

# Baseline Report

Enhanced Livelihoods for Displaced People  
February 2017



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## IMPRINT

### COVENANT CONSULT CO. LTD.

No. 27 Pinlon 1st Street Shwe Pinlon Housing, 27 Ward North Dagon Tsp. Yangon

Registration No.: 3781/2011-2012

Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development

### Principle Contact:

Tim Paul Schroeder

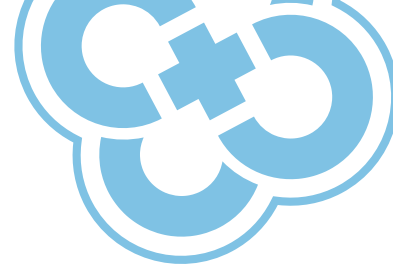
Tim.schroeder@covenant-consult.com

### Pictures:

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# List of Acronyms and Abbreviations



<b>CSO</b>	Central Statistic Organization	<b>KNU</b>	Karen National Union
<b>EAO</b>	Ethnic Armed Organization	<b>KVTC</b>	Karen Vocational Training Center
<b>ELDP</b>	Enhanced Livelihood for Displaced People- Project	<b>LIFT</b>	Livelihood and Food Security Trust Fund.
<b>GDP</b>	Gross-domestic product	<b>SEZ</b>	Special Economic Zone
<b>HHs</b>	Households	<b>TKPSI</b>	Tanintharyi Karen Peace Support Initiative
<b>IDP</b>	Internal Displaced Person	<b>VTC</b>	Vocational Training Center
<b>ILO</b>	International Labour Organization	<b>VT</b>	Vocational Training
<b>KDN</b>	Karen Development Network		
<b>KII</b>	Key Informant Interviews		

## Methodology

This Baseline Report forms an initial stage to impact measurement, which is being used for the Enhanced Livelihood for Displaced People Project (ELDP). Covenant Consult developed this baseline survey. The used questions include standardized questions along with other questions that specifically link to the ELDP's activities. Special attention was given to a conflict sensitivity approach. The field team and enumerators were trained during a 'Do no harm' workshop. This baseline report is designed to focus entirely on quantitative data.

## The Survey

The survey was designed by the consortium to measure impact related to the ELDP's activities. The survey underwent a thorough review process, particularly in relation to gender, conflict sensitivity, program relevance, and evaluation standards. The survey was translated into Burmese language.

## Interviewers

One workshop was held in Dawei for the data collectors, covering all essential concept of a baseline survey, as interview methodology and pilot testing. Data collectors were staff and hired enumerators from Dawei.

## Interviewees

355 interviews were conducted in 15 villages across 3 Townships of the Tanintharyi Region, namely Pala (4), Thayetchaung (5), and Dawei (6).

The sample size for the survey has been calculated with a confidence level of 95% (1,96), an expected value of indicators of 50%, and a margin of error of 5%. The total sample size was calculated on the basis of 344s HHs from a total of 3285 households.



**Karen Development Network:** KDN was founded in January of 2004, with a vision of promoting human rights and human resources development for the Karen people, regardless of people's religious adherence. KDN's social outreach concerns are especially catered to the dire needs of those who are the direct victims of ongoing-armed conflict including IDPs. KDN seeks to promote community development through peace-building initiatives in its areas of influence. This includes interventions that promote empowerment of individuals and community-based organizations to enhance sustainable livelihoods and income generation, and the access to educational and health services as well as technical know-how to develop vocational expertise.



**Tanintharyi Karen Peace Support Initiative:** TKPSI is a unique network of community-based Karen organizations that operates in conflict-affected areas of the Tanintharyi Region. As part of the Myanmar Peace Support Initiative's (MPSI), this network was established in 2012. With its strategy to establish pilot projects in conflict-affected areas, the support of the peace process and build-up of trust and confidence among conflict actors is pursued. TKPSI has been given the unique mandate/permission by the GoUM (President's office) and the KNU to carry out humanitarian aid and development projects in ceasefire areas.



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**Covenant Consult Co. Ltd.:** Covenant Consult is a Yangon based development consultancy and was established in 2011. The organization focuses on supporting local NGOs and INGOs, through capacity building, project proposal development and monitoring & evaluation.

**THE 'ENHANCED LIVELIHOODS AND FOR DISPLACED PEOPLE' (ELDP) PROJECT IS FUNDED BY THE LIVELIHOOD AND FOOD SECURITY TRUST FUND (LIFT).**



## Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund









# 1. Executive Summary

Delivered as part of the Livelihood and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT) funded Enhanced Livelihoods for Displaced People (ELDP) Project, this baseline provides the reader with an insight into the situation as it is current faced by Karen IDPs in the Tanintharyi Region. It is based on a comprehensive and systematic research process involving over 355 HH interviews conducted in 3 townships across Tanintharyi Region in early 2017.

The baseline survey provides data and analysis on the socio-economic situation, attitudes towards peace and conflict, general gender dynamics, and other crosscutting issues. The ELDP consortium hopes that this report will help enhance understanding of the current situation of Karen IDPs in the Tanintharyi Region and ultimately support interventions that are better tailored in order to adequately respond to community needs.

## Main findings of the baseline include:

- › The majority of Karen IDPs are engaged in the agriculture sector, including orchard cultivation (betel nut), shifting cultivation (slash & burn), and to some extent own small rubber plantations. Only a small number of respondents are engaged in the service and trading sector or employed in the government sector.
- › 40% of interviewed households indicated that they have an average income per year that is below 1 Million MMK (USD\$750), while 26% of HHs reported an income between 1 Million MMK and 2 Million MMK. Another 21% have an income between 3 Million MMK to 5 Million MMK, while only 7% of the HH in the target villages have a yearly income above 5 Million MMK. People with a higher income do not only rely on the agriculture sector, but also have diversified their income streams (trade, services, etc.).
- › Though 88% of respondents indicated that they own agriculture land, 73 % indicated that they have no official land titles/documents. This represents a significant threat to experiencing land tenure insecurity. In addition, 41, 3 % of interviewees responded that they only own up to 5 acres of productive land, which limits and affects overall livelihood security.
- › Access to finances remains a great concern for local communities. The majority of respondents (43,7%) rely on informal moneylenders in order to gain access to capital. 72% of interviewees indicated that they have to pay a monthly interest rate of 1-5%.
- › The majority of HHs (76%) indicated that they experience food shortage during the year. Of the ones who indicated a food shortage, 55% experience a food shortage period up to 3 months, while 38% reported a period between 4 to 6 months.
- › Both the government and the KNU provide public services in the target region, including education services, small-scale infrastructure constructions, issuing of land titles, natural resource management, food assistance and the issuing of citizen scrutiny cards. Next to these duty bearers, NGOs and INGOs are found to also provide essential public services to conflict affected communities.
- › Natural resource management (NRM) plays an important role in the lives of target communities. 62% of respondents indicated that they have a community forest in their community with the majority (64%) responding that it is registered under customary/indigenous law, followed by registration through the Karen Forest Department (15%) and the government (3%). Both KNU and NGOs/INGOs were identified as being the main NRM training providers in the region.
- › Around 24% of HH members have worked outside their communities, with the majority (62,4%) seeking job opportunities in Thailand, followed by places within the Tanintharyi Region (31,8%). Reasons for migration include job scarcity, insecurity, and limited vocational training opportunities. Currently, the majority of respondents (88%), however, indicated that they have no desire to migrate.



- › Only 10% of respondents indicated that they had the opportunity to receive vocational trainings in the last 12 months. This data indicates a high demand in vocational training.
- › Though the ceasefire between the government and the KNU has significantly improved the situation of Karen conflict affected communities, the majority of respondents (46%) do not believe that the current peace process will result in lasting peace, while 30% do not know.
- › While the relationship between the government and KNU has improved, communities face new challenges, including land grabbing and unsustainable natural resource extraction by the private sector. In fact, 76% of respondents do not believe that the private sector has a positive impact on their community.

Outcomes		Indicators	Baseline Results
HLO (1)	VTC are sustainable	Examples showing VTC are functionally and structurally sustainable	Did a HH Member participate in any training in the last 12 months? 89% -No, 10% - Yes, 1% Don't know.
HLO (1)	IDP initiated small businesses are successful	# of IDPs (disaggregated into sex) with successful business projects	-
		Examples of successful small businesses by IDPs	-
HLO (1)	IDPs have better employment opportunities	# and % of IDP benefitting from safe-employment	Main Occupation: 61% Farmer, 29% Students, 3% Livestock, 2% Trader, 2% Government, 4% other.
HLO (2)	Land-use and CF certificates are achieved	# of CF certificates successful	-
		# of IDPs (disaggregated into sex) getting land-use certificates (from both KNU & Gov.)	Do you have official title for your farmland? Yes- 27% , No- 73%
		# of areas under land-use certificates	Are there CF in Your village? 62% Yes, 28% No, 9% Don't know.
			If, Yes, Where are CF registered? 3% Government, 64% Indigenous, 15% KNU, 18% Don't know.
HLO (3)	Township authority, government and NSAs are well informed about local development issues	# of IDPs reported that quality of service by service providers are improved	How is the quality of services, provided by the Gov/ KNU? 80% good, 6% Excellent, 12% Fair, 1% Not good, 1% no Comment.
		# of and types of stakeholders informed by local development plans	-
HLO (3)	Improved livelihood and food security of involved people	# of IDPs (disaggregated into sex) who are able to access to rice in lean seasons with low cost	Have you stored rice for the lean season? 37% Yes, 63% No,
			Does your family experienced food shortage? 76% Yes, 24% No
		# of vulnerable HHs (IDPs) access to loans at low cost in times of needs	Interest rate per month 40% > 3-5%, 32% 1-3%, 21% no interest, 6% >5-10%,
		Example showing improvements in livelihood status among IDPs	-

# Introduction

Delivered as part of the LIFT funded ELDP Project, this baseline provides the reader with an insight into the current situation as it is faced by Karen IDPs in the Tanintharyi Region. It is based on a comprehensive and systematic research process involving over 355 HH interviews conducted in 3 townships across Tanintharyi Region in early 2017.

The baseline survey provides data and analysis on the socio-economic situation, attitudes towards peace and conflict, general gender dynamics, and other areas outlined in the contents. The ELDP consortium hopes that this report will help enhance understanding the current situation of Karen IDPs in Tanintharyi Region and ultimately support interventions that are better tailored to community needs.

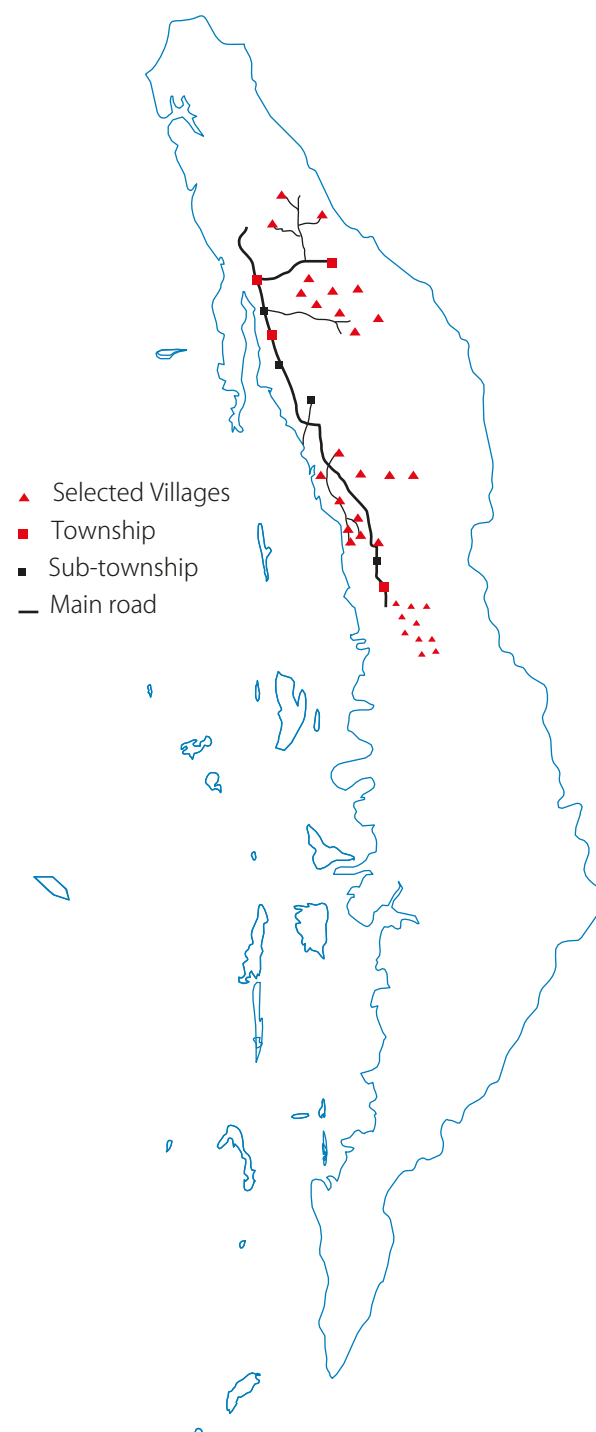
## PROJECT BACKGROUND

Through repeated conflict-induced displacement, many local Karen people of the Tanintharyi Region have not been able to engage in stable agriculture and economic activities in the past, leading to severe poverty and food insecurity. A consortium was formed in 2016 to enhance livelihoods and improve food security for Internally Displaced People (IDPs) currently residing in 33 target villages in three townships in Tanintharyi Region. The major Outcomes for the ELDP project are:

1. Vocational Training Centre (VTC) built, short courses developed, and IDPs trained and enable to access the job market.
2. IDP HHs obtain safe land access and tenure rights and are able to utilize and manage local natural resources (community forests);
3. Increased resilience of IDP communities;
4. Creation/strengthening of VDCs, VSLAs, etc. and linkages to public services;

This baseline study aims to develop and provide adequate facts and figures to measure the impact of the beneficiaries' livelihood opportunities by the project implemented activities. An Endline Survey will be conducted by the end of the project-funded cycle in June 2019.

33 Villages of ELDP (Tanintharyi)









# 1. General overview

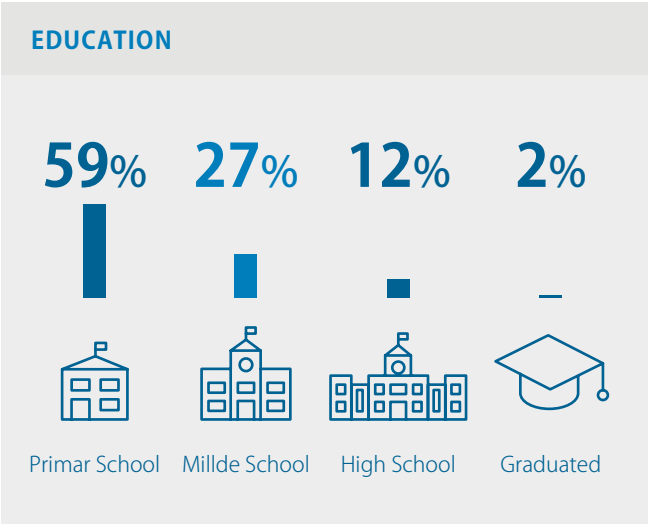
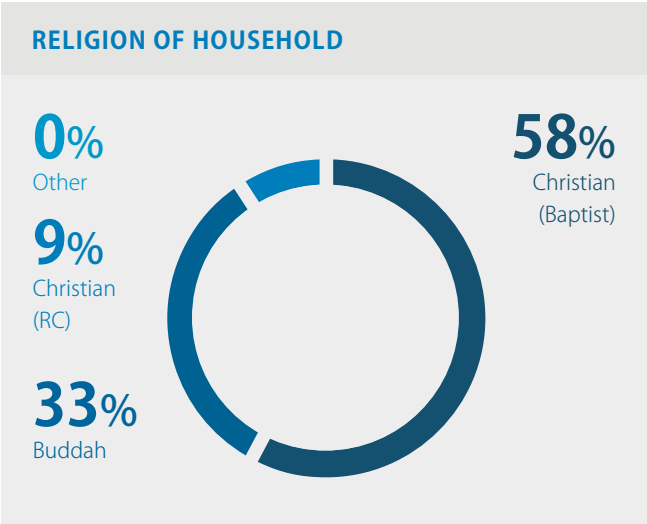
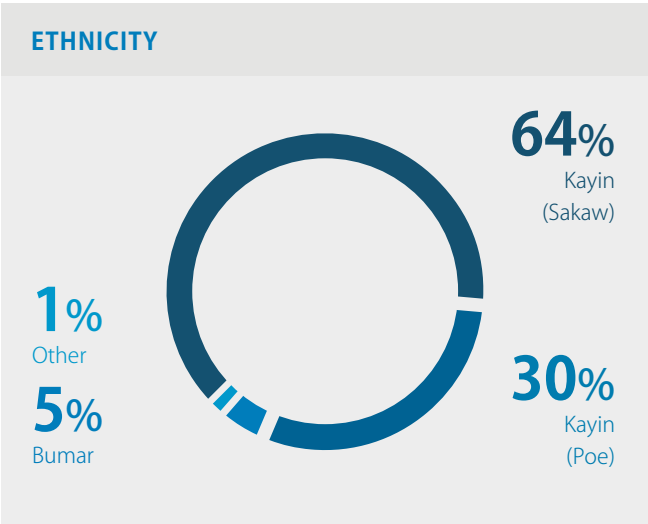
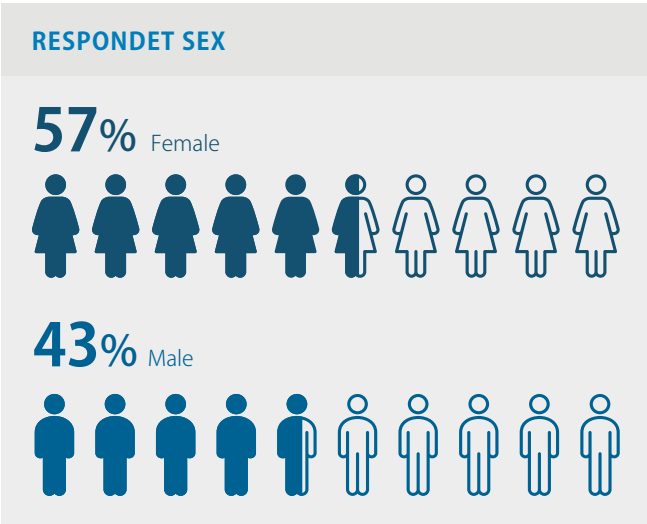
For this baseline, there were more women interviewed than men during the baseline. This resulted from the circumstance that men were often absent from their villages while women were more available during times of data collection. The survey was conducted in 15 villages of 3 townships of Tanintharyi, including Palaw (4), Thayetchaung (5), and Dawei (6). A total of 355 HH interviews were conducted in three townships including:

- › Palaw (96 in 4 Villages)
- › Thayetchaung (121 in 5 Villages)
- › Dawei (138 in 6 Villages)

KEY POINTS ON SUBGROUPS:

The majority of respondents (94%) belongs to the Karen ethnic group (Sgaw and Pwo), while 5% can be classified as ethnic Bamar. The ELDP Project works primarily with Karen IDPs in non-urban settings. 67% of respondents belonged to a Christian denomination (Catholic or Baptist), while 33% were Buddhist.

A total of 59% respondents completed primary school, 27% middle school, 12% high school, and only 2% achieved a university degree.





## 2. Income Situation

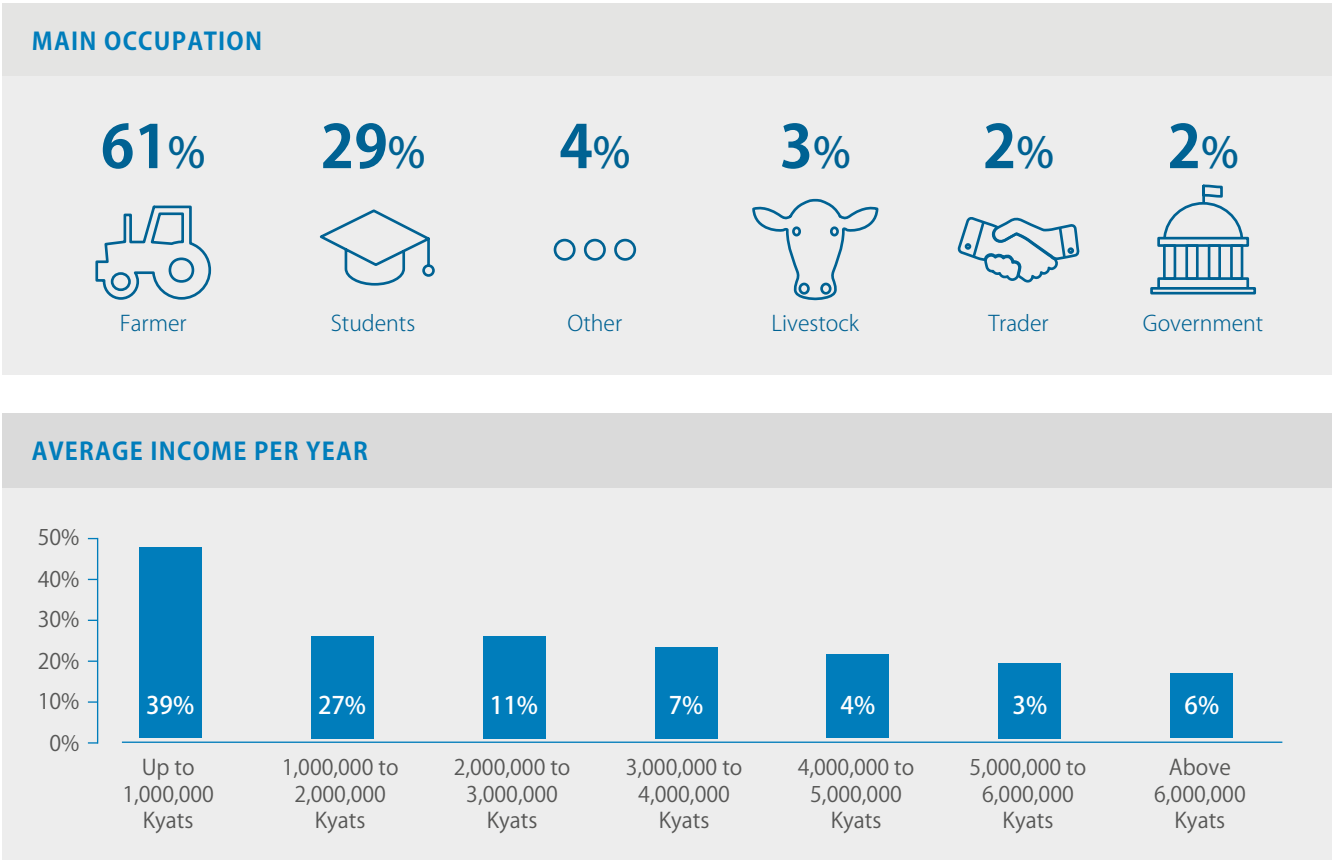
The income situation reflects the flow of cash or cash-equivalents received from work, capital, and land. The majority of the labor force in Myanmar is working in the primary sector, while a relatively small number of rich people own the capital and the land. All too often, property prices are increasing over the years and interest rates for loans are high. This unfortunately only increases the accumulation of wealth among those who own assets.

According to the survey, more than 64% of people in our target area are working in the agriculture sector. About 29% of all household members are still attending school, while less than 1% are employed by the government as teachers or administrative officers.

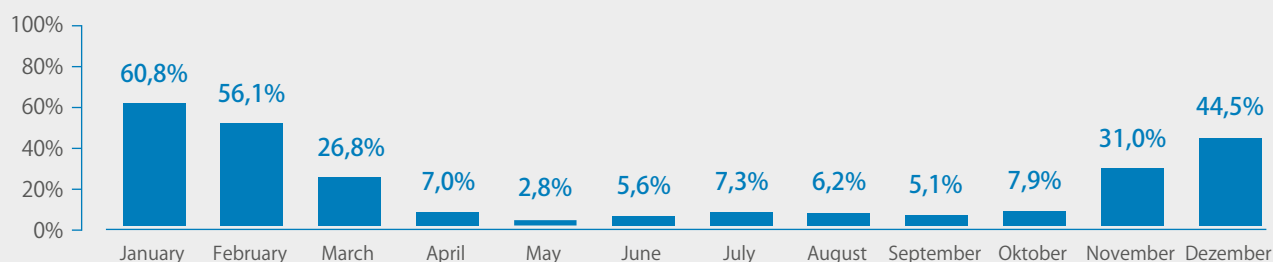
Average household income is a significant indicator that informs about HHs capacity to invest in areas of their preference,

i.e. education, production equipment, or other consumables. About 40% of the households have an average income per year that is below 1.000.000 Kyat, less than 750 USD. 26% of the HHs has more than 1.000.000MMK but less than 2.000.000MMK available for spending. Another 21% have an income between 3.000.000MMK to 5.000.000MMK, while only 7% of the HHs in the target villages has a yearly income above 5.000.000 MMK. People with higher income are often involved in other than agriculture sectors, i.e. the trading business.

The following chart shows income variations, which largely result from the engagement in the agriculture sector. This data corresponds well with the fact that most people are involved in agriculture activities (see graphic 'Main Occupation'). During the harvest time, starting in late October and ending in April the following year, the income situations of the HHs in the target



### MONTHS WITH THE HIGHEST INCOME



villages significantly improve. Farmers are able to sell agriculture produce after the harvest which secures their immediate income. However, this opportunity becomes an immediate challenge due to low prices paid for agriculture produce; the pressing need of farmers for immediate income; and traders' exploitation of this situation. In order to break this cycle of dependency and urgent need to sell produce right after the harvest at lowest prices, the ELDP project is going to support the establishment of rice banks in a number of communities.

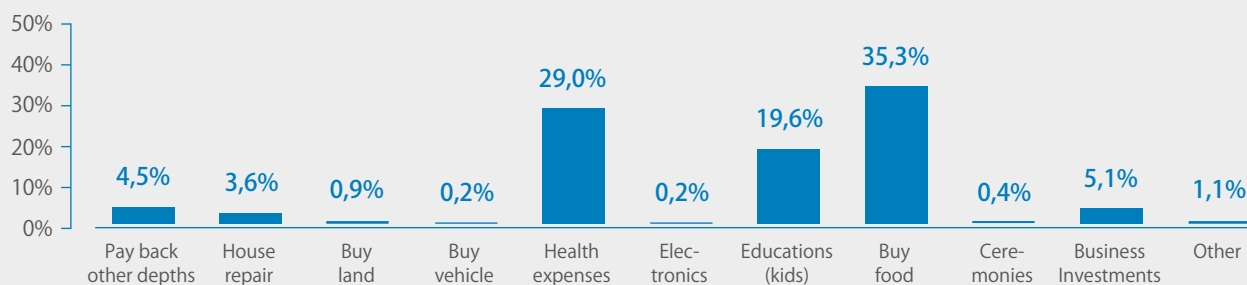
During the lean season, rural people try to cope with the low income situation through seasonal migration (**see Migration section**).

The free flow of capital is a vital sign of a well-functioning economy. The government, households and companies in-

vest into productive assets, while others lend their savings to receive interest payments in return.

According to the latest labor market study that was conducted in February 2017, the Tanintharyi Region lacks of a well-functioning financial market. Companies have a limited access to capital for a reasonable price. Instead, so called moneylenders exploit the vulnerability of people during the lean season to gain high profit margins. 65% of the participants had to borrow money in the last six months for reasons such as food, medical treatment and education. 4,5% of them even borrowed money to remunerate other credits they received previously. Only a relatively small number of participants were able to borrow money and to invest into the education of their children or in assets that will help them to increase their income over the next years.

### WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR TAKING A LOAN?



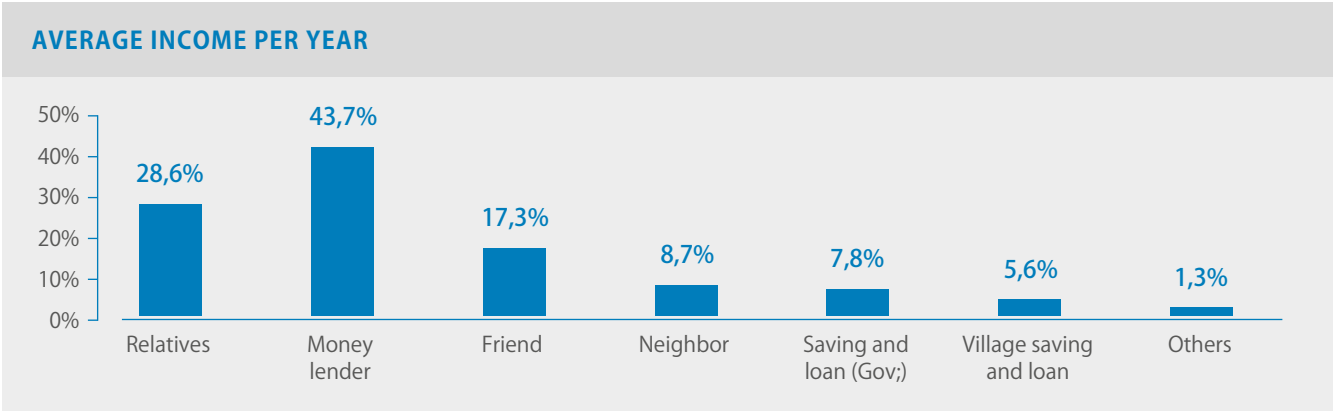
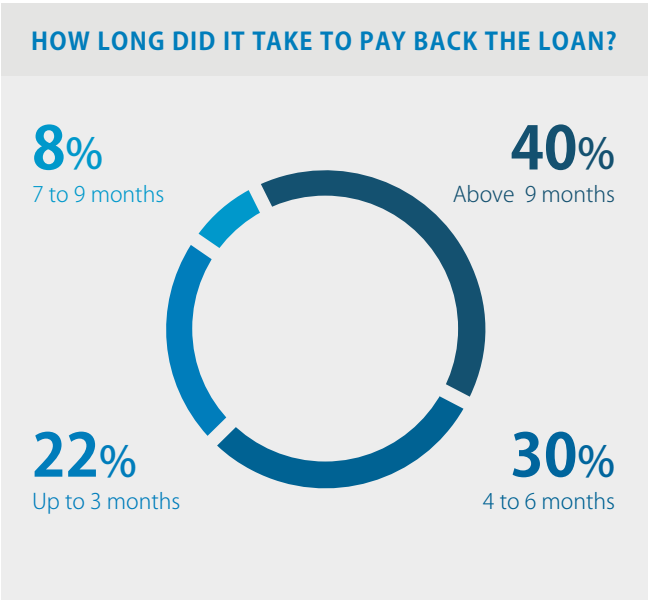
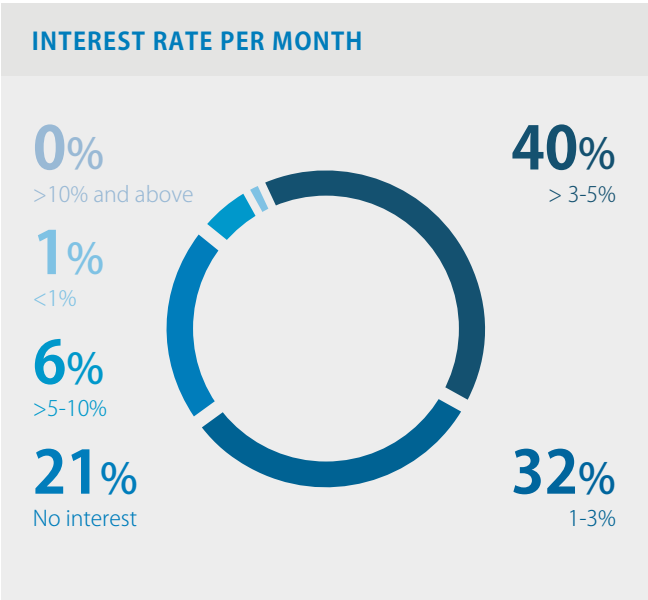


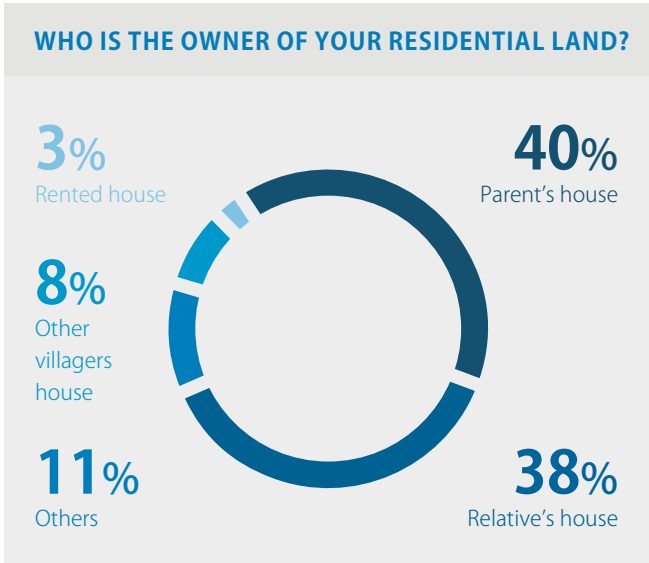
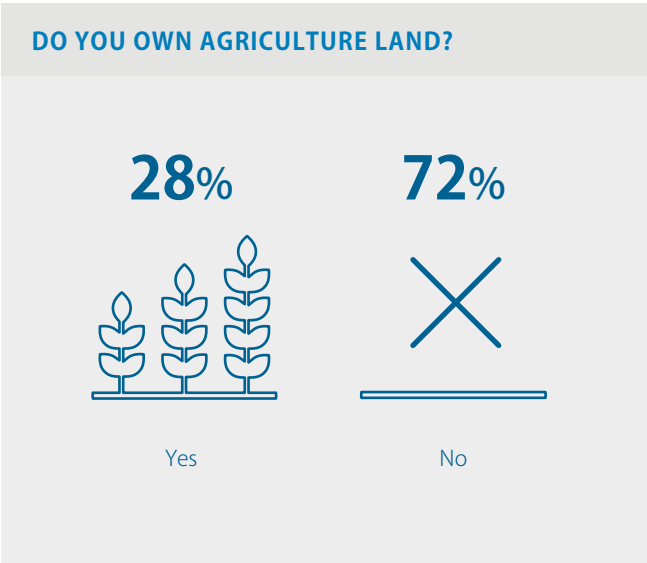
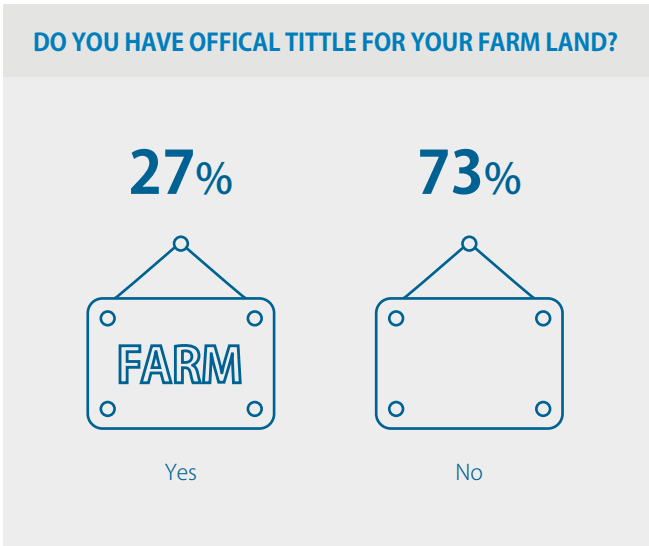
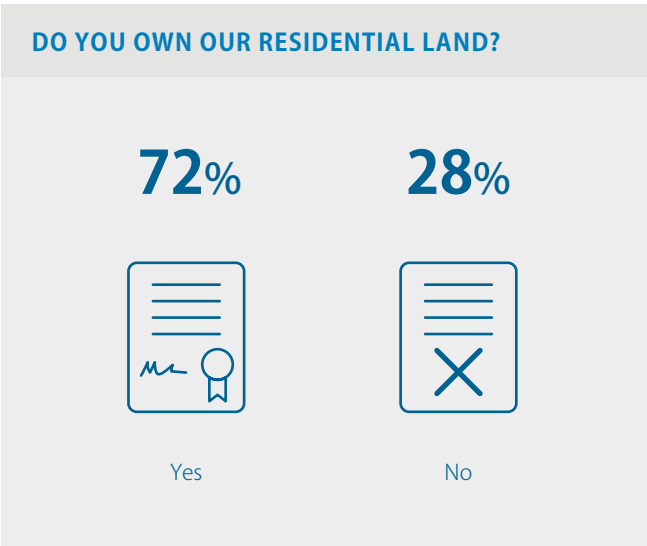
Interest rates are calculated in monthly instead of yearly rates. The majority of the people (72%) have to pay an interest rate that is between 1-5%. However, it is a positive surprise that 21% are able to receive a credit from their relatives and friends free of charge.

To many of the readers of this baseline study, an interest rate of 3% per month may appear reasonable. However, taking into account the compound interest, the yearly interest payment comes up to an incredible 42% p.a. It is self-explanatory that economic prosperity is not attainable within this

current economic framework. That is the reason why the EL-DP-Project focuses on the implementation of Village Saving and Loan Associations (VSLA) to improve access to financial resources for private business owners or start-ups.

Most of the loans people have to take are short-term loans. The duration of most of the loans is less than 9 months. 40% however are medium or even long-term liabilities (more than 9 months). The length of the loan period depends usually on 2 main factors, the interest rate and ability to pay back.





**RESIDENTIAL LAND**

The majority of the people in the 33 ELDP project target vil-lages are owners of their residential land. Only 28% of them are living on land that is not owned by them but by their par-ents (40%) or other family members (38%). A very small num-ber of the participants of this survey are not the owners of their residential land. It is more likely that these people have

to pay rent for their residential land to non-family members (11%, 3%).

**AGRICULTURE LAND**

Owning agriculture land is another essential factor that indi-cates the level of livelihood security.

In the ELDP target villages a majority (88%) of the people own agriculture land. This is a positive sign. When bringing the size of agriculture land people own into account, 41% of the respondents have only up to 5 acres, a relatively small piece of land to grow enough food throughout the year. Another group of about 32% have between 6 to 10 acres available while only 8 % of the people in our survey have more than 25 acre of farming land that they own.

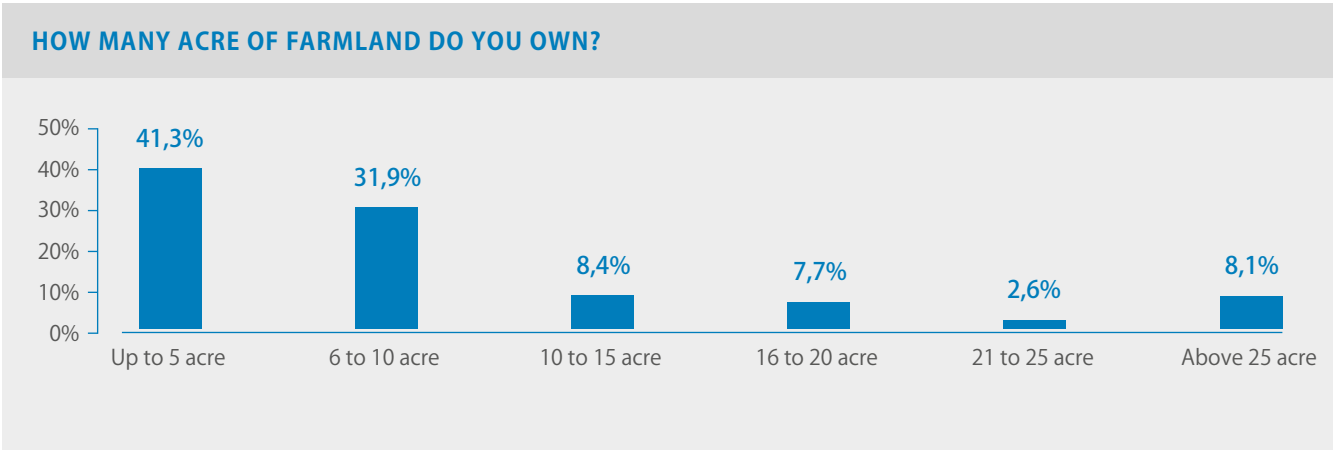
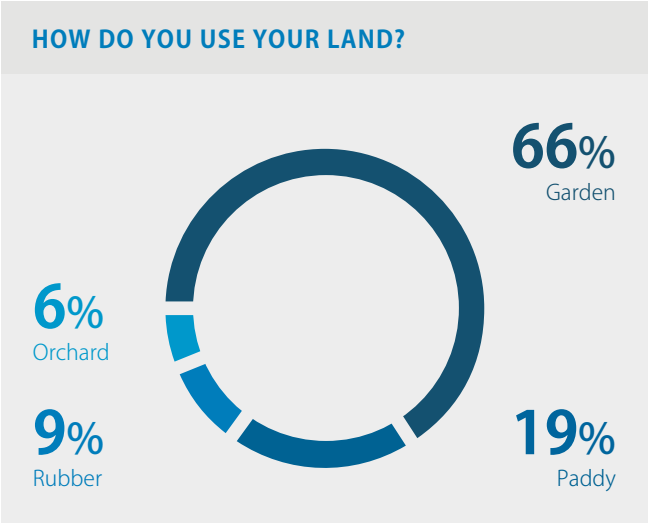
Despite the fact that 88% of the people own agriculture land, only 73% out of them have an official title for their farmland. This is a fact that has led to land grabbing cases and increased

concerns among villagers about land security. From the development sector perspective, it is a very issue of livelihood security and sustainability.

Rural households in our target area use their agriculture land in different ways. Most people (66%) indicated to utilize agriculture land as a 'Garden', not further specifying the type of agriculture produce gained from this land. Traditionally and in the Myanmar context however, people cultivate and grow betel-nut and cashew nuts in a garden, and sometimes some fruit trees. There indeed occurs an overlap between 'garden' and 'orchard' categories.

Only 19% said they use agriculture land as paddy fields to grow rice. It is unclear however, whether rice is also cultivated in 'gardens'. In traditional settings however, 'gardens' are used in multiple ways, depending on natural conditions, such as soil quality, water accessibility and topography. The aspect of available labor to cultivate land is an increasing factor that comes into play. People who migrate often leave elderly and kids behind in the villages. This situation appears to become a drain of labor and abilities to cultivate larger areas of land in more effective ways. To an increasing number of people it might seem more opportune to migrate and earn more money abroad in easier ways.

There is huge potential to increase simple ways to plant fruit trees and the project will use its Community Facilitators (CFs)



to look at this area and potential in more comprehensive ways. Opportunities for working in rural communities and trust building will enable the CFs to promote the cultivation of fruit trees that can significantly contribute to family health and livelihood security. Many farmers have not been informed of the difficulties that come along with rubber plantation. The simple fact that there will be no income from this land for up to 8 years, depending on the growth of the trees, bears the potential to increase the level of people's vulnerability. The private sector and the government however have promoted rubber plantation for a long time and have used even official agriculture

extension services to convince farmers to plant rubber trees. There are cases in which the private sector has invested and provided rubber trees to be planted to a large extent.

The size of own land is crucial to livelihood security. As mentioned above, about 41% of the respondents in our baseline survey indicated to have up to 5 acres. This size is in general below the ability to secure livelihoods from farming activities alone. The second largest group (32%) has up to 10 acres which seems to be generally sufficient, depending on the quality of the soil.



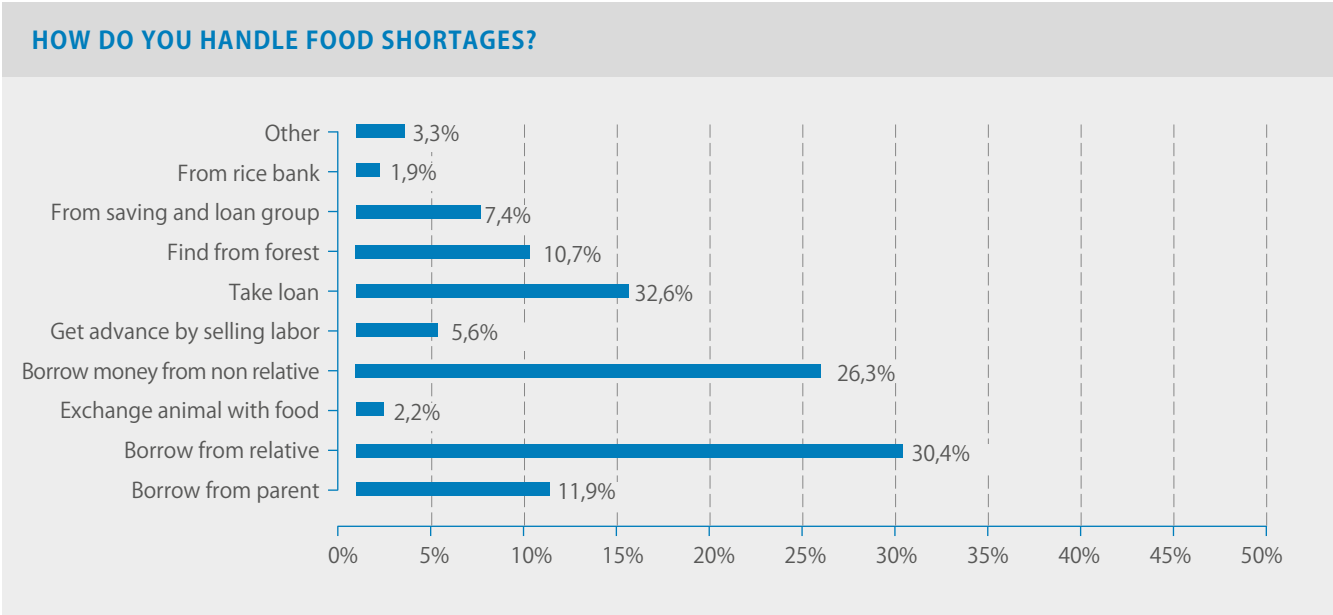
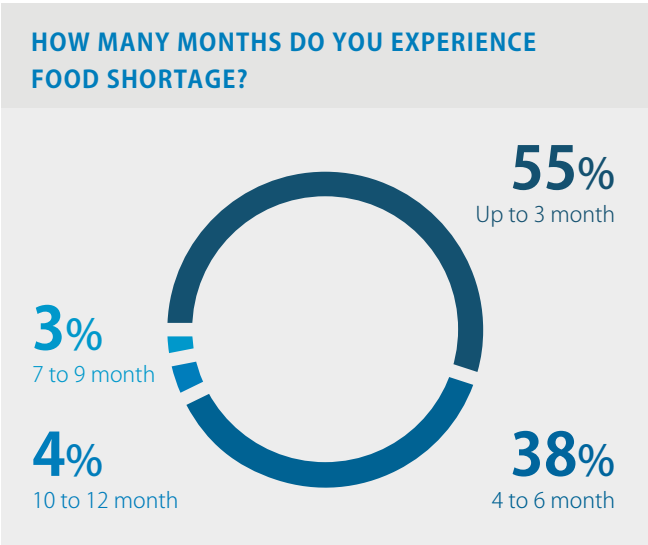
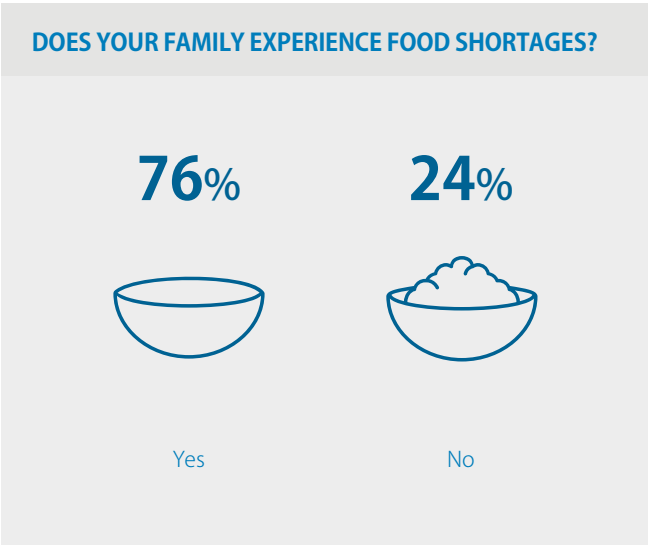


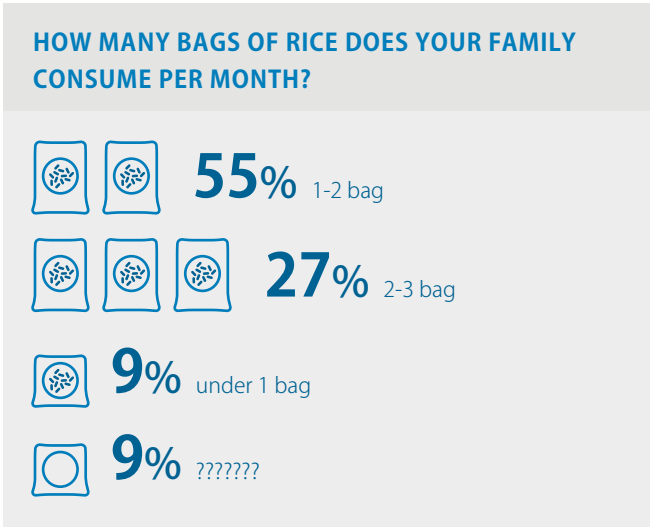
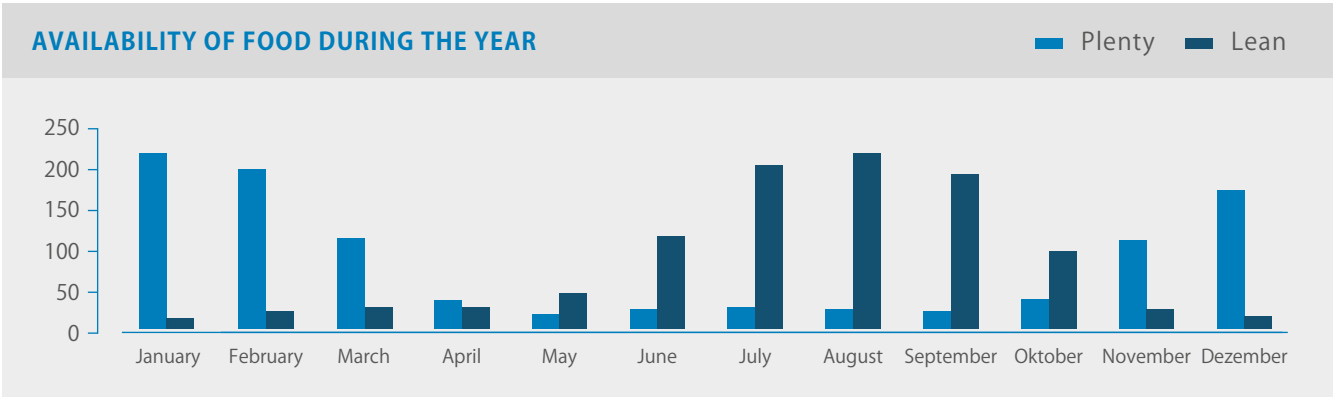


### 3. Food Shortage

The reasons for food shortage can be manifold. In the context of forced displacement, people are uprooted from their traditional livelihood activities and mostly suffer from these consequences. This leads to a relatively high level of food insecurity and temporary as well as permanent food shortages. As mentioned in another section of this baseline report (**Natural resource management**), secured access to land and forests

are also essential to mitigate permanent food shortages. Due to IDPs vulnerability level, their food security is additionally at risk when i.e. natural disasters hit the region. Uprooted people most likely never had the chance for developing adequate coping mechanisms or community safety nets that would help mitigating a crisis.





Food insecurity is directly linked to the cycle of poverty and the most vulnerable (children) are affected severely. Negative effects of malnourishment are massive and have a direct on children’s performance in school and the productivity of working adults. Sickness is due to an insufficient immune system more frequently.

According to the baseline data that was collected during the survey, 24% of the participants have experienced food shortages. Out of these 24%, the majority (around 93%) have experienced a food shortage of up to 6 months. 4% of them have struggled over 12 months to regain stable food supplies. These data give additional evidence that forced dis-

placement is a major thread in peoples’ life and a very threat to livelihood security.

There is enough evidence that people see solutions to immediate food shortages. One coping mechanism for most people who participated in the baseline survey and who experienced food shortage tried to deal with it by taking a loan either from their relatives or from money lenders. A relatively small number of villagers who experienced a food shortage have received aid through the implementation of a rice bank (1, 9%) or an existing village Saving and Loan group (7, 4%). These are the reasons why the ELDP project aims to address the food security issue by establishing

rice banks and money saving groups (VSLAs). Once these mechanisms are established in communities and properly functioning, food shortages are less threatening or not occurring anymore.

### FOOD PROVISION DURING THE LEAN SEASON

Myanmar has a tropical monsoon climate with basically two seasons. The dry season without any significant rainfall runs from October to May, while rainfall can be constant for long periods of time during the rainy season from June- September. The harvest time starts in November and continues up to March. Therefore, food shortage also varies during the lean season but is highest right before the harvest season starts.

According to the data collected during the survey, most people in the area have access to food during harvest time, while food is less available during the lean season starting from April-October. According to our data, people face the greatest food shortage during the month of August. In order to cope with this situation, villagers partly store rice or other food for that period of time. The issue however is that storage facilities that would prevent rice from mold is limited, if ever existing. Often, inside villagers' there are not enough dry places for storage over long periods of time.

In terms of storage capacity, the collected data reveals that 63% of the households have not stored rice for the lean season. The possible reasons are partly discussed above. Due to the vulnerability level of IDP households, savings do mostly not exist which means that HHs have to borrow money to purchase rice which consequently leads to higher indebtedness of many households. Negative events such as natural disasters may hit an IDP household and will not be covered by savings. This makes the people additionally vulnerable. Keeping the cycle of poverty in mind, it all can start with the incapacity to properly store rice (bers) or else. Understanding eating habits however, when rice is available, consumption per person goes up. It is an understandable practice however this practice has its limits but "stretching" the amount of avail-

able rice is a quite common and very first coping mechanism to mitigate a food shortage.

During the survey, we also captured data about rice consumption. IDP households responded that they as a family of 5 people in average consume up to 3 bags of rice. With the average weight of 30 kg for one bag, it would be a consumption of up to 18 kg per month and person. This average consumption figure emphasizes that rice is the major staple food and nonnegotiable necessity for all IDP households. The gathered data also reveals that about 18% of households consume less than 1 bag of rice per month. This is either due to the size of the household (less than 3 members) or other reasons. However, when rice is available, consumption per person goes up. Nevertheless, "stretching" the amount of available rice is a quite common and very first coping mechanism to mitigate a food shortage.





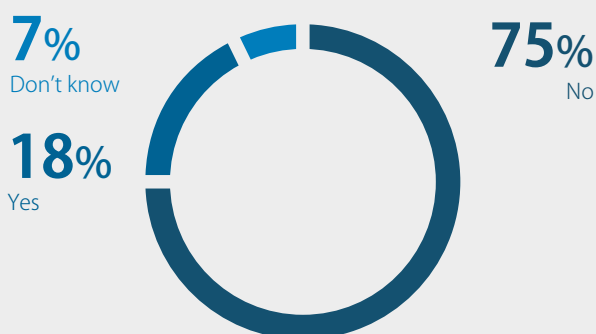
## 4. Training and Aspiration

Education is one of the key drivers in human development. People with a relatively high educational level are less vulnerable than others, they usually have more access to information and find it easier to adapt to the demand of the local labor market. In contrast, the lack of access to training and education can have devastating effects on the economy such as fewer job opportunities and an increase in the amount of people living in poverty. In this context, literacy rates are a significant indicator. As self-reported in the 2014 Census, in the Tanintharyi Region the literacy rate is below the national

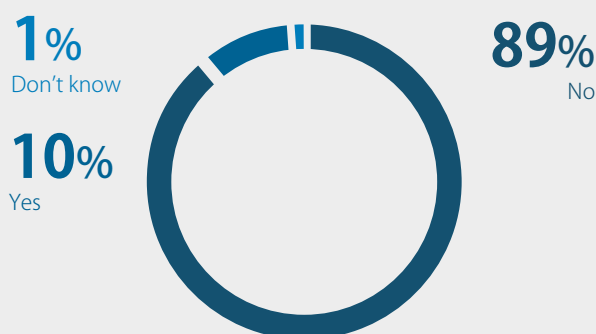
average of 90%. Particularly women's literacy rates are lower than that of men.

Across the Union of Myanmar, many different groups outside of the Government system provide education services, such as monasteries, NGOs and privately owned schools. While religious institutes are focusing on the spiritual development of their pupils, NGOs from the development sector are focusing on adult education like vocational training.

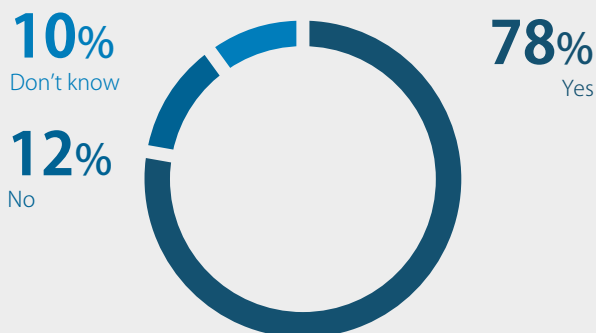
### ARE THERE ANY VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTER IN YOUR AREA?



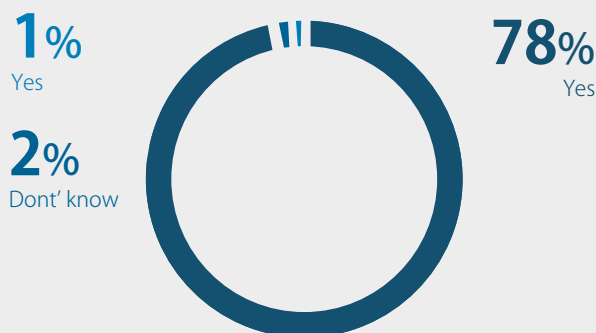
### DID A HH MEMBER PARTICIPATE IN ANY TRAINING IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS?



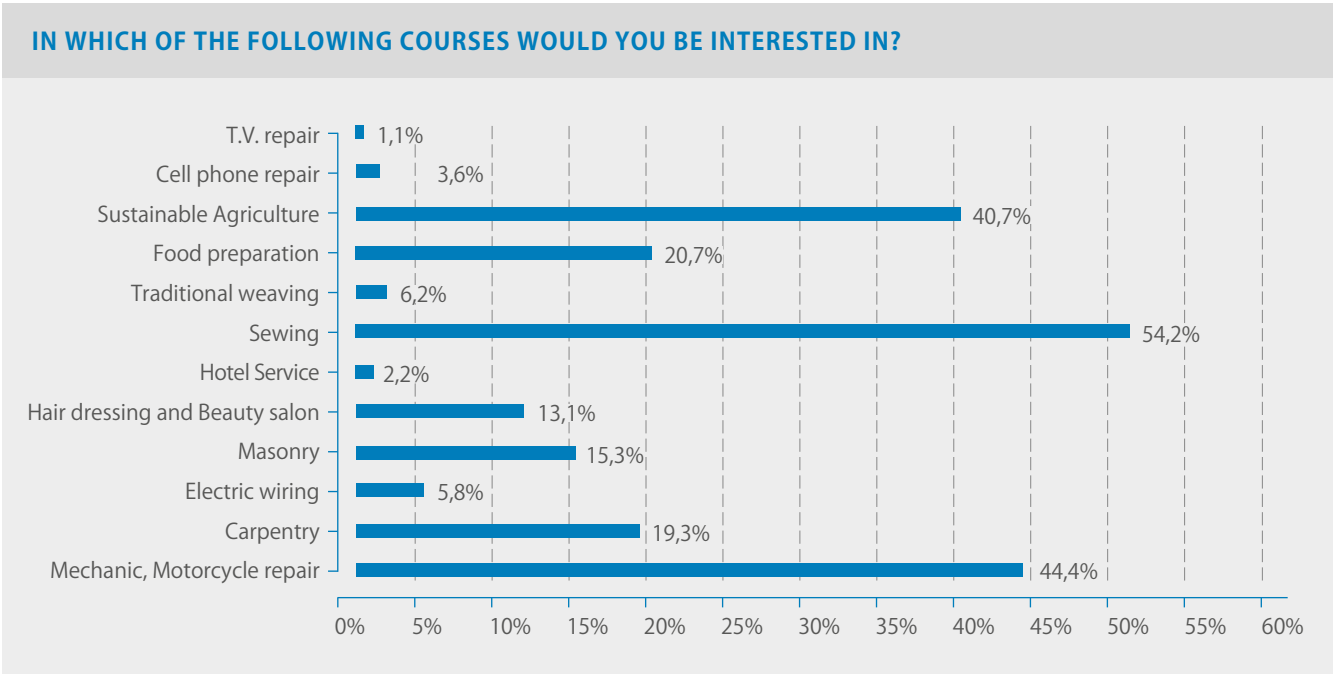
### WOULD YOU LIKE TO ATTEND A CERTIFIED ON-SITE, 10 WEEKS VT?



### DO YOU THINK THERE SHOULD BE VT IN YOUR AREA?







Vocational training aims to equip people of all ages but in particular skilled, out-of-school young adults to equip them with qualified skills towards competitiveness in the labor market. This will secure and improve livelihoods and help the local economy to grow. Once individuals have developed skills relevant to the labor market, they have realistic chances for improving the income situation of their households and to make themselves less vulnerable to stress and shocks.

In our baseline survey, we found that only 10% of the household members who were asked (N=355) have participated in a vocational training in the last 12 months. This indicates a gap on training opportunities in the region. This feedback correlates with the next bar graph where 75% of respondents indicate that there is no VT center available in their area. A significant number (7%) also indicate of not knowing about and being aware of a VT center in existence. This indicates the clear need for promoting a VT center once it is established.

The baseline survey included a set of questions about a person's interest in participating in a two-month certified train-

ing course. The feedback reveals that 78% of respondents or four out of five interviewees have shown interest in a certified, on-site, vocational training course. This might be an indication to an understanding among people that building skills involves a time-investment and commitment to a learning process. In this context, the project is confident that once the center is established and the training program is set up, the number of people who will show interest in participation will increase.

In order to further analyze training needs and fields of interest, the participants of the survey were directly asked which courses they would like to attend. The survey participants responded as follows (**figures are clustered and rounded**):

- › 54% are interested in receiving training as a textile seamstress;
- › 44% would like to become a mechanic;
- › 41% would like to have a better understanding of sustainable agriculture;
- › 21% are interested in receiving training as a cook;

- 19% like to work as a carpenter while another 15% look forward to receive training in masonry.

It is interesting to note that the feedback from survey participants directly correlates with the labor market data. The five areas mentioned (garment industry, mechanics, agricultural sector, hospitality/catering, and construction sector) can be

seen as the drivers for development. Skilled labor is needed in the region as well as in the migrant settings. Therefore, a training center that will be accessible for individuals without skill training (primarily young adults) from more remote areas is directly contributing to poverty alleviation and livelihood security.



## 5. Natural Resource Management

The management of natural resources, such as land, water, soil, plants and animals, deals with managing ways in which people and natural landscapes interact. Land use planning, water management, biodiversity conservation and the future sustainability of industries like agriculture, mining, tourism, fisheries and forestry are subject to natural resource management. Due to FAO figures, nearly half of all jobs worldwide are linked to natural resources. While all human societies are linked to ecological processes and healthy ecosystems that produce the requirements for life, rural poor people depend significantly more on natural capital than other population groups. There is little disagreement that sustainable natural resource management practices in the hands of indigenous people are therefore in direct correlation to rural poverty alleviation. In this context, the ELDP project aims to take steps and promote legalized community forests through which rural communities are enabled to manage their resources in sustainable manners. The legal framework marked by appropriate laws and regulations is in this context basically a non-negotiable matter.

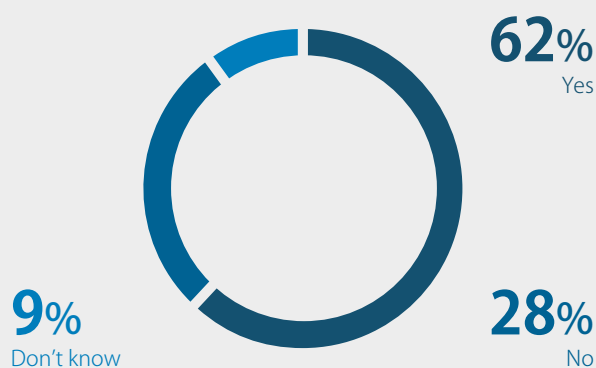
For rural areas in the Tanintharyi Region, the sustainable management of natural resources is vital to the survival of the villages. This baseline survey of the ELDP project provides essential baseline data that will enable to project to measure progress over time. Qualitative and quantitative data we ob-

tained describes the current situation in the target communities. The following graphs are largely self-explanatory but will be complemented by comments reflecting more thorough interpretations.

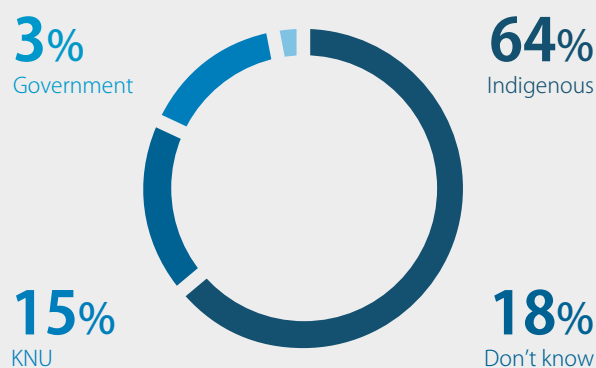
Sustainable management of forests and forest products as anticipated in the 33 project target villages needs to be seen in the above described context. Community forestry is one major aspect of natural resource management that deals with the utilization of forests for community purposes (**timber for construction and to a limited extent for income**) but also with the sustainable usage of non-timber forest products. The start-off for a sustainable forest management is the existence of community forests to which all villagers have access.

According to our baseline survey, 62% of the interviewees mentioned that they have community forest already established. But a little over one third of people interviewed (38%) mentioned that CF have not been established or they have no information (don't know) whether a community forest exists. The number of uninformed people might indicate exclusive structures in communities where certain people have access while others are hold back from receiving equal rights and access to natural resources. It will be the duty of the project to set measures in place in order to address the issue and further

### ARE THERE CF IN YOUR VILLAGE?

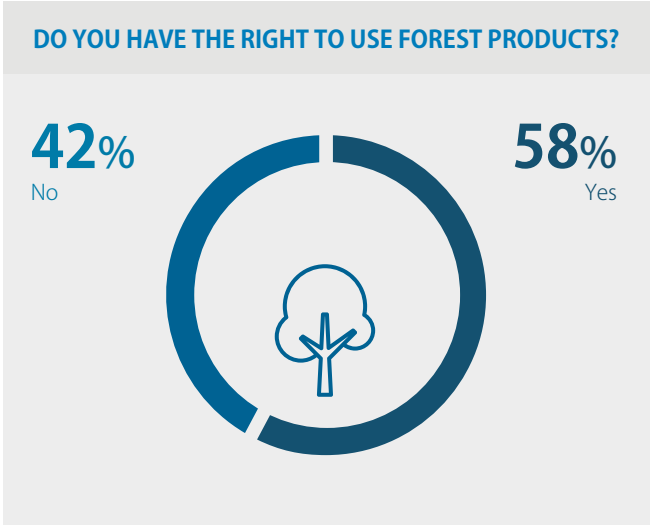


### IF YES, WHERE ARE CF REGISTERED?



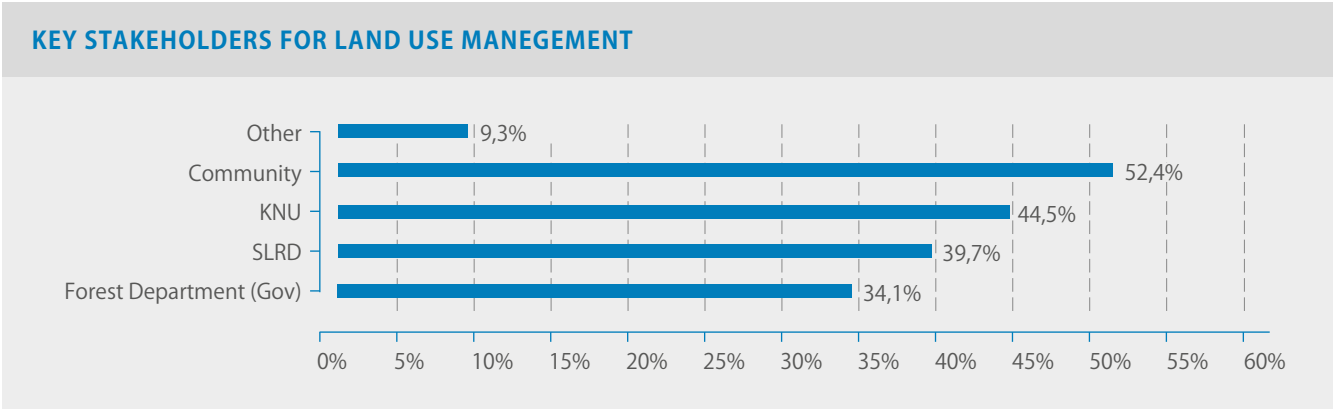
identify why there are people uninformed about forest usage issues in their community. In the context of obtaining legal access to forests, it is essential to assess the legal frameworks under which the villagers gain access. Through our survey it became apparent that most villagers have legal access to forests through indigenouness or traditional registration. It has been best-practice for generations that communities have used forests while these traditional rights were challenged by external investors and government institutions more recently, including the KNU. The hunger for exploiting natural resources for income and cash has tremendously increased in recent years. In this context, the traditional forms of agreements do not work anymore as before. Villagers more and more see external and international investors coming into their area for NR exploitation. This makes it necessary to develop a wider recognized legal framework that is also internationally accepted and does not violate against basic human rights. Both, the GoUM and the KNU claim to have their legal frameworks which are currently competing over territory in some areas. There is the risk that such parallel structures can bring villagers in difficult situations and also carries the potential for new emerging village-level conflicts.

Currently, only 15% of community forests in the project area are registered under the KNU framework and not more than 3% through the government of Myanmar system. As mentioned above, most of the forests (64%) are still following indigenous pattern of registration.

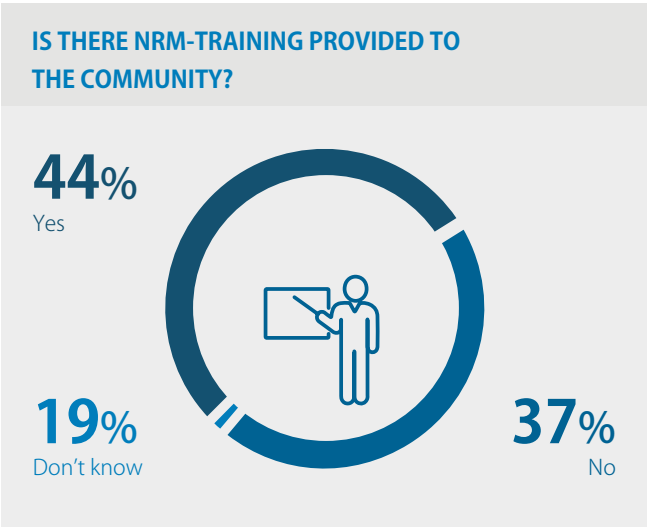


Through the survey it also became known that a high percentage of people (18%) don't know where community forest is registered. Consequently, these people do not seem to use NR for securing livelihoods. Data revealed by the baseline study gives direction for the work of the project, namely to further identify suitable means for villagers and advocate on community behalf if deemed necessary.

The discussion over NR management and forest usage leads to the ultimate questions whether villagers hold the rights to use forest products. In our survey only 58% of the households have access to the community forest and are entitled to







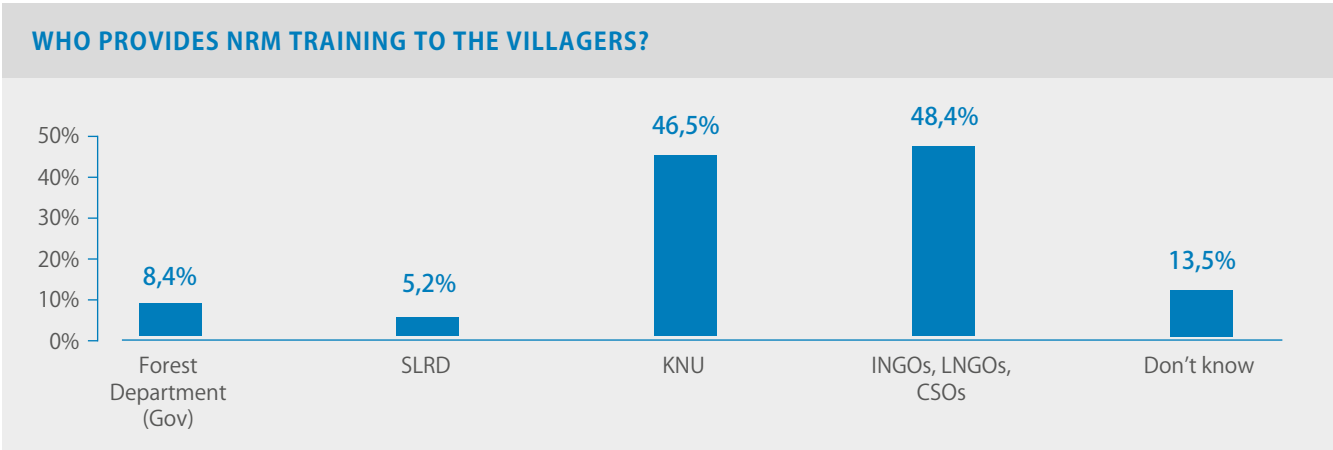
use forest products. This fact raises the question what might be the reasons for the limited access. This baseline data gives significant space for the project to explore the reasons as well as identifying means to increase accessibility for people who have not been entitled to use forest products. Additional research activities are underway to further assess land and tenure practices in the project area.

With growing populations and demand for food and usage of natural resources for economic growth requires using available land and resources in more sustainable manners.

Among the many causes of land conflicts, one is that many people or parties/organizations impacted directly or indirectly by land (or legitimate stakeholders) are not involved in land use decisions and management while others, including state structures, hold the ultimate right for managing land. Involving all people impacted by land is an effective (if not the best) way to reduce the risk of land conflicts, resulting in good Land Use Management (LUM).

The key stakeholders for land use management within the 33 target villages are the communities themselves, the Karen National Union, the Settlement and Land Record Department (SLRD), and the Government Forest Department. This reveals that the government has set up dual structures to address their desire to control land/territory to an extent of more than 70%. It is beyond the scope of the baseline survey to provide more data about the quality of services, trustworthiness, and potential to alleviate poverty through measures that secure livelihoods of rural households. It is also beyond the scope of this report to further assess underlying strategies of the Government or KNU and their attempts to build land security frameworks that significantly serve the rural people and their desire to have secured access to land.

Survey data indicates an increasing pressure on communities to render traditional ways for land management (currently 52%) and to follow the government or the KNU frameworks



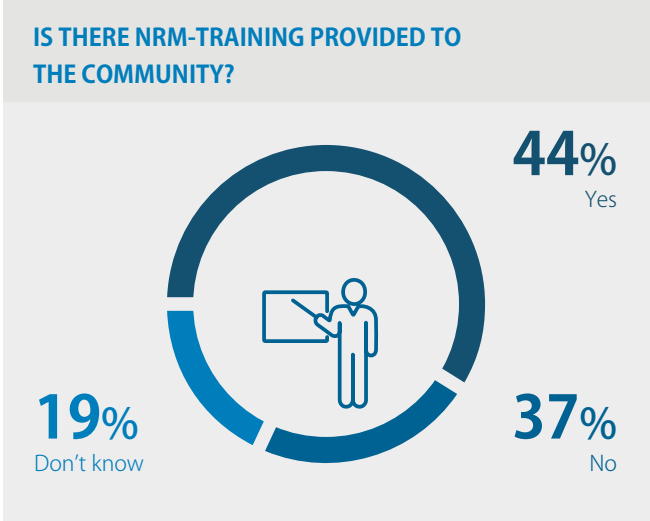
instead. Careful focus on this sensitive issue will determine the impact of the project, the reputation of the implementing institutions, and the overall trustworthiness of the development professionals who work with rural people. Consequently, it will be an issue that carries significant conflict potential.

In order to use land and NR in sustainable manners, training can be crucial to successful and fair management. Despite the fact that the government and the KNU together are the largest stakeholders for land use management, only 44% of the communities have received not further defined NRM-training. The number of people who have not heard about training is also relatively high (19%). Again, it will be a measure of the project to increase the number of trained people and their skills in the target communities to manage their NR.

Appropriate NRM training is a crucial measure and significantly impacts the way forests are managed by indigenous people or people with little educational background, such as IDPs. Most training is provided by NGOs who intensively work with communities in the area of advocacy for land rights as well as the KNU forest and agriculture department. Despite the fact that the Government is one of the key stakeholders that claim responsibility and ownership over land use management and related issues, including NRM, it is noteworthy that the government does not demonstrate much of engagement in training. In contrast, the KNU and NGOs are providing training and knowledge transfer to communities and have the chance to gain significant trust among villagers. The training and advocacy role of NGOs, however, is additionally challenged by the fact that two systems are co-existing and claim their legitimacy.

In order to stabilize training inputs and move toward sustainable community forest management, NGOs promote the establishment of forest user groups.

The establishment of FUGs aims to serve multiple aspects: (a) to control usage of forest products, mainly timber, (b) to work against deforestation, (c) to contribute to wildlife conservation, (d) to protect water resources, (e) to serve against



climate change and contribute to this larger scale goal, and (f) to support peace building by assisting with reintegration (returnees) and reconstruction and providing livelihood assistance. Additionally, and on a micro-level, FUGs are meant to work toward inclusive management of NR in forest communities to ensure all groups, including vulnerable groups, are stakeholders with equal rights.

The data received through the baseline survey reveals that CF user groups are only in some villages (18% responded with “Yes”). Again, it is noteworthy that even more respondents (23%) did not know whether a FUG was established or is functioning in their community. This indicates the need to take a deeper look on village power structures and transparency in the context of accessibility to significant information. Most of the respondents(59%), however, indicated that the village has no CF user group in place.



## 6. Public Sector

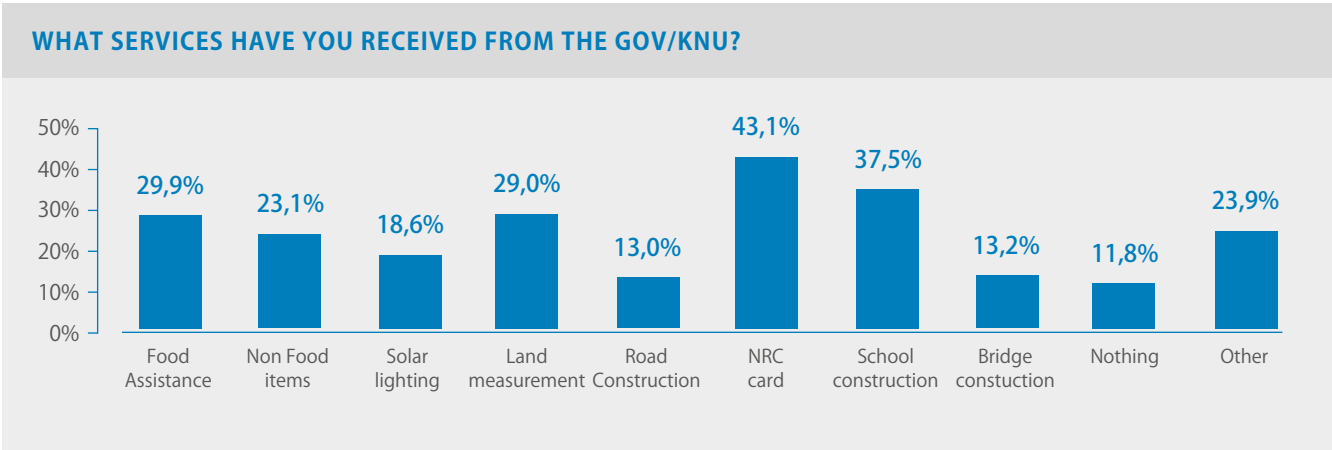
Defining public service can be broad. It however refers to activities and types of work organized by the government or governance actors in order to benefit all the people in a particular society or community. The entities that hold authority over the organization of public services are meant to help people with what they need, rather than making profit. The definition of what can or should be public services is under controversial discussion. In fragile states, however, types of public service (**basic healthcare & education, security, judicial structures, waste management, provision of information, etc.**) might be rather weak or non-existent. Even in developed countries there is a controversial discussion to which extent certain services should be free of charge or provided at minimum costs. Some argue basic education and basic health services should be free. However, in reality, an often significant amount of money is expected to “contribute to the system.” When this is the case, it can be identified as social exclusion that harms people by preventing them from meeting their basic needs. Examples can be seen where certain people groups are prevented from access to sufficient health services.

Concerns about fragile states and insufficient public service structures have caused the development sector to respond. It has become a humanitarian issue that this also relates to peace and prosperity. Despite the fact that service delivery

is not a neuter issue but can be politically significant importance as well.

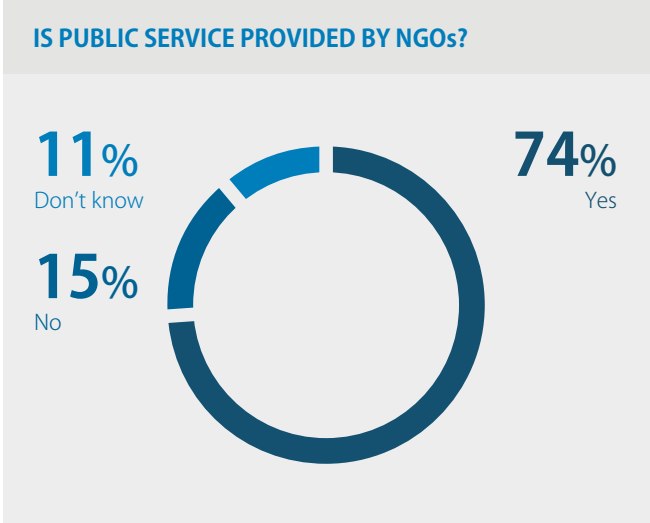
After having laid the theoretical foundation for understanding public services, the following section is primarily dedicated to the baseline survey results. For IDP households however, effective service delivery is essential and it can be assumed that the primary interest of these vulnerable people groups is the access to essential services, regardless where these services come from. Donors in this context can play a significant role as they often aim for building capable states that have controlling presence, authority and visibility throughout their land. It is a natural thing that a central government is challenging any other authority (ethnic group) for these very reasons. As the KNU and its structures have also been significant service providers in large parts of their territory, it will depend on the development of their capability for providing significant public services in future. The above graphic shows the list of services IDPs have mentioned and which are essential to IDP households. The list of services was not pre-determined but gathered throughout the survey. Public health services can be allocated under the category “other” as these are not directly listed.

During the last few years, government authorities have primarily provided Citizen Scrutiny Cards for communities, have sent teachers to target villages, and have in some cas-



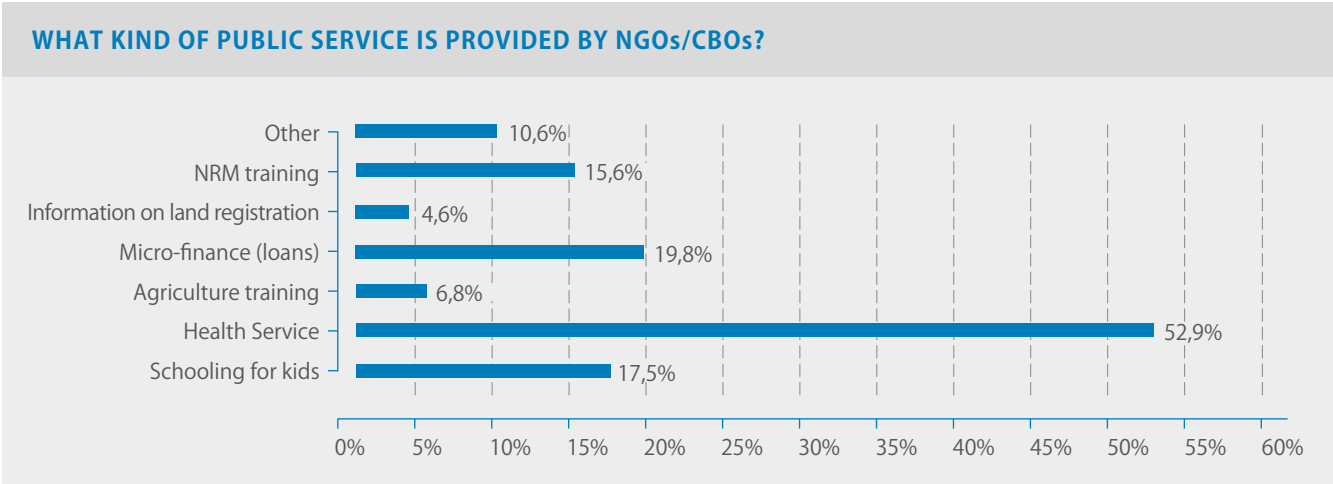
es provided social infrastructures such as school buildings. Through the Karen Education Department (KED), the KNU is also providing education support by the employment of local Karen teachers and stationaries. In the absence of Interim Arrangements between the government and the KNU and the presence of clear demarcations, the government has tried to further penetrate into contested areas through the establishment of schools and placement of teachers. Within mixed controlled areas, the government has been trying to reinforce its presence and strengthen its control over former inaccessible areas.

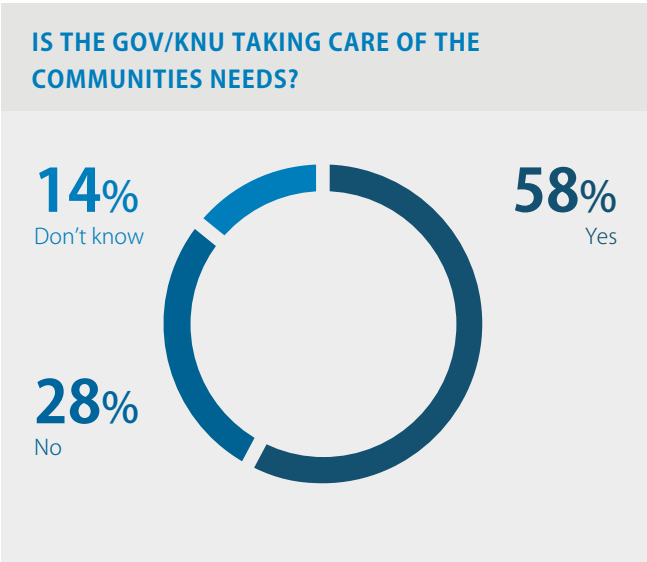
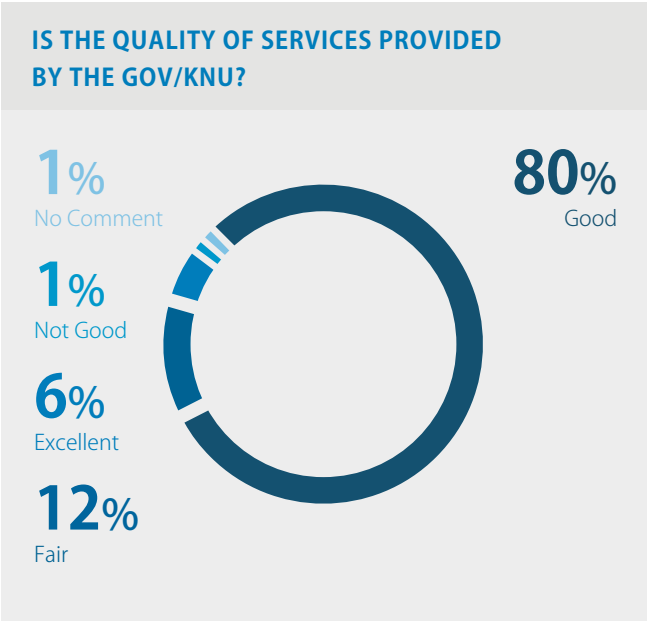
Up to this point, effective service provision is provided by either GoUM or KNU entities. This can be perceived as a positive since it benefits IDP households. It is interesting to note that food assistance (30%) is seen as a public service. This means it is still very essential to some communities and reflects the early stage of rehabilitation and development. The ELDP project has promised to take steps forward to lower this dependency. And when non-food items are added, the percentage of the two categories food assistance and non-food items moves up to 53%. This indicates a high level of vulnerability or dependency. As food assistance usually does not belong to the category of classical public services but can be defined as food/item assistance in crisis, it will be an essential benchmark to reduce this vulnerability/dependency level.



However, overall it can be said that economic development and progress in the region will not be sustainable without sufficient public services equally accessible.

Public services provided through external funding can and should only be an interim solution. In this context, our survey was assessed to which extent NGOs/CBOs are also providing public services. We found that 74% of IDP respondents indicated that public service is provided by the civil society sector to which NGOs and CBOs belong.





expectations but are easily satisfied with a minimum of services provided. This is a vulnerability indicator in itself (**ability to express needs**). The following question whether authorities (GoUM/KNU) are taking care of community needs touches people’s perceptions on a deeper level. It is interesting to note that only 58% of IDP respondents have the impression that these authorities are concerned about community needs. There is a larger group of people, however, who are not satisfied or have not a clear idea or are unsure about what to answer to this question. The ELDP project will have to take significant steps forward in advocacy in order to make the voices of displaced people heard. The project has sufficient means to conduct a series of meetings/workshops with stakeholders at township level in order to address the issue of accessibility to public services. There will be fair and valuable chances for bringing diverse voices together. But the overall goal is to ensure that the voices of IDPs are heard and that their concerns are properly communicated at the levels of authorities. A dialogue facilitated by the project bears the chance to work towards significant improvements for those who are still left out and have been marginalized for a long time.

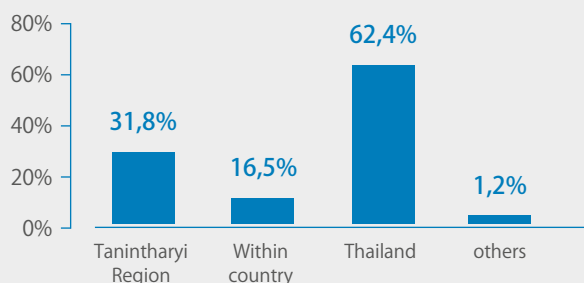
Next to the simple availability of essential public services, quality of services determines whether they contribute to peoples’ welfare. Our survey revealed that most people (80%) are satisfied with the quality of service that is provided by GoUM or KNU. In this context, it can be understood that vulnerable people usually do not express high or any



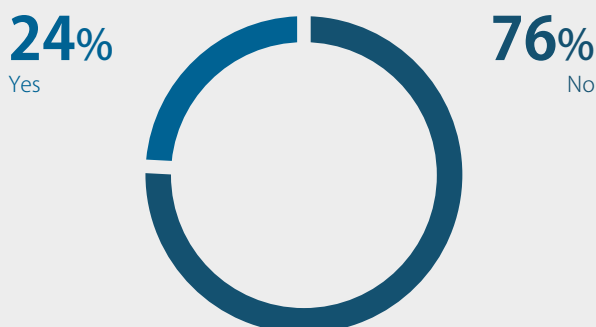
## 7. Migration

People in migration are defined as people leaving voluntarily their home in search of the better standard of living and quality of life, higher salaries, and more stable political conditions. In our baseline survey, we are seeking to include both, people who migrate for voluntary reasons and people who migrate for the reason of armed conflict (forced migration). The study does not make distinctions and refuses to categorize negative effects from armed conflict but assumes that IDP households are generally from a background of forced migration experiences. The long lasting civil war has made people, especially ethnic groups, very vulnerable.

### IN WHICH REGION DID THE PERSON MIGRATED TO?



### HAS A HH MEMBER WORKED OUTSIDE THIS REGION?

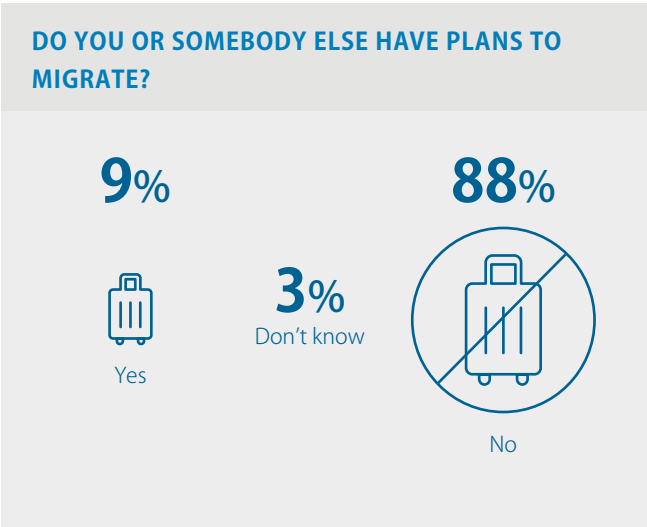


Since the national ceasefire agreement (NCA) between the government of the Union of Myanmar and the Karen National Union (KNU) came into existence on February 7th 2012, people from refugee camps along the Thai-Burmese Border have evaluated their chances for dignified return to places of origin or elsewhere in Myanmar. Benchmarks are usually very similar and deal with the very question of livelihood security, schooling for children, and availability of public services. Meanwhile, several hundreds have returned to their homeland but most refugees still have remained in the Thai camps. However, as ongoing political instability and economic stagnation shapes every day's life, it is still the youth who search for opportunities outside of their communities, which seems to cause an obvious brain drain. Within the development sector, however, migration is meanwhile an excepted way to secure livelihoods because remittances are seen as a new means to secure livelihood. The negative effects of migration are not discussed in this document.

The data we collected refers to migration purposes for work reasons. The data gathered show that around 24% of the household members have worked outside their region of origin. The majority of these people have worked in Thailand (62,4%), followed by places in the Tanintharyi Region (31,8%) and other places within the country (16,5%).

### WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR MIGRATION?

The question about reasons for migration is important as it reveals deeper understanding of the underlying patterns of leaving home for work. The data we received shows that becoming a seasonal worker is common among nearly 65% of the respondents. It can be assumed that seasonal work outside the area of origin is taken up during the lean season where income opportunities or food at home gets short. Another larger group of respondents (36.5%) mentioned they migrate for learning purposes. It can be assumed that these desires for learning are somehow combined with work in unfamiliar areas (rural people work in the hospitality sector and being trained by hotels, restaurants, etc.). Major reasons are

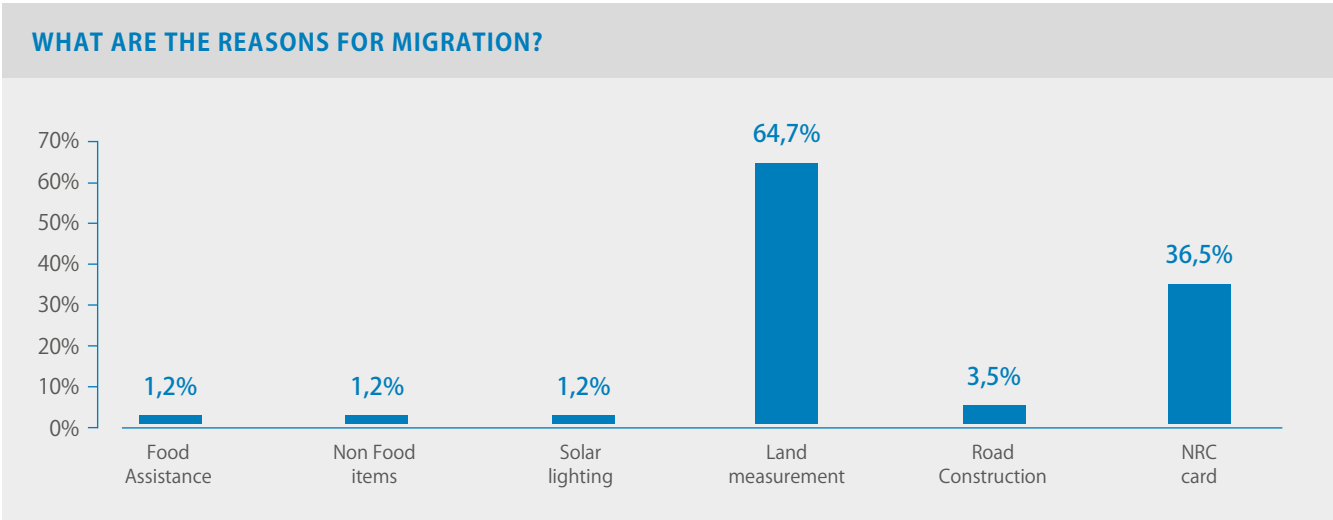


usually similar for seeking better job opportunities as seasonal workers while simultaneously being on the lookout for vocational training and better future prospects by new job opportunities. In this context, it can be mentioned that Thailand aims for accumulating more semi-skilled or unskilled labor in order to train these people in specific areas of need.

The respondents in our survey, however, mentioned that most of them (88%) do not have concrete plans to migrate

to Thailand or elsewhere. The experience of forced migration among IDP households is probably contributing to the view that migration is seen rather negative or at best, as necessary means to secure livelihoods of the family. One could argue that this is a positive sign for family unity and certain values in place that are concerned with family and community union.

In our survey, only 9% of all participants of the survey have currently plans to leave the region or know somebody who does. This relatively small percentage might be an indicator that especially young people look into the future with more confidence and have hopes that the economic situation would improve in their region. The ELDP project likes to interpret this feedback as positive. There is the hope that, once the VT center is established, valuable learning opportunities in the region have emerged and will contribute to secured livelihoods in the region.

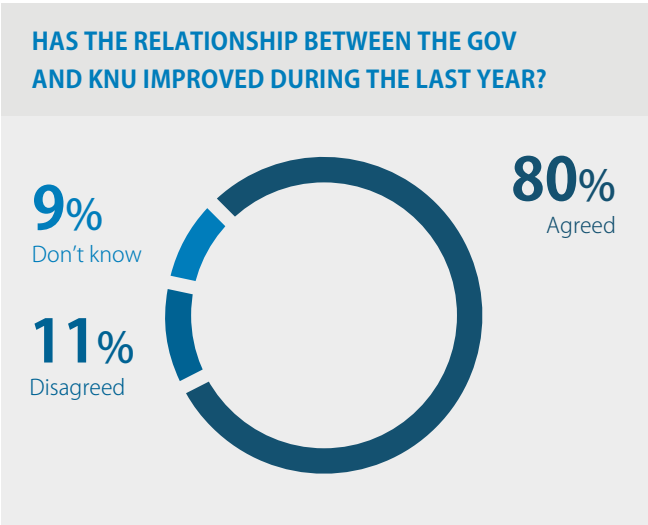




# 8. Peace and Conflict

The majority of Karen communities under the ELDP Project have suffered conflict- and development induced displacement in the past due to the conflict between successive Myanmar Governments and the KNU. The bi-lateral ceasefire between the two parties in 2012 and the National Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) of 2015 greatly contributed to increased stability and security across Southeast Myanmar, including Tanintharyi Region. Though far from being a post-conflict environment, the more or less stable ceasefires have tremendously improved the situation of conflict-affected Karen populations. In many areas, displaced people have returned to their places of origin and are attempting to rebuild their lives. Increased freedom of movement, improved livelihood opportunities and the (re-) emergence of civil society and civil society networks have been identified as benefits of the ceasefire by conflict affected populations. Research has also shown that communities expressed a strong desire for peace and increased security. The need for assistance is consistently expressed as only being secondary to the need for peace and security.<sup>1</sup>

While communities acknowledge that the relationship between the government and the KNU has significantly improved during the last few years, trust and confidence in the overall success of the peace process remains limited. When asked if the current peace process will result in lasting peace between the conflict-parties, only 24% of interviewees agreed, while 46% disagreed and 30% did not know. Furthermore, respondents were rather undecided if authorities reflect their priorities in the peace process. The majority (39%)



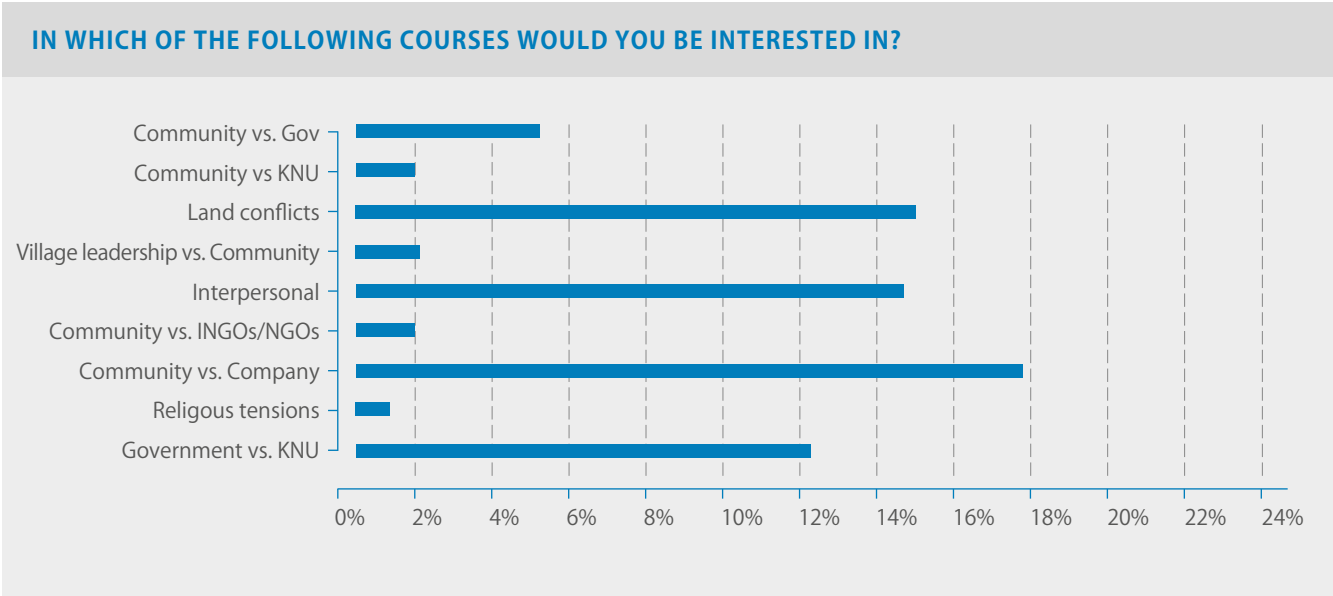
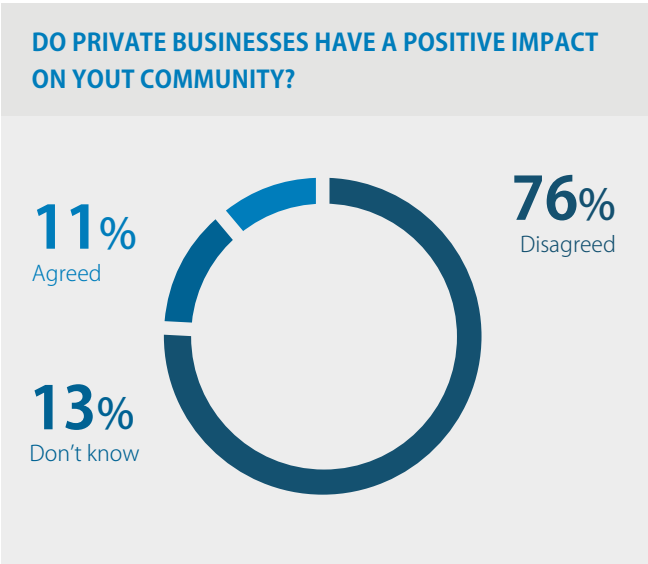
<sup>1</sup> Myanmar Peace Support Initiative (MPSI) (2014): Lessons Learned, pp.26-27

felt that authorities did not reflect their communities’ priorities in the peace process.

Ceasefires have also opened up many previously inaccessible areas to private businesses, including large-scale tracts of productive land and rich natural resource deposits. Many project are moving forward, before the government and the

KNU have reached agreements on key economic governance including resource sharing, property rights, rules and regulations that form the regulatory environment for business. These problematic aspects of the current framework have already contributed to negative consequences from projects in conflict-affected areas, including contested land acquisitions and unsustainable and environmentally damaging resource extraction, which have both become a major concern for conflict-affected communities and potentially threaten to discredit both the EAOs that have led the peace process, and the ceasefires themselves. In fact, 76% of respondents did not feel that private businesses have a positive impact on their community. In addition, respondents indicated that most tensions in the communities exist due to land conflicts and conflicts between community and private companies.

The ceasefire has also allowed local and international humanitarian & development agencies to access conflict-affected areas and engage with communities. The majority of respondents (74%) indicated that NGOs and CSOs have positively changed the situation in their community, while only 5% disagreed. The relationships between communities and aid organizations can be regarded as healthy, but will need



continuous efforts in the fields of accountability and transparency in order to be sustained.continuous efforts in the fields of accountability and transparency in order to be sustained.





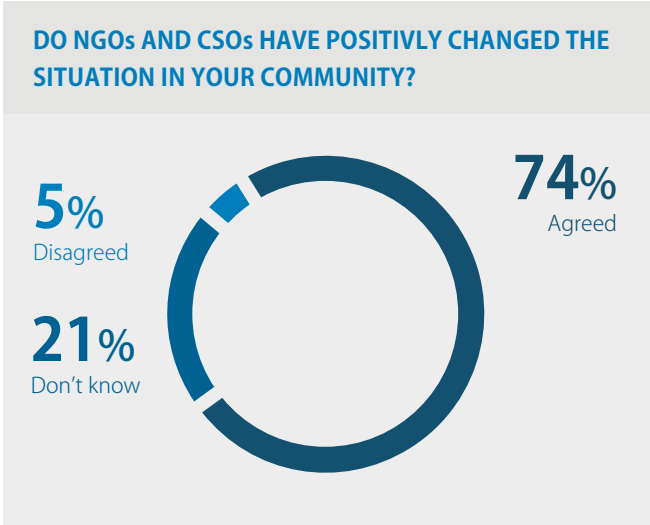


## 9. Conclusions

This section provides some key overall conclusions.

- › The majority of Karen IDPs are engaged in the agriculture sector, including orchard cultivation (betel nut), shifting cultivation (slash & burn) and to some extent own small rubber plantations.
- › Income levels of Karen IDPs remain low, with 40% of interviewed households indicating that they have an average income per year that is below 1 Million MMK (USD\$750), while 26% of HHs reported an income between 1 Million MMK and 2 Million.
- › Land tenure security remains a major issue in Karen IDP communities. Over 73% of land owners report that they don't have official land titles/documents from the government or KNU.
- › Access to finances remains a great concern for local communities. Many are vulnerable to local money lenders.
- › The vast majority of Karen IDP HHs indicated that they experience food shortage throughout the year and need to borrow money in order to ensure food security.
- › Both the government and the KNU provide public services in the target region, but coordination and cooperation between the actors remains limited. In addition, NGOs and INGOs are found to also provide essential public services for conflict affected communities.
- › Natural resource management (NRM) plays an important role in the lives of target communities that are located in rural and forest areas.
- › Migration has been a common phenomenon in ELDP Project target communities. Reasons for migration include job scarcity, insecurity, and limited vocational training opportunities. However, the majority of respondents indicated that they have no desire to migrate.
- › The majority of interviewed HHs did not have a chance to receive vocational trainings in the last 12 months. Many respondents have shown a high interest in attending vocational training courses in the future.
- › Though the ceasefire between the government and the KNU has significantly improved the situation of Karen conflict-affected communities, the majority of respondents do not believe that the current peace process will result in lasting peace. While the relationship between the government and KNU has improved, communities face new challenges, including land grabbing and unsustainable natural resource extraction by the private sector.

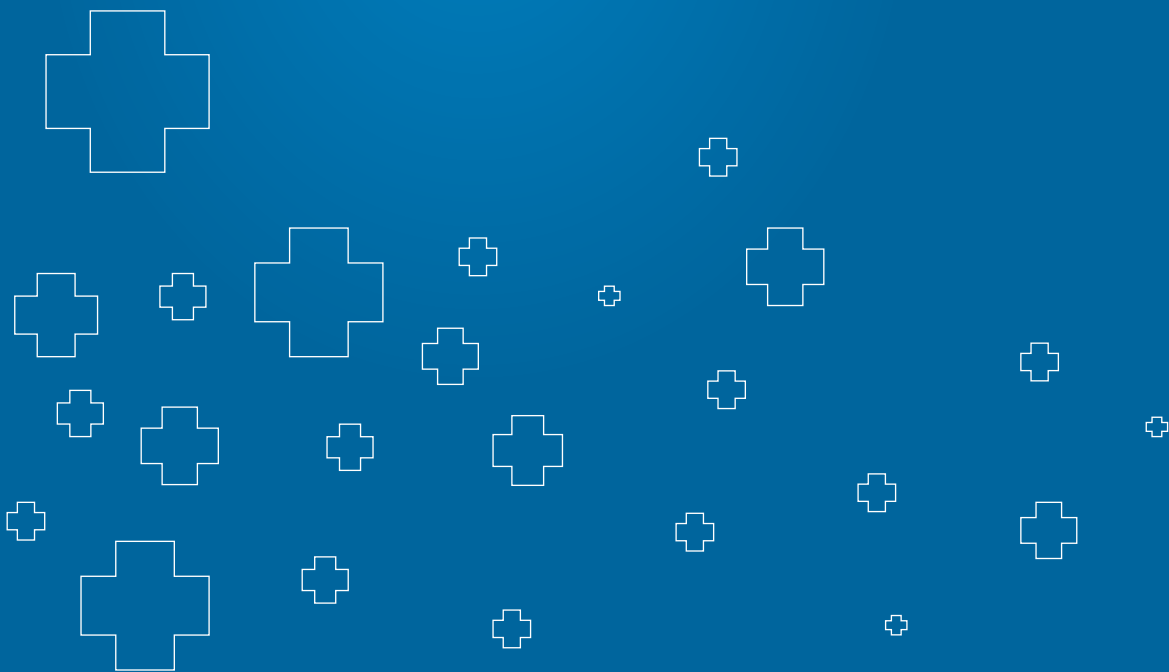
aid organizations can be regarded as healthy, but will need continuous efforts in the fields of accountability and transparency in order to be sustained.



## 9. Conclusions

This section provides some key overall conclusions.

- › The majority of Karen IDPs are engaged in the agriculture sector, including orchard cultivation (betel nut), shifting cultivation (slash & burn) and to some extent own small rubber plantations.
- › Income levels of Karen IDPs remain low, with 40% of interviewed households indicating that they have an average income per year that is below 1.Mio. MMK (USD\$750), while 26% of HHs reported an income between 1.Mio. MMK and 2.Mio.
- › Land tenure security remains a major issue in Karen IDP communities, with over 73% of land owners reporting that they don't have official land titles/documents from the government or KNU.
- › Access to finances remains a great concern for local communities, with many being vulnerable to local money lenders.
- › The vast majority of Karen IDP HH indicated that they experience food shortage during the year, and need to borrow money in order to ensure food security.
- › Both the government and the KNU provide public services in the target region, but coordination and cooperation between the actors remains limited. In addition, NGOs and INGOs are found to also provide essential public services to conflict affected communities.
- › Natural resource management (NRM) plays an important role in the lives of target communities, who are located in rural and forest areas.
- › Migration has been a common phenomenon in ELDP Project target communities. Reasons for migration include job scarcity, insecurity and limited vocational training opportunities. Currently, the majority of respondents however indicated that they have no desire to migrate.
- › The majority of interviewed HH did not have a chance to receive vocational trainings in the last 12 months. Many respondents have shown a high interest in receive vocational training in the future.
- › Though the ceasefire between the government and the KNU has significantly improved the situation of Karen conflict affected communities, the majority of respondents do not believe that the current peace process will result in lasting peace. While the relationship between the government and KNU has improved, communities face new challenges, including land grabbing and unsustainable natural resource extraction by the private sector.



**Covenant Consult Ltd.**

No. 27, Pinlon 1st Street  
Shwe Pinlon Housing, 27 Ward  
North Dagon Tsp. Yangon