



Taking the Lead

An Assessment of Women's Leadership Training
Needs and Training Initiatives in Myanmar



Gender Equality Network
November 2013



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I want to become a leader who can participate in the nation's decision-making processes ... If I can participate, I can change policies.

Female Interviewee

Acknowledgements

The Gender Equality Network would like to thank all of the women who took time off from their busy schedules to answer our questions. They provided insights into the range of views on leadership by women who are taking the lead in public life in Myanmar – in their communities, organisations and institutions, and in Myanmar's current political transition.

Thank you to the organisations which provided information about their leadership training programmes and who shared their training materials. These materials contribute not only to this review but also to establishing a resource, which through GEN, can be made available to other organisations seeking to initiate and develop women's leadership development programmes. Such sharing of resources was highlighted by many of the participants of this review as an example of how GEN can help its members to further develop their leadership training programmes.

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Executive Summary

Women's representation in public leadership positions is alarmingly low in Myanmar. For example, women hold a mere 6% of elected positions in the national parliament, far behind the Asian regional average of 18.3%.¹ The institutionalised tradition of male leadership has created substantial barriers to women taking up leadership positions. Women indicate that they require more support to strengthen their leadership competencies and to build confidence in their abilities and potential. At the same time, Myanmar's recent political and social reforms are creating more opportunities for women to shape the political and social transformation that is taking place. The Government's National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (2013-2022) aims to ensure women's equal participation in leadership at all levels. This Plan and the opportunities associated with the upcoming 2015 national elections will likely generate more interest in women's leadership programmes.

The Gender Equality Network (GEN), as a result of its strategic planning process with member agencies, is working towards brokering and facilitating high quality training opportunities for current and future generation women leaders. GEN prepared this research report to identify the skills and capacity development needs of current and emerging women leaders, and to review existing women's leadership training materials and planned initiatives, in order to allow the Network to identify suitable training programmes to support its members. The research involved interviews with 12 key informants currently managing a total of 13 women's leadership programmes, and 43 current and emerging women leaders from community based organisations, local and international non-government organisations, faith-based organisations, and political parties - including current parliamentarians. The results provide a broad picture of women's views on leadership and basic patterns in capacity and training needs.

Consistent with international trends, the majority of training programmes promoted a 'transformational leadership model', in which women leaders share power and use inclusive, participatory processes to influence others and catalyse fundamental social change, including greater gender equality. The current and emerging women leaders that were interviewed, provided a similar vision of a strong women leader. They also emphasised the importance of serving the public and being knowledgeable and capable of making the 'right' decisions. It appears that in a number of cases, women are taking the lead as part of the movement in Myanmar to shift away from an authoritarian and patriarchal style of leadership based on power and traditional attributes such as age and gender, to a more democratic and inclusive model based on ability and principles of equality and social justice.

In assessing competencies and training needs, the research team developed a Leadership Framework involving key leadership competencies particularly relevant for women leaders across three areas: leading oneself; leading other people; and leading an organisation, institution or community. The study found that women's own assessments of their current competencies and their identified training priorities varied significantly based on their work setting, their leadership experience and the extent to which they have participated in previous leadership training.

The competencies identified as most important to the women leaders' current roles relate to the attributes described in their vision of a strong leader. A comparison with the topics covered by existing women's leadership training activities shows that where the competencies which are most important are included in current curricula – such as increasing self-awareness, displaying drive and purpose, communicating effectively and valuing diversity – many women leaders interviewed have strong skills in these areas and do not identify them as competencies they want to strengthen. However, in the area of leading an organisation, institution or community, the most important competencies – setting vision and strategy and solving problems and making decisions – are still ranked highly as areas women want to learn more about, despite their identified high levels of competency, possibly because only a limited number of current programmes cover these topics.

The common belief in Myanmar that leadership is a men's skill and prerogative creates resistance to women taking on leadership roles. In transgressing social norms, most women interviewed faced criticism and discouragement. Young women faced particularly critical assessments based on the added dimension of age.

¹ Phan Tee Eain & the Gender Equality Network, 2012. Women in the Myanmar Parliament 2012, Yangon; Inter-Parliamentary Union, www.ipu.org/wmn-e/world.htm (current as at 1 July 2013).

While many women showed great resilience, most women expressed a strong desire for training targeted at increasing their capacity to address such resistance.

The training programmes reviewed in this study target 'second line leaders,' rather than heads of organisations or current parliamentarians, as they aim to nurture young, less experienced women to become future leaders. The programmes cover topics in three main areas: women's rights and gender equality; leadership competencies; and technical areas relevant to a specific sector. Most of the programmes cover some of the leadership competencies in the three categories in the Leadership Framework, but to varying degrees. Most organisations rely on external resource persons for training on various topics. In addition to participatory and practical workshops, some programmes integrate hands on training, such as an internship in a local community midway through the training and 'homework' tasks. Some organisations offer follow-up support, such as mentoring. While both the organisations and women leaders themselves emphasised the importance of mentoring, in practice there remains significant scope for expansion of such support. It is important to note that this assessment does not make any judgements about the quality of the training programmes that were reviewed.

Many women's leadership training programmes have been developed concurrently with the recent political and social reforms to support more women to take on public leadership positions. With a continued focus on transformative leadership, responsiveness to the diverse needs of women leaders, and enhanced follow-up support, training programmes will inspire and equip women to lead differently to traditional forms of predominantly male leadership, and to support the country's political and social transformation. As a network with increasing membership and influence, GEN has a critical role to play in supporting the strengthening of women's leadership training and facilitating increased participation in effective programmes.

The report makes the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. Organisations should continue to capitalise on the conducive policy environment, recent economic and social reforms, opportunities such as the Government's recently released National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women 2013 - 2022, and the 2015 elections, so as to promote the expansion of women's leadership programmes.
2. The need for women's leadership training remains enormous. More organisations should be encouraged to promote women's leadership, as well as women's leadership development programmes in a wide range of sectors.
3. Leadership training programmes currently being delivered are relevant and appreciated by current and emerging woman leaders. New programmes should build on the success of those currently offered.
4. Women's leadership training should continue to promote a transformational leadership model in which women leaders share power and use inclusive, participatory processes to influence others and catalyse fundamental social change, including greater gender equality.
5. Leadership training programmes need to be targeted at different levels to meet the varying needs of women: those with no previous training; women with prior training and experience; as they change over time. Organisations initiating leadership training should also carry out specific training needs assessments with their own target groups, and to build upon the findings of this assessment.
6. Current leadership training programmes need to be expanded to cover additional topics to equip women with the full set of competencies they need.
7. Organisations should further develop methods to measure the effectiveness of leadership training programmes to ensure that they meet the needs of training participants.
8. In addition to formal training workshops, leadership programmes should include forms of follow-up support, including mentoring and coaching.
9. Standardising women's leadership training is not recommended as the diversity of women's training needs should be acknowledged and respected.
10. As a network, GEN should support members to share experiences; coordinate sharing of resource materials; and facilitate access to leadership trainers, mentors, and international training opportunities.
11. Further investigation about different ways to develop women's leadership in Myanmar, other than training.

1. Overview

1.1 Background

The Gender Equality Network (GEN)² is an inter-agency network that aims to facilitate the development and implementation of enabling systems, structures and practices for the advancement of women, gender equality, and the realisation of women's rights in Myanmar. GEN comprises approximately 100 national and international non-government organisations (NGOs), civil society organisations (CSOs) and networks, UN agencies and technical resource persons.

According to its Strategic Plan (2012–2015), GEN aims to enable women's leadership through quality technical inputs, opportunities and enhanced public legitimacy. GEN has committed to "broker and facilitate high quality training opportunities for current and future generation women leaders." As a first step, GEN conducted an assessment to: 1) identify the skills and capacity development needs among women leaders; and 2) review existing women's leadership training materials and initiatives. This report presents the assessment's findings.

1.2 Women's Leadership in Myanmar

The profound under-representation of women in public leadership positions is a critical issue for Myanmar. Following the elections in 2010 and by-elections in 2012, 55 women hold positions in the national and state/regional level parliaments, constituting a mere 4.8% of all parliamentarians.³ A 2011 study commissioned by ActionAid, CARE and Oxfam explored the impact of social norms and attitudes on gender equality in leadership and decision-making in Myanmar.⁴ The study found that leadership is widely considered a male skill and prerogative. The report notes Myanmar has a "long and institutionalised tradition of male leadership", in which men are perceived as "natural leaders" and women as "natural followers".⁵ Women themselves may internalise these stereotypes, affecting their own assessment of their abilities and their confidence in taking on leadership roles. Challenges in accessing education and information have also led to limited skills and capacities in technical areas, in addition to limited leadership and management skills.

The National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (2013–2022) developed by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement includes an objective to improve systems, structures and practices to ensure women's equal participation in decision-making and leadership at all levels of society. Activities to support this objective include capacity building for future women leaders in leadership skills. In line with this Plan, and in preparation for the 2015 national elections, there is currently strong interest in initiatives to train women to enhance their leadership roles and enable them to participate meaningfully in decision-making in a range of sectors.

Increasing the number of women in leadership positions is critical, not only to give women a voice and to ensure their concerns are represented, but also because women's involvement has been shown to improve the way in which leadership and decision-making is practiced.⁶ It is widely documented that promoting women's leadership not only benefits women, but also the family, community and country as a whole.

² Formerly the Women's Protection Technical Working Group.

³ Phan Tee Eain & the Gender Equality Network, 2012. Women in the Myanmar Parliament 2012.

⁴ ActionAid, CARE, Oxfam, 2011. If Given the Chance: Women's Participation in Public Life in Myanmar. Yangon.

⁵ Ibid at p vii & p 75.

⁶ The Institute for Inclusive Security, 2009, Bringing Women into Government: Strategies for Policy Makers, No 1, March; McKinsey and Company, 2012, Women Matter: An Asian Perspective – Harnessing Women Talent to Raise Corporate Performance, p 16.

1.3 Transformative Leadership Model

The experiences of other countries have shown the importance of not simply increasing the number of women leaders, rather, increasing the number of transformative women leaders.⁷ Agencies with a women's rights agenda tend to embed women's leadership training within a 'transformational leadership model'. This model involves challenging the status quo by using participatory and inclusive processes to mobilise a shared vision of transformed power relations, social equality and human rights. CREA, an international women's organisation based in India, provides a useful analysis of leadership for social transformation in the context of women's rights and gender equality.⁸ CREA's own leadership programme is based on the assumption that:

"...leadership is not a fixed state of being but a process through which women assert their rights by continually evaluating relevant experiences, questioning their roles in society, challenging power structures and effectively catalyzing social change."⁹

The sharing of power is a critical aspect of this leadership model. A transformative leader gains respect and influences others to bring about change.¹⁰ This model corresponds to the Myanmar concept of power based on *awza* (influence), which contrasts with power based on *ana* (authority).¹¹ Myanmar leaders have traditionally ruled by virtue of power and authority using a top-down style of leadership, in which their instructions are implemented unquestioningly by staff/followers. This hierarchical system is embedded within a patriarchal culture where age is also highly respected. The system is underpinned and reinforced by religious and military institutions, which dominate much of Myanmar's social fabric and governance structures. In contrast, *awza* is an inherently positive quality associated with individuals possessing charisma, wisdom and ethics, and who create influence by gaining respect.¹²

The transformative leadership model is particularly well suited to the qualities and skills that are commonly associated with women's leadership. Literature on women's leadership, particularly from the management field, suggests that women are more likely to effectively use skills associated with cooperative decision-making, developing others and relationship building.¹³ At the same time, caution should be used in applying this analysis to avoid further reinforcing gendered assumptions about leadership styles.

1.4 Assessment Framework and Methods

This assessment's specific objectives were to:

1. Identify the target groups of existing and planned women's leadership training initiatives
2. Collate and review existing women's leadership training materials
3. Identify the capacity building needs of GEN members' trainers to provide better women's leadership training to their target group(s)
4. Identify the leadership skills and leadership capacity development needs of women leaders targeted for training by GEN members

⁷Wandia, Mary, 2011, 'Challenging Structural Inequalities: The Vision of Feminist Transformative Leadership', Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa, Building Vibrant and Tolerant Democracies, BUWA! – A Journal on African Women's Experiences, p 47.

⁸CREA, 2011, *Feminist Leadership for Social Transformation: Clearing the Conceptual Cloud*.

⁹Ibid at p 27.

¹⁰Jahan, Rounaq, 2000, *Transformative Leadership in the 21st Century*, Centre for Asia-Pacific Women in Politics, Women in Parliament Conference, Plenary session.

¹¹Gustaff Houtman's analysis of *ana* and *awza* in the context of leadership is described in Harriden, Jessica, *The Authority of Influence: Women and Power in Burmese History*, Nias Press, 2012.

¹²Harriden, Jessica, *The Authority of Influence: Women and Power in Burmese History*, Nias Press, 2012, p 220.

¹³For example, Ruderman, Marian and Ohlott, Patricia, 2005, 'Leading Women: What Coaches of Women Need to Know', *Leading in Action*, Vol 25, No 25, Number 3, July/August.

Fostering women's leadership is a broad field involving a wide range of strategies addressing the multitude of issues that affect the ability of women to take on leadership roles. This assessment is limited to initiatives to train and build the capacity of current and emerging women leaders.

1.4.1 Leadership Framework

Drawing from a leadership model developed by the Centre for Creative Leadership,³⁴ and a CREA transformative leadership analysis, 37 leadership competencies were identified as being particularly relevant for women leaders (refer to Annexes 2 and 3). Grouping some of these competencies together, an abridged Leadership Framework of 23 competencies relating to leading oneself, leading other people and leading an organisation, institution or community was developed (see Table 1).

Table 1: Leadership Framework

Leading Self	Leading Others	Leading an Organisation, Institution or Community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing self-awareness • Challenging social norms relating to gender equality & women's leadership • Displaying determination to reach a goal • Exhibiting powerful body language • Increasing capacity to learn • Developing ability to adapt to change • Balancing home duties & outside activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicating effectively • Managing conflict • Building and maintaining relationships • Managing effective teams and groups • Valuing diversity and difference • Mentoring others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a clear collective vision • Developing a strategy to achieve goals • Enhancing organisational and planning skills • Understanding and navigating the organisation/institution/community • Solving problems & making decisions • Managing change • Influencing others • Negotiating for success • Taking risks and innovating • Developing networks and support structures

1.4.2 Assessment Methods

The assessment team consisted of a lead consultant, the GEN Research and Training Coordinator and a data collection and input consultant. The assessment used two key methods for data collection: 1) key informant interviews with organisations conducting women's leadership training, including both GEN and non-GEN members; and 2) individual interviews with current and emerging women leaders.

Key Informant Interviews

Through GEN's members, the assessment team identified existing and planned women's leadership training initiatives. A total of 12 key informant interviews were conducted with the heads of organisations or key training staff involved in these programmes. A guide was developed for the key informant interviews (See Annex 1). Where possible, the interviewers obtained copies of the organisation's training curriculum, schedule and training materials. Most of these documents provided at least a general overview of the topics covered but did not give details of how the sessions were conducted. The collected materials are kept in the GEN Resource Centre and are available for members' use.

³⁴ The Centre for Creative Leadership is a US based institution providing leadership training throughout the world for leaders in the corporate, government and non-profit sectors. See www.ccl.org.

The data from the key informant interviews was used to inform the review of training initiatives. The review does not make any judgements about the quality of the training.

Individual Interviews with Current and Emerging Women Leaders

Initial key informant interviews informed the design of a questionnaire for subsequent individual interviews with current and emerging women leaders (see Annex 2). The questionnaire was field-tested and revised before it was finalised. Using the questionnaire, a total of 43 face-to-face interviews were conducted with women leaders from three different categories:

- Local-level community based organisations (CBOs) such as village development committees and women's groups
- Local and international NGOs, including faith-based organisations
- Political party members and Members of Parliament (MPs)

Interview participants were identified in discussion with the key informants and the broader GEN membership. The key informant interviews were conducted by the lead researcher and were in English, they varied in length from 1 to 1.5 hours. The individual interviews with women were conducted in the Myanmar language and were approximately 45 minutes long, with the exception of one interview conducted in English by the lead researcher.

A summary of participants is set out in Table 2 below, including the number of women in each category, their average age and average length of time in current leadership roles.

Table 2: Summary of Women Interviewed

	CBOs	NGOs	Political Parties	Total
No. of women interviewed	13	17	13	43
Average age (years) (range)	32.9 (17-52)	38.7 (23-66)	48.1 (28-67)	39.8 (17-67)
Average time in current role (years) (range)	4.2 ¹⁵ (0.25-27)	3.1 (0.25-14)	1.8 (0.5-3)	3.0 (0.25-27)

The average age of women interviewed was 39.8 years. However, the ages ranged widely from 17 to 67 years. The assessment sought to ensure that the views of young women were reflected.¹⁶ More than 50% of women from CBOs and from NGOs were below 35 years, but women in political parties tended to be older and only one woman in this category was below 35 years.

The women's current leadership roles varied widely. Participants from CBOs ranged from volunteers and peer educators to directors or heads of organisations. Participants from NGOs were staff at various levels, including officers and directors. From the political parties, participants included party members, Executive Committee members and current MPs, including representation from a number of ethnic political parties. The length of time women had spent in these leadership roles ranged from 3 months to 27 years. The majority of interviewees, however, had less than 3 years experience in their current role.

¹⁵If one particular participant (27 years) is excluded, the average length of time in the current role drops significantly to 2.3 years.

¹⁶Young women were initially defined as women aged under 25 years. However, during data collection it became apparent that few women below this age could be identified as current or emerging leaders from the three different groups interviewed. As a result the definition was changed to women 35 years and below.

The majority of women interviewed had completed tertiary education. All the women from NGOs and political parties had university degrees. About half of the women from CBOs had graduated from University, with the other half having completed secondary level education.

1.4.3 Limitations of the Assessment

The assessment faced some limitations. Firstly, given time and funding constraints, most interviews were conducted in or around Yangon, including in the Ayeyarwady Region. A number of interviews were conducted in Nay Pyi Taw with MPs from different states/regions, and one interview was conducted in Myitkyina. While attempts were made to include women from other states/regions by interviewing them while they were in Yangon; most interviews were with women from Yangon.

Secondly, the definition of a leader or emerging leader was very broad and the participants consisted of women with a wide range of experience. The assessment specifically sought to include young women and 'second line' leaders as these are the target groups of most leadership training initiatives; nevertheless, it also included women who are already Directors and MPs. Some had attended numerous trainings while some had not attended any. Coupled with the small sample size, the findings provide a general picture of the views of a broad selection of women leaders rather than a specific target group.

There is also potential bias related to GEN assessing its own members' training initiatives, and with training participants commenting on women's leadership training programmes offered by GEN members. The interviewers, however, stressed the importance of receiving honest and frank feedback.

2. Findings: Women's Leadership Training Needs

2.1 Visions of a Strong Woman Leader

In designing useful effective training programmes, it is important to have a clear understanding of what constitutes good women's leadership. When women were asked to describe their vision of a strong woman leader and what they aspire to be, three general themes emerged: dedicated to serving the public; shares power and bravely speaks out about women's issues and social justice; and is knowledgeable and capable to make the 'right' decisions.

The notion of service and doing good for the public was a very common thread. This vision of a leader who serves the public reflects the model of 'servant leadership'.¹⁷ In this model, the leader prioritises the needs of others, shares power and helps people develop. Skills and attributes described by the women that are most relevant to this leadership model included self-sacrifice, kindness, being liked, and listening and learning from others.

"Leaders shouldn't be leaders for themselves, rather they should be leaders for serving the public. This is what I call a strong woman leader. I would like to be a leader who will serve the people."

"I don't like a leader who abuses her power. I want to do good for the public and serve to bring about good things."

"A women leader should sacrifice and serve the public. Leaders shouldn't be selfish."

This vision was given by women from all three categories, and was particularly evident for women from CBOs. While doing good for the public is clearly desirable, women's leadership programmes should use caution in promoting the servant leadership model given the notion of 'serving' is traditionally associated with femininity and subservience, and may further reinforce gendered social norms.¹⁸ It is also worth noting that in previous research the same desired characteristic appeared for men's leadership as well.¹⁹ The cultural desirability and the potential application of this leadership vision to men as well as women is important to recognize, however, as this study largely focussed on interviewing women, gendered comparisons cannot be made in this case.

Secondly, women described an image of a strong woman leader that aligns with the transformative leadership model described in section 1. This leader was described as brave, courageous to speak out, accountable, critical (including of herself), and a pioneer, challenging traditional thinking, and advocating about women's issues, as well as broader social justice and environmental issues. This leader shares power and gains respect (consistent with the servant leadership model and comments in section 1 relating to influence and authority), values diversity, builds networks and promotes collaboration.

"I want to become a leader who can participate in the nation's decision making process ... If I can participate, I can change policies."

"If you are a woman leader, you can advocate and organise for other women."

"Leaders should work for women's issues, including those of women with disabilities, women's education and protection ... I want to become a leader who not only works for women but who also works for youth, including boys and girls."

"I want to become a leader who can produce leaders".

¹⁷ The phrase "servant leadership" was coined by Robert Greenleaf in an essay he first published in 1970. Greenleaf said: "The servant-leader is servant first... It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve, to serve first. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. That person is sharply different from one who is leader first, perhaps because of the need to assuage an unusual power drive or to acquire material possessions."

¹⁸ Eicher-Catt, Deborah, 2005, The Myth of Servant-Leadership: A Feminist Perspective, Women and Language, 28(1), 17-25.

¹⁹ ActionAid, CARE, Oxfam, 2011, If Given the Chance: Women's Participation in Public Life in Myanmar, Section 3.2. Yangon.

The third common image portrayed of a strong women leader is that of a woman who is knowledgeable, educated, capable, intelligent, analytical and able to make the 'right' decisions.

"A leader should be decisive, capable enough to solve problems among the community or among men."

"At least she must have knowledge. She doesn't need to be old. Leaders can be young if they are knowledgeable."

This vision, which was most common among women from NGOs, included having good management and organisational skills and being able to produce effective results.

Overall, the picture painted is that women are taking the lead as part of the movement in Myanmar to shift away from an authoritarian and patriarchal style of leadership based on power, age and being male, to a more democratic and inclusive model based on ability and principles of equality and social justice.

2.2 Attitudes Faced as a Woman Leader

International management research reveals how the persistent association of leadership with maleness, results in critical assessments of women's leadership abilities. Standards of success are measured against the masculine leadership norm. The belief in Myanmar that leadership is a male prerogative creates resistance to women taking on leadership roles in contravention of gender role expectations. Most women interviewed faced negative attitudes in their paths to become leaders. They told stories of criticism, lack of respect and discouragement from those around them.

"Women leaders need to be self-determined. They need to struggle more."

"Being men and women is a little bit different. Women cannot influence people much and their ability is often challenged. People don't want to listen to women."

Some women were criticised for displaying qualities not traditionally associated with being feminine. They were told they were aggressive, bossy or just wanted to spend time outside the home. The women felt that they were being questioned, judged and monitored. Age and experience, as well as physical size, were also identified by the women as issues which affect people's attitudes to them as leaders. One woman noted that it was particularly challenging dealing with older men because of the strong traditional concept of respect for elders.

"For older men, it is very difficult because of culture. They think they know best and that women are not as good as they are. To overcome this, I need to be careful and first build a relationship so that they listen to me. They then become accepting. Age is very important."

It was reported that negative attitudes were also displayed by some older women who believe in the traditional notion that age equates with wisdom and therefore they do not want to listen to young people.

One Member of Parliament said she had faced double criticism, both for engaging in politics and for being a woman:

"Myanmar people's political awareness is very low. People say to me that what I am doing is nonsense, and that being involved in politics cannot feed my family. Since I am a woman, I am criticized twice... Now the country has changed. People see me differently now."

Some of the women said that they have faced mixed reactions – they are supported by some people but face negative attitudes from others. Only a few women said that they have not faced any negative attitudes. They said that they are seen to be brave and are respected because they are helping the community. On a positive note, the narratives of the women interviewed indicated that there may be a shift in attitudes as more women now become active in public life.

Family ties were expressed as one factor that can shield women from negative attitudes. One CBO leader said that she did not have any difficulties because she is the daughter of the leader of an opposition group. Such protection, however, could be interpreted as using authority for protection, and as such brings the legitimacy of this authority into question.

The women showed great resilience in dealing with negative attitudes and described the following various coping strategies: trying to convince others through common sense and critical thinking that women have the same capacities as men; ignoring negative remarks and demonstrating capacity through their performance; building trust and negotiating.

"I don't give much attention to such nonsense. I ignore it. Some people really appreciate my leadership skills. When I receive negative comments, I try to convince those people to change their attitude. I prove with my actions."

"When I became a leader, I faced negative attitudes and points of view. But I don't pay much attention to these things. People will say good and bad things about others. Because of my position, I expect these kind of attitudes".

"At the beginning, men didn't want to give me opportunities. I had to prove my ability through performance. When you face a challenge, you cannot just sit and be quiet, you have to speak out if you think you are saying the right thing".

2.3 Support Needed

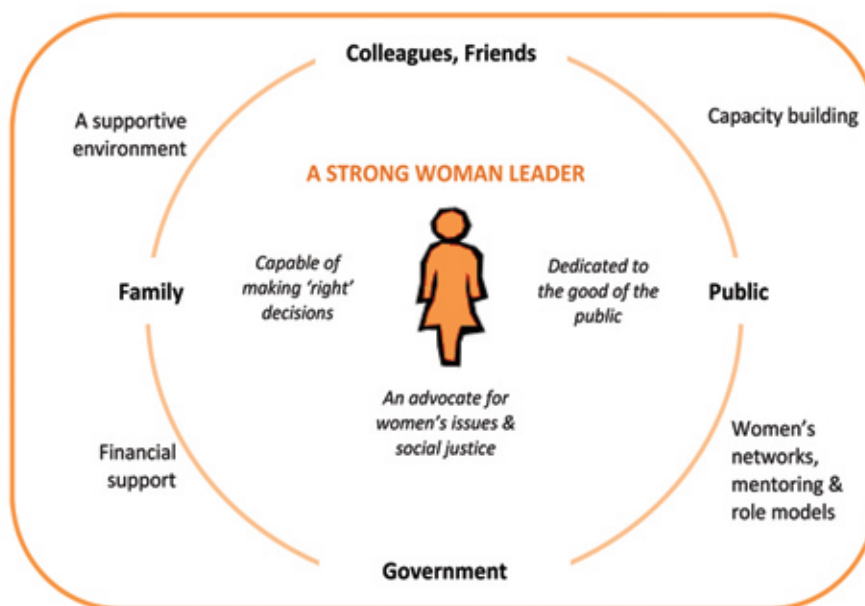
The women were asked what support they need to become their ideal, strong leader. Training opportunities and capacity building in various leadership competencies were identified as a key support. However, equally important was the establishment of a supportive environment – including support from their own organisations, political parties, friends, colleagues (including male colleagues), the public and the government. A supportive environment involved opportunities for women, the space and time to develop, as well as psychological and moral support. In particular, family support (including understanding from spouses) was mentioned by several women as key to their ability to take on leadership roles.

Other kinds of support identified as being useful, included:

- Financial support to undertake community level activities
- Linkages with women's networks and role models from the same background
- Women's awareness raising and empowerment programmes
- Exposure and observation such as regional and international visits
- Written resources, including access to libraries

A summary of the vision of a strong woman leader and the support she needs is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Vision of a Strong Woman Leader and Support Required



2.4 Previous Leadership Trainings Attended

The majority of women interviewed had received some formal leadership training in the past. All women from political parties and NGOs had received at least one training, and several had attended two or three workshops. However, only half the women from CBOs had received some formal training, and none had attended more than one workshop. This could be due to the lack of training opportunities, to busy schedules or other reasons.

All those who had attended leadership training workshops found them useful. Women from CBOs primarily found the trainings useful because they provided “more knowledge”. Women from NGOs referred to improvements in various leadership competencies such as public speaking, prioritising issues, motivating self and others and critical thinking. Women from political parties noted increased understanding about women's rights, legal and governance issues. As one MP stated:

“The training was very supportive. It provided clear messages about human rights, women's rights and the law. It was very encouraging and also made me more confident.”

Other ways in which the trainings had helped included networking with other women leaders.

Only about half of the women who had attended leadership training workshops received some follow-up support (these respondents were primarily from NGOs). Further follow-up support, such as through mentoring and coaching, was a key recommendation for improving the trainings the women received.

Many of the political leaders reflected that training workshops were generally too short and provided only basic introductory topics. They suggested conducting trainings for women politicians throughout the country, and expanding curriculums to include exposure to political systems in other countries and technical skills related to drafting of laws. Suggestions for improving training from CBO and NGO leaders varied widely, including:

- More opportunities for putting skills into practice, including internships
- The option of training on the weekends for increased accessibility
- Gender training for men
- Inclusion of guest speakers
- Provision of information about women's networks
- Inclusion of other topics such as media issues, legal issues, organisational management, presentation and debating skills, problem solving skills and technical issues.

2.5 Leadership Competencies and Training Needs

Women were asked to rank a list of competencies under the three categories:

1. Leading Self
2. Leading Others
3. Leading an Organisation, Institution or Community.

They were asked to do this according to the importance of:

- a. Competency in their current leadership role - most important now
- b. Their own relative levels of current competency
- c. Which competencies they want to strengthen through training - training needs.

In the following analysis, some of the competencies have been grouped together for simplicity and to align with the abridged Leadership Framework shown in Table 1. See Annex 3 for the full list of competencies.

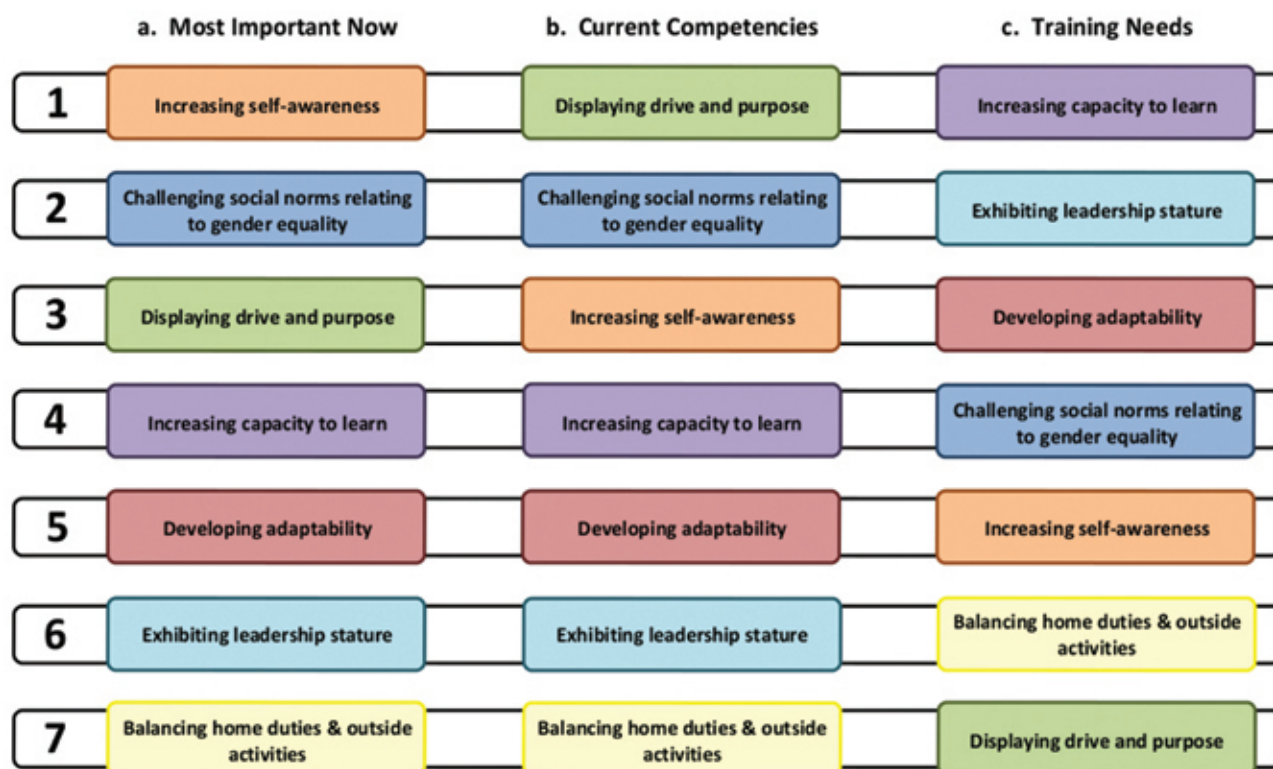
The capacity and training needs of women varied significantly based on their work setting, their leadership experience and previous leadership training. With the small sample size and the wide range of women interviewed, it is not possible to have any level of statistical significance. Nevertheless, there were some patterns evident in the data collected.

2.5.1 Leading Self

Figure 2 shows how women ranked their leadership competencies and training needs on the seven competencies included in the first category: Leading Oneself.

The key competencies that are most important to the women for their current leadership roles are related to increasing self-awareness – being aware of their own strengths and weaknesses, setting their own personal goals and having confidence in their own skills and capacities. Most women felt they have relatively strong competencies in these areas and did not rank them very highly in their learning priorities. Similarly, displaying drive and purpose was ranked high in terms of importance and own level of competency, and low on the competencies that women want to develop. A possible explanation is that these competencies are covered in most current training programmes.

Figure 2: Ranking of Competencies and Training Needs – Leading Self



Exhibiting leadership stature – including coping with negative comments based on gender, and having confidence in one's own leadership style as a woman – was considered less important and women felt that they had relatively low competency. However, it was ranked among the highest in the competencies women want to learn more about. It should not be lost in this analysis that the ability to cope with negative comments based on gender was ranked the single highest priority for future training, of all individual competencies (see Annex 3). This likely reflects the many negative attitudes the women had faced in taking on leadership roles, as described in section 2.2 above. The interest in strengthening this competency was strongest among women from NGOs. Many women also selected increasing capacity to learn as a priority for development, which corresponds with the importance placed on being knowledgeable, capable and qualified, as described in their visions of a strong woman leader.

Balancing home duties and leadership responsibilities was seen as the least important competency. This is surprising given women bear the bulk of domestic responsibilities.²² International research in the private sector suggests for women in Asian countries, where traditional gender roles generally remain strong and there continues to be limited government services such as childcare, the 'double burden' syndrome of balancing domestic and paid work is the top barrier to women's leadership advancement.²³ This assessment found women did not feel they had the competency to balance responsibilities well, but also did not seek to build this competency. One explanation is that women may believe that 'training' cannot assist with this challenge related to their individual family circumstances. It could also be that such training has not been experienced to date, and/or that this issue is viewed through the prism of 'social practices and cultural norms' - and that challenging these may involve different approaches such as mentoring and internships etc. It would be appropriate to explore this issue further before de-prioritising it in future training programmes.

²² Oxfam, CARE, Trócaire, ActionAid, 2013, Women and Leadership. Yangon.

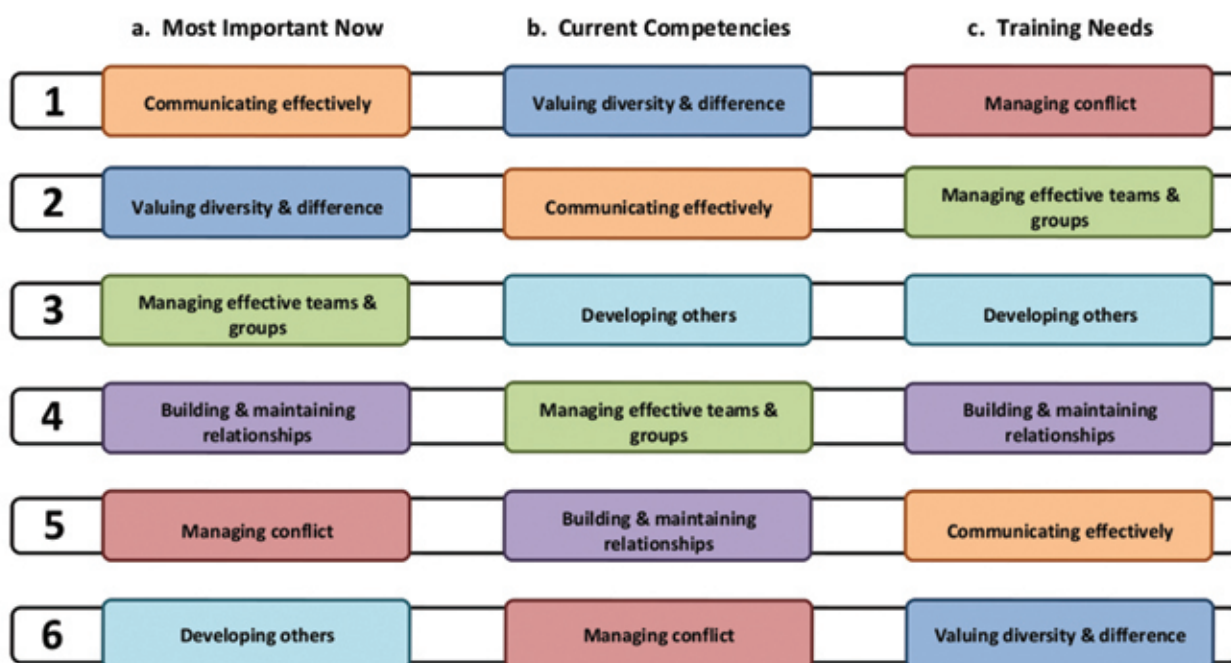
²³ McKinsey and Company, 2012, Women Matter: An Asian Perspective – Harnessing Women Talent to Raise Corporate Performance; See also: Tuminez, Astrid, 2012, Rising to the Top? A Report on Women's Leadership in Asia, Asia Society.

2.5.2 Leading Others

Figure 3 shows how women ranked competencies and training needs on the six competencies in the second category: Leading Others.

Communicating effectively and valuing diversity and difference were the most important competencies. The women rated themselves highly and did not identify these as key competencies that they wanted to develop. These topics are covered in almost all current leadership programmes. Consistent with the nature of their work, women in CBOs ranked developing others at a higher level than women in the other categories and were keen to further develop their competency in this area, while women in political parties gave greater emphasis to strengthening their communication skills. Overall, managing conflict and managing effective teams and groups were the key areas that women wanted to learn more about. These topics are not covered in many of the existing leadership training programmes.

Figure 3: Ranking of Competencies and Training Needs – Leading Others



2.5.3 Leading an Organisation, Institution or Community

Figure 4 shows how women ranked the ten competencies for the final category: leading an organisation, institution or community.

Two of the competencies – **setting vision and strategy** and **solving problems and making decisions** – stand out as areas that women find important, have a high level of competency in, but still want to learn more about. The importance of solving problems and making decisions corresponds to the vision of a strong leader who can make the 'right' decision. The interest in learning more about these areas despite relatively high self-assessed levels of current competency is possibly because most current leadership initiatives do not provide training in these areas.

Figure 4: Ranking of Competencies and Training Needs – Leading an Organisation, Institution or Community



3. Findings: Women's Leadership Training Programmes

The assessment identified a sample of 13 programmes providing leadership training targeted towards women in the study areas (see Table 3). Note that this is not an exhaustive list of agencies providing such training.

The organisations implementing these programmes include CBOs, national and international NGOs, faith-based organisations and private sector training institutes. Nine of the 13 programmes are implemented by GEN members. Some organisations focus specifically on women's leadership training while others integrate such training within sectoral development programmes or as part of their staff/volunteer development programmes.

Table 3: Women's Leadership Training Initiatives²⁴

Organisation	Programme Name	Target Group/s	Duration
Ahkaya	Mentorship Training	Akhaya Members	15-20 days
Charity Oriented Myanmar	Strengthening Leadership and Political Awareness in Women of Potential	Political Parties, Self-Help Groups, Faith Based Organisations, Young Women's Groups, Church Groups	20 days for Module I and 15 days for Module II
Comprehensive Development Education Centre (CDEC)	Young Women Leadership Programme	Young Women Leaders from CSO's and Businesses in Yangon and Mandalay	7 day Introductory Course & one month Mobile Training
Concord	Women in Public Service and Political Leadership	Second Line Leaders in Public Services, Political Parties and CBO Leaders	2 months
Oxfam	Promoting Women's Participation in Community Decision-making	Oxfam Staff and Partners	4 days
Oxfam	Women's Leadership in Disaster Risk Reduction	Women Community Members in project areas	3 days
Karen Women's Empowerment Group	Women's Leadership Training	-	-
Phan Tee Eain	Capacity Building for Women's Political Leadership	Political Parties, Parliamentarians, Women's Organizations	-
Sandhi	Women Leadership Programme	Political Leaders, Civil Society Leaders, Ethnic Leaders, Young Potential Leaders for the 2015 election	6 weeks
Student Christian Movement	National Women Leadership Programme	SCM members	5-7 days
Yuang Chi Thit	Women Empowerment Training	Village Leaders & Political Leaders	N/A
Women Can Do It (WCDI)	Women Can Do It	CBO Leaders, Youth Leaders, Ethnic Leaders	5-7 days
Young Women's Christian Assoc (YWCA)	Leadership Training	YWCA Members	2 months

²⁴ This list is not intended to be an exhaustive list of agencies providing women's leadership training, other agencies also conduct such training.

3.1 Target Groups

Among the training programmes covered in this study, most target women in political parties and civil society organisations (CSOs). This includes ethnic political parties and CSOs in ethnic minority areas. Notably, the targeting of some women CSO leaders reflects their potential candidacy in the 2015 elections.

One organisation indicated that some of the political party members it trains are also public service personnel. Another expressed a desire to expand its programme to cover the public sector in the future. Only one organisation targeted women leaders in the business sector and that programme has ended. One organisation includes men in its programme in order to promote men's acceptance of women's leadership roles.

The majority of programmes target 'second line' leaders rather than heads of organisations or current MPs as they aim to nurture young, less experienced women to become future leaders. It was also noted that current leaders do not have time to attend training programmes.

Most organisations do not plan to expand to new target groups. One organisation indicated it could expand (e.g. to cover media, business, government) if it received the support to do so. One organisation indicated that it plans to provide more intermediate and advanced courses for women who show more potential in order to build on the introductory course that it now offers.

3.2 Training Approaches

The approaches adopted by most training programmes included in the survey largely align with the transformative leadership model. The programmes support women leaders to listen to their community/constituencies, create a shared vision through participatory processes and be inclusive of people from different ethnic groups and social backgrounds. Many programmes emphasise the importance of creating a sense of self-awareness and of building self-confidence among women to speak out.

Although the model of leadership is similar, given the wide range of women's training needs, the review found that the training programmes use different approaches to encourage women to take up leadership roles and to build the skills they need to take on those roles.

Some organisations consider training on understanding women's rights and gender equality as leadership training because it motivates women to become leaders, even though the training does not specifically provide training on leadership competencies. Some organisations include training on addressing specific women's rights issues, such as violence against women, with the expectation that women leaders will take up the issue in their advocacy work. One organisation uses sexuality and sexual rights as an entry point.

Other organisations consider training on 'technical' areas for emerging women leaders as leadership training as they build the capacity of the women to perform better in their chosen fields.

3.3 Training Topics

The topics covered by the sample training programmes can be broadly divided into three categories:

- Women's Rights and Gender Equality
- Leadership Competencies
- Technical Areas.

For a full list of the training topics identified in the training programs reviewed, please refer to Annex 4.

Women's Rights and Gender Equality

All programmes reviewed include training related to women's rights and gender equality. Some programmes start with a basic introduction to the social construction of gender and use this to challenge social norms that create barriers to women taking on leadership roles. Many programmes provide information on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as a basis for discussions on women's rights and the importance of women's equal participation in political and public life. As noted above, some organisations include training on specific women's rights issues.

In the interviews with women leaders, challenging social norms was ranked highly among the competencies women find important; they also ranked themselves highly in this level of competency, reflecting the training they have already received. Many women noted that previous trainings have opened their eyes to the inequalities that result from gendered social norms. While they said their acquired knowledge has helped equip them to respond to negative attitudes they face, they are still keen to further develop this capacity. Leadership training programmes can address this by providing more practical skills in this area.

Leadership Competencies

Most of the training programmes cover some of the leadership competencies in the three categories in the Leadership Framework, but to varying degrees. Some programmes cover only a few competencies while longer programmes are able to cover more of the competencies.

Almost all programmes include training on communication skills with a focus on public speaking skills. As noted in section 2.5.2 *Leading Others*, women did not rank communication highly in areas they want to develop in the future, probably because of training they have already received. Nevertheless, communication skills will be important for those who have not received any previous training.

Many of the programmes also cover competencies related to self-awareness, building confidence, facilitation and networking skills. As with communication skills, these were ranked as important by women leaders interviewed but were not selected as areas they wanted to develop as they have assessed themselves as having relatively good levels of competencies in these areas. It is important that introductory training programmes include these areas of competencies but further training in other competency areas are needed for those who have already received some basic training.

Most of the training programmes reviewed cover few of the topics related to leading an organisation, institution or community. Only longer programmes which cover more advanced topics include competencies on negotiation skills, decision making and problem solving, change management and critical thinking.

A topic that was included in some of the training programmes but not in the Leadership Framework was good governance and accountability. The women leaders interviewed also highlighted the importance of ethics, integrity and accountability in their descriptions of a strong woman leader.

Technical Areas

Many of the programmes provide some technical training related to the participants' respective sectors. For example, one organisation targeting women from CBOs includes topics on sustainable development, environmental issues, peace, livelihoods and micro-credit. For women in political parties, many organisations provide training on human rights, the Myanmar political system and campaigning. Basic English language and computer skills are often also included. Several organisations noted the difference between the training needs of those women interested in representative politics and those interested in broader social activism. Some have shifted their focus more to one group because of expressed needs for further training, or have provided different follow-up training for women with different interests. Such technical training is essential for women who want to become leaders as

most women have few opportunities to learn and be exposed to these issues. The women leaders interviewed indicated an interest in learning more about technical areas in addition to specific leadership competencies.

3.4 Capacity Building Methods

The organisations interviewed use a wide range of capacity building methods. All the programmes included training workshops. The length and format ranged from: 3-7 day workshops; 15-20 half-day sessions spread over 8 months; 2-month live-in courses; to a one month mobile course, which included visits to different field training sites in the country. Workshops involved classroom type sessions with participatory learning activities, presentations, games, debates, guest speakers, videos and hands-on practice (e.g. using computers). One organisation noted that their trainings for women integrate more sharing of stories and experiences than in those trainings targeted at both women and men. The organisation has found that women generally respond well to the use of storytelling rather than only facts and figures (of course, this learning method may not be effective for all women given variations in learning styles).

Some programmes aim to integrate hands-on practical work (e.g. conducting research, implementing individual action plans based on learning from the training, or an internship) between classroom type sessions. One organisation splits their training into modules – an initial 20 day module focused on theoretical issues, following which the participants return to their communities where they are expected to carry out a practical activity, and a second 15 day module focused on sharing of experiences. Another organisation spreads its training sessions (for Yangon based women) over eight months and the participants are strongly encouraged to integrate the practices into their daily lives (e.g. using the internet to learn more about an issue of interest). Another innovative method of capacity building includes setting up book clubs where women read about a topic of interest and then share their thoughts with the group.

Almost all organisations noted the importance of on-going support, such as mentoring and coaching, after the formal classroom training. However, not all the organisations are able to provide this support as participants are usually spread throughout the country. Organisations working in specific geographic areas are better able to facilitate such mentoring. One organisation is currently training their alumni to become mentors so as to provide ongoing support to trainees in the future.

3.5 Trainers

Most of the organisations rely on external resource persons for training on various topics. Although the programmes may have their own trainers, for the majority of sessions they call on resource persons from CSO's, international NGOs, and UN organisations, as well as MPs and academics. Many resource persons are from the Women Can Do It (WCDI) alumni. WCDI is a training programme for women established by the Norwegian Labour Party and implemented in partnership with Norwegian People's Aid. A WCDI training was conducted for 25 first line women leaders from different organisations in 2011. The 25 women subsequently formed an alumnus and have conducted further WCDI trainings through their own organisations and jointly as a network.

Some of the staff trainers of the training programmes reviewed are former staff of capacity building organisations such as the Capacity Building Initiative (CBI). Some trainers have received training regionally such as from the Community Development and Civic Education programme in Chiang Mai. A number of international NGOs use staff from their headquarters to support the development of the training curriculum and to train the trainers. One organisation has established a link with Columbia University to support the development of a new curriculum.

4. Moving Forward

4.1 Support GEN Can Provide

Key informants were asked to provide suggestions as to how GEN could support women's leadership training. Their suggestions included:

- Compiling and sharing resource materials
- Supporting access to international mentors
- Sharing information on resource persons and trainers
- Sharing models of leadership and approaches to leadership training
- Developing a suggested curriculum for women's leadership training
- Developing new training materials such as documentaries based on the local context
- Organising forums for sharing experiences on women's leadership development

As most of the organisations rely on external resource persons, the training of staff trainers was not highlighted as a priority. However, as the model of a strong woman leader includes well supported leaders (Figure 1), it is imperative that local leadership development trainers have a supportive environment - one where organizations, mentors, networks, and others support their growth and development. This includes organizations allocating adequate human and financial resources to leadership development programs. The ongoing expansion and development of a cadre of national trainers will contribute substantially to strengthening the impact, reach and sustainability of women's leadership throughout the country.

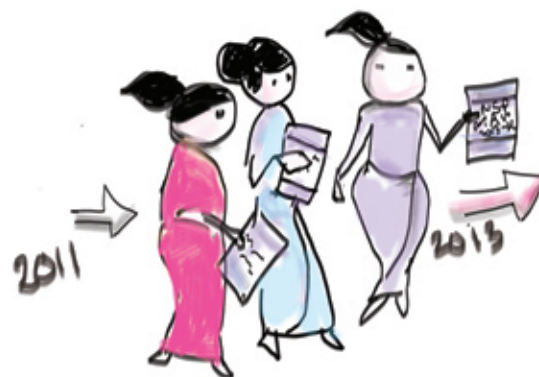
Training topics that GEN members indicated they would like more support in delivering were:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| • Advocacy | • Critical thinking |
| • Gender sensitive policy making | • Networking |
| • Strategic planning | • Communication |
| • How to set up an organisation | • Decision-making |
| • Balancing work/life and self-care issues | • Peace building and nation building |

In line with the above suggestions, and as outlined in GEN's Strategic Plan Activity 3.1, a high quality training opportunity for current and future generation women leaders is being planned for early 2014. In partnership with a global leader in this field, the programme aims to further develop the current pool of skilled Myanmar women trainers/facilitators in the area of women's leadership development by enhancing self-awareness and interpersonal skills, within a highly experiential and localized context. The participants will learn how to effectively design and facilitate leadership development programs for specific target groups of women, and will be motivated to initiate dynamic and effective leadership programs for women.

4.2 Conclusions and Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Organisations should continue to capitalise on the conducive policy environment, recent economic and social reforms, opportunities such as the Government's recently released National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women 2013 - 2022, and the 2015 elections, so as to promote the expansion of women's leadership programmes.



Recent social and economic reforms have created a huge opportunity to expand women's leadership training programmes and support women to participate in the transformation of the country. Many women's leadership training programmes have been developed concurrently with the reforms, to support more women to take on leadership

Recommendation 4: Women's leadership training should continue to promote a transformational leadership model in which women leaders share power and use inclusive, participatory processes to influence others and catalyse fundamental social change, including greater gender equality.



Most of the training programmes reviewed promote key aspects of the transformative leadership model. This model aligns well with the current momentum for political and social reform in Myanmar and with women leaders' own visions of a strong women leader.

Recommendation 5: Leadership training programmes need to be targeted at different levels to meet the varying needs of women: those with no previous training; women with prior training and experience; as they change overtime. Organisations initiating leadership training should also carry out specific training needs assessments with their own target groups, and to build upon the findings of this assessment.



Assessment findings suggest that the extent of women's prior training experience has a substantial impact on their own assessment of their capacity and their learning priorities. Organisations should consider offering both introductory and advanced level training to cater to the differing situations and needs of women. Given the dearth of leadership training programmes focussing specifically on women at community levels there is an imperative to increase coverage so as to include these women. It would also be useful for organisations to consider women's leadership development needs as they change over time - for example, as women's roles in organisations change or as their careers progress. Training programmes could also involve women leaders taking part in mixed gender leadership development programs that provide for the replication of experiences involving men and attitudes often found to be challenging. Additionally, previous work has shown that many top leaders don't have time for "leadership training" - particularly if it is training of a nature similar to that they may have previously experienced. As such, specific leadership development programmes designed for high level leaders, where only top leaders participate, could also be made available.²⁵

²⁵Munusamy, Vijayan, Ruderman, Marian, and Eckert, Regina, Leader Development and Social Identity. In The CCL Handbook of Leadership Development. Third Ed. Van Velsor, Ellen, Mccauley, Cynthia, and Ruderman, Marian. Eds. Jossey Bass 2010. pp 171.

The capacity and training needs of current and emerging women leaders varied significantly based on their work setting, their leadership experience and the extent to which they have participated in previous leadership training. It is recommended that organisations build upon this assessment's findings by undertaking further needs assessments tailored to their specific target groups.

Recommendation 6: Current leadership training programmes need to be expanded to cover additional topics to equip women with the full set of competencies they need.

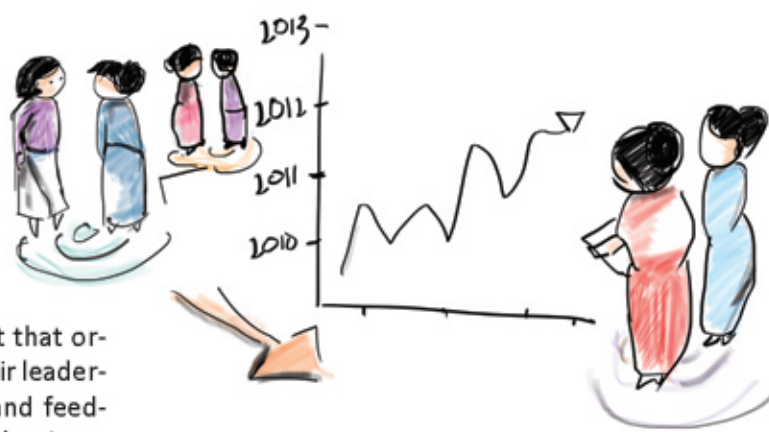
While taking into account the needs of their specific target groups, it is recommended that organisations consider expanding training programmes to:

- Give women more practical skills to cope with the negative attitudes they personally face when they transgress gendered social norms and take on leadership positions
- Increase the focus on building competencies in managing conflict and in managing effective teams and groups
- Include more training topics relevant to the competencies associated with leading an organisation, institution or community
- Include more technical content relevant to the leaders' respective sectors
- Include good governance, accountability, ethics, and integrity.



Recommendation 7: Organisations should further develop methods to measure the effectiveness of leadership training programmes to ensure that they meet the needs of training participants.

Whilst not a finding of this study, it is important that organisations continue to refine and strengthen their leadership training programmes based on reflection and feedback from participants. More strategic use of evaluations prior, during and after training programmes will support this process. It may be helpful for GEN to develop a common evaluation framework for use by network members and others that includes learning and participatory evaluation methods.



Recommendation 8: In addition to formal training workshops, leadership programmes should include forms of follow-up support, including mentoring and coaching.



positions and to help bring about positive change. The National Strategic Plan for the Advancement of Women (2013-2022), which aims to ensure women's equal participation in leadership at all levels, and the opportunities presented by the 2015 national elections, will generate more interest in women's leadership programmes.

Recommendation 2: The need for women's leadership training remains enormous. More organisations should be encouraged to promote women's leadership, as well as women's leadership development programmes in a wide range of sectors.

While a number of organisations have been implementing women's leadership training programmes for a while, it is a relatively new area of development in Myanmar. The institutionalised tradition of male leadership and other social norms such as gender roles, as well as challenges for women in accessing education and information have created significant barriers to women's leadership advancement. There is a great need for more training programmes to support women to: build their leadership competencies; have increased confidence in their leadership capacity and to challenge social norms that hold them back; strengthen networks with other women leaders; build technical knowledge and skills to advance in varied sectors. It is also important that organizations work individually and collectively to help build and strengthen support systems for women and women's leadership development trainers, this includes mentors and coaches, creating opportunities for internships, and providing space to reflect upon the challenges that various leadership situations present.



Recommendation 3: Leadership training programmes currently being delivered are relevant and appreciated by current and emerging woman leaders. New programmes should build on the success of those currently offered.

All of the women interviewed who had previously attended leadership training workshops found them useful. Women in each of the three categories emphasised different reasons the training was valuable: women from CBOs stressed their increased knowledge; women from NGOs emphasised their increased leadership competencies; and women from political parties highlighted their increased understanding about women's rights, legal and governance issues. Women have particularly valued opportunities during trainings to build their networks with other women leaders.

Only about half of the women who had attended leadership training workshops received some form of follow-up support, such as mentoring, coaching or internships. A key theme in women's recommendations for improving leadership training was the provision of such support. See Recommendation 10 below for suggested GEN support to this recommendation.

Recommendation 9: Standardising women's leadership training is not recommended as the diversity of women's training needs should be acknowledged and respected.



Given the significant variation of women's leadership capacity and training needs, standardised leadership training is unlikely to be effective. Organisations should tailor their programmes to their own aims and settings.

Recommendation 10: As a network, GEN should support members to share experiences; coordinate sharing of resource materials; and facilitate access to leadership trainers, mentors, and international training opportunities.



GEN has an important role to play as a network in supporting members, and to some extent non-member organisations, to strengthen existing leadership training programmes and initiate new programmes. It is recommended that GEN:

- Encourages members to share training curriculums, approaches and lessons learned including through regular monthly meetings and specific experience sharing events
- Supports exposure to regional and international experiences, including from countries that have recently gone through political and social transitions
- Coordinates sharing of local and international resources, particularly good practices, through various avenues, including the GEN Resource Centre
- Facilitates access to leadership trainers, particularly advanced trainers of trainers (while organisations currently providing training did not specifically request this support, it is likely organisations initiating new programmes would find this valuable)
- Brokers access to mentors, including, where feasible and appropriate, international mentors
- Facilitates access amongst members to high-quality domestic and international training opportunities
- Establishes a Women's Leadership Working Group

Recommendation 11: Further investigation about different ways to develop women's leadership in Myanmar, other than training.



In other countries where organizations compete to provide leadership development services, much thinking goes into the changing landscape of leadership, and into developing appropriate, high impact ways to develop leaders. This could involve leadership development programs through universities or a local think tank housed in GEN or elsewhere. It might include initiatives such as research with Myanmar women leaders so as to better understand changes over time and in areas such as the government, parliament and private sectors, or the study of differences in women leaders in Myanmar compared to other parts of the world, and what culturally relevant approaches can be taken to nurture and develop women leaders. Such exploration might also include testing ideas and methods from other countries for women's leadership development by bringing in external resources and piloting projects, or by studying the results of interventions currently being used by international specialists in the area of leadership development.

In conclusion, targeted and well-designed leadership training, based on a transformative leadership model, and complementary approaches, will empower and equip women to realise their visions of strong women leaders. The recent political and social reforms have created a huge opportunity to strengthen and expand women's leadership so that women also take the lead in the transformation of the country.

Annexes

Annex 1: Key Informant Interview Guide

GEN Women Leaders' Training Needs Assessment

1. Who are the targets of the leadership development programmes? Are there other target groups you plan to work with?
2. What are the models and approaches to leadership used by the programmes?
3. What skills building are included in the training?
4. What are the capacity building methods used?
5. What are the topics and activities included in the training programmes?
6. How long is the training? How often is it conducted?
7. What are the future plans?
8. What support do you feel you need? How can GEN provide this support?
9. How do you train the trainers?

Where possible, the team will request a copy of the training curriculum

Annex 2: Women's Leadership Training Needs Assessment Questionnaire

Name of interviewer: _____ Interview code: _____
 Date of interview: _____ Mode of interview: Face to face/phone

Individual Interview Questionnaire**I. Instructions for interviewer**

1. Please tick the category of leader being interviewed (determined prior to interview):

- ☐ Local level community based organisations such as village development committees and women's groups
☐ Local and international non-government organisations and faith-based organisations
☐ Political parties and parliamentarians

2. Introduce yourself and explain the reason for the assessment (to identify the capacity building needs of women leaders so that GEN members can provide training which meets those needs).

3. Explain that you have a list of questions you would like to ask and the interview is expected to take about 45 minutes to 1 hour.

4. Inform the respondent the information is confidential, no names will be collected and GEN will only present information such that it cannot be traced back to any individual respondent.

II. Questions for respondent**A. Basic information**

1. Place of residence:

a. Village/ward: _____ b. Township: _____

c. State/region _____

2. Age: _____ years

3. Education level: Primary school/middle school/high school/university degree

B. Leadership role

You are being interviewed because you are a leader or a potential leader in your activities in <specify category from I.1 above>.

1. Describe your current role within that community group/organisation/party:

2. How long have you been in this role? _____ months

3. What is your vision of a strong woman leader in general? What kind of leader do you want to be?

4. What type of support do you need to become this kind of leader?

5. What were people's attitudes towards you as a woman leader? How did you try to cope with them or overcome them?

C. Previous leadership training received

1. How many leadership trainings have you received? _____
2. Complete the following for each leadership training received.
 - i. Organisation which provided training: _____
 Topic/Title of training: _____
 Length of training: _____
 Was any follow-up support provided (e.g. mentoring, internship)? Yes/No
 If yes, what support was provided? _____
 Did the training help you in being a better leader? Yes/No
 If Yes, How? _____
 - ii. Organisation which provided training: _____
 Topic/Title of training: _____
 Length of training: _____
 Was any follow-up support provided (e.g. mentoring, internship)? Yes/No
 If yes, what support was provided? _____
 Did the training help you in being a better leader? Yes/No
 If Yes, How? _____
 - iii. Organisation which provided training: _____
 Topic/Title of training: _____
 Length of training: _____
 Was any follow-up support provided (e.g. mentoring, internship)? Yes/No
 If yes, what support was provided? _____
 Did the training help you in being a better leader? Yes/No
 If Yes, How? _____
3. What other support have you received to develop your leadership skills?

4. What suggestions would you give to improve the leadership training you have received?

D. Leadership competencies

For the assessment, we have identified three areas which are important for leaders to have the skills and capacities in -- to lead herself, lead others and lead a community/organisation/institution. For each of these areas, answer the following:

- i) Which skills and capacities do you think are the most important for you in your current leadership role? (Rank from most important to least important; 1=most important)
- ii) What is your level of skill/capacity (Rate yourself 1-5 for each skill/capacity; 1= very good, 2=good, 3=fair, 4=poor, 5=none)?
- iii) Which would you like to learn more about? (Tick all that are relevant)

1. Leading Self

Skills and Capacities	Most important for you (rank all from 1=most to 13=least)	Your skill/capacity level (rank each from 1=very good to 5=none)	Like to learn (tick all that are relevant)
Aware of my own strengths and weaknesses			
Have confidence in my own skills and capacities			
Set personal goals			
Take responsibility for my own actions			
Understand the reasons why women's equality is important			
Have confidence in my own leadership style as a woman			
Challenge social norms that support men as leaders and women as followers			
Cope with negative comments towards me because I am a woman			
Have the determination to strive to reach a goal			
Show that I am a leader in the way I carry and present myself			
Seek to continuously learn new things			
Adapt to different situations			
Manage my activities as a leader/potential leader while also fulfilling responsibilities at home and with my family			

2. Leading Others

Skills and Capacities	Most important for you (rank all from 1=most to 9=least)	Your skill/capacity level (rank each from 1=very good to 5=none)	Like to learn (tick all that are relevant)
Communicate information and messages effectively			
Listen effectively			
Confident to speak in front of a large group of people			
Manage conflict to achieve a positive outcome for all			
Develop and maintain relationships with other people to support my goal			
Manage the people I work with to meet our goal			
Have respect for and value different ideas			
Have respect for people from different backgrounds, ethnicities and religions			
Provide support to others to improve their capacities			

3. Leading an Organisation, Institution or Community

Skills and Capacities	Most important for you (rank all from 1=most to 15=least)	Your skill/capacity level (rank each from 1=very good to 5=none)	Like to learn (tick all that are relevant)
Work with others to establish a clear collective vision			
Work with others to develop a common strategy for achieving our vision			
Plan and prioritise the activities of the community/organisation/institution			
Have an understanding of how to get things done within the community/organisation/ institution			
Analyse a problem and identify solutions			
View an issue from different perspectives			
Involve others in making decisions			
Make clear decisions in a timely manner			
Cope positively with changing environment			
Know how to influence others			
Negotiate to achieve the interests of my community/organisation/institution			
Be assertive in challenging circumstances			
Know when to take risks			
Generate ideas for new ways of working			
Build partnerships, network and collaborate with others			

Annex 3: Data on Leadership Competencies and Training Needs

These tables show the ranking of the competencies as presented in the questionnaire. Some of the competencies were grouped together for the analysis above.

Leading Self

Most important to me in my current leadership role	My own level of competency	I want to learn more about
Aware of my own strengths and weakness	Take responsibility for my own actions	Cope with negative comments towards me because I am a woman
Have confidence in my own skills and capacities	Have the determination to strive to reach a goal	Seek to continuously learn new things
Understand the reasons why gender equality is important	Understand the reasons why gender equality is important	Show that I am a leader in the way I carry and present myself
Set personal goals	Challenge social norms that support men as leaders and women as followers	Adapt to different situations
Challenge social norms that support men as leaders and women as followers	Aware of my own strengths and weakness	Understand the reasons why gender equality is important
Take responsibility for my own actions	Seek to continuously learn new things	Have confidence in my own leadership style as a woman
Have the determination to strive to reach a goal	Have confidence in my own skills and capacities	Challenge social norms that support men as leaders and women as followers
Seek to continuously learn new things	Adapt to different situations	Aware of my own strengths and weakness
Adapt to different situations	Set personal goals	Have confidence in my own skills and capacities
Show that I am a leader in the way I carry and present myself	Cope with negative comments towards me because I am a woman	Manage my activities as a leader/potential leader while also fulfilling responsibilities at home and with my family
Cope with negative comments towards me because I am a woman	Show that I am a leader in the way I carry and present myself	Have the determination to strive to reach a goal
Have confidence in my own leadership style as a woman	Have confidence in my own leadership style as a woman	Set personal goals
Manage my activities as a leader/potential leader while also fulfilling responsibilities at home and with my family	Manage my activities as a leader/potential leader while also fulfilling responsibilities at home and with my family	Take responsibility for my own actions

Leading Others

Most important to me in my current leadership role	My own level of competency	I want to learn
Listen carefully	Have respect for and value different ideas	Manage conflict to achieve a positive outcome for all
Communicate information and messages effectively	Have respect for people from different backgrounds, ethnicities and religions	Manage the people I work with to meet our goal
Confident to speak in front of a large group of people	Confident to speak in front of a large group of people	Communicate information and messages effectively
Have respect for and value different ideas	Listen carefully	Provide support to others to improve their capacities
Manage the people I work with to meet our goal	Communicate information and messages effectively	Develop and maintain relationships with other people to support my goal
Have respect for people from different backgrounds, ethnicities and religions	Provide support to others to improve their capacities	Confident to speak in front of a large group of people
Develop and maintain relationships with other people to support my goal	Manage the people I work with to meet our goal	Have respect for people from different backgrounds, ethnicities and religions
Manage conflict to achieve a positive outcome for all	Develop and maintain relationships with other people to support my goal	Listen carefully
Provide support to others to improve their capacities	Manage conflict to achieve a positive outcome for all	Have respect for and value different ideas

Leading the Organisation, Institution or Community

Most important to me in my current leadership role	My own level of competency	I want to learn
Work with others to establish a clear collective vision	Work with others to establish a clear collective vision	Analyse a problem and identify solutions
Have an understanding of how to get things done within the community/ organization/ institution	Generate ideas for new ways of working	Work with others to develop a common strategy for achieving our vision
Analyse a problem and identify solutions	Make clear decisions in a timely manner	Know how to influence others
Work with others to develop a common strategy for achieving our vision	Work with others to develop a common strategy for achieving our vision	Negotiate to achieve the interests of my community/ organization/ institution
Plan and prioritise the activities of the community/organization/ institution	Plan and prioritise the activities of the community/organization/ institution	View an issue from different perspectives
View an issue from different perspectives	Build partnerships, network and collaborate with others	Generate ideas for new ways of working
Make clear decisions in a timely manner	Know when to take risks	Work with others to establish a clear collective vision
Negotiate to achieve the interests of my community/ organization/ institution	View an issue from different perspectives	Make clear decisions in a timely manner
Build partnerships, network and collaborate with others	Negotiate to achieve the interests of my community/ organization/ institution	Cope positively with changing environment
Cope positively with changing environment	Cope positively with changing environment	Build partnerships, network and collaborate with others
Generate ideas for new ways of working	Analyse a problem and identify solutions	Have an understanding of how to get things done within the community/ organization/ institution
Know how to influence others	Know how to influence others	Plan and prioritise the activities of the community/organization/ institution
Know when to take risks	Have an understanding of how to get things done within the community/ organization/ institution	Know when to take risks Be assertive in challenging circumstances

Annex 4: Training Topics Included in Existing Training Programmes

Training topics related to women's rights and gender equality

Topics	
1. Sex and sexuality, and their relationship with gender	14. Democracy and women's participation
2. How media shapes women's roles	15. Democracy and gender equality
3. Basic gender awareness/sex and gender	16. Power and distribution of power
4. Gender discrimination	17. Women in politics
5. Gender equity and equality	18. Women and law
6. Gender and development	19. Language is power-gender language
7. Gender mainstreaming	20. Domination techniques
8. Women's rights	21. The Ladder of Participation
9. CEDAW	22. Working with women: the personal, social and political sphere
10. Women's participation in public life	23. Women's issues
11. Women in peace process	24. Violence against women/Gender based violence
12. Roles of women leaders	25. Trafficking
13. Women leaders around the world	

Training topics related to leadership competencies

Leading Self	Leading Other People	Leading the Organisation, Institution or Community
Self-awareness and personal development	Communication skills	Facilitation skills
Ownership of the issue	Presentation skills	Group management
Building self-esteem/confidence	Public speaking skills	Negotiation skills
Creating self-care plan	Argumentation, speeches, debates	Critical thinking
Body language --status and roles	Listening skills (dialogue with constituencies)	Stakeholder mapping
What is good leadership	Feedback	Networking
	Mentoring	Decision making & problem solving
	Social relationships	Leadership & representation role
	Building trust	Planning skills
	Team building	Office management
	Conflicts resolution/conflict transformation	Responsibilities of a Secretary
		Staff supervision
		Time management
		Change management
		Program ideas and planning
		Good governance and accountability
		Influencing and advocacy
		Community organisation

Annex 5: Women's Leadership Training Materials

Printed materials

ActionAid, 2012, Giving Women a Chance: A resource on barriers to and opportunities for women's participation in public life and decision-making in Myanmar

ActionAid, Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)
(Booklet with pictures and captions in Myanmar)

Comprehensive Development Education Center, Steps that Make the Flowers Blossom
(Booklet of women's stories in Myanmar)

NGO Gender Group, The Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
(CEDAW) (Full convention in English and Myanmar)

Oxfam, Promoting Women's Participation in Community Decision-making: A Resource Pack
(English and Myanmar versions available)

UN Habitat, 2005, Key Competencies to Improving Local Governance Volume I:
Quick Guide Women Can Do It, Women Can Do It Training Curriculum, unpublished document

Various training materials, training topics and resource persons from different organisations on leadership competencies (available from GEN Research and Training Coordinator)

Videos

ActionAidMyanmar, Inspiring Women

Buddha's Touch in Tamaole (A video on a community environmental conservation initiative in Cambodia, translated into Myanmar language)

Comprehensive Development Education Center, Leadership Enhancement Programme for Young Women (LASS)

Comprehensive Development Education Center, Let's Grow Together

Mekong River Commission, The Mekong: River of Life (Documentary on the relationship between people and their fisheries in the Mekong River based in Thailand, English)

Annex 6: Bibliography

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<http://sites.asiasociety.org/womenleaders/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Rising-to-the-Top-Final-PDF.pdf>

Wandia, Mary, 2011, 'Challenging Structural Inequalities: The Vision of Feminist Transformative Leadership', Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa, Building Vibrant and Tolerant Democracies, BUWA! – A Journal on African Women's Experiences, p 47: <http://www.osisa.org>