



2024's Deepest Wounds Found in

WOMEN





Institute for Strategy and Policy – Myanmar

Established in 2016.



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The original Burmese version was published on February 3, 2025.

CONCEPT NOTE

What distinguishes women's struggles from those of others? How have challenges intensified in the aftermath of the 2021 coup?

It has been four years since the coup. Myanmar people's lives have become increasingly difficult just to survive. Hidden challenges now shape daily life; people vanish into thin air, empty chairs at family dinner tables, and professionals forced to work in the shadows, stripped of the pride in their calling. Notably, in 2024, the enforcement of the Conscription Law has heartbreakingly forced parents to send their children far from home or abroad, with scant hope of reunion.

The economy stagnates, politics are fraught, and natural disasters exacerbate the situation. These multifaceted challenges indiscriminately afflict the rich and the poor, young and old, urban and rural, causing widespread suffering. However, a closer examination reveals that the deepest wounds are carved into women's lives. Beneath the surface—behind the makeup and forced smiles—lies the reality of profound, persistent, multi-layered stress that women face. Hollow and impractical assurances like "we'll hoist the flag in triumph by the end of next year" are no longer motivating. Tying public resilience with a long thread of false hopes is cruel. ISP-Myanmar wants to shed some light on the reality of women through this discussion.

Earlier, ISP-Myanmar's Research Network published survey findings analyzing the challenges faced by the women of Myanmar. The perceptions of over 500 women nationwide were also collected. Among these, 74 percent expressed concerns about their future, while over 88 percent facing scarcity of job opportunities and dealing with income and expense imbalances. Commodity prices have risen by more than threefold and affected 83 percent of them. Over 70 percent are exploring domestic remedies for these issues without going abroad. While additional



- ▶ research is necessary, these statistics and reactions significantly reflect the present circumstances.

The resilience of the public, including women, should not be overestimated, nor should it be assumed to remain constant. These compounding challenges erode people's resilience over time. Many people are selling their possessions as their pockets slowly thin out. No institution can sufficiently support the beleaguered populace; self-reliance is paramount, yet communal support is woefully inadequate. In this milieu, whether democratically elected officials, people in power, reigning authorities, or resistance forces, all must place public well-being at the forefront of their agendas. All policymakers must prioritize the betterment of the people. In the face of such profound challenges and consequences, the community urgently requires a significant bolstering of psychosocial support mechanisms.

This episode of "*30 Minutes with the ISP*" explores the results of socioeconomic studies from ISP-Myanmar's Research Network program and insights from women living in the country regarding their current situations. ■

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30 MINUTES with the ISP

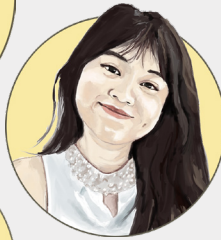
2024's Deepest Wounds Found in

WOMEN



Thet Kyi Sin

Program Head
Research Network Program
Lead Panelist



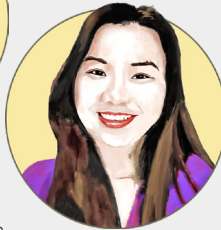
Su Lin Han

Program Assistant
Research Network Program
Co-panelist



Khant

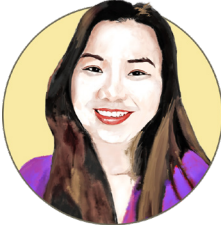
Program Associate
Research Network Program
Co-panelist



Ingyin May

Program Head
Communications Department
Host

This event was held on December 21, 2024, exclusively for ISP Gabyin Community members. The recorded video of the event is available on ISP-Myanmar's YouTube Channel with English subtitles. DVB broadcasts the recorded video with English subtitles of the live event on its channel regularly on Mondays and Wednesdays.



Ingyin May

Program Head
Communications Department
Host

Greetings to all the attendees of the "30 Minutes with the ISP" program. I am Ingyin May, and I will be the host for today's session. This is the sixth episode of the "30 Minutes with the ISP" program. Today's discussion is presented under the title: "2024's Deepest Wounds Found in Women."

Our panelists for today's discussion are Thet Kyi Sin, Program Head of the ISP-Myanmar Research Network Program; Khant, Program Associate; and Su Lin Han, Program Assistant. After the panelists' presentations, we will open the floor to questions, comments, and reflections from attendees. You are welcome to ask live questions or submit them via the Chat or Q&A features. If we can't address all questions during the live session, we will answer them via email afterward.

Today's session will be broadcast live on DVB TV News, the ISP-Myanmar website, and our social media platforms. Let's begin the panel discussion.



Thet Kyi Sin

Program Head
Research Network Program
Lead Panelist

Firstly, I would like to thank you all for taking the time to join us today. It has now been almost four years since the military coup. Over these four years, the lives of the people of Myanmar have become increasingly challenging. We often hear of those vanished into thin air, empty chairs at family dinner tables, and professionals forced to work in the shadows, stripped of the pride in their calling. Day by day, we witness and hear more stories of such struggles. In 2024, these challenges were further exacerbated by the SAC's conscription law. Many parents send their children to remote areas or even abroad, often hoping that at least their children will remain alive and one day reunite with them again. Economic hardships, political instability, and natural disasters also continue to compound these difficulties.

These combined pressures touch everyone—rich or poor, young or old, urban or rural. But when you examine any burden or challenge, you'll find that women are always at the center of the hardest hits. They face insecurity both within their homes and outside, job scarcity, making it harder for their livelihood, and constant worry for the well-being of their husbands, sons, and brothers, without any support system, having to confront these issues entirely on their own. This discussion aims to shed light on the harsh realities of women's lives. We seek to explore what challenges women encounter and how they struggle to resolve them practically, focusing on political and conflict-related, economic, and social challenges. Our findings are based on surveys conducted with over 500 women across Myanmar. In addition, we have also conducted some Focus Group Discussions with female researchers from various townships.

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30MINUTES
with the**ISP**

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its channel regularly on Mondays (11:30 am)
and Wednesdays (7:30 pm).



■ In Their Own Words - Young Female Researchers

“Uncertainty weighs heavily”

Currently, if we are to identify the biggest challenge, I think it would be uncertainty. Uncertainty weighs heavily on everyone. For example, for those who participated in the CDM (Civil Disobedience Movement), they felt unabating uncertainty and anxiety about their careers. Another significant challenge is the concern for others in our families. Although it's not me, having a father and a younger brother, I worry about them because of the military's conscription law. This adds to the challenges we face. Additionally, I have to buy groceries for my family. That means I am concerned about the living costs. I am more aware of the impacts of high inflation when I buy groceries myself. And, how to manage household expenses becomes a real challenge.

“They lash out simply because they're frustrated”

I have seen that some men are abusive even without drinking just in their normal nature, beating women at home. They lash out simply because they're frustrated or dissatisfied with something. For example, they might say, “I've given you all the money I earn, so why is it not enough?” They get angry over the financial situation. For women, let's say they receive 300,000 kyat (about \$68) from their husbands. That is the whole family's living expenses for the whole month, around 10,000 kyat a day. But now, if you go to the wet market with 10,000 kyat, you can barely buy anything. Even a small bundle of five long beans costs 1,500-2,000 kyat these days. So, definitely, money is not enough. And women can't show much for what they spend as everything is expensive and they can't buy much. For these reasons, domestic violence often begins, rooted in financial pressures and insufficient income.

“Why is this happening so unfairly?”

For me, living inside Myanmar feels very unsafe—not just for myself but for everyone around me. Then, I made preparations to leave the country. However, I found out that my name is on the blacklist of the SAC, so I can't leave. I have no choice but to stay here and struggle to survive as best I can. What's worse is the situation of my colleagues who were also CDM (Civil Disobedience Movement) participants. Some of them entered Thailand illegally but couldn't move to a third country. As a result, they're now working as housemaids in Thailand. It's heartbreaking to think about them. They were respected officers and now work as housemaids. It's deeply saddening to see. When can we get justice for these? Why are we blacklisted? We didn't commit treason against the country. Why are we being treated this way? Why is this happening so unfairly? How can we legally hold the perpetrators accountable? Even within the country, as CDMers, we don't get any protection under the law.



Thet Kyi Sin

Program Head
Research Network Program
Lead Panelist

Women are experiencing various hardships due to political instability and conflict. For example, women who participated in the CDM have been targeted for their political involvement. I'd like to start with this issue.

Before the coup, these women were employed as governmental staff. However, their income significantly decreased after joining CDM, facing financial imbalances. They can't use or renew their professional licenses when they try to re-enter the workspace. As a result, they are often undervalued or demoted in the workplace.

What's even worse is that their colleagues often hesitate to help them out of fear of being implicated themselves. One female researcher, a CDMer, told us that they are even alienated as outcasts and ghosts. We were told that they live in constant fear and can't sleep peacefully at night. Moreover, many who want to leave the country find it difficult to do so because their names are blacklisted due to their CDM involvement.

Another layer of challenges stems from the ongoing armed conflict. Women face constant physical and psychosocial insecurities. There's no guarantee of safety; they live in fear of aerial bombings or stepping on landmines. These dangers have become part of their daily life. The situations of displaced women are also very dire. They must pay high rents in new areas when they flee due to the conflict. Consequently, they struggle to integrate into unfamiliar communities, often encountering social alienation.

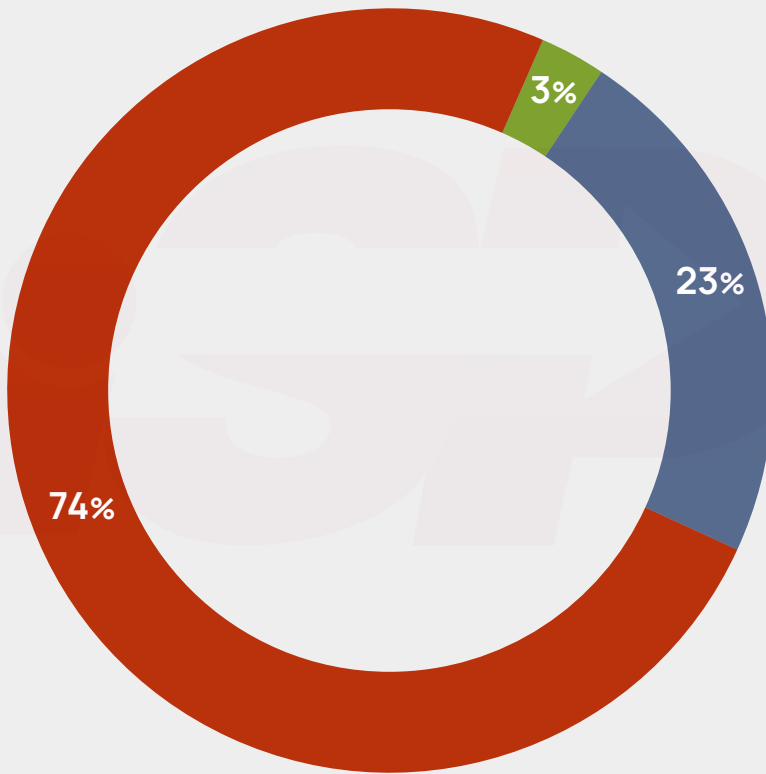
Additionally, the conscription law and abductions create additional stress for women. They have to worry about their male family members—husbands, sons, and brothers—being forcibly recruited. Families resort to bribing local authorities by borrowing, pawning, and selling belongings to avoid conscription. Women subjected to conscription also live in constant fear of SAC's troops knocking on their doors to recruit forcibly. As shown in the figure, our survey of over 500 women revealed that 74 percent expressed concerns about their future and personal safety under these circumstances. For women, the struggle extends beyond physical insecurity. They often find themselves living in a state of helplessness with no legal protections. They lack access to formal complaints and are left to resolve these challenges on their own. These are some profound difficulties women face due to the current political instability and conflict. Now, I'd like to invite Khant to discuss how women encounter economic challenges.

■ Over 74 Percent Apprehensive About What Lies Ahead

Socioeconomic Studies

ISP Myanmar

In December 2024, ISP-Myanmar surveyed 507 women across Myanmar, asking them about their outlook on the future. A significant 74 percent expressed concern, only 3 percent reported no concern, and the remaining 23 percent described their feelings as neutral.



● Not concerned ● Neutral ● Concerned

Findings from a December 2024 survey of 507 women in Myanmar on their biggest challenges.



Khant

Program Associate
Research Network Program
Co-panelist

When we talk about economic conditions, the primary hardship for women is income restraints and, its consequence, poverty. The challenges range from inflation to the exploitation of loan sharks with high interest. In Myanmar society, women are typically the ones managing household budgets, groceries, and daily expenses. As a result, inflation has become a real headache for them.

According to our research, the foreign exchange rate and gold prices have stabilized since late September 2024. However, the prices of basic food items remain high. When we compare the reference prices of rice and palm oil from November 2024 to January 2021, prices have increased by sixfold and fivefold, respectively. Similarly, meat prices have noticeably risen over the past three months.

We heard female researchers share their thoughts on how a 10,000-kyat bill has lost its value. Women are struggling to make ends meet. You can see on the slide, according to our findings, 83 percent of the women surveyed reported that their monthly expenses have tripled or more since 2021. Furthermore, 88 percent of the women said their incomes do not meet their expenses.

They have to find other ways to cope due to these reasons. For example, women are resorting to skipping meat in their meals, eating only cheap vegetables, borrowing from relatives, pawning belongings, and purchasing on credit. This cycle often leads to a spiraling debt burden. We also found that many microfinance firms left the country after the coup. Consequently, the number of these formal financial services has decreased.

Additionally, their loan procedures take time and are subject to various limitations. As a result, informal moneylenders with easier access become widespread. Interest rates of these lenders are alarmingly high, ranging from 15 percent to 30 percent. Sometimes, borrowers receive only 60,000 kyat for a 100,000 kyat loan after the interest is deducted upfront. When they are desperate for cash, women buy a sack of rice on credit for 180,000 kyat. They would sell it immediately for 120,000 kyat to solve the cash flow problem. They knowingly lose 60,000 kyat.

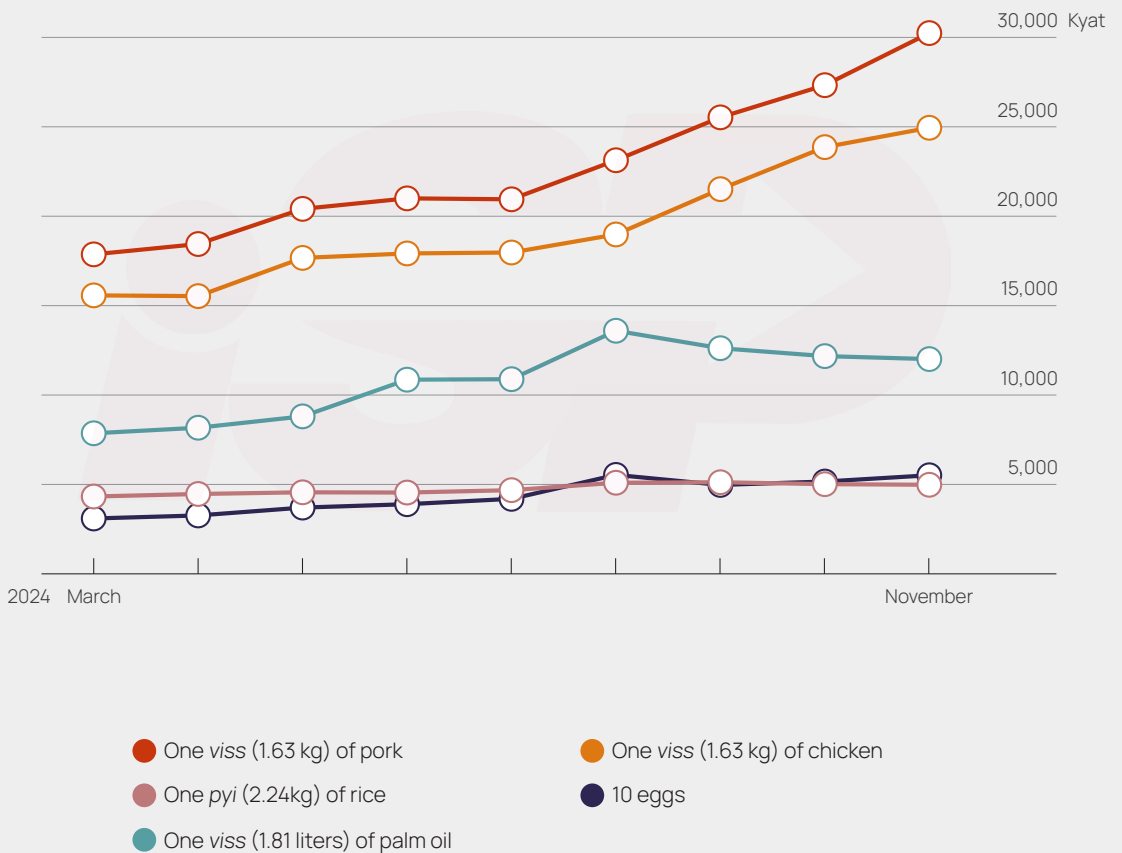
In Myanmar society, it's often women who have to do the borrowing and ask for help in secret, where you often have to lower your head. The scary part is that borrowers even get beaten up physically in public if they can't pay back their loans. Some moneylenders even hire enforcers to scare borrowers into paying back.

Another challenge is the scarcity of job opportunities within the country. After the garment factories fled the country, unemployment among women has risen sharply. According to our survey, 88 percent of women reported finding a job has become difficult. When asked about their thoughts on working abroad, 70 percent stated they have no plans to leave the country. Instead, they are finding ways to survive inside the country.

However, due to the shortage of jobs, the rate of women seeking work abroad increases, both legally and illegally. When asked where they'd like to go, they mentioned Thailand, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, and Middle Eastern countries like Dubai, Qatar, and Oman. Most women working abroad are employed in the service industry, like caregiving and housekeeping. This is the broader economic difficulties and job scarcity women face within the country and their challenges when seeking opportunities abroad. Now, I'd like to hand it over to Su to discuss the final segment on the social hardships of women.

Commodity Prices Still Rising

Although currency exchange rates and gold prices began to decline in late September 2024, commodity prices continue to rise. Compared to the reference price of 2021, rice and palm oil costs have surged to six times higher.

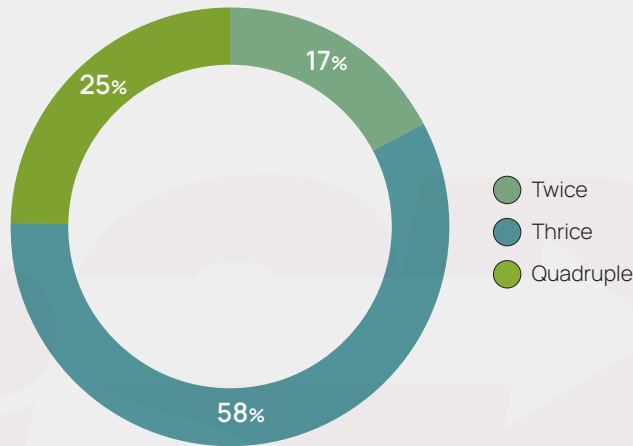


Source: ISP-Myanmar's Research Network Program's socioeconomic survey conducted across 110 townships nationwide.

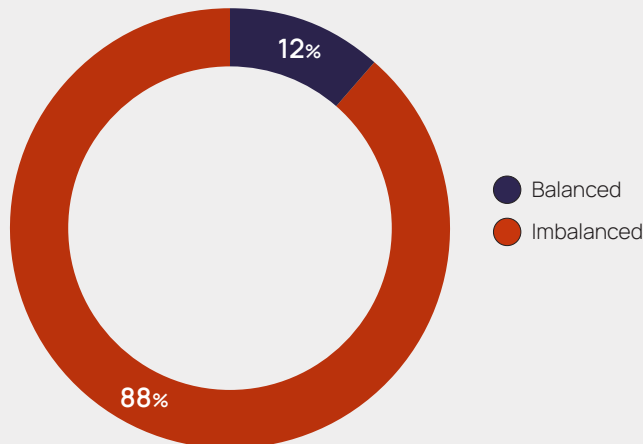
■ Tripled Inflation Stresses Income Disparities

In December 2024, ISP-Myanmar surveyed 507 women across Myanmar, revealing that 83 percent of respondents are dealing with a tripling or greater increase in their living costs. Furthermore, 88 percent highlighted imbalance between their incomes and expenses.

How much have living costs risen since 2021?



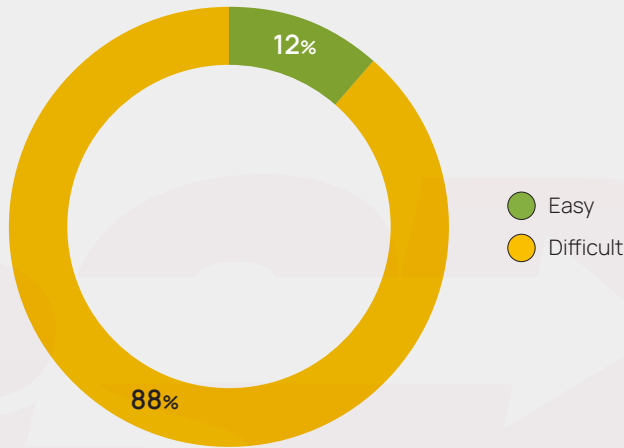
How do you assess the balance between income and expenses?



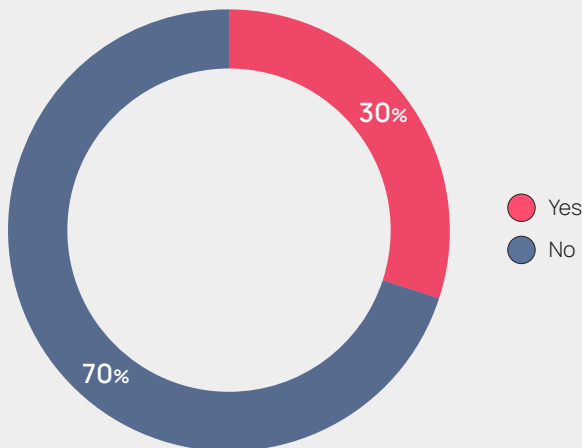
■ Employment Challenges and Scarcity

In December 2024, ISP-Myanmar polled 507 women in Myanmar, probing the ease of securing employment. A substantial 88 percent reported difficulties finding jobs. Concurrently, 70 percent expressed no intention to seek employment opportunities abroad.

How challenging is it to find employment locally?



Are you considering relocating abroad for work?





Su Lin Han

Program Assistant
Research Network Program
Co-panelist

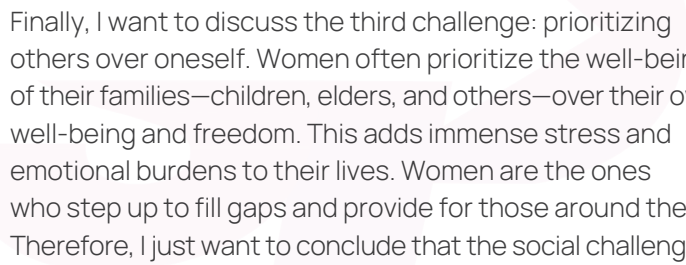
I would like to discuss three key social challenges women face. The first is the consequences of drug abuse and gambling. Nowadays, drugs are readily available almost everywhere, especially in cities. These drugs often appeal to young people who feel lost or unsure about their futures. For many of them, drugs and entertainment seem like a way to escape. In this situation, drugs are just a grabaway. It's not just men who fall victim to drug addiction; women are increasingly affected as well. One critical issue is that when women become involved with drugs, they often find themselves becoming victims of violence without even realizing it.

As Khant mentioned earlier, job opportunities are slim. Under these circumstances, more women are resorting to working in KTVs or nightclubs as sexual entertainers than before. Additionally, according to our female researcher, some men vent their frustrations and anger onto the women working there. As a result, some women were sexually exploited and faced violence. Many of these incidents didn't make it online or to news media. They are handled privately or remain hidden within the community. Looking at these realities, it's clear that women are carrying increasingly heavy burdens and suffering layered trauma.

Now, I'd like to move on to the second challenge: domestic violence. According to our monthly data from 110 townships, domestic violence cases have significantly increased, linked to the effects of drug abuse and gambling. We found that the root cause of domestic violence isn't limited to substance abuse—it also stems from financial stress and broader social issues. Domestic violence has become so normalized that communities see it as an ordinary occurrence.

No help is coming for this issue. Our opinion poll data also shows that many women endure domestic violence without reporting it to anyone. Even if they want to report it, various factors put them in a dilemma to take action.

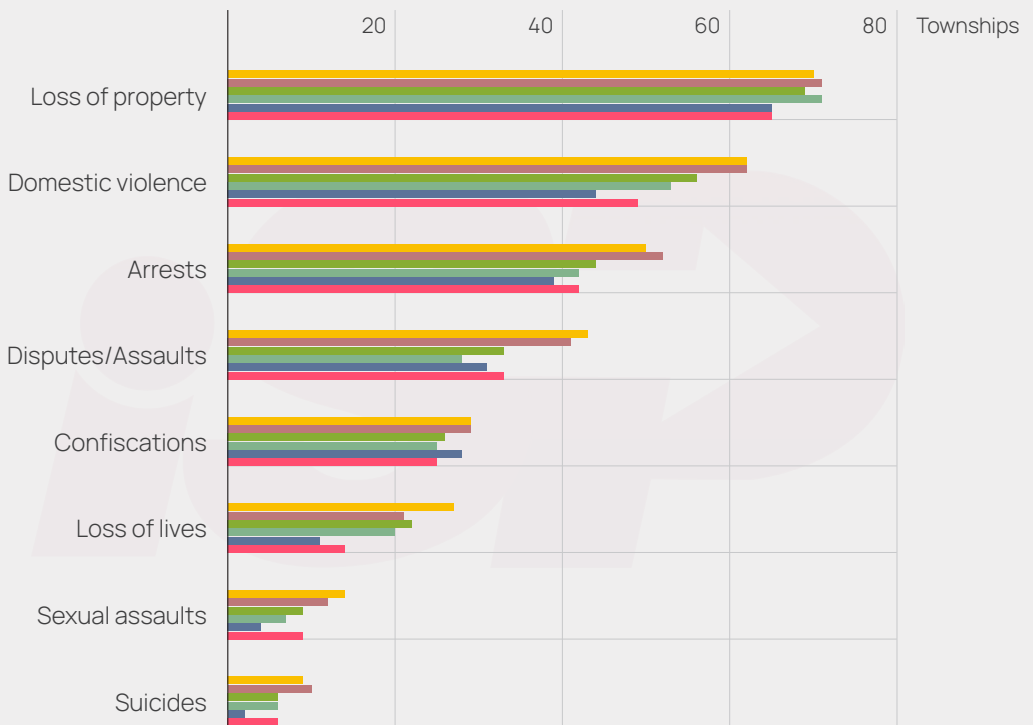
There were incidents where a woman reported her husband for beating her, and he was subsequently conscripted. So, women often hesitate to report their husbands as they depend on them financially. In today's climate, where forced conscription and abductions are rampant, these fears are quite valid. In some cases, people are treated like livestock, with headcounts set to abduct individuals from each block and sell them for conscription. In this bleak time, as some depend entirely on their husbands financially or for the sake of their children, they can't leave their abusive marriage.



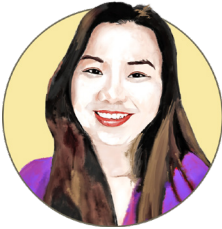
Finally, I want to discuss the third challenge: prioritizing others over oneself. Women often prioritize the well-being of their families—children, elders, and others—over their own well-being and freedom. This adds immense stress and emotional burdens to their lives. Women are the ones who step up to fill gaps and provide for those around them. Therefore, I just want to conclude that the social challenges faced by Myanmar women are deeply entrenched.

Consequences of Drug Use

ISP-Myanmar's socioeconomic studies spanning 110 townships between March and August 2024 underscore the severe repercussions of drug use, notably loss of property. Furthermore, the studies reveal domestic violence against women as the second most prevalent issue, with regular monthly occurrences in at least 44 of the surveyed townships.



Source: ISP-Myanmar's Research Network Program's socioeconomic survey conducted across 110 townships nationwide.



Ingyin May

Program Head
Communications Department
Host

Thank you so much to all the panelists for sharing your insights today. As a closing remark, Thet, would you like to say something?



Thet Kyi Sin

Program Head
Research Network Program
Lead Panelist

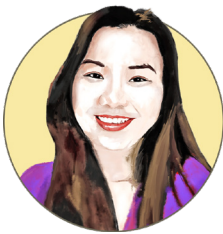
In 2024, amidst the escalating military conflicts, we find that women in countries like ours are facing compounded challenges. As discussed earlier, women are enduring the impacts of war, climate-related disasters, and economic hardships all at the same time. In reality, the resilience of the people—particularly women—relies heavily on access to resources. Their resilience highly depends on how much society can provide women with access to financial and other resources. For example, a woman needs the right to work, recognition of her labor, decision-making power, and access to resources such as finances and land.

Although women are persevering through these difficult times, their real-life circumstances are so disconnected from the narratives being told through media and other channels. Providing misleading information, failing to discuss the real issues, and continuously asking women to endure based on false hopes is both unfair and unjust. Another critical point to consider is— during a crisis like this, leaders must ►

- ▶ deliver public services and solutions that can alleviate real-life everyday hardships, especially women's hardships. Without service delivery, the disconnect between the people and the leaders will get worse. This could eventually end up by enabling those with arms to get the final words.

Currently, our country's economic productivity is decreasing, and militarization is intensifying. With all the various challenges, women's development and progress are often sidelined. So, during such periods of crisis, it becomes even more critical to review and improve the prospects of women who are most often forgotten and marginalized.

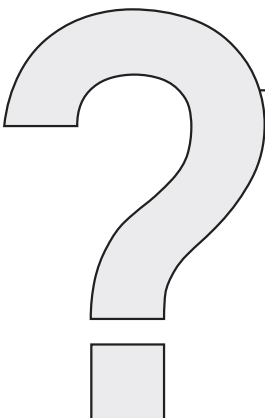




Ingyin May

Program Head
Communications Department
Host

I would like to begin the Q&A section. We would like to invite discussions and questions from Gabyin members. Firstly, we will proceed with a question received via email.



"I find myself complaining why we, women, have to endure such immense pain and hardship. I also can't help but reflect on how we can overcome these challenging times marked by political instability, war, and economic difficulties. This question has been on my mind, and I'd like to ask it here: how can we, as women, navigate and overcome these struggles?"



Su Lin Han

Program Assistant
Research Network Program
Co-panelist

Women's lives have become increasingly harsh and difficult. Every day, they must struggle with worries about basic necessities, their families, and their safety. It's extremely stressful and exhausting. I'd like to share an example we came across through discussions with female researchers. This story involves a low-income female employee. She lives with her father, and it's just the two of them in their family. Her father is in poor health and getting old, so she has been the sole caretaker for a long time. As everyone knows, prices have continued to climb. Moreover, she regularly listens to political news, which significantly increases her stress level.

During this time, her health conditions started to deteriorate. She constantly worried about what would happen if the fighting reached their area, puzzling where they might flee. These thoughts and pressures overwhelmed her, leading to a point where she decided to end her own life. Luckily—or maybe it was fate—her neighbors stepped in just in time to help her. Afterward, her community came together to make sure she had everything she needed to recover. Now, she's back on her feet again. What I want to emphasize here is the importance of supportive environments for women. These supports can play a significant role in their lives. Women's groups, religious groups, community support groups, and social networks must come together to create supportive spaces and communities that can offer emotional strength and encouragement to women. I urge everyone here to collaborate in building these kinds of networks. I strongly believe that this approach will help our women to be resilient to overcome the challenges they face today.



Ingyin May

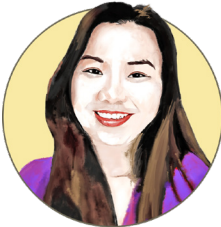
Program Head
Communications Department
Host

Thank you, Su, for sharing your thoughts. We truly appreciate it. Now, we've noticed some hands raised among our audience. Let's begin with the first hand. We've unmuted your mic. You may ask your question.



ISP Gabyin Member

I'm not here to ask a question; I'd like to add something to the discussion. Currently, I'm a displaced woman from Rakhine State due to the ongoing conflict. Speaking from my personal experience, I want to highlight the situation of pregnant mothers, who are a crucial part of our communities. From what I've observed, they often don't get the necessary nutrition when they have to flee to other regions due to the conflict. Similarly, nursing mothers are unable to provide sufficient nutrition for their young babies. This is one critical issue I'd like to raise. Therefore, when we talk about women, we must include both nursing mothers and pregnant women in the conversation.



Ingyin May

Program Head
Communications Department
Host

Yes, definitely. What you said is absolutely correct. We must not forget about pregnant mothers as well. Thank you very much for sharing your thoughts. We'll now invite another audience member to discuss. We've unmuted another participant. You may speak now.



ISP Gabyin Member

Regarding women's issues, I just wanted to raise another point, just as the earlier speaker. It is regarding elderly women—those over 50, or more precisely, over 60— they can't do much at this age, not that active anymore. Sadly, there have been instances where they were brutally killed. For instance, they were being burned alive by the military. We should not forget these incidents. Similarly, young children, including newborns and toddlers as young as five or six, have also suffered unimaginable violence, such as being mercilessly killed during military crackdowns. Security forces have committed such acts, especially during periods of intense conflict or uprisings. How do we heal from such atrocities? The magnitude of the harm inflicted on women is immense. In Buddhism, it's taught that "*Matapitu Upadhamam*"— the reverence for one's parents—places mothers even before fathers. In families, mothers come first, as emphasized in Buddhist teachings and cultural practices.

Mothers bear the weight of nurturing, protecting, and providing for their children, often enduring immense struggle. However, beyond mothers, we must also consider the plight of elderly women and innocent children who are caught in the crossfire of war.

Why are they being killed? It's because of war. We need to examine the root causes of this war. What led to it? And most importantly, how do we end this conflict? These atrocities are consequences of the military coup, and it is crucial to ensure that such a coup never happens again. I want to add this point to our discussion when brainstorming solutions for women. Thank you very much.



Ingyin May

Program Head
Communications Department
Host

Thank you so much. Yes, what you discussed is also very critical. Elderly people truly face even greater hardships. We'll move on to our final participant. Please go ahead with your question.



ISP Gabyin Member

I have a question I'd like to ask. The main point is, among the discussions you've had about women—especially married women—what can they do in situations where they don't have their own income? These women rely entirely on their husband's earnings. When problems arise, like wanting to report or address conflicts with their husbands, they find themselves unable to do so because they are dependent on their husband's income. Some women, even though they wish to break free from their difficulties, find themselves stuck because they look at their children and feel they can't move forward. These women, without jobs or incomes of their own, continue to depend entirely on their husbands. In such cases, Ma'am, how do you think these women can break free? For women like this, who lack job opportunities, skills, or educational qualifications and who depend solely on their husbands, what kinds of strategies or approaches should they adopt to overcome these challenges? What would you recommend, Ma'am?

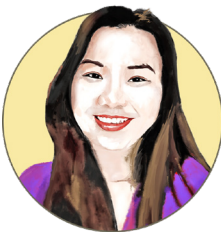


Thet Kyi Sin

Program Head
Research Network Program
Lead Panelist

Thank you so much, Ma'am, for asking the question. So, as we study the socio-economic conditions of Myanmar, we focus primarily on the impacts that arise. ►

► Within these impacts, we've identified that women are among the most affected groups. Recently, we conducted surveys with over 500 women and engaged in discussions with female researchers. From there, it became evident that, even now, women are managing to persist and endure. Why is this the case? As you mentioned earlier, many women are concerned about their children's futures and their reliance on household breadwinners. Despite these challenges, women continue to press on. What I see as a critical need for them right now is stronger support networks among women. Mutual support and community solidarity are essential. If we can provide them with some form of encouragement or emotional strength, it would make a significant difference. For this, organizations—both social and women-specific groups—as well as other community-based organizations, must consider how they can offer support and assistance. Based on our findings, this type of collaborative network is still lacking and remains a pressing need for women today. This is what I wanted to share regarding our observations and the needs of women in the current context.



Ingyin May

Program Head
Communications Department
Host

Due to the time constraints of our program, we will have to end the Q&A section here. Could That provide a recap and final remarks for today's program?



Thet Kyi Sin

Program Head

Research Network Program

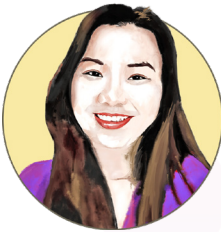
Lead Panelist

Women right now are enduring hardships with incredible resilience. However, just as discussed earlier and echoed by many of the researchers we've engaged, even in these trying times, women have not lost their spirit to persevere. Instead, they continue to create and innovate, not only for themselves but for their families and communities. These are our findings. While some might see them merely as enduring passively, our observations suggest otherwise.

What I want to highlight here is that individual women are still resilient. But we noticed that the networks and community support they need remain very limited. When we spoke with women researchers and activists, they wanted spaces that allow women to uplift and support one another—spaces where they can share their struggles, offer advice, and learn from one another's experiences. Right now, women are fighting their battles with an unrelenting spirit.

However, there are very few social, civil, or community-level organizations that women can lean on for emotional or logistical support. An example Su shared earlier demonstrates the power of community—when a woman facing a suicidal crisis found strength through the kindness and support of those around her, she was able to regain her footing and rebuild her life. It's important to recognize that while financial or material aid might be limited, emotional and social solidarity—women supporting women—is equally valuable. A sense of connection and mutual care can significantly empower individuals to face challenges more effectively. As we say, one woman alone might struggle, with a group of fellows they can push back against adversity.

So, anyone who is working for Myanmar's future, must think how to foster a culture of mutual support and building stronger networks for women. When policymakers and leaders think and plan for the future of our country, it's essential that they also prioritize and consider the struggles and contributions of women. With this, I want to conclude my remarks.

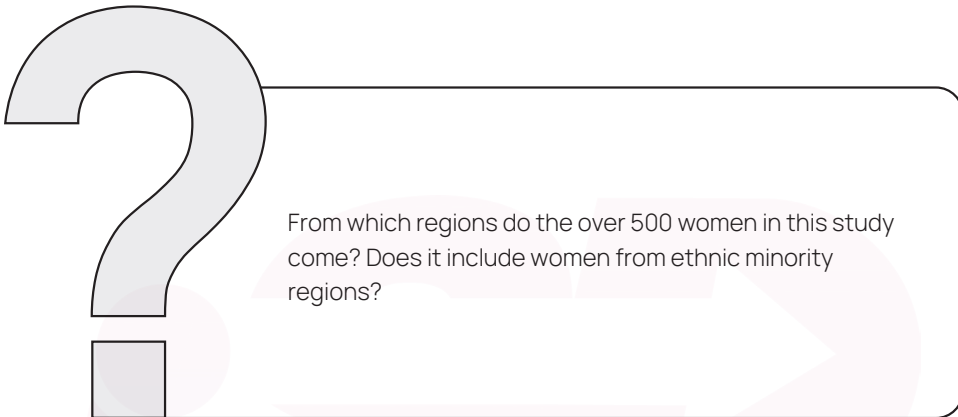


Ingyin May
Program Head
Communications Department
Event Host

Thank you, Thet. In today's program, there are some questions and comments left to address during the live session. We will respond to these later via email. In addition to the information presented today, you can also explore other research findings on our website at www.ispmyanmar.com and on our social media platforms, all of which are freely accessible. We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to each and every one of Gabyin members for taking the time to attend today's program. By saying our appreciation, we will conclude the program for today. ■

Appendix Questions

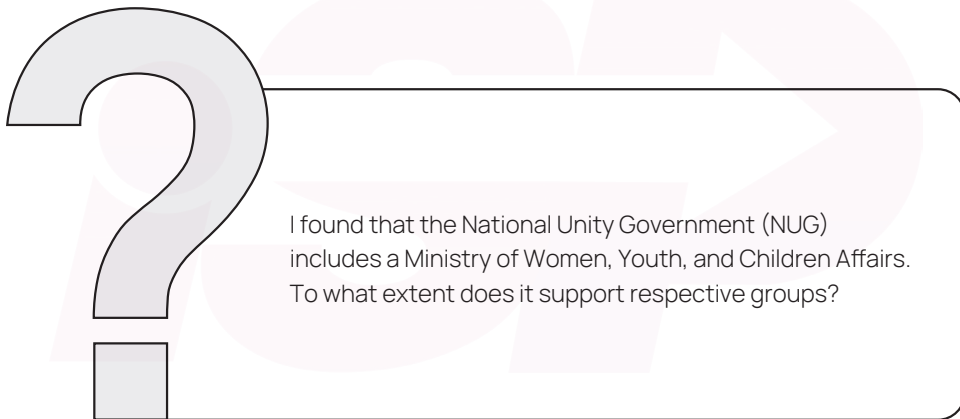
The questions listed below were submitted via chat during the "30 Minutes with the ISP" event on December 21, 2024.



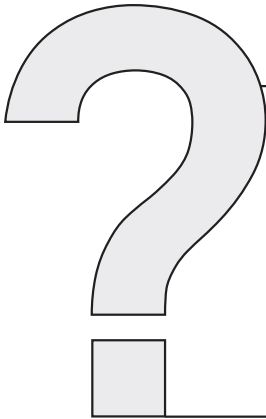
Our Research Network Program covers 110 townships. Of these, 75 are district townships from different states and regions, while the other 35 are chosen for their economic and demographic significance. Therefore, over 500 women are from these townships, including women from ethnic areas such as Kachin, Rakhine, Karenni, and Karen. This program involves women from both urban and rural settings, including displaced female researchers and those from their communities. ■



During our panel discussion, we highlighted women's various challenges regarding physical and psychological security. In these unpredictable times, women must uplift each other and access community support, as emphasized by insights from female researchers. Furthermore, improving women's capabilities via training and offering financial resources are crucial for empowering them. This approach necessitates collaborative efforts from administrative and local entities, NGOs, INGOs, and CSOs. For instance, local organizations and relevant authorities should prioritize women's vocational training for their livelihoods or offer microfinance options for small businesses. Furthermore, organizations across different regions should advocate for women's representation in governance and implement protective regulations to ensure their safety and foster their inclusion in decision-making roles. ■








It's challenging for ISP-Myanmar to provide a definitive answer as our monthly socioeconomic research and surveys have not inquired explicitly into this matter. However, according to the NUG's Ministry of Women, Youth, and Children Affairs reports, their department pursues the 3P goals: Protecting women, youth, and children, Providing basic support for these groups, and Promoting women and youth engagement in establishing federalism. They engage in rehabilitation for pregnant women, children, and injured youths, provide online psychological counseling, implement capability enhancement campaigns, and document cases of sexual violence against women. We suggest observing the NUG's ministries' social media and online platforms for detailed information. ■



The SAC is known to conscript both men and women forcibly. To my knowledge, women have not yet been recruited, but if they begin to be forcefully conscripted, I think their difficulties might be greater than those faced by men. What preparations should women and resistance groups make in response to such threats?

Current circumstances of financial constraints and the conscription law have pushed men to flee the country. As a result, women's conscription may occur sooner or later. Research findings indicate that women are trying to avoid conscription by fleeing abroad, relocating within the country, getting married, and re-enrolling in schools, and other methods. Recommending a specific solution for these scenarios is challenging. Resistance groups need to protect women through various means and avoid coercive recruitment similar to the conscription law, committing sexual violence against women, and human rights violations in their controlled areas. ■

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