

Mental Health, Gender and Conflict in Chin State

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Abstract

This paper examines how armed conflict in Chin State intersects with entrenched gender norms to shape psychosocial wellbeing and exposure to violence. Drawing on qualitative data from focus group discussions and key informant interviews across multiple townships, the study analyses how moral authority, religious institutions, and social expectations influence the experience and expression of distress. The findings highlight how rigid gender roles limit women's access to leadership, economic independence, and safe reporting mechanisms, while intimate partner violence and other forms of gender-based harm often remain unspoken. LGBTQIA+ individuals face layered stigma and exclusion. The paper argues that protection strategies must address both institutional collapse and embedded social hierarchies, and that community-led, gender-sensitive approaches are essential to meaningful mental health and humanitarian responses.