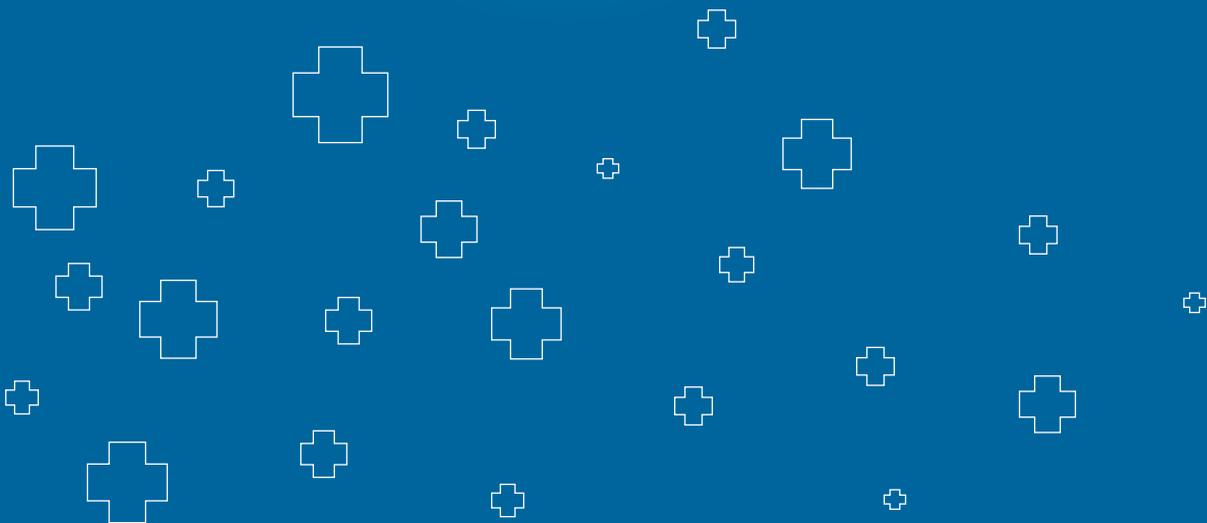


Vulnerability, Poverty and Displacement in the Tanintharyi Region of Myanmar

Covenant Consult and the ELDP Consortium



Prepared by Dr. Robert Mellor



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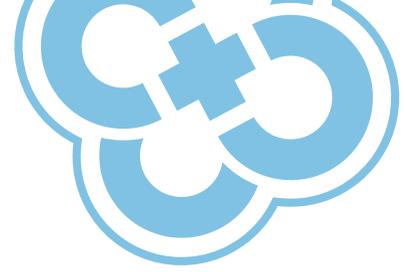
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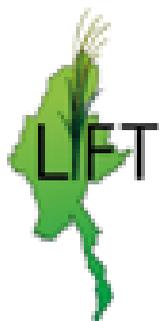
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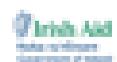
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Dr. Robert Mellor
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May 2017

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



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1. Executive Summary

This report describes the process and findings of a Vulnerability Assessment carried out by Covenant Consult – a member of the ELDP Consortium in the Tanintharyi Region of Myanmar in March/April 2017. The communities covered by the assessment are almost entirely comprised of Karen people, and all of them have suffered the particular effects of displacement and conflict as well as the general effects of poverty. All of the communities are part of the target population for the ‘Enhanced Livelihoods for Displaced People’ (ELDP) Project funded by LIFT. This project targets a catchment population of approximately 15,365 people of approximately 2,600 HH the Tanintharyi Region. The Vulnerability Assessment was conducted shortly after the project Baseline Survey and the combined set of results will inform and guide project activities.

Within available resources and time, the Vulnerability Assessment covered a sample of 254 households in 9 villages and three townships. A modified ‘Umbrella Model’ approach was used – utilising household questionnaires, focus group discussions, key informant interviews and observation in the field. Whilst our modifications and the sample size does not allow for a detailed comparison against other regional ‘Umbrella Model’ data sets, it still allows for general observations and informed discussion. Using this model with adjustments and calibrations it was deemed **that 79 sampled households (31.1%) were ‘vulnerable’ – this is certainly higher than the average 24% recorded through studies in other communities.**

All of the communities examined had all suffered displacement due to conflict of various kinds: in some cases we visited well-established villages where inhabitants had been forced to flee (often repeatedly) and had returned after some

1 A well-proven model developed by Dr Mike Griffiths, the Director of Research at the Social Policy and Poverty Research Group (SPPRG) in Yangon, Myanmar in co-operation with LIFT

2 The Karen National Union (KNU) and its armed wing, the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) have been, until recently, waging a well-documented civil war against Government forces. A cease-fire was signed in but anecdotally still many areas in the regional reconsidered “under KNU control”

time; others were ‘new’ IDP villages in areas where re-located communities had been established in particular areas under the instructions of either the Myanmar Government or the KNU/KNLA². In one case, a small community had fled, then returned home to their village to discover their land had been stolen by neighbours, then re-located to a location under government instruction, only to find that the government had “sold their land” to a private rubber company.

Our study indicates that the **experience of this kind of displacement has produced noticeable and negative outcomes within these communities and has exacerbated the effects of already-prevalent causes of vulnerability (a ‘multiplier effect’). Current factors and behaviours are doing little to improve their resilience** Health indicators for this population group appear significantly worse than the national averages. Most households in the sample group are losing an average of 60 days of productive work due to ill-health. Yet, as confirmed by the recent UNCHR Return Assessment 2016³, very few village (8% recorded by UNCHR) have adequate health facilities. Many people observed in these communities (understandably) now display **behaviours that indicate they do not have any kind of secure attachment to their current ‘home’** – and this in turn increases their vulnerability when measured against various ‘Umbrella Model’ factors. In many locations, their **crop production (for food and limited sale) is restricted to the outputs from shifting and ‘slash-and-burn’ agriculture** on lands (often far from their homes) that “...no-one else wants”. There is commonly **little evidence of effective community water management** and people spend relatively large amounts of time collecting water for their daily needs, as they have not established easily-accessible collection (wells or tanks) nor storage facilities.

In all of the 9 villages we visited across the region, there is a long-established **pre-occupation with growing ‘betel-nut’⁴ as the only primary cash-crop.** There is **little apparent**

3 UNCHR, 2016, Return Assessments - Tanintharyi Region Myanmar South East Operation - UNHCR Hpa-An



consideration of other cash crops within these communities. People often said “...that is all we know” as a justification. Yet they had little knowledge of market prices or other critical information. In this situation they are typically at the mercy of the local betel-nut traders, who operate cartels that conspire to fix a low price and frequently indenture families to years of servitude to repay very small loans. The focus groups often revealed a **mendicant attitude** amongst village representatives – whilst certainly not ‘hopeless’, these communities displayed little of the pro-active commercial initiative obvious in the surrounding (typically Burmese) communities.

In relation to social capital, the displacement experience has created a number of **ironic effects**. In some ways, many of these communities show evidence of **increased strength of social capital and community bonding** that has grown from empathy and their shared endurance of hardship. Such hardship has brought them together to re-build physical aspects of their communities (churches, village halls etc). **Yet many have also suffered at the opportunistic hands of their neighbours**, who have sometimes taken over land and property during times of emergency. These kinds of events (frequently spoken of) have engendered **a level of mistrust and caution**.

In response to our findings, and within the scope of the ELDP project, our Vulnerability Assessment suggests recommendations in areas such as:

- › **Providing certificated Vocational Education and Training (VET) in areas of projected high demand;** (e.g. construction, hospitality, customer service, tourism, small business management, motorcycle/machinery maintenance, job interview/application skills etc) to allow people to better participate in meeting local labour needs and also projected regional labour/skill demands associated with economic developments (such as the SEZ and Deep Sea Port) in Dawei and around the region;

4 Areca Catechu

- › **Piloting cooperative small business arrangements and building local capacity;** (e.g. grower’s cooperatives, farmers transport cooperatives, cooperative lending/ microfinance groups, village labour group for short and long-term contracts etc);
- › **Establishing pilot businesses associated with the ELDP training centre;** (e.g. motorcycle repair shop, teashop, restaurant, guesthouse, souvenir shop);
- › **Establishing information networks to provide local communities** (especially those with limited or no phone coverage) **with market information** (e.g. market prices for betel nut, market prices for other cash crops etc);
- › **Providing (or facilitating through government extension programs/ NGOs/CSOs) valuable information and training on other sources of livelihood;** (e.g. alternative cash-crops, fish/crab/shrimp raising, production of items for sale etc);
- › **Providing (or facilitating through government extension programs/ NGOs/CSOs) valuable information and training on improved methods of production and farming** (e.g. permaculture, organic farming, soil improvement, aquaculture, aquaponics, value-chain improvements etc);
- › **Providing (or facilitating through government extension programs/ NGOs/CSOs) valuable information and training on improved community planning and facilities** (e.g. water collection and management, community waste management, alternative power sources, alternative and efficient cooking methods, solar power/cooking, mini-hydropower, climate-change resilient building design etc)
- › **Facilitating important dialogues with Government/KNU :** (e.g. to secure land tenure, improve delivery of government services, critically improve local health services and education, ensure delivery of government extension services)

- › **Facilitating important dialogues with KNU/INGOS/NGOS/CBOs;** (e.g. to target these communities and include them as a priority within their programs/project

- › **Facilitating important dialogues with Private Sector entities** (especially multinational companies); (e.g. to seek opportunities for 'Inclusive Business' programs, Corporate Social Responsibility programs, and to lobby and support communities against unfair land-grabs by business interests

- › **Building capacity for local people (including Government and KNU officials) to develop and maintain their own capacity-development activities in the future;** (e.g. through ToT, development of community resource people, support for community members to work with the project as employees and/or interns). Critical and important skills would include: community facilitation and participation, using PRA tools, inclusive planning, building effective community structures etc.

- › **Building capacity for self-advocacy in IDP communities** – so that they may more effectively represent themselves in important dialogues concerning their futures. This is especially critical around discussions on land tenure and title and lobbying for increased healthcare and Government services.

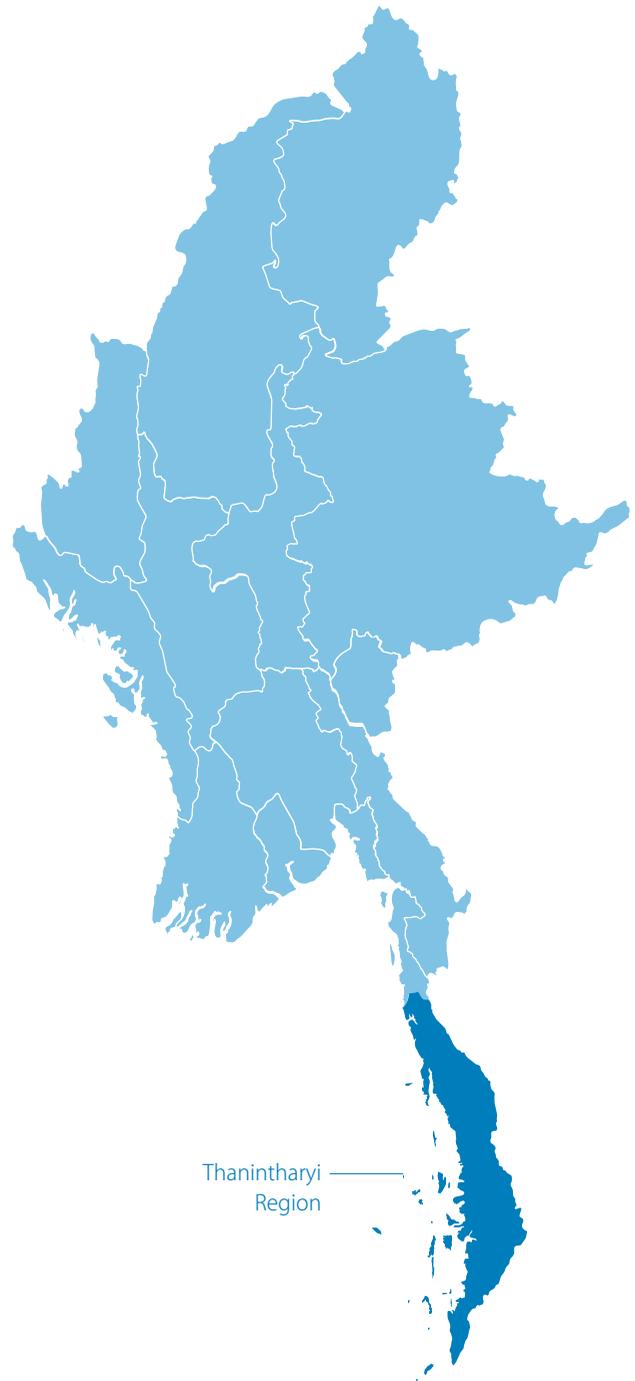
2. Background

THE TANINTHARYI REGION

The Tanintharyi region (previously called the Tennesarim Division) in southern Myanmar (Burma) is an area rich with natural resources. It covers the long narrow part of the country in the south – bordered by Thailand on the east and the Andaman Sea on the west. To the north is the Mon State where a Mon separatist movement under the New Mon State Party (NMSP) has been active for decades. The capitol of the region is Dawei, which the British previously called Tavoy. In Dawei there is a sizeable airport, a train line that runs to Yangon and about 25km west from the city on the coast there are well-publicized preparations to build one of the largest Special Economic Zones (SEZ) in Asia along with the Dawei Deep-Sea Port – of a size to rival Singapore. If media and government reports are to be believed, the amount of foreign investment currently pouring into the area amounts to hundreds of billions of dollars.

There are many islands off the coast – the Mergui and Moscos island chains – and these and the long coastal beaches are already being earmarked for luxury tourism development. The region’s hills and mountains have long been a source of: teak, coal, gold, and precious metals and there are an increasing number of multinational mining companies operating in the area – often despite the protests of local communities. The area is also home to some of the biggest rubber and palm oil plantations in the world. The coast and offshore fishing grounds are a major industrial fishery and many coastal communities are also involved in small-scale fishing and the production of dried fish, shrimp, squid and Ngapi (fermented shrimp paste). There is some amount of pearl cultivation in the region and also the commercial collection of Bird’s Nests for export.

According to the latest Census figures (2014) the population of Tanintharyi region was officially 1,406,434.





THE KAREN PEOPLE IN TANINTHARYI REGION – CONFLICT AND DISPLACEMENT

The Karen people are an ethnic minority in Myanmar (Burma). It is estimated that the 4-5 million Karen people comprise approximately 8% of the total Myanmar population. In Myanmar, the largest concentrations of Karen people live in Karen State and in the south-eastern region – including Tanintharyi. The Karen people were often favoured by the British Colonial government and this (amongst other cultural and political reasons) has led to resentment and ethnic persecution of the Karen by the Burmese majority since World War II. The Karen National Union (KNU) and its armed wing the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) have waged an often-bloody civil war against the central Burmese government since early 1949. The initial goal of the KNU at first was the creation of an independent state. However, since 1976 the KNU has called for a federal system rather than an independent Karen State. A bilateral cease-fire agreement was signed with the government in early 2012, which was followed by the National Cease-fire Agreement (NCA) in October 2015. As a consequence of the armed conflict, Karen people have fled the country and sought asylum in other countries as refugees. Even to this day some 100,000 Karen people are still living in refugee camps along the Thai/Myanmar border – many of them were born in the camps.

The effects of armed conflict have been felt by Karen communities as far back as the 1940s. Both regular Burmese military units (Tatmadaw) and armed Burmese militia groups have been involved in attacks on Karen communities – especially in the southern parts of the country. The incidents of rape, torture and atrocities committed during these armed conflicts has been well-documented and significant numbers of people have been displaced by conflict. During the conflicts, the government troops have also often destroyed roads and other essential infrastructure and the Government frequently denied essential services to areas that were ‘under Karen control’. Both sides laid extensive tracts of landmines which have resulted in civilian casualties. Local Karen people were often

pressured to move to areas under Government control and were then forced to pay ‘taxes’ in the form of rice and other basic supplies and/or provide labour under forced labour programs. In areas under ‘Karen control’ the KNU has often acted as a de facto government body – providing schools, housing and medical services, regulating trade, and providing food and shelter. Its armed wing, the KNLA, also acted as a security force protecting people from attacks from government forces and/or giving them warning and engaging in armed skirmishes with attackers to allow people time to flee to safety in the jungles and forests.

However, it is well-documented that the displacement experience of these communities typically did not come on just one occasion, nor from one aggressor. Often their suffering came at the hands of various actors, in different ways... and repeatedly over time. UNCHR report that peak of the armed conflicts in Tanintharyi Region occurred in 1970s – 1990s, but smaller armed conflicts continue and other (long-lasting) drivers of displacement persist.

We found that the Karen people in these Tanintharyi villages have been subsequently displaced in a number of ways: a) fearful amidst armed conflict (or imminent conflict) they have fled into the forests or over the border to the Thai refugee camps – some of them never to return to their homes; (b) people have been ‘re-located’ “for their own safety” by either the Government, or ethnic armed groups (EAGs) such as the KNU/KNLA; (c) more recently, people have been forced or “persuaded” to move by large and powerful companies (with strong links to the Government) that have “acquired” massive tracts of land for forestry, rubber, palm oil plantation agriculture or extractive industries.

Ironically, as the UNCHR⁵ reports, the relative stability of the region and infrequency of major armed conflict since the 1990s has promoted the recent ‘investment boom’ and

5 Tanintharyi Region Profile - Updated: June 2014 – UNCHR South-East Information Management Unit



development in the area which in turn has led to a proliferation of 'land-grabs'. A recent UNCHR report (2014) suggested that there are some 71,650 people in Tanintharyi Region are now classified as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). In addition, it is estimated some 70,000 Karen people have fled the country and sought asylum in other countries as refugees. Even to this day some 100,000 Karen people are still living in refugee camps along the Thai/Myanmar border – many of them were born in the camps.

THE ELDP CONSORTIUM AND THE 'ENHANCED LIVELIHOODS FOR DISPLACED PEOPLE' (ELDP) PROJECT

The ELDP Consortium is a consortium between: the Karen Development Network (KDN), the Tanintharyi Karen Peace Support Initiative (TKPSI), and Covenant Consult. The ELDP Consortium was formed to address the issues described above and enhance livelihoods for Internally Displaced People (IDPs) currently residing in 33 target villages in three townships in the Tanintharyi region. The Consortium is responsible for the Enhanced Livelihoods for Displaced People (ELDP) Project. This project, funded by the LIFT Fund, targets a catchment population of approximately 15,365 people of approximately 2,600 HH. The project is centred on close involvement and dialogue between village communities, village-based organizations, and local authorities of both, the Government of the Union of Myanmar (GoUM) and the Karen National Union (KNU), as appropriate in the area. In this context, KDN and its implementation partners are committed to conflict-sensitive principles and will incorporate those into their working practice.

ELDP Project Objectives

- i. To build vocational skills that help IDPs to increase their incomes through new jobs and self-employment in small businesses;
- ii. To support village organizations and community structures that lead to reduced vulnerability to shocks and stresses;
- iii. To facilitate a constructive dialogue between GoUM, KNU and CSOs in conflict sensitive ways that lead to improved services at state and township level;
- iv. To build capacities in IDP communities that lead to more equitable access to and sustainable use of local natural resources

⁶ The 'Umbrella Model' comprises 10 factors which contribute to vulnerability assessment of IDP households. It represents a tool of mapping relative household vulnerability in a user-friendly umbrella style radar plot to illustrate the relative degree of 'protection'



3. Context and Situation

PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

The Vulnerability Assessment aimed to identify underlying contributors to (and causes of) **both transitory and chronic vulnerability**. This approach also included analysis of factors which can affect resilience at community and a household level.

The field survey questionnaire we used was an adapted version of the **'Umbrella Model'**⁷ developed by Dr Michael Griffiths and the Social Policy and Poverty Research Group (SPPR) in cooperation with LIFT. This model is currently being used to measure vulnerability at household and community level in other areas of the country. The SPPR/LIFT Umbrella Model focusses on **10 key factors that contribute to household vulnerability: Indebtedness, Income, Assets, Food Security, Livelihood Diversification, Health, Water and Sanitation, Dependent Household Members, Social Participation, and Decision-Making**. For the particular purposes of the EDLP project, **additional questions** (both qualitative and quantitative) were added - relating to the experience and effects of Displacement. Underlying the overall conduct of the Vulnerability Assessment was also an examination of **five key sources of livelihood assets: natural resources, human capital, financial capital, social/religious capital, and physical assets**.

In addition to the household questionnaire, village focus groups⁸ were held with community leaders in each village - where a series of consistent questions guided the initial discussions. The Enumeration Team Leaders and the Assessment Team Leader also completed a standardised observation sheet documenting key community indicators as a further source of information. Hence we had three sources of input data.

⁷ The 'Umbrella Model' comprises 10 factors which contribute to vulnerability assessment of IDP households. It represents a tool of mapping relative household vulnerability in a user-friendly umbrella style radar plot to illustrate the relative degree of 'protection' which a household has against shocks and hazards. Our adapted version included additional questions as well as an additional key factor-'Displacement' -which we believe to be pertinent in this research context.

This Vulnerability Assessment needed to be both reliable and pragmatic. The assignment was undertaken within a limited budget of finance, resources and time. In addition, the 'Vulnerability Assessment followed closely (one week) after the project conducted its Baseline Survey - in hindsight it would seem logical for future projects to combine both activities for the sake of effectiveness and to avoid "over-questioning" the sample group of villages.

A team of 25 trained enumerators (a combination of both ELDP project and contract staff) under the leadership of Dr Robert Mellor (Assessment Team Leader), designed, modified, trained in and conducted the field research over a period of ten days. Nine representative villages, in three Townships - Dawei, Palaw and Thayetchaung - were surveyed. With approximately 28 Households (HHs) per village community sampled and a total of 254 HHs, the sample size represented just under 10% of the project's designated HH population.

It is recognised that this sample size is smaller than the previous Vulnerability Assessment in Tanintharyi conducted by SPPR in 2015⁹ that sampled 40 HH in each village, but the modified assessment questionnaire also investigated additional 'Displacement' factors and was supplemented with further qualitative data from focus groups and village observations. Whilst the sample size and questionnaire design of our adapted Umbrella Model may not permit precise statistical comparison with other, previous, 'Umbrella Model' data sets, it nevertheless allows for well-founded comparisons and confident observations and discussions regarding the villages covered by the ELDP project.

⁸ Originally these meetings were intended as Key Informant Interviews with village leaders - however, as a result of cultural practice, typically a group of interested village spokespeople would join in and hence they became focus groups.

⁹ 'Dimensions of Poverty, Vulnerability and Social Protection in Rural Communities in Myanmar', SPPR, 2015 (sampled 1385 HH -

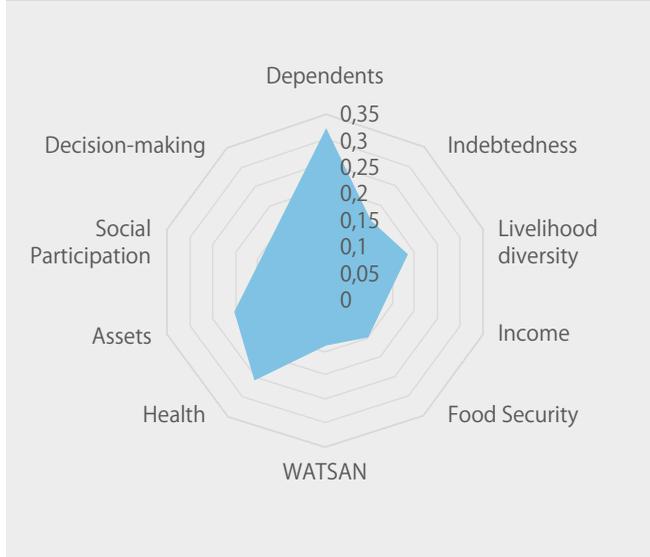


4. The Findings

The Assessment showed that **households in these IDP communities are more vulnerable in some factors than other communities and regions**. Although, in some factors, these communities showed a relative level of security, in others they show potential for ongoing vulnerability and an absence of resilience. In in some factors they show symptoms of the transition from transitory vulnerability to chronic vulnerability.

The **‘Umbrella Model’** utilises a relative definition of (statistical) vulnerability: “Vulnerability [is] defined in relative terms by measuring the relative deviation of a particular household score from the overall population mean. If the overall household score for each factor (for example health) [is] more than one standard deviation below the overall population score average, then that factor is classified as ‘vulnerable’. Overall **a household is classified as ‘vulnerable’ if three or more of the ten factors scored over 1 standard deviation lower than the population mean for those factors.**

(SPPR, DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY, VULNERABILITY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION IN RURAL COMMUNITIES IN MYANMAR’, 2015)



Using this standard definition (and utilising the internal mean-standard deviation of the sample itself), **79 (31.1%) of the 254 households were defined as ‘vulnerable’**. This compares to the average of 24% amongst the communities in other regions reported from the broader surveys by SPPR in 2015.

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Indebtedness 41 HHs/16% | Income 35 HHs/14% |
| Livelihood diversity 47 HHs/19% | Food Security 37 HHs/15% |
| Health 65 HHs/26% | WATSAN 34 HHs/14% |
| Dependency 82 HHs/32% | Assets 51 HHs/20% |
| Social Participation 40 HHs/15.5% | Decision-making 44 HHs/17% |

Our studies revealed that these communities are particularly vulnerable in a number of factors: **Health, Dependency, Livelihood Diversity, Household Assets, Water and Sanitation** - and evidence from our **non-comparable data**¹⁰ sources also reveals that these IDP communities are also vulnerable due to issues relating to: **land tenure and security, over-emphasis on a single source of income** (cultivation and sale of betel nut), **over-reliance on ‘slash and burn’ shifting agriculture, nature of indebtedness, poor information networks and relatively little cooperative production and marketing.**

¹⁰ Data collected from the FGDs, observations and additional survey questions (not included in the standard ‘Umbrella Model’ questionnaire) supplied to us - and hence not comparable.

In comparison¹¹ with other National data sets it was noted that these IDP communities in the Tanintharyi region are noticeably **vulnerable in areas such as Health**. Effective water management and poor agricultural practice (slash-and burn) are also significant issues and daily water collection/storage plus travel to and from remote farming plots is taking up a large proportion of productive hours in each day.

Within the Region, these IDP Karen communities also **suffer from enhanced social vulnerability** arising from ongoing ethnic discrimination and isolation. The betel-nut traders and wholesale supply merchants are almost entirely Bamar and despite their anecdotal claims that they “support the farmers” it is frequently reported that they often conspire to set a low wholesale price for the purchase of betel nut, as well as lending small amounts of money with very high interest rates (often indenturing future betel crops as repayment).

For re-located communities, often their new ‘home’ is in an area surrounded by ethnic Burmese Villages – compounding a sense of cultural isolation. In areas where there are extractive mines and rubber or palm oil plantations, it seems common practice that the owners bring in Burmese labourers from other parts of the country rather than hiring local Karen workers (apart from some sporadic low-paid day labouring such as weed clearance in rubber plantations etc). However, it must be recognised, that during focus group discussion, **many groups appeared quite passive and sometimes mendicant** and admitted that they had done little to seek out better-paid employment with these companies, nor develop small businesses that may profit from a synergistic relationship.

SPECIFIC VULNERABILITY FACTORS

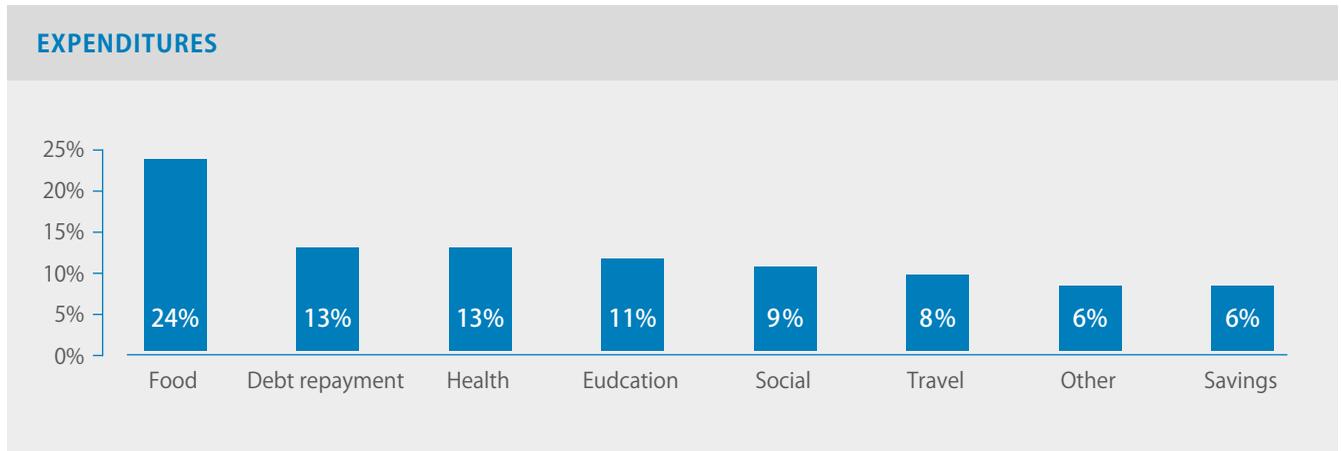
The following section discusses the findings in relation to the sample IDP communities and specific vulnerability factors – the **ten generic factors covered in the ‘Umbrella Model’ and the additional information** gathered in relation to ‘Displacement’. The findings include information revealed from all four sources: the Umbrella Model Questionnaire, the additional survey questions, the Focus Group Discussions and the Observation Checklist

1. Indebtedness

“High level of non-productive debt put livelihood assets at risk (collateral); repayments may reduce essential expenditure; high levels of existing debt can reduce ability to access additional credit” (SPPR, 2015). Using Umbrella Model calculations, 41 (16.14%) of surveyed households were deemed ‘Vulnerable’ in this factor.

In the communities studied, debt appeared to be a consistent factor in all households. Servicing debt accounted on average for 13% of household expenditure and was the second-highest item in the household budget (after food). This is slightly higher than previous surveys throughout the country. In Myanmar, it is generally accepted that there are a number of key factors in relation to debt when viewed as a potential risk to the household: the amount of debt as a percentage of household spending, the amount of expected debt in relation to expected income, the status of the creditor (and risk of foreclosure).

¹¹ Due to design differences in survey methodology and design, it was not possible to compare the results of this Vulnerability Assessment precisely with other ‘Umbrella Model’ data sets from the 2015 SPPR Vulnerability Assessment report. Nevertheless, a valid general comparison is possible.



WHAT ARE THE MAIN REASONS FOR TAKING A LOAN?

| | | |
|--------------------|------------|-------------|
| Livelihood | 16 | 8,0% |
| Health | 80 | 39,8% |
| Buy house/land | 4 | 2,0% |
| Education | 31 | 15,4% |
| Buy expensive item | 1 | 0,5% |
| Food | 60 | 29,9% |
| Other | 9 | 4,5% |
| Total | 201 | 100% |



In all villages, people recorded that debt was a constant factor in their life and the results reveal that they are persistently **borrowing for 'Health' (39.8% of borrowings) and 'Food' (29.9%)**. This is concerning, as both these items are necessary consumables rather than large, one-off items. When people spoke of 'Health' costs in discussions, it became apparent that they typically referred to smaller purchases such as medicines and small health clinic fees, rather than larger bills such as

major hospital bills. Hence, **people are borrowing simply to finance their daily living needs rather than investments in future income production**- this clearly makes them vulnerable if the debt should become unmanageable. It is also an area where a transitory vulnerability (borrowing to cover a 'one-off' occurrence) has the obvious potential to become long-lasting and chronic (the so-called 'downward spiral of debt').

Like other Umbrella Model studies, we have also examined and analysed from whom the money is being borrowed – the creditors. As with other studies¹², we recognise that borrowing from friends or relatives is regarded as carrying far less risk (and typically lower interest rates) than borrowing from ‘strangers’. Our study reveals that **more than half the debts are owed to ‘high risk’ creditors** – money lenders, ‘bosses’ (including traders /wholesalers/suppliers) and banks.

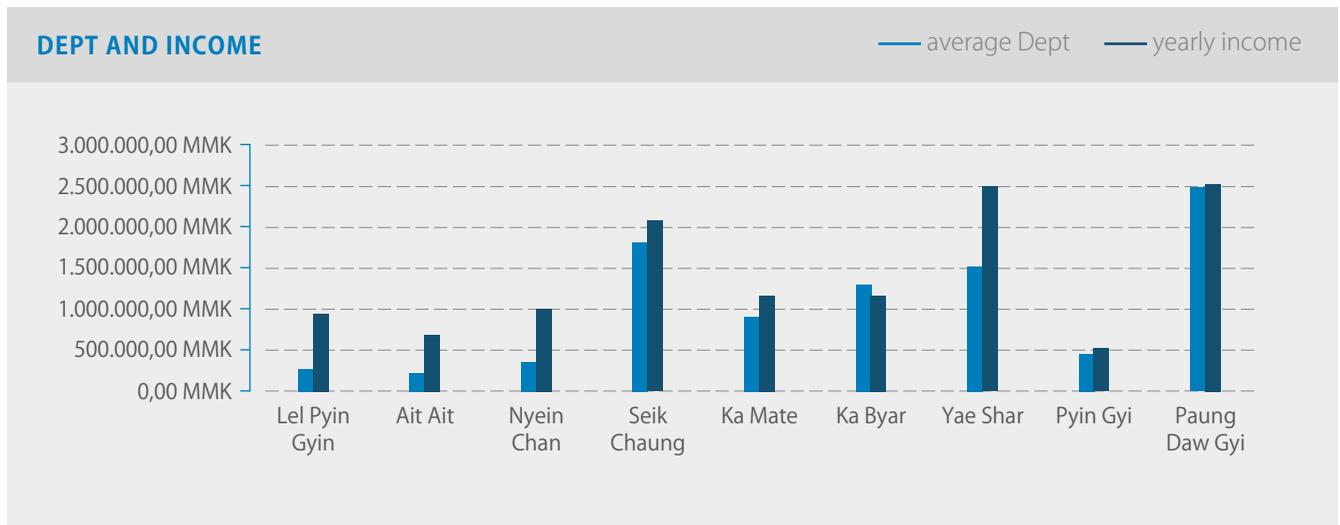
A common and disturbing scenario is found amongst poorer betel-nut growers. Already suffering disadvantage due to the well-known practice of price-fixing by the betel-nut trading cartels (enhanced by frequent ignorance of ‘real’ market prices due to absence of phone coverage), our FGDs often described the situation where the poorest families faced financial difficulties (transitory vulnerability) and were forced to borrow money from the betel-nut traders for spending on food or health items. In return, they are required to sell their future betel-nut crops to these traders (sometimes for 2-3 years) for a fixed price (often below market value) in order to service the high-interest repayments on the loan. Clearly this scenario disadvantages the poorest and most vulnerable households and also locks them into **a cycle of servitude and chronic vulnerability**.



‘It often happens to the really poor families in this village. They get into some kind of trouble for some reason or another and they end up having to borrow money from the betel-nut trader to buy simple things like food or medicine. Then they have to sell their betel nut to the trader for a low price – to pay back the loan. Sometimes they owe all their crops for the next 2-3 years into the future. The traders tell people that they are “helping the poor farmers” … but really they are …picking out the weak ones.’

Village Leader
Tanintharyi Region, 2017

¹²E.g. Dimensions of Poverty, Vulnerability and Social Protection in Rural Communities in Myanmar’, SPPR,2015



2. Income

“Low or negative income: expenditure ratio can lead to reduction in essential spending, increase risk of debt or negative coping responses”. Using Umbrella Model calculations, **35 (13.77%) of surveyed households were deemed ‘Vulnerable’ in this factor.**

We asked respondents to report on “expected income for the year versus expected debt”. As can be seen from the chart above, **in one village (Ka Byar) people reported expected annual debt in excess of expected income.** In three others (Seik Chaung, Ka Mate, and Paung Daw Gyi) average expected annual debt is close to expected income. This result (especially when combined with high spending on non-productive items) increases the vulnerability of these communities. In addition, the constant cycle of debt for daily, non-productive (consumable) items such as food and medicine shows that this area is one where the vulnerability is chronic. **61% of households reported simply that they did not have enough money.**

Nevertheless, anecdotal evidence in a number of villages showed that people were still spending money on social

costs – weddings ,celebrations ,ceremonies etc - in particular, in these largely Baptist communities, people were donating (sometimes borrowed) money to build or improve the church. However, there was no evidence of spending on collectively-owned or income-generating assets such as machinery or infrastructure. Despite the constant hyperbole surrounding the economic developments in the area around them - such as the proposed Dawei Special Economic Zone (SEZ) and Deep-Sea Port - none of the respondents forecasted that that “things would get better” for them economically, in terms of improved future income.

3. Livelihood Diversification.

“Income derived from a single source is more vulnerable to shocks. Multiple sources or the potential to diversify can increase protection against shock-affected main/key livelihoods”. Using Umbrella Model calculations, **47 (18.5%) of surveyed households were deemed ‘Vulnerable’ in this factor.** However, relative to some other communities around the country, these villages had more diverse income sources. In nearly all cases, households had more than one major source of income and hence, perhaps better resilience.



Livelihood Diversification

| Source of Income | Percentage of HHs nominating this Income Source as 'Regular' | Average percentage of HH income |
|--|--|---------------------------------|
| Agriculture | 56% | 14.5% |
| Fishing | 5% | 1.3 |
| Livestock | 26% | 6.7% |
| Fish Breeding | 15% | 4.0% |
| Selling Goods to Others | 36% | 9.5% |
| Casual Day-Wages | 40% | 10.5% |
| Regular Part-time Employment | 44% | 11.5% |
| Regular Full-time Employment | 42% | 10.9% |
| Contributions from Friends/ Relatives | 24% | 6.4% |
| Other services | 20% | 5.2% |
| Rental of Assets | 10% | 2.6% |
| Donations | 14% | 3.7% |
| Loan Repayments | 8% | 2% |
| Pension | 3% | 0.8% |
| Other | 40% | 10.4% |

As part of the survey, respondents were asked to allocate sources of income on a pre-printed chart showing various sources and using 25 beans (1 bean = 4%) to demonstrate percentages. Clearly in this region the **main sources of income are: Agriculture (14.5%), Casual Day labour (10.5%), Regular Part-time Employment (11.5%), Regular Full-time Employment (11.5%) and Selling Goods to others (9.5%)**

These communities would not typically be described as 'fishing' communities, although some villages extended to the

coast. Just over half of the households reported that they did catch fish (only 3 reported any incidence of even rudimentary aquaculture) and this was almost entirely for household consumption – hence it accounted for just 1.3% of average household income stream.

87% of Households nominated that they grew crops. Yet there were many stories of 'landlessness' caused or increased by their displacement. In some cases people told stories of fleeing conflict and then returning to their villages only to find their neighbours had taken over (stolen) their land in their absence. Given the lack of formal land title in these communities, ownership of land is primarily demonstrated by occupation and usage. In other cases people still continue to farm their 'traditional' lots in other areas and (due to their lack of attachment to their 'new home') this causes them to travel 4-5 hours each day to tend to their plot. In other cases, they walked for hours to and from mountainous or forest areas to till land that "no-one else wants", and typically using inefficient 'slash-and-burn' shifting agriculture practices. In these plots they grew some food for their house, but still were required to purchase a large percentage of food from traders. There was little evidence of cash-crops except betel nut.

HOW MANY ACRES DID YOUR HOUSEHOLD USE TO GROW CROPS?

| | | |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------|
| Up to 5 acres | 169 | 80,9% |
| 6 to 10 acres | 30 | 13,4% |
| 11 to 15 acres | 7 | 3,3% |
| Above 20 acres | 3 | 1,4% |
| Total | 209 | 100% |

Within the agricultural income stream, the growing of **betel-nut (areca catechu) and some small amounts of paan leaves (piper betle) is by far the most dominant cash crop** – there is no evidence available of diversification into other cash crops. The so-called betel-nut ‘orchards’ are typically rudimentary plots of forest land that require relatively little tending and take, on average, 7 years to produce saleable nuts after planting. This pre-occupation with a single-cash crop makes these communities very vulnerable to: periods of low rainfall or forest fire, market fluctuations, price-fixing cartels amongst traders, and the common practice of traders lending growers small sums of money (at high interest) against the sales (at contracted low prices) of future crops. However, when questioned about this lack of diversification, people simply say “but it is what we know”. Only during two FGDs did any community leaders report that the community had discussed/enquired about the viability of alternative cash-crops. There was no recollection in these communities of any donor, NGO or Government extension program that educated them about alternative cash-crops.

Similarly, there was **little evidence of any attempts at improving the efficiency/effectiveness of their commercial relationships** within the betel-nut trade. During FGDs, the groups were asked about the viability of ideas such as forming a growers cooperative – that could improve sale prices through collective bargaining, offer small loans (at fair terms) to members, and possibly arrange direct transport to better-paying markets (“cutting out the middleman”). These ideas were welcomed enthusiastically but it was clear that they had not been discussed seriously before at a community level. Whilst they bemoaned their lot, they also seemed to simply accept it as fate.

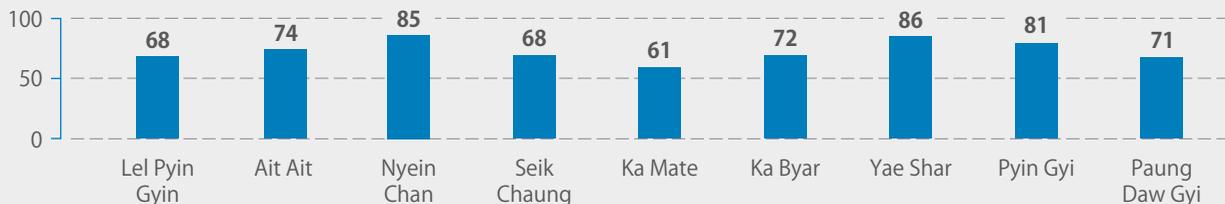
FGD discussions also revealed there had been **little, if any, consideration of seeking out any new income opportunities from small business or labouring** – exploring potential for small businesses (shops, tea-houses, motorbike repair etc.) in communities located close to major roads, or collective sub-contracting to large employers (mines, plantations etc.) for labour.

In many ways our ethnographic research suggests that this **passive (at times mendicant) ‘mindset’** in relation to developing new income streams, most likely arises from their **continued lack of security due to displacement and their uncertainty about land tenure**. Often people, when asked “why don’t you grow other crops for sale”, would answer simply “because this is not our land” or “because we don’t have land” yet further investigations revealed there had been no attempt to acquire land or in fact there were areas of unused land in or nearby the village.

4. Food Security

“Current and prior experiences of food insecurity are strongly linked with increased vulnerability to future food insecurity. Likewise, food insecurity leading to malnutrition can affect human capital and put livelihoods at risk”. Using Umbrella Model calculations, **37 (14.5%) of surveyed households were deemed ‘Vulnerable’ in this factor**. As mentioned in the previous section, there was little evidence of households growing edible cash crops, but many grew small amounts of household food and evidence suggested that all fish caught was for household consumption. When visited, people in these villages showed no visible signs of malnutrition. But the survey shows that despite growing/raising/catching food, **all of the sample households in all the villages needed to purchase more than 50% of their daily food on a regular basis**. Naturally, this creates vulnerability as they require a cash income source of some kind to pay for daily food, and our examination of debt saw borrowing money simply to pay for food was common.

HOW MUCH OF YOUR HH FOOD DO YOU USUALLY BUY?



WHAT IS THE BIGGEST RISK FOR YOUR FOOD SOURCES?

| | | |
|--|-----|-------|
| Lack of investment | 50 | 22,8% |
| Poor Health | 107 | 48,9% |
| No able to undertake regular work | 15 | 6,8% |
| Due to Climate change | 12 | 5,5% |
| Inadquate water for agriculture | 1 | 0,5% |
| Limited raw material (pebble and sand) | 1 | 0,5% |
| Limited Techniques | 3 | 1,4% |
| Crops destroyed. | 22 | 10,0% |
| Transportation issues | 3 | 1,4% |
| Price fluctuations | 1 | 0,5% |
| Lack of support from Social network | 1 | 0,5% |
| Poor cultivation techniques | 1 | 0,5% |
| Scarcity of labour | 1 | 0,5% |

ARE YOU CONFIDENT THAT YOUR HH WILL HAVE ENOUGH FOOD IN THE FUTURE?



During the past week, how many times has your household eaten the following foods:

| Source of Income | More than once per day | Once per day (Daily) | 2-3 times a week | Once in the week | Not at all | Don't eat because of personal preference or religion |
|----------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|------------|--|
| Rice | 100,0% | 0,0% | 0,0% | 0,0% | 0,0% | 0,0% |
| Beans/pulses | 0,4% | 0,4% | 5,9% | 11,8% | 72,4% | 9,1% |
| Fresh vegetables | 70,1% | 11,0% | 13,8% | 3,9% | 1,2% | 0,0% |
| Fish | 17,7% | 7,5% | 43,7% | 23,6% | 6,3% | 1,2% |
| Meat | 1,2% | 1,2% | 8,3% | 15,4% | 72,0% | 2,0% |
| Fresh fruit | 3,1% | 3,1% | 27,6% | 22,8% | 43,3% | 0,0% |
| Wheat/flour/noodles | 2,4% | 1,2% | 25,2% | 24,8% | 44,9% | 1,6% |
| Eggs | 8,7% | 10,2% | 41,7% | 18,9% | 19,3% | 1,2% |
| Poultry | 1,6% | 0,4% | 14,6% | 27,2% | 54,7% | 1,6% |
| Oils/fat | 72,0% | 10,6% | 10,6% | 3,1% | 3,5% | 0,0% |
| Sugar/honey | 31,5% | 17,7% | 21,3% | 8,3% | 20,5% | 0,8% |
| Nuts/seeds/grains | 0,8% | 1,2% | 8,7% | 12,6% | 70,5% | 6,3% |
| Tobacco/alcohol | 34,6% | 7,5% | 11,4% | 5,5% | 9,4% | 31,5% |

People nominated a series of risks to their food sources, but nevertheless, nearly **60% felt confident that they would have enough food in the future.**

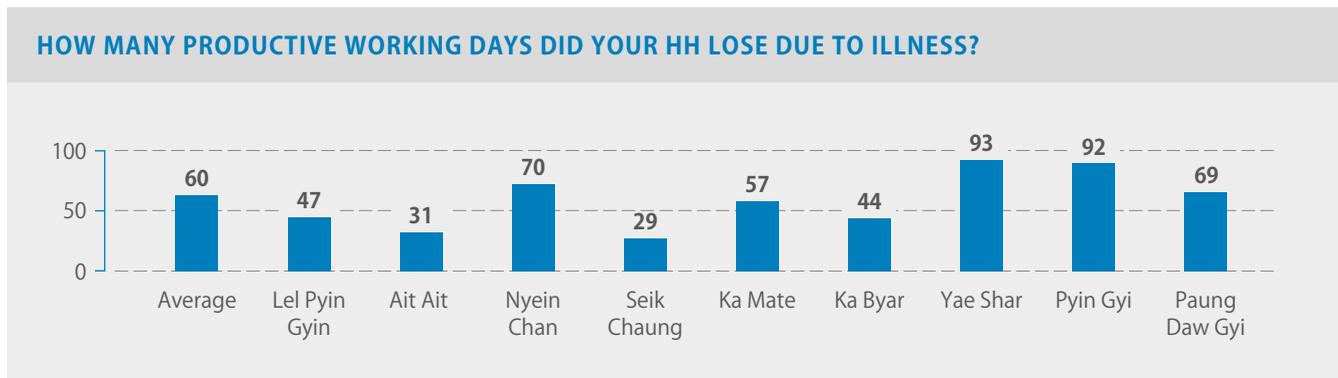
The reported diet is not untypical for this area of Myanmar and amongst these Karen communities. Rice is the predominant food staple, with 100% of households reporting they ate rice at least once a day. Fish and Poultry are the primary source of protein.

Whilst there was **a large consumption of fresh vegetables (70.1%)** there was a **very low consumption of fresh fruit (3.1%).** There is a **regular consumption of oils (72%)** and

sugars (31.5%) and a regular consumption of tobacco and alcohol in over one-third of households.

5. Health

“Chronic or frequent illness in primary earner or other family members threatens livelihood security. Increased health expenditure and reduced income can lead to negative coping, the conversion of livelihood assets to cash“. Using Umbrella Model calculations, **65 (25.6%) of surveyed households were deemed ‘Vulnerable’ in this factor.**



What is more alarming, the figures reveal, is that on average, households in these communities lose **60 (approx. 19%) productive working days¹³ a year due to illness and ill health. This is significantly higher than the average of 23 days reported in the 2015 SPPR study.** In two villages, Pyin Gyi and Yae Shar the figure was as high as 92-93 days (approx. 30%). Despite some anecdotal rumours of water and air pollution in Pyin Gyi – caused by a nearby coal mine – there are no obvious environmental explanations for this relatively high figure for ill-health. Our FGDs did not lead to discussions regarding any major disease or health issues, although the high expenditure on non-prescription medicines and minor health clinic treatments may suggest absence from productive work may be caused by a pattern of lesser but nonetheless chronic ailments. Food intake results from our survey shows high levels of fats and sugars consumed regularly (although this is typical in many rural Myanmar diets), and little fresh fruit consumed; village shops were typically stocked with mainly processed snack foods; and all villages were observed to have high levels of litter from processed foods (particularly candy and cakes wrappers) – so it is not unreasonable to suppose that **ill-health may be exacerbated by poor dietary practices.**

Our observations showed **a very common practice of chewing betel nut** amongst both men and women, which is

¹³ In these mainly Baptist Christian communities, we assume 6 working days per week, with Sundays for worship

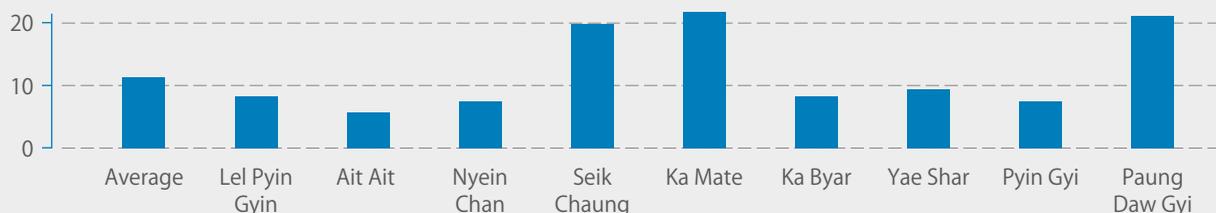
typical in Myanmar and contributes to the country’s world ranking as the fourth-highest number of deaths¹⁴ from oral cancer. Men and sometimes women often attended our meetings/interviews **smoking** hand-rolled cheroots. During FGDs, village leaders revealed what they described as **‘normal’ level of alcohol abuse** and there was some discussion of **few instances of drug abuse** (mostly methamphetamine) amongst young men who had recently returned from labour contracts in Thailand. Our research is not able to accurately compare the health status of these IDP communities compared to the population of Myanmar as a whole. Most telling, was the survey result that **23% of our respondents said that their health had suffered directly as result of conflict and displacement.** In one village, the village pastor remarked that amongst those villagers that had returned after staying in the Thai refugee camps for some time, it was noticeable that their health seemed significantly stronger immediately after their return and then declined the longer they stayed in the village.

6. Water and Sanitation (WATSAN)

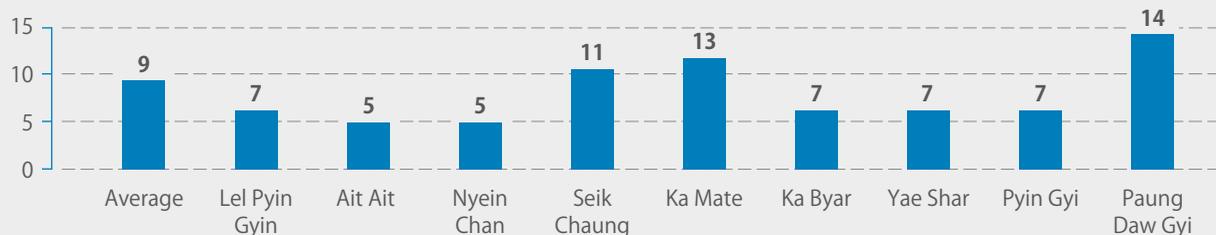
“Water is an essential natural resource and the time necessary for ensuring water supply can affect other activities as well as unreliable water supplies increases resource expenditure;

¹⁴ <http://www.worldlifeexpectancy.com/country-health-profile/myanmar>

MINUTES FOR FETCHING DOMESTIC/DRINKING WATER IN ONE DAY (DRY SEASON)



TIME (MINUTES) TAKEN FOR FETCHING DOMESTIC/DRINKING WATER IN ONE DAY (NORMAL SEASON)



Where does your drinking water come from?

| | Lel Pyin Gyi | Ait Ait | Nyein Chan(1) | Seik Chaung | Ka Mate | Ka Byar | Yae Shar | Pyin Gyi | Paung Daw Gyi |
|---------------------|--------------|---------|---------------|-------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Piped water | 0 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 24 | 19 | 3 |
| Water jars | 0 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 1 |
| Well | 29 | 25 | 3 | 10 | 25 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| River-stream | 0 | 2 | 0 | 15 | 4 | 11 | 2 | 7 | 22 |

unsafe water sources increase health risks which reduces livelihood effectiveness". Using Umbrella Model calculations, **34HH (14%) of surveyed households were deemed 'Vulnerable' in this factor.**

Around 30% of households had reliable 'piped' water from local communal systems. In most cases, where villages had a piped water supply system, local people usually reported that it had been installed by NGOs or with assistance from



the KNU. In the others, **water came from a well or was carried in plastic containers from a river or stream**. Whilst, the average times for collection of household water are not disturbing there was evidence from discussions that the water sources were unreliable¹⁵.

It was noticed that unlike other areas of Myanmar, in these communities there was **little collection of rainwater** from roof areas into clay water pots or cement tanks, and in 70% of villages we did not observe any community infrastructure for collective water storage (except in Seik Chaung). In some of the older well-established villages we observed that there were in fact disused concrete water cisterns. This was despite **frequent sto-**

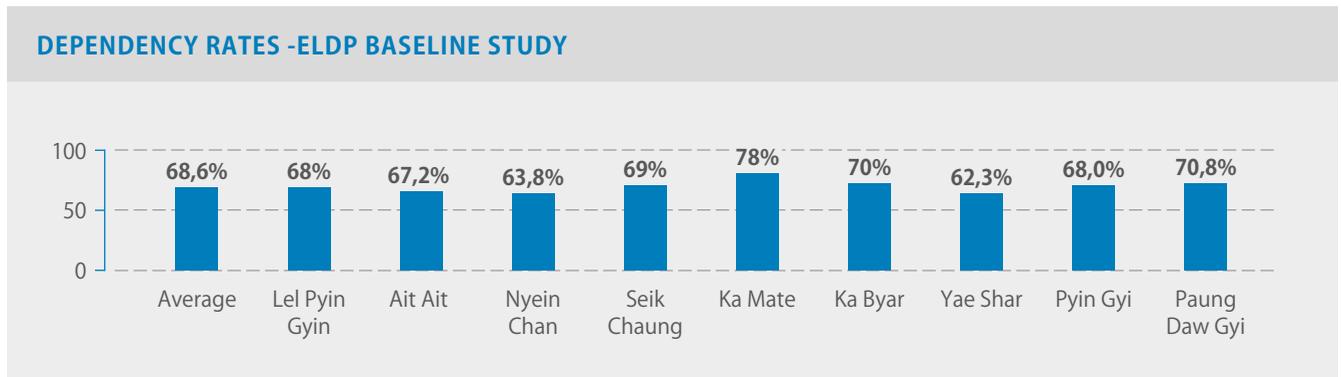
ries of the water “running out” in the dry season. When asked about what happens when the water from rivers, streams or wells becomes scarce people typically answered that **they were forced to buy water** (8.7% total water consumption on average) and they simply “tried to not use water”.

Whilst **97% of households reported that they had a toilet**, their unreliable **water sources and the frequent lack of community water storage makes these communities more vulnerable in this factor and also less resilient to poor rainfall, high temperatures and climate change**.

7. Household Dependency

“Household members who require higher levels of social or medical care divert human, physical and financial resources

¹⁵ This opinion is re-confirmed in the UNCHR, 2016, Return Assessments - Tanintharyi Region Myanmar South East Operation - UNHCR Hpa-An

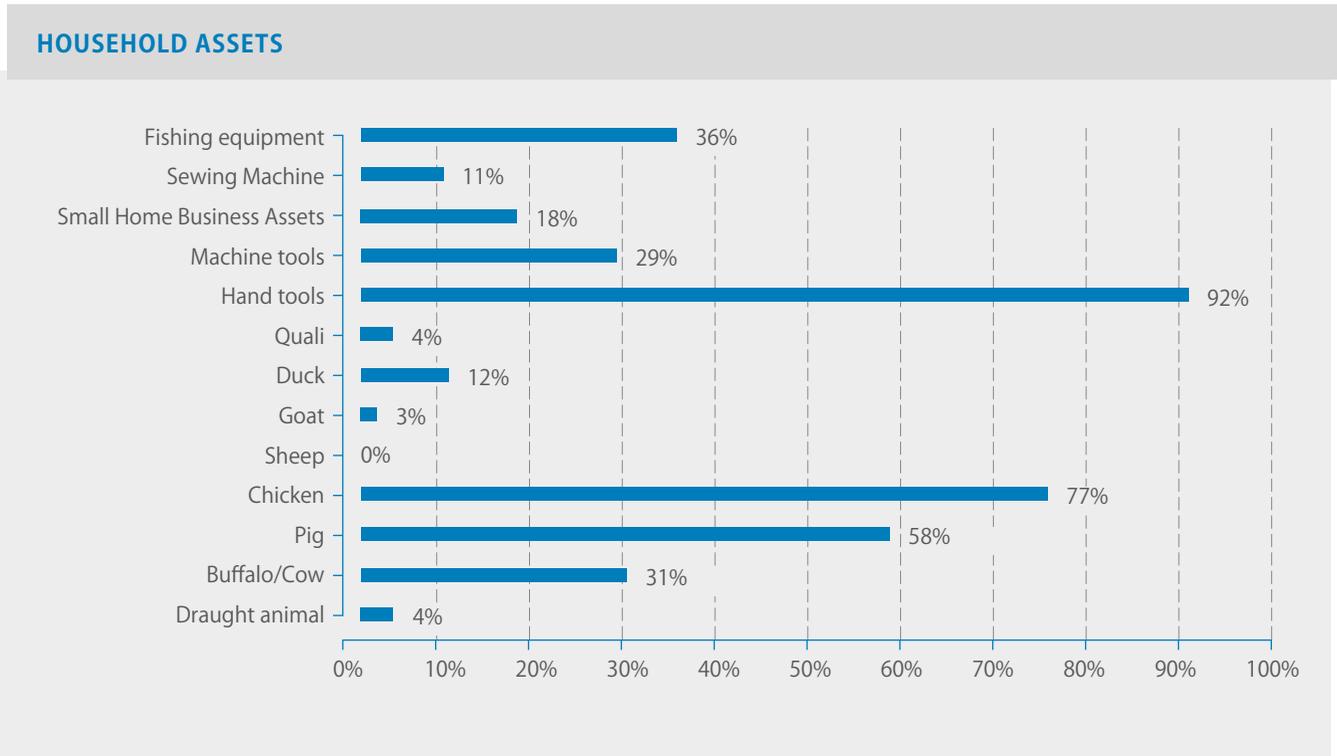


which can affect livelihood activities”. As our field survey data regarding number dependent household members was eventually deemed limited we calculated this factors based on the village averages gleaned from the Baseline Survey conducted the week before. Using Umbrella Model calculations, **82 (32%) of surveyed households were deemed ‘Vulnerable’ in this factor.**

In addition we examined our survey results that illustrated the **productive time lost in caring for persons with an illness or disability.**

When combined with the productive days lost due to ill-health, the **vulnerability due to the level of dependent/disabled/ non-productive persons in these households is quite significant.**

It is also revealed that the ability of family members working away from home (either within Myanmar or abroad) to provide significant income relief to households was very limited. **Remittances from family members living and working abroad were quite small (just over 6%).** FGDS confirmed that this was not a significant source of income. It was frequently mentioned that the attractiveness of overseas employment was felt to be quite low in these communities – even amongst young people. The negative impact of separating family members was often described as more significant than the possible positive economic benefits that could be brought to the household from external (especially overseas) labour contracts – this is understandable given the pain of family separations endured by these families as a consequence of conflict and displacement.



8. Household Assets

“Ownership of livelihood assets/capitals (human, financial, natural, physical, social & religious) can provide protection against shocks”. Using Umbrella Model calculations, **51 (20%) of surveyed households were deemed ‘Vulnerable’ in this factor.**

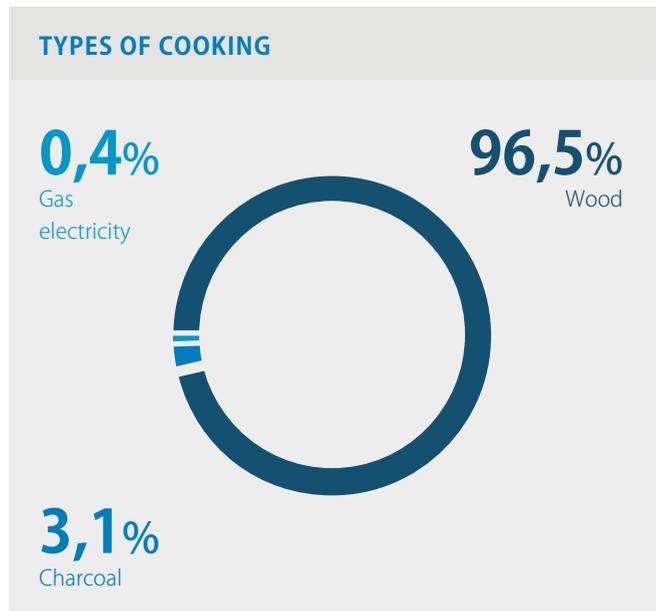
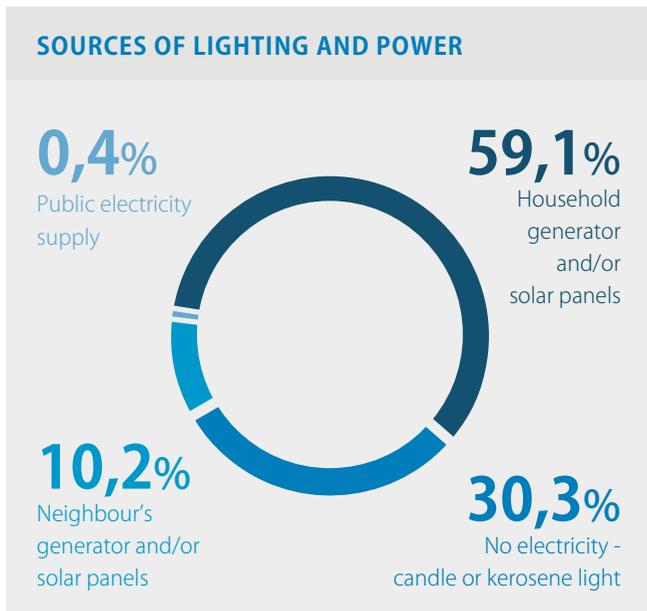
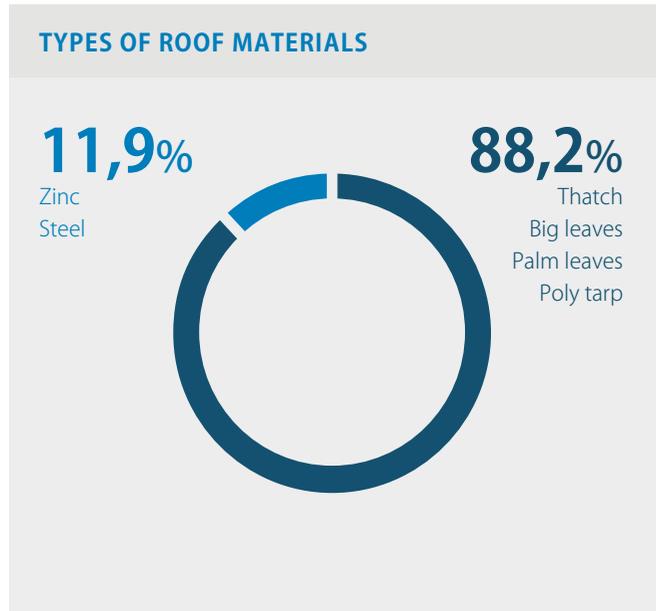
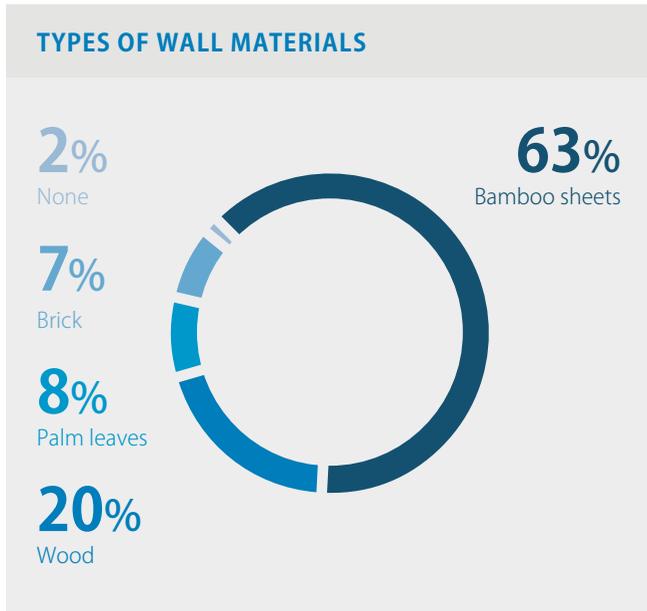
It was noted that the livelihood assets (both mechanical and animal) are of small and transportable size. These communities had a relatively wide range of small hand tools, small fishing equipment, household equipment, and chickens and pigs – but owned few large animals such as buffalos or draught animals. Similarly, there were almost no examples of large mechanical/transportation assets. Bicycles and small-capacity motorcycles comprised nearly all of the mechanical assets. Boats were only small dinghies, suitable for navigation on inland rivers and streams. Nevertheless, it was noted these communities had a wider variety of small assets than some other regions surveyed By SPPR in 2015.

Housing assets were mixed. The **majority of houses were still of a ‘temporary’ style** – bamboo wall and bamboo thatch roof - even in communities that had re-located some time ago. This is not surprising as the continuing psychological insecurity of residents may well manifest in people not building more ‘permanent’ homes. Nevertheless, in some villages it was noted that people were slowly building (and investing in) more solid structures with brick/concrete elements and steel roofs. Electricity most typically came from photo-voltaic cells (solar panels) and sometimes small, petrol-powered generators.

Electricity was most commonly used for lighting and social purposes (TV, DVD player, charging mobile phone etc). There was little evidence of communal sharing of electricity, except for churches and sometimes wells. 30% of homes had no electricity at all. **Cooking was overwhelmingly done on wood fires and this will further increase vulnerability** as communities are dependent on a rapidly depleting fuel source.

| | Lel Pyin Gyi | Ait Ait | Nyein Chan(1) | Seik Chaung | Ka Mate | Ka Byar | Yae Shar | Pyin Gyi | Paung Daw Gyi | Total |
|--------------------------|--------------|---------|---------------|-------------|---------|---------|----------|----------|---------------|--------------|
| Cycle | 4 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 14 | 1 | 1 | 31 |
| Motorcycle | 16 | 22 | 15 | 16 | 15 | 5 | 20 | 4 | 13 | 126 |
| Car | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Trawler | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4 |
| Animal drawn cart | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 18 |
| Boat | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 10 |
| Other | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |





9. Social Participation

“Persons with higher levels of social participation build up social capital which can increase the likelihood of relief and assistance in times of difficulty”. Using Umbrella Model cal-

culations, **40 (15.5%) of surveyed households were deemed ‘Vulnerable’ in this factor.** Within these IDP communities there was strong evidence of social capital and social participation, as their shared experience of hardship had created strong collective bonds.

| How often do household members participate in following events? | Always | Frequently | Sometimes | Never |
|---|--------|------------|-----------|-------|
| Village meetings and organised clubs/events | 11.8% | 10.2% | 42.1% | 35.8% |
| Weddings, funerals, religious festivals | 37.4% | 22.4% | 38.6% | 1.6% |
| Household events with neighbours | 11.4% | 16.1% | 66.9% | 5.5% |
| Village Association/group | 53.9% | 21.3% | 21.7% | 3.1% |

Yet FGDs also revealed a noticeable level of mistrust towards the broader community - even the broader Karen community. There was a general mistrust of government and little faith that 'promises' would not be broken and they would be displaced yet again.

98% of households nominated that they worshipped in the community. In these communities this was most frequently in the church (They are mainly Baptists and the number of non-Christians is very small) and only one village had a Buddhist monastery within close distance. Most typically (80%) nominated that they worshipped communally once a week, but it was frequently declared that not all family members attended church together as someone would have to remain home to "guard the house". Hence, whilst there is a good degree of social participation there is **a lingering spirit of mistrust** that increases social vulnerability and demans social resilience.

10. Decision-Making

"Persons with more influence in decision making can have stronger negotiation position for livelihood related factors such as fair pricing, land and asset use'. Using Umbrella Model calculations, **44 (17%) of surveyed households were deemed 'Vulnerable' in this factor.** As can be seen from the above table, **over 50% of households nominated that they always attended village association/group meetings.**

Nevertheless, whilst participating in the meetings, many respondents nominated a somewhat passive role – attending, sometimes joining in discussions, but typically not feeling that they influenced discussions. (Note: it would be generally agreed that this kind of reported 'shy' behaviour would be a cultural norm in Karen communities- only a small minority of people would typically self-nominate as being influential in the community.) Our observations during all FGDs showed

| Extent to which women household member participates in village planning meetings | Always | Frequently | Sometimes | Never |
|--|--------|------------|-----------|-------|
| Influences decisions | 7.9% | 5.5% | 27.2% | 59.4% |
| Participates in discussions | 13% | 12.6% | 36.2% | 38.2% |
| Attends the meeting | 36.6% | 18.1% | 30.7% | 13.8% |

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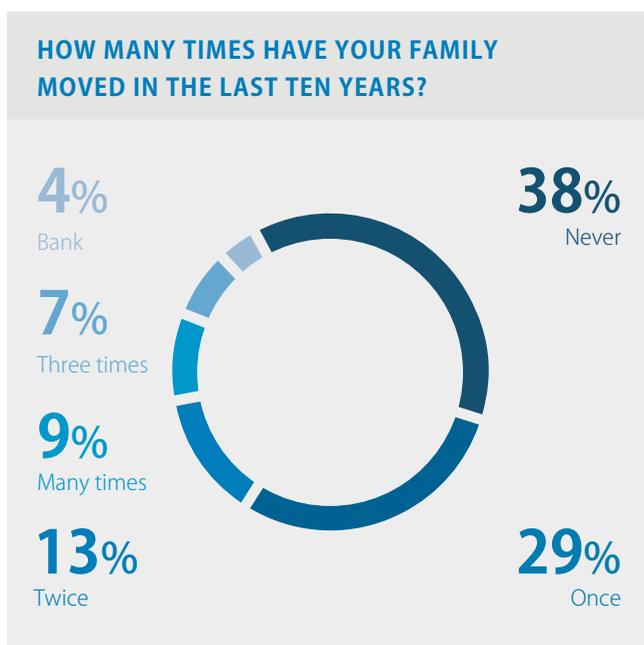
that all self-nominated ‘community leaders’ (whether officially recognised or not) were typically older and had lived in the village for some time. It would seem that new arrivals/returnees to the village were seldom part of the decision-making ‘elite’. On one occasion our meetings were attended by a helpful and supportive local KNU representative, on three other occasions our presence was questioned by KNU representatives but they did not attend FGDs.

As can be seen from the results, women’s attendance at meetings is less frequent and during meetings their behaviour is often less assertive than their male counterparts. This would be in line with recognised cultural norms. Once again, our observations showed that women who self-nominated as ‘village leaders’ for the FGDs were typically older and longer-term residents. It would therefore be reasonable to assume that recent arrivals (including returnees from refugee camps) would be least likely to take strong roles in village decision-making. We observed that during our visits, it was women (especially younger women) who were busy with a variety of livelihood chores and did not take part in our meetings. However, the lack of female participation in decision-making is a known factor in community vulnerability and low resilience.

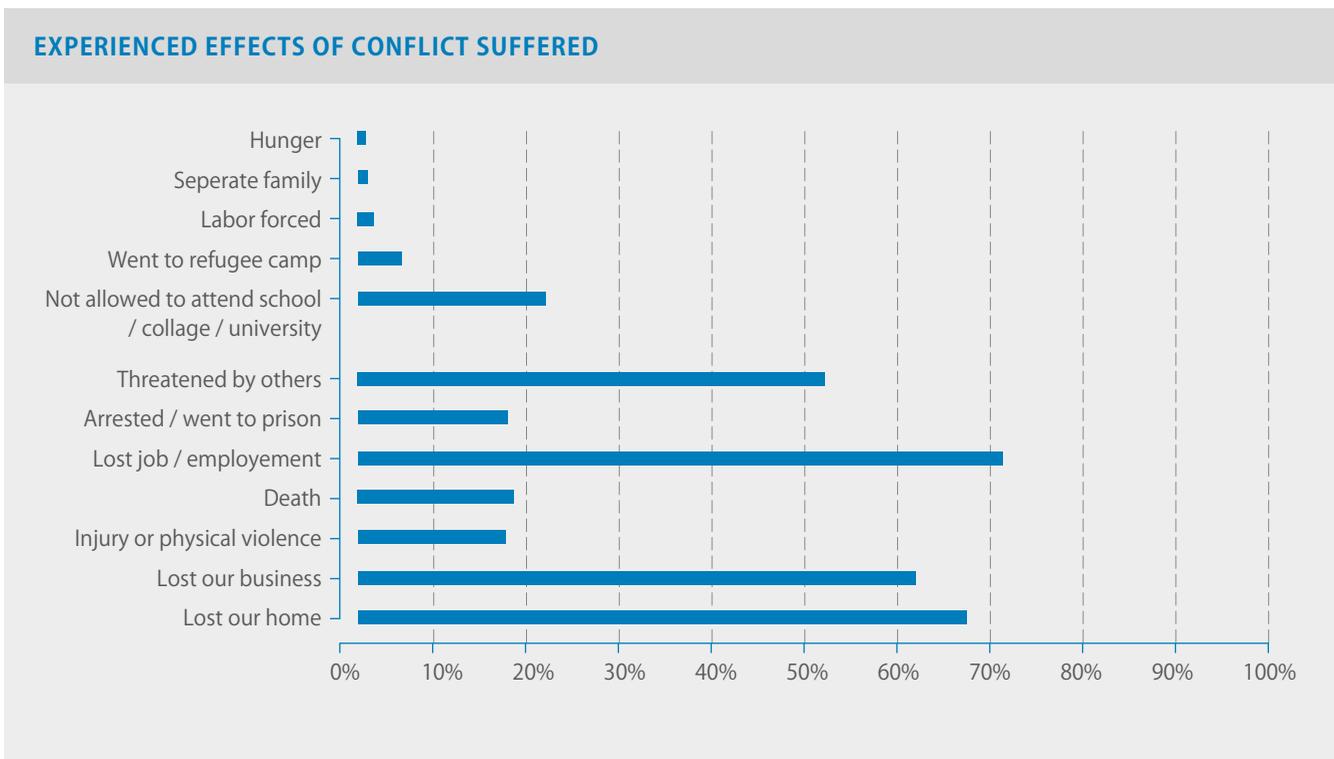
11. Forced Displacement

“The experience of forced displacement contributes to a perception of powerlessness and decreased self-esteem that affects peoples’ capacity to restructure healthy lives”.

Note: This aspect of vulnerability was added specifically for the ELDP Vulnerability Assessment. But it does fit with the current Umbrella Model therefore we cannot calculate a ‘vulnerability scale’ using the same formulae and algorithms. Nevertheless, our research shows that **displacement**



| | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|-------|
| We were told to by Government | 96 | 40,9% |
| We thought it would be safer | 34 | 14,5% |
| To look for better work/ life | 36 | 15,3% |
| Education/study | 2 | 0,9% |
| Marriage/ family reason | 118 | 50,2% |



has had a ‘multiplier effect’ upon the vulnerability in these communities – most particularly on health and continuing insecurity, but also in ongoing problems in finding work and/or making a living, and to an extent on social capital and trust.

It is generally reported that despite occasional armed skirmishes, the peak periods for armed conflict in this region

were 1970s-1990s. Despite this 33% of families reported that they had been forced to move once or more in the last ten years. **A small number of respondents (4%) stated to the field enumerators that they did not feel comfortable to answer this question publicly.** When asked why they moved, the major reasons (respondents could nominate more than one reason) were because “We were told to by the Government” and because “We thought it would be safer”.

Only 15% of households believed that the move would lead to better work/living conditions – far more had moved for fear and personal security reasons or simply because they had been forced to. Coinciding with this, the largest reason for re-location was re-uniting with displaced family members.

Most commonly it was younger family members (sometimes returning from hiding or, more recently, from refugee camps) re-uniting with older family members. As mentioned, they were common stories presented in the FGDs of people returning to their ‘hometown’ only to discover that their land and property had been either stolen or destroyed – sometimes by the Tatmadaw, but often by their neighbours. This fact has created new kinds of social conflict within communities. However, the FGDs highlighted that the most recent displacements in the Region were occurring due to land being ‘acquired’ from the Government for large development projects (e.g. roads, mines, palm oil and rubber plantations, tourism developments)As can be seen from the table above the most common experiences of the effects of conflict were: disruption to education, threats from others (civilian or military –sometimes religious), loss of job/employment, and loss of business or home. These experiences were felt by both those who were forced to re-locate and those that returned to their ‘hometown’. 10-20% of the respondents reported that their household members had suffered arrest/prison, physical injury and even death as a consequence of conflict.

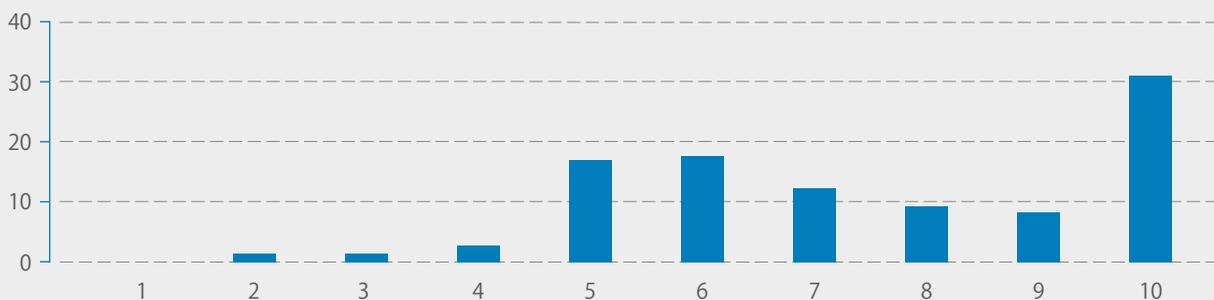
TYPES OF PROBLEMS SUFFERED

| | |
|-----|--------------------------------------|
| 23% | Health suffered |
| 19% | Away from family / friends |
| 19% | Very Hard to find work |
| 12% | Always Fell frightened |
| 8% | Lost money / savings |
| 8% | Education suffered / badly disrupted |
| 2% | Poverty |
| 1% | Disability |
| 0% | Serperate family |

As a result, people reported that they had suffered **a range of problems** – many of them ongoing, and **some of them (e.g. health, difficulty in finding work, separation from family/friends, and continued mental disorder) evolving from transitory to chronic over time.**

HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU, THAT LIFE WILL GET BETTER?

(1 = low confidence and 10=high confidence)



Most respondents reported that they continued to worry about key issues. **Health (68.8%) continued to be an enduring source of anxiety and concern** for well over half the population – and perhaps for some their anxiety disorder has in fact become a chronic health issue. **We questioned respondents about what were their major reasons to worry about the future**, A significant proportion (42.5%) of these IDP communities do not feel confident in the **National peace process** and are still insecure and anxious – many continue to fear the prospects of more forced displacement. **Many are still constantly concerned about securing their daily livelihood needs** (food/clothing 37.7%) **and the future for their children (21.%)**

Yet amidst all of this there is **still confidence for the future**. On a scale of 1-10 (1 = low confidence and 10=high confidence) **76% of respondents ranked their confidence higher than the median score of 5**.

In terms of **physical community indicators of confidence** we noted: people were generally clean and cleanly dressed (especially children); some people were investing time and money in building/re-building more substantial houses (sometimes cooperatively); some people were investing time and money in building new community assets (such as water supplies, churches, meeting halls and homes for a church pastor).

People's **aspirations** were significant and revealing, as when asked: "...**what 3 things would make you happier**", by far the **3 most common choices were "To be more healthy" (78.8%), "To be wealthier" (74.2%), and "To have more unity in our family/village" (19.8%)**. The remaining list of aspirations was a mixture of: Financial (e.g. New house, New motorbike, New phone, Television etc); Occupational (e.g. New/better job, Improved livelihood, Children get good education etc), and Emotional/spiritual (e.g. More peace, Find love, Children get married, Religious influence in the community gets stronger etc)

However, despite these aspirations, we heard very few stories or suggestions of pro-active initiatives regarding: diversifying cash crops; establishing small businesses; establishing cooperative groups to sell cooperatively and/or offer micro finance loans to members; collective labour bargaining.

It would appear (simply from observation and experience) **that the general culture in these communities is less pro-active and more mendicant than the surrounding (non-IDP Karen) communities**. Many of the ideas/initiatives raised through our Vulnerability Assessment and FGDs were enthusiastically received, but it certainly appeared that they had not been discussed comprehensively at a community level before. On a daily basis, it was evident that other people were moving into the area to take advantage of economic developments and opportunities. Yet in **these communities we rarely heard suggestions for initiatives that may improve their lot. It is obvious that these communities need support as well as encouragement to explore and develop options to decrease their vulnerability and increase their resilience**.

5. Conclusions & Recommendations

Within available resources and time, the Vulnerability Assessment covered a sample of 254 households in 9 villages and three townships. Using the modified 'Umbrella Model' it was deemed that **79 sampled households (31.1%) were 'vulnerable' – this is certainly higher than the average 24% recorded through studies in other communities.**

All of the communities examined had all suffered displacement due to conflict of various kinds: in some cases we visited well-established villages where inhabitants had been forced to flee (often repeatedly) and had returned after some time; others were 'new' IDP villages in areas where re-located communities had been established in particular areas under the instructions of either the Myanmar Government or the KNU/KNLA. A number of these communities were increasingly insecure that they might still 'lose' land and become displaced again due to major development projects authorised by the Government and sometimes the KNU. In Seik Chaung they were increasingly concerned that (despite Government reassurances to the contrary) that much of their land would be flooded by a rumoured dam. In Paung Daw Gyi, the villagers hang banners protesting about the large multinational coal mine which they already encroaches on their and say brings nothing but pollution and "headaches". In one case, in Nyein Chan 1, the small community had fled, then returned home to their village to discover their land had been stolen by neighbours, were then re-located to a location under government instruction, only to find that the government has now "sold their land" to a private rubber company that surrounds their houses on all sides only metres away.

Our study indicates that the **experience of this kind of displacement has produced noticeable and negative outcomes within these communities and has exacerbated the effects of already-prevalent causes of vulnerability (a 'multiplier effect'). Current external factors and behaviours within these communities are doing little to improve their resilience Health indicators for this population group appear significantly worse than the national**

averages. Most households in the sample group are losing an average of 60 days of productive work due to ill-health. Yet, as confirmed by the recent UNCHR Return Assessment 2016, very few village (8% recorded by UNCHR) have adequate health facilities. People are clearly still insecure, and there is some evidence to suggest that ongoing anxiety and insecurity has translated into chronic health problems. This is exacerbated by other factors such as: poor diet; lack of health care facilities and education; high use of betel-nut and tobacco; reliance on hard physical labour. It is not possible for our assessment to ascertain the mental health ramifications of trauma, post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSS), and ongoing anxiety.

Many people observed in these communities (understandably) now display **behaviours that indicate they do not have any kind of secure attachment to their current 'home'** – and this in turn increases their vulnerability when measured against various 'Umbrella Model' factors. In many locations, their **crop production (for food and limited sale) is restricted to the outputs from shifting and 'slash-and-burn' agriculture** on lands (often far from their homes) that "…no-one else wants". This kind of agricultural production is both well-known for providing only limited nutrients to the soil, but also requires that they seek out and find new land at least once a year. In other communities, their enduring 'hope' that they will be able to "return to their home village" means that they still travel long distances every day to go "back to their old land". Both of these practices display an enduring lack of attachment to their current 'home' and take up significant amounts of time out of their productive working hours.

Only 30% of villages have reliable water sources. There is commonly **little evidence of effective community water management** and whilst people currently relatively manageable amounts of time collecting water for their daily needs, they have not established easily-accessible collection (wells or tanks) nor storage facilities. They collect water frequently and this ties them to close by the water sources for much of the day – which, in turn, limits their livelihood options.

In all of the 9 villages we visited across the region, there is a long-established pre-occupation with growing 'betel-nut' as the only primary cash-crop. There is **little apparent consideration of other cash crops** within these communities. People often said "...that is all we know" as a justification. Yet they had **little knowledge of market prices or other critical information**. In this situation they are typically at the mercy of the local betel-nut traders, who operate cartels that conspire to fix a low price and frequently indenture families to years of servitude to repay very small loans. In our discussions, they were very interested in the idea of a grower's cooperative (possibly with a microfinance loan group) but they had not seemed to have explored such ideas themselves.

There was **little evidence of any discussions (let alone development) around expanding sources of income**. The Region as a whole is experiencing a development 'boom' and whilst that may have negative effects (land-grabs and pollution) it also offers potential for opportunities. Newly-constructed roads and highways offer possibilities of new small businesses, easier access to markets, and opportunities to travel quickly to locations requiring contract labour. Even, local day-labour contracting (such as weed clearance in plantations) was typically on an individual basis, and there was no example of organising collective labour teams to 'win' contracts. The focus groups often revealed a passive and mendicant attitude amongst village representatives – whilst certainly not 'hopeless', these communities displayed little of the pro-active commercial initiative obvious in the surrounding (typically Burmese) communities.

In relation to social capital, the displacement experience has created a number of **ironic effects**. In some ways, many of these communities show evidence of **increased strength of social capital and community bonding** that has grown from empathy and their shared endurance of hardship. Such hardship has brought them together to re-build physical aspects of their communities (churches, village halls etc). **Yet many have also suffered at the opportunistic hands of their neighbours**, who have sometimes taken over land and

property during times of emergency. These kinds of events (frequently spoken of openly) have engendered **a level of mistrust and caution**. Houses in the village are seldom left unattended –forcing at least one household member to remain and 'Guard' the house. We saw no evidence of collective ownership of larger, productive machinery or assets –although collective labour and investment were most evident in building and maintaining churches.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

In response to our findings, and within the scope of the ELDP project, our Vulnerability Assessment suggests recommendations in areas such as:

› **Providing certificated Vocational Education and Training (VET) in areas of projected high demand.**

There is a need for all of these communities to diversify their sources of cash income. The Tanintharyi Region as a whole is facing an increased demand for skilled labour and this will multiply exponentially with major developments such as the SEZ and the Deep-Sea Port and the expansion of tourism. Construction of new roads and highways are not only making access to paid work opportunities "closer" but also there are opportunities for roadside businesses. Therefore VET is essential in areas of identified skills(e.g. construction, hospitality, customer service, tourism, small business management, motorcycle/machinery maintenance, job interview/application skills etc) to allow people to better participate in meeting local labour needs and also projected regional labour/skill demands.

› **Piloting cooperative small business arrangements and building local capacity.**

There would be value in further developing collective business arrangements in these villages -e.g. grower's cooperatives, farmers transport cooperatives, cooperative lending/ microfinance groups, village labour group for short and long-term contracts etc. Such activities not only

build income-generation possibilities but they build social capital and cooperation in the villages. The ELDP consortium could draw upon the experience of its members and access to valuable networks to help support and facilitate such pilot projects. Information on market prices in Dawei and Yangon could be shared via project community workers. More efficient transport for products to market could be organised collectively. NGO/INGO networks could be explored for sources of microfinance funding

› **Establishing pilot businesses associated with the ELDP training centre.**

It is understood that the project will establish a roadside training centre on a major road in the Region. This location would be ideal for establishing small businesses associated with the training centre (e.g. motorcycle repair shop, teashop, restaurant, guesthouse, souvenir shop). Such businesses would allow real-life work experience for the trainees as well as an opportunity to generate income and be a best-practice case study.

› **Establishing information networks to provide local communities**

(especially those with limited or no phone coverage) with market information (e.g. market prices for betel nut, market prices for other cash crops etc). In many communities, especially those not well-served by phone or internet networks, the communities are at the mercy of the traders. In other parts of the country, it has been well-documented how access to market prices significantly improves the bargaining power for small growers. Also alerting the target communities with information about market prices for other cash crops may encourage them to diversify more and hence reduce vulnerability.

› **Providing (or facilitating through government extension programs/NGOs/CSOs) valuable information and training on other sources of livelihood.**

The consortium should supplement the training provided by ELDP by facilitating access to training offered by other

providers on various forms of livelihood production (e.g. alternative cash-crops, fish/crab/shrimp raising, production of items for sale etc). The demand and request for such training was raised on a number of occasions during our assessment visits.

› **Providing (or facilitating through government extension programs/ NGOs/CSOs) valuable information and training on improved methods of production and farming.**

The current forms of 'slash-and-burn' farming often used are not only destructive to the environment but force farmers to shift regularly and hence lose productive time. Information and training on other forms of agricultural practice (e.g. permaculture, organic farming, soil improvement, aquaculture, aquaponics) as well as agricultural value-chain improvements would assist in decreasing vulnerability;

› **Providing (or facilitating through government extension programs/ NGOs/CSOs) valuable information and training on improved community planning and facilities.**

The communities need assistance to build their collective capacities to plan and implement community projects (e.g. water collection and management, community waste management, alternative power sources, alternative and efficient cooking methods, solar power/cooking, mini-hydropower, climate-change resilient building design etc). Their efforts and results with collective work related to building and maintaining churches should be enhanced and expanded. Such efforts should be guided to ensure inclusive planning (especially of women, people with disabilities, IDPs and returnees). As well as building valuable infrastructure they would build social capital and community trust

› **Facilitating important dialogues with Government/KNU.**

The ELDP communities require strong support and advocacy to continue their dialogues and with both Government and the KNU about important topics (e.g. to secure land tenure, improve delivery of government services,

critically improve local health services and education, ensure delivery of government extension services). Training sessions on planning and undertaking negotiations would be helpful, as would coaching and mentoring to build self-reliance and confidence.

cal around discussions on land tenure and title and lobbying for increased healthcare and Government services.

› **Facilitating important dialogues with KNU/INGOS/NGOS/CBOs.**

The non-government sector should be contacted and alerted through ELDP networks to propose ideas to assist the IDP communities (e.g. to target these communities and include them as a priority within their programs/projects).

› **Facilitating important dialogues with Private Sector entities (especially multinational companies).**

Increasingly, multinational companies are seeking to instigate projects in the Region that could have potential benefits for the target communities, ELDP can help propose ideas to assist the IDP communities; (e.g. to seek opportunities for 'Inclusive Business' programs, Corporate Social Responsibility programs). Strong support and assistance is also required to lobby and support communities against unfair land-grabs by business interests

› **Building capacity for local people (including Government and KNU officials) to develop and maintain their own capacity-development activities in the future.**

Capacity-building efforts need to target local communities (e.g. through ToT, development of community resource people, support for community members to work with the project as employees and/or interns). Critical and important skills would include: community facilitation and participation, using PRA tools, inclusive planning, building effective community structures etc.

› **Building capacity for self-advocacy in IDP communities.**

Ultimately, all efforts should focus on building strength, confidence and pride in these communities, so that they may more effectively represent themselves in important dialogues concerning their futures. This is especially criti-

Appendices

Appendix 1

VILLAGES SURVEYED

| CODE | VILLAGE | DISTRICT | SURVEYS | VALID RESPONSE |
|--------------|---------|------------------------|------------|----------------|
| D1V1 | D1V1 | Dawei (D1, V1) | 26 | 100% |
| D1V2 | D1V2 | Dawei (D1, V2) | 30 | 100% |
| D1V3 | D1V3 | Dawei (D1, V3) | 29 | 100% |
| D2V1 | D2V1 | Palaw (D2,V1) | 28 | 100% |
| D2V2 | D2V2 | Palaw (D2,V2) | 28 | 100% |
| D2V3 | D2V3 | Palaw (D2,V3) | 29 | 100% |
| D3V1 | D3V1 | Thayet Chaung (D3, V1) | 27 | 100% |
| D3V2 | D3V2 | Thayet Chaung (D3, V2) | 28 | 100% |
| D3V3 | D3V3 | Thayet Chaung (D3, V3) | 29 | 100% |
| Total | | | 254 | |

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Vulnerability Assessment

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Project: | Enhanced Livelihoods for Displaced People (ELDP) Project |
| Consortium Partners: | Karen Development Network (KDN) - Lead Agency , Tanintharyi Karen Peace Support Initiative (TKPSI), Covenant Consult Co. Ltd. |
| Donor: | The Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT) |
| Region: | Tanintharyi Region, Myanmar |
| Townships: | 3 Townships: Dawei, Palaw, Thayetchaung |
| Villages: | 15 selected villages and (3) control villages |
| Target Population: | Internally Displaced People in 3 townships of Tanintharyi Region |
| Assessment Timeline: | Februar / March / April 2017 |

Through repeated displacement in the South-East of Myanmar since 1997, many local Karen people have not been able to engage in stable agriculture and economic activities, leading to severe poverty, food insecurity, and vulnerability. Currently, IDP communities face a range of challenges/problems, which have resulted in significant livelihood¹⁶ challenges as they are trying to recover from armed conflict and displacement.

The KDN consortium was formed to address these issues and enhance livelihoods for Internally Displaced People (IDPs) currently residing in 33 target villages in three townships in the Tanintharyi region. The consortium is responsi-

ble or the Enhanced Livelihoods for Displaced People (ELDP) Project. This project targets a catchment population of approximately 15,365 people of approximately 2,600 HH. The project will be centred on close involvement and dialogue between village communities, village-based organizations, and local authorities of both, the Government of the Union of Myanmar (GoUM) and the Karen National Union (KNU), as appropriate in the area. In this context, KDN and its implementation partners are committed to conflict-sensitive principles and will incorporate those into their working practice.

ELDP Project Objectives

- i. To build vocational skills that help IDPs to increase their incomes through new jobs and self-employment in small businesses;

¹⁶ A livelihood is a means of making a living. It encompasses people's capabilities, assets, income and activities required to secure the necessities of life. (Sutherland, M., Dr.)

- ii. To support village organizations and community structures that lead to reduced vulnerability to shocks and stresses;
- iii. To facilitate a constructive dialogue between GoUM, KNU and CSOs in conflict sensitive ways that lead to improved services at state and township level;
- iv. To build capacities in IDP communities that lead to more equitable access to and sustainable use of local natural resources

Two of the key, underpinning concepts for the ELDP project are 'poverty' and 'vulnerability'. Both concepts – 'Poverty' and 'Vulnerability' are acknowledged to be multi-faceted and their root-causes often defy simple analysis. In the short- to medium-term, there is little that IDP households and communities can do to affect the vulnerability context itself. However, humanitarian and development agencies can play a critical role in promoting/nurturing resilience¹⁷ to vulnerability by increasing access to services, providing advocacy and training, improving institutional- community capacity, and implementing other resiliency-promotion programs.

It is well-recognized that IDP households in the target region still face significant challenges and have remained largely vulnerable, and also that effective measures and regional data on IDP livelihood vulnerability is incomplete or lacking. In response, the ELDP project wishes to carry out a multi-faceted 'Vulnerability Assessment'.

The assessment aims to identify underlying contributors to (and causes of) both transitory and chronic vulnerability, its consequences of disasters, crisis (displacement) and hazards. This approach also includes analysis of factors which can affect resilience at community and household level. It is

16 Resilience is the ability to withstand, to respond to, and to build back after exposure to a particular threat (LIFT)

expected that the adapted 'Umbrella Model'¹⁸ is being used to measure vulnerability at household and community level. In order to adequately address vulnerability in significant aspects, the assessment will include the five livelihood areas to its research (see Graphic 1).

The overall objective of the vulnerability assessment is to measure relative vulnerability at household level and identify significant contributory factors to household vulnerability. It is understood that a Vulnerability Assessment includes a broader look at the general poverty level. Thus it may be that some households can be considered 'poor' but not necessarily vulnerable, and likewise, some vulnerable households may not necessarily be poor. The overall advantage of measuring vulnerability is that it can help identify not only households that are already poor, but those that are at risk of becoming poor. Therefore, the assessment on specific hazards can be of great value to inform the consortium about existing and also potential vulnerability factors. The Vulnerability Assessment results will be used in line with the project framework to provide suggestions for program implementation and for poverty and vulnerability reduction. The results will also form the basis for monitoring of the achievements of the planned outputs, outcomes and results.

The Vulnerability Assessment will include findings from the review of relevant documents (e.g. LIFT vulnerability framework) but primarily be informed by the collection of quantitative and qualitative household data that includes the following factors/areas:

18 The adapted 'Umbrella Model' comprises 11 factors which contribute to vulnerability assessment of IDP households. It represents a tool of mapping relative household vulnerability in a user-friendly umbrella style radar plot to illustrate the relative degree of 'protection' which a household has against shocks and hazards.

Table 1: Vulnerability factors, contributions to vulnerability and indicators

| Factor | Contribution to vulnerability | Indicator(s) |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Income | Income – expenditure ratio and investments: Proportion of income spend on non-productive items/things can lead to underinvestment in livelihood and leading to higher risks | Proportion of income expended on non-productive items (food, health, rent/fees) |
| Indebtedness | High levels of non-productive debts put livelihood assets at risk, repayment may reduce essential expenditure and investments; high levels of existing debt can reduce ability to access additional credit. | Debt repayment in proportion to income, Income – repayment ratio |
| Livelihood Assets | Ownership of livelihood assets/capitals (human, financial, natural, physical, social & religious) can provide protection against shocks. | Deviation between different livelihood assets and between hard – soft assets |
| Livelihood diversification capacity | Income that derives from a single source is more vulnerable to shocks. Multiple sources or the potential to diversity can increase protection against shocks. | Livelihood diversity index (number of income generating activities in HH) |
| Food Security | Current and prior experiences of food insecurity are strongly linked with increased vulnerability to future food insecurity. Likewise, food insecurity leading to malnutrition can affect human capital and put livelihoods at risk. | Food security index |
| Health | Chronic or frequent illness in primary earner or other family members threatens livelihood security. Increased health expenditure and reduced income can lead to negative coping, the conversion of livelihood assets to cash. | Health-illness ratio: Income generating household member days per year vs. days of illness |
| Water & Sanitation | Water is an essential natural resource and the time necessary for ensuring water supply can affect other activities as well as unreliable water supplies increases resource expenditure; unsafe water sources increase health risks which reduces livelihood effectiveness. | Average time to ensure water supply for HH; Understanding of correlation between sanitation issues and water-borne diseases |
| Dependents | Household members who require higher levels of social or medical care divert human, physical and financial resources which can affect livelihood activities. | Household dependency scale |
| Social Participation | Persons with higher levels of social participation build up social capital which can increase the likelihood of relief and assistance in times of difficulty. | Participation index Identified obstacles |
| Decision Making | Persons with more influence in decision making can have stronger negotiation position for livelihood related factors such as fair pricing, land and asset use. | Proximity to power scale and relationships |
| Forced Displacement | The experience of forced displacement contributes to a perception of powerlessness and decreased self-esteem that affects peoples’ capacity to restructure healthy lives. | Displacement experiences Proximity to last forced displacement |

In order to measure and visualize the level of vulnerability on household and village level, standardized indicators which can be converted to a scale from 0-1 will show the vulnerability level. This consistent method allows that even multiple indicators can be used to measure the different factors and be transferred into the graphic to visualize the result.

The interpretation builds on the understanding that first, all IDP households can be classified as relative 'Vulnerable.' Differences however will be identified through this research especially including 'obvious' vulnerable HHs which are single parent or women headed, HH caring for a person with disability, etc. If three or more of the 11 vulnerability factors (see table 1) are scored over 1 standard deviation lower than the population average, the HH is classified as highly vulnerable.

The graphic below will be used to plot the results of the 11 criteria from each surveyed household to show highly vulnerable household pattern as well as combined data for indicating differences within and among villages.

The Vulnerability Assessment will be conducted (and led) by a consultant/team leader with relevant expertise in conducting assessments with vulnerable persons/communities, as well as knowledge and experiences of the Myanmar country context.

It is intended that the assessment be a participatory learning experience for all key stakeholders. The consultant/team leader will be supported by the ELDP project implementation team and the consortium's technical advisors. In addition, the field research activity will be supported by a team

GRAPHIC 1: HOUSEHOLD VULNERABILITY PROFILE – 'UMBRELLA' MODEL

Adapted model by Matthias Rimarzik (Covenant Consult, Nov 2016)



Note: in order to facilitate comparison we ultimately eliminated 'Displacement' from the Umbrella Model and created a separate set of non-comparable questions.

of enumerators as appropriate under the supervision of the program coordinator. The preparation of the field assessment methodology as well as the report design will be carried out by the consultant in cooperation with consortium members.

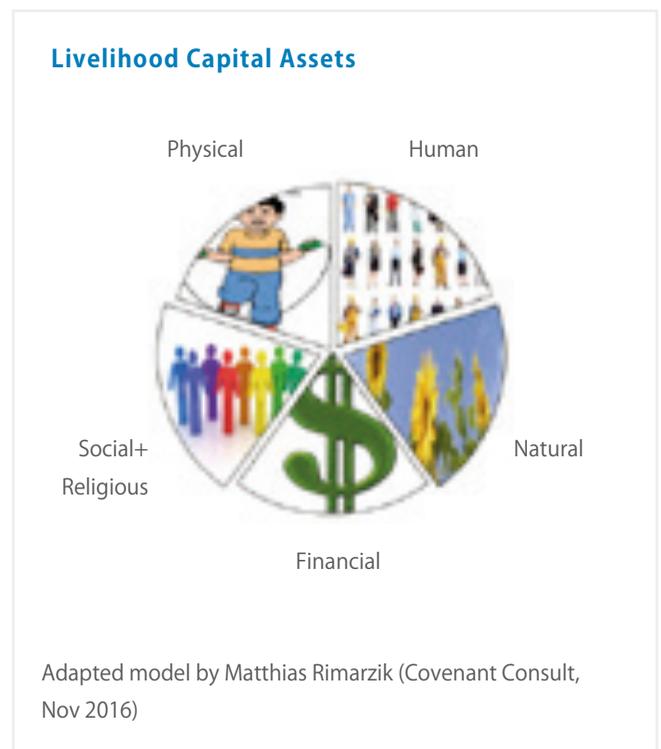
The consultant/team leader will be expected to propose an appropriate and practical methodology and develop the tools (questionnaire, etc.) that will be used for the assessment. It is expected that the consultant’s proposal will build on an approach to measuring vulnerability which is not based on fixed demographic characteristics alone but also includes a focus on the 11 criteria (table 1) and livelihood capital assets (Graphic 2) in the design of the assessment. In this context it needs to be recognised that existing measures of vulnerability in economic terms alone are limited and need to be extended by a more useful approach and methodology that reflects the dynamic aspects of household and community vulnerability. In this context displacement experiences need to be included and are key to a more comprehensive understanding of vulnerability. The Vulnerability Assessment will be conducted (and led) by a consultant/team leader with relevant expertise in conducting assessments with vulnerable persons/communities, as well as knowledge and experiences of the Myanmar country context.

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Figure 2: Livelihood Capital Assets



The analysis and description of the vulnerability context shall include the (mostly uncontrollable) external factors that influence people's livelihood assets and livelihood opportunities. Importantly, the vulnerability assessment shall be designed to measure two principle vulnerability levels - chronic vulnerability caused by low levels of access to services, resources, entitlements in the long-term and transitory vulnerability that results from fluctuations in services, productivity, or are conflict related, etc.

Broadly, these contributing factors can be classified as:

- › Shocks (e.g. environmental, conflict-related);
- › Trends (e.g. resources, technology);
- › Seasonality (e.g. price fluctuation, employment opportunities)

1. KEY RESEARCH QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED IN THE VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

Next to the indicators mentioned in table 1, following key questions may guide the research design:

- › What is the level of vulnerability in the project target region? (using the 11 factor 'Umbrella' model which includes e.g. the Livelihood Vulnerability Index and any other useful tools, if appropriate)
- › What are key issues that cause vulnerability in IDP HHs in the target region?
- › What are risks that contribute towards future vulnerability?
- › Strengths and weaknesses of livelihood assets in target community that carry risks to future vulnerability;
- › What are existing coping mechanisms in communities to deal with stress, shocks?
- › Identification of resilience indicators in relation to project components;
- › To which extend are community structures (organized groups in communities if existing) contributing to resilience (preventing from vulnerability)?
- › To which extend does migration contribute to increased

or decreased vulnerability (is migration a solution towards resilience)?

- › What are the challenges/issues that might come along with vocational training opportunities in the region that carry the risk of increased vulnerability?

The consultant/team leader may suggest other relevant key questions as part of their proposal.

See consultant proposal – three aspects to be included. The consultant/team leader will be required to train and induct the field assessment enumerator team and familiarize them with the terminology and methodology of the assessment. The induction will include a thorough familiarization with the survey questions in order to keep non-response rates as close to zero as possible. Note: 'Non- response' includes both refusal to participate in the assessment and refusal to answer particular questions. While it should always be stressed to respondents that they have the option of not answering certain questions, enumerators should be able to achieve a level of comfort with the respondents that they are interviewing so as to minimize non-response rates.

During the field assessment the team leader will conduct regular team meetings to share experiences and discuss challenges team members may have identified during interviews. These meetings are also meant to record progress and cross-check data entry to the questionnaires.

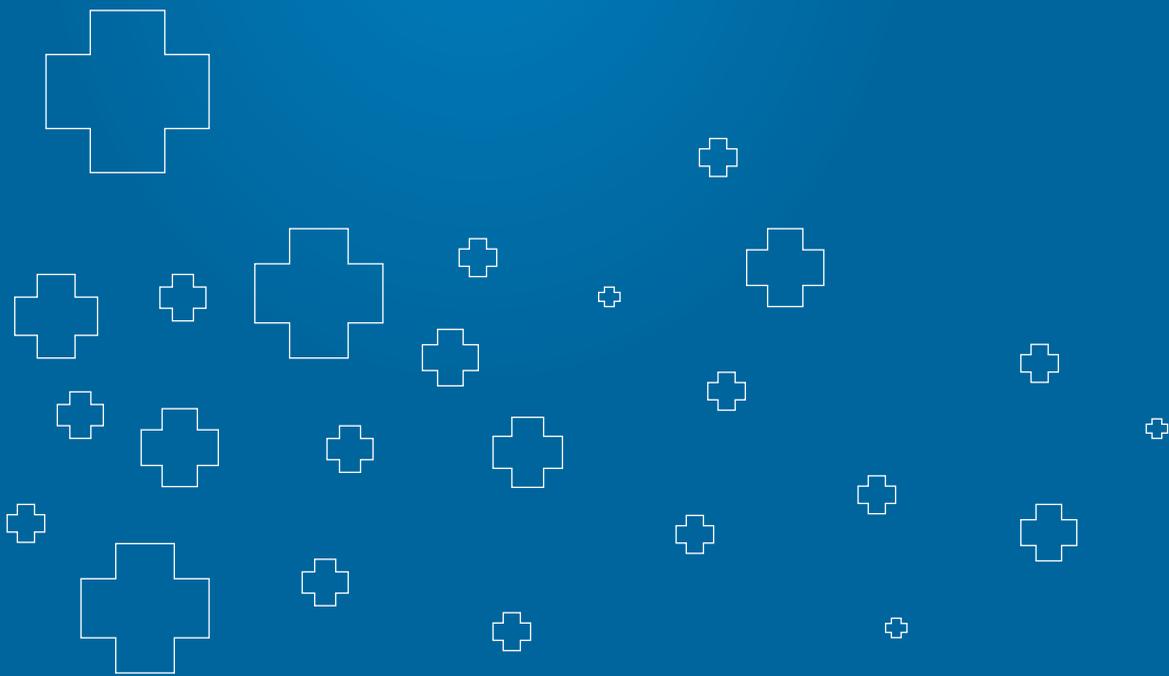
2. EXPECTED OUTPUTS

It is envisaged that the primary output of this assessment will be a Plain English report (no more than 30 pages - excluding annexes) that addresses but not limited to the aforementioned aspects and questions. The study report should make recommendations to the operational side of the KDN consortium and also to the broader community of operational actors and humanitarian agencies who may consider developing programs for the Tanintharyi region and the IDP context.

The report should be preceded by an executive summary and include the following:

- › Purpose of the evaluation and the methodology;
- › The main findings: vulnerability measures and deviations, chronic and transitory vulnerability, vulnerability deviations in communities (patterns?);
- › Programmatic information: identify relevant information for the operational side and the implementation team in relation to vulnerability; radar diagrams for each community with explanations of deviations;
- › Conclusions and recommendations,
- › Annexes: TOR, Itinerary, List of people met, List of documents reviewed, Questionnaire, Interview questions, tables and graphics.

The consultants will also develop a PowerPoint presentation for further use by the consortium and information sharing with the donor. The final report in English is expected to be completed no later than one week after the final input/feedback is provided by the consortium.



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