Gender, identity and harassment
Myanmar

Helani Galpaya
Maputo, Sep 2018

This work was carried out with the aid of a grant from the International Development Research Centre, Canada and the Department for International Development UK.
Different negative experiences and motivations for harassment

- Both men and women get accounts hacked
- Men’s account hacking leads to ransom demands
- Women’s account hacking leads to photos being taken, altered and reposted to cause shame
- Women shamed for things only women can be “shamed” for
  - For being unable to have a child: privacy violated by the gynecologist

]
Sometimes differentiated coping mechanisms between men and women

• Self censorship as solution to avoid harassment
  – Most frequently women avoid posting photos of themselves online

• Women signaling “unavailability”
  – By posting photos of husband, child as profile photo
  – Perceived to avoid random men approaching

• Women going online through husband/male friend’s account to avoid harassment
  – Financial inclusion; eGov;

• Women not listing their gender, where possible
  – E.g. Transgendered women on digital work platforms
Fake identities (and accounts) as a solution to avoiding harassment

• Women and men have multiple accounts
  – But most women have a one fake male identity
  – [men mostly have other male accounts/identities]