

# Opportunities for Creating Respectful and Inclusive Workplaces In Myanmar

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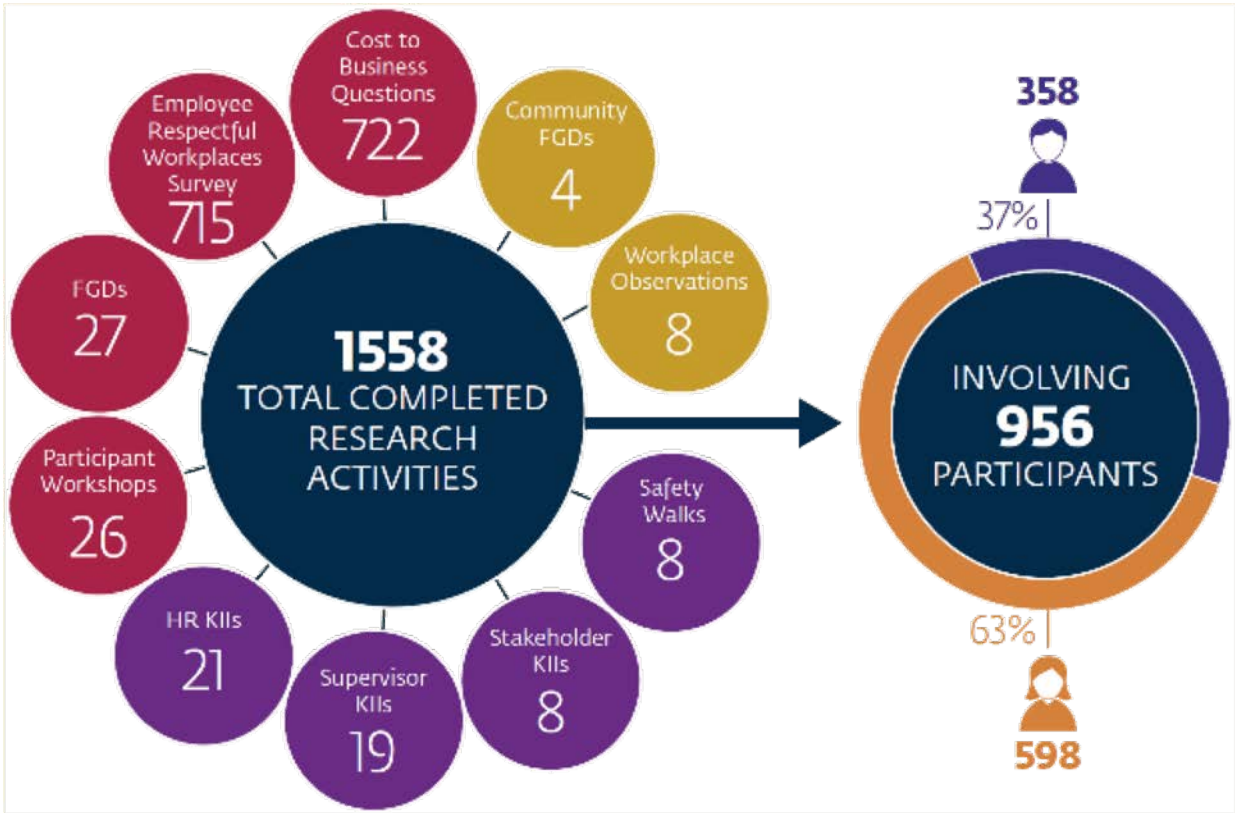
Vicky Bowman  
Director, Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business  
EU Forum  
Naypyidaw, 5 June 2019

# What's the business case?



- Businesses in Myanmar need to recruit and retain skilled labour
- Respectful workplaces appeal to employees, increases productivity by average 14% (IFC study).
- Private sector can play an important role in promoting peaceful and sustainable development of Myanmar by promoting tolerance and inclusion

# What's the problem?



### RESPECTFUL WORKPLACES

Exploring the costs of bullying and sexual harassment to businesses in Myanmar

**DeNe Facility** **UKaid** **Australian Aid**

**UMBRELLA FACILITY FOR GENDER EQUALITY** **WORLD BANK GROUP**

**IFC** International Finance Corporation  
Creating Markets, Creating Opportunities

## KEY FINDINGS

### Sexual harassment affects all workplaces:

- **15%** of employees had been sexually harassed.
- **21%** witnessed someone being sexually harassed.

### Bullying is more common than sexual harassment:

- **40%** employees had been bullied.
- **56%** employees had witnessed bullying.
- Employees are almost three times more likely to have witnessed or experienced bullying than sexual harassment.

### Men and women both experience bullying and sexual harassment in Myanmar workplaces, but their experience is different:

- **40%** were bullied. More men than women have experienced bullying.
- **15%** employees had been sexually harassed. More women than men have experienced sexual harassment.

### Bullying and sexual harassment are a cost to business:

- **14%** annual loss of labor productivity due to bullying and sexual harassment.
- Other business costs not measured in this study include turnover, recruitment and retraining costs.

### MOST COMMON TYPES OF BULLYING

- Being gossiped about
- Being shouted or sworn at by a supervisor
- Being teased
- Being excluded from work-related social events

### MOST COMMON TYPES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

- Body shaming
- Hearing someone tell a joke containing sexual content
- Inappropriate hugging

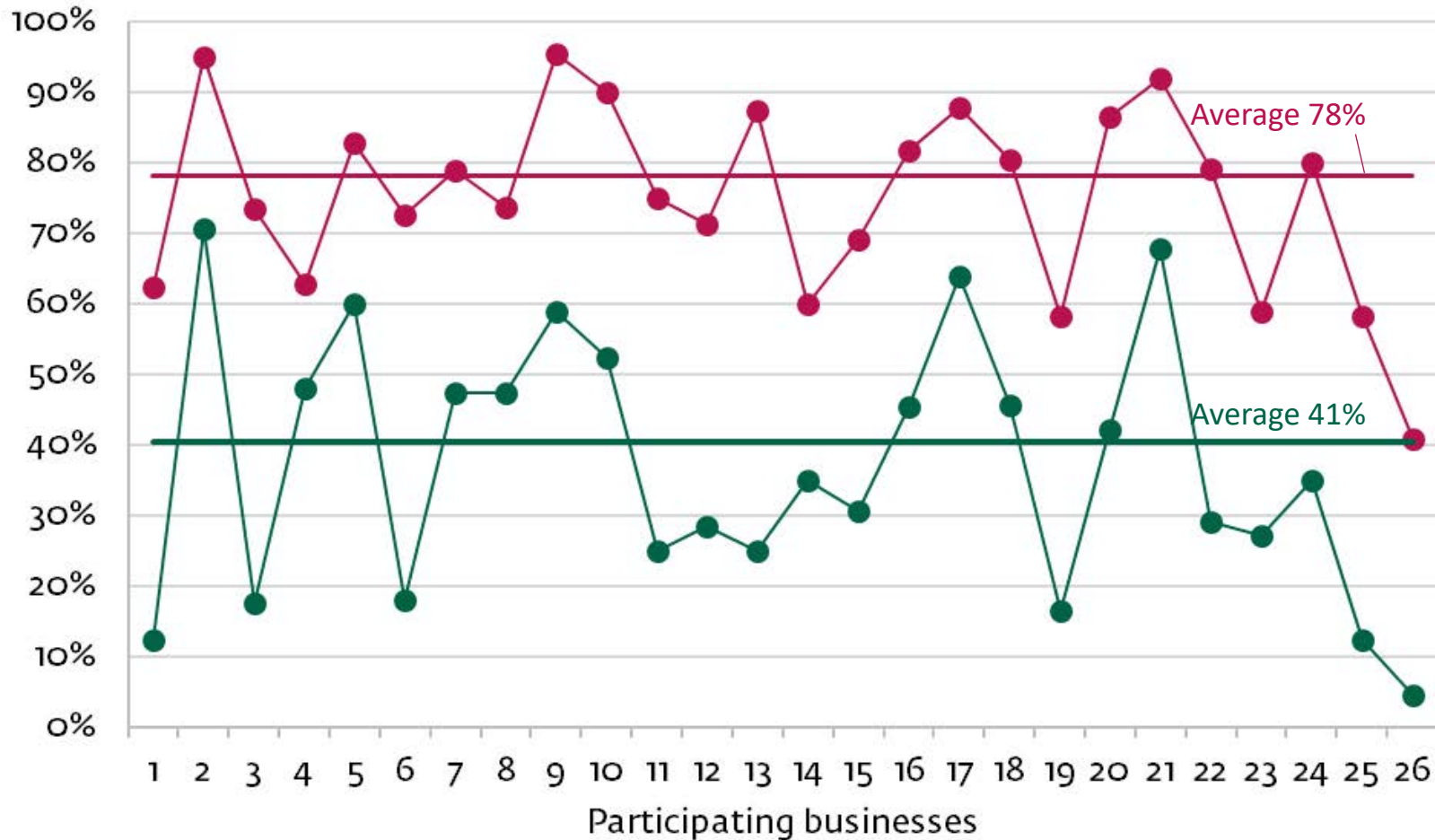
#### RESPECTFUL WORKPLACES

Expanding the reach of bullying and sexual harassment in businesses in Myanmar



Empowering Markets. Creating Opportunities.

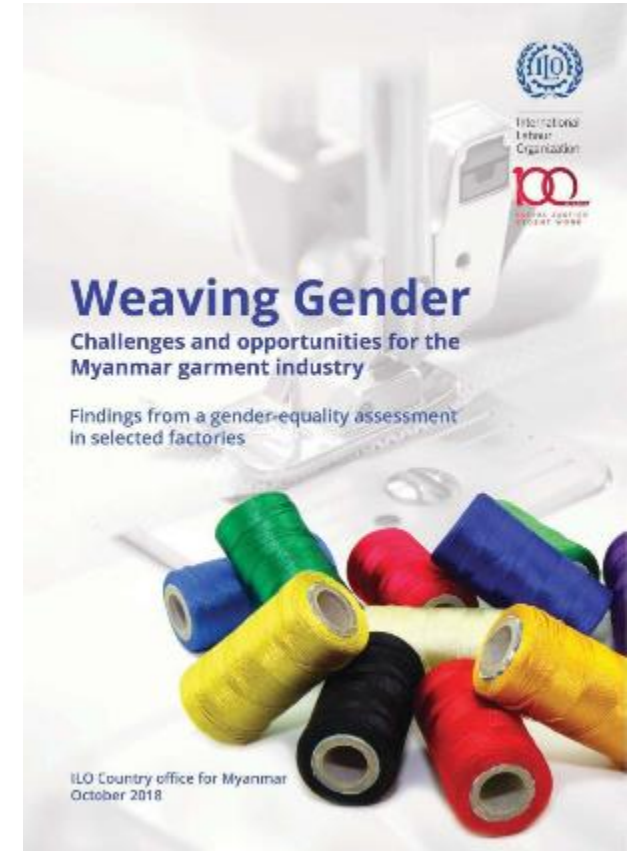
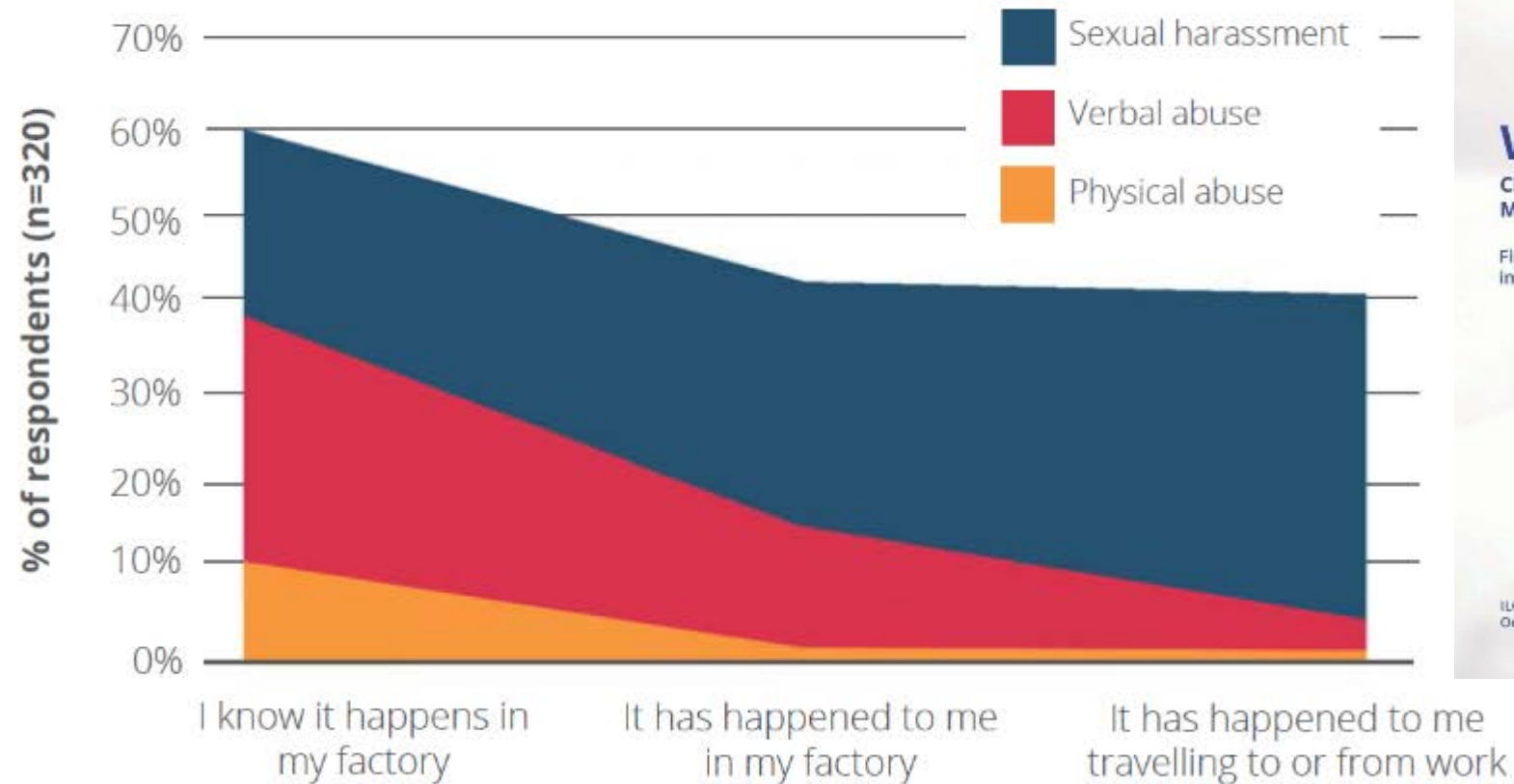
# This situation is not “normal Myanmar culture”



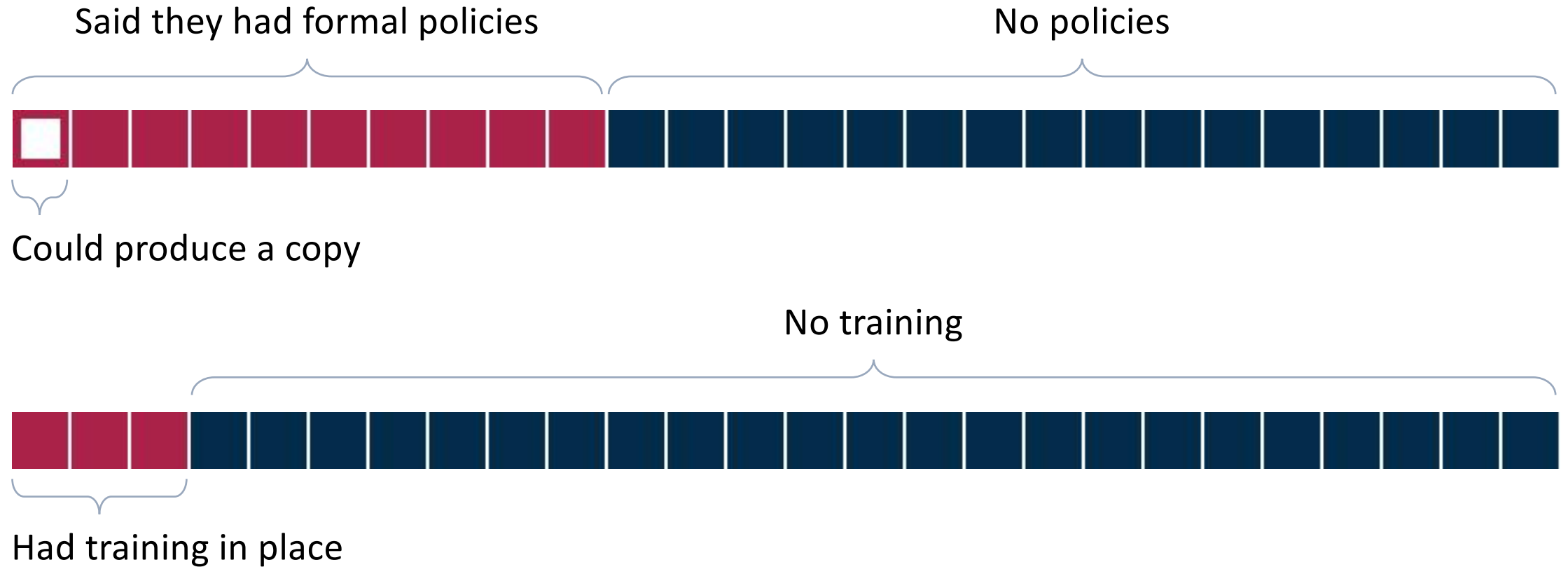
- Percent who said they had experienced at least one behavior (indicative of bullying or sexual harassment)
- Percent who acknowledged they had been bullied or sexually harassed

# H&M SIDA ILO report – ‘Weaving Gender’

Figure 13 Comparative rates of sexual harassment and abuse



# Policies and training



# Businesses can contribute to creating respectful workplace cultures by....

- Increase awareness, training on human rights, equality, diversity, inclusion, etc
- Create strong HR policies, to ensure inclusion of diversity among employees; whistleblowing/support for employees; employee surveys
- Develop skills and capacity to create respectful workplaces;
- Take public action
  - support the cause
  - collaborate with other organizations to change social attitudes

အမျိုးသမီးအချင်းချင်းကို ချစ်သူ (Lesbian) ၊ အမျိုးသားအချင်းချင်းကို ချစ်သူ (Gay) ၊ လိင်တူလိင်ကွဲကို ချစ်သူ (Bisexual) ၊ ဆန်ကျင်အက်လိင်လို ဝတ်စားဆင်ယင်နေထိုင်သူ (Transgender) နှင့် Intersex များအား ဒွဲပြားဆက်ဆံမှုများကို တိုင်ကြားပေးခြင်း၊ ဦးစားရေးလုပ်ငန်းများအတွက် ကျင့်ဝတ်စံနှုန်းများ

တရားစီရင်စဉ်

## Tackling Discrimination against Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, & Intersex People

### STANDARDS OF CONDUCT FOR BUSINESS

**FIVE STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

AT ALL TIMES

1. Respect human rights
2. Eliminate discrimination
3. Provide support
4. Prevent other human rights violations
5. Act in the public sphere

WORKPLACE

MARKETPLACE

COMMUNITY



UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER



IDAHOT – 17 May 2019

# International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia 2019

Companies which flew the flag included:  
ANZ , Awba and the 8-Mile Business Centre, Capital Diamond Star Group, DeHeus Myanmar, ERM Myanmar, H&M, Heineken, Magic Event Myanmar, Metro Wholesale, Myanmar Bureau, Nestle, One to Watch, Padamyar FM, Rose Garden Hotel, Shwetaung (Junction City), Unilever, Woodside Energy.



# Information, training and support is available from.....

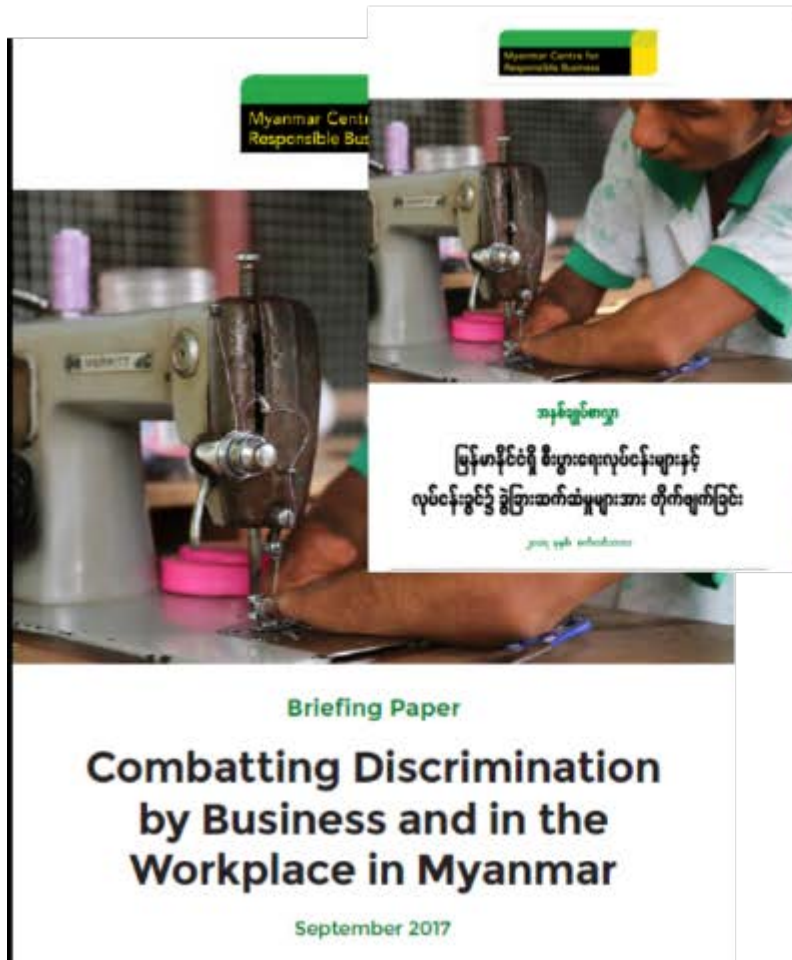
- Myanmar Business Coalition on Gender Equality
  - [www.mbcgea.com](http://www.mbcgea.com) – seeking company members
- Disability job coaching:
  - Myanmar Independent Living Initiative
  - Shwe Mintha Foundation
  - The Leprosy Mission



■ LGBT: Colors Rainbow  
and other organisations



# MCRB Briefing Papers



Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business

အနာခံရမှုတို့ကို  
ပြန်မာနိုင်ငံရှိ စီးပွားရေးလုပ်ငန်းများနှင့်  
လုပ်ငန်းခွင်၌ ခွဲခြားဆက်ဆံမှုများအား တိုက်ချက်ပြင်  
၂၀၁၇ ခုနှစ် ဇူလိုင်လ

Briefing Paper

## Combating Discrimination by Business and in the Workplace in Myanmar

September 2017



Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business

အလုပ်သမားများအတွက် လက်ရှိကဏ္ဍ

ပသန်စွမ်းသူများအား  
အလုပ်ခန့်ထားခြင်း

ပြန်မာနိုင်ငံရှိ အလုပ်သမားများအတွက် လက်ရှိကဏ္ဍ

AAR Japan Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business

## Employing Persons with Disabilities

A Handbook for Employers in Myanmar

AAR Japan Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business



BRIEFING PAPER

## Indigenous Peoples' Rights and Business in Myanmar

FEBRUARY 2016

# Social media and respectful workplaces



## Lessons Learned

- Social Media can be a positive way to build reputation
- Encourage employees - don't only list rules
- Do's and Don't should be simple
- Give training face to face and in local language
- Share dilemmas and examples
- Let your peers start giving feedback to each other
- Social media etiquette & digital literacy takes time!

An infographic titled 'Social Media Policy Content' with the Heineken Myanmar logo. It features six key principles, each with an icon and a brief description in Burmese and English:

- Be prudent and respectful:** Icon of a signpost with 'Respect' and 'Prudent' arrows.
- Be truthful and accurate:** Icon of a megaphone and a speech bubble saying 'Truth & accurate'.
- Be transparent, use a disclaimer and speak only for yourself:** Icon of a person's silhouette with a speech bubble.
- Always keep your composure and do not pick fights:** Icon of a speech bubble with a bomb and a red prohibition sign over it.
- Protect Confidential Information:** Icon of a yellow folder with a key.
- Respect privacy and contact preferences:** Icon of a padlock.



Heineken presentation to MCRB 7 May 2019 workshop

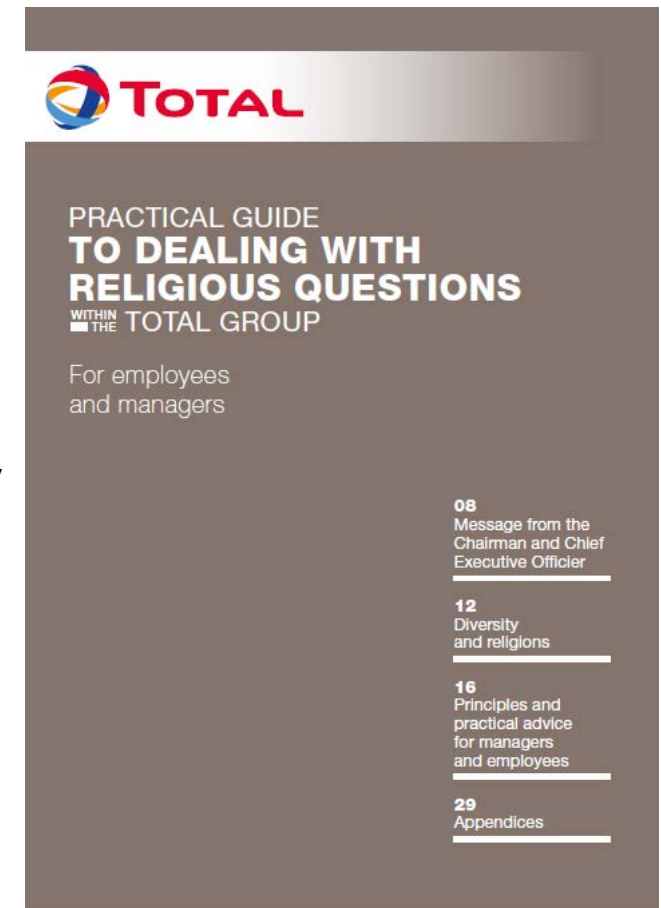
TRANSLATE

COMMUNICATE

TRAINING

# Religion and the Workplace

1. **Favour** dialogue and goodwill towards other employees and managers
2. **Respect** the beliefs of others, including those of co-religionists who may hold different points of view and take different positions
3. **Learn** about local practices in order to be familiar with customs and the laws in effect before making any requests to management
4. **Give** manager enough advance notice of requests for leave-time to allow them to make decisions
5. **Know and understand** the regulations of the Code of Conduct, especially the criteria that may justify any restriction placed by managers on the expression of religious beliefs
6. **Suggest** solutions to line management that are appropriate to the situation and compatible with the smooth operation of the business unit



# Respecting Myanmar Culture in the Workplace: launching soon



Responsible investment is respectful investment

An easy-to-read illustrated booklet

To help foreigners working in Myanmar to respect Myanmar culture and avoid problems in the workplace and with local communities based on cultural misunderstandings

Target audience is investors

Helps companies “respect and comply with the customs, traditions and traditional culture of the ethnic groups in the Union [Art (65(a)), Myanmar Investment Law]

Guide may also be useful for others, such as foreign employees of international organisations and NGOs

# Contents of Respecting Myanmar Culture in the Workplace

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not take photos in front of/with Buddhist statues in a way that is disrespectful.



Be aware that there may be diverse religious and ethnic groups in the workplace. Allow them to respect their holy days. These include official Gazetted Holidays, for major Buddhist holidays, Christmas, Bakari Eid and Deepawali days when staff should be granted leave.



Myanmar people appreciate foreigners who try to wear Myanmar clothing – 'longyi' (a sarong – 'paso' for men and 'htamein' for women).

