



Roundtable on:

Myanmar Update Series: Addressing Religion in Conflict

Thursday, 2 May 2019, 09:45 – 12:30 at swisspeace, Sonnenbergstrasse 17, Bern

This update series aims to bring together Swiss actors working in and on Myanmar to exchange on their work and discuss relevant topics related to peacebuilding in the country. In this installment, participants will be invited to share an update of their perspectives on working in and on the Myanmar context. This information round will be followed by a paper presentation and discussion on the topic: addressing religion in conflict in Myanmar.

Peaceful coexistence between groups belonging to different religious traditions is under pressure in Myanmar today. At the same time, various peacebuilding initiatives aimed at addressing issues that involve interfaith or intercommunal relations and peaceful coexistence between religious communities in Myanmar exist. The paper presentation will highlight the learning points and good practices derived from applied research of three peacebuilding approaches to interfaith tensions in Myanmar following the outbreaks of violence in 2012. The three case studies include the *Flower Speech Campaign* by Panzagar, the *Local Resilience for Peace-program* by Mercy Corps, and the *Religion and Rule of Law Training* by the Institute for Global Engagement. While the insights are context and time specific, they also provide relevant lessons for the wider community of practitioners and policy makers working on peace, conflict and religion. The paper presentation aims to start a conversation on five questions frequently asked by peacebuilders facing conflicts with religious dimensions in Myanmar and elsewhere: 1) How does religion drive conflict? 2) How do we address religion in conflict? 3) How do we engage religious actors when they are excluded? 4) How does the implementer's religious identity influence the scope for engagement? 5) How do we work on religion in conflict without making it worse?

Following the paper presentation, the KOFF Roundtable will provide space for an open discussion and exchange of experiences. How is your own peacebuilding practice in Myanmar influenced by religion and conflict? What challenges do you currently face and how do you address them? What good practices on religion and conflict in Myanmar have you learned from your work?

If you would like to participate, kindly send a confirmation e-mail to [Lara Ehrenzeller](mailto:lara@swisspeace.ch) by **24 April 2019**. We look forward to a fruitful exchange and a rich discussion!

Best wishes,

Julia Palmiano Federer

swisspeace

Andrea Grossenbacher

Swiss Platform for Peacebuilding KOFF

Speakers:

[Angela Ullmann](#), Culture and Religion in Mediation, Centre for Security Studies ETH

[Seng Mai Aung](#), Institute for Global Engagement

Moderator:

Julia Palmiano Federer, Program Officer Myanmar, swisspeace

Program:

09.45 – 10:15 Welcome and Update Round

10.15 – 11:00 Presentation of the Paper “Addressing Religion in Conflict: Insights and Case Studies from Myanmar“ by Angela Ullmann & Seng Mai Aung, followed by a short Q&A session

11:00 – 11:15 *Break*

11:15 – 12:15 Discussion

12:15 – 12:30 Outlook and Closing