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Contextualising and theorising economic development, local business and ethnic cleansing in Myanmar

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ABSTRACT

After Myanmar ended military rule in 2011, significant foreign investment arrived to facilitate a profitable transition to an integrated regional economy, and under the promise that foreign actors can help facilitate peaceful long-term development. However, these firms have also tacitly supported an ethnic cleansing committed by the government that most have partnered with or funded. This article builds theory on economic opening, development and conflict, using research from Myanmar to forward three arguments about business actions in fragile, at-risk countries. First, international-led regulatory reform has had little impact on endemic corruption at the micro- or meso-levels, as local elites and international businesses remain the primary beneficiaries. Second, 'development' is a contentious topic, defined locally not as broad societal growth but the unjustified picking of winners and losers in society by foreign entities. Third, business ventures are exacerbating ethnic tensions through a liberal peace-building mentality that is unresponsive to either local conflicts or local communities. The article closes by offering three ways that these findings open future research avenues on business engagement as peace-builders and development agents in developing yet fragile states.

KEYWORDS

Myanmar; peace-building; ethnic conflict; Rohingya; human rights; sustainable development; SMEs

Introduction: building business, breaking peace?

Myanmar's economic opening and transition to democracy has given businesses significant opportunities to expand in a high-growth but problematic emerging market. Foreign direct investment has grown 10-fold since 2011¹ across all sectors of the Myanmar economy. But Myanmar also ranks in the bottom 5 per cent of 189 countries surveyed by the World Bank for ease of doing business,² permeated by endemic corruption at the individual, institutional and political levels.³ The United Nations Development Programme lumps these issues under the umbrella of 'business rights', including contractual certainty, financial fairness and freedom from corruption and extortion,⁴ together considered as the building blocks for successful business development.

While opening brought optimism that trade and growth would lift Myanmar's poorest, these gains have primarily benefited existing local elites as most new

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investments require local partners who hold high-level roles in Myanmar's political-military nexus. Moreover, Myanmar's military undertook an ethnic cleansing of 2 million Rohingya Muslims in Rakhine state – just the type of authoritarian action that economic opening was promised to temper. Today, some 700,000 Rohingya are refugees in neighbouring India and Bangladesh, with a further 100,000 in internally displaced persons camps.⁵ While many international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) have condemned the violent cleansing, no businesses operating in Myanmar have spoken out against it as of February 2017, and none have withdrawn their government partnerships or left the country. This silence comes as many companies have explicitly framed their entry (or re-entry) into the Myanmar market as action to help solidify peace in one of the world's least developed states, promoting their roles as agents of peace and sustainable socio-economic development.

Myanmar's society remains a patchwork of ethnic groups, regional fighting and power struggles that often pre-date military rule. While growth grows the pie (and spoils of peace), unevenness of this distribution has exacerbated societal cleavages. There are 135 ethnic minorities in Myanmar and 18 conflict groups that base their allegiance and fight upon the stated basis of grievances resulting from social, political and economic deprivation.⁶ These conflicts tend to be based in the country's border areas, where employment opportunities, infrastructure and state capacity are limited, and the likelihood of abuses by official forces is high. Nearly all of these conflicts are rooted in the uneven division of economic opportunities and civil rights in Myanmar, along with the heavy-handed rule used to maintain it.

Layered within these historically repressive tactics is state-supported ethnic conflict. These issues have manifested in Rakhine state between Buddhist majority 'ethnic Rakhines' and a Muslim Rohingya minority. The Rohingya are called 'Bengali Muslims' by most in Myanmar, due to their migration from what is now Bangladesh beginning in the late 1700s, and as an indicator of the desire to designate Rohingyas as outsiders.⁷ This is the government's third major cleansing attempt of Rohingya, following similar efforts in 1978 and 1991.⁸ Many have used the new liberalised media landscape to promote divisive ethnic speech, most visibly Buddhist nationalists Ashin Wirathu and Ma Ba Tha.⁹ These overtures culminated in a series of 'Protection of Race and Religion' laws that designated Myanmar as a Buddhist state and legalised anti-Rohingya discrimination.¹⁰ Criticised by the UN, INGOs and some domestic NGOs, the bills were nevertheless passed throughout 2014 and 2015.

To understand why economic opening and rapid development has failed to bring an inclusive peace to Myanmar, we compare Myanmar's imperfect opening to existing assumptions on how businesses can and should operate in fragile states. The literature has been proliferating rapidly with theories about how, where and why businesses can contribute to peace-building.¹¹ The business community has also been urged to be more involved in post-conflict peace-building processes,¹² through the Responsibility To Protect, UN Sustainable Development Goals, Business and Human Rights Guiding Principles, United Nations Global Compact (UNGC) and similar multilateral initiatives.

But the empirical evidence that can support and refine such pushes remains wanting. We have gaps in understanding national-level variations in motivations behind business engagement in peace, how international business-peace agendas influence local business communities, which local business agents are the most effective for peace and

development, how competition from firms based in countries with more illiberal predispositions influences ethical business decision-making and where peace-building business activities have worsened local ethnic conflict instead of alleviating it. This article explores new avenues for theory on these issues through analysis of national business engagement in peace and development in Myanmar after the country's 2011 economic opening, emphasising business owners in conflict-affected Rakhine state.

This article presents three primary findings about business actions in Myanmar. First, international-led regulatory reform has had little impact on endemic corruption at the micro- or meso-levels, as local elites and international businesses remain the primary beneficiaries. Second, 'development' is a contested and contentious topic in Myanmar, defined locally not as broad societal growth but the unjustified picking of 'winner' and 'loser' communities by foreign entities, as some business-peace projects have intensified these cleavages. Third, economic opening has exacerbated ethnic tensions by piggybacking upon a liberal peace-building mentality that has noble global aims but is largely unresponsive to either local conflicts or local business communities.

This article first offers a background of development and economic opening in Myanmar, contextualising relevant economic opening and peace and conflict literatures. It then illustrates how business-peace promises have manifested in Myanmar through perspectives from local business leaders in Rakhine including Rohingya refugee communities. I close by exploring three new theoretical and empirical opportunities for business and peace in Myanmar and potentially other emerging democracies as more illiberal international actors gain in stature.

Business, development and peace in Myanmar

Existing economic and political science literatures understand economic opening to be a positive activity for local populations, and peace and conflict scholarship bookends these arguments with assumptions that economic opening heightens the probability for peace. This article uses the sub-field of business engagement in peace and peace-building to pin findings to emerging arguments on business, development and conflict.

The idea that business actors can and should contribute to peace and development (business-peace) in Myanmar has rapidly grown. INGOs, the UN and international firms, have all developed projects that publicly aim to support peace and development. These initiatives forward development and human rights aims of the UN (and by extension the UN's Business for Peace programme) by stressing economic development, local development of disadvantaged areas and importing international norms. Some firms have gone further, as when the Myanmar head of Norwegian mobile firm Telenor Petter Furburg claimed that their work in building mobile towers and negotiating with rebels to do so should be celebrated as nation-building.¹³ Such actors in Myanmar often see their roles at the 'win-win' intersection of peace-building and business risk mitigation/aversion, but local government and business actors are less inclined to celebrate such initiatives.¹⁴

Business-peace proponents back the broad notion that economic opening coupled with business support for institutional reform and local development can encourage more peaceful societies. The Washington Consensus-supported platform of market expansion and regulation streamlining by the World Bank, Asian Development Bank

and other International Financial Institutions has overshadowed other initiatives as the biggest change agent for growth.¹⁵ Regulation overhaul is advocated, particularly in reforming banking, resource and other commercial centres to international standards in an effort to increase transparency, efficiency and state stability.¹⁶ Economic openings propose to increase ties between states in the hopes that conflict becomes too costly to conduct – a claim with a rich empirical history often labelled as the ‘liberal peace’.¹⁷ However, in ‘emerging’ Asia, conflict dynamics are often more complex and muddled than interdependence arguments for peace imply.¹⁸

Contradictions between economic liberalisation and peace-building after repression and/or conflict are well known. Tensions in Guatemala,¹⁹ Afghanistan²⁰ and across Sub-Saharan Africa²¹ illustrate the difficulty in crafting coherent policy in tense transitional environments that prioritise both peace and growth. Local legitimacy (and thus local support for peace) issues haunt the liberal peace project.²² Several large-n studies find that the relationship between economic opening and reduction of intrastate conflict is nil at best and potentially negative, meaning that rapidly opening states might find themselves *more* susceptible to internal conflict.²³

What is framed as the ‘neo-liberal peace-building approach’ of economic reform as supported by much of the international community for Myanmar is poorly suited to tackle socio-economic grievances. New parties to government typically express the desire for ‘their turn’ of the economic spoils, and those excluded from the peace table are left behind in post-peace gains, particularly where ethnic cleavages lie. Myanmar carries complex historical relationships between sovereignty and peace, complicated by natural resource extraction in ethnic areas.²⁴ Post-conflict demobilisation and reintegration tactics like power-sharing have been considered,²⁵ but political demands for local autonomy via federal structures have rendered ceasefires as little more than stopgaps given the central government’s hesitation to decentralise power. Elections can also complicate negotiations, which challenge rebel governance claims and can trigger conflict in their own right,²⁶ likewise natural resources and illicit drugs, historically taken from ethnic areas to fund and entrench the military regime.²⁷

Such policies have bolstered elite wealth creation that exacerbates socio-economic inequalities, providing a short-term peace boost but sowing the seeds for longer term conflict and violence likelihood.²⁸ The policies prioritise instead economic elements of peace-building that support a ‘corporate peace’ that increases stability without addressing social inequalities.²⁹ While favouring economic policy incentives over opening can be productive,³⁰ Myanmar’s elite-weighted process may take decades to trickle down to society at large as political and economic spaces are reshaped.³¹ Liberalisation has thus entrenched power within a military–political elite at the expense of democracy, albeit in a manner palpable to the international community.³² Such critiques predate the Western-led opening, as Kudo explores with respect to Chinese investment,³³ which benefited the military junta but offered little overall development due to distorted incentives structures. These were largely maintained post-2011, posing a challenge not only for development and economic growth, but also for rewarding the very conglomerates that prospered during military rule due to their entrenched cronyism.³⁴

The above sets the stage for three new explorations of business and peace dynamics in Myanmar. First, overviews of economic opening suggest that it made Myanmar more susceptible to conflict, but there has been little work on causality or the conditions that

made such conflict more or less likely. Second, studies of business in conflict zones give little attention to local business actors on business-peace engagement, prioritising instead conflict actors, NGOs, international firms, affected communities and/or governments. Third, the international community has not delivered promised economic reforms for peace in a durable or sustainable way, with little self-reflection of its role in potentially contributing to conflict. Filling these knowledge gaps requires engagement with those communities in Myanmar most impacted by and cognisant of these changes.

Methodology

Seventy-five semi-structured interviews were conducted with two related questionnaires of 15–20 open-ended questions in four stages from June 2016 to February 2017 (see Appendix 1). Interviewees were national businesspersons (retail shop owners, importers, heads of business/industry associations, farmers, executives, contractors and entrepreneurs) in Rakhine state, as well as Rohingya business leaders originally from Rakhine but who fled due to persecution. Select interviews were conducted of businesspersons in Yangon for triangulation. Focus on these actors explored a community that was inherently pro-business and pro-peace (or at least pro-stability) in nature, providing more weight and substance to critical reflections. Snowball technique was employed, with multiple sites visited to triangulate findings and avoid projecting bias to one community. Respondents are anonymised and locations have been generalised for protection.

The presentation of selected interviews is intended to illustrate representative data regarding local community understandings of political processes or a ‘perspectives’-based qualitative methodology.³⁵ Unlike other qualitative methods, this approach does not utilise coding of respondents, clustering/visualisation techniques or begin with testable research questions. Its unique value (similar to but not as deeply intensive as grounded theory methodologies) lies in using generative questions to pursue potentially unexpected responses by interviewees to better understand their own lives in their own words, particularly in conflict-affected or sensitive regions where more traditional methodologies can insufficiently adapt to participant needs. It is a more balanced and agency-positive method to interview individuals in vulnerable communities, who are often under pressure to give answers that they think the interviewer might want to hear (or that authorities might want to hear), especially when questions are closed or asked in a leading manner to elicit yes/no responses.³⁶

Instead of pre-defining hypotheses that set the research agenda, this method first explores a consistent set of open-ended, broad questions and extrapolates from these answers what conforms to existing understandings and where new theoretical ground emerges. This methodology stresses the ethnographic discovery of patterns of consensus amongst respondents, and is explicitly designed to encourage new scholarly avenues of testable support for business-peace questions, and is a better methodological fit to understand business–society interactions.³⁷ While outliers were occasionally found, the data as presented provide an overall snapshot of community experiences as presented, and should be taken as such.

This article offers longer quotes where relevant to better present respondent tenor and context. While generalisability is a concern in such situations,³⁸ this approach can distil a more vivid humanisation of findings when researching complex livelihood interactions. Interviews were conducted in Rohingya, Bengali or Burmese and translated/interpreted by two assistants, and in limited places lightly edited for clarity. Theoretical framework and study design adhered to the Consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative research (COREQ). See [Appendix 2](#) for complete 32-point checklist, study details and ethics guidelines.

Alternative explanations for findings were also reflected upon. First, I considered if interviewees simply told us what they thought we wanted to hear or the fieldwork sites were outliers. In response, a pilot study was conducted followed by a series of interviews in different settings to reduce the likelihood of inaccurate representation, working independently of government or local activist facilitators where possible, and taking multiple site visits to diverse areas with varied conflict dynamics. Further, as the topic was about the respondents' own business experiences, responses were likely both candid and knowledgeable.

Second, I considered that the conflict's expansion since economic opening may have augmented the impression that political decisions (and international actors) were more responsible for local problems than they truly were, or that regulatory change – itself notoriously glacial – was happening but simply too slowly to be noticed. Given the inherent challenges of disentangling perceptions from 'reality', this was a concern. In response, interviews incorporated participants who were in Rakhine as well as those who left over 2014–2016, triangulated by interviews in Yangon. Findings were consistent across these communities, although businesspersons in refugee camps had stronger opinions, perhaps owing to their ability to speak more candidly given their extraction from the direct conflict environment.

Third, I considered if foreign business and INGO impacts – positive and negative – were overstated by respondents, recognising that local political actors often use such entities as scapegoats to deflect blame. This was visible in some responses, particularly regarding human rights issues affecting the Rohingya. In response, interviews were structured to probe particular issues and policies to temper generalisations about 'foreign involvement' and instead explore more specific activities with personal impacts.

Results: business, development and peace in action

Interview data from Rakhine business actors on local interpretations of and influence upon business-peace efforts generated three main findings: new corruption dynamics; varied effects of 'development'; and local consequences of 'liberal economic peace' opening.

An everyday corruption

First, respondents agreed that international-led regulatory reform had little impact upon endemic corruption at the micro- or meso-levels, as elites and international businesses were the primary beneficiaries even for projects specifically designed to assist local communities. To date, many mechanisms exist for untangling the most egregious

barriers within the country's existing regulatory framework, often through importation of international norms. For example, Myanmar was admitted into Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative in 2014, as much to provide future guidance to the country's efforts to provide transparency as to recognise the limited progress made since 2011.

While a bumpy regulatory road is to be expected, in practice, Myanmar followed a path similar to that of post-Soviet states: elite leaders expropriated valuable assets as their own and were rewarded when the country opened to capitalist overtures. This rigged investment system benefited the 'Big Boys' of politics, military and industry, ensuring their power even after the transition to democracy. However, smaller foreign firms with local partners also got entangled. As the Myanmar head of a German pharmaceutical firm said:

We were banned by the Myanmar government, and allowed to operate again two years ago. We have not been approved for (selling our own products), so we have no official office or staff and all our work is through a local subcontractor. There is no ban on the products themselves, so we're just considered a B2B firm as far as the government is concerned. We could get our registration today but that would require paying a large bribe. If such expenditure is included into our cost of business, we would be priced out of the market.³⁹

In Rakhine, an 'everyday corruption' rooted in prejudice against minorities expanded in breadth and depth. While connected local strongmen received a trickle of the new investment, Rohingya businesspersons had major occupational challenges:

I'm not allowed to get money from a bank or the government, (and) we have to pay militaries and the police whenever they ask. We have a very frustrating life (to ensure) the survival of my family members. Influential groups in this society give us a tremendous amount of problems, like racial profiling [...] Monks delivered hate speech against Islam, ordering not to associate with Islam followers. It affects our survival, business policies, market stability, and ethnic polarisation. And it decreases our business return.⁴⁰

I owned a bazaar[...] that was burned down. It had 276 shops that I rented to earn money. All the businesspersons who were tenants were Muslims except one (ethnic Rakhine) jeweller. To set up such market one needs (government) permission and has to pay different government departments [...] including the tax department as well as military and other influential entities. Then the shops in the bazaar were attacked and burnt in front of us. It happened three months ago. They abused, shot people and slaughtered and burned everything. I left when I could not bear the abuse and torture anymore and came to Bangladesh. We needed to pay MMK 30,000 per head to cross the border and money was taken from everyone who crossed [...]

(In September), the military and government came to ask us to join them saying that if we join they won't abuse us anymore. We united with them through negotiation along with other local influential rich people. For seven-eight days after the negotiation things seemed normal. Negotiations included informing them about who filed cases against the government (for rape and torture) and who was involved in violence. (To survive), we had to bribe (ethnic Rakhines) as well as government – all sizes of business so none of us made profit. But they never helped except in providing permission in exchange for bribes.⁴¹

The head of a local business cooperative that included many Rohingya landowners echoed these perceptions:

Local people have been affected very deeply (from new business development projects). They lost their land without compensation, or got prices far below market value. First the

government came and occupied the land without disclosing that a multinational company was coming to develop it. According to the 2008 Constitution all land technically belongs to the state. So most high-ranking military officials transferred land titles for future project areas to their relatives and then sold to the multinationals for a sky-high price [...] they destroyed paddy fields, religious areas, social gathering places, and sacred sites. Then company people came and promised to provide jobs, better lifestyles, schools, hospitals, and roads but instead negotiated with the military under the table and gave us nothing [...] they did even not try to train (us). The ultimate loser is the local people.⁴²

This corruption was so all-encompassing that otherwise wealthy merchants from Rohingya communities were unable to do business, and migrated along with other refugees – not out of security fears per se, but the economic freeze upon their livelihoods:

I am part of a large family, we had farmland spread across four townships. We lost it all during a communal clash in 2012 (that created) a food shortage for Rohingya people. For survival my family left and I started working (on commission in a refugee camp) for an online lottery based in Bangkok called CHICE. I know people are just throwing their money away. It's wrong for society but I do it to feed my family. If the government can't even save the life of my Rohingya communities how can we expect to succeed in business?⁴³

In Rakhine, 'corruption' has manifested less through elite rent seeking of Rohingya finances, and more through the closure of Rohingya market access by businesses communities *that would still find it profitable to engage with them*. The decision to discriminate is made because Rakhines perceived greater benefits from national elites if they did so, including kickbacks and land grants, zero interest loans, expropriation of Rohingya assets and the offer of participation in joint ventures. This system mandates making the Rohingya business community a pariah not due to risk of financial loss or reputation from the majority community, but due precisely to the corrupt practices and deals amplified by economic opening.

The international engineerings of 'development'

As in many poor countries with a large international aid presence, 'development' is a contested and contentious topic in Myanmar. Since 2014, leading ethnic Rakhines have begun to reframe foreign-led development not as the encouragement and facilitation of societal growth that is augmented by economic opening but ethnic favouritism that is pressed by foreign agencies. The idea that businesses can bring peace ties closely with the notion of 'conflict-sensitive development' practices that INGOs have attempted to implement in order to enact positive change in challenging environments. In Myanmar, this has meant firms working in parallel with the government and military to allow for deniability of the problematic issues that formal associations would imply.⁴⁴ Post-opening, proponents for a 'light footprint' approach argued for prioritisation of local actors' needs and expertise while sidestepping complex government relationships to avoid 'international actors doing more harm than good' in peace or development,⁴⁵ although the role of business in exacerbating inequality (and the host of social ills that it generates) was rarely discussed, even by business scholars.⁴⁶

Peace and development actors have made inroads, typified by the UNGC's establishment of a local office in 2012 after its endorsement by local business leaders.

However, UNGC guidelines mean ‘little more than a signal to the international community that local entrepreneurs are looking to diversify their investment portfolio’, even if there is ‘significant potential for (the UNGC) shaping the direction of Myanmar’s business discourse’ in the future.⁴⁷ Respondents believed that international organisations are not helping the business community, and simply trying to force human rights issues in the name of development. As noted by the executive director of a Yangon-based firm:

*The business environment of Myanmar is just like a newborn baby. Many big businesses want to establish their business sectors as quickly as they can. And we like to invite international development programmes, (but) what we don’t accept is when they create problems in our community like paying interest beyond their objectives between Rakhine people and Bengali Muslims. The development agencies started treating people unequally, giving more privilege to Bengali Muslims. It started sowing the seeds of conflict in complicated ways. Any development programme should be free from politics, without bias – otherwise it will just create more problems than before.*⁴⁸

Likewise a Yangon business owner who saw bias in funding allocations:

*Using of funds from foreign countries for making peace in society must be very transparent, and accountable [...] Development must be designed by respecting the collective interests of society. Development projects that only benefits certain communities will increase the volume of conflict – nothing else.*⁴⁹

Economic opening allowed Rakhine nationalists to blame international actors for the violence and ethnic cleansing. As former INGO manager and ethnic Rakhine Tun Aung writes:

*INGOs have little care for other ethnic minorities of Rakhine State although there are many underprivileged people, poorer households and malnourished children in ethnic villages [...] The Bengali children (Rohingya) who benefitted from WFP and INGO nutrition programmes 18-20 years ago are the main rekindling force of the recent violent conflict and terrorist acts [...] Now it is time for all the patriotic people of Myanmar to be [...] vigilant what these INGOs and UNHCR have been doing in this part of Rakhine State to carry out their evil motives and how they are instigating the Bengali Muslim or the so called Rohingya against the Rakhine people of Myanmar.*⁵⁰

Such language was expropriated by armed groups like the Arakan Liberation Party, stating in a manifesto that ‘recognizing a hitherto non-existent racial group is a prejudiced act which foments worsening of a country’s internal affairs (by) big powers and big organizations including the UN (which) could result in endless negative consequences’.⁵¹ In response, most INGO offices in Rakhine were destroyed by arson in 2016. These feelings were echoed more tactfully by two Rakhine business leaders who traded with Rohingya counterparts but supported the cleansing:

*Human rights and political rights are different paradigms. The majority of the crisis of Rakhine state is due to illegal influx from Bangladesh. They need human rights, but demanding political rights too is not acceptable.*⁵²

*For human rights, responsibility does not lie only on the shoulders of government but also citizens. (But) Bengali Muslims is a government issue. Bengali Muslims are not supposed to demand more rights by using human rights issues as tools. Every country has their own laws and regulations and they should not be bypassed or jumped over.*⁵³

Two Rohingya business owners who fled the violence had a different perspective on rights:

I was an agricultural trader, but my business is gone now. My business was destroyed after a communal clash and the lifestyle of my family and society became challenged limitlessly – being a Muslim is a big problem. We were not allowed to live freely (so) we started thinking of the immediate risk to our lives. We started distrusting everyone, and decided that we had to move to a place of safety. I am very afraid to try to re-establish it because I would have to disclose my real identity.⁵⁴

I had property and I used to be a farmer before we fled. I had four buffaloes and (grew) potatoes, brinjal, chilies, bitter gourd and paddy and I sold them to the whole community. (But) then we started getting tortured. They (official forces) used to detain us for three–four days per month to work for free and used to beat us a lot. I remember being taken for forced slavery seven times [...] building police check posts, cleaning the yards/grounds, cutting trees. We tried to hide in forest to avoid being caught to work as a slave but they used to find and take us. Some managed to survive after working this hard and some died. From my village three–five people died in such work trips.⁵⁵

Spurning the international community, ethnic Rakhine businesspersons recognised the Rohingya human rights situation, but felt that human rights do not equal political rights. Rohingya respondents had a more holistic understanding of the situation, seeing themselves and their businesses caught up in a manufactured ethnic conflict for the sake of power. For ethnic Rakhines, ‘development’ was seen as a pathway of opportunity for profit, and was viewed as threatening if it meant that Rohingya communities might benefit as well. But the alliance between Rakhines and the government was short-lived. After the Rohingya were cleansed, Aung San Suu Kyi then also targeted Rakhines and imprisoned Rakhine political leaders in an effort to clear land for new economic development projects such as special Economic Zones and Industrial Zones that were designed to draw foreign investment.⁵⁶

Business, peace and illiberal opening

Most businesspersons in Rakhine felt that international business projects defined by firms as bringing ‘peace’ or ‘development’ to the region exacerbated ethnic tensions, but in a different way. These cleavages came from a liberal peace-building model of opening that has noble global aims but is largely unresponsive to local communities in its pursuit of national growth as measured in GDP. The largest such projects in Rakhine were launched by Indian and Chinese firms with government ties and pitched by politicians to local communities as an ideal way for Rakhine to reap the development benefits of opening. But in Rakhine, business leaders found business interests and roles in peace and development to be an odd fit, and were quickly disillusioned:

We welcomed multinational projects. We hoped for the best but in practice it was the opposite. After the projects came there was no increase in income, social status or living standards. There is no improvement in power supply or industries either [...] most projects were designed and connected with previous military government and cronies. (For example), no benefit is seen from Shwe gas fields project. The government confiscated properties from local farmers without paying proper compensation for gas pipelines from Rakhine to China. Many were kicked out from their villages by such projects (and) benefits of Shwe Gas go

directly to the Chinese government. To protect multinational development projects (from local sabotage) requires militaries and increases the volume of militarisation. It also creates a fertile ground for recruiting to ethnic armed groups.⁵⁷

One Rohingya NGO head saw no correlation between business and peace as applied in Myanmar:

Economic growth due to development works and peace processes with armed groups in Myanmar are different issues. These issues are separate and not related at all. Ethnic minorities are not getting the rights of their natural resources in their own home territory. They are not in the decision-making processes of the political arena. Ethnic Burmese are penetrating in every section of the state [...] to meet only Burmese interests. They (ignore) the rights of ethnic minorities residing in the frontier of Myanmar.⁵⁸

However, the concept of business engaging with local communities has gained traction, as one head of a national construction company operating in Rakhine illustrated:

My company is doing CSR works in ethnic areas. We donate water tanks to schools and hospitals. When there was a flood last year, the government donated rice that was not practical to cook due to a lack of electricity. So my firm donated prepared food, fast foods like noodles, and drinkable water to Burmese people in Rakhine. We select (CSR projects) by understanding the basic requirements of local people, which we know better because of our works there.⁵⁹

Illiberal opening facilitated by illiberal actors under a liberal peace-building umbrella hardened local business perceptions against the benefits of such models while simultaneously providing a ready-made avenue to deflect blame. Ethnic Rakhines were promised by international firms and their government that opening would improve their lives, and were also told by local politicians and media firebrands that any lack of improvement is because scarce resources are going to Rohingya communities. Illiberal regional businesses were the biggest beneficiaries of the tactics, using elite partnerships to secure key local resources and build mega-projects without consulting or incorporating local populations. Western firms engaging with social development in this environment found themselves in a paradox: support the wishes of the ethnic Rakhine and help only the majority (as national firms do) and worsen inequality, protect the Rohingya from ethnic cleansing and be branded as incendiary social engineers by the government and majority communities, or do nothing and betray core liberal business principles.

Discussion: theorising business and peace in an illiberal age

These findings open three new theoretical avenues on economic opening, peace and development in conflict contexts: in the role of local business in peace-building; in the role of illiberal companies in local peace; and in the role of international business in illiberal democracies.

(1) The role of local business in peace and peace-building

As economic opening benefits in Rakhine went almost exclusively to capital elites with little going back to ethnic Rakhines, the Rohingya community became a scapegoat for

unfulfilled promises. While ethnic Rakhine political leaders acted perhaps predictably to prioritise their own needs and opportunities, what role did the business community play in facilitating such action, what were the triggers or inflection points for support, and how were such calculations made? The above evidence suggests that financial incentives and rent-seeking encouraged businesspersons to support cleansing, but causal chains for such calculations and the degree of agency for local businesspersons are less clear. New studies of local business in conflict, focusing on Small and Medium Enterprises in particular, would improve our understandings of business drivers for sub-national conflict, explore local firms as new potential actors for peace-building and better define how local communities internalise macro changes to their environments beyond typical understandings of ‘victims’ and ‘winners’.

Local business actors were an undervalued entity in Rakhine, both in their peace potential to bridge communities through cross-group business engagements and in their entanglements within local conflict issues that naturally draw from their community roles. Aside from the obvious benefits of a more egalitarian split of economic growth, respected local business leaders from both sides could have been brought together to find ways to avoid the scapegoating and mistrust that led to ethnic cleansing. Instead, Rakhine business entities were generally ignored, despite evidence that they worked together across ethnicities even while the communities began to fracture. This proposition is predicated on a Myanmar government that wants peace in Rakhine, which is dubious.

The economic opening was a macro shock event for Myanmar businesses, even felt in peripheral areas like Rakhine. In such settings, promises often quickly overtake results, and those entities that knew such a shock was coming (like government elites and foreign firms) were much better placed to reap the rewards. Local firms internalised their role in different ways, but tended to blame external factors over internal graft, for reasons of political expediency or otherwise. While this setting facilitated an ‘everyday corruption’ that likely contributed to conflict, more in-depth exploration of the conditions for how and why opening can generate local conflict is needed. Also, while first wave refugees tend to be wealthier members of their home community as they have more resources for initial mobility,⁶⁰ the role of business leaders as a subset of those refugee communities is a promising avenue for new comparative peace-building study.

More holistic knowledge about how local firms relate to communities in internal conflict settings is also needed. While we know that local business associations and individuals have peace-building potential,⁶¹ we know less about the role of local businesses as conflict *instigators*, as they are generally presumed to play no such role – if they are discussed at all. Tendencies may parallel emerging research that local business owners can work to undermine values and assumptions of international partners, attack those who expose consequences of negative actions, and fracture local communities to enhance autonomy and their own political strength.⁶² The Rakhine example suggests that their role could be much more important (and detrimental) than previously understood, and future comparative study could help fill this gap.

(2) The role of illiberal business in local peace

Myanmar's opening portended a rapid growth of not only Western firms, but also Indian and Chinese companies, many as government–private sector joint ventures in a geostrategic ‘Great Game’-style rivalry.⁶³ Chinese approaches focus on economic integration and stressing expansive historical ties to remain politically and geo-strategically competitive, largely through large-scale infrastructure.⁶⁴ Still, Chinese companies, large and small, undertake significant social responsibility activities in this environment of ‘authoritarian capitalism’, albeit with a heavy emphasis of regulatory compliance over social rights.⁶⁵ Likewise, India has deepened relations with Myanmar, and its economic and geostrategic activities have grown significantly since 2011. As part of India's ‘Look East’ policy, Indian firms and India's Ministry of Foreign Affairs have begun to jointly invest in infrastructure in the name of ‘mutually beneficial development’.⁶⁶

This study showed the societal influence that firms can have when they pitch projects as development-positive, but future research can better unpack how, why and where firms with illiberal backgrounds contribute to peace or exacerbate conflict dynamics. Following, defining ‘stability’ through political and operational risk has been a core feature of the CSR-like components of such firms. Study of megaprojects like as the Shwe gas fields (China-led) and Kaladan multi-modal infrastructure project (India-led) is warranted, especially in how they generated regional instability for the very states that have partial ownership of the projects. Learning how foreign policy risk calculations are made by state-owned firms operating in regions that are sought-after financially but also conflict-generating to work within is of particular interest.

When considering the role of such firms in economic and social development, we clarify the impact of their operations in the Rakhine context, but do not know the impact of and motivations behind illiberal businesses, owing to their lack of engagement with human rights, socio-economic development, local actors or other such metrics. However, ‘illiberal’ in this sense need not be considered as solely negative. Illiberal firms generally agree with their liberal counterparts on the value of anti-corruption and regulatory clarity, and this de-prioritisation of humanitarian and civil liberties issues in business–society engagements also holds for small and medium enterprises in illiberal settings, not just large corporations.⁶⁷

However, these actors remain under-studied for many reasons, including their tendency to operate in hard-to-reach locations, general disinterest by such firms in engagement with researchers or academics, and lack of operational transparency. Further, any benefits gained by getting such firms to join the UNGC and other international peace-building initiatives appear to be limited and conditional.⁶⁸ Future qualitative studies could explore the value of sustainable maintenance of project activities and their comparative residual impact on local peace-building, in both business and development scholarship. Preliminary quantitative studies on impact in the CSR realm are an encouraging guide,⁶⁹ and cross-disciplinary research would be insightful, particularly on how illiberal firms engage with vulnerable populations, including those that their own projects displace.

(3) The role of international business in illiberal democracies

The broader implications of this study rest within discussions of global governance, particularly in how support of the business-peace agenda entails a shift in the balance between public and private authority, both by embedding corporations within public accountability structures and by legitimising and institutionalising businesses as peace actors as a form of ‘asymmetrical governance’. They also build upon business studies approaches, most notably examinations of the impact of business on peace and conflict (and vice versa) in complex conflict settings.⁷⁰ With the USA’s inward turn and assumed devolution of interest in supporting global human rights norms in practice and policy, the UN’s limited punitive mandate and the EU’s corresponding inward turn to stave off its own disintegration, the informal global framework for international peace-building efforts will likely diminish. Less powerful states and NGOs will likely have neither the capacity nor political will to stand up to foreign rights abuses or aggressive conflict actors, or as illiberal leaders often put it, challenge ‘non-interference in internal affairs’.

On the surface, this would seem to suit the Buddhist majority in Myanmar as well as those firms that would prefer to simply ‘do business’ without engaging in social issues. However, multi-lateral agency withdrawal also means removing the sovereign cover that peace-building organisations have long enjoyed in fragile and conflict-affected areas, perhaps ushering in a chilling effect when it comes to speaking out against rights abuses. Perhaps paradoxically, the international business community in Myanmar may face increased pressure to become development agents, especially as concerns action on anti-corruption business legislation and civil liberties. However, they are left to set the agenda for ‘sustainable development’ on their own terms, encouraging a pro-corporate hegemonic discourse that further distances firms from local businesses and communities.⁷¹ As international firms debate incorporating local community inputs in fragile operational areas, less is known about how firms navigate scenarios where those very ‘locals’ are the agents of violence. More robust qualitative and quantitative studies of business in regions of institutional peace-building withdrawal would further refine these preliminary findings.

Returning to the Telenor Myanmar example, it is clear that instead of claiming that operational activities are good deeds that breed ‘nation-building’, it is more constructive to speak out when a local partner or host government is violating human rights or other democratic norms.⁷² For firms, this means developing a more substantial knowledge base about their local political and sociological surroundings and recalibrating internal political risk calculations to facilitate the assertion of responsibility over the firm’s contributions to such.⁷³ Pleading ignorance publicly while lamenting the ‘situation’ privately is both detrimental to peace-building and can encourage scapegoating and targeting of firms by local communities. This opens a host of new research questions including how firms build and maintain relationships with local communities, and how risk and peace are operationalised through them when regionalised geostrategic interests are also at play, representing a fundamental re-thinking of the role of the corporation in the public/private divide of contemporary global governance.⁷⁴

Of course, global interconnectedness cycles are cyclical and generational, so it is unlikely that the ‘end of globalism’ or liberal democracy are at hand, or that human

rights and development actions by business to build peace are irrelevant. But beyond promoting ‘trickle-down’ societal benefits, Western businesses had little intention to support inclusive societal change within Myanmar. This likely holds for business engagements with illiberal national governments, but we know little about how responsive illiberal regimes are to business pressure for peace issues, where the leverage pins lie, or what the consequences of engagement are – mostly because firms are often silent until the risk of speaking out approaches nil. In Myanmar, this has manifested in a near total silence by foreign firms during the cleansing campaign, with many speaking out only after the UNHRC’s June 2018 assessment of the now-completed military operation as ethnic cleansing.⁷⁵ Here firms may see a double-edged sword when supporting human rights given their own lack of self-reflection about how their support of opening has rewarded simplistic peace initiatives that exacerbated tensions in local communities with ethnic cleavages. While some ‘heroic corporate leaders’ act nobly in the face of atrocity,⁷⁶ of deeper forward interest are firms with CEOs who have publicly committed to liberal democracy tenets as more illiberal trajectories proliferate. New within-firm research on business strategy in conflict, crisis and transition would shed light here.

Last, testing all of the above outside Myanmar will hold deep comparative value in helping to build business-peace theory. Developing states emerging from crisis and conflict or opening economically are natural avenues, but it may also be worth exploring these issues in democracies that have trended illiberal, such as Turkey, to see what lessons and opportunities can be drawn by scholars for business strategy and action when engaging with communities that have distinct relationships with liberalism. Studies of this type can also help bridge the gap between business-peace research in conflict zones and those of ‘gentle commerce’⁷⁷ that encouraged looking at the peace actions of firms outside conflict and crisis regions.

Notes

- 1 MDI, *Foreign Direct Investment*.
- 2 World Bank, *Doing Business*.
- 3 Saw, *Tackling Myanmar’s Corruption Challenge*.
- 4 Kinley, *Development*.
- 5 UNHRC, *Report of the Independent International*.
- 6 Kyed and Gravers, ‘Integration and Power-sharing’.
- 7 Steinberg, *Myanmar*.
- 8 Amnesty, *Myanmar*.
- 9 Lee, ‘Dark Side of Liberalization’.
- 10 Caster, ‘The Truth about Myanmar’.
- 11 See Oetzel and Miklian, ‘Multinational Enterprises’; Kolk and Lenfant, ‘Hybrid Business Models’; Rahdari et al., ‘Achieving Sustainability’; Miklian, ‘Mapping Business-Peace’.
- 12 Miklian and Schouten, ‘Fluid Markets’; Miklian, ‘The Role of Business in Sustainable Development’.
- 13 Furberg, ‘Keynote Presentation’.
- 14 Gilad et al., ‘Large-Scale Social Protest’.
- 15 Findlay et al., *Myanmar*.
- 16 Hendrix and Noland, *Myanmar*.

- 17 Rampton and Nadarajah, 'A Long View'.
- 18 Kahler, *Rise of Emerging Asia*.
- 19 Carbonnier, 'Competing Agendas'.
- 20 Tadjbakhsh, 'Conflicted Outcomes and Values'.
- 21 Bussmann et al., 'Foreign Economic Liberalization'.
- 22 Richmond and Mac Ginty, 'Where Now'.
- 23 See e.g. Sorens and Ruger, 'Globalisation and Interstate Conflict'.
- 24 Grundy-Warr and Dean, 'Not Peace'.
- 25 Kyed and Gravers, 'Integration and Power-Sharing'.
- 26 South and Joll, 'From Rebels to Rulers'.
- 27 Kramer, *Ending 50 Years*.
- 28 Howarth, 'Connecting the Dots'.
- 29 Pugh, 'Corporate Peace'.
- 30 Press-Barnathan, 'Neglected Dimension'.
- 31 Bunte, 'Myanmar's Protracted Transition'.
- 32 Jones, 'Political Economy'.
- 33 Kudo, *Myanmar's Economic Relations*.
- 34 Min and Kudo, 'Business Conglomerates'.
- 35 Donini, 'Local Perceptions'. The following three paragraphs are adapted from Miklian and Birkvad, 'Religion, Poverty and Conflict'; and Miklian and Bickel, 'Business, Development Aid and Peace'.
- 36 Denzin and Lincoln, *Strategies*; Liamputtong, *Researching the Vulnerable*.
- 37 Bass and Milosevic, 'The Ethnographic Method'.
- 38 Richie and Lewis, *Qualitative Research*.
- 39 Author interview, Yangon, August 2016.
- 40 Author interview, Rakhine, June 2016.
- 41 Author interview, Bangladesh, February 2017.
- 42 Author interview, Rakhine, June 2016.
- 43 Author interview, India, February 2017.
- 44 Ware, *Conflict-Sensitive Development*.
- 45 Bachtold et al., *Working in and on Myanmar*, 5.
- 46 Marens, 'Laying the Foundation'.
- 47 Christe and Hanlon, 'Myanmar's China Threat', 9, 15.
- 48 Author interview, Yangon, July 2017.
- 49 Author interview, Yangon, July 2016.
- 50 Aung, 'UNHCR'.
- 51 Arakan Liberation Party, *Objecting to Attempts*.
- 52 Author interview, Rakhine, June 2016.
- 53 Ibid.
- 54 Author interview, India, February 2017.
- 55 Author interview, Bangladesh, February 2017.
- 56 Barkemeyer and Miklian, 'Responsible Business'; Crisis Group, 'A New Dimension of Violence'.
- 57 Author interview, Rakhine, June 2016.
- 58 Ibid.
- 59 Author interview, Yangon, July 2016.
- 60 Horst, 'Depoliticisation of Diasporas'.
- 61 International Alert, *Local Business, Local Peace*.
- 62 Soundarajan et al., 'Small Business'.
- 63 Engh, 'India's Myanmar Policy'.
- 64 Kivimaki, 'Politics of Economic Relations'.
- 65 Hofman et al., 'CSR under Authoritarian Capitalism'.
- 66 Aiyar and Ravichandran, *India's Policy Towards Myanmar*.
- 67 Jamali et al., 'CSR'.

- 68 Schembera, 'Implementing CSR'.
 69 Graafland and Smid, 'Decoupling among CSR Policies'.
 70 E.g. Forrer and Katsos, 'Business and Peace'; Kolk and Lenfant, 'Hybrid Business Models'.
 71 Tregidga et al., 'Ramping up Resistance'; Miklian et al., *Business and Peacebuilding*.
 72 Miklian et al., 'Business and Peace: Seven Ways'.
 73 Ganson et al., *Capacities and Limitations*; Katsos and Miklian, 'Overcoming Tech Exceptionalism'.
 74 Schouten and Miklian, 'Business-Peace Nexus'.
 75 UNHRC, *Report of the Independent International*.
 76 Miklian and Rettberg, 'Business Strategies'.
 77 Fort, 'Gentle Commerce'.

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Appendix 1.

Questionnaire A

- (1) Where are you from (where in Myanmar/foreign), and how long has your company been here?
- (2) Does your firm partner with the government in projects? How so? What does the partner do to help with operations? Any negative aspects?
- (3) Are there any particular challenges for your sector related to the government?
- (4) What regulation(s) would best help improve Myanmar's business environment?
- (5) What are the biggest challenges to doing business in Myanmar?
- (6) What are the biggest advantages to doing business in Myanmar as opposed to in other countries?
- (7) Is having the political backing of your home government important to success here? Why?
- (8) Do state-owned firms (Western, Chinese, Indian) have advantages here over their private counterparts? If so, what are they?
- (9) Has there been any interruption in your firm's Myanmar presence in the previous two decades? If so, what made you leave and why have you come back? Would you consider leaving again?
- (10) Are good relations with the government necessary to succeed? Why?
- (11) Many scholars say that economic opening and development can help lead to peace. Can businesses help to bring peace to Myanmar? Why/How?
- (12) Myanmar is currently developing several major infrastructure projects. What are your impressions of such projects (if any)?
- (13) What are your impressions of the Shwe and Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport projects?
- (14) Do you anticipate any major changes to the business environment with the new government?
- (15) Does your firm have many community relations/CSR projects in-country? Are they valuable/effective for your firm? Why/not?
- (16) What is your firm's relationship to any international organisations (UN, etc.) operating in the country?
- (17) What changes do you see in Myanmar's business environment over the next 5 years?
- (18) Who is bigger competition for your firm – Western or Asian firms? Why?
- (19) Does your firm have interest in engaging in Myanmar's peace process? How so or why not?
- (20) Are you aware of the UN SDGs? Does your firm participate human rights initiatives?

Questionnaire B

- (1) Did you own any business or property/land in Myanmar before you left? (*Author note – interview only proceeded if respondent answered 'yes' to this question re: business ownership.*)
- (2) What type of business was it (farming, shop, trade, etc.), and how long were you in business for?
- (3) What were the biggest challenges to doing business in Rakhine before you left?
- (4) Are good relations with the government necessary to succeed in business? Why?
- (5) Do you know what happened to your business (was it taken over by a family member/military/destroyed/etc)?
- (6) When did you leave Myanmar? Did family members go with you?
- (7) Before you left, did you feel that there was any way to seek protection and help from the community or authorities?
- (8) Did the authorities make it difficult to run a business? How so?
- (9) Was it hard to do business with people not in your community (Buddhists), or was there trade across communities?

- (10) Many scholars from Europe and the USA say that economic opening and development can help lead to peace. Can businesses help to bring peace to Myanmar? Why/How?
- (11) Myanmar is currently developing several major infrastructure projects. What are your impressions of the Shwe gas fields (if any)?
- (12) What is your impression of the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport projects (if any)?
- (13) Did any big businesses in Rakhine try to help the community through community relations/ Corporate Social Responsibility projects that you knew of? Did they help? Why/not?
- (14) Did you ever come in contact with any international organisations and NGOs (UN, human rights groups, WFP, etc.) before leaving? Were they helpful?
- (15) Did you ever come in contact with any local NGOs before leaving? Were they helpful?

Appendix 2. COREQ Checklist and Assessment

No	Item	Guide questions/description
Domain 1: Research team and reflexivity		
Personal Characteristics		
(1).	Interviewer/facilitator	Author and two Research Assistants (RAs), accompanied by local guides as facilitators where needed, who provided assistance and access as trusted local members of the communities.
(2).	Credentials	Author: PhD, Development Studies.
(3).	Occupation	Author: Senior Research Fellow
(4).	Gender	Author: Male. RA1: Male. RA2: Male.
(5).	Experience and training	Author has 10 years of extensive field experience in conflict and crisis regions, specifically of qualitative interviews in vulnerable communities. RA1 has 10 years of local expertise with communities affected by conflict in Myanmar and India. RA2 10 years of local expertise with communities affected by conflict in Bangladesh.
Relationship with participants		
(6).	Relationship established	No relationship with communities prior to study commencement.
(7).	Participant knowledge of the interviewer	Each interviewee was given a brief introduction of the affiliation of the interviewers, description of the project and its aims, assurances that interview data and responses would be kept anonymous and opportunity to withdraw at any time. Consent was verbal, per a low literacy rate to ensure evenness across respondents.
(8).	Interviewer characteristics	See #7 and 'alternative explanations' in Methodology section.
Domain 2: study design		
Theoretical framework		
(9).	Methodological orientation and Theory	Qualitative methodology was employed, specifically a perspectives method pinned to grounded theory/ethnography and uses content/contextual analysis. See 'Methodology' for more.
Participant selection		

(Continued)

(Continued).

No	Item	Guide questions/description
(10).	Sampling	Rakhine state was selected due to the nature of business and economic development projects and the presence of ethnic conflict. Rohingya refugee communities were selected on the basis of access. Participants were business owners or leaders, selected by snowball technique, facilitated by local guides.
(11).	Method of approach	Sixty-eight Face-to-face interviews, seven phone interviews. Study conforms to the Norwegian National Committees for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and Humanities (NESH) study design, and approval process was conducted accordingly.
(12).	Sample size	Seventy-five participants in four locations over four field visits including pilot.
(13).	Non-participation	Nine refusals due to security reasons or disinterest in discussion.
Setting		
(14).	Setting of data collection	Data were collected in several cities and towns of Rakhine state, Myanmar and at two refugee camps: one in Tripura, India and one near Cox's Bazaar, Bangladesh. Limited interviews conducted in Yangon. Interviews were in homes/shelters, at businesses, and other places where applicable and available.
(15).	Presence of non-participants	Local guides were occasionally present, and author/RAs often attempted to interview without their presence to encourage candid replies. Findings reflected minimal difference between interviews in which said non-participants were present and those in which they were not present.
(16).	Description of sample	Seventy-five total interviews, including 65 business owners of Rakhine state, 40 of which fled to India or Bangladesh as political refugees. Ten interviews of Yangon business leaders and executives. Sample is 95 per cent male owing to similar gender dynamics of local business ownership in Myanmar. Most respondents were between 35 and 60 years of age.
Data collection		
(17).	Interview guide	Questionnaire provided by authors upon request. One pilot study done to refine questions. Otherwise no guides or prompting given, as no definitive answers were needed due to methodology. See Appendix 1 for questionnaires.
(18).	Repeat interviews	No repeat interviews were conducted.
(19).	Audio/visual recording	No A/V recording was done, as is typical for sensitive issues like conflict and violence research of vulnerable communities.
(20).	Field notes	Field notes made during each interview and written up fully at the end of each day.
(21).	Duration	Each interview was typically one hour in length.

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(Continued).

No	Item	Guide questions/description
(22).	Data saturation	Partial saturation. Many interviews began to overlap in each of the interview sites, but given the personal nature of conflict, saturation points can be difficult to definitively measure.
(23).	Transcripts returned	Transcripts were not returned to participants for correction, due both to time and literacy issues. During interviews, responses of particular import were often asked twice to confirm responses.
Domain 3:analysis and findings		
Data analysis		
(24).	Number of data coders	Author processed the data.
(25).	Description: coding tree	N/A per method.
(26).	Derivation of themes	Themes were collated in advance from existing business-peace literature, then derived from data for presentation and discussion.
(27).	Software	N/A
(28).	Participant checking	Several Myanmar-based participants gave findings feedback.
Reporting		
(29).	Quotations presented	Participant quotes were shown to illustrate themes and findings, and each quotation was presented after being made anonymous.
(30).	Data and findings consistent	There was a strong correlation between the data and findings, and potential alternative explanations for such were studied.
(31).	Clarity of major themes	Major themes developed through interviews, and are discussed more extensively in Sections 4 and 5 of the paper.
(32).	Clarity of minor themes	Minor themes also arose, and are discussed more extensively in Sections 4 and 5 of the paper, but these need more study.