

# Navigating Think Tank

Min Zar Ni, Myanmar

# Background & Evolution as a Think Tanker

- Engaged in Private (profit) Sector While Studying Tech (computer) Field
  - Initial career path aimed at tech specialization.
- Shift to Policy-Oriented Work
  - Belief in public policy as a tool for broader societal change effectively → pursued graduate study.
- Early Policy Experience
  - Research Assistant at Chiang Mai University, focusing on Myanmar-related issues.
- Participated in Newly Establishing a Think Tank in Myanmar
  - Returned to Myanmar and engaged in research works to support reform efforts.
- Growth & Institutional Development
  - Expanded from 5 members to 50+ within 5 years, becoming a leading economic think tank.

# Why We Grow & Why We Struggle to Sustain

## Why We Grew

- Team effort & shared vision: support Myanmar's reform process for change
- Collective knowledge & expertise
  - Diverse expertise (internal and external) enabled us to meet urgent policy demands for reform.
- Participate in policy delivery process (*pros and cons*)
- Local, regional and international partnership

# Why We Grow & Why We Struggle to Sustain

## Why We Struggled to Sustain

- Political landscape : military coup
- Balancing external & internal strength
  - More on gaining political capital and policy influence.
  - Less investment in strengthening internal capacity and team building.
- Overreliance on short-term, project-based funding.
- Talent retention challenges
  - Competitive environment (*especially with international/multilateral organization*)
- Limited engagement in regional and global issues