



FAMILY-RELATED RESILIENCE STUDY IN FRAGILE SETTING, KAYAH STATE, MYANMAR

EVIDENCE BRIEF | APRIL 2026

TRIPLE-T – RESILIENCE CURRICULUM



To maintain well-being, improve healthy coping skills, strengthen harmonized couples, and family cohesion among conflict-affected population who are challenging to manage their well-being and maintain free from violence.

Summary of Key Findings:

Significant improvements in positive coping among caregivers, with increased ability to regulate emotions, manage stress, and apply practical techniques such as breathing, grounding, and reflective practices.

Marked enhancement in couple communication, characterized by more open, respectful, and constructive dialogue, leading to reduced conflict and strengthened mutual understanding.

Transformational shifts in attitudes toward children's rights, with caregivers demonstrating increased respect for children's perspectives and reduced use of controlling approach.

Improved child well-being and protection outcomes, including reduced fear, increased emotional safety, more nurturing and supportive home environments.

I. Background

In conflict-affected setting, families endured profound disruptions including airstrike, safety,

displacement, economic hardship and shortages of essential resources such as food, medicine and shelter. ¹ These challenges threatened individual wellbeing, family harmony and social cohesion. In this context, resilience refers to the ability of individual and family to adapt adversity through enhancing coping skill, communication ability and collective capacity. ² Existing studies consistently showed the importance of resilience-building initiatives that focus on how to deal individual psychosocial needs and family relationship challenges. Strong families build stable individuals and stable individuals strengthen families.³

Similarly, in the conflict-affected context of Demoso Township, Kayah (Karenni) State, Myanmar near active conflict areas, Moby, Pekon Township, ongoing instability has led to increased displacement according to frontline members' observation and report. In August 2025, intensified conflict and military movement forced many civilians fled to Demoso with urgent protection and food needs. Frontline responders reported that frequently displaced civilians face

¹ <https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/myanmar-humanitarian-needs-and-response-plan-2026-enemy>

² World Bank, *Forced Displacement and Social Cohesion: A Conceptual Framework*. . 2023.

³ Benzies, K. and R. Mychasiuk, *Fostering family resiliency: A review of the key protective factors*. Child & Family Social Work, 2009. 14(1): p. 103-114.

limited livelihood opportunities, reduced access to protection services, and inadequate coping mechanisms.

These factors have increased stress among caregivers, weakened family relationship, and contributed to negative coping mechanisms among youth including excessive gaming, substance use, and early marriage. They have also led to emotional distress among children due to disrupted access to education, particularly severe impacts on the most vulnerable groups. Strengthening family resilience was therefore essential to mitigate the psychosocial impacts of displacement and sustain recovery in conflict-affected setting.

II. About Family-Related Resilience Curriculum

Family-related resilience curriculum was designed by integrating mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS layer 2), protection, inclusion, and gender-transformative approaches to address the diverse and complex psychosocial needs of conflict-affected families through inclusive and resilience-focused strategies. The intervention emphasized strengthening internal family support system by improving couple relationships, encouraging shared responsibilities, and fostering collective decision-making. The program aimed to strengthen emotional well-being, promote healthy

coping strategies, and improve family cohesion among families facing significant stress and instability. It worked with parents, couples, and caregivers, recognizing the importance of engaging both women and men in addressing harmful social and gender norms that contribute to domestic violence. Through structured multiple sessions, it encouraged participants to express their feelings, reflect on their experiences, and practice positive coping while equipping couples with skills for open communication, peaceful conflict resolution, and sharing positive practices within their communities.

The intervention was semi-structured and delivered over 4 to 8 weeks through community-based sessions that combine key message awareness, peer discussion, role play, fun games, and reflection. Prior to implementation, coordination meeting with camp committees and community volunteers were conducted to ensure effective engagement and frontline members including facilitators, co-facilitators, and volunteers was trained to support activity delivery. A total of 507 new participants were selected based on criteria such as age, availability, level of need and interest, forming nine groups across nine displacement sites from September 2025 to March 2026. The program included five core sessions on caregivers' stress management, supportive communication, couples' fun games,

caring children with warmth, and support for family members with limited opportunities. Using participatory approach, the sessions create safe spaces for shared learning, ultimately aiming to strengthen family support system, enhance positive coping capacity and promote resilience in crisis-affected setting.

III. Study Methods

The qualitative component of the study was designed to explore potential pathways of change and was conducted through focus group discussions with family members and camp committee representatives at different stages of the intervention (before, during, and after). Each implementation cycle lasted approximately two months. In addition, facilitators and co-facilitators contributed reflection notes and observation insights throughout the process to capture changes in participant engagement, behavior, and group dynamics. Multiple data sources were applied to strengthen analysis including participant satisfaction survey at the end of the sessions, in-session reflections, success stories collected during home visiting, and pre-and-post test were collected to assess changes in knowledge, attitudes, and coping practices over the course of the intervention.

IV. Limitation

This study has some limitations. Firstly, it was conducted with multiple sessions-joined participants in nine specific displacement sites, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other contexts or populations. Secondly, the study relied on focus-group discussion and self-reported data, which may be influenced by social desirability bias, particularly given the sensitive nature of family relationship and coping behavior. Thirdly, the relatively short duration of the intervention and follow-up may not fully capture long-term changes in family resilience and well-being.

V. Findings

Areas of Positive Practices in the Family's Resilience:

Using Positive Coping Strategies: A comparison of pre-and-post test results showed a substantial improvement in the application of positive coping strategies, with scores increasing from 35% to 82% (47% increase). Couples reported adopting practical techniques such as anger management during argument, including taking a pause, stepping away temporarily, and focusing on breathing exercises. These strategies were particularly evident among couples who previously experienced frequent arguments and the changes were sustained for up to six months

during intervention and follow-up period.



Photo of Group Breathing Exercise

During home visiting, a husband of one family shared his reflection,

“I started using positive coping strategies instead of negative ones, and I felt more peaceful. Understanding other family members’ stress helped me become more patient and supportive. I believed I could manage my stress and also shared these techniques with others in my family and community.”

(U Nu, 45 years old)

Another participant highlighted that she was a female-headed household woman, recently fled from another place, initially experienced isolation and anxiety about the future due to lack of support and livelihood. After the intervention, participants demonstrated improved stress management and present-focused thinking. She reflected,

“Now I can recognize my stress and control myself better... the breathing exercises help me feel more relaxed and focus on the present.”

(Daw Toe, 58 years old)

Overall, the findings highlight that participants increasingly applied positive coping strategies in their daily lives. They demonstrated improved emotional regulation through techniques such as breathing, grounding, and open communication, with facilitator observations added greater stability, social engagement, and practical use of these skills. These results suggest that the intervention effectively strengthened the application of positive coping strategies in crisis-affected settings.

Using more open, and constructive communication ways between couples: Participants demonstrated notable improvement in communication within their relationships and shared responsibility, including active listening, the use of appropriate tone, words, and gestures, and more constructive ways of expressing emotions. Pre- and post-test results showed clear progress, with average scores increasing from 36% to 82% (a 46% increase). Before the sessions, participants reported limited communication skills, weak listening, frequent argument, and low trust. Following the intervention, couples showed improved understanding, increased quality time, and stronger mutual support, contributing to more peaceful conflict resolution and harmonious relationships. Qualitative

findings further illustrated these changes.

Participants described shifts toward openness and reconnection, with one sharing:

“We fought yesterday and did not talk, but now we played games and talked again. This is really fun.”

(Daw Su, 38 years old)



Photo of Couple’s Fun Game

Another participant reflected:

“We did not speak due to misunderstanding, which made me angry and caused stress. Now I understand open communication and try to understand each other.”

(Daw Myar, 42 years old)

Another participant reflected his insights and practices of shared responsibilities:

“I took care of my baby while my wife cooked. We walked around the school and watched other children playing games and laughed together. Sometimes, I felt anxious about our future, so I walked into the forest to find

something to cook. At least, I carried dry bamboo for firewood.”

(U Nu, 45 years old)

Improvements in emotional control and patience were also noted:

“I was impatient before, but after attending the sessions, I learned to control my emotions and be more patient when talking. This helped me understand my husband better.”

(Daw Moe, 40 years old)

One facilitator reflection supported these findings, highlighting both participant and personal transformation:

“This activity reflected my own relationship. My husband and I argued frequently, and I did not listen well. I was stressed and used him as my outlet. After facilitating and attending the training, I also practiced these skills and improved our relationship and understanding.”

(Daw Ei, 31 years old)

Another facilitator also observed broader social impact during sessions:

“Couples’ games were really fun. When we conducted them, school was closed for a moment, children and teachers were watching, and children felt happy seeing their parents happy.”

(Daw Bee, 29 years old)

These findings suggest that the intervention effectively strengthened open communication, emotional

regulation, and mutual understanding between couples, contributing to more harmonious and supportive couple relationships in crisis-affected settings.

Changing Attitude and Respect to Children’ Rights: The participant reported a significant shift in mindset after attending multiple sessions, particularly in respecting her child’s rights and perspectives. Previously, she had arranged her son’s marriage without considering his views, but through the sessions, she began to understand that different perspectives exist and should be respected. As she reflected,

“Instead of thinking ‘I am right,’ I started to feel that I could also be wrong from his perspective.”

(Daw Lo, 50 years old)

This change led to reduced pressure on her son and greater acceptance, resulting in fewer family conflict and warmer communication. She also developed healthier ways to manage stress and began sharing her learning with others in the community, demonstrating how increased understanding and reflection can transform family relationships even in challenging displacement settings.



Photo of sharing youth’s perspectives on stress management

Improving Children’s Well-Being: Findings showed that these multiple sessions contributed to improved well-being and protection of children by strengthening family relationships and caregiving practices. As caregivers developed better emotional regulation, communication, and coping skills, the home environment became calmer and more supportive. Participants reported reduced conflict, increased patience, and more positive interactions with their children, creating a safer and more nurturing space for children to grow and develop. These changes had a direct impact on children, who were observed to be less fearful, more relaxed, and more engaged in daily life. As one participant shared:

“Before, my children were scared when we argued, and I often showed my stress to them. Now I try to stay calm, talk gently, and spend time with them. They look happier and not afraid like before.”

(U Pi, 39 Years Old)



Photo of interacting practice between caregivers and children

Overall, the findings suggest that strengthening family resilience plays a critical role in improving children’s emotional well-being and creating a more protective and supportive environment, even in challenging displacement settings.

VI. Lesson Learnt

Recurring mentoring and coaching focused on critical self-reflection, adaptive skill building, consistent key message, shared facilitators’ experiences, and participants’ feedback reflection that led to personal and professional development for the facilitators.

Package Components of the intervention allowed for consistency across groups in messaging and context which can be compromised in facilitated group work. The sessions

have been flexible and adaptive based on group participants’ needs and interests.

Less men participation reflected contextual realities in displacement settings, with a higher proportion of women, resulting in a women-to-men ratio of approximately 1.7:1 due to men’s limited availability e.g., livelihood opportunities, migration or security-related roles). Women were stronger presence and engagement in family-related resilience activity sessions.

Time constraint was recorded due to other basic need priorities; all participants could not join all multiple sessions.

Lower participation among persons with disabilities, elderly individuals and couples was observed that the need for more tailored and inclusive engagement strategies such as age and need-based flexible session design, targeted outreach and appropriate support mechanisms to ensure meaningful participation of all groups.

VII. Recommendation and Conclusion

The findings highlight the importance of tailored, family-based interventions to address the diverse needs of conflict-affected populations. It is recommended to develop differentiated program packages, including couple-focused interventions to reduce domestic

violence and strengthen healthy relationships, positive parenting programs targeted at caregivers to improve child protection and respect for children’s rights, and dedicated approaches to engage youth such as life skills curricula for girls and boys. In addition, targeted strategies are needed to ensure meaningful inclusion of elderly people and persons with disabilities, through

adapted session designs, accessible materials, and supportive participation mechanisms.

Overall, integrated and inclusive resilience-building approaches that address family dynamics across all age groups and abilities are essential to promote well-being, strengthen protection, and support sustainable recovery in crisis-affected settings.

