



EU-CSO Partnership Strategy Newsletter

Newsletter Issue 1 - August 2019

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The European Strategy for a Strengthened Partnership with Civil Society in Myanmar was successfully launched on April 4th, 2019.



The EU - CSO Partnership Strategy will organise a Structured Dialogue on land issues in Kachin State on 24-25 September 2019.



Highlighting funding opportunities available to CSOs in Myanmar from the EU, EU member states and European donors and foundations.



Links to resources that can be helpful in your civil society work.

CIVIL SOCIETY SPOTLIGHT

Interview with Htet Oo Wai, Country Director, NIMD – Demo Finland/Myanmar School of Politics.

NEWS

EU-CSO PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY LAUNCH EVENT



The European Strategy for a Strengthened Partnership with Civil Society (EU-CSO Partnership Strategy) in Myanmar was successfully launched on April 4th, 2019.

Over 120 participants from civil society, academia, and the international community joined us to discuss the trends that impact civil society as Myanmar transitions to democracy. The launch was an opportunity for a diverse group of stakeholders, including civil society organisations from around the country, INGOs, donors and representatives of the EU and its member states, to have a dialogue on the steps needed to support, protect and promote civic space.

As part of the implementation of the EU-CSO Partnership Strategy similar events will be organised over the coming two years on topics of importance to civil society in Myanmar.

See the report of the launch event:

In English: <https://tinyurl.com/yxt83te6>

In Myanmar: <https://tinyurl.com/y6runzkt>



UPCOMING EVENTS

STRUCTURED DIALOGUE ON LAND ISSUES IN KACHIN STATE

24-25 September 2019

SAVE THE DATE!

In the framework of the EU-CSO Partnership Strategy, the EU will organise a Structured Dialogue on land issues in Kachin State on 24-25 September 2019. The Dialogue will bring together 50-60 CSOs from the state to have in-depth discussions on the various aspects of land issues, such as customary land practices, climate change, gender and peace. The purpose of the Dialogue is to develop recommendations that can be used by civil society, donors and governments in their policy dialogue.

The Structured Dialogue will be preceded by a networking event and CSO Fair bringing together CSOs, INGOs, EU partners and representatives to learn more about each others' work and build valuable connections.

If you are interested in land issues in Myanmar, here is some further reading:

A Housing, Land and Property (HLP) Rights-based Analysis of Customary Land Dispute Resolution in Eastern Bago Region and Kayin and Shan States

Author: MyJustice

Persistence and change in Hakha Chin land and resource tenure: A study on land dynamics in the periphery of Hakha

Authors: M. Boutry, C. Allaverdian, Tin Myo Win, Khin Pyae Sone

Myanmar: Halt Land Law Implementation

Author: Human Rights Watch

Guidance Notes on Land Issues: Myanmar

Author: U Myint Thein

Midcourse Manoeuvres: Community Strategies and Remedies for Natural Resources Conflicts in Myanmar

Authors: Meenakshi Kapoor, Nwe Ni Soe and Vidya Viswanathan

CIVIL SOCIETY SPOTLIGHT

INTERVIEW WITH HTET OO WAI, COUNTRY DIRECTOR, NIMD – DEMO FINLAND/MYANMAR SCHOOL OF POLITICS



Htet Oo Wai was a speaker at the launch of the EU-CSO Partnership Strategy. This interview covers the points that she presented at the event.

Q: Could you briefly describe the work that your organisation is doing?

Htet Oo Wai: The Myanmar School of Politics (MySoP) has been working since 2014 with politicians and political parties in Myanmar's most Eastern States and Regions: Tanintharyi, Kayin, Kayah, Mon and Shan State. MySoP strengthens political parties and promotes multiparty dialogue to support Myanmar in its transition towards a multiparty democratic society. Inclusivity is central in our approach to facilitating equal participation and diversity.

Q: What do you see as the most important trends impacting your work as a CSO (positive and negative)?

Htet Oo Wai: At the beginning of Myanmar's transition, the space for civil society rapidly expanded. Several improvements were made through macro-political reforms and the transition towards democracy. However, it takes many years for democracy to grow and there are many hurdles and obstacles along the way. Currently, we see a trend of a shrinking space for civil society. For decades, the limited space for political action was instrumental in

the ruling of the country by the military regime. Therefore, CSOs have a lot of experience navigating this limitation and usually find ways to carve out a space.

Q: What role do you think civil society should be playing in peacebuilding and in Myanmar's transition to democracy?

Htet Oo Wai: Civil society is a pillar of a democratic system and, as such, plays an important role in democracy and good governance in pre- and post-conflict societies. It contributes to a number of different areas in the peace-building process, including facets of economic and psycho-social recovery, justice and the rule of law, and security and public order.

Civil society movements in Myanmar are a clear reminder that democracy is about more than elections. Democracy is about strong institutions such as an independent and transparent judiciary and respect for the rule of law. Democracy is also about state powers responding to the needs of the people in an equitable manner, and ensuring accountability when state officials fail to listen to the voices of the people. Lastly, no democratic state can properly function without the respect and support of the people. Civil society seeks to create this partnership by acting as a key mediator between the government and the people. In particular, CSOs contribute by providing a link between state and citizens, producing information and ideas, promoting democratic values, encouraging open debate, pushing for social, economic, and political change, and building social capital.

Q: How do you see the future of civil society in Myanmar?

Htet Oo Wai: Myanmar has a long tradition of a vibrant and effective civil society that spans a diverse spectrum. For decades, civil society members have bravely responded to gaps in critical social issues such as poverty reduction; natural disaster response; social empowerment; human rights education; and affordable health care. Myanmar's new democracy needs active civil society organisations that can help all stakeholders fulfil nation-building goals and at the same time, monitor and keep the government accountable.

MySoP Facebook page: <https://tinyurl.com/y5kstgnw>
NIMD webpage: <https://nimd.org>

FUNDING FOR CSOs

Each newsletter will highlight a specific fund for CSOs. This time, the Joint Peace Fund.



JOINT PEACE FUND

The Joint Peace Fund (JPF) is an organisation set up by international donors to support peace in Myanmar. With many donors pooling their funding, the JPF offers a coherent and efficient approach to providing financial, technical and advisory assistance to the parties in the peace process, as well as other Myanmar organisations working at all levels of Myanmar society – Union, State and local.

JPF currently has eleven donors: Australia, Canada, Denmark, the European Union, Finland, Italy, Japan, Norway, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

The Joint Peace Fund is open for applications by local CSOs on a rolling basis (no deadlines) as long as their work is focused on one of the three targeted outcomes of the Fund:

- Strengthening of formal and informal conflict management mechanisms to amicably resolve and/or prevent conflict.
- Enhancing the capacity of stakeholders to participate in formal and informal consultations, dialogues and negotiations.
- Increasing civic engagement, public awareness and confidence in the peace process at the Union and Sub-Union levels.

JPF strategy: <https://tinyurl.com/yymjvneb>

Application process: <https://tinyurl.com/yy456how>

TOOLS FOR CSOs

EU DELEGATIONS UNWRAPPED: A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR CSO ENGAGEMENT WITH EUDs

The European NGO CONCORD (European NGO Confederation for Relief and Development) has published “EU Delegations Unwrapped: A Practical Guide for CSO Engagement with EUDs”, a handbook designed to support civil society organisations in their relations with EU Delegations in their country.

The handbook will help CSOs deepen their knowledge about political dialogue with the EU, EU policies and funding trends. The practical guide also provides tips on how to effectively engage with EU Delegations.

To download the document in pdf, click here: <https://tinyurl.com/yxpdb8xw>



CONTACT US

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact us by phone at +95 9 762 630003 or email at eucsostrategy.communication@gmail.com.

You can find more information about our work here:

EU-CSO Partnership Strategy Facebook page:

<https://tinyurl.com/y3974mft>

EU Delegation in Myanmar webpage:

<https://tinyurl.com/y6q7estb>