appreciated by MPs with migrant communities in their own constituencies.
- The Australian MPs who visited Myanmar found the exposure insightful. A number of Australian MPs have used this experience to engage in other international development work.

“Many of us recognised her improved public speaking skills, ability to deliver key messages within a given time, and being able to remain composed. She has raised issues about her constituents’ education, infrastructure, and social needs which are the issues she has prioritized as important to her constituency.”

— Myanmar party official



*Role play exercise in campaign door-knocking,
Leonie Morgan AM and Nang Khin Saw MP, 2019*

Understanding of gender equality:

- Myanmar women MPs gained increased knowledge of gender equality issues and legislative and policy options for promoting gender equality (for example, increased knowledge of gender quota models). Some of the MPs were newly elected MPs and had limited expertise in gender equality policy reform prior to participating in the program.

Psycho-social support:

- The program, particularly the pilot initiative involving newly elected MPs, has been highly effective in building the confidence of the Myanmar MPs. They indicated the program increased their confidence to work with men in their party and to participate in parliamentary debates. In addition to more confidently presenting their ideas and contributing to discussions in the Parliament, these women are also engaging and speaking out more at the constituency level.
- The psycho-social support had a significant impact on the MPs' resilience and resolve to achieve their own political objectives. The mentoring relationships provided the MPs with an external ally who understood the experience of being a politician.

Recognition and solidarity:

Even in the short-term, the program has resulted in growing recognition of Myanmar women MPs as leaders and attempts by other stakeholders to express solidarity with them. Following their increased visibility through program participation and the IWD events, some MPs were assigned to the Women and Child Rights Committee in the Upper House and Lower House. DFAT Post is engaging with these MPs more frequently. Results such as these are particularly significant in the Myanmar political context where there is a gap in support to newly elected MPs. Myanmar MPs have also shown solidarity with the Australian MPs, sending messages of support during the Australian bushfires and the COVID-19 pandemic.

“As we are both women politicians, it didn’t take long to develop trust and open communication. The way X struggles in this sexist environment, is so similar to me.”

— Myanmar MP, first cohort

“In politics, sometimes the most powerful support can be simply having someone who understands.”

— Australian MP, first cohort

“I think women [MPs] have sympathy and empathy for other women as they share a common understanding. So I talked to my mentor regarding the issues which I can’t share with others.”

— Myanmar MP, second cohort



Angie Bell MP and Daw Ei Ei Pyone MP, Canberra, October 2019

Outcome-level results

IWDA and Akhaya have been able to incrementally develop and implement a mentoring approach that delivers on gender equality outcomes. In a relatively short period of time, the program delivered on longer term outcomes in the area of women's political participation and gender equality. This achievement confirms the value of mentoring, and IWDA and Akhaya's approach to mentoring, as a means to strengthen leadership pathways for women and promote gender equality.

Influence of women MPs in their political parties:

The program had a definite impact on the position and influence of Myanmar women MPs within their political parties. This is evidenced through the increased engagement of these MPs in political affairs at the party level. For instance, following active lobbying by one of the participating MPs and sustained advocacy by the broader Shan women's rights movement, the SNLD party adopted a 30% gender quota in early 2020. The SNLD met this commitment and preselected almost 30% women candidates for the November 2020 election, which is a milestone for the party.

Further, 10 of the 12 participating women MPs were successfully preselected by their parties for the November election (the remaining two MPs chose not to contest their seats for personal reasons). Of those nine women who contested the election, eight were successfully re-elected (voting was canceled in one constituency). While this achievement is not wholly attributable to the program, it suggests that the right kind of support can strengthen leadership pathways for women MPs.



Senator Claire Moore and Daw Khin Swe Lwin MP, Naypyidaw, 2017

“When I first suggested a 30% quota for women in Parliament, the men laughed at me. They said, ‘if women enter politics, who will cook for us? I see quotas in Australia and I know to keep fighting.’”

Myanmar MP, first cohort

“I learned about quotas and now I am promoting this in my party.”

Myanmar MP, first cohort

Promotion of gender equality legislation and policy:

Some progress was made towards promoting gender equality legislation. Examples include:

- Two MPs from different parties in the first cohort collaborated to put forward a parliamentary motion for increased penalties for those convicted of child sexual abuse.
- Akhaya gained support from two participating MPs on the Upper House Women and Child Rights Committee to facilitate a public hearing about the Protection and Prevention of Violence against Women (PoVAW) Bill, in which 16 women survivors of violence shared their experiences directly with committee members. With the support of participating MPs, Akhaya also had the opportunity to provide recommendations on strengthening the PoVAW bill to the Women and Child Rights Committees (both Upper and Lower Houses) and the Bills Committee (Upper House).
- One MP from the second cohort raised a question in the National Parliament to encourage the Department of Education to ensure girls who have experienced sexual violence are supported to continue to access education.

“Potential difficulties of working cross-party were quickly overcome on the principle that everyone is committed and working towards women’s empowerment, therefore it does not matter which party we represent, we shared the same agenda.”

— Myanmar MP, first cohort

“Regarding women’s issues, it is important that women MPs work with other women MPs.”

— Myanmar MP, second cohort

Daw Khin Swe Lwin and local constituents, Chin State, IWD event, 2018



Leveraging of constituency-based initiatives:

Myanmar MPs benefitted from the support to hold constituency-based initiatives, which had a catalytic effect on their gender equality influence at multiple levels. Firstly, the initiatives strengthened the visibility of the MPs as advocates for gender equality and as effective leaders at a community-level. Secondly, the initiatives brought the MPs in contact with other gender-sensitive actors and women's rights organisations.

There is evidence that the increased profiling through the International Women's Day events, contributed to the MPs gaining more influential gender equality roles. For example, one MP was assigned as Secretary to the Women and Child Rights Committee in the Upper House and two MPs were assigned as members of the Women and Child Rights Committee in the Lower House.

The resourcing of the constituency-based initiatives demonstrated the adaptability of IWDA and Akhaya to respond to the requests of MPs and deliver timely support and assistance.

Linking women MPs to the women's rights movement:

The Myanmar MPs developed networks with Myanmar's women's rights movement. The program strengthened the Myanmar MPs' relationships with Akhaya. Significantly, Akhaya has become the 'go to' organisation for these MPs on matters concerning gender equality reform. For instance, MPs contacted Akhaya for analysis regarding the PoVAW Bill, to discuss strategies for responding to violence against women cases in their constituencies and to refer constituents to GBV services run by Akhaya. One participating MP joined Akhaya's online training called 'Anti-COVID-19 Ambassador Program', which addresses the gender dimensions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

To some extent, the program also contributed to new linkages between the MPs and other local women's rights organisations. There is strong evidence to suggest that Akhaya's



Daw Lwi Sar, MP and Senator Janet Rice, Melbourne, October 2019

"I invited all stakeholders in Kayah State for International Women's Day, including the ethnic armed organisations. This helped to raise my profile in my constituency. It created a platform for women to discuss issues e.g. discrimination, including in government departments. This is unusual to do in ethnic areas. I would like to do the 16 days of Activism and IWD events in my constituency again next year."

Myanmar MP, first cohort

engagement with the MPs increased the MPs' broader interest in collaborating with civil society organisations. As MPs' understanding of gender equality and Akhaya's work grew, they became more open to interacting with, and even seeking out, civil society organisations in their constituencies.

Strengthened ties between Australia and Myanmar:

The program resulted in new and strengthened connections between Myanmar women MPs and the Australian diplomatic and aid staff. DFAT has facilitated several meetings between the Myanmar MPs and Australian diplomats visiting Myanmar. Myanmar MPs are now invited to events organised by the Australian embassy in Myanmar like Australia Day celebrations.

The program also contributed to an improved understanding in the Australian Parliaments (federal and state) of the Myanmar political context. Australian MPs made speeches in the Australian Senate and the Parliament of Victoria about Myanmar and the challenges that women MPs face. For example, one Australian MP spoke passionately about her experience as a mentor to contribute to debate about the future of Myanmar and Australia's ongoing relationship. Another Australian MP raised the issue of the needs of Karen refugees in an Australian parliamentary debate on citizenship and a video of her presentation was watched by nearly ten thousand people on Facebook.



Daw Chris Htun MP and Ann Sudmalis MP, Australia Day Event, Naypyidaw, 2019



Nang Kham Aye MP and Australian Ambassador, HE Andrea Faulkner, Yangon, 2019



Celia Hammond MP and Nang Kham Aye MP, Melbourne, 2019

Enablers and challenges

Participant selection process: The MP selection process is key to ensuring program relevance and effectiveness. There are strengths and weaknesses involved in an open call for expressions of interest compared with parliamentary selection. An open call has the benefit of attracting women MPs who are interested in selection criteria promoted by IWDA and Akhaya. On the other hand, parliamentary engagement in the selection process supports ongoing sustainability, but may reduce the focus on gender equality.

Capacity to influence key political actors: During the pilot initiative, which was relatively informal, IWDA and Akhaya identified potential participants, oversaw the MP matching process and organised the Myanmar MPs' visit to Australia. Subsequently however, the involvement of parliamentary bodies and other political actors was at times challenging and resulted in delays and consequent inefficiencies. While IWDA, Akhaya and the political advisers worked hard to communicate program objectives and expectations, it is likely they were not sufficiently prepared to respond to the unanticipated political influences that are inevitable in an established political mentoring program.

Face-to-face and informal interaction between MPs: Adequate face-face interaction early on in the program contributes to the development of strong mentoring relationships. A related critical factor is the timeframe between participant selection and the first face-to-face meeting of MPs. A time lag from program initiation to when the first visit occurs, can dilute messaging about program objectives. Adequate preparation time is also essential to ensure the visit itinerary aligns with the MPs' interests and professional development objectives, and that all participants are comprehensively briefed on the cultural and political aspects of each country. Based on requests for increased political briefings on Myanmar from Australian MPs in the pilot, this element was strengthened in the second cohort.

Identification of common interests: The MPs who have developed close and meaningful relationships include those who were able to identify common interest areas early on. Ensuring that the matching process allows for an alignment of common interests, as well as facilitating sufficient face-to-face time to develop trust and identification of common interests, is important.

Language: The program included strategies to mitigate against language barriers. The mentoring guides were translated, and there was interpretation support from the very start. While the efforts of the interpreters were appreciated, Australian MPs said that it was challenging for them to understand and convey some complex political concepts. Moreover, a small number of Myanmar MPs felt trust and confidentiality were at risk by the involvement of a third person interpreter and were reluctant to share details about some challenges they face in front of interpreters.

Experienced local partners and personnel: The program benefited from Akhaya's leadership, strong understanding of mentoring concepts and strategic coordination with key Myanmar stakeholders. Akhaya's flexibility was equally important as the technical skills of the team.

The political advisers' expertise was also critical to the program's success. Without exception, the Australian MPs recognised the work of the Australian adviser Leonie Morgan AM. Drawing on her twenty years' experience in women's political mentoring with EMILY's List Australia, Leonie played an important role in program design and

encouraging regular communication between Australian and Myanmar MPs. Likewise, positive feedback was received about Cheery Zahau, the political advisor in Myanmar. Her astute political analytical skills were invaluable in program design, participant selection and in briefing all MPs.

The program also benefited from the IWDA program manager's in-depth understanding of parliamentary processes and the challenges faced by women MPs. These factors contributed to the success of the pilot and enabled IWDA to withstand pressures and address challenges in the second cohort.

Interest in mentoring: Many of the participating Myanmar MPs expressed interest in mentoring other women MPs going forward. From a starting point where the concept of mentoring was new to the Myanmar context, IWDA and Akhaya have developed a pool of experienced mentors both in Australia and Myanmar who are committed to mentoring other women MPs.

“[My mentor] stands behind my back and encourages me. We women MPs need someone behind us, supporting us. I hope one day I’ll become a mentor for someone who needs me.”

— Myanmar MP, first cohort



Daw Khin Saw Wai MP and Former MP Lesley Clark, Yangon 2019



Lisa Chesters MP and Nang Khin Saw MP, Myanmar Parliament, 2019

Lessons learned

Elements that worked well

- The embedding of a gender equality focus in all aspects of the mentoring model.
- The engagement of MPs from different parties, with varying levels of knowledge regarding gender equality concepts.
- The high quality political briefings and bilingual program documentation provided to participating MPs.
- The focus on the psycho-social benefits of mentoring, in addition to knowledge and political skills development.
- The engagement of experienced political advisors and program staff with a good understanding of politics.
- The facilitation of relaxed, informal face-to-face interactions between women MPs to deepen their relationships with each other.
- The support to Myanmar MPs to lead gender-responsive initiatives in their constituencies.
- The early evaluation of the pilot initiative, which contributed to an adaptive approach and enabled IWDA and Akhaya to address initial challenges.

Elements that could be improved

- Strengthening of relationships with parliamentary bodies, political parties and other important political actors (including DFAT in Australia), and increased investment in monitoring the Australian and Myanmar political contexts, in order to increase capacity for addressing potential political challenges affecting program implementation.
- Ensuring that MP selection occurs well in advance of the first country visit to enable adequate preparation, including clear communication of program objectives and alignment of the visit itinerary to MP's professional development objectives.
- More attention to the multiple levels and types of relationships that need to be built to strengthen women's political participation, including parliamentary committees, political party leadership and experienced women MPs.
- Exploration of options for in-country technical support, including coaching, for Myanmar women MPs to complement mentoring.

Where to from here?

- IWDA and Akhaya should seek additional donor funds for a mentoring program targeted at women elected at the November 2020 general election. The anticipated increase in women parliamentarians provides an opportunity for a localised mentoring program with participating Myanmar MPs mentoring newly elected women from their political parties.
- IWDA and Akhaya should invest in sharing program lessons and achievements. This could include updating the existing Practice Brief⁹, integrating findings from this evaluation.
- IWDA and Akhaya should continue to support and accompany successful mentoring relationships established through the program. Funding for translation will be essential. Ideally, the same translators should be employed for each MP partnership.
- IWDA and Akhaya should continue to explore linkages with other local NGOs, international parliamentary strengthening organisations and UN bodies that offer professional development support to Myanmar MPs.

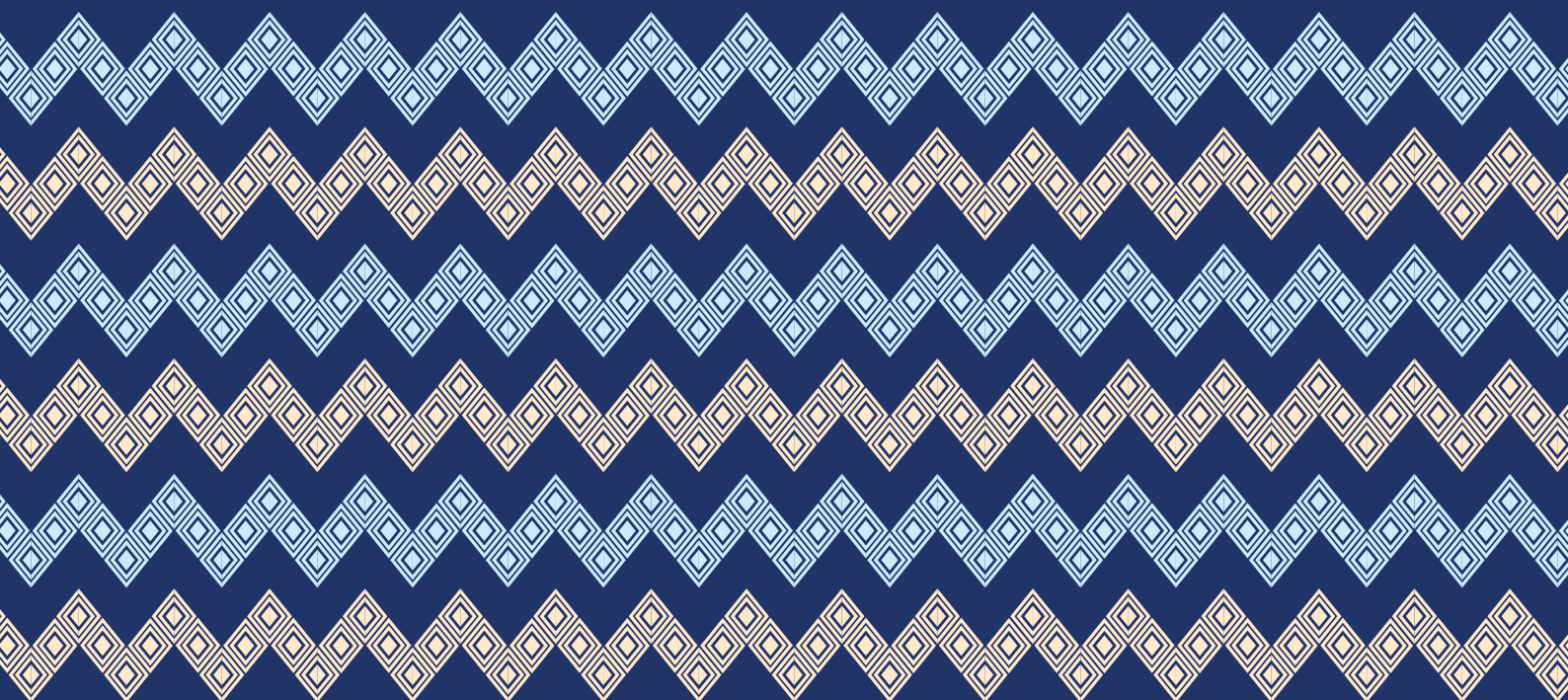


Workshop on social media, Naypyidaw, 2019

9 IWDA and Akhaya, 2018, Myanmar Women Parliamentarians Mentoring Pilot Program: Increasing the Influence of Myanmar's Women Political Leaders through Mentoring – Practice Brief: https://iwda.org.au/assets/files/Myanmar-Woman-Mentoring-Program-Practice-Brief_2018_FINAL.pdf.

Interview list

DFAT	Anouska Charles	International Deployments Team, DFAT, Canberra
	Khaing Aye Nyein	Program Manager, DFAT Post, Myanmar
Australian MPs	Angie Bell MP	Member for Moncrieff, Parliament of Australia (Liberal)
	Ann Sudmalis	Former Member for Gilmore, Parliament of Australia (Liberal)
	Claire Moore	Former Federal Senator for Queensland (ALP)
	Judith Graley	Former Member, Victorian Parliament (ALP)
	Senator Janet Rice	Federal Senator for Victoria (Greens)
	Dr Lesley Clark	Former Member, Queensland Parliament (ALP)
	Lisa Chesters MP	Member for Bendigo, Victoria, Parliament of Australia (ALP)
Program staff and political advisers	Alice Ridge	Research, Policy & Advocacy Adviser, IWDA
	Cheery Zahua	Women's Political Adviser, Myanmar
	Daw Htar Htar	Founder and Director, Akhaya Women
	Emily Miller	Director, Systemic Change and Partnerships, IWDA
	Jen Clark	Program Manager, IWDA
	Ko Thiha Nyi Nyi	Program Manager, Akhaya Women
	Leonie Morgan AM	Women's Political Adviser, Australia
Myanmar MPs	Dr Kyi Moet Moet Lwin	Sintgaing Constituency, Mandalay Region, Lower House (NLD)
	Daw Nan Moe	Mon Ton Township, Shan State, Lower House (TNP)
	Daw May Than Nwe	Constituency No. 11, Ayeyarwaddy Region, Upper House (NLD)
	Daw Yinmin Hlaing	Gangaw Constituency, Magway Region, Lower House (NLD)
	Daw Khin Saw Wai	Mung Daw Township, Lower House (ANP)
	Daw Khin Swe Lwin	Constituency No. 9, Chin State, Upper House (NLD)
	Daw Nan Htet Mon	Staff member, Research, Public Relations and International Relations Department, Upper House
Stakeholders	Daw Chaw Sandi	Program Manager, Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy
	Daw Khin Thazin Myint	Country Representative, Danish Institute for Parties and Democracy
	Mindy Walker	Women and Politics Consultant
	Naw Hser Hser	General Secretary, Women League of Burma
	U Tar Hla Pe	CEC member, Ta'ang National Party
	U Sai Nyunt Lwin	Vice Chairperson, Shan Nationalities League for Democracy



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