



## NETWORKS FOR PEACE

Identity-based violence and hate speech are rising in South and Southeast Asia. Yet actors working to address these issues often do so in isolation and/or lack support to magnify their impact. *Networks for Peace* uses its regional convening power to collectively engage and support civil society organizations and key influencers in advancing tolerance and peaceful coexistence, mitigating growing polarization of ethnic and religious identities across the region.

Working with partners in Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and with the Central Tibetan Administration, *Networks for Peace* fosters intra- and interfaith harmony and social cohesion through grants, capacity building, research, and regional knowledge sharing.

### STRENGTHENING ORGANIZATIONS AND REGIONAL NETWORKS

*Networks for Peace's* regional approach focuses on strengthening organizational capacity while providing networking opportunities for a broad range of civil society organizations and key influencers, including women, youth, religious actors, faith-based organizations, and the private sector. *Networks for Peace* activities focus on: (i) promoting intra- and interfaith harmony; (2) addressing dangerous speech and amplifying positive narratives of peace and inclusivity; and (3) promoting regional youth champions to foster greater understanding and tolerance among different ethnic and religious communities. Additionally, *Networks for Peace* programming integrates key elements of USAID's Women, Peace, and Security strategy empowering women and marginalized groups through inclusion and meaningful participation in activities.

## EXPANDING KNOWLEDGE AND LEARNING

*Networks for Peace* is expanding civil society organizations' access to evidence-based research, knowledge, tools, and resources to better understand religious nationalism and promote religious tolerance in South and Southeast Asia. By enhancing partners' access to learning resources, *Networks for Peace* enables regional partners and stakeholders to design and implement more strategic interventions improving the effectiveness of their advocacy and peacebuilding efforts.

## KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- *Networks for Peace* held consultations with over 200 organizations and key influencers across Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and the Central Tibetan Administration and Tibetans in exile in India to better understand the context related to ethnic and religious conflict across each country and explore avenues to effectively promote peace and inclusivity.
- *Networks for Peace* regional exchanges provided critical forums for 208 civil society representatives and key influencers (60 percent women) to share experiences and best practices across multiple countries on issues such as interfaith and intrafaith dialogue, the role of women and youth in peacebuilding, and addressing online misinformation and dangerous speech.
- Since 2020, *Networks for Peace* has trained 146 persons (64 percent women) to advance gender equality or female empowerment through their roles in public or private sector institutions or organizations. Since then, 211 local women have participated substantively in *Networks for Peace* regional and in-country activities.
- *Networks for Peace* employs a Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) lens to ensure that women and marginalized groups are empowered and meaningfully included in all aspects of its partner networks' operations. With *Networks for Peace* guidance, a regional network was able to incorporate GESI principles in the selection of its project participants. This led to a more inclusive and diverse group of regional peacebuilder participants, comprised of Buddhist monks, female clergies, and representatives from marginalized groups.
- *Networks for Peace* regional events, workshops, and grants have supported in-country and cross-border collaboration among organizations working to promote intra- and interfaith harmony and address dangerous speech. For example, following their participation in a *Networks for Peace* activity, a tech company in Burma and a Sri Lankan civil society organization have explored areas for collaboration and are now jointly implementing a project to adapt an existing dangerous speech monitoring platform. In Thailand, through their participation in *Networks for Peace* partnership building exchanges, three Thai private tech companies and a local civil society organization are establishing a Dangerous Speech Monitoring and Mitigation Network to coordinate their respective activities.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information, please visit [www.usaid.gov/asia-regional](http://www.usaid.gov/asia-regional) or email [info-rdma@usaid.gov](mailto:info-rdma@usaid.gov).