



The APS Network celebrates novelty, unity, and collaboration in this issue. Read on to see how pioneering ideas, projects, and movements by APS alumni are shaping the world despite the current pandemic. Be inspired by not one but two "Alumni Stories" and discover exciting improvements in the network!

The Newsletter Team

PEACEBUILDING BEYOND BINARIES

First Look at Queering Peacebuilding in the New Decade

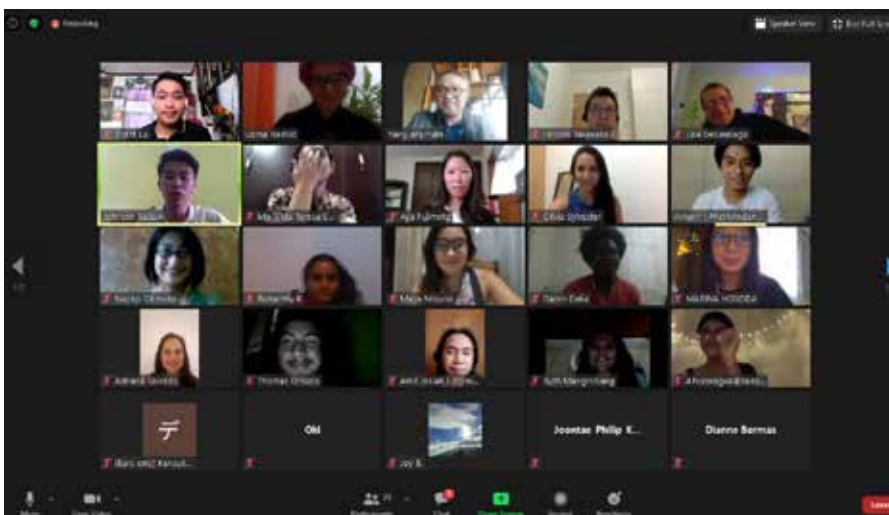
Where are the women in peacebuilding? What kind of women are we looking for? These nuanced queries sparked the feminist and queer curiosity of the participants at the Queering Peacebuilding event last October 17, 2020.

Queering Peacebuilding, a webinar organized and hosted by APS Cohort 13, aimed at promoting gender diversity through conversations centering on the agency and challenges of gender minorities in peacebuilding.

The event was graced by two distinguished Academic Experts: Dr. Uzma Rashid, University for Peace Assistant Professor; and Nery Ronatay, APS Cohort 6 alumnus and a M.A. in Gender and Peacebuilding graduate.

Nery shared his views on the prospects of mainstreaming LGBTQ+ peoples' stories in peacebuilding discourse and practice. Meanwhile, the APS Cohort 13 presented the results of their study on the agency and challenges of gender minority peacebuilders in Mindanao.

After the webinar, Nery and APS Cohort 13 continued their partnership in piercing binaries within peacebuilding as they worked on a collaborative presentation at the Philippine Queer Studies Conference 2020.



APS ALUMNI IN ACTION!

APS Alumnus Rancha and current student Monyvann contributed...



Rancha and Monivann, contributed to the success of the Memorialization Project. They helped in project implementation when the current pandemic restricted some project implementers to travel to Cambodia.

With their passion and expertise, Rancha and Monivann helped APS Cohort 13 students in reaching the community, in interviewing the narrative contributors, and in preparing the documentation for video and for exhibition. With the success of the project, the spirit of unity and collaboration within APS Alumni Network thrives!

Rancha Keo (APS 12) and Monivann Nhean (APS 14) joined APS Cohort 13 students in their Memorialization Project in Cambodia. The project sought to preserve collective memories of Buddhist monks' lived experiences as affected populations of a dam project in Battambang, Cambodia during the Khmer Rouge regime.

The project design enabled memorialization through documentation of community narratives, conduct of peacemaking circle, and sharing through community launch and exhibition.




APS ALUMNUS CONTRIBUTING TO PEACE DIALOGUE IN MYANMAR

Saw Thu Raw Aung, also known as "Bosco" (APS 11), has his life's work dedicated to peacebuilding in Myanmar. After his APS graduation, Bosco joined Search for Common Ground as a Project Manager.

In 2020, Bosco initiated a project entitled, "Communicating for the Future, Building Confidence and Trust in the Myanmar Peace Process." The project aimed at bringing forward the voices of various groups in the Myanmar Peace Process through the use of media and dialogue.

In organizing a dialogue session on Myanmar's Peace Process and Priority Issues, Bosco helped facilitate discourse among representatives of the government, media, academics, students, youth, and women, among others, on different issues facing the peace process.



For more details, please see the briefing paper here: 

SFCG Briefing Papers & Dialogue Session on MYANMAR'S PEACE PROCESS AND ITS PRIORITY ISSUES



PANELISTS

Ashley South (Affiliated Researcher, Chiang Mai University / Advisory Committee of SFCG)
Mi Kun Chan Non (Chair, Mon Women's Organization)
Min Zin (Executive Director of the Institute for Strategy and Policy & Advisory Committee of SFCG)
Kheunsai Jaiyen (Advisor of PPST and Advisor of Pyidaungsu Institute)
Naw May Oo (Advisor of Karen National Union, KNU)

3 NOVEMBER 2020 (THURSDAY)

09:45 - 12:00 PM (THAILAND TIME)

4FL, FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, CHIANG MAI UNIVERSITY

IN-PERSON

In-person participants

please register by

31 Oct, 2020

at www.sfcg.org

ONLINE

online participants, join us through zoom

<https://join.zoom.us/j/938759811>



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UPLIFTING THE APS SPIRIT!



The APS Alumni Network encourages and supports collaboration among its members. In this section, three APS alumni are featured as they show how to uplift the APS spirit through unity and collaboration.

In 2019, Hideki Osugi (APS 11) and Rika Mitsuhashi (APS 10) pursued a sustainable enterprise with a unique product, Cascara Tea. Cascara Tea is made from the skin of coffee cherries from which coffee beans are removed.

Hideki and Rika's sustainable enterprise, "Sustainability Asia Ltd.", aims, among others, to introduce Cascara Tea in Japan. Despite the challenges of the current pandemic, the enterprise continued to seek opportunities to expand their product's reach.

In 2020, Hideki and Rika were able to reconnect with another APS alumnus, Eri Uchimara (APS 8). With Eri's help, they succeeded in reaching out to various stakeholders in Osaka, Japan. Currently, the Cascara Tea has been made known to, and is now being served at, an independent coffee shop, which has been loved by locals in an Osakan suburb for 20 years now.

APS ALUMNUS WINNING A GLOBAL GRANT FOR PEACE AND SECURITY



Sathees Mohanathas (APS 8) has won in the U.S. Department of State's Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund (AEIF) 2020. AEIF is a global grant competition for peace and security. With the benefits of the global grant, Sathees will implement his project on "Youth Leadership for Peace and Security."

The APS Alumni Network would like to give our warmest congratulations and best wishes for the success of his project!

ALUMNI STORIES 01

BE A PEACEBUILDER, BE IN APS!

Novri Susan The Theory and Practice of Sociology of Conflict

Novri Susan (DIPS 1) has always got the passion for peacebuilding. He has spent the past 13 years building his academic career, furthering his education and balancing his peacebuilding work in Indonesia.

Novri's interest in peace and conflict studies dates back during his undergraduate years. His undergraduate thesis offers an in-depth analysis on the violent clash between Moslems and Christians

in Ambon Maluku, Indonesia from 1999 to 2002. He pursued work in the academia as a faculty member of the Department of Political Science of Universitas Airlangga.

In 2007, Novri hoped to further his studies and was accepted for scholarship under the DIPS program. Building on his knowledge, Novri was receptive to "new insights through in-depth understanding of peace and conflict, and global perspectives" shared by his professors and classmates.



“
They had direct exposure to some protracted conflicts, which enabled them to offer compelling stories and new insights on the dynamics of conflict

continue to next page

“Looking back, my entire experience in ADMU and UPEACE had a big influence on me. It was exposure not only of knowledge but also of cultural experience.”

Novri is always grateful for his experience in the Philippines and Costa Rica. His personal take away include the commitment to uplift the values of tolerance and respect. He said, “my exposure with new environments in non-Moslem-majority countries made me experience and understand tolerance and respect better. I felt accepted when I lived in the Philippines and Costa Rica.”

After graduation, Novri became productive as an academic and a writer. He wrote books, such as *The Introduction to Sociology of Conflict* and *The State Fails in Managing Conflict: Democracy and Governance of Conflict in Indonesia*. The contribution of his books cannot be overlooked. The first book alone has been quoted in academic papers for more than 400 times. After obtaining a Doctoral degree, he also wrote several journal articles and became a regular contributor in *Rumah Opini* (Opinion House).

In 2019, Novri took a senior role in the team of the Spokesperson of the President of Indonesia. He has helped in briefing the Presidential Spokesperson about the rising issues in Indonesia so that the latter is well-informed about the issues the Presidency is going to address. “The key is to provide balanced information and to develop public messages of unity and action. Here, I employ a sociology of conflict that promotes an understanding of vital issues in the society.”

“What I learned from UPEACE is respect to other people’s perspectives, the diversity of views in any issue in the society”.

With a renewed mindset, Novri has appreciated criticisms as opportunities for engagement and improvement. “As an academic who works to assist the government, it is my responsibility to engage the public in dialogues to find solutions for our country.”

Read more:

<https://apsan.org/featured-alumni/>



“Young people should be given the chance to participate in peacebuilding. They must have the opportunity to have dialogues to determine the future of their country.”

This view has driven Kyi Kyi Seinn (DIPS 2) to establish Moving Forward Together (“MFT”) in 2013. MFT is a non-governmental organization in Myanmar that works with youth in peacebuilding across the country. Since its inception, MFT has worked to deliver a variety of capacity-building projects to empower young people. It also collaborates with organizations to support young people in business who are contributing to nation-building Myanmar.

It took a few years for Kyi Kyi to manifest her mission to empower youth. It all started with her endeavor in the Dual Campus International Peace Studies in 2008-2009, when Myanmar was still under military regime. Kyi Kyi believed that local capacity in peacebuilding will be needed at some point to change the direction of Myanmar’s history. Thus, the opportunity to study peace and conflict in Philippines and Costa Rica excited her.

Indeed, Kyi Kyi’s career in peacebuilding started when she carried out an internship in ASEAN Secretariat Office in Jakarta, Indonesia, to fulfill a requirement for DIPS program. “For someone coming from Myanmar, especially at that time, the internship in ASEAN Secretariat was very useful for career development. The experience is helpful to strengthen my curriculum vitae.”

Not long after graduation, Kyi Kyi expanded her career as a Program Associate for UNDP in Myanmar. Afterwards, she worked for Save the Children for two years, initially as a research consultant, then, later as Advocacy Adviser for Child’s Right Protection.

“Young people can also contribute to peacebuilding. Through their businesses, they can help build a sustainable society.”

Kyi Kyi appreciates the freedom she gets in consultancy work that enables her to give more time for MFT. With more time on her hand, she is ready to lead MFT into its second phase which involves developing MFT as a social enterprise that can sustain itself and help sustain other social enterprises.

“We have started in Nyaung Shwee, where we have established a branch office. We intend to regularly invite and gather various Nyaung Shwee ethnic groups to train them on developing businesses and strengthening social cohesion.” Kyi Kyi envisions this as she points to the location of the soon-to-rise MFT’s training center and agricultural enterprise in Nyaung Shwee’s neighboring city, Taunggyi.

Read more:

<https://apsan.org/featured-alumni/>



Alumni Initiatives and *UPDATES*

APSAN welcoming Cohort 13 graduates; Alumni forum held. The APS Alumni Network warmly welcomes the graduates of APS Cohort 13 to its growing family! To complement their graduation, Cohort 13 graduates were also able to interact with, and learn from the experienced of, APS alumni, Mi Ki Kyaw Myint (ALP 5), Rowena Aldico (APS 10), and Rei Firdha Amalia (APS 11), during the 2020 Alumni Forum. In the said forum, Cohort 13 graduates were introduced to the APS Alumni Network by Alumni Relations Officer Gayathri Gamage (APS 11).

Building a career as an Asian Peacebuilder! The APS Alumni Network supports the career development of its members. To contribute to this, it held a mentoring program on career building for APS Cohort 13 graduates on December 12, 2020. APS Alumni, Miki Yoshida (APS 7), Rei Firdha Amalia (APS 11), Bunthea Keo (ALP 6), and Endro Kristanto (DIPS 2) shared their journeys in working after APS. The discussion was focused on job opportunities, CV preparation, applications, and interview processes.

APSAN-AIA 2020 grantees finalized. In October 2020, the APS Alumni Network set another call for proposals for its Alumni-Led Initiative Activities (AIA) Grant. The theme for this year's grant is "COVID-19 and Peacebuilding Initiatives." An information session was held on November 28, 2020, during which the prospective applicants were oriented on the requirements and qualifications for the call for proposals. By December 2020, all applications have been received. Two projects were chosen, and project implementation shall be conducted in the first half of 2021.

Moving on from 2020, and welcoming 2021 with hope! On December 30, 2020, the APS Alumni Network organized a virtual gathering of APS/DIPS/ALP alumni to reflect on 2020 and to envision a better 2021. The event was filled with warm and heartfelt conversations amongst APS alumni. The APSAN Executive Council is happy about the results of the informal gathering that enabled APS alumni to reconnect and to make a collective vision of hope for 2021.

New online platform for TNF scholars coming soon! The Nippon Foundation (TNF) has been a generous scholarship provider for more than 50 years and currently has more than 40,000 alumni from different scholarship programs. In an effort to connect its growing network, TNF has contracted a network provider to host an online community platform for its current scholars, alumni, and partners. The APS Alumni Network looks forward to accessing the platform by April 2021.

APSAN Media Group and Newsletter Team gets new members! The APS Alumni Network sincerely welcomes the new members of its Media and Outreach Working Group, and it's The APS Newsletter Team!

Alvin Kurnia Sandy (APS 13) has volunteered to further develop the APSAN website. He is skilled in website development and maintenance.

Meanwhile, Shirley Kimmayong joins The APS Newsletter Team beginning January 2021. Shirley is an aspiring changemaker for indigenous peoples and is currently working to amplify indigenous peoples' voices within the UN. She is also the Founder of Hagiyo, a local organization working with indigenous peoples on education, empowerment, culture, and environment. Shirley is a part of APS Cohort 7.



Are you an APS alumni? Join the APS Alumni Network's



<https://web.facebook.com/groups/2543407389054047/>, and be in the know of latest APS updates and of collaboration opportunities with your fellow Asian Peacebuilders!



Do you want to see your news, story, article, poem



or other creative writing on the next THE APS NETWORK issue? If so, please contact us at apsalumnisecretariat@upeace.org

