



5 March 2020

Media Advisory: Launch of a Report on Karen Women Village Chiefs on International Women's Day

A new publication, *'Kill Me Instead of Them': A Report on the Resilience of Karen Women Village Chiefs*, by the Karen Women's Organization (KWO) brings attention to the serious risks' women village chiefs in Karen State face, and the coping mechanisms they have adopted to mitigate conflict and ease tensions. Though men have traditionally held the position of a village chief, due to the high risk of being persecuted by the Burma Army, many fled for their lives. Seeing a need for leadership and an opportunity to bring peace, more women started to take on the position. The report, which will be launched on International Women's Day on 8 March, brings much needed visibility to the experiences of women village chiefs and in particular, the strategies they used, including quick thinking and negotiation to bring safety to their villages.

Despite ceasefire agreements between Karen armed groups and the Burma Army, fighting in civilian areas has continued to threaten the safety of local people. As conflict escalates, the stories of the threat's women faced and how they survived are increasingly more relevant. Further, this report is a testament to their narratives as protectors of their people against extraordinary odds.

When: 8 March 2020, 9 AM - 12 PM

Where: That Bay Hta at KECD Meeting Hall

Speakers:

KWO

AJAR

Former Woman Village Chief

For more information, please contact:

Naw Tha Lay Paw, KWO Office Manager

Ph:+66 929323343

Naw Abenezier, KWO Office Staff

Ph:+66 85687542

Email: kwocentral@gmail.com

kwomaesot@gmail.com

--

***The Karen Women's Organization (KWO)** was formed in 1949 and re-organised in 1985. Currently KWO has a membership of more than 60,000 women living in Karen State, Burma and in refugee camps along the Thai-Burma border. KWO is a leading indigenous women's organization working in protection and our programs directly serve women, girls, children, and the most vulnerable people in our community. We promote women's leadership, gender sensitivity and community ownership in all aspects of our work. KWO is active in four main sectors: Organising and Information Sharing Program, Education Program, Health Program and Social Welfare Program.*