



Peace Resource Collaborative  
ศูนย์วิจัยและพัฒนาระบบสันติภาพ  
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Center for Conflict Studies and Cultural Diversity



SHAPE  
S E A



“ Dealing with the challenges of the ongoing conflict requires the cultivation and accumulation of peace assets over time. Women’s groups are a potential peace asset. To ensure they reach their full capacity for the greater common good, it is crucial that any obstacles women may experience are reduced and the opportunities for their sustained contribution to peace increased. ”

## Women and the Peace Process in the Deep South of Thailand

Duanghathai Buranajaroenkij

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The manuscript was revised following two consultation meetings organized by PRC with support from the European Union

Delegation to Thailand (EU). The first meeting was held in Pattani Province on 9 October 2017. Eighteen female activists and two male activists—the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Civil Society Council of Southernmost Thailand— provided opinions on the draft report. The second meeting was held in Bangkok on 16 November 2017. Nine experts on Women and Gender Studies from Bangkok and the Southern Border Provinces helped review the draft and offers suggestions for improvement. The author also thanks Ms. Theerada Suphaphong, Mr. Mathus Anuwat-udom, Mr. Somkiat Boonchu, Associate Professor Mark Tamthai and Associate Professor Dr. Chantana Banpasirichote for sharing their insights for this report.

The author hopes this book will be useful to the peacebuilders in the South of Thailand. Specifically, the author hopes that it will contribute to raising the importance of the need for a gendered perspective to conflict and to the role of women as peacebuilders.

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July 2018

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# Introduction

The ethno-political conflict between the Thai State and the Malay-Muslim Resistance Movement has been around for close to a century, with attempts to resolve the conflict yielding numerous policies, recommendations, and practical guidelines.<sup>1</sup> Since 1993, efforts have been made to create a space for dialogue between state agencies and a handful of separatist groups. Notwithstanding the secretive and sporadic nature of these talks, these attempts to reduce violence and to seek peaceful co-existence have continued from that time up until the present.

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<sup>1</sup> Different groups will refer to the Malay-Muslim Movement in different ways. The Thai Government refers to the Movement Representatives in the Peace Dialogue Process as “People with Different Opinions from the State” or “Party B”. The Malay-Muslim Movement sometimes refers to itself as the “Patani Independence Movement.” In this article, the Malay-Muslim Movement will be referred to either as the “Movement” or the “Resistance Movement.”

In the past, responsibility for resolving the conflict in the Southern Border Provinces did not rest only with state officials. Before the current period of unrest re-emerged in 2004, initiatives had been established to make policy-making and implementation on national security more inclusive. The National Security Council (NSC)'s National Security Policy on the Southernmost Provinces (1999–2003) was the first national security policy to embrace people's participation. A number of studies were commissioned and hearings were conducted with members of the public and stakeholders in the Southern Border Provinces.

Following the re-emergence of violence in 2004, the Thaksin Shinawatra government established the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC), an independent body composed of 50 individuals from various groups and sectors. The NRC was the first official space that brought together a diverse group of persons from inside and outside the conflict region to propose solutions to the problems of the South. The NRC included eight women commissioners. A further ten women worked as research assistants, subcommittee members, and support staffs. Many women in the NRC had actively worked in peacebuilding prior to its establishment and many continue to do so to this day.

The unrest has attracted many actors to the region attempting to find a way to resolve the conflict. Among actors from inside and outside the region, individual women and women's groups have sought to mitigate the violence and promote peaceful coexistence.

Since 2004, women's roles have gradually become more recognized by those at the top of the hierarchy and at the grassroots level. The activities of these women have been especially appreciated by those whose voices have been marginalized from the peace process.

The latest round of peace talks began in 2015 under the military government. However, it is evident that this military government prioritizes a counter-insurgency approach over a conflict settlement approach. At the same time, the Thai side's counterpart at the dialogue table, MARA Patani, is struggling to be accepted as the legitimate representative of a fragmented Movement (Mark, 2017). Taking into account the ebb and flow of the peace dialogue process, dealing peacefully with the challenges of the ongoing conflict requires the cultivation and accumulation of peace assets over time. Women's groups are one potential peace asset that needs careful attention to ensure it reaches its full capacity for a greater common good. Therefore, reducing the potential obstacles women experience, and increasing the opportunities for their sustained contribution to peace efforts, is crucial.

This study identifies policy issues that need to be addressed to ensure women's meaningful participation in the Track 1 official dialogue and with Track 2 civil society or academia. This study seeks to bridge the divide that often exists between research, practice, and policy. In addition to a literature review and desk research, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with 15 peace activists in the Southern Border Provinces between 2016 and 2017. After the first draft was completed, the researcher organized stakeholder



consultations to collect feedback. The first consultative meeting was held in Pattani on 9 October 2017 with 18 female and two male activists. The male activists were the President and Vice President of the Southern Border Provinces Civil Society Council. The second consultative meeting was held on 16 November 2017 in Bangkok with nine Women and Gender Studies experts.

This paper presents 1) an overview of how women are affected by the Deep South conflict; 2) a gender, peace and security conceptual framework; 3) international frameworks on women's participation; 4) modalities of women's participation in peace processes; 5) the need for women's participation and an engendered peace process; 6) experiences of women peacebuilders in the Deep South and; 7) recommendations for the Thai Government, the Movement, CSOs, Academia, Media and Women's Groups.

# 1. The Situation of Women in the Deep South Conflict

The protracted ethno-political conflict has affected communities for decades. Between 2004 and 2017, there were approximately 19,516 violent incidents, 6,653 deaths and 13,198 injured.<sup>2</sup> A report by the Southern Border Provinces Administration Centre (SBPAC) indicated that between this period, 513 women were killed, 75 women maimed, and 1,704 injured as a result of shootings or bombings. Around 84.5 percent of the victims were male heads of household (average age 45.9 with an average of three dependents per family).<sup>3</sup> Between 2007 and 2017, 9,226 persons under the

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<sup>2</sup> Statistics from Deep South Incident Database (DSID) as of September 30, 2017.

<sup>3</sup> Statistics from a survey study on “Living conditions and the way to heal victims’ family from violence in Southern Thailand: Case study in Pattani Province”. (ศึกษาสภาพชีวิตความเป็นอยู่ และแนวทางการเยียวยาครอบครัวผู้ได้รับผลกระทบจากเหตุความไม่สงบในจังหวัดชายแดนภาคใต้ กรณีศึกษาจังหวัดปัตตานี). The survey was conducted by PSU’s Deep South Coordination Center between

age of 25 lost a parent. Of this figure, around 200 persons had lost both their mother and father; 8,578 youth had lost a father and 448 had lost a mother.<sup>4</sup> Although men are largely the victims of direct violence, women bear multiple burdens in their households and in their communities, as a result of the conflict. The conflict has affected women's quality of life and also has had a psychological impact (Prohmpetch et al, 2015).

Women, whose spouses and family members are charged with security-related crimes, experience different social pressures. They may become isolated from relatives who fear they will arouse the suspicion of the authorities. Frequent visits from security officials create tension and are psychologically distressing for family members of suspects and former detainees.<sup>5</sup> A number of women, who have

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January and October 2007. Retrieved June 20, 2016 from [http://medipe2.psu.ac.th/~dscc/webold/download/abstract\\_eng\\_std\\_living.pdf](http://medipe2.psu.ac.th/~dscc/webold/download/abstract_eng_std_living.pdf).

<sup>4</sup>Statistics from Deep South Coordination Centre (DSCC) delivered during an interview by PSU Pattani Campus Radio Station. See PSU Pattani Campus Radio Station. (2017). "13 years of violence in the Deep South resulted in more than 9,000 orphans. Trend likely to decline following decreased in number of incidents. Although new structural problems need to be addressed". (13 ปีความรุนแรงชายแดนใต้มีเด็กกำพร้ามากกว่า 9 พันคน แต่มีแนวโน้มลดลงตามจำนวนเหตุการณ์ไม่สงบ พบปัญหาใหม่เชิงสังคมที่ต้องร่วมมือแก้ไข). Retrieved February 25, 2018 from <http://psu10725.com/2558/?p=6550>.

<sup>5</sup>See dialogue activity report on "Social Healing and Reintegration" between victims of violence and authorities in the Southern Border Provinces, organized by Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies, Mahidol University between 31 October and 1 November 2017 in Pattani Province.

lost husbands, are forced to become the breadwinner, striving for economic survival for themselves and their dependents. It has been found that under armed conflict conditions, women have limited access to reproductive health and face unreported domestic violence (Kliangklaio, 2013). Violent incidents (on average three incidents per day) have destroyed women's sense of security in everyday locations such as their homes, places of worship, schools, markets, and hospitals.

In 2013, a peace dialogue between the Thai government and representatives of the Movement was initiated under Section 8 of the National Security Council's 2012–2014 Administration and Development Policy for the Southern Border Provinces. This policy sought to “encourage continuity of the peace dialogue processes with people who have different opinions and ideologies from the state and choose to use violence to fight against the state, as one of the stakeholders to the Southern Border Provinces’ problems.” Local residents hoped this dialogue would be a peaceful alternative to the deadly conflict. A recent peace survey found that 56.9 percent of people in the Deep South support dialogue and negotiation as a means to solve the conflict; only 5.7 percent of respondents disagreed (Office of Peace and Governance, King Prajadhipok Institute 2017; p.13).

Women's groups in the Southern Border Provinces demonstrated their support for and readiness to take part in the 2013 peace dialogue that started during the Yingluck Shinawatra's administration (Todong, 2013). Neither the Thai side nor the BRN voiced any objection to

women's involvement in the peace process.<sup>6</sup> After the military took power from the Yingluck government in May 2014, the military junta re-started the dialogue process but with the Movement instead represented by MARA Patani.<sup>7</sup> In April 2016, the talks stalled after the two parties were unable to come to an agreement on the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the process (Chalermripinyorat, 2016). Attempts to push the dialogue forward included a proposal for Safe Public Spaces put forward by women's groups. Their proposal was incorporated into the peace dialogue agenda by the parties in 2017. However, it became apparent that the dialogue parties and the women's group had different understandings of what subsequently became known as the "Safety Zone" initiative. As such, there is still no clear policy or mechanism to ensure that the voices and needs of women are heard and taken into account in the current Track 1 dialogue process

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<sup>6</sup> Police Colonel Tawee Sodsong, the then SBPAC secretary said during the seminar (as cited in Areeda Samoh (อารีดา สามเฝ้าะ), 2013). "BRN has no objection to women's participation in the peace dialogue." เผย BRN ไม่ปฏิเสธผู้หญิงร่วมโต๊ะเจรจา. Retrieved on May 31, 2016 from <http://www.deepsouthwatch.org/dsj/4110>.

<sup>7</sup> *Khaosod* reported that P.M. Prayuth Chan-ocha states that his government is ready for the dialogue: "We are ready in all aspects to organize a long-lasting peace dialogue, but the problem is: are the people who use violence to fight us ready as well? Do they want to talk about peace?" See *Khaosod*. (2015, January 7).

## 2. Gender, Peace, and Security Framework

In violent conflicts, different social groups often encounter distinct experiences. This creates different types of suffering yet also means that different opportunities may emerge from the situation. Each social group will have distinct conditions and contextual factors leading to diverse group goals and opportunities to participate in peacebuilding. Women in the conflict areas of the Southern Border Provinces focus on day-to-day security for themselves and for their family. This perspective is often considered to be personal and apolitical. As such, many peace processes globally, and in Thailand, neglect women's security concerns because they are seen as distinct from the security concerns of the main conflict parties.

Women's security perspective is a view from below and is quite different from a state security perspective, which may be characterized

as the view from above. Both perspectives entail different strategies to achieve the balance of security. This paper does not seek to reduce the importance of national security. Rather, it aims to demonstrate that women's participation in formulating and shaping the definition of security can help build sustainable peace. Women are ready to engage in the peace process. Their suffering has led them to carve out a space for themselves whereby they must strive to shift their status from that of victims to that of social change agents. This will be discussed in further detail later in this paper.

Laura Sjoberg (2016) criticizes the securitization-focused solutions to conflicts that are usually offered by states and resistance movements as “security” is often significantly linked to militarism. Sjoberg, as well as other security studies scholars – Ann Tickner (1992) and Laura J. Shepherd (2018) – advocate for an expanded security framework which includes security in the perimeter of everyday life. Security is a matter of daily life. If the concept of security is exclusively tied to the military—in the sense of creating security in a conflict, it will inevitably be monopolized by a military-oriented paradigm or an approach which privileges military intervention.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Likewise, budget and resources will then be primarily allocated to the military. It is estimated that if only 9.5–13% of official military spending globally were diverted to the development of agriculture and infrastructures in poor communities, global poverty and hunger would be eliminated by 2030 (FAO, IFAD and WFP, 2015).

Protracted conflict negatively impacts societies in many ways. It affects the economy, livelihoods, interpersonal or group interactions, and social relationships. It creates paranoia and a sense of alienation among and between social groups. It affects people's sense of security both outside and in the home. In the aftermath of violence, many women must bear the burden of caring for orphans or for persons with disabilities. They may have to take responsibility for their entire family. The consequences of the violence must be borne daily, not only during days of intense armed clashes or immediately following a death or injury in the household. Women living in numerous protracted conflicts around the world and motivated by the desire to end the oppressive conditions affecting their everyday security, are rising up and hoping to bring about change (Lederach, 2005, Lederach & Lederach, 2010). The women in the Southern Border Provinces of Thailand are no different.

Expanding the security framework, when working in conflict and peacebuilding, means that one must pay attention to gender.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup>Gender refers to the characteristics that indicate the gender-marking. For example, biological sex is indicated by the sexual organs or physical characteristics indicative of masculinity and femininity. Each society and culture constructs gender through gender role assignment, sexual/gendered division of labor, gender relations and prescribes a different set of values to males and females. The society or culture divides the social space into the private sphere or public sphere and then assigns which sex, in any condition, should play a role, be duty-bound, and/or exercise power in which sphere. Gender roles and relations can be distinct in a given social context.



Distinct gender roles and differential power relations mean that women and men experience conflict differently. As previously discussed, gender norms result in women and men having unequal level of influence, decision-making power, or access to various resources with respect to peacebuilding policies in its diverse forms.

Conflict transformation inevitably has implications for gender. However, the influence of masculinity and femininity also has implications for conflict transformation. Traditionally, women were confined to the private sphere while in the public sphere, the so-called political space, conflict resolution was officially meant to take place (Reimann, 2004). A gendered conflict transformation process is an important pre-condition for creating social justice, structural stability, and sustained peace (Ropers, 2002; p.49). A peaceful society requires genuine enhancement of meaningful participation and inclusion where voices from diverse social groups can be heard to ensure that every need is met. This is the only way to address the problems arising from living with violent protracted conflict.

### 3. International Frameworks on Women's Participation in Peace Processes

In many countries, including Thailand, men tend to dominate the activities related to conflict resolution and peacebuilding resulting in the marginalization of women. Their access and control over resources is restricted and their power to direct peace-building policies, provisions, operations and projects is limited. Women do not have a say about their own future or the right to make decisions about the future of their homeland. Women in many countries share similar experiences; they have to find alternatives outside the traditional channels in their efforts to mitigate violence and build peace. Women are not merely victims of conflict and violence; women around the world who are living in conflict areas have had to develop creative approaches to mitigating violence and resolving conflict in their respective communities and societies. There are at least

seven international frameworks which encourage women's political participation. These frameworks are aimed at addressing, politicizing, and institutionalizing women's participation in peace processes. They affirm the importance of including women as decision-makers in peace policies and of ensuring that engendering peacebuilding is included on international agendas. The international frameworks are as follows:

a) **1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action:** The section on "Women in Armed Conflict" advocates for an increase in women's participation at the decision-making level in conflict resolution. It calls on governments and relevant institutions at regional and international levels to mainstream gender perspectives into mechanisms for resolving conflicts and violence.

b) **United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security:** Recognized as a historical decision in favor of women,<sup>10</sup> it addresses the impact of conflict and war on the protection of women and children. Notably, UNSCR 1325 supports a greater role as well as more meaningful participation for women in peace processes. This was the first time an international resolution recognized women not only as victims of conflict but also

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<sup>10</sup>On 31 October 2000, the UN Security Council held a special session on the issue of peace and security based on women's experiences and perspectives. At the session, UNSCR 1325 was passed unanimously (Peacebuilding Initiative, 2009).

as actors in violence mitigation and conflict transformation; as agents who should enjoy equal participation in decision-making and peacebuilding.

**c) Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW):** Ratified by the Thai government in 1985, CEDAW commits states to undertake the necessary measures to ensure women's participation on equal terms with men in all fields, including the social, economic, political, and cultural.

**d) Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1820:** Aims to protect women from sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations by creating an environment where women are able to seek protection from and justice for gender-related crimes (UN Security Council, 2008). This resolution also advocates for an increased number of women in peace-keeping forces. In fragile post-conflict environments, peace-keeping is not only about preventing further outbreaks of violence, but also about ensuring the prevention and protection of women against other forms of violence given the heightened risk for abuse (Groves & Resurreccion & Doneys, 2009).

**e) Universal Periodic Review (UPR):** A mechanism under the UN Human Rights Council (UNHRC) which reviews the human rights records of all UN member states. Every four years member states are obliged to prepare a report on the human rights situation in their country to present to the UNHRC. The UPR process also enables women and other non-governmental groups to participate in

assessing the state of human rights. Participation from various sectors is a key objective of the UPR process and member states are encouraged to evaluate their human rights record in consultations with all sectors of society.

f) **Organization of Islamic Cooperation Charter (OIC Charter)**: The Charter stipulates that the OIC aims “to safeguard and promote the rights of women and their participation in all spheres of life, in accordance with the laws and legislation of member states.” The OIC also emphasized the role of women at the first Muslim Women Rights Congress on the occasion of International Women’s Day in 2014, under the slogan, “equality for women is progress of all,” thereby showing appreciation for the role of women in society. The congress discussed the challenges that Muslim women face in the home, at the workplace, and in wider society. At the same time, the OIC requested 57 member states to develop measures to promote the potential of and provide opportunities for women to participate in the social development of all sectors (Shaikh, 2014).

g) **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**: Adopted at the UN General Assembly session of the Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015 with a view to replacing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and setting the sustainable development agenda for the next 15 years. The SDGs have 17 Goals<sup>11</sup> and 169

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<sup>11</sup>Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere. Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture. Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. Goal 4:

targets, which aim to create a balance between the economic, social, and environmental dimensions. SDG5 focuses on Gender Equality and has 17 targets to realize women's rights across various dimensions, including protection from violence. SDG16 has a peacebuilding focus and includes the target – empowering women to make decisions and participate in sustainable development and in building peaceful societies, in the private and public spheres, as well as in conflict zones. The Thai government established the Committee for Sustainable Development (CSD), presided over by the Prime Minister, to coordinate work towards the achievement of the SDGs in line with the country's national strategies.

Although many agencies and women's organizations actively promote the above-mentioned frameworks, women's involvement in peace processes is still lacking (Ford, 2015). Even UN-led peace processes include only a small number of women in a leading role (Diaz & Tordjman, 2010). Conciliation Resources (n.d.) reported that between August 2008 and March 2012 there were 61 signed peace agreements, but only two agreements involved women. Similarly,

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Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning. Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. Goal 6: Ensure access to water and sanitation for all. Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all. Goal 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all. Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation. Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries. Goal 11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns. Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat

between 1923 and 2011 there were 31 peace processes, but only three percent of women were mediator team leaders, and only nine percent were negotiators. Between 1990 and 2010, there were 585 peace agreements, yet only 92 agreements contained issues related to women. That said, it is possible to see some positive changes if viewed from a broader frame of reference.

After the adoption of UNSCR 1325 in 2000, the inclusion of issues related to women and gender in peace agreements increased from 11 percent to 27 percent. Many countries where UNSCR 1325 was adopted have experienced a growing number of women meaningfully participating in peace processes. Women's engagement in peace processes is gradually becoming less of a tokenistic or symbolic engagement and at the same time they can foster gender justice (Coomaraswamy, 2015).

In Thailand, women participate in the peace process formally and informally although there are more women in informal peace work with a limited number of women engaged in the formal peace dialogue.<sup>12</sup> Since the Thai government refuses to use the term "armed

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climate change and its impacts. Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources. Goal 15: Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss. Goal 16: Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies. Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

<sup>12</sup> There is only one woman, Wanrapee Kaosaard, Senior Justice Officer in the current government's Peace Dialogue Panel. Wanrapee is a member of the Peace

conflict” to describe the Southern insurgency, it is difficult to formally operationalize UNSCR 1325. Nevertheless, in 2016 the Department of Women’s Affairs and Family Development (WAFD) at the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security drafted a concept paper entitled “Measures and Guidelines on Women and the Promotion of Peace and Security.” WAFD collaborated with UN Women and the Peace Agenda of Women (PAOW), a local women’s network for peace, to improve the draft in September and November 2016.<sup>13</sup> Even so, having measures and guidelines is no guarantee for effective practice unless all sectors prioritize and commit to implementing them.

Paffenholz (2015b, p.1) argues that the problem of women’s exclusion is due to “the lack of evidence-based knowledge on the functioning and impact of inclusion on peace and other political processes (negotiations and beyond).” A number of studies from many countries echo this finding. Women in armed conflicts and post-conflict environments across countries develop alternative

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Dialogue Panel’s Technical Working Group, responsible for document preparation and coordination. See Jatuporn Puangthong (2016).

<sup>13</sup> The first draft was called “Policy and Strategies on Women and the Promotion of Peace and Security” and to make it acceptable the department agreed to call the framework “Draft Measures and Guidelines on Women and the Promotion of Peace and Security” on 26 September 2016. See DSJ. (2016). Adjust policy to practice guidelines on peace promotion. [ปรับนโยบายสู่แนวปฏิบัติส่งเสริมสันติภาพ]. Retrieved 30 August 2017 from <http://www.deepsouthwatch.org/ms/node/9895>.



avenues to push for their interests to be included in decision-making processes that promote peace and reconciliation. As such, women in many countries develop diverse strategies to overcome discrimination with respect to their participation in peacebuilding projects. A further discussion on this concept is provided in the next section.

## 4. Modalities of Women's Participation in Peace Processes

Cross-country studies on women's participation in peace processes illustrate the windows of opportunities for women's engagement in the core of the peace process and through informal platforms.<sup>14</sup>

### 4.1 Engaging in Track 1: Negotiations and Formal Peace Process

Women's representation and demands are included at the negotiation table in various forms.

**a) Mediators:** Among 31 major peace processes between 1992 and 2011, 2.4 percent of chief mediators were women. This was the case

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<sup>14</sup> Information in this section is drawn from the following studies; 1) Paffenholz, Thania. (2015). '*Civil Society and Peacebuilding Project*' Briefing Paper. Centre on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding. Geneva: The Graduate Institute

in the Republic of Angola, the Republic of Cyprus and the Republic of Kenya. In 2011 the UN co-led peace processes in 14 conflicts but no women acted as head of the mediator team. Among 14 support teams, however, there were 12 teams that included women members.

**b) Negotiating Parties' Delegates:** Between 1992 and 2011, 9 percent of negotiating delegations were made up of women. Among 31 major peace processes, women's participation ranged from zero to 35 percent. A study conducted by UN Women noted that long standing advocacy by women's groups did have an impact on increasing women's participation. During negotiations in Oslo between the Government of the Philippines (GPH) and the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), 35 percent of the delegation and 33 percent of signatories on the 2011 agreement were women. In the Republic of Kenya's 2008 peace talks, women made up 40 of the 340 delegates.

The number of women does not guarantee that gender perspectives will be reflected in peace talks and agreements. In Aceh,

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of International and Development Studies. 2) Paffenholz, Thania. (2015b). *Results on Women and Gender Brief*. Center on Conflict, Development and Peacebuilding. Geneva: The Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies. 3) Paffenholz, Thania. & Ross, Nick. & Schluchter, Anna-Lena and True, Jacqui. (2016). *Making Women Count - Not Just Counting Women: Assessing Women's Inclusion and Influence on Peace Negotiations*. Geneva: Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative. 4) Diaz, Pablo Castillo, & Tordjman, Simon. (2010). *Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations: Connections between Presence and Influence*. UN Women.

a woman delegate who took part in the peace process acknowledged that she had no gender perspectives and was not aware that UNSCR 1325 was a mechanism she could use to advocate for gender issues and women's rights in the peace agreement. During the 2006 to 2008 Juba peace negotiations in Uganda, three women delegates successfully engendered the peace agreement to improve women's situation. They were gender-minded delegates with a clear position and perspective on promoting gender equality (Diaz & Tordjman, 2010; p.8).

**c) Witnesses or Observers:** In many cases women are present during the signing ceremonies but not as parties to the peace talks. Witnesses have little power as their inputs or opinions are optional and have no influence on the agreement. However, they observe first-hand what happens during the talks and may have a chance to offer opinions informally to parties away from the negotiation table. Another category of engagement at the negotiating table is as an observer providing inputs during talks, but without voting power. Nevertheless, women can have a great impact on peace agreements in these seemingly more passive roles. Non-violent demonstration as seen in the powerful case of Liberian women who pressured conflicting parties to reach a peace agreement to end the civil war in 2008, is one notable example. Similarly, during the peace talks in Uganda and Burundi, women observers pressured negotiating parties to include women's demands in the final peace agreements.

**d) Representatives of Women's Parties.** This was exemplified in the special context of Northern Ireland where women formed the

cross-community Northern Ireland Women's Coalition. This women's party ran in elections for a seat at the Northern Ireland Forum of Political Dialogue in 1998. Women obtained two seats at the negotiating table and two seats in the consultative forum. This case is famous as their strategy succeeded in creating a platform for women's demands and the inclusion of their concerns in the peace agreement texts.

**e) Gender Consultants** to facilitators, mediators, and delegates: This category of engagement is one of the most effective strategies for incorporating gender perspectives, policies, and provisions in peace agreements. Notably, in Uganda and Sudan, gender specialists from UNIFEM offered a gender perspective and knowledge to Uganda's Women's Coalition so they were able to articulate and communicate their interests and views. Although the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) did not sign the peace agreement, the Women's Coalition continued to monitor the implementation of the Peace and Reconstruction Development Plan for Northern Uganda. Similarly, UNIFEM gender advisers supported the establishment of a Gender Expert and Support Team (GEST). Male delegates were invited to join the team drafting women's priorities to redress gender inequality and this draft was successfully incorporated into the Darfur Peace Agreement.

**f) Commissioners:** Commissions can be established at different phases of the peace process: a commission to prepare peace negotiations; a commission to deliver and implement the peace agreement or; a permanent commission to address specific issues. Women's

engagement mostly relates to implementing gender-responsive provisions that have been articulated in a peace agreement. The National Integration and Cohesion Commission in Kenya in 2008 or the Inter-Ethnic Commission in Kyrgyzstan in 2013 are examples of permanent commissions to address specific issues with long-term commitments. In both cases, the commission addressed equal rights for all ethnic groups in the country. A study by Paffenholz, Ross, Schluchtera and True (2016) suggests that women's involvement at the early stages and in every phase of the peace process has opened opportunities for women to assert their influence in peace negotiations. However, women's full engagement in the overall peace process still requires affirmative action measures, for example through gender quotas, to ensure their participation and to set an inclusive tone for peace talks at the outset.

## 4.2 Engagement in Informal Peace Processes

**a) Parallel Platform or Movement to Formal Peace Negotiations:** This is the most popular intervention employed by women's groups to raise awareness of the exclusion of women from peace talks. Often, it is not the preferred approach of women's groups, but tends to be a reaction against the absence of women from formal peace negotiations (Diaz & Tordjman, 2010). Nevertheless, it is a chance for women's groups to share the common demands and priorities of diverse groups with the peace talk parties, mediators, funders, and with the general public.

**b) Gender Mainstreaming in Local Administration Development Projects:** Authorities may provide space and resources to address gender issues in conflict areas. For example, the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (NAP WPS) of the Philippines was launched in 2010 in response to the mandate of UNSCR 1325 to promote and prevent the violation of women's rights in ongoing and post-conflict situations. The NAP WPS' goal was to protect and empower women and to encourage them to play a decision-making role in peace and security mechanisms. The NAP WPS initiated the "Women Friendly Space" (WFS) project to enhance women's access and control over resources and to raise consciousness and meaningful participation to the decision-making level (Honculada, 2015). The WFS was one way in which gender was mainstreamed into Local Government Units (LGUs) which were responsible for endorsing gender responsive local development projects.

**c) Advocacy in the Context of Peace Processes:** In many countries, women struggle to take leading roles and to be part of official peace negotiations. They are left at the margins of the peace process because mediators and negotiating parties do not view them as an important component. In response, some women mobilize and network to force the key parties' to take notice of their concerns. In Myanmar, more than a hundred women's groups, including exile groups, formed a network called the Alliance for Gender Inclusion in the Peace Process (AGIPP) in 2015. The AGIPP advocates for women's participation in the peace process in Myanmar under the frameworks of CEDAW and UNSCR 1325. They also conduct research

in order to create an evidence base for their gender issues. This collaboration among women's groups allows the AGIPP to work with women throughout the country to build up their readiness to discuss gender and political issues that affect their livelihood and security and, which are based on the Union Peace Dialogue Joint Committee (UPDJC) dialogue guidelines.

**d) Participation in High-Level Problem Solving Workshops:**

Often considered a Track 1.5 approach,<sup>15</sup> these workshops are an unofficial and unpublicized process. The problem-solving workshop serves as a meeting space which can last for several years and which is under no pressure to find agreement. Oftentimes it is hosted by academic institutes or INGOs collaborating with local partners. These workshops typically appear to be exclusively men-only clubs. However, similar workshops can be organized exclusively for women either prior to, parallel to, or after formal peace talks. Such was the case in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2002.

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<sup>15</sup> The problem-solving workshop was developed by John W. Burton to address intractable intra-state conflict such as in Israel/Palestine and Sri Lanka. The problem-solving workshop is a non-official strategy of third parties to address the conflicting parties' needs on identity, security and distributive justice, and to search for a constructive alternative to violent conflict. See Reimann, Cordula. (2004). *Gender in Problem-solving Workshops: A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing?* Swiss Peace: Switzerland. And Paffenholz, Thania. & Ross, Nick. & Schluchter, Anna-Lena and True, Jacqui. (2016). *Making Women Count – Not Just Counting Women: Assessing Women's Inclusion and Influence on Peace Negotiations*. Geneva: Inclusive Peace and Transition Initiative.



Women and other stakeholders were able to work towards a common position and develop common demands to influence negotiations (Ibid).

The spectrum of modalities offers different possibilities for women's groups and stakeholders in the Deep South to take into consideration. Due to the particularities of context and depending on the resources available, a single model would likely be inadequate; it would be necessary to assess a series of potential models or designs in response to the dynamics of the local context in order to strengthen the skills and ensure the readiness of women's groups.

## 5. The Need for Women's Participation and for Engendering the Peace Process

Participation in the peace process may occur at various levels. The number of women must be sufficient for meaningful engagement, not just adornment. The voices of women must be included as they are stakeholders who will be affected by any decisions taken. Overall, the peace process should incorporate a gender dimension to attend to the concerns and needs that arise as a result of gender differences. Experiences from other countries show that the inclusion of sufficient numbers of women and a gender perspective results in constructive and significant support for peace talks and long-term peacebuilding.

It is evident that women and gender issues are important at the international level. **Peace processes in other countries give more importance to the inclusion of women and/or gender**

**issues over time.** In 2015 it was found that seven out of ten peace agreements had specific projects or measures that included a gender perspective (UN Security Council, 2016). The study also found that having female representation in peace talks increased the chances of a cessation of violence by as much as 24.9 percent in a year (Stone, 2014).

Peace processes involving the different modalities of women's participation at any level **contributes to the sustainability of the peace agreement and long-term peacebuilding** (Coomaraswamy, 2013).<sup>16</sup> It is a given that peace processes are challenging and require a high degree of patience from all actors involved. There are numerous examples of peace processes breaking down due to ceasefire violations, internal divisions within the parties, disagreement over options proposed by the mediator, etc. **However, there has never been a case where women's involvement has harmed the peace talk process** (Paffenholz & Prentice & Buchanan, 2015, p.4).

**A peace process is an important opportunity for gender equity and social justice to be built.** Gender justice is at the foundation of a culture of respect for human rights. Societies around the world have normalized a culture of gender discrimination and

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<sup>16</sup> Peace processes that included women as witnesses, signatories, mediators, and/or negotiators demonstrated a 20 percent increase in the probability of a peace agreement lasting at least two years. This increases over time, with a 35 percent increase in the probability of a peace agreement lasting 15 years.

exclusion. It is difficult to find a leverage point that can change the normalized practice of gender discrimination. In many societies where women and men want to build new norms of gender practice, peace dialogue–negotiation can be an opportunity to create change.<sup>17</sup> Studies in many countries have found that gender–based violence is linked to armed conflict. **Peace processes must include an agenda to end gender–based violence** (Reimann, 2014). Women working to stop domestic violence in Thailand’s Deep South have identified a link between the conflict and increases in gender–based violence and domestic violence. However, this issue has received insufficient attention.<sup>18</sup>

Peace processes do not aim only to end violence, but have a larger goal of sustainable peace for society. All stakeholders need to create a peace process which cover elements over and above the typical elements of ceasefire negotiation, political management, and conflict management among elites (Anderlini & Tirman, 2010). Sustainable peacebuilding prioritizes efforts to assemble social power, to utilize resources and ideas from a wide range of sectors at full capacity to increase the likelihood for society to overcome

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<sup>17</sup> Gender practice refers to roles and jobs determined according to how each gender should behave in the private and public space as construed by society and culture. For example, what each gender should or should not do, what positions they should take. Gender practice varies according to contexts and social change.

<sup>18</sup> Rosida Pusu, interview April 27, 2017 in Pattani, and Pateemoh Pohitaedaoh, interview April 26, 2017 in Yala.

violence. In the Deep South of Thailand, women are an important peacebuilding actor. Their varying roles are discussed in the following section.

## 6. Women Peacebuilders in the Deep South of Thailand

It cannot be assumed that all women are peaceful and it cannot be denied that there are women who support violence and the use of weapons. Women affected by conflict come with different experiences, bear different oppressions and have different opportunities. They also have various positions and interests. In Thailand too, women are members of state and non-state armed groups. Moreover, it cannot be assumed that women have a natural aptitude for peacebuilding as part of their “nature”. Like other social groups, to constructively engage in a conflict and to effectively work to reconcile society, women need to cultivate their skills, knowledge, and confidence in peace work, which requires time and effort.

The conflict in the Deep South has drawn many women into peace activism. Women engaged in peace work come from many sectors

-government, commercial, academic, not-for-profit, media, and include ordinary people. Women recognize the importance of being involved in solving the conflict as it affects their livelihoods. The image of women in the Deep South is transforming from that of victim to that of human rights defender or peace activist. Women are acknowledged as having a great capacity for peacebuilding and in the Southern Border Provinces, women make up as much as 80 percent of those involved in peacebuilding projects.<sup>19</sup> Women's roles in peacebuilding are as follows:

#### **a) Women as Healers and Human Rights Defenders**

In the Southern Border Provinces, women are at the forefront of humanitarian assistance, offering essential help to victims affected by violence. They act to protect women, children, and their communities because women themselves are affected the most by the ongoing conflict. This aligns with women's experiences from different countries: "Women are the ones who push the most for peaceful resolutions. They are the ones with the greatest interest in achieving it as they lose the most in wars."<sup>20</sup> Women's groups expand their healing work from individual healing towards social healing and

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<sup>19</sup> Abdullah Hayee-abu as cited in DSW (2014). Reflective Voices from the WeVoice platform "10 Years of the South on Fire Builds Stronger Women" (เสียงสะท้อนผ่านเวที WeVoice "10 ปีไฟได้ สร้างผู้หญิงให้เข้มแข็งกว่า"). Retrieved on June 20, 2016 from <http://www.deepsouthwatch.org/dsj/5152>.

<sup>20</sup> This statement made by Tanya Gilly-Khailany, vice president of Iraq's Seed Foundation and a former member of the Baghdad parliament as cited in Black,

include ostracized groups such as Gu Jing Lue Pa Village in Narathiwat.<sup>21</sup> Women's groups engaged intensively with women in the village in 2016 and helped open a space for them to talk to women from different villages so as to reconnect them with their original community and to connect them with women's groups from other villages.<sup>22</sup> The NGO Civic Women helped this group gain access to social services and compensation after being excluded by other organizations since 2007.

In a conflict area where special security laws are applied, restriction of freedom of expression is inevitable, particularly for those whose views diverge from the traditional state narrative. Suspicion between local communities and the authorities occurs because many family members and relatives of suspected Movement

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Ian. (2016, June 9). UN campaign highlights unsung work of women in Middle East peace-building. *The Guardian*. Retrieved on June 9, 2016 from <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2016/jun/09/united-nations-un-campaign-work-women-middle-east-peace-building-conflict-resolution>

<sup>21</sup> 23 women from Gu Jing Lue Pa Community, Ra-ngae District, Narathiwat Province were arrested and prosecuted for holding captive two teachers. The incarceration led to the death of one of the teachers, Juling Pongkunmul. Only 5 of 23 women were sentenced to 3-6 years imprisonment. See Thitinob Komalnimi. (Ed). (2017). Lang Roiyim: Rueang Lao Phuea Phlikfuen Tuaton Lae Chumchon Chaidan Tai [Behind the Smile. Stories for Revitalizing the Southern Border Community]. Pattani: The Women's Civic Network for Peace in the Southern Border Provinces (Civic Women).

<sup>22</sup> Yana Salamae. (2015, April 28). Civic Women Organization Visit Gu Jing Lue Pa Village. *Thai PBS*. Retrieved on June 10, 2016 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KfDe6dMxR9g>.



members or sympathizers may not acknowledge their actions as crimes, believing them to be innocent. Differences in perception compound the lack of understanding and information between villagers and authorities and this has created considerable friction between the state and the community. This reality has led a number of women activists and academics, as well as local women with family members caught up in security cases, to work on human rights protection. They aim to reduce tension between security officials and local people by creating communication channels and monitoring security operations to ensure they are in line with international standards.

### **b) Women as Trust Builders**

Women's groups use soft power and the ability to position themselves with different groups to remain impartial agents.<sup>23</sup> Women's groups are uniquely placed to act as trust-builders who can access different groups in areas where mistrust is high. To achieve sustainable peace, an effective peace process requires the perspectives of everyone in the community to be included; women have the potential to reach out and collect these views and communicate them to the parties.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Anticha Sangchai (2016, March 11). Women's organization and peacebuilding. Thai PBS. Retrieved on June 10, 2016 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-0kvjv2dwT4>.

<sup>24</sup> Police Colonel Tawee Sodsong acknowledged women's roles in peacebuilding see, Areeda Samoh (2013). "BRN has no objection to women's participation

### **c) Women as Community Facilitators**

Women in this context have gained the trust of different groups on the ground; they have proven their skill as facilitators working with conflicting groups. Women's organizations, supported by professional facilitators, have trained groups of women in dialogue facilitation. Women have facilitated dialogues in cases between ostracized villagers and other villagers to create mutual understanding. They have facilitated dialogue between Buddhist and Muslim communities giving opportunities for them to share their grievances and to build empathy and friendship. Women have also acted as connectors between officials and villagers.<sup>25</sup> They have facilitated dialogue between officials and villagers, so that the latter is better able to understand the responsibility and mission of authorities and so the former is better able to understand villagers' problems and concerns regarding official operations in their area.

### **d) Women Security Officers as Connectors**

Since the Movement operates underground, the Thai govern-

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in the peace dialogue." เผย BRN ไม่ปฏิเสธผู้หญิงร่วมโต๊ะเจรจา Retrieved on May 31, 2016 from <http://www.deepsouthwatch.org/dsj/4110>.

<sup>25</sup> For example, the Civic Women for the Southern Border's Peace organized dialogue between women from Gu Jing Lue Pa village and the officials of security sector Major General Chawalit Reanjang (พลตรี ชาลิต เรียนแจ้ง) (2015, August 19). Gu Jing Lue Pa Community Dialogue. *Thai PBS*. Retrieved on June 10, 2016 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1rKMsR5WYsg>.

ment increasingly relies on paramilitary forces to achieve its goals (International Crisis Group, 2007). A number of Buddhist and Muslim women in the conflict area volunteer in the security forces. Meanwhile, informally, some female villagers have joined their village security force to guard their community. These village security forces reduce the burden on officials and individuals can act as a liaison between officials and villagers. Women monitor and patrol their communities to keep the peace. More formally, women may volunteer to join the Thai army in an attempt to end the conflict. Their main role is to reduce tension and increase trust between security officials and villagers in conflict areas. One study found that female rangers, through the use of soft power rather than coercive power, were able to build relationships of trust and achieve the mission of their affiliate organizations in this way. Female paramilitaries have helped the Thai state to mitigate violence, a key issue in the first round of peace dialogue process (Buranajaroenkij, 2014). Since women also have the potential to adopt a violent approach to conflict, it is also important to encourage women to participate in non-violent approaches to conflict resolution.

#### **e) Women's Groups as Network Builders**

About 23 women's groups in the Deep South formed a network called the Women's Agenda for Peace (PAW) on 28 April 2015. This network then changed its name to the Peace Agenda of Women (PAOW) (Pluemjai & Sungkharat, 2015). The network aims to promote women's role in peacebuilding. PAOW strongly supports peace

dialogue and is keen to be part of the formal peace talks. In particular, they want women's voices and concerns to be heard by the Thai Government (aka Party A) and the Resistance Movement (aka Party B).<sup>26</sup>

PAOW is not isolated from other CSOs. They organize meetings to monitor changes in views and to provide advice to improve strategies and actions. With the support of the Southern Border Provinces Administration Center (SBPAC), PAOW provided inputs to the NSC's 2016–2018 draft Strategic Development Plan for the Southern Border Provinces to promote women's participation to resolve conflict using a rights-based approach and based on the principle of gender equality.<sup>27</sup> Unfortunately, there has since been little in the way of implementation.

#### **f) Women's Group Advocacy**

In August 2016, PAOW advocated for Safe Public Spaces and urged the dialogue parties to take measures to ensure the safety of

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<sup>26</sup> Soraya Jamjuree. (2016, March 11). Women's organizations and peacebuilding. *Thai PBS*. Retrieved on June 10, 2016 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0kvjv2dwT4>.

<sup>27</sup> Soraya Jamjuree. (2015, July 11). Women bring their concerns and share their opinion to improve the development and administration plan of the Southern Border Provinces. *Thai PBS*. Retrieved on June 10, 2016 from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-XEowI-JaeM>.

schools, markets, hospitals, and places of worship.<sup>28</sup> This proposal was recognized by the Thai government and MARA Patani and both parties agreed to have the issue of the Safety Zone put on the agenda on 2 September 2016.<sup>29</sup> At the time of writing, the dialogue parties were still working on this agenda item. This proposal has been referred to in statements made by representatives of both the Thai government and MARA Patani on a number of occasions. Abu Hafez Al-Hakim, MARA Patani spokesperson, has said the umbrella group welcomes the inclusion of voices from various groups (Crisis Group Asia Briefing N°148, 2016).

Nevertheless, some members of PAOW are disappointed that the Safe Public Spaces, as conceived by the dialogue parties, differs from the proposal put forward by the groups. The Safety Zone

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<sup>28</sup> See DSJ. (2016). “‘Safety zone agenda must be on dialogue table’ PAOW proposes to government and MARA Patani.” [“พื้นที่ปลอดภัยต้องอยู่บนโต๊ะพูดคุย” คณะทำงานผู้หญิง ยื่นถกไทย-มาราปัตตานี] Retrieved on 5 September 2017 from <http://www.deepsouthwatch.org/dsj/th/9367>.

<sup>29</sup> See DSJ. (2016). MARA Patani reveals that Party A and Party B have accepted PAOW’s proposal on safety zone in public spaces and it will be part of the next dialogue agenda. [“มาราปัตตานี” แถลงข้อสรุปการพูดคุยกับตัวแทนรัฐบาลไทย ว่ารับข้อเสนอ “พื้นที่สาธารณะปลอดภัย” ของคณะทำงานวาระผู้หญิงชายแดนใต้บรรจุในการประชุมครั้งถัดไป] Retrieved on 5 September 2017 from <http://psu10725.com/2558/?p=2782>. However, some members of PAOW say they think the agenda put in the official dialogue table is slightly different from their original proposal, therefore PAOW will continue its campaign in hope to realize their proposal (interview from a leading member of PAOW on 26 April 2017 in Pattani province).

initiative that has emerged from the talks is more of a confidence-building measure between the negotiating parties and will only be implemented in certain districts. As such, the network continues to advocate for safe public spaces, hoping for increased security in religious sites, hospitals, schools, markets, and travel routes.<sup>30</sup>

### **g) Women in the Thai Government Delegation Supporting the Track 1 Dialogue**

In the current peace dialogue process Senior Justice Officer at the Ministry of Justice Wanrapee Kaosaard is the only woman working to support the talks. She is one of six members of the “Technical Working Group for Peace Dialogue Panel” responsible for information and document preparation. Locally, four women are involved in the Inter-Agency Coordination Working Group which is headed by the Army 4 Commander. The two members are Lamai Manakarn and Pateemoh Pohitaedaoh. The two Secretariat Assistants are Sunee Maha and Suwara Kaewnuy.<sup>31</sup>

During undisclosed talks held in 2010, Centre for Humanitarian

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<sup>30</sup> Soraya Jamjuree and Lamai Managarn, members of PAOW, interviews on April 26, 2017 in Pattani and March 30, 2017 in Nakhon Pathom respectively.

<sup>31</sup> On 26 November 2014, Gen. Prayuth Chan-Ocha issued Prime Minister’s Order 230/2557 establishing a three-tier dialogue mechanism: at the policy level the Steering Committee for Peace Dialogue was chaired by Gen. Prayuth; in the middle a Peace Dialogue Delegation, headed by Gen. Aksara Kerdpol; and finally, the local Inter-Agency Coordination Working Group, headed by the 4<sup>th</sup> Region Army Commander.

Dialogue (HD) Coordinator Theerada Suphaphong coordinated with representatives from the Thai government and from Deep South civil society. Her work contributed to local women peace activists gaining a better understanding of the peace works and provided opportunities for them to engage in knowledge exchange with women from conflict areas in other countries.

Prior to the start of 2013 peace talks, a key person in the peace dialogue process was Jiraporn Bunnag, former Deputy Secretary General of the NSC. Her involvement began in 2005 with her work as a Commissioner in the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC). During that period, the Thai government attempted informal talks with the Movement, initiated by the Center for Humanitarian Dialogue (HDC).<sup>32</sup> Then-Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra instructed the NSC to coordinate with HDC. The NSC Secretary General then assigned the responsibility to Jiraporn Bunnag, whose had overseen the Southern Border Provinces since 1999, and she became one of four Thai government delegates. However, the talks ceased under the Samak Sundaravej and Somchai Wongsawat governments because of an absence of a clear policy for continued peace talks.

Even after her retirement, Jiraporn continued to work for peace with Ahmad Somboon Bualuang and with academics from King Prajadhipok's Institute in recognition of the fact that if the work was

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<sup>32</sup> The former name of HDC was Henry Dunant Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

discontinued, the trust built would be lost. The peace dialogue work was nurtured with Jiraporn acting in a Track 1.5 capacity and engaging with prospective representatives from both sides until she passed away in 2015. It could be said that Jiraporn laid the foundation for the peace dialogue processes announced under the Yingluck Shinawatra's government and under the current military government.

There are many individual women and groups of women dedicated to working for peace in the Deep South, where the space for women is still limited and largely informal. Women's contribution to supporting the peace process must be continued. The next question is how to utilize the available assets to achieve a peaceful and just society.



## 7. Recommendations: Engendering the Peace Process

Women have the potential to expand the peacebuilding horizon in the Deep South since they can engage the groups and communities that the dialogue parties and the facilitator have not been able to reach. Building on women's existing roles and proven capacity, stakeholders should strongly support women's more meaningful participation in the peace process by adopting the following recommendations:

### **Recommendations to Party A, Party B, the Facilitator, and Local CSOs**

#### **7.1 Build mutual understanding that women's everyday security concerns are a political issue**

Every party must recognize and agree that the issue of security in the formal peace talks has more than just a military dimension. Women's

security in everyday life is a political issue. Women's concerns are usually connected to the well-being and safety of their family and community. These "private" issues tend to be regarded as apolitical and therefore irrelevant to political negotiations. Women's issues are thus overlooked in peace talks and negotiations which emphasize security from the military perspective. It is important that all parties recognize that women's issues are also political. Women are vulnerable and the operations of conflicting parties have directly affected their lives and livelihoods, creating additional and different burdens for them to bear in contrast to men.

## **7.2 Acknowledge women as peacebuilding actors**

Women's image as peacebuilders and facilitators needs to be emphasized, not only by women's groups but also by other stakeholders including the media, academia, CSOs, and government. Women can engage groups and areas that are difficult for other actors to access. Their predominant strategy is to turn foes into friends and they are highly committed to nonviolent approaches, strongly motivated to restore security in homes, farms, markets, hospitals, schools, and places of worship. Out of concern for their family's security, women's groups actively campaign against violence and promote safe public spaces although their visibility is still somewhat limited. Women, like men, are not born peacebuilders. They have to develop their skills in the field. The women who have become peace activists have accumulated years of experience, sharpening their knowledge and skills through practical application. Women's

organizations and other expert institutions should provide trainings and workshops to further provide knowledge and skills on peace, security and gender to diverse groups of women. A critical mass of skilled and knowledgeable women in peacebuilding is essential to the visibility and recognition of women as active participants in the peace process.

### **Recommendations to Party A, Party B and the Facilitator**

#### **7.3 Implement a framework to ensure women’s meaningful participation**

As a party to CEDAW, the Thai government is obliged to ensure women’s involvement in decision-making. Adopting UNSCR 1325 would be a complementary measure. The Ministry of Social Development and Human Security’s Department of Women’s Affairs and Family Development (WAFD) adopted UNSCR 1325 and created a framework on “Measures and Guidelines for Promoting Women, Peace and Security.” This aims to promote women’s inclusion and protection to mainstream gender in the peace process. It is crucial that this measure is supported and implemented by all key actors so as to build a sustainable structure to advance women’s rights in conflict areas.

#### **7.4 Ensure legitimate women’s representation in peace talks**

Key actors, including the Thai government, the Resistance

Movements and the Facilitator should ensure a seat for women in the peace talks. They should also allow for other forms of participation that can enable women's meaningful participation. Parties should consider a 30 percent quota for women's representation in talks. Stakeholders should learn from the experience of other countries and tailor the knowledge to suit the context of the Deep South. Since women are not a monolithic group, legitimate representation is crucial. Women's groups could nominate delegates or adopt a rotation system to have different women's groups represented albeit with the support and advice of the women's network. The type of representation should be acceptable to all parties and women's groups. It should also represent the diverse interests of women's groups.

### **7.5 Develop inclusive strategies for women's participation in the peace process**

Deliberative platforms should be created to develop a sound strategic plan that takes into account the diverse interests of women's groups and which is acceptable to all parties and stakeholders. Given the diverse modalities of participation for women discussed above, key stakeholders must take the time to identify which model(s) may be most suitable to the context. This requires a comprehensive study to identify and develop options that they can be tried, tested and modified until the most appropriate model is found that genuinely serves its purpose. This will ensure a sound strategy that can be embraced by all women's group and which is responsive to the dynamics and context of the peace process.

## **Recommendations to authorities, INGOs, academia and women's groups**

### **7.6 Ensure the continuity of women's efforts for building peace**

Measures to ensure continuity must be created so that women's involvement in peace efforts can endure in the long term and across different phases of the peace process. Studies confirm that "women's inclusion in the formal peace agreements [make them] more likely to last." (Kinnock, 2015). Continued support from the international community, local academics, CSOs, authorities, and media are crucial for women to maintain their role as peacebuilders.

### **7.7 Keep the momentum of social pressure on women's inclusion**

Paffenholz (2015b) notes that the inclusion of women's groups and their agenda in negotiations requires sustained social pressure and lobbying by women's groups, mediators, and the international community to increase legitimacy, support and power. Women must continue building on-the-ground support networks in case there is a need for social pressure through mass action to raise public awareness and to get their voices and interests heard and acknowledged.

## **Recommendation to local CSOs**

### **7.8 Ensure continuity of women's empowerment to support the peace process**

To make dialogue parties more receptive to women's inclusion, CSOs must mainstream gender to a broader extent as CSOs are an important actor in peace processes (Paffenholz, 2015a). If CSOs encourage women's participation in decision making, this can help ensure women's empowerment in the peace process.

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# Timeline of Peace Dialogue Processes and Women's Participation



## 1993-1994 Chuan Leekpai (1992-1995)

**Dialogue Process**

**Process-Actors-Policies/Orders**  
Informal talks between the 4<sup>th</sup> Army and PULO Founder Tuanku Biyo Kodoniyo.

**Objectives**  
The informal and underground talks aimed to reduce violence and convince sympathizers to join the Thai government's reintegration program.



**Notes**  
The talks were direct engagements between parties without 3<sup>rd</sup> party intervention.  
The 4<sup>th</sup> Army terminated talks after the Resistance Movement shared the signed meeting minutes with the OIC. The Resistance Movement had wanted to show the OIC that the talks had been elevated to a higher level.

## 1999 Chuan Leekpai (1997-2001)

**Dialogue Process**

**Process-Actors-Policies/Orders**  
The National Security Council (NSC)'s National Security Policy on the Southern Border Provinces (1999-2003).

**Objectives**  
This policy document placed an emphasis on cultural diversity and was generated through a participatory process with inputs sought from various sectors, as well as from people in the region. It established basis for the next set of NSC policies on the Southern Border Provinces.

The Government developed a policy on peace dialogue but the dialogue was not open to the public.

**Dialogue Process**

**Process-Actors-Policies/Orders**  
The Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD) introduced discreet talks as a dialogue approach to identify root causes of the armed struggle on behalf of the then-Prime Minister. A member of the House of Representatives was assigned to meet members of the Resistance Movement. However, after two meetings, the Resistance Movement representatives were found to be older fighters who lacked any real influence in the region.

**Objectives**  
As the NRC was conducting its assessment, HD made a proposal to revive the talks. The Prime Minister ordered the NSC's operations team to join the dialogue without making the talks public. The NSC established the Strategic Non-Violence Working Group (SNWG), which consisted of external scholars and NSC staff members, to coordinate a secret and narrow dialogue circle to create mutual understanding and to examine the possibility of resolving the conflict. Approximately three meetings were held in Switzerland.

## 2005-2007 Pol. Lt. Col. Thaksin Shinawatra

**Dialogue Process**

**Process-Actors-Policies/Orders**  
The National Reconciliation Commission (NRC) was composed of 50 members: the President, the Vice-President, 17 individuals from the Southern Border Provinces, 12 representatives from civil society, 7 politicians (opposition, MPs and senators), and 12 civil servants from security and development departments.

**Objectives**  
An official space was provided by the Thai state for those from inside and outside the conflict area for the purpose of conflict resolution.

**Women's Representation**

**Formal Dialogue/Track 1**  
Women's Committee

1. Kanchana Silapa-archa
2. Jiraporn Bunnag
3. Nari Charoenphonphiriya
4. Pornnipa Limpapayom
5. Dr. Pechdau Tohmeena
6. Maryam Samoh
7. Rattiya Saleh
8. Saowanee Chitmuad

**Notes**  
The NRC had a two-year mandate.  
None of the NRC's recommendations were officially implemented following the report's release. However, many of the women involved continued to work building peace and promoting non-violence in the Southern Border Provinces.

**Part of a Track 1 or Track 1.5 support team**  
Ten Support Staff

- Meeting Secretariat: Sunandha Kanchanaakaradej, Pongthong Tangchupong, and Wannapid Jarusombat
- Two Assistant Researchers: Chayanit Poonyarat and Janjira Sombatpoonsiri
- Two Sub-Commissioners: Duangpon Boonyajinda and Pacharee Thanasomboonkij
- Secretary and Assistants to the Sub-Commission Secretary: Napapon Mekdamrong; Tuwae Koliyoh Kabae and Ilham Yeedin



## 2006 Gen. Surayud Chulanont

**Dialogue Process**

**Process-Actors-Policies/Orders**  
Prime Minister's Order 206/2549 (2006): Policy to Promote Peace in the Southern Border Provinces (signed 31 October 2006).

**Objectives**  
Part of the policy was to promote understanding by building bridges with groups holding different opinions and who resorted to violence as a means of resistance.

**Notes**  
Coup d'état on 19<sup>th</sup> September 2006

**Process-Actors-Policies/Orders**  
Geneva Process

**Objectives**  
The Prime Minister authorized the Peace Dialogue Panel to continue the process. As NSC chair, the Prime Minister also appointed "the NSC's Peace Dialogue Commission" to be responsible for peace talk operations. The peace talks took place in Geneva.

**Notes**  
The Geneva Process ended in 2011 after Abhisit Vejjajiva dissolved Parliament and Yingluck Shinawatra adopted a different approach.



## 2007 Gen. Surayud Chulanont

**Dialogue Process**

**Process-Actors-Policies/Orders**  
Talks under the Geneva Process.

**Objectives**  
This was the beginning of high-level peace talks approved by the Prime Minister, which led to a clear policy and the development of a high-level mechanism for peace talks. However, both parties agreed that talks were to be conducted in secret to protect those involved and to build trust. No information was disseminated publicly.

**Notes**  
Jiraporn Bunnag had retired from government service by this point.



Dialogue Process

Process-Actors-Policies/Orders

The government continued the Geneva Process and re-launched the Peace Dialogue Commission to take charge of the process. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mark Tamthai was appointed to lead the Thai delegation in negotiations with the Movement.



Objectives

Official talks aimed to reduce violence and pave the way for peaceful coexistence. Negotiations brought about cooperation and testing – of the Movement’s ability to control the violence and the sincerity of both parties towards each other. Both parties agreed to implement a project to reduce confrontations, leading to the reduction of violence in June and July in three districts of Narathiwat (Bacho, Yi-ngo, and Cho-airong).

Women’s Representation

Part of a Track 1 or Track 1.5 support team

The Dialogue Panel started to bring civil society representatives to meet movement representatives to exchange views on the issues and needs in the conflict area as they recognized that the problems of the Deep South were not only a matter for the conflict parties. In the first attempt, one woman from civil society was invited. Later, a group of civil society representatives consisting of four women and four men were invited to meet the movement.

Jiraporn Bunnag now a retired government official, continued working with women’s groups from various sectors including, government, business, and civil society. She worked alongside King Prajadhipok’s Institute (KPI) and CSOs in the South. She also established the Women for Peace Foundation.



Dialogue Process

Process-Actors-Policies/Orders

The 1<sup>st</sup> round of formal dialogue started on 28 February between the Thai Government (Party A) and the BRN (Party B) represented by Hassan Bin Toyib. The Government of Malaysia acted as facilitator. The process was announced to the public through the signing of the General Consensus on the Peace Dialogue Process.

Objectives

The talks focused on the preparations and agreements required with respect to the peace negotiation framework.

Dialogue Process

Process-Actors-Policies/Orders

On 26 November 2014, Prime Minister’s Order 230/2557 established a 3-level dialogue mechanism: at policy level – the Steering Committee for Peace Dialogue – chaired by the PM; the Peace Dialogue delegation, headed by Gen. Aksara Kerdpol; and at local level – the Inter-Agency Coordination Working Group – headed by 4<sup>th</sup> Army commander.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> round of formal peace dialogue began between the government (Party A), led by Gen. Aksara Kerdpol, and Mara Patani (Party B). The Malaysian government continues to act as the facilitator.

Objectives

The talks aimed to prepare for and agree on the framework for peace negotiations.

Women’s Representation

Formal Dialogue/Track 1

Wanrapee Kaosaard, Senior Justice Officer at the Ministry of Justice is part of the “Technical Working Group for Southern Thailand’s Peace Dialogue Panel”, which consists of six members. She is responsible for preparing information and documents for the talks.

Part of a Track 1 or Track 1.5 support team

Four women are involved in the area-based Inter-Agency Coordination Working Group. Two women sit in the Working Group – Lamai Manakarn and Pateemoh Pohitaedaoh. The other two women act as Secretariat Assistants – Suneeh Maha and Suwara Kaewnuy.



2008

Samak Sundaravej and Somchai Wongsawat

Dialogue Process

Process-Actors-Policies/Orders

Talks under the Geneva Process stopped due to lack of support from the government.



2010

Abhisit Vejjajiva (2008-2011)

CSOs – KPI – Insider Peacebuilders Platform (IPP)/ Peace Resource Collaborative (PRC)

CSOs and academics created a platform for diverse groups to exchange their views and ideas to resolve the conflict. Based on the principle that a sound alternative to conflict should come from the collaboration of all stakeholders, the platform aims to act as a bridge connecting voices from the ground and help nurture the official peace dialogue.

Notes  
Platform is ongoing (as of 2018).

HD Coordinator Theerada Suphaphong liaised with representatives from the government and from local civil society. Her work contributed to and supported local women peacebuilders to learn from and exchange with women from conflict areas in other countries.

During this time there was also an international campaign to promote the role of women in peacebuilding based on UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

Notes  
Cooperation to expand the ceasefire area in the second round ended after the government dissolved Parliament.  
General Election in August 2011

2011

Yingluck Shinawatra (2011-2014)

Dialogue Process

Process-Actors-Policies/Orders

The government followed the 2012-2014 Southern Border Provinces Administration and Development Policy prepared by the Office of the NSC, as per Article 8 of the 9 Articles. The document outlines the policy on dialogue with dissident groups and continues to serve as guide in the present.

Notes  
The 2017-2019 Southern Border Provinces Administration and Development Policy is based on the 2012-2014 guidelines.

2013

Yingluck Shinawatra

Dialogue Process

Process-Actors-Policies/Orders

Dialogue process was disrupted due to political crisis in Bangkok.

Notes  
Coup d’état on 22 May 2014



2014

Yingluck Shinawatra / Gen. Prayuth Chan-ocha

2015

Gen. Prayuth Chan-ocha

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