

WOMEN SUPPORTING WOMEN

MYANMAR WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS MENTORING PROGRAM



MENTORING HANDBOOK 2019

LEONIE MORGAN AND CHEERY ZAHAU

*"Effective mentoring involves an exchange of skills and experience
firmly based on mutual respect"*

Senator Claire Moore, Pilot Program Mentor



Front cover photo: Daw Nan Htwe Thu MP and Former
Senator Penny Wright, Photo: Shwe Wutt Hmon

AUTHORS

LEONIE MORGAN AM

Leonie is lead author and a Women and Politics Advisor to this Mentoring Program. Leonie is a consultant in women's leadership, mentoring, human resources and governance.

Leonie has extensive mentoring experience, as a consultant, a paid employee and in a pro bono capacity. Her passion is seeing more women elected to public office and much of her mentoring within Australia, in the Pacific and Asia focusses on this. This was acknowledged in 2017 when Leonie was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia for significant services to women, in particular equitable political representation.

CHEERY ZAHAU

Cheery Zahau is a Women and Politics Advisor providing technical guidance with this Mentoring Program. Cheery is an internationally recognised human rights activist with extensive experience in promoting women's political participation.

At the 2015 election, Cheery contested the Chin Progressive Party ticket for the Lower House (Pyithu Hluattaw) representing Falam Township, Chin State. She is the Treasurer of the Chin Progressive Party and Chin National League for Democracy - the newly merged Chin major political parties.

Cheery was awarded the European Union's Schuman Award for Human Rights in 2018 and the UN Development Program's N-Peace Award in 2017.

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A warm thank you to all those women who generously shared their experiences of mentoring:

- Daw Nan Moe, MP Lower House, Myanmar Parliament
- Daw Khin Saw Wai, MP, Upper House, Myanmar Parliament
- Cheery Zahau, Women and Politics Adviser, Akhaya Women
- Ann Sudmalis, MP, Parliament of Australia
- Senator Claire Moore, Queensland, Parliament of Australia
- Judith Graley, former MP, Parliament of Victoria, Australia

We also acknowledge EMILY's List, Australia, as this Program is based on extensive learnings from EMILY's List in coordinating mentoring for Australian Labor Party women candidates and newly elected parliamentarians.

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The Myanmar Parliamentarians Mentoring Program is part of IWDA's Women's Action for Voice and Empowerment (WAVE) Program. WAVE is a ground-breaking women's leadership program that brings together and supports individual women, organisations, and movements in Asia and the Pacific region to increase the representation of women in diverse leadership positions.

WAVE supports 18 women's rights organisations in 5 countries with the resources, skills and networks they need to amplify their collective voice and create a more enabling environment for women's leadership.

FORWARD



Htar Htar

Mentorship has been at the core of Akhaya's work since 2011 and has been utilised across our organisation's different programs and activities. From those experiences, Akhaya has observed the powerful, organic and high impact outcomes it could bring. "Political Mentorship" is a unique approach used for advancing women's leadership and empowering women in politics with limited published literature.

The "Mentorship Approach" is a new practice for Myanmar's learning community. As example of the "Mentorship Approach" in the Myanmar cultural context, let's suppose I am fond of gardening and I am not skillful in it. However, one of my friends is a skillful gardener so I would let her show me how to grow plants and do the gardening by planting or gardening together with her. It may include sharing of some inspiring gardening videos, sharing seeds of different species, discussing pros and cons of gardening and how gardening can be related to family life. Through this approach, mentees will be able to learn the process through practical experience.

The "Mentorship Approach" has been highly successful for Myanmar Women MPs as we have seen great impacts and achievement of our mentees throughout their journey. Six women MPs from the first cohort of the program became more upfront in parliament, in their own political parties and in their communities. Their engagement in women issues became more visible and their statements and appearances within the Parliament became stronger.

As Director and Founder of Akhaya, I am very proud of being able to initiate this program and for having the chance to work together with amazing, strong and skillful women leaders from the Myanmar Parliament, International Women's Development Agency and other women leaders involved in this program. The program is still needed to be strengthened and improved. I strongly believe that this "Myanmar Women Parliamentarians Mentoring Program" will contribute to true women leaders who will represent the women of Myanmar and lead for change.

I hope other NGOs and INGOs are able to utilise the "Mentorship Approach" in the practical implementations of their programs as this approach can bring positive changes in community work which can, in turn, bring changes to the nation.

Htar Htar
Director and Founder, Akhaya Women



Bettina Baldeschi

IWDA and Akhaya Women share an international vision to amplify and advance women's political leadership.

This Mentoring Program is a blueprint for life long international connections between women in government in Australia and Myanmar.

I expect this political exchange and learning between our countries will have impacts far beyond the governments of the day.

As the mentoring relationships gather momentum, a new public face of leadership from female members of parliament is emerging. This new face of leadership is sowing confidence and inspiration for voters. Importantly, it is also generating personal and professional joy and resilience for women MPs.

We support women's leadership, so women leaders can support women's rights. The evaluation of the 2017 pilot program demonstrates this works. The Myanmar MPs developed links with the women's movement and became solid advocates for gender equality. Their commitment to gender equality was found to be based on their experiences of being a woman and extended beyond party politics.

We see huge potential for expanding this program across the Asia-Pacific region - we're thrilled to be launching the program in Timor-Leste in 2019.

Bettina Baldeschi
CEO, IWDA

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INTRODUCTION

The doubling of women Members of Parliament (MPs) in Myanmar's national Parliament at the November 2015 general election was a great achievement and an important step towards strengthening the voice of Myanmar women. The number of women MPs at the national level doubled and women now make up 10.2% of all MPs.¹ Nevertheless, this still leaves Myanmar with the second lowest percentage of women in national parliaments across ASEAN countries, above Thailand which has the lowest level.

Many of the elected women overcame enormous social barriers to enter politics, motivating them to make positive changes in their respective communities. To support them achieve their goals, Akhya Women and Australia's International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) piloted a mentoring program under the regional Women's Action for Voice and Empowerment (WAVE) program in 2017/18.

Six women MPs across political parties with a commitment to advancing gender equality policy and legislation were matched with six Australian women MPs with similar commitments.

In 2018 an external evaluation² of the Pilot Mentoring Program found that as an outcome of the Program, the Myanmar MPs:

- increased their public speaking skills and confidence
- increased their engagement with constituencies on gender equality issues
- had greater connection with the women's movement and engagement on gender equality
- increased their understanding of mentoring
- had more visibility in their parties and constituencies
- strengthened the connection between Myanmar and Australia

The 2019 Mentoring Program draws on the lessons learnt in the Pilot, matching six new Myanmar MPs with six Australian MPs, the majority of whom participated in the Pilot.

The 2019 Mentoring Program aims to support the Myanmar women MPs to:

- become even more effective and successful in their parliamentary work – thereby challenging strongly held community attitudes that leadership is the prerogative of men
- obtain useful guidance regarding balancing parliamentary work and other family, social and political responsibilities
- increase their chances of retaining their seats in the 2020 general election
- work effectively within their parties, including promoting women within party structures
- work closely with women's movements to advocate for gender equality policies and legislation

PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This second edition of the Mentoring Handbook has been developed to assist 2019 Program participants to make the most out of the mentoring experience. It includes practical advice, tips and stories from the women MPs who were part of the Pilot Program.

Following a general introduction to mentoring, the Handbook is divided into two sections: one for mentees and one for mentors. It also includes a Mentoring Agreement template to support the development of individualised mentoring plans.

¹ IPU, Women in National Parliaments, 1 November 2018: <http://archive.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>.

² Newstone Global Consulting, Myanmar Women Parliamentarians Mentoring Pilot Learning Review, August 2018, www.iwda.org.au/resource/myanmar-women-parliamentarians-mentoring-pilot-learning-review/.

MENTORING - WHAT IS IT?

Mentoring is a supportive relationship between two people with similar goals and interests. The mentor listens and provides feedback and direction to support the mentee to achieve their goals. Mentoring is a two-way exchange based on mutual respect and trust.

Some mentoring relationships have a business or corporate focus. This Mentoring Program has a political focus. Political mentoring involves supporting candidates or newly elected MPs based on their individual priorities. Political mentors are generally experienced party officials, political campaigners or MPs who are willing to share their skills, knowledge and networks.

Mentoring has two main functions:

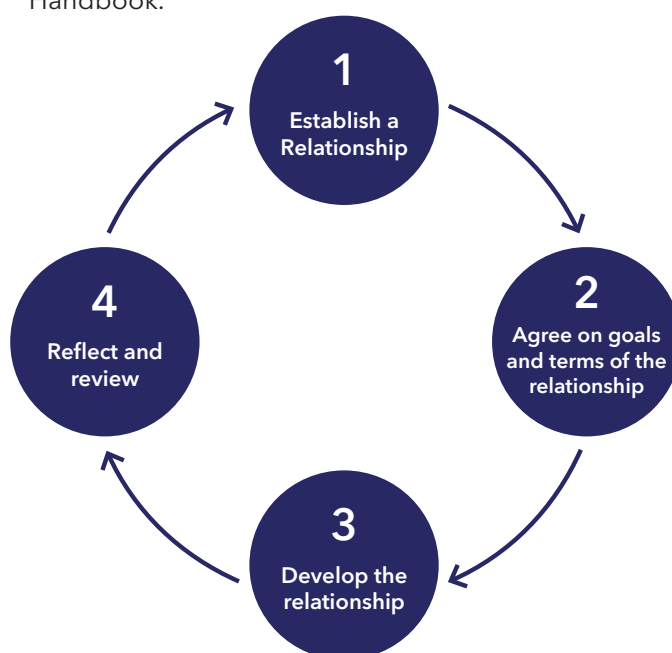
- **Personal support:** mentoring is a professional friendship - mentors listen with empathy, act as a sounding board and provide encouragement and reassurance about decisions.
- **Professional development:** mentors assist mentees to progress in their political careers by providing suggestions, sharing knowledge, introducing new resources and approaches and providing access to expanded networks.

Mentoring also provides development opportunities for mentors who gain access to new knowledge and fresh perspectives, strengthen their

listening and coaching skills and have an opportunity to reflect on their own goals and experiences.

While each mentoring partnership will be different, based on what the mentee wants to achieve and the skills and experiences of the mentor, there are some common steps which ensure an effective mentoring partnership.

These steps are set out below in diagrammatic form and described in more detail throughout this Handbook.



Myanmar and Australian MPs in 2017 Pilot Program. Photo: Shwe Wutt Hmon

INFORMATION FOR MYANMAR MPS

WHY BE PART OF THE MYANMAR WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS MENTORING PROGRAM?

As a woman MP, you will find many benefits to participating in a parliamentarians mentoring program:

Personal support

As a professional friend, your mentor will:

- assist with strengthening your self-esteem and confidence by sharing their experiences and encouraging self-reflection
- support you to develop resilience in the face of public criticism
- discuss strategies for self-care including how you might more easily balance your work in the Parliament with your family and community commitments
- listen to you when you need empathetic understanding from an independent source

Professional development

Based on your identified needs, your mentor can:







- provide suggestions on how to:
 - best advocate for the policies and legislation you want to develop and/or implement
 - work effectively in partnership with men in politics
 - raise your profile in your constituency and in the Parliament
 - build alliances with other women MPs and with the broader women's movement
 - campaign more effectively
- pose challenging questions to encourage you to see something from a different perspective and consider other strategies for resolving an issue
- suggest resources that might help with your parliamentary work or your future campaigning
- connect you to regional networks

Reflection and making a difference

As someone who has experienced the ups and downs of a parliamentary career, your mentor will:

- help you to reflect on the good times and the bad – and to learn from these
- encourage you to achieve all you can in the areas in which you want to make a difference
 - she knows from her experience the importance of making every day count during your time in parliament!

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF BEFORE YOU BEGIN

-  Do I want to become a more effective MP?
-  Do I feel comfortable asking questions and seeking advice?
-  Am I confident asking my mentor anything from the personal to the political?
-  Am I prepared to keep all of our discussions confidential?
-  Do I feel okay about sharing my experiences with a mentor and learning from her?
-  Am I open to feedback? – remember you don't have to do everything your mentor suggests – though it would be good to think about her suggestion and consider your further action

YES!

If you answered yes to all of these questions, then you will likely gain a lot from participating in this Mentoring Program.

THE BENEFIT OF A MENTOR

Daw Nan Moe, member of the Ta'ang National Party, was elected to represent Manton Township, Shan State in the Lower House of the Myanmar Parliament in 2015. At the beginning of the Pilot Mentoring Program, she asked to be matched with Judith Graley, Member of the Victorian Parliament. These are Nan Moe's reflections on her most significant changes as a result of the Pilot Program.³

As a naturally fast paced speaker with a tendency to become emotional when speaking about the lack of human rights in her electorate, Nan Moe says her first public speaking occasion at the Parliament did not go smoothly. Knowing there were over 400 representatives who could question her motion, she was nervous.

This experience was discussed with her mentor Judith Graley who provided her with practical public speaking steps such as breathing before speaking, sipping water, and building her message content for a powerful delivery. Whilst these things might be simple suggestions for some people, for her it was reassuring to know that many things in politics can be learned and mastered. Getting these practical tips from her mentor, a seasoned politician with many years of experience, instilled confidence that she could succeed. After practicing these speaking tips, her performance at parliament was noted by other representatives as showing a marked improvement.

The other significant change due to this Program was the importance of continuous campaigning. Judith showed her that as a legislator there is no down time. She must seize every opportunity to listen to constituents, get to know their issues and be in touch with the community. This is not only a good feedback mechanism, but it also sharpens the policy and mission directions of the representative. Now when she goes back to her constituency, during parliamentary recess, she will make every effort to listen to her constituents to more effectively represent their voices and concerns.



Judith Graley MP and Lway Nan Moe MP. Photo: Kira Sharkie

³ Newstone Global Consulting, Myanmar Women Parliamentarians Mentoring Pilot Learning Review, August 2018, p 9, www.iwda.org.au/resource/myanmar-women-parliamentarians-mentoring-pilot-learning-review/.

MENTORING - LEARNING MORE ABOUT GOOD GOVERNANCE

Daw Khin Saw Wai is a second term MP from the Arakan National Party representing Yethihtuang Township in Rakhine State. Khin Saw Wai asked to be matched with Dr Lesley Clark, a former State Member of the Queensland Parliament. These are Khin Saw Wai's reflections on her most significant changes as a result of the Pilot Program.⁴

Daw Khin Saw Wai joined the Pilot Mentoring Program to hone her understanding of gender sensitive health, education and social welfare policies. Her most significant change as a result of this program was the experience and learning she acquired from the Australian study trip. The tour included a visit to Dr Clark's former constituency in Barron River, Cairns. The geographic conditions of this constituency are similar to that of her state which is along the coastline with an abundance of natural resources.

She gained ideas about various state revenue generation policies and preservation of natural resources, such as forests, beaches and marine life. She also witnessed the flourishing ecotourism contributing to Cairns' economy. Further, as a significant change in her perspective on the role of government in taking steps towards environmental sustainability, she learned how the local government has adopted many initiatives. Rakhine State has a long pristine beachline with a deep-sea port. If ecotourism could be established, the revenues could be utilised for the social development of the people of Rakhine and elsewhere. This policy learning opportunity enhanced her understanding of good governance in the area of resource sharing arrangements among the states and provinces.



Daw Khin Saw Wai MP and Dr Lesley Clark

⁴ Newstone Global Consulting, Myanmar Women Parliamentarians Mentoring Pilot Learning Review, August 2018, p 8, www.iwda.org.au/resource/myanmar-women-parliamentarians-mentoring-pilot-learning-review/.

THE MENTORING STEPS AND TIPS FOR MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR MENTORING EXPERIENCE

Step 1 - Establish a relationship

- Spend some time getting to know each other. Share your experiences, ideas and political goals with your mentor. Tell her about your constituency and the Parliament - it is very different from Australia!
- Tell her why you got involved in politics, how you have already made a difference as an MP and the difference you hope to make in the future.
- Find out more about your mentor's background. Ask her about her political experience, her constituency, the reasons she became involved in politics and what policy issues she is passionate about.

Step 2 - Agree on goals and terms of the relationship

- To ensure this learning process best meets your needs, think about what you want to achieve from the mentoring. Why did you agree to join the Mentoring Program?
- You can revise these goals as the mentoring evolves. The Pilot Program participants found that simple goals at the start of the Program worked best. Write down what you want to achieve from the Program. It has a one-year formal time frame so make sure the goals you write down are simple and can be realistically achieved.
- Discuss your goals with your mentor to identify how she can best support you to meet them. Encourage your mentor to discuss what she hopes to get from the mentoring relationship.
- Agree upon the terms of the relationship. For example, how often, when and how will you communicate? Remember the time difference - Myanmar is approximately four hours behind Australia. Most of the Pilot Program partners found communicating via Facebook Messenger worked best. In most cases the messages were sent via a translator through the help of Akhaya Women. Unfortunately, your mentor will not be able to speak Burmese.

The Mentoring Agreement template at page 18 will assist you and your mentor to systematically work through the goals and terms of your relationship.

Step 3 - Develop the relationship

- Recognise that mentoring relationships involve trust and take time to develop.
- Recognise that mentoring is a partnership - each of you brings different knowledge, skills and experiences to this partnership. Learn with your mentor, not just from your mentor. Your mentor will certainly learn a lot from you.

Communication

- Keep in regular contact with your mentor. For the mentoring to be beneficial, you need to prioritise it and commit to regular contact. Don't wait for your mentor to contact you.
- If you think you would get more out of the mentoring sessions if you had an interpreter for oral communication and/or translation of written communication, please don't hesitate to ask. Akhaya Women will help facilitate this. Most of the participants in the Pilot Program used an interpreter to aid their communication.
- Prepare for each mentoring session - create a list of topics you wish to talk about, including any specific questions. You might send these to your mentor before the session so she can also prepare. This list will ensure you're actually getting what you want from the Mentoring Program.
- Keep a journal and after each contact with your mentor reflect and record what you may do differently in the future.
- Remember that you will also meet face-to-face with your mentor at least twice during the Program - once in Myanmar at the beginning and also when you travel to Australia as part of the exchange program.

Responding to suggestions

- Be open to new ideas. Listen to what your mentor suggests, consider what it means for you and make sure you say what you think about the advice - you are best placed to know if the idea or suggestion is suitable for Myanmar and will work in your political context.
- Listen to feedback with an open mind. Mentors are critical friends who will encourage you to consider challenging issues before they arise in a more public setting.

Keeping mentoring discussions confidential

- Ensure you keep what you talk about with your mentor confidential. For your mentoring relationship to thrive, it is important that you

feel confident that information you share remains between the two of you. If you feel that you need to talk about the specifics of your mentoring partnership with others, for example, you may be asked to speak about the benefits of your mentoring partnership to a wider group, ensure that you first discuss this with your mentor.

Step 4 - Reflect and review

- Regularly review your mentoring relationship. Consider if it is meeting your expectations and whether you are on track to meeting your goals – those you set out in the Mentoring Agreement. You may need to revise these over time. Share your reflections with your mentor.

- Provide constructive feedback to your mentor about what aspects of the mentoring relationship are most useful and what could be improved.

One of the most important things about the Myanmar Women Parliamentarians Mentoring Program is to enjoy the mentoring experience!

Always remember:

- You bring a lot of knowledge and experience to the mentoring partnership – your mentor will definitely learn a lot from you
- Don't wait for your mentor to contact you – if you need support, send her a message
- If you have any concerns or problems with the mentoring partnership, please contact Akhaya Women

HOW TO MAKE MENTORING WORK FOR YOU

Cheery Zahau is the Women and Politics Advisor with Akhaya Women providing technical guidance for this Mentoring Program.

- List out the things you want to ask your mentor, for example:
 - Are you asking for information you need for your parliamentary work?
 - Are you asking for some clear advice about what to do when you feel uncertain?
 - Are you asking for someone to listen to you and share your thoughts?
 - Are you looking for inspiration because you feel lost, helpless or hopeless?
- Trust your mentor, it's very helpful to have a long-term friendship.
- Give yourself sufficient time when you are with your mentor – it's much nicer if you spend one or two hours for tea/drinks whenever there is an opportunity. The best ideas come out when having a relaxed meeting.
- Interactive dialogue is very helpful when communicating with your mentor (ask questions back and forth).



Cheery Zahau

INFORMATION FOR AUSTRALIAN MPS




WHAT WILL YOU DO AS A MENTOR?

What you do as a mentor will vary according to your experience and skills as well as what the Myanmar MP with whom you are matched wants and needs.

However, most likely you will provide her with support and advice on how to:

- be resilient in the face of public criticism
- work more effectively in the Parliament
- work more effectively in her political party
- work effectively in partnership with men in politics
- advocate for the policies she wishes to develop and/or implement
- be an effective grassroots MP and improve her chance of re-election by keeping in regular contact with her constituents, delivering the services they need, and/or which were promised
- run a strong campaign to get re-elected
- practice 'self-care' for example better balancing work as a politician with other responsibilities in life, including family and community
- build strong alliances and networks and support other women
- develop greater self-confidence

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF BEFORE YOU BEGIN

-  Am I interested and knowledgeable about the particular issues that impact on women in leadership, including in politics?
-  Do I want to help another woman in her political career?
-  Do I have experience in working with women cross-culturally and do I want to learn more about communicating cross-culturally?
-  Do I consider myself a good role model?
-  Have I had a mentor or been a mentor in the past and do I want to learn more about mentoring?
-  Do I consider I have excellent communication skills?
-  Can I listen, encourage, support and provide constructive feedback without being condescending and judgemental?

YES!

If you answered yes to all of these - then you will make a great mentor.

WHY BE A MENTOR?

Ann Sudmalis is the Member for Gilmore in the Australian Parliament. During the Pilot Program, Daw Chris Htun, representing Kayin State, Constituency No. 7, for the National League of Democracy, was matched with Ann. Here Ann speaks about the benefits she gained from participating in the Program.

Working with technology is not unlike working with someone in a different nation.

While we have much in common and plenty of potential to have amazing outcomes, unless there is a balance of skill, expectation and patience, then the system simply will not work.

The Myanmar Mentoring Program works on all aspects of skill building, personal compatibility and balance of social and political connection.

Being a mentor is never a one-way street of learning and the effectiveness of this program reflects that.

It is both fascinating and inspiring to view the government mechanics in another nation, to see the diversity of opinion, to compare the way politicians in a developing nation struggle to work as hard as they do with so little support, either in terms of accommodation and staffing.

I have been truly grateful to be able to share in this experience and I look forward to helping and learning even more in 2019.



Ann Sudmalis MP and Daw Chris Htun MP. Photo: Jen Clark

WHAT WILL I ACTUALLY DO?

Senator Claire Moore has been a Senator for Queensland since 2001 and has held many senior positions, including Shadow Minister for Women. She is currently the Shadow Minister for International Development and the Pacific. With many years of experience as a mentor, Claire was matched in the Pilot Program with Daw Khin Swe Lwin, representing Constituency No. 9 in Chin State for the National League for Democracy.

Mentors provide support and challenge. The political workplace focuses on personal success and achievement in a public, competitive environment where it can be difficult to find safe, honest, and private support, based on real trust.

Effective mentoring involves exchange of skills and experience firmly based on mutual respect. It is critical to develop a personal connection and confidence that while being challenged there is no judgement or attack.

I value the assurance that there is absolute discretion and I can share fears and uncertainties as well as frustration knowing that it will not be repeated or made public. I can be honest and open without vulnerability.

Working with women in another country, particularly when there is an absolute language barrier, does have particular challenges, however the key principle remains... this must be a genuine personal connection. So despite the reliance on good interpretation services, the benefits are the chances to share experience and have the space to just say and ask whatever you need. Each relationship is different, so just having the contact when you need it provides the security, and the confidence, that someone really cares

And always remember to have fun and share the laughter.



Senator Claire Moore and Daw Khin Swe Lwin MP. Photo: Shwe Wutt Hmon

TIPS FOR BEING AN EFFECTIVE MENTOR

Step 1 - Establish the relationship

- Prior to meeting with your mentee, find out as much as you can about the Myanmar political context – DFAT will also provide you with briefing materials as part of an initial orientation. The importance of a thorough briefing was emphasised in the evaluation of the Pilot Mentoring Program
- At your first meeting, take time getting to know each other:
 - Ask your mentee why she stood for election, what she has achieved so far as an MP, what she wants to achieve in the future and what policy issues she is passionate about. Find out about her party, constituency, ethnic group and major support base.
 - Talk a little about yourself – your community, your constituency, the policy areas you are interested in, what you have achieved – and most importantly – how you think you might be able to use your experience to assist your mentee.
- Emphasise that all communication will remain confidential. A sense of trust is crucial to a positive mentoring relationship.

Step 2 - Agree on the goals and terms of the relationship

- Discuss your expectations and your mentee's expectations of participating in the Mentoring Program. This is something to do at the first face-to-face meeting – and to review as you go along. Remember that much of the benefit of the Mentoring Program will be psycho-social (providing a sense of solidarity and friendship etc).
- Encourage your mentee to identify what she hopes to achieve by participating in the Mentoring Program. Outline the assistance you think you might be able to provide in the areas your mentee has identified. Together, draft clear goals to be achieved within a one-year time period. You can revise these goals as the mentoring evolves. The Pilot Program participants found that simple goals at the start of the Program worked best.
- Write down what you both want to achieve from the Program. It has a one-year formal time frame so make sure the goals you write down are simple and can be realistically achieved.
- Agree upon the terms of the relationship. For example, how often, when and using what methods will you communicate? Remember

there will be times when your mentee might need a quick response from you. Note: the time difference – Myanmar is approximately four hours behind Australia.

- Most of the Pilot Program participants found communicating via Facebook Messenger worked best, and in most cases the messages were sent via a translator through the help of Akhaya Women. You probably will not be able to speak Burmese and your mentee may not be confident in English, at least initially.

The Mentoring Agreement template at page 18 will assist you and your mentee to systematically work through the goals and terms of your relationship.

Step 3 - Develop the relationship

- Recognise that developing a trusting mentoring relationship takes time.
- Take time to understand your mentee's needs. Focus discussions around what your mentee hopes to achieve from the Mentoring Program – the goals you both set out in the Mentoring Agreement – but remember these may change over time.
- Avoid telling the mentee what she should do. Provide suggestions based on your own experience, but keep in mind that the Myanmar political experience may be very different from that in Australia.
- If you don't know an answer to a question, discuss other possible contacts or sources of information.
- And remember that you will also meet face-to-face with your mentee at least twice during the Program – once in Myanmar at the beginning and also when she travels to Australia as part of the exchange program.

Communication

- Maintain regular contact. If your mentee doesn't make contact with you, make contact with her – send her a message on Facebook Messenger or give her a call asking how she is doing.
- Use active listening skills to clarify and confirm and respect any silences.
- Most of the Pilot Program mentoring pairs used a translator to ensure they got the most out of their mentoring sessions. Please don't hesitate to ask for translation support. Akhaya Women and IWDA will help facilitate this.
- In your discussions, try to use open ended or probing questions to explore specific issues. For example:

- Can you give me a typical example?
 - What precisely happened?
 - What was the outcome?
 - How did you handle it?
 - How was it resolved?
 - What worked well?
 - What might have worked better?
 - What did you learn from the experience?
 - What might you do differently next time?
- To promote broad discussion and keep the relationship on track, other open-ended questions that may be useful for beginning conversations are:
 - How are you feeling?
 - What's been happening since we last spoke/met?
 - What have you learnt?
 - What concerns do you have?
 - How about this for an idea...?
 - What are your plans for achieving these outcomes?

Step 4 - Reflect and review

- Initiate reflection on the mentoring process – though recognise your mentee may be reluctant to provide frank feedback to you about your mentoring style. You may suggest she provides feedback to Akhaya Women to be then shared with you.
- Consider if you are both on track to achieving the mentee's goals – suggest your mentee considers updating her goals.
- Reflect on whether the mentoring relationship is meeting your expectations and what you are learning from the mentoring relationship – share your thoughts with your mentee.
- Continually reflect on whether an interpreter/ translator might assist your communication.

Most importantly, enjoy the mentoring experience!

Always remember to:

- Listen carefully
- Accept differences
- Be aware of your own assumptions and biases

MENTORING IS ALL ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP

Daw Nan Moe, the Member for Manton Township in Shan State in the Lower House of the Myanmar Parliament, was matched with Judith Graley, Member of the Victorian Parliament during the Pilot Program. Here they talk about their unique mentoring relationship.

In describing their mentoring relationship Judith Graley says: "in politics, sometimes the most powerful support can be simply having someone who understands. Having someone who can empathise with real political experiences and help to support Nan Moe on a political and a personal level is really important. She's a naturally effervescent person, and I'm a fairly open person as well, so we really just talk things through and also have a bit of a giggle."

Nan Moe agrees that their relationship came naturally. She says: "As we are both women politicians, it didn't take long to develop trust and open communication. The way Judith struggles in this sexist environment, is so similar to me. Judith 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."



Judith Graley MP and Daw Nan Moe MP, Myanmar 2017

QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE ABOUT THE PROGRAM

Q. HOW HAVE THE MENTEES AND MENTORS BEEN CHOSEN?

Most of the current mentors participated in the Pilot Mentoring Program and were very keen to be involved again. The mentors are: experienced parliamentarians; from different political parties; have a commitment to gender equality; and have at least some prior experience in mentoring.

The Myanmar MPs were chosen by the Parliament. They have a commitment to gender equality and are from different political parties, ethnic groups and geographic areas.

Q. HOW WILL I CHOOSE MY MENTORING PARTNER?

All Program participants will meet face-to-face in Myanmar at the start of the Program. Each participant will be encouraged to talk about their experience and interests, as well as what they hope to gain from participating in the Program.

The Myanmar MPs will then choose who they would like to be matched with based on their policy interests and priorities.

Q. HOW WILL I MAKE CONTACT WITH THE MENTEE/MENTOR?

There will be a face-to-face meeting in Myanmar at the start of the Mentoring Program. And there will be a second face-to-face meeting approximately six months into the Program, with the Myanmar MPs travelling to Australia.

Contact will primarily be through phone or electronic means, such as email, Facebook Messenger, Skype or smartphone applications (WhatsApp etc). Translation of written communication and interpretation of oral communication will be facilitated where useful. If you think translation support will assist, contact Akhaya Women or IWDA.

Q. HOW OFTEN SHOULD I MAKE CONTACT WITH MY MENTEE/MENTOR?

This will be determined by each mentor and mentee at the beginning of the partnership and will be written into the Mentoring Partnership Agreement. It will most likely be fortnightly or monthly. You might also agree that if a particular problem arises you will make contact when you need to. Just remember there are time differences between Myanmar and Australia.

The Pilot Program evaluation found that the most important thing is that contact is maintained on a regular basis.

Q. WHAT IF I NEED HELP WITH COMMUNICATING?

Much of the communication between partners will be conducted by phone or electronic means, such as email, Facebook Messenger, Skype or smartphone applications.

As the Australian MPs unfortunately don't speak Burmese, you may require assistance with translation. Akhaya Women can provide help with this.

Q. HOW DO I KEEP IN CONTACT WITH MY MENTEE/MENTOR?

At the beginning of the partnership you will discuss and agree on who will usually initiate the contact and how contact will be made. These details will be included in your Mentoring Partnership Agreement.

Q. WHAT HAPPENS IF MY MENTOR/ MENTEE DOESN'T CONTACT ME?

Mentoring is a two-way exchange - if the designated person does not make the contact when agreed, the other person should initiate the contact. The main thing is to keep up the contact!

If agreed-upon contact is not made on two consecutive occasions, contact Akhaya Women or IWDA to help problem-solve.

Q. WHAT HAPPENS IF THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP IS NOT WORKING OUT?

It is helpful to regularly review whether both parties are finding the mentoring relationship useful. Please provide feedback to one another about what is working well and what could be improved.

If you see problems developing contact Akhaya Women or IWDA for support. If issues cannot be worked through then another mentor will be allocated.

Q. WHEN SHOULD OUR MENTORING RELATIONSHIP END?

The formal program will last 12 months and at the end of the 12 months we will ask mentees and mentors to reflect on the impact of the mentoring. It is then up to mentees and mentors to decide together if they would like to continue their mentoring informally beyond 2019.

THE MENTORING AGREEMENT

A mentoring agreement helps ensure the expectations of both the mentee and mentor are met and that both parties are clear on each other's respective roles and responsibilities. While the agreement is written down at the beginning of the partnership, it should be regularly reviewed as the relationship and trust develops.

A Mentoring Partnership Agreement template is set out below. Please use this as a basis for discussion and documentation of the roles and responsibilities within your mentoring partnership.

Following on from this you will find a sample agreement to help generate ideas.

MYANMAR WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS MENTORING PROGRAM PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT TEMPLATE

We have agreed on the following goals for our mentoring partnership:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

We have discussed how we will work together. In order to ensure that our partnership is a mutually rewarding and satisfying for both of us, we agree to:

1. Make contact regularly. Our specific schedule of contact is as follows:

Frequency:

Method:

Who will initiate the contact?

2. Maintain confidentiality of our relationship. Confidentiality for us means:

3. Honour the ground rules we have developed for the mentoring partnership. Our ground rules are:

-
-
-

4. Provide regular feedback to each other and monitor progress. We will accomplish this by:

-
-
-

We agree to make contact regularly for a minimum of 12 months. At the end of this period, we will review this agreement and our progress. The formal mentoring relationship will then be complete. If we choose to continue our mentoring partnership informally, we will negotiate a basis for continuation.

If, within the 12-month period, one of us believes it is no longer productive for us to continue, we will communicate this to each other and contact Akhaya Women or IWDA for assistance.

Mentor's signature:.....

Date:...../...../.....

Contact details for mentoring communication:

.....

.....

Mentee's signature:.....

Date:...../...../.....

Contact details for mentoring communication:

.....

.....

MYANMAR WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS MENTORING PROGRAM

SAMPLE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

We have agreed on the following goals for our mentoring partnership:

1. To get to know each other and to find out more about our particular challenges and how these might be best overcome.
2. To share our experience of working with others in the Parliament to get things done, for example how to get support from others in the Parliament about a particular policy idea or program.
3. To learn from each other effective campaign strategies in preparation for the next election such as using social media more effectively.
4. To share practical strategies to connect better with constituents and to put these in place.
5. To discuss and work on practical strategies to more effectively work with men in politics.

We have discussed how we will work together. In order to ensure that our partnership is a mutually rewarding and satisfying one for both of us, we agree to:

1. Make contact regularly. Our specific schedule of contact is as follows:
 - Frequency: once every month on the first of the month
 - Method: Facebook Messenger and calls on WhatsApp
 - Who will initiate the contact: the mentee will make the call at the agreed time
2. Maintain confidentiality of our relationship. Confidentiality for us means:
 - We will agree ahead of time if any information is to be shared with anyone else.
3. Honour the ground rules we have developed for the mentoring partnership. Our ground rules are:
 - We will treat each other with mutual respect and recognise that each of us bring different skills and experience to the Mentoring Partnership
 - We recognise that we will both learn from the Mentoring Partnership
 - We will be in regular contact as set out above
 - Mentee will assume responsibility for confirming that the agreed time of communication is still convenient a day prior to the agreed communication time (taking into account the time difference between Myanmar and Australia)
 - We will both keep a journal of our mentoring experiences
 - At the conclusion of each contact we will agree on topics for our next discussion
4. Provide regular feedback to each other and monitor progress. We will accomplish this by:
 - Checking in with each other at the end of our discussion whether we have both achieved the aim of the discussion
 - Regularly discussing the progress we have made towards meeting our goals
 - Checking in with each other periodically about whether the mentoring goals are being met and/or whether they require revision
 - Being open with one another about whether we feel our communication is effective or could be improved

We agree to make contact regularly for a minimum of 12 months. At the end of this period, we will review this agreement and our progress. The formal mentoring relationship will then be complete. If we choose to continue our mentoring partnership informally, we will negotiate a basis for continuation.

If, within the 12-month period, one of us believes it is no longer productive for us to continue, we will communicate this to each other and contact Akhaya Women or IWDA for assistance.

Mentor's signature:.....

Mentee's signature:.....

Date:...../...../.....

Date:...../...../.....

Contact details for mentoring communication:

Contact details for mentoring communication:

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JANUARY 2019

IWDA Head Office

Level 1, 250 Queen Street
Melbourne VIC 3000
1300 661 812
iwda@iwda.org.au
www.iwda.org.au
ABN 19 242 959 685
ACN 126 216 165

Akhaya Office

No.8, Block72,
Nawaday Garden City,
Yangon-Pathein Road (no.5
Road), Hlaing Thar Yar
Township, Yangon,
Myanmar
www.akhaya.org



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Netherlands

