

EXPLORATORY CALL FOR CONCEPT NOTES

A) PROMOTING TRANSFORMATIVE MASCULINITIES

B) GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE PROGRAMMING IN SOCIAL COHESION

Many groups across Myanmar continue to face physical and structural violence such as community-based conflict, hate speech inflaming ethnic or religious tensions, violent confrontation between armed groups, gender-based violence, displacement, or exclusionary policies, norms or actions. **Many aspects of such violence and exclusion have significant gendered undertones** - from who is most impacted by day to day violence in the home, to how men and women are expected to behave in public and private spheres, through to who is expected to provide, protect, or give care.

Entrenched gender inequality remains a major issue across all communities and geographies in Myanmar and this undermines social cohesion. The Paung Sie Facility (PSF) understands a **cohesive society as working towards the wellbeing of all, creates a sense of belonging, promotes trust, and offers everyone the opportunity to prosper and advance peacefully**. We see gender inequality as undermining social cohesion through the dynamics outlined below.

What is the problem?



Harmful and unequal gender norms



Family, religious, cultural leaders entrench gender norms



Discriminatory policies and practices - including based on gender



Normalisation and high levels of gender-based violence

PSF is calling for concept notes responding to two areas of programming on gender equality and social cohesion, applicants must apply for either strand A or strand B:

The Call

Strand A: Promoting transformative masculinities

Globally, work on gender and masculinities is gaining acknowledgement as a key dynamic in conflict resolution, peacebuilding and for achieving gender equality. Global evidence has shown that in times of conflict, men's traditional roles – often as providers and protectors – are challenged, and the inability to meet these expectations can fuel further violence¹. Even in context that have not experienced protracted conflict, global evidence shows that men who identify more with masculinity defined with aggression and dominance, are more likely to be violent. This violence is primarily directed at women,

¹ Wright, H. (2014) *Masculinities, conflict and peace building, perspectives on men through a gender lens*. Saferworld; and Naujoks, J. and M T. Ko (2018) *Pulling the strings: Masculinities, gender and social conflict in Myanmar*. International Alert, Phan Tee Eain and Thingaha Gender Organization.

undermining their wellbeing and prospect to prosper peacefully. This violence is also directed at the men themselves through self-harm, children, and other men. Further, this body of evidence further demonstrates that men who experience social discrimination experience higher levels of violence from other men². It is this latter form of violence programming on social cohesion in Myanmar tends to focus on.

While acknowledging the vulnerabilities experienced by men in times of crisis, work on masculinities must not reinforce the many areas men already do have power, promote more 'benevolent' patriarchal norms or inadvertently elevate men's voices and experiences above those of women and girls. This work should not move away from seeking to improve the situation of women and girls and achieve gender equality but go hand in hand with it. It is with global best practice and an analysis of the Myanmar context, that PSF has chosen to open an exploratory call for concept notes on **'transformative masculinities'**, which puts an emphasis on gendered social norms in relation to men's power and how this can be changed for gender equality in programming for social cohesion.

In Myanmar, PSF's analysis has found that work on gender with a masculinities lens is both limited and inconsistent. There are differences in how work on masculinities is framed, implemented and how it relates to achieving gender equality. Additionally, working on gender is mostly (mis)understood as working on issues relating to women and girls only, and there is often resistance to work on gender. In practice, most of the work on masculinities in Myanmar is at the individual level – with training of individual men, and some work with youth, that may engage women. PSF sees value in supporting transformative approaches in work on masculinities. **Transformative approaches that seek to change gendered beliefs, practices and power structures are lacking.** These approaches are also lacking in relation to intercommunal tensions, legal and policy spaces, or conflict transformation as often prioritised in social cohesion work. The understanding of patriarchal norms and dominant masculinities as a driver of conflict, tension and structural exclusion is limited. Transformative approaches would aim to nurture a wider understanding of how men and boys understand themselves, how they interact with others, including women, and increase space for and value of non-violent conflict resolution at individual, relational, community and societal levels.

Transformative Approaches seek to:



Change gendered
power dynamics



Address root causes of
gender inequality -
including norms



Change policies and
practices maintaining
gender inequality



Respond to the needs
and elevate the social
value of women and girls

The following areas for programming on masculinities in the context of social cohesion or peacebuilding are of interest:

- Fatherhood (and the role of men in care work for family and community)
- Work with religious leaders and communities on masculinities
- Engaging men as allies in social norm change and bystander intervention

² Our Watch (2019) *Men in focus: Unpacking masculinities and engaging men in the prevention of violence against women*.
Retrievable from: <http://www.ourwatch.org.au>

- Transformative masculinities and non-violence, including relating to conflict management
- Structural and systemic analysis of men's attitudes, beliefs and practices around gender equality in Myanmar

We also welcome applications with a different focus if they are able to clearly articulate how their approach to transformative masculinities will contribute to social cohesion in Myanmar.

We invite applications that test new ideas and encourage learning on what works to explore and promote transformative masculinities in Myanmar.

Strand B: Gender transformative programming in social cohesion and peacebuilding

Despite laudable advances in women's participation in peacebuilding in Myanmar over the last five years, social cohesion and peace programming which actively seeks to prioritise gender equality and women's empowerment as a primary objective remain a minority. Further, current efforts to integrate gender considerations in social cohesion programmes are rarely based on gender transformative approaches. This means that gender is considered in a symbolic manner, with some mention of gender dynamics in an analysis or as a percentage of women participants in an activity. Consequently, programming does not prioritise the needs of women, girls, boys or meaningfully address the inequality they face. Promoting gender equality and women's empowerment are central to **gender transformative approaches, as they seek to: change gendered power relations and norms; address root causes of gender inequality; change policies and practices maintaining inequality; and respond to the needs of women and girls (and other gender minorities) and elevate their social position and value.**

Tackling the structural inequality that consistently affects women and girls, across Myanmar, is critical to reach a cohesive society as one that works towards the wellbeing of all, creates a sense of belonging and offers everyone the opportunity to advance peacefully. Dedicated efforts and transformative approaches are needed to make meaningful progress towards both gender equality and more social cohesion.

We invite applications that test new ideas and encourage learning on what works to implement gender transformative programming in social cohesion in Myanmar. We invite applications that are locally informed and driven, that respond and seek to transform inequality and discrimination based on gender and may include (but not limited to) aspects of the Women, Peace and Security agenda (participation, prevention of violence, protection, and relief and recovery).

Guidance

We invite concept notes from, in particular, local, national organisations, and women's organisations, but will also consider applications from international organisations, which develop approaches and projects that promote either:

- a) transformative masculinities; or
- b) gender transformative programming in social cohesion and peacebuilding

In doing so, all applications must respond to PSF's ToC which prioritises:

- 1) **Mitigating Conflict:** Helping individuals and groups to understand, prevent and respond to conflict and violence, mainly at the local level.
- 2) **Catalyzing Leadership:** Supporting current and future leaders to understand and respond to conflict and violence, from the grassroots to top-level, including by promoting more equality and diversity.

- 3) **Influencing structures:** Encouraging greater sensitivity to gender equality and shifting discriminatory norms, policy and practice by government actors, communities, institutions.

We expect applicants to make a compelling case as to how their work will contribute to the outcome goal of building an environment more conducive to dialogue, increased equality, and create safer communities – and how they think implementing either a) promote transformative masculinities or b) gender transformative programmes for social cohesion as critical pathways to achieve this. Applicants should set out their own understanding of the challenges and creative solutions to them. Applicants are invited to consider how they would help achieve progress in one or more of the areas identified in the ToC but PSF is receptive to strong arguments for other ideas.

Applicants must apply for one of the two strands mentioned in the call: either A) Transformative Masculinities **OR** B) Gender Transformative Programming in Social Cohesion.

- We encourage applicants to propose locations which are relevant to clearly articulated causes or sources of exclusionary norms or practices, or where there are sites of possible progress, for example, attached to recent or imminent policy or practice decisions.
- A **two-step process** is envisaged. Concept notes will be due by **31th December 2019**. Applicants will then be advised if a full proposal will be sought, and guidance will be shared at that point. An average grant size is about USD 200,000 for PSF, but we would expect smaller organisations to apply for smaller amounts.
- PSF is seeking applications for projects that may run until 31 March 2022, but projects for a shorter duration will also be considered, particularly for research or pilot projects. PSF welcomes ideas that test new approaches to identified and evidenced problems.
- PSF's Theory of Change in relation to transformative masculinities and gender transformative approaches in social cohesion is outlined in a guidance document released with this call. All successful applications need to be specific about what results to deliver on in terms of social cohesion. Please see the "PSF's Theory of Change with Example Interventions" accompanying this call.
- All applicants must embed and demonstrate conflict sensitivity in their approaches.
- PSF's **Concept Note Template** is available on our website: <http://www.paungsiefacility.org/templates.html>. Please use this template.

Please Contact Us

PSF can support the development of your concept note. We encourage you to contact and meet with: Shwe Yee Oo, Programme Officer – Gender and Inclusion: syo@paungsiefacility.org