

SHAN STATE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AA	Arakan Army
CBO	Community-based organisation
CSO	Civil society organisation
CSSU	Committee for Shan State Unity
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
EAO	Ethnic armed organisation
FGD	Focus group discussion
GAD	General Administration Department
IDHAA	International development and humanitarian assistance actors
IDP	Internally displaced person
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
KIA/KIO	Kachin Independence Army/Organisation
KII	Key informant interview
KNLP	Kayan New Land Party
MMK	Myanmar Kyats
MNDAA	Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army
MOAI	Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation
MOU	Memorandum of understanding
MP	Member of Parliament, includes members of any of the Hluttaws (State or Union level)
NCA	Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NLD	National League for Democracy
NRPC	National Reconciliation and Peace Centre
RCSS	Restoration Council of Shan State
SAZ	Self-Administered Zone
SNDP	Shan Nationalities Democratic Party
SNLD	Shan National League for Democracy
SSA/SSPP	Shan State Army/Shan State Progressive Party (the political wing of the SSA)
TNLA	Ta'ang National Liberation Army
TYT	<i>Taing-Yin-Tha</i> , the 135 recognized national ethnic races
USDP	Union Solidarity and Development Party
UWSA	United Wa State Army

Executive Summary

Shan State is the biggest of Myanmar's administrative units. For convenience, this territory is divided into three areas (Shan East, Shan North and Shan South).

Building a Democratic and Peaceful Shan State

Despite a high turnout for the 2015 general election, political participation and involvement with public affairs is low, perhaps due to the need to focus on day-to-day survival. This focus on immediate needs is also reflected in the higher level of participation in local level cooperatives and communal activities.

There is a perception that men and women are treated equally, but objective indicators such as the number of women in leadership roles suggest otherwise. Entrenched gender norms contribute to the lack of representation and to the underreporting of discrimination, as well as underreporting and lack of adequate follow-up on gender-based and domestic violence. There are however active women's organisations and wide-spread awareness of the need for more gender equality training.

Humanitarian issues in Shan State

Shan State is not at present facing an acute humanitarian crises, but there are a number of chronic issues, including lack of preparedness for natural disasters, the impact of fighting and issues relating to drug use and the drug trade.

Ongoing fighting in Shan North is a major cause of lack of security and instability. On the other hand, responses from Shan South and East suggest that ceasefires between government and EAOs have a positive effect. However, even in ceasefire areas, remnants of conflict, particularly landmines, have an ongoing impact on the safety of the population. There is also an urgent need to address the psychological impact of the conflict and for trauma healing in all sections of the population.

Long and short-term conflict related displacement continues to be an issue in both Shan North and South. In all parts of the State, there are also populations who have been trapped in their villages by the fighting and suffered deprivation as a result. Formerly displaced persons who have returned to their villages may also need assistance while rebuilding their livelihoods.

Drug use has reached epidemic proportions across Shan State. The causes of this are complex, but include the drug trade, the lack of good job opportunities, insecurity (both a cause in itself and due to its psychological impact), displacement, injury and involuntary exposure to drugs. In turn drug use has an impact on productivity, health and security. Drug use cannot, in this context, be separated from the drug trade, which itself is intricately linked to conflict and security (as both cause and consequence). Respondents consistently identified drug addiction as the biggest social problem currently facing Shan State. Government attempts to address the drug trade have not had notable successes. There are rehabilitation centres, but these cannot meet the needs of the population.

Development in Shan State

Economic Perspectives

There are three closely linked (and mutually reinforcing) challenges for economic development in Shan State: low skill levels and lack of skilled workers; lack of economic opportunities; and extensive economic migration (primarily to China and Thailand). The lack of economic opportunities in Shan State drives migration abroad, while the lack of skilled workers impacts the State's economic development (and encourages employers to look elsewhere to fill skilled positions). Simultaneously, the lack of skilled positions and the fact that better educated employees are not noticeably better off means that there are few incentives to continue in education or invest in developing skills. Land grabbing, both by private mining companies and for governmental development projects, also poses a threat to livelihoods, while poor infrastructure (particularly a lack of rural to urban roads and low levels of access to electricity) impact all economic sectors.

Agriculture is the largest economic sector in Shan State, even in urban areas, followed by mining and (in Shan South) by tourism. However, access restrictions and lack of infrastructure have inhibited the

development of tourism outside a few well-known spots, while the local population is not generally involved in mining, even as labourers. There are also complaints about lack of consultation in granting mining concessions as well as the environmental impact of mining.

In the agricultural sector, poor farming techniques and choice of crops and varieties result in poorer outputs and contribute to the overuse of chemical fertilisers and pesticides, and environmental degradation. These factors also contribute to poor quality nutrition, despite no reported shortage of food. The cost of seeds and other inputs, and reliance on imports from China and Thailand, insecure land tenure, lack of knowledge and lack of infrastructure are barriers to improving farming techniques. While local markets are generally easy to access, farmers report little access to more distant internal or international markets. An additional problem is that opium poppies are a low effort crop and provide a guaranteed return. In order to be attractive, alternative crops will need to offer quick and sustainable returns (which to date has not been the case).

Remittances from those working abroad are a major source of income in some areas and help families survive. However, this irregular migration reduces the skilled workforce in the State and puts the migrants at risk of trafficking or ending up in illegal, unsafe or under-protected work.

Most respondents had access to loans, but these were generally small loans from individuals; the collateral required by banks making their loans inaccessible. Government loans are available, but are criticised as too small to facilitate investment. Repaying previous loans and healthcare costs are common reasons for taking out loans, highlighting a risk that loans may create a cycle of debt rather than enabling investment.

Basic Needs

In the health sector, the major challenges are the lack of trained personnel (particularly specialists) and the cost of medication. Most women give birth at home, creating a particular need for community level midwives to ensure adequate peri-natal care.

In towns water mainly comes from wells, while in rural areas rainwater is collected in traditional ponds. In both cases poor management of the water resources and contamination are problems. In towns, most families have access to latrines, but access to latrines decreases in rural areas, while some individuals continue to resist using latrines even if they are available.

Despite government efforts in this sector, there are problems with access to and quality of education, including due to a shortage of qualified teachers. Teaching is delivered in Burmese, which many students do not speak, contributing to poor educational outcomes and high levels of school drop-outs.

Technical training is more highly prized than formal education and there is an appetite for more vocational training. However, except for training on agriculture, vocational trainings are not currently effective in improving the situation of participants. Longer, more in-depth trainings corresponding to the actual needs of the community would be better than one-off trainings. Links to other programmes to ensure that participants have the resources needed to put new skills into practice would also be beneficial.

Development and humanitarian actors – access, implementation, safety and stakeholders

The current administration has said that International Development and Humanitarian Actors (IDHAAs) that genuinely wish to provide humanitarian and development assistance in ethnic areas will be granted access. These actors are nonetheless likely to face practical and bureaucratic problems in carrying out projects in Shan State. Making the right connections within the Union and State governments and with influential actors in target communities will be important in ensuring access. IDHAAs will also need to be transparent in their methods and ensure that relevant actors are consulted and informed.

If IDHAAs channel their assistance through local NGOs, these NGOs should be responsible for identifying entry points and getting necessary permissions. However, there are few local NGOs that have the capacity or experience to implement donor-funded projects. It may therefore be necessary to work through more experienced Yangon-based NGOs or adopt the model of tripartite partnerships (IDHAAs, relevant government agencies and NGOs) that has been used in Rakhine State.

Introduction

Purpose of the research

The current research was commissioned by the Embassy of Switzerland in Myanmar in the context of the development of a new strategic framework for the Embassy's work. This includes a greater focus on the north-east of Myanmar, an area characterised by great diversity and economic possibilities, but also by deeply-rooted conflicts. The research aims to provide a baseline of information on humanitarian and development needs in Shan State to guide decisions on the Embassy's engagement in the region. The original 'Terms of Reference' were to cover both Shan State and the northern part of Kayah State, however in the operationalisation of the research it proved impossible to cover Kayah. This report therefore focuses exclusively on Shan State.

The Embassy of Switzerland in Myanmar identified four domains for its activities (1) employment and vocational skills development, (2) agriculture and rural market development, (3) health and basic services and (4) peace, state-building and protection.

Within these domains, the Swiss Embassy in Myanmar requested information covering:

- Relevant stakeholders;
- Humanitarian needs of the population;
- Space for development within the four domains;
- Political economy analysis of the four domains;
- Possible entry points for development in the four domains;
- Ways of supporting the region to move out of fragility;
- The role of women, how to reduce gender disparities and create opportunities for women.

The findings of the report are presented below in five parts. Part 1 addresses briefly the political and social landscape. Part 2 considers humanitarian needs with a particular focus on displacement, the drug problem and natural disasters. Part 3 addresses development, first considering economic elements (employment, agricultural and market development) and then access to basic services (health, water and sanitation, and education, including vocational education). Part 4 provides a stakeholder analysis and some observations on issues relating to working in Shan State. Finally, Part 5 draws together and discusses the key points identified in the main text.

While this report and research was primarily designed as a one-off mapping of the situation in Shan State rather than as a tool for monitoring progress, it may nonetheless provide a baseline for assessing progress throughout the lifetime of the SDC's strategy. Given the scope and approach of this research, such use would have to be complemented by monitoring of the impact of specific projects and the main focuses of SDC's work. However, the recommendations provided at the end of the current report should suggest some areas in which it might be useful to consider developing indicators to monitor the overall evolution of the situation. Since the approach adopted in this report focused on individual's perceptions and lived experiences it does not provide a basis for monitoring using purely factual indicators. However, using a similar approach, and even the same questions, would enable SDC to identify how the population see their situation evolving and whether activities are having a real impact on day-to-day experiences.

Historical and regional context

Covering almost 25% of her territory and with a population of 5,824 million inhabitants,¹ Shan State is Myanmar's biggest and most populous administrative unit. The State has a long international border with China to the north and east, and Thailand and Laos to the south. In Myanmar, Shan State is bordered by Kachin to the north, Mandalay to the west, Bago to the south-west and Kayin and Kayah to the south. For convenience the State is divided into three areas (Shan East, Shan North and Shan South), which reflect the military division into three commands. Five of Myanmar's six Self-Administered Zones (SAZ) are in Shan State: the Pa'O and Danu SAZs in Shan South and the Kokant, Palaung and Wa SAZs in Shan North. In addition to these five groups and the Shan (who are the majority population) there are a

¹ 'Myanmar Population and Housing Census', 2014.

number of other ethnic minorities present in Shan State, including Kachin, Intha and Kayan. There are also groups who are not among the recognised national ethnic races of Myanmar, but nonetheless comprise distinct populations. These include the Panthay (Chinese Muslims), Nepalis and Indians.

Its location, fertile soil and extensive natural resources make Shan State a potentially important trading hub. However, insecurity and inaccessibility have resulted in the drug trade taking precedence over other enterprises. The agricultural sector dominates the economy, followed in importance by mining. A significant proportion of the population also seek work abroad, predominantly in China or Thailand (see Appendix 1: Shan State Geography and Economy).

Shan State's development and its current situation has been shaped by its history and particularly the complex (and ongoing) conflict between and among the ethnic armed organisations (EAOs) and the government. In this context it is worth providing a brief historical overview (a more extensive discussion of the history is provided in Appendix 1).

Shan State as a single entity or administrative unit is a relatively recent phenomenon; historically the Shan States were a number of independent kingdoms, with shifting internal boundaries and alliances. Similarly the kingdoms' relations with the Burman empire, but also with other neighbouring powers (particularly Thailand and China) varied and encompassed at different periods conflict, alliance, lack of contact and tributary status. Although the British "pacified" the Shan States and incorporated them in the "Frontier areas" administration of British Burma, they permitted the ruling princes to keep a high level of autonomy, so that it was not until independence that 'Shan State' was defined as a single administrative unit.

Even before the 1962 *coup d'état*, the joining of the Shan State to Myanmar had led to uprisings, notably by the Burmese Communist Party (BCP). A plethora of EAOs (connected to varying extents with the BCP) also sprang up—especially in the north of Shan State. The first Shan faction emerged in 1958 under the banner 'Num Sik Han'. After undergoing several transformations during the 1960s, it merged with another Shan group to form the Shan State Army (SSA) in 1964, which remains one of the most active and influential EAOs in Shan State today.² In 1971, the Shan State Progressive Party (SSPP) was created as the SSA's political wing. Adding to the anarchic situation in Shan State in the 1960s and 1970s was the proliferation and increasing unruliness of local militias, which were created in 1963 to fight insurgents in remote areas. These groups were encouraged to expand and permitted to operate self-sufficiently, although without funding from the central government. In these circumstances many turned to drug and mineral trading to support their activities.

The breakup of the BCP and a government actively seeking ceasefires, lead to two decades in which the situation was relatively stable and there was little actual conflict. However, this period also saw an increase in the drug trade with Shan State becoming a nexus for opium, heroin and amphetamine production and traffic.

Under the Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) Government, the peace process became more structured and systematic leading finally to the signing of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) in 2015. Of the EAOs active in Shan State today, two are NCA signatories, the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS) and the Lahu Democratic Army. The SSA/SSPP and the United Wa State Army (UWSA) have bilateral ceasefires with the Government, but have not joined the NCA.

Since taking office, the National League for Democracy (NLD) Government has committed to continuing the peace process within the framework of the NCA. While the changes to the process have been relatively small and to an extent cosmetic, they have impacted the relations between the Government and EAOs.

As of today, the situation is very different in the different areas. In Shan South and Shan East the situation is largely peaceful with only few clashes having been reported over the last few years, often without casualties. In Shan East this has led to easier movement and increased trade with Thailand and China, as

² Sai Kam Mong, *Kokang and the Kachin in the Shan State, 1945-1960* (Bangkok, Thailand: Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, 2005).

well as a reduction in the number of armed groups patrolling the area. However, the number of militia groups has increased, contributing to the complexity of the picture.

In Shan South, the situation in Pekon Township deserves particular attention. There is a sizeable Kayan population in this township and the Kayan New Land Party (KNLP) has a notable presence. Although it has had a ceasefire with the government since 1994, the KNLP remains an influential actor and is committed to securing a SAZ for the Kayan people (which would include areas in both Kayah and Shan States).

The situation in Shan North is much worse. EAOs active in Shan North include the Kachin Independence Army/Organisation (KIA/KIO), UWSA, the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) and Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA). Attempts to agree bilateral and multilateral ceasefires in this area have not been successful. In 2016, an attack on Muse by the Northern Alliance (which is formed of the Arakan Army (AA), KIA/KIO, MNDAA and TNLA) heralded an escalation of the conflict. Observers have suggested this was part of an attempt by the KIA/KIO to reduce the Tatmadaw's pressure on its headquarters in Kachin State. The TNLA sees its role as defending the Ta'ang/Palaung SAZ and people against the Tatmadaw and Shan EAOs; a peculiarity of the situation in Shan North being the risk of conflict between EAOs particularly the TNLA and RCSS.

Considering politics and Myanmar's transition to democracy more broadly, two points should be noted. Firstly, that the instability in Shan State made it impossible to hold elections in several constituencies in 2015, illustrating the complex relationship between the peace and political process. Secondly, that Shan State was one of only two States where the NLD did not win control of the Parliaments in the 2015 elections. The USDP is currently the majority party in the Shan State Hluttaw, following by the NLD and the Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD). The SNLD remains an influential political force within the State.

Methodology and sample description

This project used both quantitative and qualitative research methods, to capture both depth and breadth of data. The research covered 24 townships in Shan State. The qualitative element involved 282 respondents (49 participants in Stakeholder Meetings, 140 Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) and 93 participants in Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)). The quantitative survey collected responses from 3,010 participants. An initial survey had 2,310 respondents, while a follow-up focusing on particular topics where an analysis of the initial results suggested more information was needed received 700 responses. Due to budget constraints, research was not conducted in northern Kayah State.

Qualitative data collection

The qualitative research included three elements: (a) one-on-one³ in-person interviews with individuals identified through the elite sampling method;⁴ (b) focus group discussions; (c) stakeholder meetings; and (d) participative observation. Interviewees included the following actors:

- Religious leaders;
- Civil society and cultural association leaders (including youth groups and women's groups);
- Politicians;
- Government staff;
- EAO representatives;
- Business leaders.

FGDs involved a range of participants, including some private individuals who expressed interest and were knowledgeable about the affairs of their region.

³ Although with the assistance of an interpreter where necessary.

⁴ "Elite sampling" refers to the selection of individuals who possess specialist insights into the local situation for in-depth interviews.

Researchers made an effort to ensure that interviewees and FGD participants were representative in terms of ethnicity and religion. However, the range of topics and the need for informed discussion meant that other types of diversity (e.g. in terms of educational background) could not be fully reflected among participants and, despite the efforts of researchers to include women, only 35% were female.

Interviews and FGDs were semi-structured and intentionally allowed space to focus on different subjects, depending on the backgrounds and experiences of the participants as well as enabling participants to highlight issues of particular importance to them, even if these were not among the issues identified as potentially significant by the researchers. Informal interviews were conducted on some particularly controversial issues to put the interviewees at ease and ensure confidentiality.

Interviews were conducted in all 24 townships covered by the research and included participants from both urban and rural areas. The three stakeholder meetings (at Kengtung in Shan East, Lashio in Shan North and Taunggyi in Shan South) allowed researchers to benefit from the insight of civil society organization (CSO) and community-based organisation (CBO) representatives.

The qualitative research has been supplemented with relevant information from interviews conducted between October 2016 and January 2017 for a different project. These are included in the figures presented in Table 1.

Table 1: KII and FGD participants by Gender and Area

Area	Number of participants
Shan South total	62
• Male	24
• Female	38
Shan East total	49
• Male	22
• Female	27
Shan North total	122
• Male	46
• Female	76
Total	233

Table 2: Participants in stakeholder meetings

Area	Number of participants
Shan South	22
• Male	8
• Female	14
Shan East	12
• Male	7
• Female	5
Shan North	15
• Male	5
• Female	10
Total	49

Quantitative data collection

The quantitative research was carried out through a public opinion questionnaire (see Appendix 3), supported by desk research. Between January and March 2018, researchers collected 2,310 surveys in 24 townships in Shan State (the list of Townships is provided in Appendix 2). The townships were selected using a purposive sampling method. The choice of this method rather than a randomised sampling method ensured that the research captured a cross-section of Shan State's geographical and ethnic diversity⁵ and made it possible to take into consideration population density and historical elements.

On the ground, a mix of stratified, quota and, where necessary, the snowball sampling methods were used. The stratified sampling method was applied first to ensure that ethnic diversity and key demographic variables were fully reflected among respondents in a given Township. Having identified the relevant ethnic groups, a minimum quota of 20 respondents from each ethnic minority group was established, to ensure that there were enough responses from each group to permit comparisons to be made. The snowball sampling method was used in two townships in Shan North, where researchers faced particular difficulties with data collection. While using this method, efforts were still made to ensure that there was a balance between the different demographic variables and contacts were asked to help identify

⁵ Drawing in particular on the information provided by the Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population.

respondents with relevant characteristics. As a result, it was possible to fulfil the quotas established for ethnic groups despite using snowball method.

In addition to the main data collection for the report, which took place between January and March 2018, a second round of data collection took place in April and May 2018 to supplement the responses in particular areas. Where relevant the data has been supplemented by insights from other research in Shan State.

Data Operationalization

Survey questions were designed to permit anyone—regardless of educational background, socioeconomic status, age or gender—to answer relatively easily and accurately. For this reason the survey was largely standardised questions focusing on subjective opinions. Researchers anticipated that the cumulation of such responses would reveal overall trends and issues. Surveys were anonymous, increasing the probability that responses accurately reflect the attitudes and experiences of respondents.

The main survey consisted of 176 multiple-choice questions. The additional data collection in April-May 2018 included 30 questions, which overlapped with those asked in the main survey. For most questions, respondents were asked to choose one answer from an ‘ordinal scale’ of responses, such as (1) thoroughly, (2) somewhat, (3) a little, and (4) not at all (‘single-answer multiple-choice’). “I don’t know” was also offered as a choice. Other questions allowed participants to select multiple answers, with responses being tabulated and compared for popularity.

Description of the sample

Diversity in survey respondents was sought along seven demographic variables:

1. Place of residence (township);
2. Gender;
3. Age;
4. Educational background;
5. Ethnicity;
6. Religious affiliation;
7. Socioeconomic background (income level).

Age, educational background, and income level were recorded in ‘interval level measurements’. Place of residence, gender, ethnicity and religious affiliation were registered in ‘nominal level measurements’. A detailed description of the respondents across these seven variables is provided in Appendix 2.

Place of residence

Of the 24 townships in seven districts included in the research there were most respondents in Taunggyi Township, due to its larger population. Similarly, Shan South represented the biggest proportion of the sample (59%) and the less populous Shan North, the smallest proportion (20%) of the sample.

Gender and age

The sample was 49% male and 51% female, however it was not possible to maintain this degree of equality across all age categories. The minimum age for participation in the survey was 18. As with gender, it was not always possible to have an equal spread of ages. However, the sample only differs from the demographic reality to a minor extent.

Ethnicity

There are 135 recognised *Taing-Yin-Tha* (TYT) (or indigenous) ethnic groups in Myanmar. Whatever the limitations of this classification, it provides a useful category of analysis in some cases. The main TYT groups included in the sample are Shan (33%), Bamar (16%), Pa’O (15%), Danu (7%) and Intha (5%). In the last three cases, the use of quota sampling was partly responsible for the proportion of respondents from these groups. For non-TYT groups, the categories ‘Chinese’, ‘Indian’, ‘Gurkha’ and ‘Muslim’ are used in the analysis, reflecting the self-identification of respondents.

Religion

Buddhists are the largest group in the sample (87%), followed by Christians (7%) and Muslims (4%). The quantitative data collection did not allow a breakdown of the different Christian denominations, but the qualitative part of the research took into consideration differences between sub-religious groups.

Professional grouping

For the sake of clarity, the professions of respondents have been divided into six groups (see Appendix 2), based on typical earnings. The most common profession was farmer (22%), followed by dependents (18%), shopkeepers and day labourers (each 12%), traders (10%) and service providers (8%).

Additional data collection

Of the 700 respondents surveyed during the additional data collection conducted in April and May 2018, 49% were male and 51% female with the majority being aged between 18 and 47 years. Twenty-nine percent were from Shan East, 21% from Shan North and 50% from Shan South.

Part 1: Building a Democratic and Peaceful Shan State

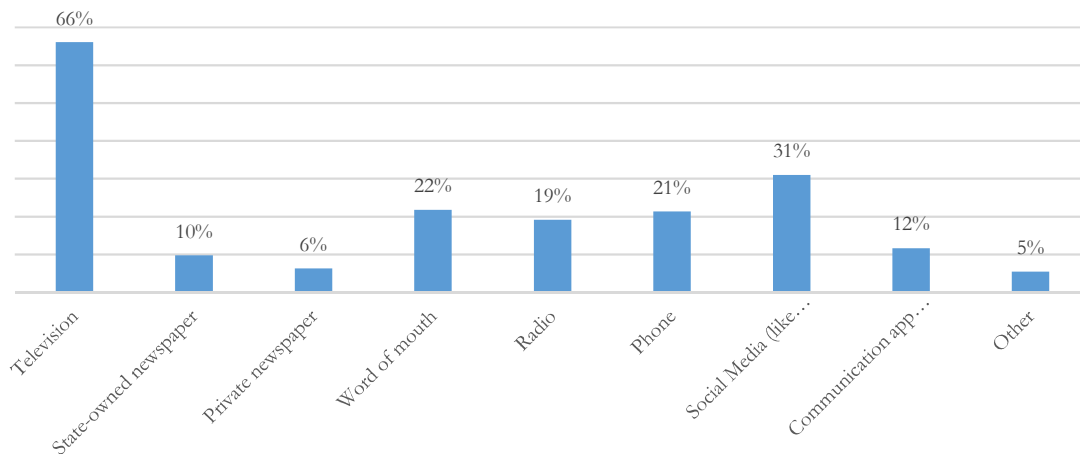
Following decades of military rule, in 2003 Myanmar began a slow transition towards democracy. Since then, the controversial adoption of a new Constitution in 2008 and general elections in 2010 and 2015 have brought about profound changes at both the political and social levels, although democratisation and peace-building remain a work in progress. Nationwide the 2015 election resulted in a landslide victory for the NLD. However, in Shan State the results were less decisive with each of the SNLD, the NLD and the USDP taking 25% of Amyotha Hluttaw seats, while the USDP also took the largest number of seats in both the Pyithu Hluttaw and the State Hluttaw. (See Appendix 4 for a more detail analysis of the election results).

This part is divided into three sections focusing on different aspects of political participation and social relations in Shan State: access to information; political and social participation; and the role of women.

Section 1: Access to information

Television is both the main and the most trusted source of information for residents of Shan State while social media and ‘word-of-mouth’ were the next most common sources of information (figure 1). Social media use was, unsurprisingly more common among younger respondents, although even in the youngest age category it did not replace television as the main source of information.

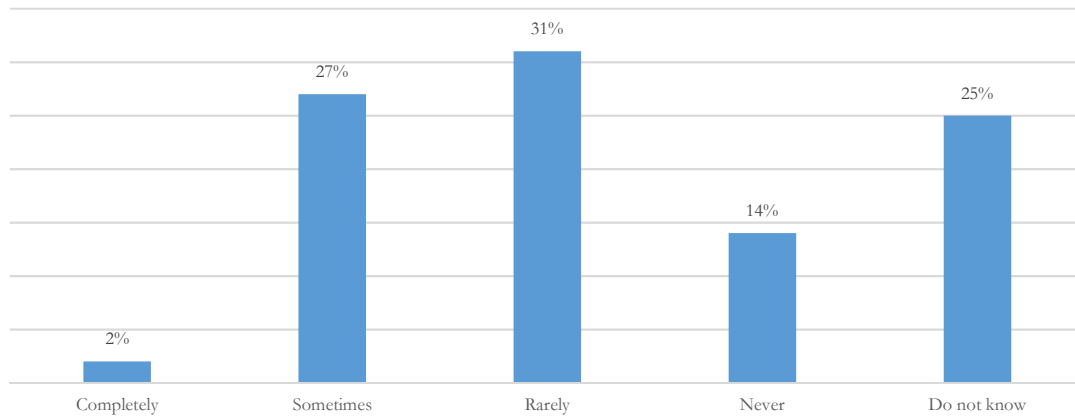
Figure 1: Main source of information



The use of social media (particularly Facebook) has increased since the 2011 telecommunications reforms and reduction in the price of SIM cards made mobile phones widely accessible. However, at least in Shan State, this has not resulted in Facebook displacing other sources of information. Only 27% of respondents believe ‘completely’ or ‘sometimes’ what they see on Facebook, while a similar proportion believed information received in this way ‘rarely’ and 15%, ‘never’ (figure 2). Here again a clear age difference appears, with the youngest respondents more likely to believe what they see on Facebook (39%) compared to 12% in the oldest age group. Also unsurprising is the finding that more educated respondents are less likely to believe what they see on Facebook than less educated ones.

Public debate on social media often focuses on the issues of rumours and hate speech. Respondents were therefore asked how they verify rumours. In line with the lack of trust in information acquired via social media, only 14% of respondents use social media to check rumours, while the biggest proportion ask the village elders about the situation. Worryingly though, 20% of the respondents ‘do not check rumours’, making them particularly vulnerable to the spread of hate speech and irrational fears.

Since access to, and use of, information were not the main focus of this research, the responses do not permit more in-depth analysis. However, the factors highlighted here may be useful to consider when designing communication strategies or awareness raising programmes. In particular, strengthening the quality and accessibility of public TV channels—including in term of languages—and ensuring that residents receive reliable, good quality news and information this way could be useful.

Figure 2: Whether or not the respondents believe what they see on Facebook

Section 2: Political and social participation

Participation in political and social affairs is a key indicator of the vibrancy of a democracy and provides an indication of the extent to which the populace is actively engaged and concerned with societal affairs.

Turnout at the 2015 general election was high (a fact confirmed by those monitoring the elections). It is therefore not surprising that most respondents voted in the election, although some in Shan North were unable to vote due to fighting (by-elections were held in most of these areas in 2017). It is interesting to note that turnout was higher for the 2015 election than for the election of village administrators (figure 3).

Turning to other indicators of political participation, the population is less engaged than these voting figures might suggest. Less than 15% of respondents had been involved in a public campaign of any sort. Interviewees said that they are not too concerned with protest and public campaigns as they “fight for their daily survival”, reflecting the extent to which capacity to participate in public campaigns is related to economic situation: the unemployed, daily labourers or farmers have less capacity to be involved in such events than traders or employees. Membership of a CSO can also be an indicator of political participation. CSO members are often more politically active and thus more likely to participate in—or even to organise—such protests. The low number of respondents who are members of a CSO may help explain the low level of participation in public campaigns. It is, however, worth noting that the areas with the most numerous and ‘important’ issues were also those with the highest level of membership of CSOs.

Opinions on the role of CSOs are mixed. While both interviewees and respondents displayed a certain level of confidence in the work of the CSOs, some noted that people do not have the time to get involved in such organisation. Restrictions on the work of CSOs, particularly in conflict areas, were also mentioned as a limiting factor on their work (figure 4).

Nonetheless, the apparent lack of participation in public campaigns and some slight scepticism related to the work of the CSOs do not mean that the residents are not involved in community activities. In fact villagers are often involved in communal religious activities (e.g. organising donation ceremonies) and participate in blood-donation groups and environmental activities. These day-to-day forms of participation are as important as more classical forms of political engagement in shaping society. They also attest to the localised character of society and social organisation in Shan State—a crucial factor to consider in implementing projects.

Figure 3: Participation in the 2015 general election and 2016 village administrator elections by Age at the time of the election⁶

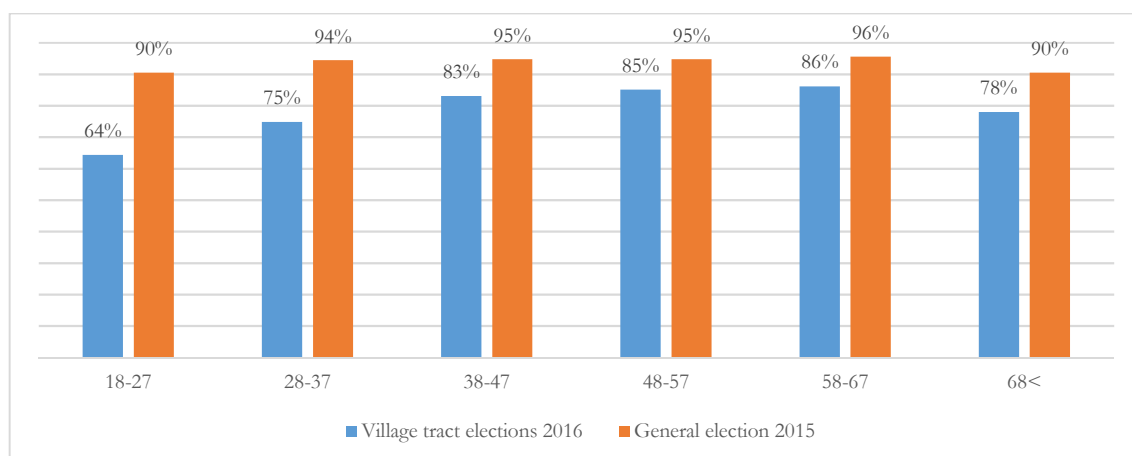
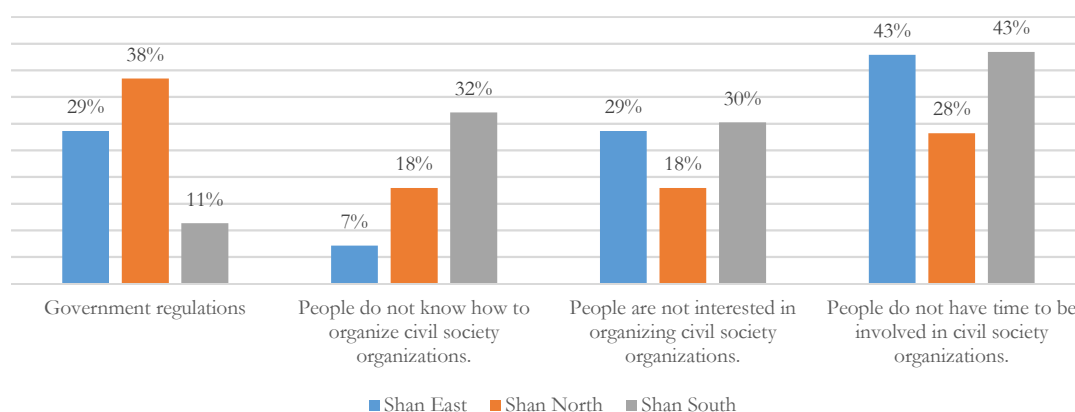


Figure 4: Restrictions on the work of CSOs in the respondent's area



Section 3: Women's participation

Women in Myanmar are constrained by the widespread acceptance of traditional gender roles. For instance, Mi Mi Kaing, a Myanmar expert on gender issues has demonstrated how gender inequality and discrimination are entrenched in social norms and traditions to the point that women themselves do not see their treatment as unequal or discriminatory, but at most as just different. As she puts it:

“...we [women] always keep alive in us the religious feeling that we are ‘below’ mankind. It is not so much a feeling that women are a lower race as that a man has the nobility of manhood in him. We call it ‘Hpon’, the glory, the holiness of a man, and we respect this not with subservience but with the same feelings as we respect monks and parents.”⁷

⁶ Since some of the respondents were not old enough to vote at the time of the election, the population included in this chart is slightly different from that in other charts.

⁷ Peace Support Fund, ‘The Women Are Ready – an Opportunity to Transform Peace in Myanmar’ (Peace Support Fund, January 2016) quoting; Mi Mi Khaing, *Burmese Family* (Bangkok, Thailand: Ava House, 1996) and; Mi Mi Khaing, *The World of Burmese Women* (London, UK: Zed Books, 1984).

A report on gender equality reached similar conclusions, describing hierarchical gender relations as “internalized among both men and women, making them not only hard to see, but also very hard to question.”⁸

It is in this context that the survey finding that 62% of respondents believe that men and women are treated equally should be understood. That this does not, in fact, reflect real equality was established through interviews with ten female community activists. One, pointed out, for example, that “in Akha and Lahu communities, only men could inherit family properties. In our Shan communities, there still are many men who see women like me very un-women, for we are trying to do what men usually do.” Another observed that:

“Traditionally, men are considered to be superior to women in all ethnic communities in Shan State. In poor families, when parents could only afford to send some of the children to school, they always give priority to sons. Whenever families have meals together, more food was given to men.”

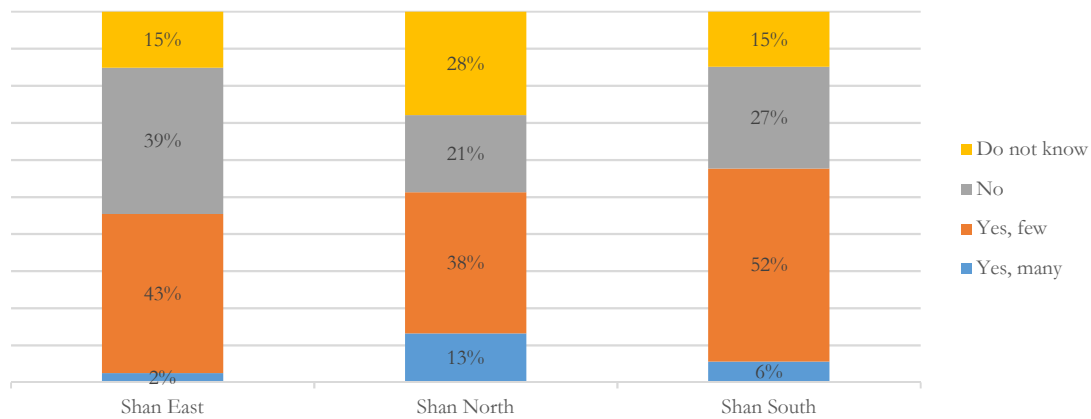
The survey also collected information about women community leaders and perceptions of these leaders. In line with the traditional ideas outlined above, the majority of respondents expressed doubt about the willingness of male community leaders to accept female community leaders (figure 5). Unsurprisingly in the circumstances, half the respondents in Shan East, 38% in Shan South and 28% in Shan North reported that there were no female community leaders in their area.

Figure 5: Opinion on whether or not male community leaders are willing to accept the idea that women should play a leading role in community activities by Area



On a more positive note 54% of the respondents reported that there are ‘many’ or at least ‘a few’ effective women’s organisation in their areas and only 18% stated that there were no such organisations, although the number of such organisations reported in Shan East was much lower (figure 6). The presence and visibility of these organisations potentially provides a network which could be involved in training and awareness raising on gender equality and women’s empowerment. Given the lesser visibility of women’s organisations in Shan East, particular efforts to strengthen organisations and expand their coverage might be needed.

⁸ Pansy Tun Thein, ‘Gender Equality and Cultural Norms in Myanmar’ (International Conference on Burma/Myanmar Studies: Burma/Myanmar in Transition: Connectivity, Changes and Challenges, Chiang Mai, Thailand: Chiang Mai University, 2015).

Figure 6: Opinion on whether or not there are effective women's organisation by Area

It is clear that strengthening women's organizations should be a priority and be understood in a broader framework of the need to address gender inequality. For instance, a female community development worker suggested that, in addition to empowering and promoting women's organisations, funders should require all fund recipients to promote gender equality. There is also both a need and an appetite for more training on gender discrimination, gender-based violence or gender inequality: 82% of the respondents in Shan East, 66% of those in Shan North and 76% of those in Shan South considered that there is a need for such trainings. Female interviewees also called for more training to counter the lack of understanding or perception of the existence of gender-based discrimination.

Part 2: Humanitarian Needs

The prolonged and, in some areas, ongoing history of conflict have left their mark on Shan State, most obviously in the displacement of sections of the population and the presence of landmines, but also more subtly in lack of investment and infrastructure, and popular fears. While the humanitarian needs of the population resulting from these factors are less obvious than those in other parts of the country, notably Rakhine and Kachin States, they nonetheless deserve attention. This part is divided into four sections, the first considers displacement, and the second, safety and security. The third and fourth move away from a focus on conflict to highlight the impact of the drug use and trade and natural disasters.

Section 1: Displacement and migration

Displacement in Shan State is driven by two causes; the need to find work and conflict. Under the general heading of conflict-related displacement, there may be a variety of specific causes, leading to long- or short-term displacement. Individuals flee to avoid immediate fighting, but also avoid forced recruitment or forced labour or because the conflict has made it difficult to make a living. In the 1980s, residents of Shan State were forcibly relocated by the government as part of their efforts to cut off EAOs' access to food, funding, information and recruitment. In such cases, displaced persons often suffered harassment from the government troops as a result of (real or perceived) links with the EAOs.

A caveat should be noted at this point; it became clear during the data collection for this research that some individuals did not have a clear understanding of what was meant by displacement and how to respond to relevant questions. Despite this, the data clearly shows that displacement is common across all areas and townships in Shan State (figure 7). Both the overall proportion of men and women reporting displacement and the reasons given for displacement were largely similar. However, men were slightly more likely to report having moved to another country (whatever the cause of the displacement), while female respondents were more likely to report displacement within Shan State.

In Shan East, displacement is overwhelmingly associated with economic migration rather than conflict, which is probably related to the absence of any major EAO operating outside the Wa region and Mong-La. Interviewees reported that Wa are sometimes displaced to Tachileik and Kengtung, but that they are generally well-off and so not in need of assistance.

In Shan South, displacement for economic reasons also seems to be more common than conflict-related displacement, although the two are often intertwined with those displaced by conflict frequently ending up as migrant workers. Despite the signing of a ceasefire between the government and the RCSS in 2012, community leaders estimated that there were still several thousand displaced people and that such displaced persons could be found in most townships in Shan South. There are particular concentrations in Loi Tai Leng, Loi Moong Merng, Loi Lam, Loi Hsarm Hsip, and Loi Gaw Wann, where internally displaced persons (IDPs) received international assistance until 2016, although they were no formally recognised IDP camps.

Despite being a party to the NCA as well as a bilateral ceasefire, the RCSS has reportedly not stopped recruitment. Some families therefore continue to send their children to monasteries in safer areas to avoid forced recruitment. A Buddhist monk noted that there were currently more than 5,000 young people staying at monasteries in Taunggyi for this reason, and many others elsewhere in the country.

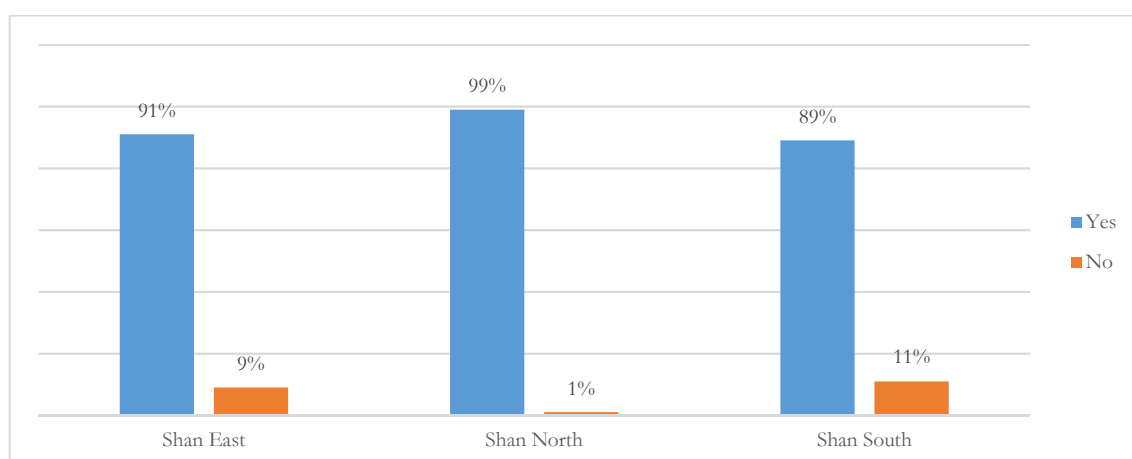
Unsurprisingly, given the ongoing fighting, conflict-related displacement is common in Shan North. Economic migration is also high leading to 99% of respondents in Shan North having displaced friends or family (figure 7). Shan North is the only area in Shan State that has formal IDP camps: two in Muse—one run by the Kachin Baptist Church and the other by the Kachin Catholic Church—one in Nam Phat Kar village and one in Mone Paw village. The total population of these camps is around 10,000, mostly Kachin, with a few Ta'ang/Palaung. There are no Shan IDPs in the camps.

All four camps receive food and medicine from local non-governmental organisations (NGOs) (like the Mitta Foundation), Christian Churches and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs). However, like their non-displaced peers, young people from IDP camps have limited access to higher education and health care. Moreover, IDP camps do not have capacity to deal with sudden surges in

demand. For instance, there was a shortage of food when more than a hundred thousand people (most of whom have now returned home) had to flee fierce fighting between government and Kokant troops in 2015. The possibility of such short-term displacement and the need for temporary shelters for those who flee fresh outbreaks of fighting should be kept in mind in planning for IDPs.

However, most of the survey respondents who had been displaced reported having been displaced for between one and three years, with just under a quarter displaced for more than three years. These trends were true for both men and women (figure 8), but when asked how long they had been resident in their current location, women were more likely than men to mention a relatively short period of time. While the present research does not provide enough evidence to draw detailed conclusions, it does suggest that the risk of displacement lasting several years should be kept in mind in planning for IDPs.

Figure 7: Proportion of respondents having a friend or a family member being currently displaced



In addition to those currently displaced, the humanitarian situation of two other groups needs to be considered: those who have returned to their villages and those who chose to remain (or were unable to leave) and became trapped by the fighting. Such entrapped villagers often faced as great a hardship and deprivation as displaced persons, including food shortages as a result of being unable to reach their lands, as well as rape, forced labour and other abuses by armed actors. Furthermore, many of these entrapped villages were in remote areas and so remain hard to access and underdeveloped. Interviewees estimated that several thousand people in Shan South are still trapped in remote villages. Some villagers receive remittances from family members who have found work abroad, but these are often not enough to live on and not received regularly. Economic migration in such cases denudes villages of working age adults, leaving behind only old people, drug addicts and young children.

Formerly displaced persons who have returned to their villages may find it hard to return to normal life and generally do not receive assistance from either the government or international organisations. As with the entrapped population, they will usually be returning to areas that have seen little development due to the conflict, deficiencies which are not necessarily rectified after the acceptance of ceasefires. In Shan South, the Thein Sein administration built new roads between towns and in some rural areas, but the government has not undertaken major development projects to improve the livelihoods and living conditions of former IDPs in either government or RCSS controlled areas.

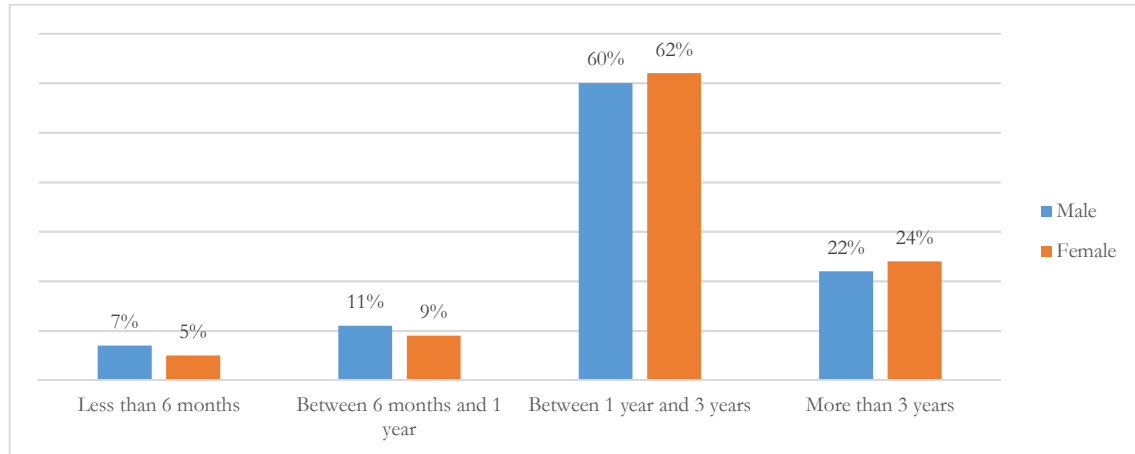
For those living in or returning to combat areas, landmines are an ever-present risk. In addition to those injured by landmines, the presence of mines may limit access to farmland and so impact the availability of food and livelihood opportunities. Some returnees find that their houses have been destroyed, creating an additional difficulty for those trying to rebuild their lives. A community development worker in Shan East and community leaders in Shan North both highlighted the risk of such populations turning to drug use and drug dealing. One community leader in Shan North explained:

“It was not safe for them to work in the field, for there could be land mines on the way to the field. They did not have money to repair their damaged houses. Although they run the risk of getting arrested by the police, drug dealers do not have to worry about stepping on land mines as much as farmers do. Drug dealers always

manage to make enough money to rebuild their houses. That is why, Shan North has the highest number of drug users and dealers.”

Five community leaders in Shan North put the level of drug use among young people from conflict zones at 70% and noted that drug use affected both men and women. IDPs, returnees and those from entrapped villages are also at heightened risk of trafficking and may resort to prostitution or other risky solutions to survive. A community leader in Shan South stated that more than 60% of the young women who were forced into prostitution came from displaced families.

Figure 8: Length of displacement by Gender



Section 2: Safety and security issues

The major safety concerns in Shan State are land mines, getting caught in the skirmishes between the Tatmadaw and EAOs, attacks from bandits, robbery by drug addicts and getting caught in fights between drug dealers. Despite the range of dangers, the risk of fighting is clearly uppermost in people’s minds when asked about safety. This is reflected in the fact that 92% of survey respondents in Shan South and 83% in Shan East felt that the places in which they lived were safe and most attributed this safety to the existence of ceasefires between the government and EAOs.

Conversely, 63% of survey respondents from Shan North felt that the places they lived were unsafe. Fighting between the Tatmadaw and the AA, the KIA/KIO, the MNDAA and the TNLA and attacks on passenger buses and cargo trucks by EAOs were identified as particular concerns. A bus driver from Muse noted:

“Between 2011 and 2013, there was no major fighting in northern Shan State and we did not feel unsafe to travel to any parts of northern Shan State. However, since the fighting between the Tatmadaw and ethnic armies resumed, we have felt very unsafe on the highways in various parts of Northern Shan State.”

Similarly a business man noted:

“Since the fighting between the Tatmadaw and ethnic armed groups resumed, the road between Lashio and Muse is no longer safe to travel on. Some areas between Pyin Oo Lwin and Lashio are also less safe now compared to before. The public is worried that the warring factions could plant landmines on the highways in northern Shan State. That is the reason many people in northern Shan State feel a sense of insecurity.”

However, in all three areas the majority of respondents felt that the security situation had remained stable over the last twelve months (figure 9). While differences across age-groups in this respect were minimal, there was a slight trend towards greater feelings of safety in older age groups. Correspondingly, younger age groups were more likely to identify security issues as the biggest challenge facing their community.

Figure 9: Perception on whether or not the safety situation has improved over the last year by area

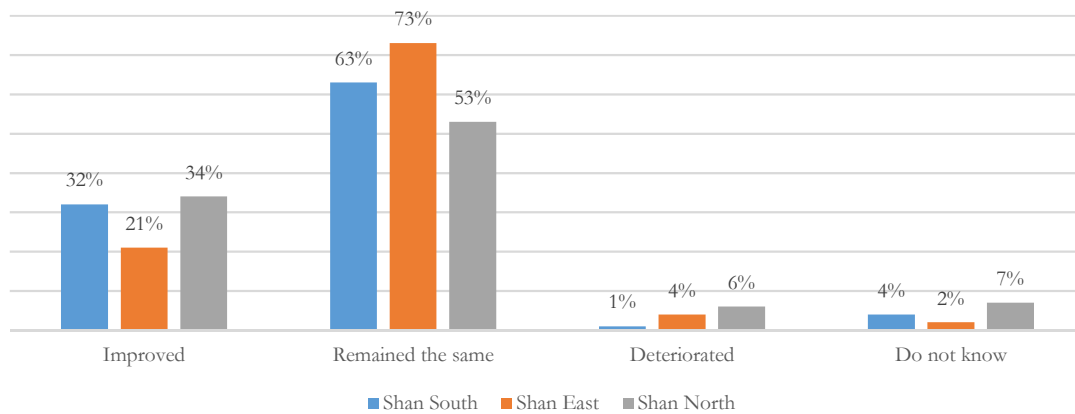


Figure 10: Reasons for improved level of safety in Shan South and Shan East

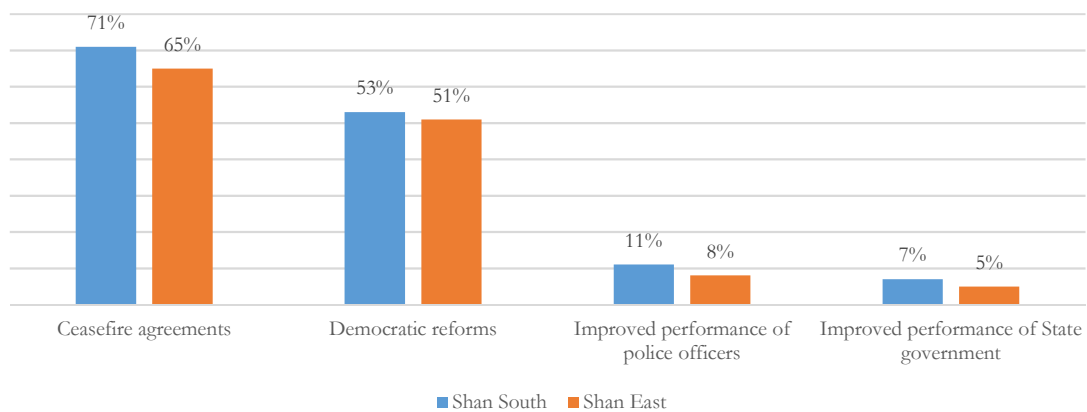
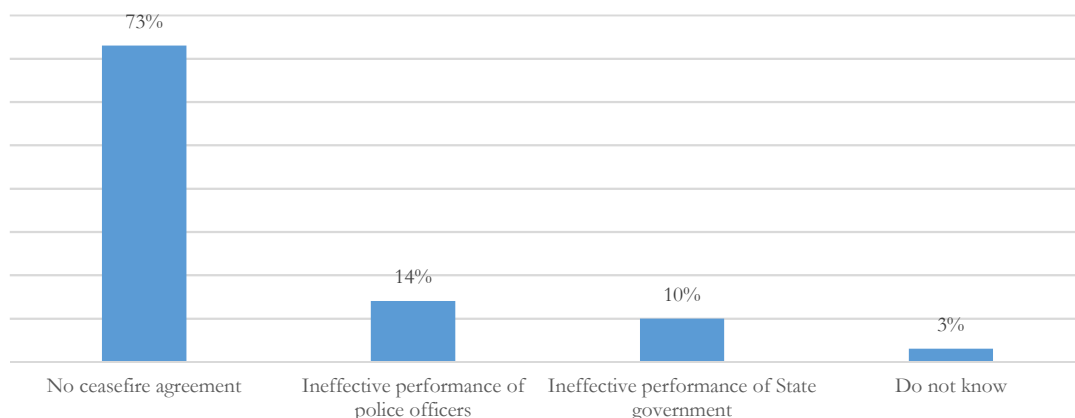


Figure 11: Reasons for the increasing level of unsafe situations in Shan North



FGD participants and interviewees noted that most roads in Shan East and Shan South had been cleared of landmines. However, in remote areas and in Shan North as a whole, landmines continue to be a problem, limiting the ability of individuals to move freely and causing livelihood problems for farmers who risk injury to access or cultivate land. For instance, two residents from a village near the RCSS-

controlled areas said that they felt unsafe when they moved around their areas, as they were worried about stepping on landmines.

The high levels of drug use and the ubiquity of the drug trade make it unsurprising that drug-related incidents are identified as a security problem. Forty-one percent of survey respondents identified this as the biggest security issue in the State, with women being particularly likely to give this response (47% of female respondents). Approximately one third of FGD participants said they had been robbed by drug addicts, and all agreed that this was very common. However, participants noted that drug addicts rarely harmed the general public. A youth leader said: “Drug addicts don’t usually like to socialise with people. They just steal things and buy drug with the money they get from the sale of the stolen goods. They usually harm themselves and their families, not others.” However, three community leaders were not certain that drug addicts would never harm the general public and wanted police officers to take more effective action against drug addicts who commit theft.

Interviewees from Shan East also complained about fighting between rival drug dealers. A community leader noted that people in Tachileik were shocked by the killing of a drug dealer by his rival in broad daylight. The same community leader said: “So far, drug dealers have not yet harmed innocent citizens. However, the disputes between drug dealers are more frequent now, so people could get caught in the middle and get killed. The police must do away with these drug dealers.”

Participants in three FGDs claimed that police officers knew who the major drug dealers were, but did not take any action against them. They felt that security officials needed to be more accountable and less corrupt and bring drug dealers to justice. With that said, all FGD participants felt that the law enforcement agencies have, in general, become more accountable, although corruption continues to be an issue and results in criminals being free to harass innocent citizens. The spread of criminal activity resulting from drug addiction has also made it more difficult for police officers to do their jobs effectively.

Most survey respondents, both men and women, said that they have not witnessed or experienced gender-based violence. However, interviews with five female community activists indicated that many drug addicts abuse their wives both physically and mentally. There has also been a rise in rape cases, including of underage girls. The activists said that many victims of sexual violence were too embarrassed to report it, which encouraged perpetrators to continue their abuses. They noted that despite growing concern, most community and political leaders do not adequately address gender-based violence.

Section 3: Drugs as a humanitarian problem

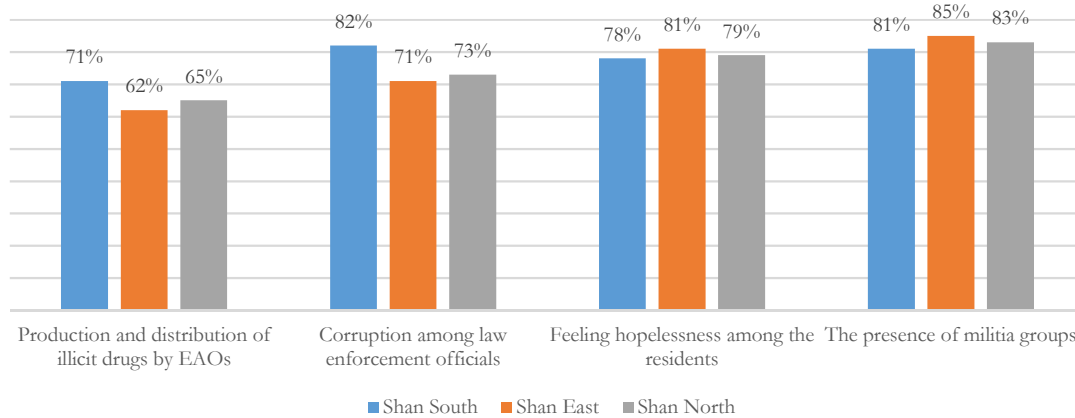
All survey participants and community leaders interviewed by the research team agreed that rising levels of drug addiction is the biggest social problem currently facing Shan State. Interviewees estimated that around 40% of the urban population and 70% of the rural population are drug users. Community leaders also noted that more than 60% of well-to-do people in Shan North and Shan East and 40% of those in Shan South could be linked to the drug trade. Survey respondents identified a range of reasons for the drug problems, reflecting the complexity of the issue and the range of factors involved (figure 12).

Community leaders attributed the rise in the number of drug users and dealers to the ceasefire agreements between the government and the UWSA and MNDAA in 1989. In an attempt to maintain the ceasefire, military intelligence allowed these EAOs to act freely in the first two years of the ceasefire. Drug dealers and pushers linked to the MNDAA and UWSA took advantage of this opportunity to increase their production of opium and *yaba* (methamphetamines) for both domestic and foreign markets. The Maung Tai army was also originally a major actor in the drug trade, but after signing a ceasefire with the government its leader, Khun Sa, retired from the drug business. However, members of the Maung Tai army who did not accept the ceasefire broke away and formed the RCSS. Although the leadership of the RCSS have distanced themselves from the drug trade, community leaders noted that local units continued to be involved in producing and selling drugs, as this is a reliable and regular source of income.

Many of the militia groups established by the government to counter the EAOs are also involved in the drug trade for similar reasons. The only support they receive from the government is the issuing of firearms. Direct contributions from the (generally poor) population have proved insufficient to finance their activities, while the drugs trade is highly lucrative. Local community leaders from all three areas

observed that more than 90% of the militia groups operating in Shan State rely on the drug trade to fund their activities. As a result, Shan State is one of the largest producers of opium and has the highest number of meth labs in the country; producing approximately 1.5 billion *yaba* pills a year.

Figure 12: Opinion on the causes of the growing drug problem by Area



In addition to the involvement of militias in the drug trade as a means of financing, many small and mid-level drug producers and dealers chose to join militia groups since this provides them with protection and armed and organised support, as well as permitting them to officially own guns.

The spread of the drug trade means that drugs are readily available. People in almost every neighbourhood in Shan State know where opium or heroin can be bought, while *yaba* is available in almost all roadside betel shops and stores. The price of drugs has decreased due to reductions in the cost of production and distribution. For instance, a *yaba* pill cost about 2,000 Myanmar Kyat (MMK) in 2016, by 2018 the price was about 160 MMK.

In the circumstances, it is unsurprising that drug use is widespread; there is hardly a village which is free from drug use, while several interviewees referred to a 2017 survey which found more than 100 villages where all residents were drug users. Fifteen youth leaders reported that the youngest *yaba* addict they had seen was a 12-year-old middle school student and the oldest an 89-year-old farmer.

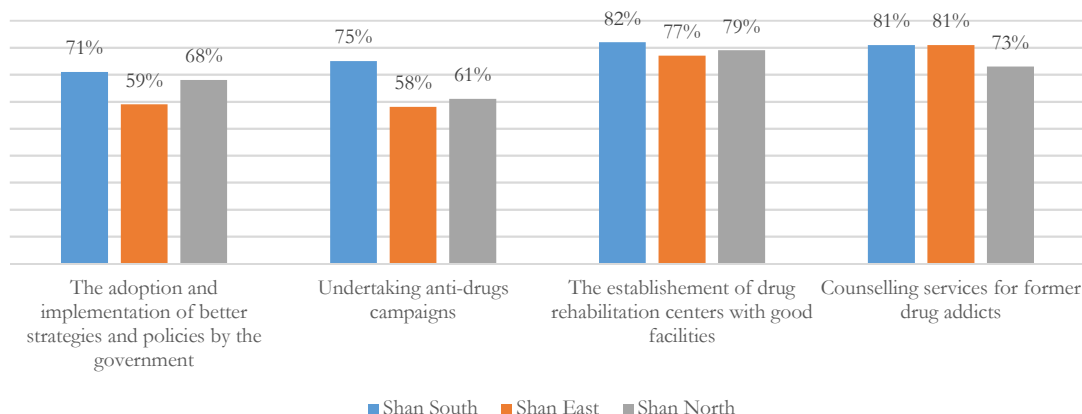
Asked why people started using opium or *yaba*, fifty community leaders said it was to forget about their problems, while the youth leaders blamed the ease of availability of drugs. In Shan South and Shan East, some contractors reportedly put *yaba* into their workers' drinking water. A community leader noted: "people who had used *yaba* would not know if they were tired. They would just keep working without taking breaks." Ten of the community leaders also reported that some men from rural areas in Shan South and Shan East put *yaba* in their wives' food, believing that their wives would cease complaining about the husband's drug use if they themselves were also addicted.

As already noted, stealing to support a drug habit is a widespread problem, particularly among addicts from poor families who cannot find work (or even odd jobs) or are not fit to work. Female drug addicts often end up working as prostitutes. Unsurprisingly, the HIV infection rate among drug addicts is high. In addition to these immediate problems, youth and community leaders noted the devastating impact of drug addiction on the availability of capable human resources; unless the problem is addressed, Shan State will not have the capacity to develop and will never live up to its potential.

In the last five years the government has been making more of an effort to crack down on drug production and drug dealers, although commentators suggest that they have focused on small time dealers rather than the drug kingpins. Despite a plethora of arrests and the seizure of millions of *yaba* pills, survey participants had not noticed any progress on drug problems, while the RCSS and community leaders have suggested that the government's actions have actually worsened the situation. Community leaders complained that the abolition of prison terms for drug addicts meant that drug users were no longer afraid. Several also mentioned a suspicion that government officials, especially security officials, were involved in the drug trade.

NGOs, CBOs, government agencies and the RCSS have opened rehabilitation centres for drug addicts. However, community and youth leaders estimated that these centres cover less than 5% of the need. Poor drug users complained that they could not afford the fees for CBO's rehabilitation centres, while many were worried that the RCSS might use its rehabilitation centre as a recruitment centre.

Figure 13: Opinions on the measures needed to combat the drug problem by Area

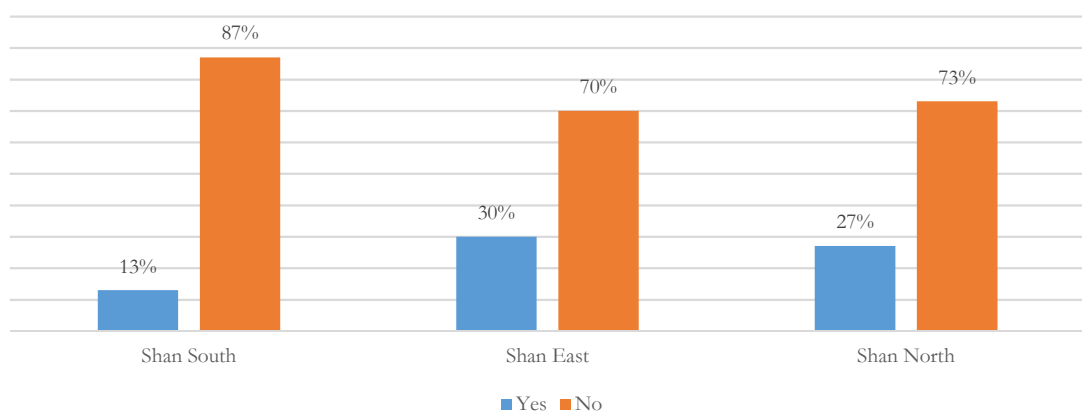


Section 4: Natural disasters and Disaster Risks Reduction (DRR)

In the last couple of decades, Shan State has not experienced any major natural disasters, although there have been small fires and an earthquake in Shan East. Probably as a result of this, more than 70% of survey participants did not feel that their state was prone to natural disasters. However, three community development workers and five people with some expertise on DRR noted that there is a fault line between Shan East and Shan South, meaning that a strong earthquake could occur at any moment. Shan State also experiences torrential rain every year. Combined with the loss of most of the tree coverage over the last three decades this has increased the risk of soil erosion. Changes in weather patterns have also resulted in some parts of Shan South experiencing drought.

The majority of survey respondents believed their houses were resistant to earthquakes and that there was no need for the government or residents to make special preparation for natural disasters. However, 70% indicated an interest in learning more about DRR; a surprisingly positive factor given the general low level of concern and engagement on this topic shown in the survey responses and FGDs.

Figure 14: Perception of the risk of natural disaster by Area



Part 3: Development

This part considers the development context and needs in Shan State under two general headings: an economic perspective and a basic needs approach. The first focuses on the major economic sectors in Shan State. The second section covers access to health care, availability of clean water and education (including vocational training).

Section 1: An economic perspective

This first section focuses on the major economic sectors in Shan State, namely agriculture, mining and tourism. It also returns to the question of economic migration (touched on in the section on displacement) and notes the role of remittances in the economy. It then considers two cross-cutting issues; access to credit and infrastructure.

Although gender-norms mean that men are often still seen as the head of the household and the breadwinner for a family it is relatively common for women to work. Economic migration and the widespread drug use have contributed to leaving families without economically active male members and so to an increase in the number of women working. Among respondents to the first questionnaire used in this research 66% of women were engaged in work of some description (compared to 88% of men). In this group women were more likely than men to be shopkeepers or privately employed (see, Appendix 2: Description of the same for a full breakdown of occupations by gender).

In addition to this work, women generally also take on the majority of caring and household responsibilities. For instance, a case study in Tachileik Township found significant differences in the amount of work carried out by men and women:

“Field research in villages along the Kyaing Tong–Tachileik road in Shan State in 2009 revealed differences in men’s and women’s time use. Women from border villages spent more time on reproductive (on an average 5.4 hours per day) and productive work (6.8 hours), compared with men (who spent 0.4 and 5.4 hours, respectively, on those activities). As a result, women had much less time for rest (4.3 hours) and sleep (7 hours) than men (8.1 and 7.4 hours, respectively).”⁹

Agriculture

As in other parts of Myanmar, agriculture is the largest economic sector in Shan State, even in urban areas. Both men and women are involved in agriculture (a fact reflected in the sample for this research where 32% of men and 13% of women gave this as their occupation. Some specific issues that affect women in the agricultural sector are addressed at the end of this section.

Maize and paddy, which are exported to China, are the most common crops. Other annual crops such as melon, strawberry, onion, garlic, ginger, pigeon peas and (in Shan North) sugar cane are also cultivated, but less extensively, while farmers have been reluctant to plant perennials such as avocado, orange, tea, coffee and rubber due to lack of access to local or foreign markets for these goods.

The other major crop is opium poppies, which are relatively cheap to grow and provide a high return, making them attractive to farmers who lack the resources to invest in other crops. Although a steep decline in the price of opium (from 700,000 MMK to 250,000 MMK per 1.6 kg) has reduced the spread of poppy cultivation, it remains common, taking up around 40% of the agricultural land in Shan South, 27% of that in Shan North and 23% in Shan East.¹⁰

Farmers are willing to give up poppy farming, but alternative crops have so far not provided them with a level of profit and security of revenue to encourage a permanent shift away from poppy cultivation. For example, some poppy farmers tried planting avocados, but could not find a buyer to export them and so faced very low returns. Others tried substituting maize, but also experienced much lower returns on their investment, linked particularly to the cost of transportation. A Shan youth leader in Panglong

⁹ Asian Development Bank et al., ‘Gender Equality and Women’s Rights in Myanmar: A Situation Analysis’ (Mandaluyong City, Philippines: Asian Development Bank, 2016).

¹⁰ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, ‘Myanmar Opium Survey’ (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Regional Office for Southeast Asia and the Pacific, December 2017).

Township explained: “Farmers would not grow poppy if they had a guaranteed market where they could sell whatever they grow. What is more, they know that opium market is illegal and they would not be able to rely on that market in the long run.”

Interestingly, most of the farmers interviewed for this research did not face difficulties accessing markets located in their township, but did reported difficulties accessing markets that are further away, including international ones. Questions in the follow-up survey confirmed that most farmers find it easy to access local markets, but that accessing markets elsewhere is generally difficult (figure 15). While there was not a significant difference in responses between men and women (and the size of the sample for the follow-up questionnaire means that firm conclusions cannot be drawn) women were slightly more likely than men to report difficulties in accessing both local markets and markets elsewhere in Shan State or Myanmar.

These findings suggest that local markets are well established and could provide a locus for improving trading opportunities and efficiency. The situation in Shan North is particularly worrying with only 3% of the respondents considering it easy for farmers to access markets outside their township, but within Shan State, which may be due to the ongoing conflict. Conversely respondents in Shan North found it easier to access international markets than those elsewhere in the State (figure 16). This is probably related to the cross-border trade with China. While this can be positive, with local farmers benefiting from loans and seeds from the Chinese companies and having a guaranteed market for their produce, in some cases this results in farmers being unable to sell crops at market price or facing difficulties if the Chinese companies do not buy their crops. These practices also contributes to the reliance of Shan State’s economy on China.

More generally, transportation problems and poor road infrastructures clearly contribute to the difficulty of accessing more distant markets. Transportation issues also increase the cost of production, and so impact either the farmer’s income or the purchasing power of the populace. Lack of information on the market and lack of business-related skills exacerbate the situation. Interviewees often highlighted that most of the inhabitants work for ‘their daily survival’, suggesting a focus on short-term gains and immediate needs. Such short-term thinking may impede investment, even if this would be beneficial in the longer term. Some farmers do not see that their economic activity can be expanded or rationalised and so restrict themselves to the local market.

Figure 15: Opinion that it is easy for farmers to access local markets and markets elsewhere in Shan State by Area

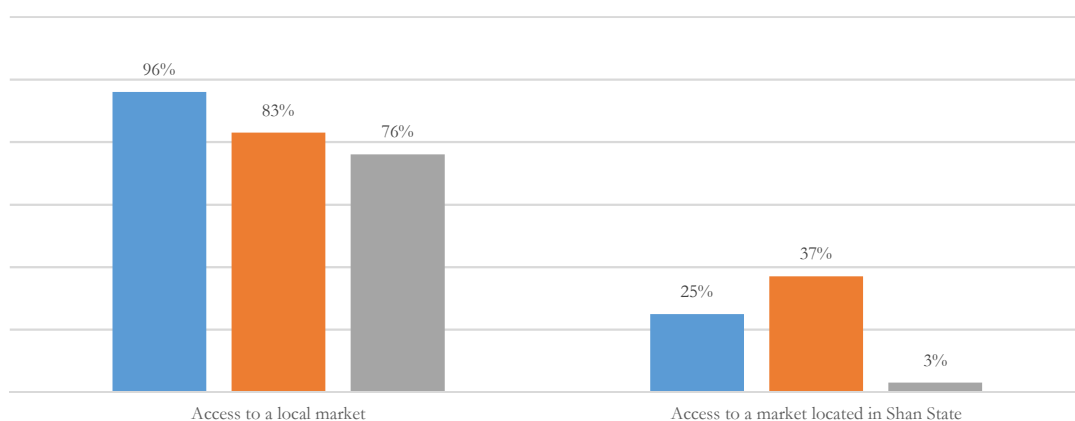
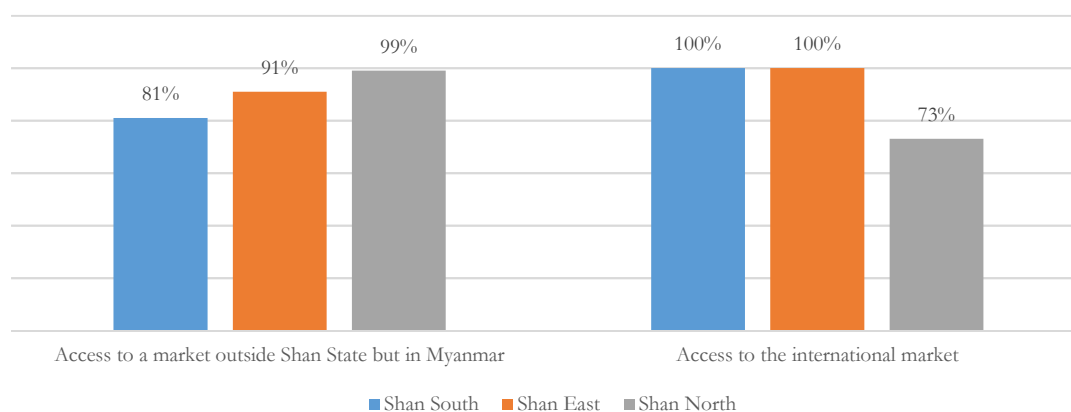


Figure 16: Opinion that it is difficult for farmers to access a market outside Shan State or an international market by Area



Lack of knowledge and capacity also mean that farmers are not always aware of or able to benefit from modern farming techniques and understanding of crop varieties. Eighty-seven percent of women identified this as a major problem facing farmers, compared to 67% of men, suggesting that this may be a particular issue for female farmers. This both decreases the quality and quantity of outputs and encourages the excessive use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides, which have an impact on the quality of food (discussed below) and their market value. A renowned Pa'O farmer and a businessman in Hopong Township both reported that: "Some types of seeds should no longer be used and replaced with more productive ones these days. We are still using those seeds, however, because there is no research group working on seeds production."

Even if they are aware of the benefits of different varieties of crops or alternative cultivation methods, farmers may lack the resources to act on this information (although they have access to credit, including government loans, this is not currently sufficient to resolve all issues with lack of resources. These points are addressed further at the end of this section under the heading 'Loans and access to credit'). This is particularly true when it comes to seeds, which often have to be imported, usually from China or Thailand. While survey participants identified lack of knowledge as the main problem in this respect, the cost of the inputs and the quality of available inputs were also mentioned. A Lisu farmer in Hsihseng Township observed that: "Out of 50 farmers growing maize in this village, only 10 of those can afford to buy 10 packages of seeds, other 10 of those can afford to buy 5 packages, and the rest majority 30 of those can afford to buy only 1 to 3 packages".

Swidden (slash and burn) agriculture remains common, particularly in Shan East and the northern parts of Shan South, which are the hilliest regions and those with the least favourable conditions for agriculture. This has led to widespread deforestation, which has decreased the fertility of the land and contributed to environmental degradation and the risk of natural disasters. Swidden agriculture also generally takes place in areas without good transportation, increasing the cost of production and reducing profits.

As noted at the start of this section, a significant number of women, particularly in rural areas, are involved in farming and other agriculture-related business. However, women face particular issues in this sector. While land-ownership is an issue for both men and women (see below, 'land-grabbing'), the expectation that the owner of the land will be the head of the household (and that the head of the household will be a man) means that women have additional problems. In particular, access to agricultural land may be insecure and could be lost in the event of divorce or death of the husband. Lack of land-ownership can also have knock-on effects, for instance on access to loans due to lack of the necessary collateral (see below 'loans and access to credit').

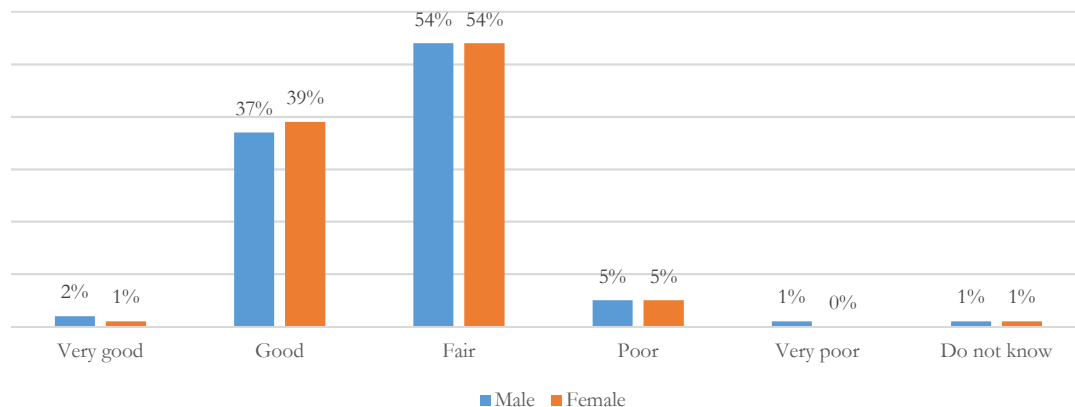
While the data collected in the course of this research did not address the question of labour distribution in the agricultural sector, observation and qualitative interviews suggest that there is a noticeable gender-based division, with men being more involved in tasks related to the preparation of the soil or ploughing

while women usually do work related to planting, weeding, transplanting, harvesting, threshing, postharvest operations, and marketing.

Food security and nutrition

Over 80% of respondents indicated that they had good or fair access to food (figure 17) and did not have to worry about having enough food for their families, while only 5% said that they were dependent on food aid. The majority also reported that their access to food had remained unchanged over the last year. There was almost no variation based on ethnicity, age or gender in these responses. However, those living in female-headed households were slightly more likely to rate their access to food as poor.

Figure 17: Access to food by Gender



While the responses were similar all three areas, it should be noted that it was not possible to conduct research among IDPs and their host communities along the Thai-Myanmar border. The cessation of food aid in these areas in 2016 and the fact that it was necessary in the first place make it likely that research in this area would yield different results. However, a community development worker did not feel that this population was at risk of starvation:

“As long as people are willing to work, they will make enough money to buy the food they need. Even though their food aid was cut, IDPs from the areas along the Thai-Myanmar border will manage to survive. Shan people are very generous. They received donations from ordinary people. It is not that their lives were easy but they would not be stricken by famine.”

The sense that the population generally had sufficient food was confirmed by FGD participants and interviewees. While there is variation in how often people are able to eat meat, this does not undermine an individual’s sense that they have adequate food. A 75-year-old businessman noted:

“In the last seventy years or so, I have not heard that anybody died of starvation. All residents here somehow managed to find food to eat. Most people here prefer to eat vegetable, fermented soy beans and chili. Rich people will eat meat more regularly than poor people but poor people will never feel bad that they could not eat meat regularly. That’s why the finding of your survey perfectly made sense.”

A farmer whose income is about 7,000 MMK per day concurred that people are not starving and added: “I would not feel bad if I could not eat meat regularly but I would feel bad if I could not get vegetable, chili and rice. I am poor but I have never had problem getting vegetable, chili and rice for my meals.”

FGD participants reported that fresh vegetables are readily available and that they believed people ate nutritious food, with the possible exception of drug users. However, a local doctor and an analyst both highlighted the danger of hazardous chemicals in foods, due to the overuse of fertilisers and pesticides in agriculture and the consumption of Chinese-made foods that use dangerous chemical preservatives. The FGD participants admitted that this was not something they had considered, demonstrating the general lack of detailed knowledge of nutrition and food safety.

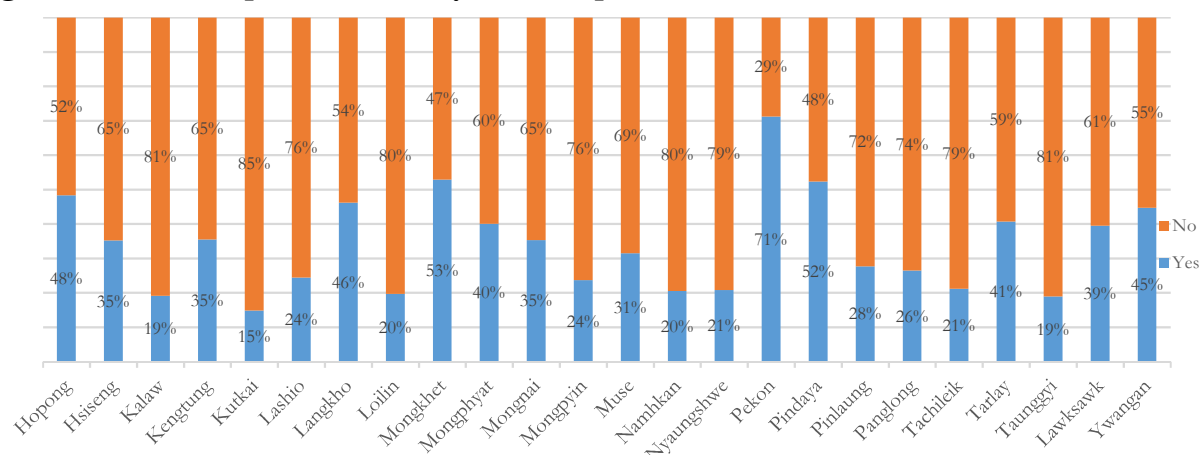
Land grabbing

Land grabbing, both by private mining companies and for governmental development projects, is said to pose a serious threat to people's livelihoods and contributes to the low level of land ownership across the State (figure 18). As was mentioned above, there are particular barriers to land ownership for women. This is reflected in the fact that only 25% of female survey respondents own land (compared to 37% of male respondents). In female headed households this drops further to 22%.

A female Inn-Karen youth leader in Kengtung Township described some of the problems:

“In addition to mining companies, the government itself has been grabbing more locals' lands than necessary for urban development projects. For example, they once grabbed farmers' lands for building a railway. But, they did not return lands to farmers even when that project was unsuccessful. Then, they did not give farmers any compensation, once they grabbed hundreds of acres of farmers' lands for university campus. As a result, farmers have lost their lands to grow, became unemployed and finally become victims of human trafficking.”

Figure 18: Ownership of farmland by Township



Mining

Mining, for zinc, lead, copper, nickel, coal, jade and gold, has been a significant part of Shan State's economy for decades. The most well-known mining companies are joint ventures, supported by the government, and include: Cornerstone Resources (Myanmar) Ltd.; GPS Joint Venture Co., Ltd.; Win Myint Mo Industrial Co., Ltd.; Top Ten Star Production Co., Ltd.; and Lin Pyae Mining Co., Ltd.¹¹ There are also a large number of independent companies as well as illegal mining enterprises.

Despite the prevalence of mining, local people have not participated in the business either as investors or even as labourers. In the eastern half of Shan South, locals complained that coal-mining companies such as Hei Hein, Ngwe Panglong and Hein Myitta benefitted from Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the State government, but did not employ local labourers. Similarly, in Shan North Chinese mining companies have reportedly brought in more than 5,000 labourers from upper Myanmar, believing that this would be cheaper than hiring locals.

Residents complained that they are not consulted about mining projects and that government authorities do not seek their approval before granting access to mining companies. One Bamar-Inn CBO leader and businessman in Panglong Township reported:

“The government should have acquired local people's consent prior to granting companies permission for mineral mining, but they did not do so. Those who are rich and educated, and have power are running all coal mining companies in this region. Locals who are not educated, poor and inexperienced in mining are not allowed to work for their companies. No other benefits are left for the locals.”

¹¹ Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, 'Foreign Joint Venture Operations', Organisational website, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, accessed 12 April 2018, <http://www.mining.gov.mm/ME-1/1.ME-1/Details.asp?submenuID=11&sid=753>.

Mining is having a serious environmental impact in some areas, including contaminating land and water sources. For instance, in Tachileik Township in Shan East, locals complained that cyanide-laden waste from gold mining by companies including Sai Saik Pyo Ye, Shwe Taung and Loi Kham has seriously contaminated local water sources in a number of villages.

Tourism

Taunggyi District in Shan South is a popular tourist destination. Other parts of the State are considered unsafe and foreigners are not permitted to visit (except the major cities, Lashio, Hsipaw, Kengtung and Tachileik). Accordingly, tourism in Shan State as a whole is weak and has benefited only those living in a few tourist-attractive areas (e.g. Taunggyi, Nyaungshwe (Inlay), Kalaw, Ywangan, Pindaya and Hsipaw).

The possibility of tourism in Shan East and Shan North does not appear to have been considered. In contrast, in the eastern townships of Shan South (particularly Panglong and Loilen) there have been complaints about the impact of the Tatmadaw's identification of their areas as black or grey zones and the resulting ban on visits by foreigners. According to locals and concerned CSOs/CBOs, these areas have become much more peaceful and would have great potential for tourism if the government reassessed the security situation and permitted access.

Migration and Remittances

Economic migration is common in all parts of Shan State, with (unsurprisingly) those aged 18-35 being the most likely to migrate. Most economic migrants cross the nearest international border; going to China from Shan North and Shan South and to Thailand from Shan East. Some also go to Laos or further afield, including to Malaysia. This migration is driven by the lack of job opportunities in Shan State and the relatively small proportion of the population that owns land or businesses which would tie them to the State, and by displacement due to the conflict, which detaches individuals from their former livelihoods and may provide an additional incentive to look for a life outside the State. While a study conducted by the International Organisation for Migration concluded that in most cases political reasons were marginal in the decision to migrate (only 7% of those surveyed giving this as a factor), the Shan were significantly more likely than others to have migrated for reasons related to security or safety.

According to qualitative information gathered in Shan State, there is a more or less standard pay rate for migrants of 1,700-2,100 Chinese Yuan and 8,000-10,000 Thai Baht (around 350,000-450,000 MMK). As a result migration is an attractive prospect for anyone unable to find work that will provide a regular income of at least 100,000 MMK.

The remittances sent back by these migrant workers are a major source of income for their families and often necessary for their survival. However, both regular and irregular migrants face difficulties in sending money back to Myanmar, due to the underdeveloped finance sector. The commonly used hundi system of cash transfer also has numerous risks. The current research did not gather detailed information on economic migrants and remittances, however a study conducted by Macquarie University highlights some interesting factors relating to gender. This study found that women tend to send more money back to their families than men. Women are also more likely to use a formal banking system or to use hand to hand transfer, while men are more likely to use the hundi system.¹²

Most of those leaving Shan State do so irregularly, which puts them at risk of ending up in illegal, unsafe or under-protected work. In China, migrants do not need passports to work in Ruili (Shweli) and Mansi. However, there are reports that Chinese business owners have taken migrant workers beyond these two cities and so employed them illegally. In these cases the migrants are paid half of the fees received by those working legally. Cases of Chinese employers calling the police to arrest their own irregular migrant employees when they found it difficult to pay even these cheap wages have been reported. Irregular migrants are also at risk of trafficking. In particular, there have been reports of women and children being trafficked as maids or sexual workers. In Shan East, the Shan and Lahu are reported to be most at risk

¹² Sean Turnell, Alison Vicary, and Wylie Bradford, 'Migrant-Worker Remittances and Burma: An Economic Analysis of Survey Results', in *Dictatorship, Disorder and Decline in Myanmar*, ed. Monique Skidmore and Trevor Wilson (Canberra, Australia: ANU E Press, 2008).

of trafficking, while in Shan North it is the Palaung and Kachin. This may partly explain why women appear less likely than men to return to Myanmar if they emigrate,¹³ which may have far reaching implications both in terms of the economic contribution of migrant women and the gender balance in Shan State. This fact may also contribute to the lower proportion of female respondents reporting that they have been displaced abroad for economic purposes. On the other hand, it is also possible that women are more likely to look for employment within Shan State, while men are more likely to seek employment abroad. It is, however, worth noting that the differences found in this respect are small. Further research would be needed to fully explore the scope, reasons and implications of economic displacement and the dynamics of the payment and receipt of remittances.

Overall, Government authorities have proved incapable of controlling irregular migration and smuggling in persons, while CSOs and NGOs lack the capacity to address these issues in the absence of cooperation from the government authorities.

Infrastructure

The vast majority of survey respondents reported that roads in their region were good or fair, although this probably reflects ease of travel for individuals rather than suitability for the transport of goods (with the exception of the trade route to China via Muse, which is well maintained). Inter-city roads are generally in reasonable conditions, but access to and from rural areas remains a problem, and exacerbates the difficulties farmers face in transporting their produce to markets.

Access to electricity is limited across the State. In Shan East only Tachileik and Tarlaw (which are able to import electricity from Thailand) have electricity 24 hours a day. Kengtung has only 12 hours of electricity a day, Mongpyin, five, and Mongkhet four hours a day, although they are regional trading centres. Cities in Shan North and Shan South generally have 24-hour electricity, but in all three areas access to electricity outside towns is limited. A Lisu philanthropist and elder in Hsihseng Township said:

“Despite much better access to electricity in urban areas, accessibility of electricity has still been terribly poor in rural areas. Although a few villages have access to better solar energy provided by community based organisations (CBOs), most villages have to rely on self-help installation of small solar panels with low wattage. There are still some villages where no electricity is accessible at all.”

In Kengtung, the turbine power station has been privatised and is now owned by a group of local businessmen as the ‘Kengtung Energy Company Limited’. In 2015 a Thai-based company, ‘Lumpoondum’, signed an MOU with the Ministry of Electrical Power to build a 660MW coal plant in Kengtung,¹⁴ but this project was suspended due to opposition by locals who were concerned about the plant’s environmental impact.

Poor access to electricity has a knock-on effect on the State’s economy in almost all sectors. For instance, farmers cannot invest in mills for drying and grinding seasonal crops and businesses cannot invest in macro production sites such as factories for processing and manufacturing value-added products from the raw materials produced by the agricultural and livestock sectors. Moreover, lack of electricity limits the potential to develop the tourist industry.

Loans and access to credit

The ability to access credit can be an important factor in enabling individuals to invest and develop their business. Although credit is available, and over a third of survey respondents had taken out a loan (see figure 19 for responses disaggregated by profession), around half the loans were from friends or family and the remainder overwhelmingly from lenders in the ward or village. Sixty-five percent of the farmers surveyed had also received low-interest loans from the government, although they noted that these covered only about 5% of their needs. There were also indications that some respondents might not report these government loans when asked about access to credit. Bank loans are available, but the collateral required makes them inaccessible for most people, although well-off businessmen reportedly

¹³ Cherry Zin Oo, ‘Migrations beyond Economic Motivations: A Study on Shan State’ (Yangon University, 2013).

¹⁴ ‘Kengtung Power Station’, Source Watch, accessed 19 April 2018, https://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php/Kengtung_power_station.

do use such lending services. Similarly, interviewees noted that the technical requirements set by international donors may, in practice, exclude those they are intended to help. For instance, a Shan CSO leader in Taunggyi Township reported:

“World Bank itself has still been practicing collateral-based lending to farmers and SMEs. So do other private banks such as CB and KBZ in Myanmar. Despite 20,000,000 MMK for each SME group being issued by these banks, SMEs rarely receive these loans because they do not normally have SME certificates and cannot submit their financial statements for a two-year business term.”

In the circumstances, the presence of village and ward level lenders may be a positive sign, although caution is needed to ensure that such practices do not become exploitative. A further difficulty with such low level lenders may be the capacity of farmers and business owners to borrow the amount needed to cover serious investments and the duration for which such loans may be taken out. This is certainly the case with the government’s low-interest loans, as noted above.

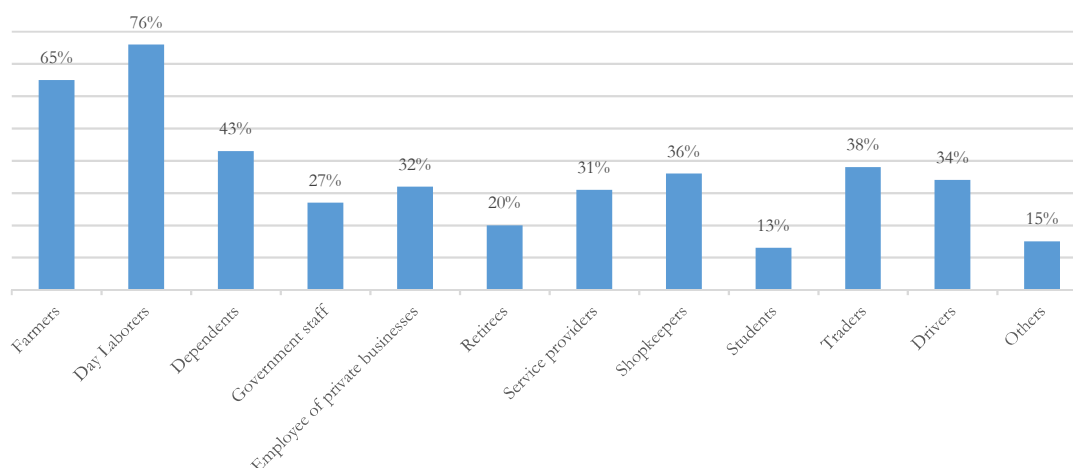
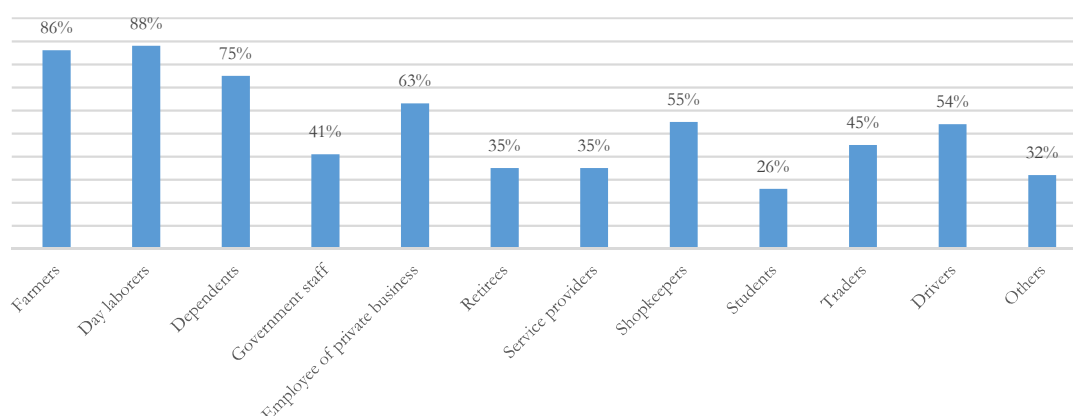
In the data collected for this research, there was not a significant difference between the number of men and women with loans. Nationwide research undertaken by ADB similarly found that: “There appears to be little difference in access to credit for either agricultural or non-agricultural businesses between male- and female-headed households.”¹⁵ However, women were more likely than men to list the source of their loan as friends or family, rather than banks or lenders in the Ward or Village. While the difference is not great enough to draw firm conclusions, it is worth noting in light of cultural norms and values relating to the role of women and property ownership, including land. In such contexts, women may lack the necessary collateral to access formal loans. They may also have more limited social networks, making it harder to access informal lenders in the Village or Ward. Micro-finance initiatives can help counter this, particularly if designed in a gender-sensitive manner, but cannot entirely mitigate the problems, not least due to the ceiling they place on loans.

Over half of the respondents with loans reported facing difficulties paying these back (figure 20), while 42% listed repayment of a previous loan as one of the reasons for taking out a loan. The second most common reason for taking out a loan overall (and the most common for women) is to pay healthcare costs. Although a sizeable number of respondents did say that they took out loans to invest in equipment (20%), raw materials (18%) or infrastructure (13%) related to their work, overall the response suggest that loans are used to cover immediate needs rather than for long-term investment. Interestingly women were more likely than men to report taking out loans related to their work and less likely to report doing so to pay off a previous loan, although a similar proportion report difficulties with loan repayment.

Disaggregating the data by age produces few surprises. Borrowing to cover healthcare costs increases with age, except for the oldest cohort, while those in the middle age ranges are the most likely to borrow for work-related investment. The figures do not suggest young people face particular difficulties accessing credit, however the youngest age group (18-27) are among those who struggle most to repay their loans (61%) and take out loans to repay previous loans (34%). This suggests a risk that young people will become trapped in a cycle of debt, with ongoing consequences for their opportunities and livelihoods. The extent to which day labourers are taking out loans and facing difficulties repaying them (figures 19 and 20) raise similar concerns for this population across age groups. It is also worth noting that borrowing to fund education is low (only 8% of 18-27 year-olds), perhaps reflecting the general lack of importance attached to education.

While the general trends are similar in the three areas, the situation in Shan South appears the most positive; although it has the highest rate of borrowing, less than half of respondents had difficulty repaying their loan. In contrast 69% of those in Shan North with loans faced repayment difficulties, while in Shan East only 29% of respondents had taken out a loan, suggesting that there may be greater difficulties with access to credit in that area.

¹⁵ Asian Development Bank et al., ‘Gender Equality and Women’s Rights in Myanmar: A Situation Analysis’.

Figure 19: Access to loan by Profession**Figure 20: Difficulty repaying loans by Profession**

Section 2: A basic needs approach

Access to services and the ability to meet basic needs are also key indicators of development. This section cannot cover the full scope of this topic, but instead focuses on three areas which provide particular insight into the difficulties faced by the population in Shan State: health; access to safe water and sanitation; and education and vocational training.

Health

This report cannot provide a full picture of the health situation and needs of the nearly six million people living in Shan State, instead it aims to provide a brief overview of the key health challenges in the State. While drug use is, clearly, a major public health concern, the subject has been tackled above and is therefore not considered further here.

Access to clinics or hospitals is good, with over 70% of respondents reporting that it takes less than 30 minutes to reach the nearest facility and none reporting a travel time of more than six hours. In most cases respondents had relatively easy access to station hospitals. In some areas, where there are no government health centres, ethnic health centres or community health-centres are established. Five percent of respondents (mainly in Shan North and Shan South) mentioned ethnic health centres as the type of clinic or hospital to which they had access. Ethnic and community health centres often have limited capacity and are not equipped to deal with serious health issues. As one interviewee in Tachileik explained: “There are two ethnic health organisations representing Ziawaka and Tarlot Baptist churches. The two organisations provide free healthcare for minor illnesses. They get funding from individual donors/organisations.” Another respondent mentioned a self-help clinic in his area, funded by donations from local businessmen. However, it only operates one day a week. In Kutkai Township, despite the

absence of an ethnic health organisation, an interviewee stated that: “There are some awareness raising programs about personal hygiene, prenatal care and child health supported by the funds of the church’s development program”.

As these comments suggest, such health centres are largely reliant on donations or donors for funding. Interviewees confirmed that they do not receive financial support from the Ministry of Health and Sports. Some ethnic health centres were reported to receive some other forms of support, for instance, one interviewee mentioned the health centre receiving medication, but other interviewees stated that: “The programs did not receive any supports from the Ministry or maintain collaborations with it” and: “We do not receive any support from the Ministry of Health and Sports”. These statements reflect the extent of variation between areas.

Around 70% of respondents reported the presence of Village Health Workers in their village (rising to 73% in Shan East). Such Village Health Workers are an important resource in the public health strategy and, as interviewees explained, provide coverage on a range of issues, including “treating minor illnesses, vaccination, nutrition and prenatal care”. However, one interviewee noted: “Having to work on awareness-raising, vaccination, prenatal care and child health, village-health workers are facing work overload”. Another also noted “There is only one village health worker per village. There are no doctors there.” As a result “For serious illnesses and patients in need of operations, village health workers refer them to hospitals.” This is an issue even in government-run health centres, which generally cannot deal with serious issue. As an illustration, figure 21 shows the ability of such medical centres to treat two of the most prevalent serious health issues—Malaria and HIV/AIDS. Such clinics are also often understaffed (figure 22), including according to the quotas established by the Ministry of Health and Sports.

In contrast to the relative ease of access to basic health services, access to specialised services and treatment for serious conditions poses difficulty for many inhabitants of Shan State. Fifty-eight percent of respondents across the State (and 65% in Shan South) mentioned this as one of the main issues with access to healthcare. This is partly due to understaffing, which is a problem throughout the health sector. However, respondents also highlighted distance and costs as problems. As a result, only 21% of respondents stated that they would definitely go to see a specialist if they needed to. In contrast, 43% reported that neither cost nor time nor other factors who prevent them visiting a general practitioner at need. However, when asked where they usually go if they get sick only 11% replied that they would go to a doctor and 24% that they would go to a government nurse. Women were rather more likely to respond that they would go to a nurse than men (28% compared to 20%). Responses to this question also showed marked difference based on age, with the oldest respondents being more likely to go to traditional healers, while younger respondents were more likely to go to doctors (see figure 10 in Appendix 5). In the border areas, those who can afford it reportedly visit Thailand and China for treatment.

Cost consistently emerges as a major barrier to effective health care. Fifty percent of respondents (and 52% of female respondents) mentioned cost as a major issue in the clinic they most often attend, although this appeared to be less of an issue in Shan North, particularly in Muse (35%) and Lashio (38%). The cost of medical services was the most common reason given for not seeing a specialist (47% of respondents), while cost of transport to the hospital was mentioned by 36%. A smaller number of respondents (16%) mentioned cost as a reason for not going to a general practitioner or nurse, making this the third most common reason given (after distance and the cost of transport). Worryingly, women were consistently more likely to mention cost as a problem with accessing medical services than men.¹⁶ It is also telling that 34% of respondents who had loans had taken these out to pay for healthcare. However, this was more common among men than women, perhaps suggesting that women are not only facing greater difficulty in paying for health care, but also in accessing credit for this purpose. The fact that those reliant on assistance as their main source of income are the least likely to have access to medication may also be related to the question of costs.

¹⁶ See Figure 11 in Appendix 5.

In general, access to medication, except for the most minor ailments (for which medication is available without a prescription), is a problem in all three areas of Shan State (figure 23) and in urban as well as rural areas. The cost of medication is a problem for 10-20% of respondents in Shan East and Shan South and 20-25% of those in Shan North. The question of costs both for access to specialist and for medication may present particular problems for individuals with chronic health conditions or with multiple conditions. These factors may result in individuals not consistently taking the medication they need or having to choose between different medications, all of which they need. In both cases this can exacerbate health issues and lead to further costs to treat the resulting complications. Conditions such as HIV/AIDS and Malaria have been the focus of activities by international NGOs. As a result treatment and medication for these conditions is more available than for conditions that are less often seen as requiring emergency or humanitarian intervention from medical NGOs.

Figure 21: Capacity of the medical facilities in the town/village to treat major diseases (Malaria, HIV/AIDS) by Area

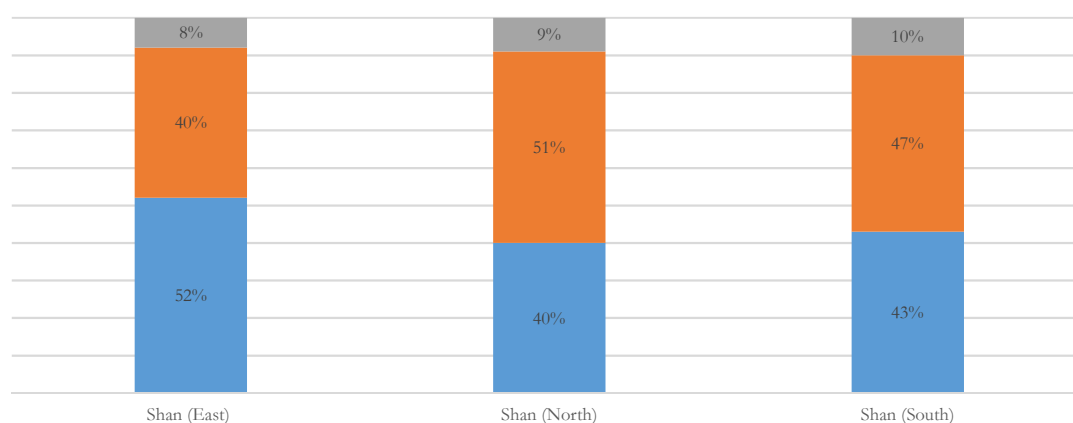


Figure 22: Major issues faced when attending a hospital or clinic by Gender

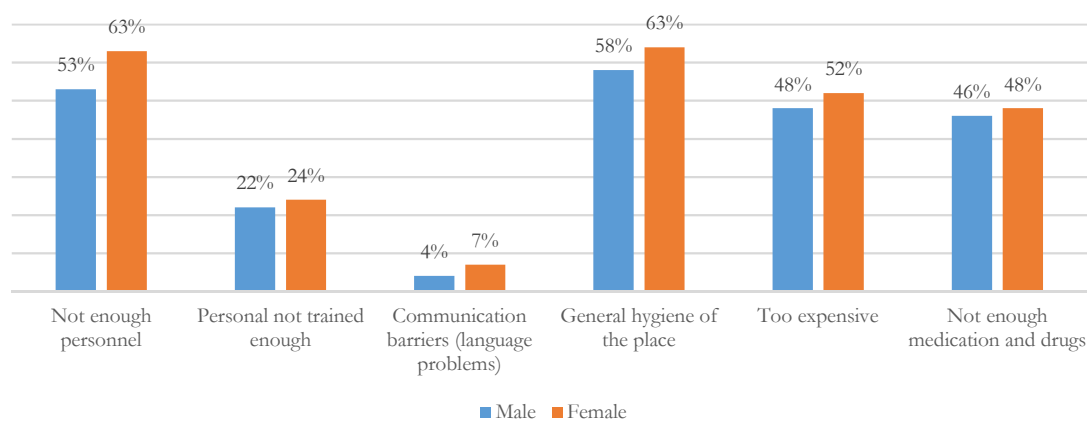
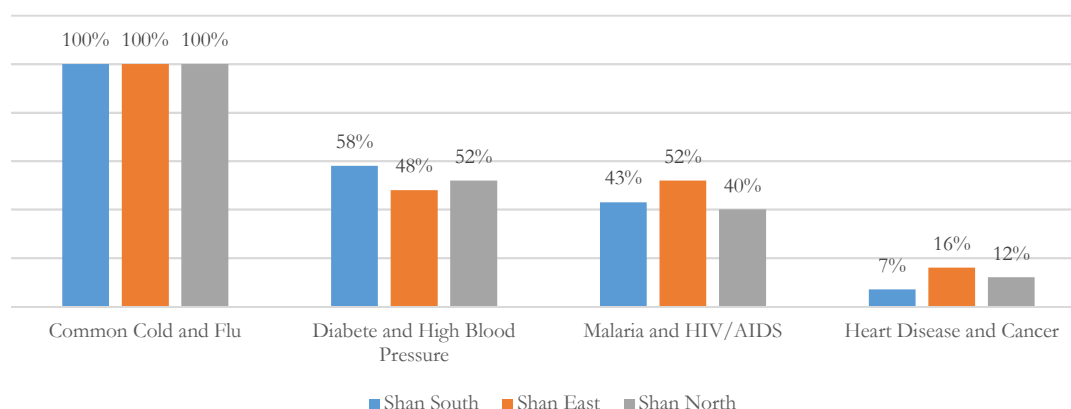


Figure 23: Ease of access to different sort of medication

A worrying element is the reported lack of visibility of the Ministry of Health and Sports and the Ministry of Social Welfare. While responses varied from one township to another, a common theme was the absence of the Union and State level Ministries of Health and Sports. However, at the Township level some interviewees reported positive contacts with the health departments and officials. For instance, in Kutkai Township, a respondent stated that he “does not know much about the measures Ministry of Health and Sports are undertaking. At township level, the Ministry refurbished football pitches and organised events such as a mass walk.” In Lashio Township, a respondent reported regular meetings with health department officials: “I do not know much about the role the Ministry of Health and Sports takes. With the lead of respective health department officials, monthly meetings, mainly on the topics of malaria and HIV, are organised for the past 4 years in northern Shan State. The Ministry is implementing the national health plan.”

Similarly feelings about the Ministry of Social Welfare varied with some respondents praising it (“the Shan State Social Welfare Minister has been very helpful”), while others complained that activities were limited to occasional meetings with CSOs. Some also highlighted the need to include ethnic minorities, particularly those ethnic minorities without Ethnic Affairs Ministers in the work of the Social Welfare Ministry:

“The ministers for ethnic affairs are doing well but some ethnic minorities were left behind. To prevent that from happening, the State Social Welfare Minister needs to address the issues of the ethnic minorities. It is important that not only the issues ethnic people of majority population in the state but also those of minority populations are addressed.”

Interviewees were also critical of the government’s tendering process. It was alleged that senior officials (including director-general level officials) in the Ministry of Health and Sports awarded tenders to pharmaceutical companies with links to their relatives and acquaintances, or took bribes in the tender process. The tender winners are believed to import cheaper, less effective medicines, while charging the State for better ones. Doctors are reluctant to prescribe such ineffective or untested medicines, and so ask patients to buy better quality medicines from outside suppliers, increasing the cost. Meanwhile the unused medicines are kept in the hospitals until they expire.

In contrast to these general problems, immunisation programmes appear to be relatively successful with nearly all respondents in both rural and urban areas in all townships reporting that they had witnessed regular immunisation programmes in their areas. This may be related to the fact that Village Health Workers often take on responsibility for immunisation, enabling such programmes to reach into most areas. This would help explain the lower rate of immunisation reported in Shan North, which corresponds to fewer respondents reporting the presence of Village Health Workers.

Pregnant women are particularly badly affected by the poor public health services and are often unable to access good maternal and peri-natal care, leading to a high rate of maternal mortality. Around two-thirds of women give birth at home and the expectation is that such births will be attended by a midwife. However, in the event of complications, women will need to travel to a hospital (local clinics not generally

being equipped to deal with childbirth) and in this situation difficulties with transportation may be fatal. A female Lahu who is a member of the Maternal and Child Welfare Association in Mongpyin Township said:

“It is too difficult for pregnant women who are facing labour problem in rural villages to go to urban clinics or hospitals due to poor public transportation. As there are only four to five midwives for the whole village tract, they cannot easily take care of a particular pregnant woman facing emergency case.”

A Lisu CBO leader in Hsihseng Township also highlighted the lack of trained personnel as a problem:

“Maternal care is still weak even at hospital, and there is still an occasion in most hospitals in Hsiseng Township that health workers (i.e. doctors, nurses and midwives) sometimes arrive the labour room, only when a baby is out by head of a pregnant woman.”

While addressing access to hospitals and the staffing of such units is clearly vital, the proportion of women giving birth at home suggests that ensuring adequate numbers of village-based midwives to cover these home births is equally important. Across all regions, just over a third of respondents reported that there was a midwife in their village. On the other hand, there was always a midwife in the village tract. If midwives are not located in every village, the size, population and accessibility of the area that each has to cover should be considered when assessing the adequacy of coverage and necessary staffing level.

The survey findings indicate that more than 80% of mothers breastfeed their children for between 12 and 24 months. Interviews with five mothers confirmed that they and the other mothers they know always breastfeed their children. Although the majority of respondents claimed that they had a good knowledge of the benefits of breastfeeding, most only knew that breastfeeding is good for children, rather than understanding specific benefits. No mother who participated in either interviews or the survey knew whether or not mothers with HIV or hepatitis C should breastfeed their children.

More generally, respondents did not feel there was a problem with nutrition and believed that children and adults had a similar diet. However, UNICEF reported that 42% of children in Shan South, 39% in Shan East and 47% in Shan North are stunted, compared to a national average of 35%, suggesting that there may in fact be problems with childhood nutrition.¹⁷

Overall 96% of respondents reported that it was easy to get a birth certificate for a new-born child. However, in Shan North the figure dropped to 87%, suggesting that there may be particular issues in this area. Moreover, those whose primary source of income is remittances or assistance from the government or NGOs are significantly more likely to report that getting a birth certificate is not easy (11% and 15% respectively, compared to the overall rate of 4%).¹⁸ That those receiving remittances face difficulties may be due to the fact that both parents must provide their identity documents in order to register the birth of a child. If one parent is working abroad this presents obvious difficulties. Perhaps unsurprisingly, those who hold Associate or Naturalised Citizenship Cards or who are undocumented are also more likely to report that it is difficult to get birth certificates than those with other forms of documentation. Christians and individuals who gave their ethnicities as Kokant or Kachin also reported difficulties in this respect at a much higher rate than other groups, but given the size of these groups in the sample it is hard to be sure if these differences are significant.

One issue that was mentioned in interviews in this context relates to the naming of the children. A respondent in Kutkai Township explained:

“The procedures for obtaining birth certificates are easy. Some difficulties may still remain. Most of the officers in charge of issuing birth certificates are Bamar so they often misspell the ethnic names. Some parents just put random names on the birth certificates. When they enrol their children in school under ethnic names, they face difficulties in registering. There were some cases where the ethnic children were registered under generic Bamar names for easy pronunciation. Now, that kind of issues have been lessened.”

In addition to the problems noted here, this raises the possibility that these children will later face difficulties acquiring or renewing citizenship cards. While no data was collected on this subject in the

¹⁷ United Nations Children’s Fund, ‘Shan State Profile’ (United Nations Children’s Fund, 2015).

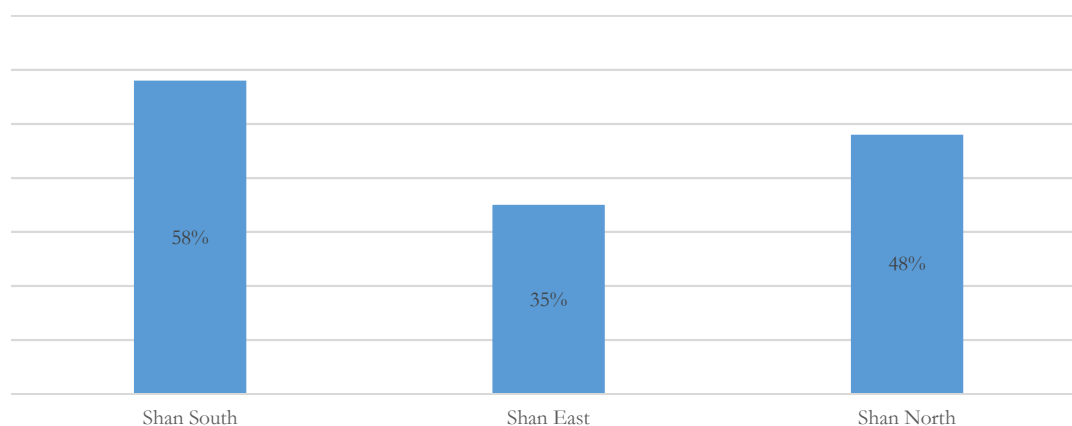
¹⁸ See Figure 12 in Appendix 5.

course of this research, having different names on birth certificates and school certificates is known to cause problems in some cases.

Safe drinking water and sanitation

In towns the majority of residents rely on artisan wells and pumping wells as their main sources of water. In rural areas rainwater collected in traditional ponds is the main source of water. Only about 45% of survey respondents had regular access to safe drinking water, with those in Shan East being the worst off in this respect (figure 24)

Figure 24: Access to safe drinking water by Area



People living in urban areas generally had more regular access to safe water than those in rural areas, probably due to better access to purified water. For example, while about 70% of survey participants from Taunggyi said they had regular access to safe drinking water, fewer than 5% of the IDPs from Shan South who lived in remote areas along the Thai-Myanmar border said the same.

There are also issues with knowledge of what constitutes safe drinking water and with the management of water resources. Community leaders noted that many people think that water from rivers or artisan wells would always be good enough to drink and would not worry about contamination of these sources, although this is a known issue (for instance in Tarlay sub-Township and Maing Yaung Township where goldmining has contaminated ponds and rivers). Five community leaders from rural areas in Shan South and five community leaders from a village in Mingset Township noted that more than 70% of their respective villages drank water from the same creeks in which they bathed and washed clothes. These creeks were also used by cattle, often at the same time as human beings. Although villages in peaceful areas maintained traditional ponds carefully, the ponds in conflict zones or areas close to conflict zones were not properly maintained. As such, ponds from villages in or near conflict areas were often contaminated with rotten leaves or animal faeces.

In all three regions of Shan State, women claimed to have more access to safe drinking water than men. A female businessman from Kalaw in Shan South explained that men would drink any type of water they could find when they were thirsty and women would at least try to find boiled water.

In terms of sanitation, families in most towns in Shan State have access to latrines, but this decreases in rural areas with only about 50% of households in rural areas in Shan East having latrines. This is not simply because rural people in Shan State do not have the money to build latrines on their property, some 30-43% actively prefer to go to the toilet in the jungle. An employee of an NGO commented that:

“Some rural people in Shan State simply feel freer using the open space behind bushes rather than a proper latrine. In some villages in Shan North, NGOs built latrines for the residents, but many people in those villages rarely use the latrines, let alone maintain them.”

Education

Formal Education

Shan State currently has seven universities, 467 high schools, 1,295 middle schools and 5,429 primary schools. Despite government efforts to improve education, there are problems with access to and quality of education; as is demonstrated by the fact that the literacy rate is the lowest in the country at 65.6%.¹⁹

Access to schools is a problem in rural areas, with some villages being up to eight kilometres from the nearest school; and the problem becomes worse the higher up the education system one progresses. This contributes to the high level of school drop-outs (well over 50% in some remote areas according to community leaders), particularly among girls. Poverty and the perception that the education is of poor quality or will not improve the child's chance of finding well-paid work also contribute to school drop-outs. Drug use, by either a parent or the child, may also lead to a loss of interest in, and commitment to, education.

There is often a shortage of teachers in rural areas and the available teachers are not always qualified to teach at the relevant level. A retired schoolteacher noted that more than 50% of the rural schools in Shan State experienced a continual shortage of qualified teachers. He said that a rural school would be lucky if it had half the qualified teachers it needed. These staffing problems are compounded by the fact that teachers' salaries are insufficient for the cost of living. Many teachers therefore take up private tutoring to supplement their income and are perceived to prioritise these private classes.

Teaching even at the primary school level is delivered in Burmese, which many students in rural areas do not speak, while teachers who come from other parts of the country may not speak their students' mother tongues. As a result students struggle with the instruction and become afraid of attending school. Similarly, the curriculum is perceived as Bamar-centric, making it less relevant for children of other ethnicities. These problems are replicated throughout the education system with the result that even individuals who complete tertiary education are less well educated than their peers in other parts of the country.

The sense that the curricula and teaching do not fulfil the needs of the population resurfaces particularly strongly in the context of university education; 95% of the university students interviewed in the course of this research stated that their studies do not prepare them for the sort of jobs they are likely to get after they graduate. Similarly, 80% of those enrolled with the University of Distance Education who were also working said that their studies were not relevant to their work, the exceptions being those wishing to become civil servants or INGO employees. These factors have a knock-on effect on the employment prospects of university graduates, which are not noticeably better than those of individuals who leave formal education early and worse than those with technical training.

Vocational Training

There are seventeen vocational and technical training schools in Shan State, four run by the Ministry of Education and thirteen by the Ministry of Border Affairs and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. Diplomas from these institutions are more valuable than regular university degrees. However, there is a lack of capacity, with current institutions only able to cover about 20% of the demand.²⁰ Moreover, most people are unaware of the existence of these institutions and the high entrance requirements exclude many who could benefit from such training.

NGOs, INGOS and CBOs also provide some vocational trainings as well as awareness raising trainings on subjects such as democracy, federalism, leadership and the peace process. It is these that people in Shan State think of when they talk about vocational training.

¹⁹ '2014 Myanmar Population and Housing Census'.

²⁰ This capacity has been further weakened by the closing of the Technical School in Muse as a result of the conflict.

The latter do not appear to have been effective in empowering locals to take on leadership roles in development projects nor in substantively improving their understanding of the peace process and so ability to participate in and influence decisions.

Similarly, although interviewees called for more vocational trainings, 84% of respondents who had participated in such trainings had not found them useful for improving their livelihood. Vocational trainings on agriculture are an exception, with 82% of respondents who had attended such trainings stating that they had been useful (figure 25).

This lack of impact reflects general complaints that trainings do not fit the needs of the population; around 60% of interviewees complained that NGOs appeared to select the content of trainings based on their own capacity rather than the needs or interests of the population. Other criticisms were that: the duration of trainings and workshops was short and their content was very basic; that they were usually one-off with no follow-up so that participants soon forgot what they had learnt; and that the use of Burmese (and occasionally English for technical vocabulary and complex concepts) by trainers meant that some trainees struggled to follow the training. Another reason noted for the lack of impact was that even when trainings were intended to empower the students to start new businesses, lack of resources often meant that they were unable to do so in practice. The criticism of one-off trainings and lack of follow-up are reinforced by the fact that 76% of survey respondents overall (and 96% of those in Shan South) felt that there was a need for more systematic development oriented trainings (figure 27).

These issues, particularly lack of interest in the subject of the training, resurfaced in responses on why respondents had not attended trainings, although lack of time was also frequently mentioned as a barrier to attendance (particularly by women). On the other hand, students and civil society activists reported that, in their experience, less than 20% of participants took the subjects they were taught and the activities they had to do seriously. Others took part because they wanted to hang out with their friends or did not have anything better to do. A youth leader disappointedly recalled that the first question ask when young people were invited to trainings or workshops was, “if lunch and travel allowance would be provided by the organisers”.

While this research did not identify a significant gender gap in attendance of vocational trainings or in the subjects of training attended by men and women, the extent to which such trainings focused on youth was striking (figure 26). While there may be an element of self-selection (including that younger people may have more free time to attend), this is also being driven by deliberate choices among training providers who almost always prioritise youth if courses are oversubscribed and often specifically target youth with their trainings. While training young people is important, this disparity suggests that there may be a need to provide trainings specifically catering to the older age groups. In particular, if trainings are intended to be cumulative and result in individuals acquiring a range of skills and increasing their capacity over time, the fact that they begin aging out of the priority groups for attendees as young as 28 presents a serious challenge.

Figure 25: Opinions on whether or not the vocational trainings were useful by Gender

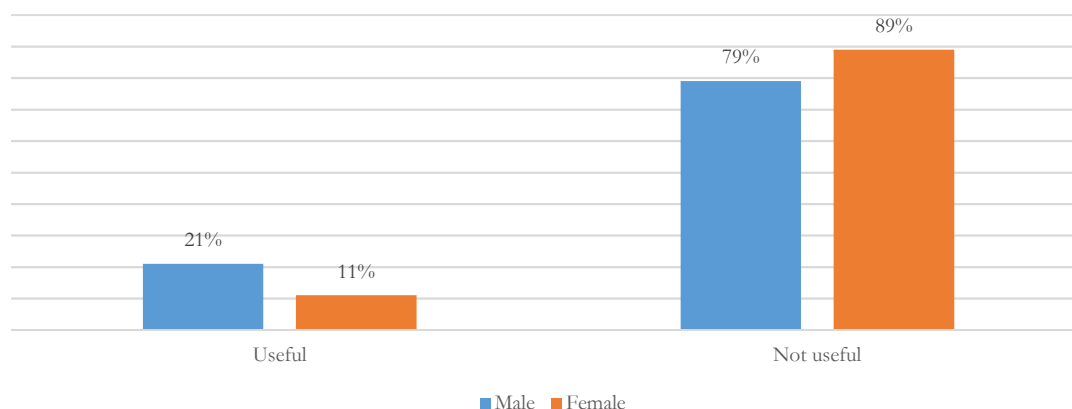


Figure 26: Attendance of vocational training by Age

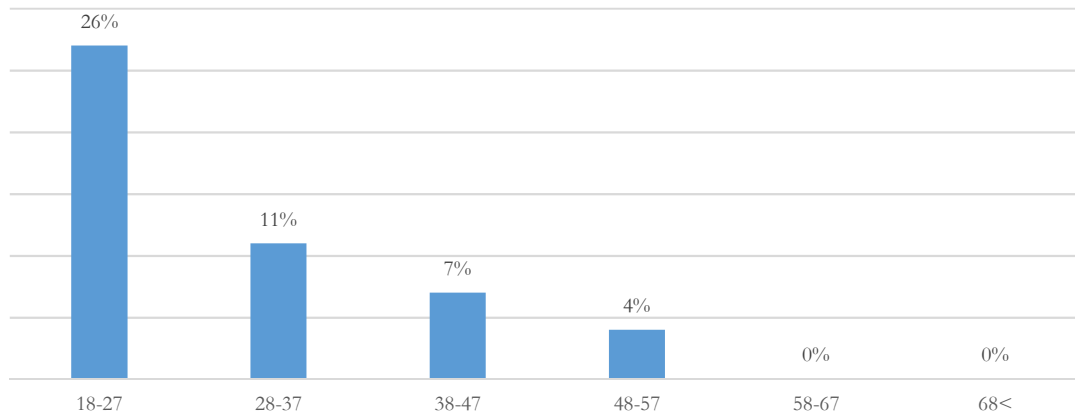
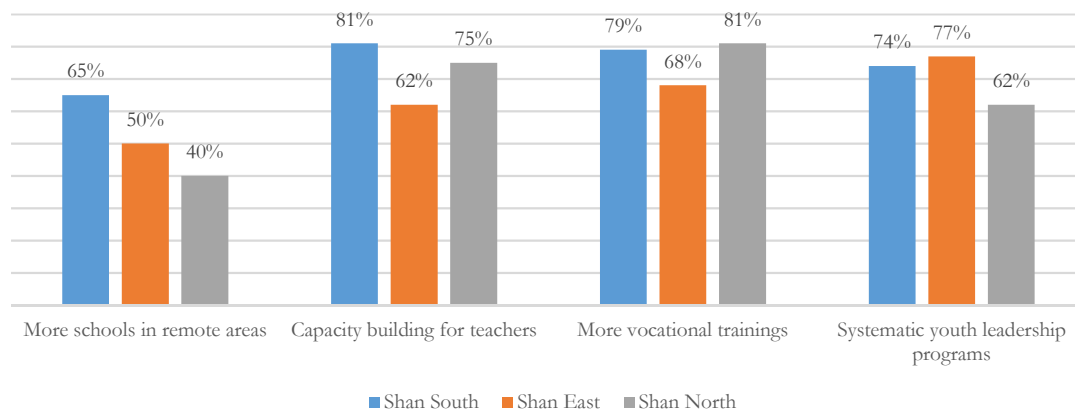


Figure 27: Opinions on the educational programmes needed to improve development and growth by Area



Part 4: Development and humanitarian actors – access, implementation, safety and stakeholders

While the previous parts have amply demonstrated the need for more work by International Development and Humanitarian Assistance Actors (IDHAAs) in Shan State, the situation on the ground presents a number of challenges to the involvement of such actors. This part aims to identify some of the factors that IDHAAs should consider in planning activities in Shan State. It also (through a stakeholder analysis) provides an initial list of potential local implementing partners and identifies some key actors at the Union, State and Township level who may assist or impede the implementation of projects.

Section 1: Access to and implementation of projects

In Shan State, as is the case elsewhere in Myanmar, IDHAAs face challenges in carrying out projects. The ongoing conflict in some areas and security concerns are a major issue and should not be underestimated. The classification of parts of Shan State as grey or black zones and the corresponding restrictions on access by foreigners are part of the same nexus of factors limiting access to project areas.

Although Myanmar governments are often unfriendly towards IDHAAs, the current administration has recently indicated that IDHAAs which genuinely and sincerely wish to provide humanitarian and development assistance in ethnic areas will be granted access. In practice, however, donors or IDHAAs will probably be subject to a plethora of bureaucratic hurdles. To overcome these hurdles, IDHAAs will need to make the right connections within both the Union and State governments and with influential actors in target communities.

If IDHAAs channel their assistance through local NGOs, the local implementing partner should be responsible for finding the entry points and getting all necessary permissions. However, there are few local NGOs that have the capacity or experience to implement donor-funded projects, with most having no experience of receiving international funding and the remainder having only dealt with small budgets (less than USD 100,000). IDHAAs will therefore probably have to work through more experienced Yangon-based NGOs. An alternative is to use tripartite partnerships, comprising the IDHAAs, relevant government agencies and credible NGOs (which has proved a successful model in Rakhine State). For instance, the Ministry of Social Welfare and the Ministry of Border Affairs are willing to work with NGOs to provide vocational and technical trainings. The ministries can provide capable trainers and the NGOs can mobilise the public and do the financial and logistical management.

IDHAAs should consult with the public and report on their progress during every step of the implementation process and in general ensure that they work in a transparent and accountable manner. This should include ensuring that all relevant actors are regularly informed about the progress of the project. Such actors, include the State parliament, the Tatmadaw, relevant ministries and local authorities, and EAOs (when projects are carried out in their areas of activity).

Section 2: Safety and security of development and humanitarian actors

All FGD participants and government officials interviewed for this research indicated that neither foreign nor local humanitarian and development actors need worry about their safety as long as they have proper permissions and do not break the law. However, five community leaders warned that humanitarian actors who are involved in anti-drug and anti-human trafficking campaigns could be viewed by drug dealers and human traffickers as enemies. A police officer also noted that IDHAAs should not wander around conflict and unstable areas; if they are working in such an area, they should finish their work and leave promptly. The same police officer noted that IDHAAs must make sure that they are not be seen as doing something detrimental to Shan State by anybody, especially by those who could harm them.

Another government officer noted that IDHAAs can easily find ways to work with the Tatmadaw and the EAOs, but that they must be careful about dealing with local militias, given their tendency to break the law and the risk that they would attack if they felt threatened. A retired school teacher also

commented that humanitarian and development actors should collect sufficient information about troublemakers in their project areas. He said:

“As long as they (humanitarian and development actors) keep their distance from these troublemakers, they will be able to do their work safely. When they cannot keep their distance, they must not act like heroes and ensure that they get police protection.”

Section 3: Stakeholder analysis

The table included here provides a brief overview of local civil society actors in Shan State. The organisations in bold have experience of working as partners of IDHAAs or have previously received funding from international donors. This represents a preliminary mapping of such actors rather than a comprehensive list and draws heavily on the database of actors and projects maintained by the Myanmar Information Management Unit.²¹

There are relatively few local civil society actors in Shan State working at the state level (or even at the level of the division into Shan East, Shan North and Shan South). Even at the township level it is more common to find co-operative style community organisations, focused on the provision of mutual support, particularly in the context of funeral expenses, than formally registered civil society organisations. A consequence of this is that while local organisations have strong links to the communities, they lack the necessary capacity, experience, and institutional structures (in particular financial and accounting structures) to carry out large projects or act as implementing partners for international organisations. Many of these organisations are financed by membership contributions, which may make it hard for them to commit to long-term initiatives. Inevitably, stronger civil society organisations are more common in urban areas and those easiest to access.

It is for this reason that it was suggested above that IDHAAs may need to look outside Shan State for implementing partners, at least while the capacity of local civil society organisations is developed.

²¹ Myanmar Information Management Unit, <http://themimu.info>. Particularly relevant are the tables of actors <http://themimu.info/3w-maps-and-reports> and dashboard <http://themimu.info/3w-dashboard>.

Local organisations

Area	Type of Activities	Name of the stakeholder
Shan East	Agriculture	Mawk Kon , Myanmar Alliance for Transparency and Accountability, Karuna Mission Social Solidarity
	Education	Myanmar Red Cross Society, Shan Literature and Culture Group
	Environment	Mizzima Social Group , Myanmar Red Cross Society
	Food security and Nutrition	Myanmar Fruit, Flower and Vegetable Producers
	Health	Brahmaso Group, Law Ka Par La Social Welfare Team, Melteza, Mizzima Social Group , Mong Khet Youth group, Mong Pyat Social Welfare Team, Myanmar Red Cross Society, Myittashin free funeral service group, Myo Sat Thit Yaung Ni Oo, Satanar Shin Social Welfare Team, Shan Youth Network, Thingaha Social Welfare Team, Wone Myitta
Shan North	Displacement	Namkhone Social Group, Shan Youth Group, Village Social Development Network, Wanmaw group, U Too Htan
	Economy	Inn Sein May , Land and Environment Protection Group, Wone Myitta
	Education	Daw Wunna, Northern Shan State Youth Network, Phyu Sin Kyae Labor Group, Ta'ang Palaung Literature and Culture Organization, Tai Youth Network, Village Social Development Network,
	Environment	Mrak Khun Phoe , Land, Natural Resource Protection Network
	Health	A Hnaing Mae, Alynn Mee Eain , Hopang Social Group, Namkhone Social Group, Shan Youth Group, Ta'ang Palaung Literature and Culture Organization
	Women	Inn Sein May
	Peace-Building and Safety	Northern Shan State Youth Network
Shan South	Agriculture	Karuna Mission Social Solidarity , Mu Di Thar (Germany), Mu Di Thar, Parami Development Foundation , Pindaya Tea Culture Horizon Development Network Pwe Hla Environmental Conservation and Development Group, Satanar Foundation, Seven Star Local Development Organization , Shwe Danu , Shwe Myitta, Tai Youth Organization
	Economy	Aung San Philanthropic and Taung Yoe Youth Assistant Group , Inlay Community Development Organization, Mya Sein Yaung
	Education	Capacity Building for Youth , Cherry Image , Early Child Care Development, Karuna Mission Social Solidarity, Lisu Women Organization, Peace World Gender Organization, Satanar Foundation, Seven Star Local Development Organization , Women and Peace Action Network
	Environment	Green Rights Organization , Hna Lone Hla Inn Maung Mal, Inn Lay CSO Network, Inlay Community Development Organization, Kalyana Mitta Foundation, Pa'O Youth Organization , Rule of Law Center, Youth for Le Cha, Ywangan CSO
	Governance	Anti-Corruption Team , Cherry Image , Democracy for Ethnic Minority Organization, Green Rights Organization, Justice Drum, Karuna Mission Social Solidarity, Kayan New Generation Youth, Lisu Women Organization, Myanmar Alliance for Transparency and Accountability, Myanmar People Alliance, Myitta Foundation, Pa'O Youth Organization, Rule of Law Center, Ywangan CSO
	Health	A Lin Yaung Myitta, A Phyu Yaung Myitta Youth, Blood Donor Union – PangLong, Early Child Care Development, Ga Yu Nar Shin , ICRC, Justice Drum, Karuna Mission Social Solidarity, Mu Di Thar (Germany), Mu Di Thar, Myitta Chong Hlwa, PangLong Philanthropist team, PanLong Shan Ethnic Youth , Phyu Sin Myitta, Seven Star Local Development Organization , Tai Youth Organization , U Than Min Htut, Youth for Le Cha
	Women	Cherry Image , Peace World Gender Organization, Shwe Inn Thu, Women and Peace Action Network

Influential Individuals and Bodies

The table below provides an overview of relevant Union and State level bodies, positions and organisations. Particular attention is devoted to those with power to permit, block, facilitate or impede access to project areas. In planning and implementing projects in Shan State it is important to keep in mind the complex network of influential actors and the ways in which actors at the different levels interact. For instance, it should be noted that although decisions on access are made at the Union level, the State Government is likely to have some influence over such decisions and can affect the ease with which approved projects can be carried out. Individual influential actors at the township level take on particular significance in the absence of strong CSOs. Ensuring the support of such individuals may have a significant impact on the ease with which a project can be carried out and the engagement of members of the local community. Finally, it should be remembered that the Tatmadaw is an independent and important actor, with an important say in access and the power to seriously impede the actions of civil society if they do not manage their relationship with it effectively. The complexity of this network of actors is another reason that many internationals find it beneficial to partner with local implementing organisations who have a better understanding of the precise dynamics of interaction between the different actors.

Location	Name and Position	Type of Influence
Union Level	Ministry of Border Affairs	Able to facilitate/impede access
	Ministry of Education	Able to facilitate/impede access
	Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement	Able to facilitate/impede access
	National Peace and Reconciliation Centre	Influence on State level actors
	Office of the State Counsellor	Influence on State level actors
	Tatmadaw	Able to block access
State Level	Chief Minister, Shan State Government	Head of Shan State government.
	Senior Monks	Influence with government, military and in community
	Shan State Parliament	Able to block access
	State Government	Influence on Union level decisions on access
	State Secretary	Able to block access
	State Security Minister	Able to block access
	Ethnic Affairs Ministers	
	CSSU (Body composed of SNLD, SNDP, RCSS and SSPP)	
	RCSS	Access to RCSS-controlled areas
	SNLD	
Armed Forces	Three Regional Commanders, one each in Shan East, Shan South and Shan North	Generally seen as the most powerful person in their area
In each township	Township Administrators	Able to facilitate/impede access.
	Township Municipal Committees	Able to facilitate/impede access.

Part 5: Discussions on the Shan State Needs Assessment findings

Having presented the results of the research, this section aims to draw together some key elements and respond to the questions posed in the Terms of Reference about key challenges and potential entry points for work in Shan State. It first considers humanitarian needs, before turning to the four domains identified in the Terms of Reference, namely: Employment and Vocational Skills Development; Agriculture and Rural Market Development; Health and Basic Services; and Peace, State-Building and Protection. Opportunities to promote gender empowerment are noted as they arise under the different headings and also collected in a final section. Two general points should be noted at the start.

Language issues will need to be considered in all work in Shan State. It deserves repeating that residents of Shan State cannot be assumed to be functional in Burmese (and still less in English). Furthermore, not all sections of the population will be able to function in the Shan language. These considerations are relevant not only to the delivery of services and training, but also to any efforts to inform communities about and gain their support or engagement with projects.

Inter-communal relations and the complex social make up of Shan State are factors that should be kept in mind in all programming and efforts made to ensure that projects focusing on particular areas or groups are clearly justified and the basis explained to so that they do not fuel perceptions of unequal treatment. At present residents of Shan State do not report experiencing overt discrimination either in general or in their interactions with service-providers. If this can be maintained it will only be beneficial to the development of the State.

Humanitarian Needs

Shan State is not at present facing an acute humanitarian crisis, instead the humanitarian needs relate largely to chronic issues and the need to prepare for any future disasters.

Displacement, both long- and short-term, continues to be an issue with a corresponding need for food and shelter and, for those displaced in the longer term, access to healthcare and education. It is unclear that IDP camps and those providing aid have the capacity to respond effectively to new waves of displacement. Formerly displaced persons who have returned home and those who were not displaced, but saw their livelihoods destroyed by conflict also need short-term support while they re-build their livelihoods. More generally there is a need to address the consequences and legacy of the conflict, including both physical remains (notably landmines) and the psychological impact.

In addition to preparation against the possibility of renewed displacement, the risk of natural disaster deserves greater attention. More efforts are needed to educate the population about the risks and support the development of resilience to natural disasters.

Drug use has reached epidemic proportions across Shan State. The causes of this are complex, but include the drug trade (which fuels the easy availability of drugs), the lack of good job opportunities, insecurity (both a cause in itself and due to its psychological impact), displacement, and involuntary exposure to drugs. In turn drug use has an impact on productivity, health and security, both for the individual and (given the extent of addiction in Shan State) at the level of the economy. Drug use cannot, in this context, be separated from the drug trade, which itself is intricately linked to conflict and security (as both cause and consequence) and continues to deform the economy of Shan State in a number of ways, including, by encouraging the cultivation of opium poppies and providing apparently profitable economic opportunities in a society with very few such opportunities. Addressing the drug trade in any meaningful way poses a complex challenge and would require sustained, creative and multi-faceted engagement by government and law enforcement as well as cooperation with China and Thailand. The issue is noted here to highlight the extent to which the drug trade represents a major challenge across all sectors and risks seriously damaging development prospects in Shan State.

At the level of programmes targeting drug users, it also seems likely that a multi-faceted approach or one which links up with other programmes to address the underlying causes of drug addiction would be useful. Health based responses provide a clear entry point and this research has highlighted the need for more rehabilitation centres and programmes, particularly ones that are accessible (in terms of cost and

location) to all and are perceived as safe spaces. However, without ongoing support and measures to address the basic causes of drug use (including lack of employment opportunities and the psychological impact of insecurity) it is unclear that such programmes will have a lasting effect. Similarly while awareness-raising on the negative effects of drug use, particularly for youth, would be beneficial, without changes to the environmental factors promoting drug use it is unlikely to have far-reaching effects. Involuntary exposure to drugs in the family or workplace is clearly an issue that needs to be addressed, but more work would be needed to identify possible entry points on this issue.

Employment and Vocational Skills Development

There are three closely linked (and mutually reinforcing) challenges in this domain: low skill levels and lack of skilled workers; lack of economic opportunities; and extensive economic migration. The lack of economic opportunities in Shan State drives migration abroad, while the lack of skilled workers impacts the State's economic development (and encourages employers to look elsewhere to fill skilled positions). Simultaneously, the lack of skilled positions and the fact that better educated employees are not noticeably better off means that there are few incentives to continue in education or invest in developing skills.

The low baseline of knowledge, including language knowledge, in the population and better employment prospects abroad are factors that may hinder progress in this domain. There is a risk that trainings either focus on the same people (the ones able to understand and benefit) or are ineffective due to lack of comprehension. Furthermore, in determining the subject of trainings it would be useful to consider the extent to which the skills gained by participants will be valuable for work within Shan State as opposed to improving the individual's employability elsewhere (although skills may in fact be relevant in both contexts). While the latter should not necessarily be excluded, depending on the specific purpose of a particular training or programme, the possibility and impact of economic migration by those who have received the training should be considered in the planning stage. The availability of resources to effectively use new skills once acquired and the relevance of the subject matter for recipients are also factors that need to be considered and will affect the actual impact of any training.

There is both a recognised need and an appetite for more vocational training. However, the need is not simply for *more* training, but for *more appropriate* training and *better* use of existing facilities and programmes. In particular, most people are unaware of the existence of the government vocational and technical schools. Even if they are aware of the schools, individuals may be unable to attend due to cost or because they do not have the necessary school qualifications. Increasing awareness that this option exists and supporting those who wish to attend (including, for instance, through sponsorship or programmes to help individuals reach the necessary educational level) would be a low key, but potentially highly influential and sustainable way of providing vocational training. Because this does not require international presence on the ground, it might also be a particularly useful approach to consider in areas where there are access problems.

Direct provision of vocational training is also an obvious entry point, particularly if such trainings are designed in a way that addresses criticisms of current trainings by ensuring that they respond to the actual needs and interests of the population. Training-of-trainers approaches might be useful as a means of addressing some of the issues around language and comprehension; local trainers should be better placed than external actors to ensure the accessibility of trainings and adapt them to the needs, culture and understanding of local participants. If women were prioritised in training efforts this could also contribute to their empowerment both directly and through the standing that a position as a trainer might offer.

Measures to ensure that the skills acquired through vocational training can be used in practice to improve the trainee's livelihood should be integrated into any vocational training. This might involve direct assistance, but could also be linked to improving access to credit. In this context it is also worth noting that vocational training programmes that engage with the same group over a considerable period would both enable more in-depth training and provide a framework for supporting the transition from training to active use of the skills.

Two specific areas in which vocational training would be useful are agriculture and midwifery. Agriculture is an obvious choice in that it is the largest economic sector both financially and in terms of the number

of people involved. Furthermore, vocational trainings in this area, unlike in other sectors, have generally been seen as beneficial by participants. Midwifery has been identified as an area where more trained personnel and particularly more trained personnel embedded in the community at the village level are needed. Vocational training would help address this need and, as a sector that is likely to be dominated by women, also provides a possible entry point for working on women's empowerment. Vocational trainings on this subject could be used as an entry point for broader training and discussions on reproductive health. Other areas for vocational training should be explored through consultations with the local population.

Infrastructure development would benefit a range of sectors and is a pre-condition for further development in some. For instance, improvements in infrastructure will be essential to any effort to increase tourism. At the same time, if designed in a thoughtful manner, infrastructure projects might provide employment and skills development opportunities for the local workforce.

Monitoring proposals for new mining or development projects and working to ensure that these involve the community and are sensitive to locals needs and concerns, including environmental concerns, would also potentially contribute to more inclusive and sustainable development as would working with existing mining operations on these issues. However, engaging on these issues might be more complex and sensitive than focusing on the provision of vocational training.

Agriculture and Rural Market Development

Although agriculture is the main economic sector in Shan State it is not optimised; poor techniques and choice of crops and varieties result in poorer outputs and contribute to the overuse of chemical fertilisers and pesticides. These have a negative impact on the environment and on the value of crops. Furthermore, the lack of understanding and poor techniques contribute to environmental degradation, including decreasing fertility of the land (inviting even greater use of fertiliser).

The agricultural economy (and more generally the economy in Shan State) is largely dependent on China and Thailand, both for inputs and as a market for crops. This provides an incentive to continue cultivating the crops for which there is a market in China or Thailand and, even more problematically, means farmers are dependent on the types of seeds and other inputs made available through these sources.

Hindering factors in this domain fall largely into two groups; factors directly relating to the farmers and environmental factors. The former include lack of knowledge of appropriate crops and techniques, lack of resources to make changes and lack of access to markets for new produce. Lack of knowledge and lack of resources to make changes are interconnected; without the necessary resources to invest in change no amount of training will help, however without a good understanding of what might be profitable crops and better techniques, farmers who wish to make changes will not be in a position to take informed decisions and are likely to do badly as a result. In this context it should be remembered that changing to a new crop or technique may not produce quick returns for the farmers, but require commitment and investment over several years. Finally, poor infrastructure, and the fact that the existing infrastructure is geared towards trading with China, means that access to other markets is more complex, requiring a further investment from the farmer in terms of identifying and reaching such markets. Furthermore the lack of capacity, including as a result of an unreliable electricity supply, limits the ability to process crops on site, which would increase their potential value and facilitate the use of more distant markets.

In addition to these issues with infrastructure, the major environmental factors hindering change in this domain are the drugs trade, land-grabbing (and more generally lack of secure land tenure), and insecurity. Growing opium poppies is, in effect, a minimum risk choice for farmers; the poppies are easy to cultivate and offer a guaranteed return (and often a higher return than an alternative crop would). If new crops do not offer a quick and sustainable return farmers are likely to be tempted to return to poppy cultivation.

Land-grabbing and insecure land tenure, the risk of conflict causing displacement, and loss of access due to the laying of landmines or to insecurity may all affect agricultural development both directly and indirectly. Each of these factors results in loss of (access to) land and so will have an immediate impact, which may be short-term (e.g. the loss of one season's crop) or longer-term (e.g. permanent loss of access

to land). Whether consciously or not, awareness that they risk losing their land may act as a disincentive for investing in improving the land or planting crops that rely on long-term tenure and care.

Despite these challenges there is an interest in improving agriculture and so space for development, though vocational training (see above) and other measures. Farmers appear willing to move away from cultivating opium poppies, making work on promoting alternatives an obvious entry point. Focusing on crops that require only short term investment and offer a quick return would have the benefit of offering clear advantages and few disadvantages for those interested in trying them. However, the risk that changes will not be sustainable after the end of a particular project would need to be assessed.

An alternative entry point would be to consider the supply side and work on improving access to a variety of good quality and appropriate seeds; ensuring that alternatives are reliably available might encourage farmers to experiment, and building supply networks will ensure that changes are sustainable rather than dependent on projects and external support. Such work could also be tied to rural market development and efforts to decrease the reliance on seeds and other inputs from China and Thailand.

Improved access to credit might enable more farmers to invest in improvements or alternatives. Such initiatives would need to consider the current difficulties faced in accessing credit, such as lack of collateral, and terms that would be conducive to investment (sufficient amounts, a long enough period before repayment, etc.) as well as avoiding trapping individuals in a cycle of debt, particularly if there is a risk that investments will not be successful or not provide quick returns.

The impact of insecurity and lack of secure land tenure are systemic issues that are not conducive to low level responses nor are any changes likely to have an immediate impact. However, in the longer term work on land issues, including ensuring that farmers whose land is taken for mining or development projects receive suitable compensation, could be useful.

Finally, as noted above, infrastructure development is a possible entry point both in terms of improving infrastructure to support the agricultural sector and as part of efforts to develop rural markets.

Health and Basic Services

The major challenge at present in access to healthcare is the lack of trained personnel (at all levels and in all sectors). The physical infrastructure (clinics and hospitals) exists and there are relatively few problems in terms of access to them.

Cost of medication or treatment is also a problem and can prevent individuals receiving treatment, or lead to a choice between treatment for different conditions. This can have knock-on effects on the individual's own health and at the systemic level (notably in terms of the spread of infections and the increased risk of drug-resistance if treatment is not completed).

Access to clean water remains a problem across the State and is compounded by contamination of water sources by agricultural and mining processes. Lack of knowledge about nutrition and the perception that people have enough to eat may conceal nutritional deficiencies and particularly vulnerable populations.

Many of the problems in Shan State are linked to the population's low educational level. The lack of quality education and, relatedly, the shortage of qualified teachers are, therefore, key challenges.

Perhaps the biggest difficulty with all the issues identified in this context is the need for long-term commitment and investment, particularly in training staff, if lasting change is to occur. A related issue is that relying on staffing from other parts of the country is not necessarily viable and can cause additional issues (for instance communication problems). In this context it is important to ensure that short-term palliative solutions do not detract from or undermine the possibility of long-term solutions.

In the health sector, in particular, there is a risk that the involvement of international NGOs focusing on particular diseases may result in other health issues receiving less attention and in a fragmented health system that relies on these external actors and cannot provide comprehensive care.

Measures to train additional health workers would be one entry point. Vocational training would help in some areas and could be used to train locals to recognise common problems. In particular, vocational training in midwifery could make major contributions to reducing maternal and peri-natal child deaths

and complications. However, this will not be adequate to address the lack of skilled practitioners and specialists. Longer term measures to fill the need for trained medical personnel are clearly needed (which is also true in other parts of Myanmar) and would need to include measures to improve basic schooling so that school graduates were in a position to study medicine.

In that context, it may be noted that the question of improving education is a particularly intractable one. While the involvement of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Border Affairs provides an entry point for work, the need to address systemic issues within the education sector (again not limited to Shan State) will remain. These include a lack of qualified teachers, poor quality teaching, the question of comprehension of the language of instruction and the perception that the curriculum is Bamar-centric and does not reflect the needs and cultures of other groups. These issues cannot be addressed through a sole focus on Shan State, but would require engagement on education policy and reform of the education system more generally. However, it might be worth exploring strategies for improving the retention of students in school and for mitigating comprehension problems. Vocational training of teaching assistants from within the local community who could facilitate communication between students and teachers or identifying ways of improving students' knowledge of Burmese might be possible approaches, although the latter could face resistance if it is perceived as forced Burmanisation. Community leaders and CSOs might be able to identify other strategies.

The fact that cost of medication is a problem offers one possible entry point for health-based interventions; efforts to reduce these costs. Such efforts might engage government officials, although in doing so it would be important to avoid contributing to the problem of tenders for the import of drugs being awarded to friends and family who then do not provide the necessary, good quality medication. Such efforts should also aim to have as wide a coverage as possible and draw on the experience of medical service providers to identify where there are particular problems

Awareness raising on the subject of nutrition, particularly childhood nutrition, could help address the apparent disconnect between people's perception that they have adequate food and problems noted by other sources. However, as with other areas, awareness raising is not likely to be helpful if access to good diet is limited by availability or cost. Addressing the overuse of chemicals in farming and, perhaps, rural market development could assist in improving access to affordable, good quality food.

Awareness raising and capacity building could also be useful in the area of access to clean water; in particular training and capacity building on how to monitor the safety of water sources, and water source management. Such measures would help empower communities to identify and document problems with their water sources and so, hopefully, to then address them directly or engage in advocacy towards those responsible for contamination, thus driving broader change. Developing water infrastructure and purification plants would be helpful in the longer term.

Peace, State-Building and Protection

The ongoing conflict and the insecurity caused by the risk of renewed fighting is the major challenge for this domain, particularly in Shan North but also in the other areas. In addition to direct conflict, the presence and sheer number of armed actors presents a challenge to peace, state-building and protection efforts. Furthermore the connections between armed actors and the drugs trade fuels insecurity and may present a barrier to progress if those profiting from the current situation believe that changes will leave them worse off. Interviewees were aware that they lacked knowledge of the peace-process, suggesting that training and capacity-building in this area would be welcome. Such efforts might help empower civil society groups to take a more active and informed role in peace-building, whether through engagement with the formal process or local level initiatives.

The ongoing presence of IDPs in some areas and the question of how to support returnees and ensure their reintegration into the community, as well as the question of support for entrapped villages, poses and will continue to pose a challenge in terms of peace-building and protection as well as development.

The National Peace and Reconciliation Centre (NRPC) has recently indicated an interest in taking on a more prominent role in dealing with IDPs in Shan State. This commitment provides a possible entry point for work on this issue and, perhaps, to engage in discussions with national level actors on durable

solutions and the need for ongoing support if IDPs return to their homes or are permanently resettled elsewhere. Working with the NRPC or local actors might also help avoid unnecessary tensions with the Tatmadaw which has reacted negatively to the provision of assistance to IDPs from RCSS controlled areas who are vocally critical of its actions.

Landmines may continue to be a reminder of conflict and a danger to the population even in ceasefire areas. In most respects mine clearance should be an obvious entry point and necessary work, with two caveats. If combatants continue to plant mines no amount of clearance will resolve the problem and where conflict is ongoing or tensions remain high, it could be seen as premature and as a move that benefits one party or another by (theoretically) facilitating their access to the land.

There is also an urgent need to address the psychological impact of the conflict and the profound trauma that the population has experienced. While progress towards a lasting peace and general improvements in safety and security (whether as a result of ceasefires or addressing other sources of insecurity) are necessary, they are not sufficient; work at the ground level to address the impact of the conflict on the population is also necessary. It is important that such efforts not focus solely on displaced persons, former combatants or others obviously directly affected by the conflict, but recognise that it has impacted all residents in the State to a greater or lesser extent. In this context, FGD participants and interviewees across the State highlighted the need for trauma healing.

Gender Empowerment

The biggest challenge for gender empowerment in Shan State as elsewhere in Myanmar is the (still largely unchallenged) traditional understanding of the roles and standing of men and women. In this context the fact that caring responsibilities for children and the elderly largely fall on women should not be ignored as a factor that limits their freedom of action and capacity to take on some roles. While the security situation poses challenges for everyone, it may particularly affect women and result in limited freedom of movement and reluctance to engage in activities that are perceived as risky.

In the health sector, the biggest challenges for women specifically is probably maternal mortality and peri-natal complications. Since women generally give birth at home the presence of trained midwives able to address common issues and ensure reasonably sanitary conditions is particularly important. Although breastfeeding rates are high, more understanding of the benefits and of particular instances in which it is not advised would be useful. Women should be consulted about whether there are other health issues that particularly affect them and need specific attention.

The existence of a reasonable number of active women's organisations and networks provides an obvious entry point for engagement on women's empowerment. Such organisations may be useful implementing partners and provide additional insight into the measures and approaches that will be most beneficial. Furthermore, strengthening and building the capacity of such organisations will contribute to ensuring longer-term engagement and the continuing visibility of the issue. More generally, women should be considered in developing all interventions and consulted along with other members of the community. Efforts should be made to ensure that vocational trainings cater to the needs and interests of women, without excluding them from general interest vocational trainings.

Measures to promote political participation and leadership of women would also be useful and contribute to lasting change. Such measures might include capacity building and training so that women have and are confident in their ability to take on leading roles, supporting women who are (or wish to) stand for elected posts, ensuring that women who are elected have the support they need to carry out tasks effectively (including, for instance, assistance with caring responsibilities) and working on developing the capacity of women leaders to take on roles at a higher level. Efforts targeting men, encouraging them to accept women's leadership and to ensure that relevant fora are not (intentionally or inadvertently) hostile environments for women are also necessary.

Recommendations

The recommendations provided below are divided into different topics and address the government, civil society and IDHAA (including SDC). While most recommendations reflect points made in above in the analysis and the presentation of the results of the research, they draw on the full scope of the project and so in some cases draw in ideas and details that for reasons of space it was not possible to address in detail in the main text. Within each topic recommendations are divided into those that could be implemented and show results in the short-term and those that will require longer-term engagement. The main factor used to decide whether a recommendation is short-term and long-term is the ‘resource mobilisation’ requirement, understood as including both financial resources and engagement with stakeholders (who may have different—and potentially conflicting—agendas).

It should be noted that the recommendations do not distinguish between the three areas of Shan State. In most cases the issues identified are of relevance across the State, but, obviously, details and priorities will vary. In designing programmes, it would therefore be important to consider the specificities of the area in which the activities will be carried out.

TO ALL STAKEHOLDERS

Cooperation and implementation

Immediate action

Government organise review meetings in order to assess and review the needs of Shan State residents with the participation of all relevant stakeholders (CSOs, EAOs, Donors and IDHAAs) Government should organise policy meetings and develop actions on how the government, CSOs, EAOs and IDHAAs (including SDC) can work together. All relevant stakeholders (CSOs, EAOs, Donors and IDHAAs) should participate to these meetings.

SDC should specifically support the government in organising review meetings and policy meetings

Displacement and migrations

Immediate action

Insofar as possible, the government, CSOs and IDHAAs should count and map people affected by ongoing and past conflicts and identify their particular needs. Attention should be paid to both those displaced (whether or not in formal IDP camps) and to those who are or were trapped in their villages.

All actors should ensure that IDPs have access to routine healthcare and treatment for minor diseases as well as for priority (i.e. serious diseases or those that pose the risk of an epidemic) healthcare issues

Drug issues

Immediate action

All actors should collaborate to establish more rehabilitation centres with better facilities and ensure that these are accessible to as broad a spectrum of the population as possible. In particular, rehabilitations centres should be free or cheap to access and provide users with a safe space. They should also be connected with measures support former drug addicts in rebuilding their livelihoods

Agriculture

Immediate action

The government, CSOs and IDHAAs should prioritise providing training and technical assistance for farmers and provide incentives and support to those interested in adopting organic or other sustainable and environmentally friendly agricultural practices.

All actors should promote rural development, including through efforts to improve infrastructure.

Long term

The MOAI should cooperate with CSOs and IDHAAs to develop and implement targeted policies to fulfil the needs of the agricultural sector in Shan State.

All actors should assist and encourage Small and Medium Enterprises to invest in industries that can process locally grown produce (such as green tea, coffee and avocado) into finished and value-added products.

Tourism

Immediate action

All actors should promote investment in tourism in Shan East and Shan North, including investment in the infrastructure needed to support a tourist industry.

All actors should promote rural tourism and eco-tourism, taking steps to ensure that tourism in rural areas benefits rural communities.

Economic migration and remittances

Immediate action

All actors should encourage and support the development of Small and Medium Enterprises and start-up businesses based on local resources and products in order to provide viable alternatives to economic migration.

Long term

The government should collaborate with relevant bodies in China and Thailand as well as with IDHAAs with relevant expertise to address the risk of trafficking in persons.

Education and vocational training

Immediate action

All actors should encourage young people to pursue their education and provide support to those wishing to do so.

All vocational training providers should ensure that trainings are conducted in language comprehensible to the audience

All actors should ensure that the vocational trainings they offer are designed in a way that will help participants find work in Myanmar, but skills that would help in finding work in China or Thailand should also be offered.

All actors should prioritise vocational training on agriculture (use of farming machinery, new technologies, and developing more systematic animal farming methods), on mechanics (fixing cars, motorcycle), and on textiles. Vocational training that provide routes into particular professions, such as hair-dressing, should also be offered.

Serious consideration should be given to establishing agricultural schools in each of the three areas of Shan State.

All actors should work towards the training of qualified teachers

Long term

All actors should ensure that vocational trainings include organisational management, recognising the structural weakness of many organisations in Shan State and the need for such training in the establishment of successful businesses.

The government, CSOs, CBOs and IDHAAs should work together to improve the capacity and skills of teachers and to ensure that schools are fully staffed.

Health

Long term

All actors should take all feasible steps to reduce the cost of health care, including the cost of medication.

Relevant government agencies, CSOs and IDHAAs should work together to ensure that the residents of Shan State have access to safe drinking water and proper latrines.

Safety and security

Long term

All actors should provide and support the training of security actors (GAD, police, Village Administrators, etc.) on community policing, diversity management and intercultural competence.

Gender

Immediate action

All actors should encourage women's participation in trainings on leadership, management and politics, take practical steps to promote women's active participation in administrative bodies, and provide support to women who are interested in participating in public affairs, but lack skills or confidence to do so.

Long term

State- and nation-wide gender equality forums should be organised, to bring together stakeholders, including government officials and parliamentarians, and provide a format for producing and submitting policy inputs relating to gender equality management.

Youth

Immediate action

All actors should encourage youth to participate in social activities and democratic processes, ensuring that these are seen as relevant and as a means to address problems.

All actors should consider organising exposure trips for youth, enabling them to meet and share experiences with youth from other parts of the country.

All actors should encourage and support youth participation in peace building and support youth in developing the necessary skills to play a greater role in this area.

Natural disasters and disaster risks reduction

Immediate action

Women should be included in trainings and empowered to take a leading role in preparations for natural disasters.

All actors should consider organising workshops to bring together different actors and discuss how to predict and prepare for natural disasters.

All actors should ensure that the soil erosion is carefully monitored and that actions are taken to limit its impact.

TO SDC AND IDHAAs

Displacement and migration

Immediate action

IDHAAs should identify and respond to the humanitarian needs of those who are or were trapped in their villages by the conflict as well as addressing the needs of IDPs (in and outside camps).

IDHAAs and SDC should strengthen the capacity of local organisations in supporting IDPs

IDHAAs should support the government in providing healthcare and education to IDPs and entrapped persons and monitor the delivery of such services

Long term

IDHAAs should take steps to ensure that Shan State does not become dependent on the provision of humanitarian aid, including through the provision of development assistance that connects with humanitarian programmes and contributes to countering the effects of conflict.

Drug issues

Immediate action

IDHAA should particularly support civil society and government initiatives focusing on awareness raising among youth.

IDHAAs should support local organisations and groups that provide activities for youth to counter the risk of drug use.

IDHAAs should prioritise responses aimed at addressing drugs issues, recognising that no humanitarian or development assistance to Shan State will be effective if the almost insurmountable drug problem is not resolved.

SDC should provide financial and technical support to the government and CSOs for the establishment and running of rehabilitation centres

Long term

IDHAAs should provide more assistance with developing a viable crop substitution programme for opium farmers.

IDHAAs and SDC should ensure that vocational training activities include former drug users and cater to their specific needs of former drug users

Food security and nutrition

Immediate action

SDC should support CSOs in raising awareness on food safety and nutrition throughout the state

Agriculture

Immediate action

SDC should consider whether its existing projects on land governance which are being implemented in other parts of Myanmar can be expanding to include Shan State or replicated here. In any case experience on documenting and securing land tenure should be used to identify strategies for addressing these issues in Shan State

IDHAAs and SDC should support and empower organisations working on natural resource management and the environmental impact of mining

SDC and IDHAAs should support efforts to move towards environmentally friendly farming techniques and provide technical advice on this subject

SDC should support the efforts of CSOs in raising awareness about the dangers of overuse of pesticides and chemical fertilisers

Long term

IDHAAs and SDC should help develop local, State-level and Union-level advocacy on sustainable and environmentally responsible approaches to natural resource management and mining based on established good practices in these areas

IDHAAs and SDC should explore how farmers could be supported to access international markets other than China and Thailand, and so reduce the reliance of Shan State's economy on these neighbours.

IDHAAs and SDC should support efforts to develop local infrastructure especially projects on improving access (e.g. roads) and water-related project (e.g. irrigation, access to ground water)

Tourism

Immediate action

IDHAAs and SDC should support the creation of Hotel Training Schools and provide financial and technical support to CSOs and government for the development of hospitality training

Long term

IDHAAs should support CSOs in monitoring the social, economic and environmental impacts of tourism.

IDHAAs should work with the government to facilitate tourism, including by widening communication networks between local tourism companies and those in other countries.

Education and vocational training

Immediate action

While working to strengthen the formal education system, IDHAAs should consider informal education schemes to strengthen the skills and capacity of youth in Shan State, including for instance programmes outside the formal school system teaching languages that will be useful to young people (e.g. Chinese, English or Thai).

IDHAAs should support CSOs in organising training for youth to empower them to take on leading roles in their communities

SDC should help improve the coordination of vocational training and the consistent documentation of skills, building the experience they already have gained in this work in other parts of Myanmar.

IDHAAs should make prior consultation with communities or otherwise demonstrating a real need for, and interest in, the subject of the training a condition for funding or support.

SDC should provide scholarships to teachers wishing to improve their skills (or those wishing to become teachers) to study outside Shan State. These scholarships should be conditional on the individual returning to teach in their community at the end of the training

Long term

IDHAAs with particular experience in curriculum development, multilingual education and education in diverse settings should offer the government technical support and advice in reforming Myanmar's education system.

Health

Immediate action

IDHAAs should provide support CSOs in providing awareness raising for youth on sexual and reproductive health

IDHAAs and SDC should provide financial and technical support to local groups providing health-related services such as transportation for those in need of care

IDHAAs should continue to support organisations such as Seven Star Local Development Organisation in forming 'Village Health Committees'.

SDC should organisation forums and trainings bringing together participants from Ethnic Health Organisations and government health services to create links and strengthen the cooperation between these actors. Such cooperation should be prioritised in light of the positive impact it can have on the peace process.

SDC should provide scholarships for midwives and health workers to enable them to train abroad on condition that after the training they return to their place of origin so as to contribute to the provision of healthcare in the community

Long term

IDHAAs, including SDC, should consider providing vocational training to individuals interested in qualifying as first aid nurses or midwives.

SDC should promote collaboration in the training of midwives and health workers between the local actors (CSOs), other IDHAAs and the State level government

Peace process and Peace-building

Immediate action

IDHAAs should take steps to ensure that Shan State does not become dependent on the provision of humanitarian aid, including through the provision of development assistance that connects with humanitarian programmes and contributes to countering the effects of conflict.

IDHAAs and SDC should provide technical support in de-mining related activities and initiatives SDC should provide EAOs, political parties and CSOs with technical support on drafting a State Constitution

IDHAAs and SDC should implement and support initiatives aiming at promoting awareness of the Peace Process

IDHAAs and SDC should strengthen the capacity of CSOs in relation to the Peace Process by providing them with technical support, but also by promoting Peace Process related activities on the ground

IDHAAs and SDC should support activities which aim to promote a cultural of peace

Long term

SDC and IDHAAs should work with the government and EAOs in order to ensure that communities benefit from ceasefires and all actors see real benefits from peace

Safety and security

Immediate action

IDHAAs should support the government in providing incentives to encourage the cessation of forced recruitment and demobilisation of persons so recruited.

IDHAAs and SDC should strengthen the capacity of CSOs to monitor and report on security sector actors.

IDHAAs should undertake their projects in a transparent manner.

IDHAAs should provide assistance to relevant government agencies and CSOs to promote the rule of law and the capacity of police to combat crime in Shan State.

IDHAAs and SDC should support to awareness raising on the rule of law and human rights.

Long term

IDHAAs and SDC should support the government in providing training to police officers on community policing, policing techniques and good practices.

Gender

Immediate action

IDHAAs should prioritise supporting women's organisations and networks.

IDHAAs should require recipients of their funding to promote gender equality.

SDC should provide or support women's empowerment programmes and activities.

Youth

Immediate action

IDHAAs and SDC should support CSOs' in monitoring the implementation of the Youth Policy. They should also provide the government with technical and financial support to implement the youth policy.

IDHAAs should provide technical and financial support for activities that train youth on responsible social media use.

SDC offer youth scholarship programmes to train youth leaders and provide them with exposure outside Shan State. Such scholarships should be conditional on the participants returning to their communities after completion of the scholarship programme.

Long term

IDHAAs should support efforts to improve economic opportunities for youth, including internships or mentoring programmes that provide routes into careers (especially for youth with low formal education qualifications).

Natural disasters and disaster risks reduction

immediate action

IDHAAs should provide trainings on disaster management and disaster awareness for civil society groups and communities in Shan State.

IDHAAs should provide technical and financial assistance to local CSOs and CBOs promoting disaster risk reduction.

IDHAAs should provide technical and financial support for re-forestation programmes.

TO THE GOVERNMENT

Displacement and migration

Immediate action

The government should ensure that IDPs have access to education facilities

The government should ensure that IDPs have access to healthcare facilities

Long term

The government should provide assistance to IDPs from RCSS-controlled areas even if they have not specifically requested help, recognising that such persons are unlikely to request government assistance.

The Shan State Government should introduce incentives to attract talented young people back to Shan State.

Drug issues

Immediate action

The government should undertake anti-drug campaigns in collaboration with and drawing on the experience of international partners.

The government should support local organisations and groups that provide activities for youth to counter the risk of drug use.

The government should take decisive punitive actions against officials who collude with drug dealers.

The government should provide former drug addicts with support to enable them to rebuild their livelihoods

The government should institute a mechanism that allows the citizens of Shan State to report drug-related activities to relevant government agencies safely.

The government should support local organisations willing to run rehabilitation centres by providing assistance. The government should also establish minimum standards for such centres

Long term

The government should try to improve the ways it deals with the drug problem in Shan State, including learning lessons from how similar problems are being dealt with in other countries.

The government should seek international assistance in dealing with both the demand and supply sides of the drug problem.

The government should implement activities aiming to reinsert drug addicts into society. These could include the targetted provision of vocational training and support to enable them to establish careers and rebuild livelihoods

Food security and nutrition

Immediate action

The government should (individually and collaboratively) raise awareness of food safety and nutrition. IDHAAs should support these efforts, including by providing technical and financial assistance.

Government should establish food safety standards and quality controls for imported foodstuffs

Long term

The Ministry of Health should make more effort to ensure that unsafe foods are not available for sale in markets in Shan State or elsewhere in the country.

Agriculture

Immediate action

The government should ensure that traders do not underpay farmers for seasonal crops, including through regular monitoring of prices.

Officials should provide eligible farmers and Small and Medium Enterprises with Form-7 documents (which are needed to apply for loans from national or private banks and other microfinance agencies) in timely manner.

The government should systematically enforce the 2012 land law and related by-laws.

The government should welcome further investment in the agricultural sector by the international community

The government should ensure that land disputes are resolved in accordance with existing land laws.

The government should increase the availability of loans for farmers and the amount that can be lent.

The government should encourage private banks to issue more loans to farmers and to introduce more flexible requirements with regard to collateral to increase the accessibility of these loans.

The government should regulate the use of chemicals in agriculture.

The government should prioritise the construction of rural-to-urban highways or railways to facilitate commodity flows between rural and urban areas (i.e. between farmers and traders).

Long term

The government, in particular the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Irrigation (MOAI), in cooperation with CSOs should educate farmers on the health impacts of the overuse of chemicals in agriculture.

Myanmar Agricultural Development Bank under the MOAI should make medium- and long-term loans available to farmers, and coordinate with private banks such as AYA, KBZ, CB, AGD and Yoma to increase access to such loans.

The government should prioritise the construction of rural-to-urban highways or railways to facilitate commodity flows between rural and urban areas (i.e. between farmers and traders).

The government should act with transparency in the financing and implementation of infrastructure projects and ensure a balance between rural and urban infrastructure projects in its planning and budgeting.

The government should establish mechanisms for reporting land-grabbing and ensure that such reports are investigated and acted on in a timely manner.

The Department of Agricultural Research and Department of Industrial Crop Development under the MOAI should provide modern agronomic technology and training to farmers

The government should aim to strategically reduce farmers' reliance on seed imports from China and Thailand.

The government should increase efforts to find international markets for agricultural products and negotiate favourable terms.

The Department of Agricultural Research and Department of Industrial Crop Development should increase research into the best seed varieties for use in Shan State. To this end they should invite the support of relevant IDHAAs.

Mining

Immediate action

The government should seek locals' consent before authorising mining projects

Mining companies should consult with locals before and during mining to ensure their support for the project and find ways that the project can contribute to local development.

The Union and State governments should make public information and policies on mining projects and ensure that decisions on the authorisation of projects are made in transparent manner.

The government should give Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) a mandate to carry out consultations and negotiations between mining companies, CBOs, CSOs and locals.

The government should fully enforce laws, rules and regulations against illegal mining and unethical mining practices, including requiring companies engaged in illegal mining to cease. In applying the laws particular attention should be paid to protecting the population against exploitation and violation of their human rights by mining companies.

The government should actively monitor the impact of mining on the ecosystem and put pressure on mining companies to act responsibly in this respect.

Government should carry out awareness raising activities and advocacy against practices that harm the environment and surrounding ecosystems

Long term

Where CBOs and CSOs are engaged in monitoring mining projects, the government should support the activities of these organisations, including by facilitating reporting of violations of relevant laws and of actions that will harm the local community.

The government should consider monitoring the conduct of mining companies itself or through cooperation with local CBOs and CSOs

The government should require Environmental Impact Assessments and Socio-Economic Impact Assessments before permitting mining projects to start. It should appoint local or international organisations as trusted third-parties to carry out these assessments.

Tourism

Immediate action

The government should review travel restrictions with a view to allowing access to areas where there is no ongoing conflict, in line with existing tourism laws.

The government should organise trainings on hospitality related topics, including hotel management. The government should establish Hotel Training Schools

Long term

The government should support CSOs in monitoring the social, economic and environmental impacts of tourism.

The Ministry of Hotels and Tourism should take steps to improve hotels and promote tourism in Shan State, calling for cooperation from other ministerial departments such as the Ministry of Transportation and Communication, the Ministry of Electricity and Energy, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Border Affairs, and the Ministry of Defence, as necessary.

Economic migration and remittances

Immediate action

The government should seek advice, technical assistance, and financial support from international organisations, such as the International Organisation for Migration, on addressing migration-related issues.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population and other actors should ensure that youth are able to access information on how to find legal work opportunities abroad and how to migrate through the formal system, as well as on the dangers of irregular migration.

Long term

The government should negotiate MOUs on transnational labour with China and Thailand, including provisions designed to protect migrant workers from abusive and exploitative treatment.

The Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population should develop friendly and constructive relations with equivalent bodies in China and Thailand and cooperate with these States on efforts to tackle irregular migration and trafficking in persons.

The government (in collaboration with neighbouring States) should ensure that services are in place to assist trafficked persons and migrant workers who find themselves in an exploitative or otherwise problematic situation. This should include, in particular, measures to enable these individuals to be repatriated without risk of facing penalties related to their irregular migration or to seek legal employment where they are.

Education and vocational training

Immediate action

The government should encourage parents to take education more seriously and raise awareness of the benefits of sending children to school.

The government should work to increase awareness of the existing vocational training schools and to establish additional schools. These additional schools should cater to students with different levels of formal education.

Long term

The government should consider wide-reaching reforms of the education system and curriculum to ensure that it meets the needs of all parts of the population of Myanmar. To this end they should consult with all relevant actors and draw on the knowledge and experience of relevant IDHAAs.

Universities should focus on preparing students for the sorts of jobs they are likely to get, designing courses and curricula accordingly.

Health

Immediate action

The Ministry of Health should not provide hospitals with fixed quantities of medicines based on hospital size, but adjust quantities to reflect the actual needs of the hospital. In establishing the needs of individual hospitals, the hospital administrators and medical personnel in the area should be consulted.

The government should ensure that health programmes specifically address the needs of women and youth.

The government should run awareness raising campaigns about the importance of clean water and provide training on how to tell if water is safe to drink, focusing particularly on rural populations.

Long term

The government should ensure that the tendering process for import of medications is transparent and monitor tender winners to ensure the quality of imports.

Peace process and Peace-building

Immediate action

The Tatmadaw and EAOs should start working to de-mine Shan State.

All armed actors, including the Tatmadaw and EAOs who are not NCA signatories, should commit to stop using landmines and begin de-mining.

The government should implement activities related to community management and teaching of history in a divided society

Safety and security

Immediate action

The government should fully enforce existing laws, ensuring that these are applied equality to everyone. Breaches of the law should be investigated and prosecuted in a transparent manner to help build trust in law enforcement agencies and the rule of law.

The government should take steps to combat corruption among law enforcement personnel, including seeking advice and technical support from relevant international actors.

The government should provide incentives to encourage the cessation of forced recruitment and demobilisation of persons so recruited.

Long term

Law enforcement agencies should give CSOs a formal role in monitoring their performance and adherence to the rule of law, including by establishing effective mechanisms for reporting complaints.

The government should providing training to police officers on community policing, policing techniques and good practices.

The government should ensure that law enforcement agencies are equipped to handle cases of sexual and gender-based violence in a sensitive manner to encourage reporting of these offences.

Gender

Immediate action

The government should raise awareness of gender discrimination and carry out, for example, campaigns and festivals to promote gender equality.

Youth

Immediate action

The implementation of the youth policy should be carefully monitored. Youth should be involved in this monitoring and in designing and implementing activities carried out under the youth policy.

Long term

The government should improve economic opportunities for youth, including establishing internships or mentoring programmes that provide routes into careers.

Natural disasters and disaster risks reduction

Immediate action

Relevant government agencies should promote awareness of the relationship between gender equality and disaster resilience.

The government should implement re-forestation programmes.

TO THE CSOs

Displacement and migration

Immediate action

CSOs should support the government in providing healthcare and education to IDPs and entrapped persons and monitor the delivery of such services

Drug issues

Immediate action

CSOs should undertake anti-drug campaigns in collaboration with and drawing on the experience of international partners.

Long term

CSOs should implement activities aiming to reinsert drug addicts into society. These could include the targeted provision of vocational training and support to enable them to establish careers and rebuild livelihoods

Food security and nutrition

Immediate action

CSOs should (individually and collaboratively) raise awareness of food safety and nutrition. IDHAAs should support these efforts, including by providing technical and financial assistance. CSOs should provide training on nutrition and the importance of good quality food, particularly for children. They should also raise awareness on specific issues, including the risks associated with chemical residues in food

Mining

Immediate action

CSOs should carry out awareness raising activities and advocacy against practices that harm the environment and surrounding ecosystems

Tourism

Immediate action

CSOs should organise trainings on hospitality related topics, including hotel management. The government should establish Hotel Training Schools

Long term

CBOs, CSOs and NGOs should take the lead in carrying out assessments of the social, economic and environmental consequences of tourism, with a view to ensuring that tourism does not have a negative impact and contributes to the wellbeing of host communities.

Education and vocational training

Immediate action

While working to strengthen the formal education system, CSOs should consider informal education schemes to strengthen the skills and capacity of youth in Shan State, including for instance programmes outside the formal school system teaching languages that will be useful to young people (e.g. Chinese, English or Thai).

CSOs should encourage parents to take education more seriously and raise awareness of the benefits of sending children to school.

CSOs should work to increase awareness of the existing vocational training schools and to establish additional schools. These additional schools should cater to students with different levels of formal education.

CSOs should organise trainings for youth to empower them to take on leading roles in their communities.

Health

Immediate action

CSOs should provide more awareness raising for youth on sexual and reproductive health.

CSOs should run awareness raising campaigns about the importance of clean water and provide training on how to tell if water is safe to drink, focusing particularly on rural populations.

Long term

CSOs should consider providing vocational training to individuals interested in qualifying as first aid nurses or midwives.

Peace process and Peace-building

Immediate action

CSOs should implement and support initiatives aiming at promoting awareness of the Peace Process

CSOs should implement activities related to community management and teaching of history in a divided society

Safety and security

Immediate action

CSOs should monitor the activities of security sector actors, and document and report on contraventions of national law as well as on human rights violations

Gender

Immediate action

CSOs should raise awareness of gender discrimination and carry out, for example, campaigns and festivals to promote gender equality.

CSOs should run gender equality trainings for both men and women in all areas (rural as well as urban).

CSOs should monitor and report on incidents of gender-based violence and sexual violence.

Women's organisations should strengthen and expand their existing networks and cooperate to raise awareness of women's issues.

Youth

Immediate action

CSOs should consider how youth can be alerted to the risks of social media use and trained to recognise, check and respond to false information and rumours spread through social media.

Natural disasters and disaster risks reduction

immediate action

Relevant CSOs should promote awareness of the relationship between gender equality and disaster resilience.

CSOs should carry out awareness raising activities on man-made natural disasters and risk factors, in particular soil erosion, deforestation and overuse of chemicals in farming.

Long term

CSOs from Shan State should be invited to do relief work and DRR work in other parts of the country, where natural disasters are more common.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Historical and Regional Context

Shan State geography and economy

Characterised by a large plateau that covers most of its territory as well as by important rivers (notably the Thanlwin), Shan State is largely rural and often subdivided into three areas: Shan South, Shan North and Shan East.

- Shan South covers 57,806 km² and is administratively divided into 21 townships. With a population of approximately 2 million, the population density in Shan South is 35 people per square kilometre, 77% of whom live in rural areas. It is also home to two of the country's Self-Administered Zones, namely the two areas that make up the Pa-O SAZ, and the Danu SAZ.
- Shan North covers 60,559 km², administratively divided into 20 townships, some of which fall within the Palaung, Wa and Kokant SAZs. The population of Shan North is estimated to be under 2 million, giving it a population density of around 30 people per square kilometre. Twenty-four percent of the population live in urban areas, and the remaining 76% in rural areas.
- Shan East covers 37,093 km² and is divided into 10 townships. Shan East's population is approximately 0.6 million, giving it a population density of 17 people per square kilometre. Twenty percent of the population live in urban areas, and the remaining 80% in rural areas.

The economy of Shan State primarily relies on agriculture and resource extraction. Rice, fruit and vegetables are the main crops, followed by maize, wheat, groundnuts, pulses and beans. There are also cotton, coffee, tea and tobacco plantations. The agricultural sector also includes livestock breeding and fisheries. The extensive forests provide various sources of income, but the most important of these, teak, appears to be largely controlled by bigger economic actors and is often traded illegally. Mining (primarily for silver, lead and zinc) is widespread. Trading is also an important part of the economy, but much more localised. Muse is a major trading post as a result of its proximity to China, while in the south of Shan State, Tachileik monopolises trading activities with Thailand.

It is important to note the relative significance of the drug trade in Shan State. A large part of Shan State's territory is located in the 'golden triangle', a region known worldwide for the production and trade of drugs. The presence of non-State armed groups contributes to the prevalence of the drug trade, as it is one of their sources of revenue. Both EAOs—though to a lesser extent today than in the past—and Tatmadaw-backed militias are involved in the drug trade. The latter, who do not enjoy financial support from the army, use this to raise funds to purchase weaponry and pay their members.

Large parts of the population of Shan State live in precarious conditions: 41% of the inhabitants live in bamboo houses, while 25% live in wooden houses. Although 33% of the inhabitants reported electricity as their main source of light, there is a sizeable proportion (17%) who rely on candles as their primary light source. Interestingly, a large number of inhabitants use solar energy to power lights (27%).²²

Historical elements on Shan State

Shan State is the most diverse area of the country with a dazzling array of ethnic groups as well as a myriad of languages. Its history reflects its complexity.

While a majority of the Shan nowadays live in Shan State, historically their presence and influence stretched further afield. Indeed, Assam State, in India, has for origin a Shan kingdom, while in Chinland, the first record of an organised political structure was the Shan kingdom of Kalay. Further north, Hkamti used to host a Shan Kingdom, as did Wuntho. In Kachin State, there is a sizeable population of Shan. More telling of the influence of the Shan people outside Shan State is the founding of three historically famous cities, as Sai Aung Tun describes:

²² '2014 Myanmar Population and Housing Census'.

“In Myanmar history, the years from 1287 to 1531 are recognized as the period of Shan kings in Upper Myanmar. This period witnessed the successful establishment of the three historically famous cities of Pinya, Sagaing and Inwa (Ava) by the Shan kings. Inwa became a well-known capital recognized as the center of Myanmar political power by westerners...”²³

As this suggests the Shan people played an important part in the history of what is today Myanmar. Following the Moghul invasion by Kublai Khan and the sack of Bagan, the political vacuum was successfully filled by the ‘three Shan brothers’; burmanised Shan who built-up strong kingdoms that became the cradle of future Burmese kingdoms. The regular provision of skilled soldiers or food to successive Burmese kings also illustrates the key-role that the Shan played in Myanmar’s history.

Pre-colonial Shan States

The Shan founded several kingdoms scattered from Yunnan to India. These kingdoms were usually ruled by a *saohpa*—lord of the sky—also known as *sawbwa*. The Shan *saohpa* were hereditary rulers, who administered their territory according to their own will following a feudal system. In brief the different Shan States were composed of several *baan* (50-200 household), which in turn form an *aing*, which in turn formed a *mong* (or State). Economically, the Shan States were self-sufficient rural-agricultural systems which used a barter system, rather than money, as a medium of exchange. Administratively, at the *baan* level, the *pu kye* was the administrator (or head of the village), while at the *aing* level, the *pu hein* was in charge of the provincial administration. The *saohpa* was dependent on the local administrators, since without them he lacked the capacity to maintain peace, collect taxes and revenue or ensure the conscription of soldiers. The *saohpa* ruled his State from the *Haw* (or palace) with the advice of a council composed of elders, his heir-apparent, and other family members.

Complicating the history of the Shan States as well as the study of the way they work, is their diversity. The States varied in size and had each their particular history. It should also be noted that the Shan ethnic group is highly diverse. There is, in particular, a divide between Tai-Long (in modern Shan State) and the ‘burmanised Shan’ (in Sagaing Region, for example).

Before the arrival of the British, the Shan States were not united, with regular conflicts arising between them. According to Sai Aung Tun, these divisions can be ascribed to not only “the topography of Shan State [which] constituted a physical barrier which prevented the forging of unity and the creation of a greater state surpassing their *mong* in size and power”, but also the influence of powerful neighbours (Myanmar and China), whose kingdoms developed vassal relationships with some of the Shan States. The obligations and allegiance of these States to their patrons, prevented the creation of a supra-entity or long-term alliances among the Shan *saohpas*. This point leads to the need to consider the relations that the Shan States had with the Burmese Kingdoms prior to the arrival of the British.

Shan and Bamar relations were not antagonistic *per se*, even though episodes of conflict did arise. For example, under king Anawrahta (1014-1077), a series of garrisons were built along the Shan foothills to prevent any intrusion by Shan armies, suggesting animosity between the Shan and the Bamar. Despite this, there were ongoing contacts and alliances between Shan and Bamar kingdoms. As mentioned earlier, the ‘three Shan brothers’ created conditions for the emergence of a stronger Burmese kingdom. Bagan area was largely dependent on the trading city of Kyaukse, where Shan traders would sell their products and buy Bamar artefacts to take back to the hills. Marriage between Shan Princesses and Bamar Kings was common and part of the tributary relations between some Shan States and the Bamar Kingdoms. During the reign of King Bayinnaung (1551-1581), the Shan States stretching as far as Chiang Mai were conquered by the Bamar and became vassal States. Shwe Zin Maw describes this relationship:

“The chiefs, *sawbwās* and *myoṣas* of subordinate states had to come to the royal capital to pay homage to the king on the new-year day and at the beginning and end of the Buddhist Lent. At the ceremony, the subordinate chiefs submitted gold, silver, horses, elephants, etc. They also had to pay annual taxes to the king. In some cases, Shan *sawbwās* showed their loyalty by submitting voluntary services and supplying contingents in times of war and rebellion. In return, they got *sanad*, or letter of appointment from the king along with regalia, titles. They were also allowed to manage judicial and revenue administration without interference from the central

²³ Sai Aung Tun, *History of the Shan State from Its Origins to 1962* (Chiang Mai, Thailand: Silkworm Books, 2009).

government. The outstanding attitude of King Bayinnaung was his policy of non-interference in the rules and privileges of *sawbwa*.”²⁴

Under King Mindon (1853-1878), and particularly after the first Anglo-Burmese war and the introduction of reforms to deal with Shan *saohpa*, the relationship between the Shan States and the Burmese Kingdom became more confrontational. The Karenni invasions of the Shan-Karenni frontier area also weakened the ability of the Burmese Kingdom to respond to rebellions. King Thibaw, who was considered a weak king under the influence of his queen, did not manage to restore order in the relations between the Shan States and the Burmese Kingdom. In Shan South, he faced a rebellion by the Mon Nai *Saohpa* as, despite it being “the largest, wealthiest and the most powerful State of southern Shanland ... its capital had been the residence of king’s military representatives.”²⁵ The dethronement of Mon Nai *Saohpa* led to a greater rebellion known as the Limbin Confederacy, led by the Keng Tun *Saohpa*. The objective of the Confederacy was to replace King Thibaw with a more benevolent ruler (the Limbin prince). After the dethroning of the King Thibaw by the British, the Limbin Confederacy changed its objective to resisting the British invasion. A similar resistance movement emerged in Shan North. However, divisions among the Shan *saohpas* and the better military equipment of the British made this resistance short lived.

Shan State, the British annexation and the Japanese occupation

The chaotic situation in Shan State soon led the British to send a military expedition to pacify the area. The situation in Shan North was quickly resolved, but in the south, the Limbin Confederacy provided a more serious opposition. The British forces focused on capture of the Limbin prince and at the same time attempted to build positive relationships with the *saohpas* in the area to undermine support for the Confederacy. In 1887, the Limbin Prince surrendered to the British and was sent to India. While this ended the first phase of the pacification of Shan State, it did not completely end the rebellions and intra-state wars.

The question of the external border also posed problems. Although the British claimed possession of all tributary States under the influence of King Thibaw, the extent of this territory was unclear. Although each *saohpa* knew the borders of their own State, the borders had (and continued to) shift based on power relations and conflict. Additionally, some areas were neither under the influence of Myanmar kingdoms, nor another power—for example, the Wa States, which had paid tribute to the Hsenwi *Saohpa*, but were not tributary to Myanmar. Moreover these border areas brought the British into contact with China, French Indochina and Siam, making the area one with strong geopolitical interests, a situation that was, according to Sai Aung Tun, regarded by the Shan, “with amazements. They did not know why in 1892, for no good reason and with no respect of regard for the opinion of the Shan and the Lu people, Keng Hung was given to China and Keng Cheng was ceded to Siam.”²⁶ In the end, it took two years for the British to fully annex and pacify the Shan States and to settle the frontier with China, French Indochina and Siam. The British also adjusted some of the internal borders and attempted to rationalise the administrative areas of the Shan States, merging some smaller states into bigger ones.

The British left the Shan States under the control of the *saohpas*. At first the *saohpas* were allowed to rule as before, but in 1888 the Shan State Act placed them under the control of a superintendent and created a *sanad* setting terms for their rule. A major change came in 1922 with the constitution of the Federated Shan States. While the *saohpas* retained their autonomous rights (taxes, law and order, justice), the federation aimed to centralise resources in the departments of Public Works, Medical Administration, Forests, Education, Agriculture and the Police. The fact that this gave the Shan States an administrative and political system distinct from that in Burma Proper has had an ongoing impact.

This federation did not gain support from the *saohpas*, as Sai Aung Tun describes:

²⁴ Shwe Zin Maw, ‘The Uneasy Subordinate Alliance: The Relations between Myanmar and the Shan States in the Late 19th Century’ (International Conference on Burma/Myanmar Studies: Burma/Myanmar in Transition: Connectivity, Changes and Challenges, Chiang Mai, Thailand: Chiang Mai University, 2015).

²⁵ Sai Aung Tun, *History of the Shan State from Its Origins to 1962*.

²⁶ Sai Aung Tun.

“From its inauguration in October 1922, the federation was not popular among the Shan chiefs. The *Saohpas* felt that they had consented to give up too much power in the federation, and a strong sense of dissatisfaction prevailed among them. Some *Saohpas* of the large states who were anxious about their hereditary rights and status waited for an opportunity to submit a memorandum for the redress of their grievances and the restrictions imposed on them by the terms of the Federated Shan States.”²⁷

However, before their grievances found a receptive ear, either in Burma or in London, the Japanese occupation put an end to the federation. The new Burma, which proclaimed independence under the control of the Japanese in 1943, did not include the Shan States. The Japanese administered the area directly through the Shan States Administration Office, staffed solely with Japanese officers. Under the Japanese, Kengtung and Mong Pan States were ceded to Thailand, without formal opposition from the new Myanmar administration, but were returned following the surrender of Japan.

Panglong I, Panglong II and Panglong III

Panglong is a small city at the centre of Shan State, located in what is now Laikha Township. It is famous for being the place where, in 1947, Aung San, hero of independence, gathered with ethnic groups from the frontier areas in order to plan the constitution of the Union of Burma. However, the Shan *saohpas* had already organised a conference in 1946, under the patronage of the Laikha *Saohpa*. During the 1946 Panglong conference:

“For the first time the Shan chiefs met with other Frontier leaders and the leaders from Myanmar proper to discuss their future unity and freedom. For the first time also, the people’s representatives were treated equally with the *Saohpa* in political matters and in those shaping the destiny of the future Shan State.”²⁸

It was during the 1946 Panglong conference that the different people represented decided to hold another conference the following year as well as to meet annually in other ethnic minority areas such as Kayin, Kachin and Chin.

Prior to the famous 1947 Panglong conference, a Commission of Enquiry was set up under the London Agreement (January 1947) to sound out the different nationalities about the idea of a federation and to push forward Myanmar’s path toward independence. On February 12, 1947, the “Panglong *Pwe*” (or Panglong festival, for the conference included not only lectures but also exhibitions and shows), ended with the signing of an agreement whereby “the hill people, led by the Shan *Saohpa* and the leaders of other national minorities, unanimously voted to join the Myanmar leaders in their struggle for independence from the British.”²⁹

In the mind of the inhabitants of Myanmar today, the 1947 Panglong Agreement is a sacred document, which established ‘the spirit of the Union’. “Anyone who would attempt to violate the principles and the spirit of Panglong could be termed a criminal.”³⁰ It is in this context and remembering the significance of the 1947 Conference in popular memory that the XXIst Century Panglong Conference, organised under State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, should be understood.

Changing political structures

Following independence Myanmar’s political structure was significantly altered. However, under the 1947 Constitution, the newly created Shan State (and the Kachin and Kayah States) remained subject to the colonial-era Hill Tribes Regulation. This allowed the Shan elders and *saohpas* to continue to administer their areas according to their traditional methods under the oversight of a centrally appointed administrator. A new institution, the Shan State Council, included both the *saohpas* and popularly nominated representatives. It was invested with legislative, executive and financial powers. The government of Shan State was dependent on the Council and in charge of carrying out resolutions passed by the Council. Above the Council, the President (in consultation with the Council) was to nominate a minister as the head of Shan State government.

²⁷ Sai Aung Tun.

²⁸ Sai Aung Tun.

²⁹ Sai Aung Tun.

³⁰ Sai Aung Tun.

The creation of a Kachin Sub-State in the area of North Hsenwi Township deserves note. The importance of the large Kachin population in this area is reflected in the fact that they sent representatives to sign the 1947 Panglong Agreement. E.R. Leach highlighted the predominance of Kachin in this area:

“When the British took over, the Kachin chief of Mong Si had the standing of a *Myosa* and ruled over a population of some 12,000 persons including 100 Kachin, 20 Shan, 15 Palaung and 12 Chinese Villages. The domain was divided into several sub-territories each of which was ruled by a Kachin *Du-wa*, a relative of the *Myosa*. Under the British dispensation it was an enemy of Naw Hpa that came to the throne of North Hsenwi and the British refused to countenance the idea of Kachin chiefs ruling over Shans.”³¹

Kachin elders approached the Frontier Areas Administration in 1947 to request the creation of a Kachin Sub-State where Kachin customary law would be applied and Jinghpaw used as the official language, although it would remain under the suzerainty of the *saohpa*. They also asked for a popularly elected Kachin *Amat* (minister) to act as a representative for the Kachin people in the Frontier Areas Administration. In December 1947, Shan and Kachin agreed on the creation of a Kachin Sub-State:

“As Chairman of the Hsenwi-Mongmyit Kachin Chiefs’ Council, [the *Howa Duma*] spearheaded the push for Kachin areas in Hsenwi State to be recognized a Kachin “Sub-State”, given the crucial role Kachin fighters played in driving the Japanese out during WWII. A formal agreement cementing this designation was signed by Kachin and Shan leaders in December 1947, and endorsed by the powerful Hsenwi Sawbwa, Sao HomHpa.”³²

Despite some reservations from the British Assistant Resident of the Frontier Areas Administration, the *Saohpa* of North Hsenwi agreed to the plan and a Kachin Sub-State, with its headquarters in Kutkai, came into existence on July 6, 1948.

It was also in 1948 that Shan East was defined as a separate administrative area (previously it had been part of Shan South). This was the result of the need for a stronger administrative presence in this hard to reach area, which saw itself as only loosely connected to the rest of Shan State. Shan East is also a strategically important area, sharing borders with China, Laos and Thailand. Hence the need to introduce a proper civil administration and “programs promoting culture, the economy, education and health”.³³ The strategic importance of Shan East—and by extension of the whole Shan State—but also its size and the regular occurrence of armed conflicts, explains why Shan State remains the only area of the country shared between three military commands.

Martial Law, insurgencies, revision of the constitution and Ne Win’s coup d’état

The Kachin sub-state was short-lived. In 1949, in response to the administrative difficulties faced by the Shan State Council and a deteriorating security situation due to the proliferation of armed groups, the military took over the administration of Shan North in consultation with the Shan State government.

On one side, as noted by Sai Aung Tun:

“Shan *saohpas* were unable to adjust themselves to the administrative policy laid down by the Shan State government. They stuck to their traditional rights to which they have been accustomed for centuries. The government did not have much choice but to carry out the administrative centralization for all of the Shan States.”³⁴

This administrative centralisation was happening in the context of a political awakening that led to an intense struggle between pro-feudalists and anti-feudalists, mostly “equipped with the new ideology of socialism”.³⁵ This struggle led to a Pa-O revolt against the *saohpas*—and eventually to the transfer of power from the *saohpas* to the Shan State government.

On the other side, Shan State was disturbed by the emergence and rapid growth of insurgencies. These included the Red Flag and White Flag Communists, the People’s Volunteer Organisation and the Karen

³¹ Edmund Ronald Leach, *Political Systems of Highland Burma: A Study of Kachin Social Structure* (London School of Economics, 1964).

³² Lahpai Nang-Kai, ‘From Howa to Hukawng: A Migration Story’, *Kachinland News*, 23 May 2017.

³³ Sai Aung Tun.

³⁴ Sai Aung Tun.

³⁵ Sai Aung Tun.

National Defence Organisation, who took over Taunggyi for three months with the support of decorated WWII commander, Naw Seng—damaging the authority of both the Union government and the Shan State government. The presence of the Kuomintang in Shan State, and its growing influence also affected security conditions and contributed to a fear of invasion from Communist China.

The different difficulties faced by the Shan State government—and more generally the problems faced by all ethnic minorities in Myanmar—led to the emergence of a federalist movement, thirteen years after independence: “[the states’ representatives] believed that all the crises that had arisen from the weak constitution could be resolved only by establishing a truly federal system”.³⁶ An “All States Conference” was organised in Taunggyi in 1961 which paved the way for the organisation of a national conference, scheduled for March 1962: the All Nationals Conference on the Federal Proposal. It was during the second day of this conference that the Tatmadaw staged a *coup d’état*. While justifications for the move varied, the fact that it happened while discussions on federalism were ongoing suggests that the fear of secession by the minority ethnic states at least contributed to the decision.

The parliamentary government of Prime Minister U Nu was terminated and replaced by a Revolutionary Council, which took control of all domestic affairs. The Revolutionary Council nationalised all major industries, established a one-party political system under the military-backed Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) and initiated a period of international isolationism. The BSPP remained in power for the next two decades.

In Shan State, as in every state and region, ‘People’s Councils’ were established at the township, ward and village-tract levels. These ‘local organs of state power’, as they were described in the 1974 Constitution, were charged with implementing policies related to economic and social affairs, the administration of justice, the rule of law, promotion of minority cultures, preparation of annual budgets, rural and urban development, environmental protection and ‘other necessary works of public interest as may be prescribed by law’. Contrary to a common perception, the Shan State People’s Council was not composed solely of Bamar, but also included Shan, appointed by Ne Win because of their loyalty to the new regime.

Shan State armed-conflicts

Although it succeeded (until the late 1980s) in reining in popular discontent, the BSPP was unable to eliminate the armed groups. From independence to 1989, the ‘White Flag’ Burmese Communist Party was one of the most powerful armed groups, carrying out attacks in Kachin State, the Shweli River Valley, and the Kokant and Wa regions, as well as Shan North and gathering fighters from a range of ethnicities.³⁷ It benefitted from generous support from the Chinese and in turn became the primary source of material and strategic support for the ethnic rebellions that emerged in this period.³⁸

The first Shan armed group emerged in 1958 under the banner ‘Num Sik Han’. After undergoing several transformations during the 1960s, it merged with another Shan group to form the Shan State Army (SSA) in 1964.³⁹ In 1971, the Shan State Progressive Party was created as the SSA’s political wing.

Adding to the anarchic situation in Shan State in the 1960s and 1970s was the proliferation and increasing unruliness of government-sanctioned local militias. Created by Ne Win’s Revolutionary Council in 1963 to fight insurgents in remote areas, *Ka Kwe Ye* home guards, as they were called, were encouraged to expand and permitted to operate self-sufficiently. In the absence of funds from the central administration to support their continued operation, these armed units turned into vast drug and mineral trading enterprises run by quasi-warlords. Among the most powerful of these groups was the Kokant army led by Lo Hsing Han, a Myanmar native of Chinese ethnicity, who aided the Tatmadaw in a battle at the strategically important Kunlong Bridge and in turn was allowed to expand his lucrative opium business. While his relations with the Tatmadaw were not always good (at one point he refused an order to hand

³⁶ Sai Aung Tun.

³⁷ Sai Kam Mong, *Kokang and the Kachin in the Shan State, 1945-1960*.

³⁸ Yan Nyein Aye, *Endeavors of the Myanmar Armed Forces Government for National Reconsolidation* (U Aung Zaw, 2000).

³⁹ Sai Kam Mong, *Kokang and the Kachin in the Shan State, 1945-1960*.

over his arms and instead joined the SSA's insurgency),⁴⁰ Lo Hsing Han always maintained a relationship with the military government.

Another important historical figure in Shan State was Khun Sa. Khun Sa also started his career as a warlord by forming a *Ka Kwe Ye*, which supported the government in its fight against Shan insurgencies in exchange for land concessions and the right to grow opium. He gradually expanded his influence and power, building a powerful private army (the Maung Tai Army) and turning against the government. Khun Sa's importance is illustrated by his nomination as Chairman of the Shan State Restoration Council in December 1992, but even more by a mass rally organised by elders, monks and Shan laypeople where the crowd declared Shan State a sovereign and independent State with Khun Sa as President. However, he eventually made peace with the government. As Yan Nyein Aye reports: "Khun Sa, having made his own observations became increasingly convinced that not only were the Government's policies right, but that it was also implementing regional development programs in accordance with these policies with genuine will and sincerity."⁴¹ His position had also been weakened by desertion and conflict with the Wa. While thousands of the Maung Tai Army soldiers followed his lead, others decided to continue the fight. One of these break-away factions—the Shan United Revolutionary Army later became the Restoration Council of Shan State.

Like many of the armed groups based in the region, the SSA had ties with the Burmese Communist Party and enjoyed its military support. However, rising tensions between the groups' leadership ultimately drove the SSA to seek peace with the government. In September 1989, it concluded a ceasefire with the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), which had taken control the year before amid massive pro-democracy demonstrations. This deal secured for the SSA a territory called Shan State Special Region 3 within which they could move, conduct business and carry arms. A break-away faction of the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), operating in the Kanbeiktee region agreed a ceasefire at the same time.⁴² Another part of the KIA, the 4th Battalion was one of the few groups that persisted in its armed insurrection even after the breakup up the Burmese Communist Party in 1989. However, following two years of intense fighting, it also agreed to the SLORC's ceasefire terms. In return, the Kachin ethnic group was given legal status, an autonomous region (Shan State Special Region 5), development assistance and a number of business concessions.⁴³

For the better part of two decades following the breakup of the Burmese Communist Party and these ceasefire agreements most armed groups in Shan State lay dormant. The absence of open warfare did not, however, necessarily translate into regional prosperity. In fact, paddy cultivation proved unprofitable, leading some farmers to resort to growing opium poppies.

Today Shan State is a nexus for opium, heroin and amphetamine traffic. Security concerns remain high; in a country with a high number of armed groups, Shan State stands out as the area with the greatest number of militias—governmental or attached to EAOs.

⁴⁰ Bertil Lintner, 'State of Anarchy', *The Irrawaddy*, 8 December 2014.

⁴¹ Yan Nyein Aye, *Endeavors of the Myanmar Armed Forces Government for National Reconsolidation*.

⁴² Yan Nyein Aye.

⁴³ Yan Nyein Aye.

Appendix 2: Shan South

Shan South is, at present, the easiest part of Shan State to access. It is home to Shan State's capital – Taunggyi – and has historically been important (as is shown by the fact that the seats of the most influential *sawbmaw*s were in Shan South). For these reasons, this appendix provides a more detailed description of the development and the humanitarian situation in Shan South and aims to identify some specific entry points for engagement in this area by SDC.

While many of the issues discussed in the main text are common to the three areas of Shan State, Shan South shows some important differences and specificities relating to democratic practices and state-building, peace-building, displacement, drugs, agriculture, health, education, and infrastructure.

1. Building a Democratic and Peaceful Shan State

In Shan South, political parties, especially small ethnic parties, are weak both structurally and in terms of capacity. As a result, ethnic minority groups are underrepresented in both the State Government and State Parliament. Members of small ethnic groups residing in Shan South reported that political problems exist not only between Bamar politicians and the population of Shan State, but also between the majority Shan and ethnic minorities. Many ethnic politicians like the idea of establishing federal or decentralised structures down to the township level, believing that this would improve representation for smaller ethnic groups. SDC should consider providing technical assistance to political parties interested in exploring such approaches and to initiatives that are piloting the use of decentralised governance structures.

From a peace-building perspective, it should be remembered that Shan State has the highest number of EAOs of any state in Myanmar. However, Shan South has only two main EAOs, although there are also several militia groups. Although the RCSS has signed the NCA, there have continued to be skirmishes between the Tatmadaw and the RCSS. Observers have also reported human rights violations by both by the Tatmadaw and the RCSS.

A significant majority of ordinary citizens in Shan South do not know much about the peace process, although they wish to live peacefully. Furthermore, most civil society groups in Shan South are too weak to play effective role in educating, mobilising and representing the public in the peace process. This weakness has a particularly bad impact on the ability of women and youth to participate in the peace process, since they are often excluded from the formal procedures. Although, a target of 30% female participants was set for the Union Peace Conference, this remains an aspiration rather than a requirement and is rarely met. Moreover, female participants may find themselves side-lined and have difficulty being heard, further reducing the impact of female voices in the peace process.

At the local level, few women are involved in activities related to the peace process or to peace-building. Political involvement by women is also very limited (as is the case in the rest of Shan State). The same is true of youth. SDC should therefore make sure that these groups are included in political and peace-building activities at the local level, as a first step towards strengthening participation and ensuring that their voices can be heard at all levels.

2. Displacement and migration

Across all townships in Shan South displacement or migration for economic reasons is seen as more common than displacement related to armed conflict (figure 2). This perhaps reflects the more peaceful situation in Shan South compared to other parts of the State. Taunggyi Township has the highest proportion of respondents who identified the presence of displaced people in their area (figure 1), which may be due to the presence of the State capital and so the existence of better job opportunities.

Unsurprisingly, figure 2 shows, there is a strong correlation between the presence of persons displaced for economic reasons and job opportunities. Kalaw Township, Nyaungshwe Township, Pindaya Township, Pinlon Township and Ywagan Township which have strong agricultural and tourism sectors show greatest number of economic migrants.

The townships where displacement due to armed conflict was most common are those where EAOs are active and influential, notably Linkhae Township where the RCSS has a strong presence.

While less prevalent than in other parts of the State, displacement remains a major issue in Shan South. The particular impact of displacement on youth and women should be noted in this context. For youth, displacement can interrupt access to education, contributing to high levels of school drop-outs and low skill levels. For both women and youth, displacement also impacts ability to access healthcare, with knock-on effects for quality of life and livelihoods. Addressing these vulnerabilities through support for education and health facilities focusing on the particular needs of displaced persons would therefore be a possible entry point for work in Shan South by SDC.

Figure 1: Reported presence of displaced persons by Township

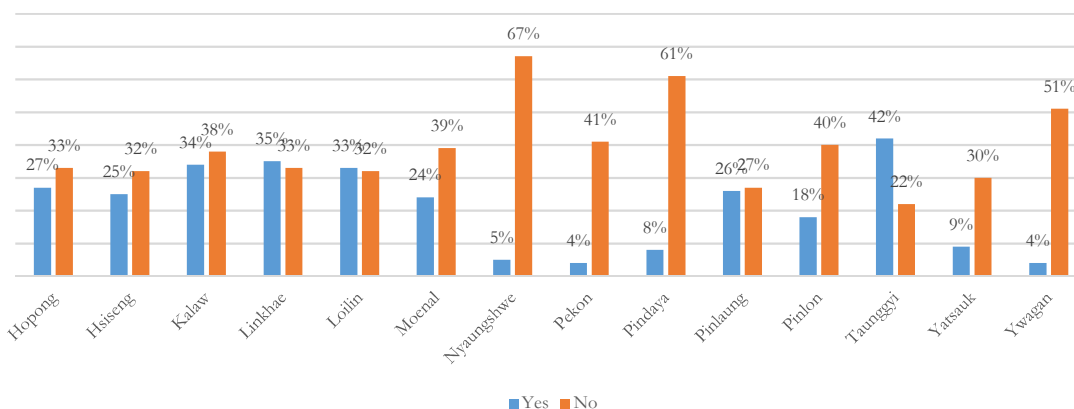
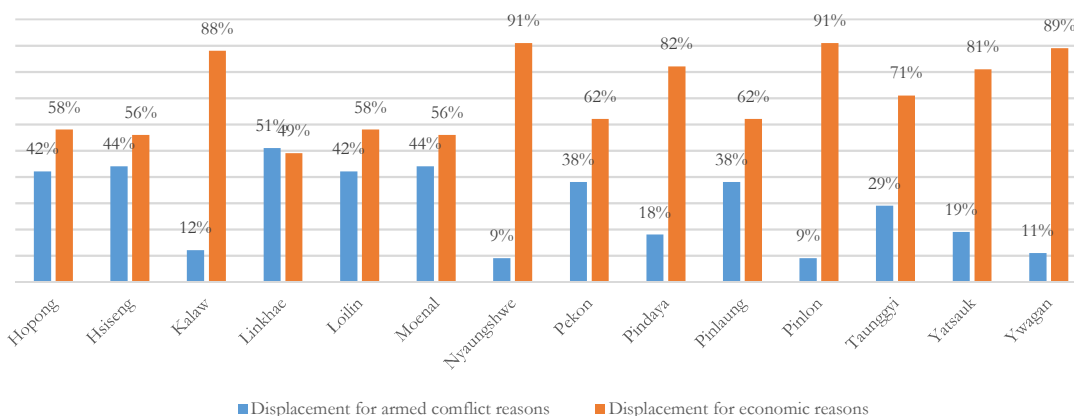


Figure 2: Reasons for displacement by Township



3. Drug problems

While levels of drug addiction in Shan South are lower than in Shan East, they remain high. As in other parts of Shan State there are a shortage of rehabilitation centres and reinsertion programmes for drug users.

In terms of drug production and trade, the situation around Pinlon Township is particularly worrying. Farmers in this area produce a large quantity of opium, with most of the population and the local law enforcement officers being aware of where opium is being grown and by whom. However, little has been done to prevent opium cultivation. Police officers are suspected of complicity and accepting bribes from poppy farmers to leave the majority of the crop untouched, although they destroy small areas for communication purposes. At the same time, there is little support (e.g. crop substitution programmes) for farmers interested in moving away from opium cultivation.

4. Agriculture

Shan South has both the most developed agricultural sector in the State and the best connections to other parts of the country. Products from Shan South are sent throughout the country, especially to the economic capital, Yangon. The construction of a road linking the northern township of Shan South to

Muse in Shan North and the modernisation of the Taunggyi-Kengtung road have also given farmers in Shan South farmers access to markets in China and Thailand.

Some townships (in particular Ywagan, Pindaya and Kalaw) have seen the burgeoning of social-enterprises, promoting sustainable production. These initiatives are often supported by IDHAAs. A good example of this model is 'Plan Bee' an initiative to produce sustainable honey in Pindaya Township.

However, despite the comparative advantages Shan South enjoys in terms of agriculture, numerous challenges remain. Lack machinery and tools to increase their production and thus their income was identified as a major difficulty for farmers in Shan South (figure 3). Agriculture in Shan South (as in other part of the country) is labour-intensive, while a sizeable proportion of the population do not own land, but are day-labourers. This limits the ability to implement change, as well as putting such labourers in a precarious position with regard to employment and income. Even those who do own their own land, often lack training in business management and the capacity to optimise their use of resources. This is true even of social-enterprises and local businesses promoting organic farming with the support of IDHAAs. However, improving and promoting the development of such business models would help to improve the quality of products from Shan South as well as the revenue of farmers. SDC should therefore support farmers in Shan South to develop such business models by providing training and expertise as well as encouraging collective organisation. Such measures should pay particular attention to the role of women and encourage the development of women-led collectives.

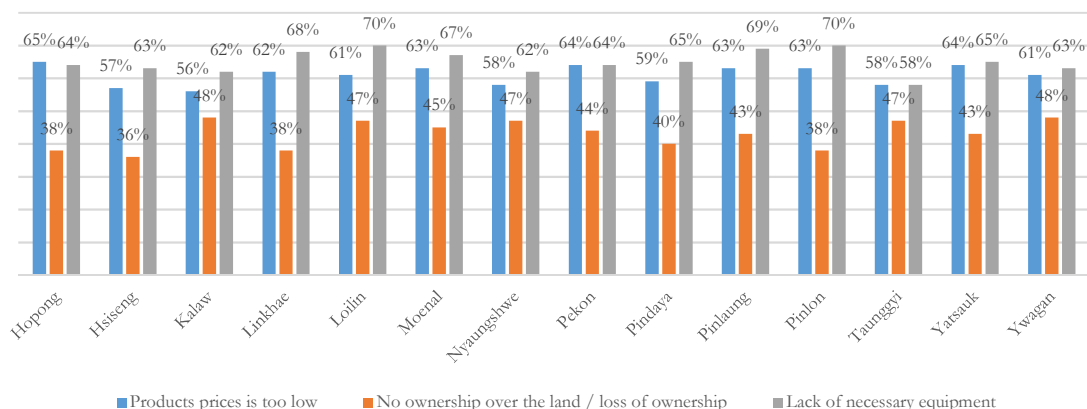
The use of pesticides provides an instructive case study for the problems and impact of agricultural issues. In an effort to improve yields, farmers use pesticides extensively. In doing so they pay little attention to the state of the soil and the impact of the pesticides. They rarely use adequate protection while spraying with pesticides, which can cause health problems. The overuse of pesticides also has an impact on food safety, not only for inhabitants of Shan South, but also for all those who consume products from Shan South.

Although infrastructure in Shan South is more developed than in other parts of Shan State, there is still a need for improvement, especially with regard to irrigation. There is a particular need to upgrade the existing road infrastructures and bridges to ensure that they are accessible throughout the year. SDC should support efforts related to improving irrigation and transport infrastructure, liaising with local communities to identify priorities and collaborating with relevant State agencies.

Finally, interviews in Shan South highlighted the need to develop the capacity to process raw materials within Shan State, both by improving existing processing capacities and through the establishment of new companies to carry out these processes. Such processing plants would contribute to developing the economy of Shan State and add value to exports, improving revenues and enabling farmers to export to more distant markets. In this context, interviewees also highlighted seasonal variations in farmers' work and income. The creation of factories processing raw outputs, would provide an alternative source of employment and income at such times and so contribute to improving living standards. The importance of such alternative sources of income and of measures to reduce the vulnerability of farmers to low prices during harvest seasons and price fluctuations is shown by the extent to which the price they receive for products was identified as one of the major difficulties faced by farmers in Shan South (figure 3).

As in other areas of Shan State, there is a clear division of labour between men and women in the agricultural sector in Shan South. Efforts to develop the processing of crops should take into consideration these differences and pay particular attention to the desirability of establishing processes which would promote the economic independence of women. This may be particularly important since women are often unable to own land and so dependent on male relatives when engaged directly in agriculture.

Figure 3: Opinions on the major difficulties faced by farmers in Shan South by Township



4. Health and education

Taunggyi houses both a university as well as state-level health facilities. This should give residents in Shan South an advantage over those in Shan East and North in terms of access to education and healthcare. However, it is clear from the responses collected in this research that significant problems persist in both sectors.

As in other parts of the State, physical infrastructure for the health sector seems to be in place, with all respondents in Shan South reporting access to either a government clinic or a private clinic. For most respondents, the clinic or hospital was located less than 30 minutes from their home (figure 4). However, significant discrepancies exist between townships. As might be expected, the predominantly urban residents in Taunggyi Township reported rapid access to clinics or hospitals with 92% saying that it would take less than 30 minutes' travel. At the other extreme, only 62% of respondents in Pekon Township reported travel times under 30 minutes to access a clinic or hospital.

The picture is rather different when access to Ethnic Health Organisation clinics is considered (figure 5). While the lack of such clinics in areas without significant ethnic minority populations might be expected, it is surprising to see the low levels of access reported across the State, including in areas such as Kalaw Township, which have large and well organised minorities. Figure 6 suggests a correlation between the presence of an EAO in an area and the presence of an Ethnic Health Organisation clinic; for instance, in Linkhae Township where the RCSS has a strong presence, almost half the respondents have access to such a clinic.

Aside from the question of access to Ethnic Health Organisation clinics, the availability of health workers emerges as the major issue for the health sector in Shan South (as, indeed, for other parts of the State). Lack of personnel and the need for better qualified and more specialised personnel were frequently identified by respondents (particularly female respondents) as priorities for the health sector. Despite the presence of the general hospital in Taunggyi, which does offer specialised services, it is clear that access to such services poses a problem. It is crucial not only to improve the training of all health workers, but also to increase the number of specialists and their dispersal throughout the area, so that access to specialist services does not require travel to the State capital. IDHAAs should therefore prioritise developing, supporting and promoting trainings and scholarships for doctors, but should ensure that these include guarantees that graduates of the programmes will return to their communities so as to strengthen the provision of health sector at the local level.

Female respondents were more likely than male respondents to mention the lack of personnel, perhaps reflecting a particular shortage of personnel trained or specialising in women's health issues. Women were also more likely to mention the general hygiene of the hospital/clinic as a problem than men. Such responses show that it would be important to engage women in discussions on the measures needed to improve healthcare in general, as well as seeking input on the specific areas relating to women's health issues that need attention.

As in other parts of Shan State access to medication (availability and costs) was noted as a major concern. Here again there are significant differences between townships. For example 38% of the respondents

from Kalaw Township reported a shortage of medication in their clinic or health centre, while 52% of respondents from Linkhae Township noted this as an issue. One element here may be the accessibility of the areas, suggesting that efforts to improve access to medication should prioritise harder to reach areas. As in the case of other areas in Shan State, in Shan South clinics and hospitals often lack necessary medication to treat some diseases; while over-the-counter medication for flu and minor illnesses is readily available, access to medication for more serious diseases poses greater difficulties and has cost implications which may make medication inaccessible in practice to some sections of the population.

Figure 4: Travel time to the nearest clinic by Township

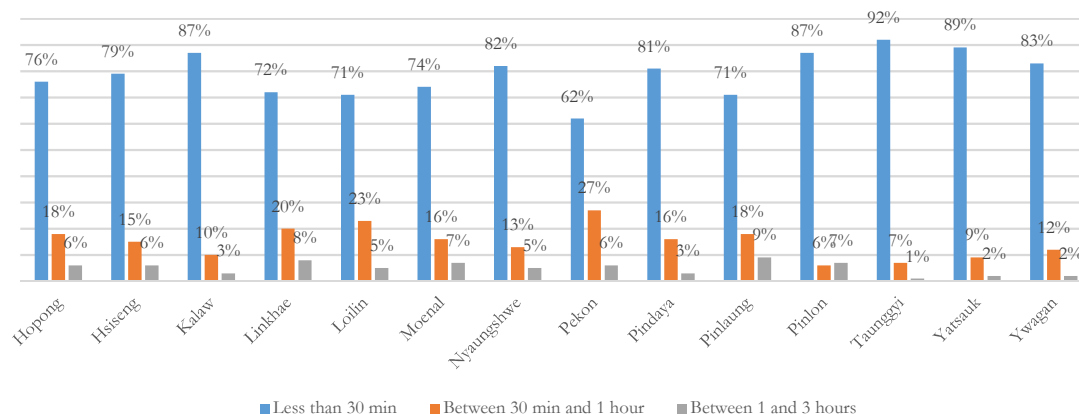


Figure 5: Access to an Ethnic Health Organisation clinic by Township

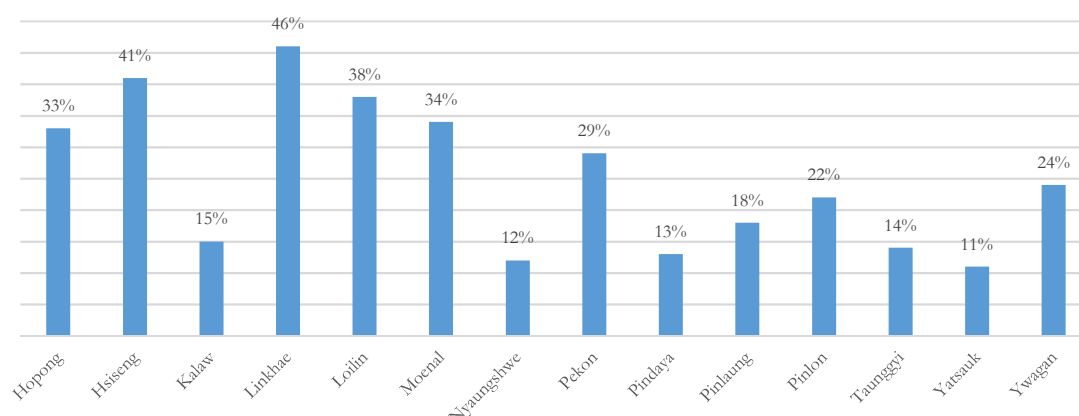
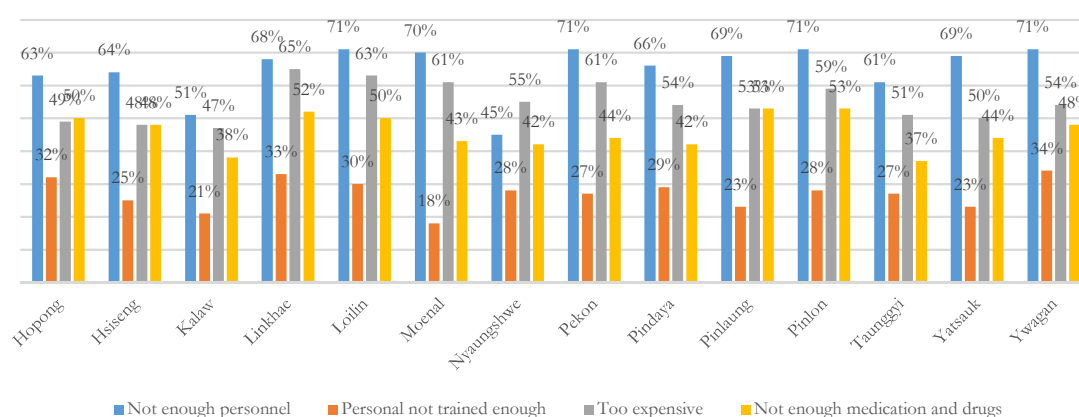


Figure 6: Opinions on the main issues of clinics and health centres in Shan South by Township



5. Inter-Communal Relations

In most respects the situation for particular groups or sections of the population, including women and youth, in Shan South resembles that in other part of the State. However, it is worth briefly considering the dynamics of relations between some ethnic groups.

In the area surrounding Inle Lake and Taunggyi and in the Pa'O SAZ there are tensions between the Pa'O and other ethnic groups. The large Pa'O presence in these areas has led other groups to accuse the Pa'O of trying to take over and, in practice, extend their SAZ to include the areas around Taunggyi and Inle Lake. The relative prosperity of these areas and the profits to be made from the tourist trade add to the animosity involved in these claims. In Taunggyi, the tensions are particularly with the Shan, who perceive themselves as the natural inhabitants of the area and have a particular reluctance to cede control of the capital of Shan State. In Nyaungshwe Township and the area around Inle Lake, there are tensions with the Intha, who have increasingly negative feelings toward the Pa'O.

Within the Pa'O SAZ, non-Pa'O groups have complained of experiencing discrimination at the hands of the Pa'O. Some have also criticised the institutions involved in administering the SAZ. While the picture is not straightforward, this suggests a particular need to monitor the situation of the ethnic minorities in Pa'O majority areas.

In the Danu SAZ the situation is rather different, with the Danu themselves feeling abandoned by the government and authorities. Initially the Danu requested a larger SAZ, which was not granted. Today, the concern is that trade in the highly agricultural areas that form the Danu SAZ is being taken over by non-Danu people from Taunggyi or other areas, with the result that the Danu are being left behind in their own SAZ.

In the area around Pekon there is a sizeable Kayan community. At present ethnic tensions in this area are not high. However, the KNPP are calling for the creation of a Kayan SAZ covering Pekon Township and part of Kayah State. Such calls in themselves and any moves to create this putative Kayan SAZ have the potential to stoke tensions. Developments in this area and the evolution of Kayan aspiration should therefore be carefully monitored.

Similarly (and unsurprisingly given general attitudes in Myanmar) the situation of the Muslims in all parts of Shan South is concerning. As elsewhere in Myanmar, Muslims are particularly likely to suffer discrimination and exclusion, with a resulting impact on their livelihoods. In Shan South, the rights of the Muslim community are not respected, with some areas implementing anti-Muslim policies such as forbidding local inhabitants from selling their land to Muslims.

Appendix 3: Description of the sample (tables and figures)

Table a: Distribution of sample by Township

State	District	Township	Respondents	% total
Shan East	Kengtung	Kengtung	172	7%
		Minekat	53	2%
		Mongpyin	55	2%
	Tachileik	Minephyat	60	3%
		Tachileik	90	4%
		Tarlay	59	3%
Shan North	Lashio	Lashio	229	10%
	Muse	Kutkai	81	4%
		Muse	54	2%
		Namkhan	83	4%
Shan South	Linkhae	Linkhae	52	2%
		Moenal	51	2%
	Loilin	Loilin	56	2%
		Pinlon	53	2%
	Taunggyi	Hopong	60	3%
		Hsiseng	108	5%
		Kalaw	110	5%
		Nyaungshwe	173	7%
		Pekon	66	3%
		Pindaya	86	4%
		Pinlaung	83	4%
		Taunggyi	301	13%
		Yatsauk	119	5%
		Ywagan	56	2%
Total			2310	100%

Figure a: Distribution of sample by Gender and Age

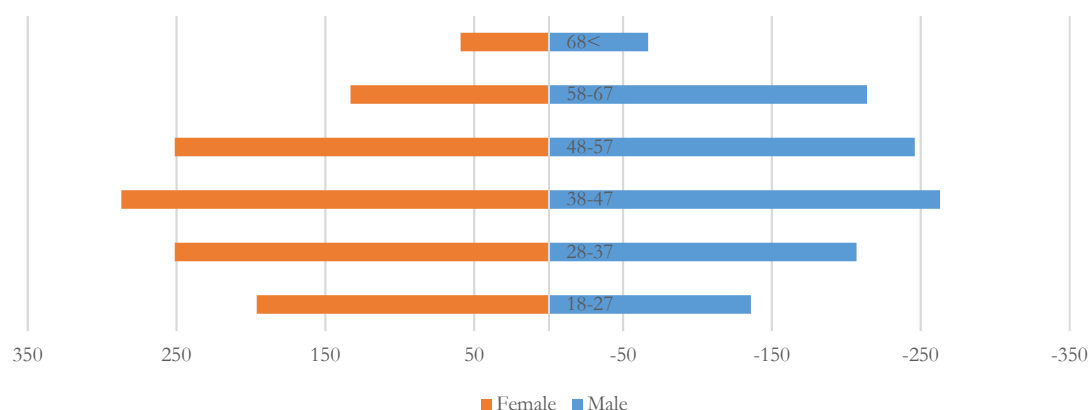


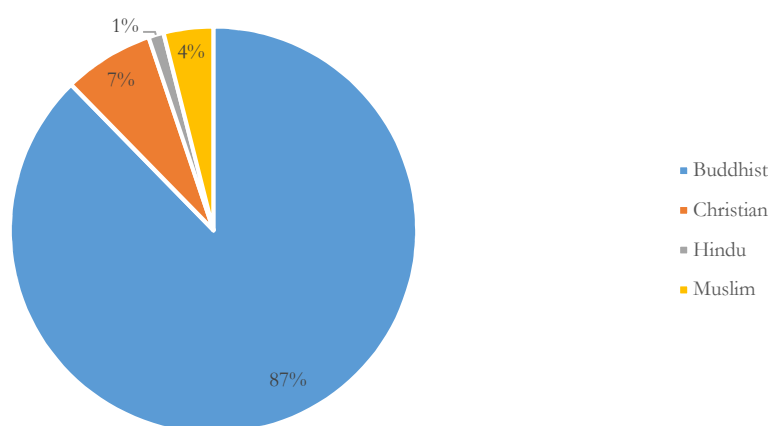
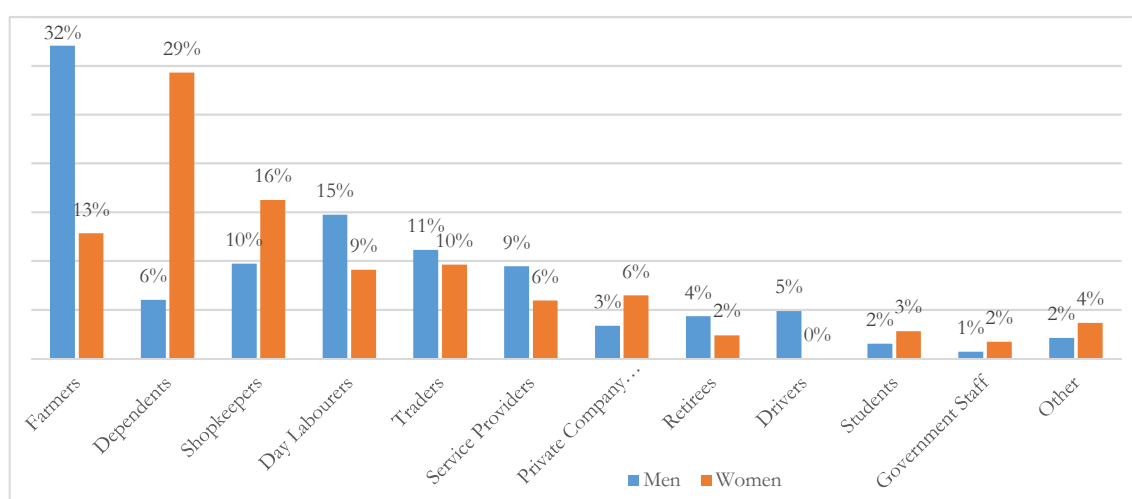
Table b: Distribution of the sample by District, Gender and Age

	18-27	28-37	38-47	48-57	58-67	68<	Total
Kengtung	26	39	51	76	64	24	280
Male	7	15	21	44	40	9	136
Female	19	24	30	32	24	15	144
Lashio	63	40	51	41	24	10	229

Male	22	14	17	17	16	4	90
Female	41	26	34	24	8	6	139
Linkhae	12	15	20	31	20	5	103
Male	3	4	6	12	9	4	38
Female	9	11	14	19	11	1	65
Loilin	10	9	25	25	27	13	109
Male	6	5	16	19	21	11	78
Female	4	4	9	6	6	2	31
Muse	41	62	56	32	19	8	218
Male	21	36	23	22	17	5	124
Female	20	26	33	10	2	3	94
Tachileik	27	43	53	47	31	8	209
Male	7	16	19	18	14	4	78
Female	20	27	34	29	17	4	131
Taunggyi	153	250	294	245	162	58	1162
Male	70	117	161	114	97	30	589
Female	83	133	133	131	65	28	573
Total	332	458	550	497	347	126	2310

Table c: Distribution of the sample by Ethnicity

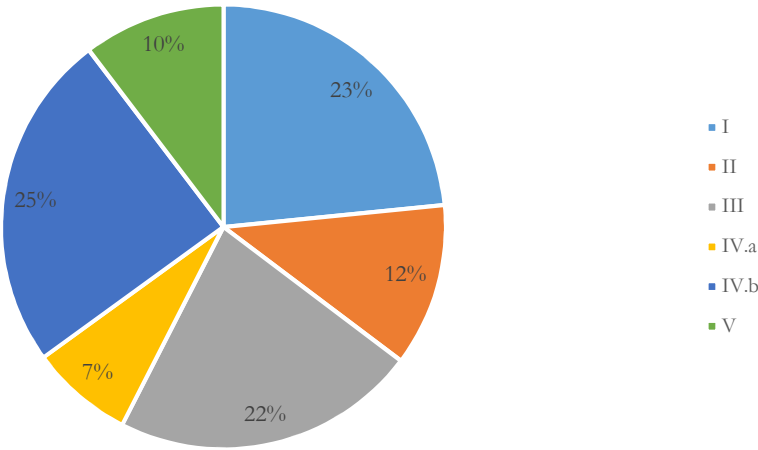
Ethnicity	# respondents	% total	Ethnicity	# respondents	% total
Shan	755	33%	Taungyoe	43	2%
Bamar	361	16%	Gurkha	34	1%
Pa-O	350	15%	Kokant	32	1%
Danu	159	7%	Lahu	30	1%
Intha	104	5%	Mixed-blood	27	1%
Kachin	97	4%	Indian	21	1%
Muslim	83	4%	Other 'TYT'	16	1%
Kayah	57	2%	Lishaw	15	1%
Ta'ang/Palaung	54	2%	Monewon	12	1%
Chinese	50	2%	Kolone Lishaw	10	0%

Figure b: Distribution of the sample by Religion**Figure c: Distribution of the sample by Profession and Gender****Table d: Occupational groupings**

Income Ranking	Type of Income	Occupations participants described by	Categories
I	No income	Unemployed, students, housewives, retirees	Dependents
II	Irregular income depending on job opportunities	Casual workers	Day labourers
III	Irregular income depending on crop/livestock yield	Farmers, plantation workers, fishermen	Farmers
IV.a	Regular income	Employees in private and public offices	Salaried employees
IV.b	Income depending on customer sales (low)	Owners of a variety of shops and kiosks	Shop-keepers

V	Income depending on customer sales (higher)	Traders in goods and services	Traders
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Figure d: Distribution of the sample by Occupational Grouping



Appendix 4: Questionnaires

- 1) How would you assess your current living conditions?
 - Very Good
 - Good
 - Fair
 - Poor
 - Very Poor
 - Do not know

- 2) How do you evaluate your current living conditions compared to a year ago?
 - Improved
 - Unchanged
 - Deteriorated
 - Do not know

- 3) How long have you been living in the place where you are currently living? (in years)
 - Between 1 and 10 years
 - Between 11 and 20 years
 - Between 21 and 30 years
 - Between 31 and 40 years
 - Between 41 and 50 years
 - Between 51 and 60 years
 - More than 60 years

- 4) Are you currently displaced?
 - Yes
 - No

- 4.A) Have you ever been displaced? (Currently or in the past)
 - Yes
 - No

- 4.B) Do you have friends and families who are currently displaced?
 - Yes
 - No

- 5) What was the main reason for you to become an IDP?
 - Displacement for armed conflict reasons
 - Displacement for economic reasons
 - Displacement due to ethnic tensions
 - Displacement due to religious tensions

- 5.A) If you are currently or were displaced in the past, where did you go?
 - 5.A.i) Displacement for armed conflict reasons
 - I have been displaced to another country (e.g. Thailand)
 - I went to an IDP camp in Shan State
 - I was displaced within Shan State, but did not go to an IDP camp
 - I have been displaced elsewhere

 - 5.A.ii) Displacement for economic reasons
 - I have been displaced to another country (e.g. Thailand)
 - I went to an IDP camp in Shan State

I was displaced within Shan State, but did not go to an IDP camp
I have been displaced elsewhere

5.A.iii) Displacement due to ethnic tensions

I have been displaced to another country (e.g. Thailand)
I went to an IDP camp in Shan State
I was displaced within Shan State, but did not go to an IDP camp
I have been displaced elsewhere

5.A.iv) Displacement due to religious tensions

I have been displaced to another country (e.g. Thailand)
I went to an IDP camp in Shan State
I was displaced within Shan State, but did not go to an IDP camp
I have been displaced elsewhere

6) If you are currently displaced, since how long?

Less than 6 months
Between 6 months and 1 year
Between 1 year and 3 years
More than 3 years

7) In the area you are currently living in, are there any displaced people?

Yes
No
Do not know

8) What is the main shock or difficulty that you faced during the past year? (Select one answer only)

Security issues
Natural disaster
Health problems
Education shortage
Food shortage
No issue
Others: ...

9) What is the most important challenge in the place you are currently living? (Select one answer only)

Security issues
Natural disaster
Health problems
Education shortage
Food shortage
No issue
Others: ...

10) Do you think your living conditions will improve significant in the near future?

Yes
No
Do not know

11) How would you describe the political situation in Shan State today compared to the political situation one year ago (prior to the 2015 election)? (Select one answer only.)

Improved

The same
Worse
Do not know

12) How would you describe your current access to food?

Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
Very poor
Do not know

13) What do you think of your access to food compared to a year ago?

Improved
Unchanged
Deteriorated
Do not know

14) In the past four weeks, did you worry that your household would not have enough food?

Yes
No

15) In the past four weeks, were you or any household member not able to eat the kinds of foods you preferred because of a lack of resources?

Often
Sometimes
Rarely
Not at all

16) Do you think that you have a problem related to nutrition?

Yes
No
Do not know

17) In your village, is the diet pattern between women and men different?

Yes
No
Do not know

18) In your village, is the diet pattern between adult and children different?

Yes
No
Do not know

19) Do you have any knowledge on food and nutrition (from training)?

Yes
No

Shan State Needs Assessment

20) For how many months did you breastfed your children?

- 12 months
- 12-24 months
- Over 24 months
- Not at all
- I have no baby

21) Do you have any knowledge on breastfeeding?

- Yes
- No

22) What is the main source of the food you eat? (Multiple answers possible)

- From Government
- From humanitarian partners
- From local well-wishers
- Own production
- Borrow, credit, advance
- Exchange work for food, gifts
- Others: ...

23) Do you receive a food ration?

- Yes
- No

24) If yes, do you sell a part of your food ration to buy other food items?

- Yes
- No
- NR

25) If yes, what do you buy with it?

- Meat and fish
- Clothing
- Drugs
- NR

26) Do you think women in Shan State encounter more serious humanitarian problems than men?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

27) Do you have access to latrines?

- Yes
- No

28) Do you have access to safe drinking water?

- Yes
- No

29) Where do you access drinking water?

Artesian well
Pumping well
Pond
Buy the purified drinking water
Public pipeline
River

30) Do animals live in or near the household?

Yes
No

31) Do you wash your hands? (Yes, before preparing food, yes, before feeding children, after handling animals, after handling pesticide, after using the latrine)

Yes
No

32) Do you have access to soap?

Yes
No

33) Do you have access to clinic/hospital?

Yes
No

34) Which type of clinic or hospital do you have access to? (Multiple choice)

Government Clinics/Hospitals
Private Clinic
Ethnic Health Organization Clinic
Others: ...
I do not have access to any clinic/hospital

35) What are the main issues in the clinic/hospital you go the most to? (Multiple answers possible)

Not enough personnel
Personal not trained enough
Communication barriers (language problems)
General hygiene of the place
Discrimination toward patient from a minority group
Too expensive
Not enough medication and drugs
I do not have access to any clinic/hospital

36) Where do you usually go if you are sick?

Traditional healer
Government nurses
Health assistant
Doctors
Health workers from ethnic health organizations (such as Backpack health worker team, Burma Medical Association or Shan Health Development Foundation)
Others: ...

37) Do you have trained volunteer health workers such as village health workers and auxiliary midwives in your village?

Yes

No

38) Is there regular immunization program?

Yes

No

39) Can newly born children easily get birth certificate from government?

Yes

No

40) What is the easiest way to reach the closest clinic or hospital?

By public transportation (minibus, bus)

With my own car

By motorcycle

By bicycle

By foot

41) How long does it take to get to the clinic or hospital from your home?

Less than 30 min

Between 30 min and 1 hour

Between 1 and 3 hours

Between 3 and 6 hours

Between 6 and 12 hours

More than 12 hours

42) Outside any clinic/hospital/dispensaries, how easy is it for you to have access to medication?

42.i) Common Cold and Flu

Very easy

Easy

Neither easy nor difficult

Difficult

Very difficult

I do not have access to medication/drugs outside clinic/hospital/dispensaries

42.ii) Diabetes and High Blood Pressure

Very easy

Easy

Neither easy nor difficult

Difficult

Very difficult

I do not have access to medication/drugs outside clinic/hospital/dispensaries

42.iii) Malaria and HIV/AIDS

Very easy

Easy

Neither easy nor difficult

Difficult

Very difficult

I do not have access to medication/drugs outside clinic/hospital/dispensaries

42.iv) Heart Disease and Cancer

Very easy

Easy

Neither easy nor difficult

Difficult

Very difficult

I do not have access to medication/drugs outside clinic/hospital/dispensaries

43) Are there enough health professionals in the location that you live?

Yes

No

44) When you are sick, how long do you need to wait before being seen by a health professional?

Less than a day

1-3 days

3-7 days

More than one week

45) How long do you need to wait to have access to hospital when needed?

Easily access whenever needed

1-3 days

4-5 days

More than 5 days

Do not know

46) Compared to a year ago, healthcare facilities in your area are:

A lot better

A bit better

The same

A bit worse

A lot worse

Do not know

47) Do you think all people living in Shan State deserve equal access to healthcare?

Definitely

Mostly

Somewhat

No

Do not know

48) Does the healthcare service in your town/village give a special attention to maternity and childcare?

Yes

No

Do not know

49) Can the medical facility in your town/village effectively treat major diseases like Malaria and HIV/AIDS?

Yes

No

Do not know

50) Do people from your town/village receive medical services from international or local NGOs?

Yes
No
Do not know

51) What are the main issues in the clinic/hospital you go the most to? (Multiple answer possible)

Not enough personnel
Personal not trained enough
Communication barriers (language problems)
General hygiene of the place
Discrimination toward patient from a minority group
Too expensive
Not enough medication and drugs
I do not have access to any clinic/hospital

52) For which reasons would you not go to see a health professional in case of a sickness? (Multiple answers possible)

52.A) General Physicians/Nurses

I cannot afford to take time off work
The health professional is too far away
It is too costly to go to see the health professional (transportation)
The service of the health professional is too expensive
I doubt the efficiency of the service
I will definitely go see doctor no matter what
Others: ...

52.B) Specialists

I cannot afford to take time off work
The health professional is too far away
It is too costly to go to see the health professional (transportation)
The service of the health professional is too expensive
I doubt the efficiency of the service
I will definitely go see doctor no matter what
Others: ...

53) Where is located the closest midwife in your area?

In my village/ward
In another village within my village tract
In another village tract within my township
In another township
In a neighboring country
Do not know

54) Where do women in your area usually give birth?

In their house, unattended
In their house with the presence of a midwife/health worker
In the local clinic (or) in a hospital
Others: ...

55) What is your main source of income today? (Select one answer only)

Agriculture
Trade/Business
Fishing
Artisan

Remittance
Regular salary (Government service)
Regular salary (Private service)
Daily wages
Assistance from Government/NGOs
Others: ...

56) How do you assess your income?

Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
Very poor
No income
Do not know

57) How do you evaluate your current income compared to a year ago?

Improved
Unchanged
Deteriorated
Do not know

58) How do you think your income will increase in the coming years?

Improve
Not change
Deteriorate
Do not know

59) Do you have some cash or other savings?

Yes
No

60) Do you have loans?

Yes
No

61) If you have a loan, from which of the following sources do you take loans? (Multiple answers possible)

Banks
Family members
Lenders from the village/ward
Others: ...

62) If you have a loan, what is the purpose of the loan? You can choose more than one answer.

To pay for my studies or my children/family studies
To have healthcare or to help family to have healthcare
To buy food
Investment in equipment for my work

Investment in inputs/raw materials for my work
Investment in infrastructure related to my work (office space, land ...)
To leave the place where I am currently living and work elsewhere
To pay for a previous loan
Others (Please specify): ...

63) If you have a loan, do you face difficulties in paying it back?

Yes
No

64) Over the last year, your access to loans has:

Increased
Remained the same
Decreased
Do not know

65) What is your main expenditure? (Select one answer only.)

Food
Health
Education
Agricultural inputs
Investment in economics
Others: ...

66) Do women face more difficulties than men in making a living?

Yes
No
Do not know

67) Do you have access to market information for your products?

Yes
No
Do not know

68) How easily can farmers access different markets to sell their goods?

68.A) Local market (village tract, town, township)

Very easily
Easily
Neither easily nor with difficulty
With some difficulty
With a great difficulty

68.B) Market in Shan State (outside their township but in Shan State)

Very easily
Easily
Neither easily nor with difficulty
With some difficulty
With a great difficulty

68.C) Market in Myanmar (outside Shan State)

Very easily
Easily

Neither easily nor with difficulty
With some difficulty
With a great difficulty

68.D) International market

Very easily
Easily
Neither easily nor with difficulty
With some difficulty
With a great difficulty

69) Can people obtain raw materials for their businesses easily?

Yes
No
Do not know

70) What are the main issues faced by farmers/people who grow vegetables or raise animals in your area? (Multiple answers possible)

Climate change (rain, drought, seasons change)
No access to market to sell the products
No customer in the market to buy the products
Prices of products are too low
Inputs (e.g. seeds) are too expensive
No access to quality inputs
No protection in their workplace (work accident)
No ownership over the land/loss of ownership
Difficult to reach (physically) where the land is (e.g. because no roads)
Unsafe to reach the land (conflict)
Lack of necessary equipment
Lack of knowledge on sustainable and modern agricultural practices

71) How many hours of electricity do you have per day?

24 hours electricity
Between 13 and 23 hours
Between 3 and 7 hours
Between 8 and 12 hours
Less than 2 hours
No electricity
NR

72) How do you evaluate your access to electricity compared to a year ago?

Improved
Deteriorated
Unchanged

73) What do you think of the roads in your region?

Very good
Good
Fair
Poor
Very poor
Do not know

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74) Is there an easy way to reach the services (market, school, health service, etc.)?

Yes

No

Do not know

75) Does the infrastructure in your region meet the needs of disabled people?

Yes

No

Do not know

76) What is the change you would like to see in your ward/village?

School

Road

Public transport

A market near

A cooperative for women

Kindergarten

Health service

Electricity

Water

Others: ...

77) Are there schools in your town/village?

Yes

No

78) If there is a school, what levels of schools are there?

Only Primary School

Primary and Middle Schools

Middle School

High School

NR

79) If there is no school, how far is the nearest school from your home?

Less than 1 mile

Less than 5 miles

More than 5 miles

NR

80) Is the school safe to access?

Yes

No

I have no children

81) Do you send your children to school?

Yes

More than 3 times a week

No

NR

82) If yes, do you send all your children to school?

- Yes
- No
- NR

83) How do you assess the current quality of education services in your township compared to a year ago?

- Improved
- Remained the same
- Deteriorated
- I do not know

84) If it has improved, for which main reason? (Select one answer only.)

- Costs reduced
- More teachers
- Better infrastructure (more classrooms, toilets)
- Better teaching materials
- Others: ...
- NR

85) If it has deteriorated, for which main reason? (Select one answer only.)

- Costs increased
- Less teachers
- Poorer infrastructure (classrooms, toilets)
- Reduced teaching materials
- Others: ...
- NR

86) Have you ever participated in a vocational training?

- Yes
- No

87) If yes, which kind of vocational training did you attend? (NA = Have not attended.)

- Agriculture
- Sewing
- Food processing
- Making soap
- Others: ...
- NA

88) If yes, who provided the training?

- Government
- EAG
- CSOs/CBOs
- INGOs

89) How useful was the vocational training for your work/improving your standard of living?

- Useful
- Not useful

90) If no, what prevented you from attending a vocational training?

- No vocational trainings have been organized in my area
- The topic of the training was not of my interest
- It costs too much to reach the training area (transportation)
- The training entrance fee was too high
- I did not trust the provider
- It was too dangerous to reach the place
- I had no time to attend training

91) Do you think the place where you live is safe?

- Yes
- No

92) Your safety situation over the last year has:

- Improved
- Remained the same
- Deteriorated
- I do not know

93) If it has improved, what is the main reason for the improvement? (Multiple answers possible.)

- Ceasefire agreement
- Democratic reforms
- Improved performance of police officers
- Improved performance of the State government

94) If it has deteriorated, what is the main reason for the deterioration?

- No ceasefire agreement
- Ineffective performance of police officers
- Ineffective performance of the State government
- Do not know

95) What should be prioritized to improve the safety situation in the area you are living in? (Select one answer only.)

- Increase the number of police
- Awareness session that related to Laws
- Implement law enforcement systematically
- Need for more community actions by improved watchfulness
- Need for more community actions by introduction of safety volunteer groups
- Others: ...
- I do not know

96) How has your sense of safety changed since the election of the new government in 2015?

- I feel more safe
- I feel no difference in safety levels
- I feel less safe
- I do not know

97) Is sexual gender based violence a problem in your area?

- Yes
- No
- I do not know

98) Have you been affected by sexual gender based violence over the past year?

Yes

No

99) What should be prioritized to improve women's livelihood development?

Better chances of education

Better chances of leading business activities

Better chances in decision making roles in community

Better chances of marriage

Better support in care and domestic work

Others: ...

I do not know

100) How strong are the checks and balances among the executive, legislative and judicial branched?

Very strong

Mostly strong

Somewhat strong

Absent

Do not know

101) To what extent can citizens and civil society organizations check and balance the government?

Very strong

Mostly strong

Somewhat strong

Absent

Do not know

102) To what extent do you think the discussions of the Pyithaungsu Hluttaw are transparent?

Completely

Mostly

Fairly

Not at all

Do not know

103) To what extent do you think the central government makes policies in a transparent fashion?

Completely

Mostly

Fairly

Not at all

Do not know

104) To what extent do you think your regional or state government makes policies in a transparent fashion?

Completely

Mostly

Fairly

Not at all

Do not know

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105) To what extent do you think the central government clearly informs the public about its actions and achievements?

- Completely
- Mostly
- Fairly
- Not at all
- Do not know

106) To what extent do you think your regional or state government clearly informs the public about its actions and achievements?

- Completely
- Mostly
- Fairly
- Not at all
- Do not know

107) To what extent do you think the different levels of government enforce rule of law properly?

- Completely
- Mostly
- Fairly
- Not at all
- Do not know

108) To what extent can citizens make their needs heard?

- Completely
- Mostly
- Fairly
- Not at all
- Do not know

109) To what extent do you think government offices or departments serve the public's interest and needs?

- Completely
- Mostly
- Fairly
- Not at all
- Do not know

110) To what extent do you think the central government can fulfill the public's demands?

- Completely
- Mostly
- Fairly
- Not at all
- Do not know

111) To what extent do you think the regional or state government can fulfill the public's demands?

- Completely
- Mostly
- Fairly
- Not at all
- Do not know

112) To what extent do you think the central government can represent all social, religious, ethnic and political sectors?

Completely
Mostly
Fairly
Not at all
Do not know

113) To what extent do you think state or regional government can represent all social, religious, ethnic and political sectors?

Completely
Mostly
Fairly
Not at all
Do not know

114) To what extent do you think people can enjoy greater freedom of media under the current administration?

Completely
Mostly
Fairly
Not at all
Do not know

115) Do you think women in your town/village have been able to play a major role in the democratization process in Myanmar?

Yes
No
Do not know

116) Do you think women in your town/village should be able to play more role in the democratization process in Myanmar?

Yes
No
Do not know

117) Do you think people in your town/village need more political education?

Yes
No
Do not know

118) To what extent can you participate in defining development priorities of your village/ward/township?

Completely
Mostly
Fairly
Not at all
Do not know

119) Do you participate in community activities actively?

Yes
No

120) Are you a member of a civil society organization?

Yes

No

121) Are you a member of a political party?

Yes

No

122) Do you participate in the activities of a political party actively?

Yes

No

123) Can community members in your town/village establish civil society organizations freely?

Yes

No

Do not know

124) Do community leaders in you town/village understand how to run civil society organizations effectively and efficiently?

Yes, we have effective civil society leaders.

Our civil society leaders need more trainings on financial and organizational management.

Do not know

125) Are there restrictions on establishing civil society organizations in your town/village?

Yes

No

Do not know

126) If yes, what kinds of restrictions are there? (You can choose more than one answer.)

Government regulations

People do not know how to organize civil society organizations.

People are not interested in organizing civil society organizations.

People do not have time to be involved in civil society organizations.

127) Can civil society organizations play an effective role in maintaining peace and stability in your town/village?

To a large extent

Only to some extent

Not very effectively

Do not know

128) Can civil society organizations play an effective role in monitoring the actions and activities of government officials and government agencies?

To a large extent

Only to some extent

Not very effectively

Do not know

- 129) Do you think civil society organizations and political parties in your town/village can represent your interests?
- Yes
 - No
 - Do not know
- 130) Do you receive assistance from INGOs?
- Yes
 - No
- 131) If yes, was the assistance you received helpful?
- Mostly
 - Fairly
 - Not at all
 - Do not know
 - NR
- 132) Do other people in your town/village received assistance from INGOs?
- Yes
 - No
 - Do not know
- 133) To what extent do you think your area is more peaceful than it was five years ago?
- To a large extent
 - To some extent
 - To a small extent
 - Not at all
 - Do not know
- 134) Do you want to play a role in the peace process?
- Yes
 - No
- 135) Have you been able to play a role in the peace process?
- Yes
 - No
- 136) Do you think the current peace process will bring peace into your area?
- Yes
 - No
 - Do not know
- 137) Which of the following is the key to building peace? (You must choose only one.)
- Federalism
 - Regional security
 - Environment
 - Economic development
 - Education
 - I do not know
 - Others: ...

138) Which of the following organizations can best represent for you at the political dialogues? (You must choose only one.)

- Government
- Hluttaw Representatives
- Military (Tatmataw)
- Ethnic armed groups
- Political parties
- Civil society organizations
- Experts
- Business organizations
- Do not have
- I do not know

139) Do you think the current peace process has improved the humanitarian conditions in your region?

- Yes, to a large extent
- Yes, to some extent
- No
- Do not know

140) Do you think people in your town/village need awareness raising workshops and trainings on peace building?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

141) Did you vote in the last elections?

- Yes
- No

142) Did you vote the elections of village administrators?

- Yes
- No

143) Have you participated in public campaigns of any sort?

- Yes
- No

144) Would you support a campaign that calls for women empowerment?

- Yes
- No
- Do not know

145) Are there effective women organizations in your town/region?

- Yes, many.
- Yes, few.
- No
- Do not know

146) If they exist, are you member of one organization?

Yes
No

147) Are there effective women community leaders in your community?

Yes
No
Do not know

148) Are male community leaders in your community willing to accept the idea that women should play a leading role in community activities?

Yes, earnestly.
Only to some extent
No
Do not know

149) Do women have equal access to public services?

Yes
No
Do not know

150) Do you think women and men are treated equally in Myanmar?

Completely
Mostly
Somewhat
Not really
Not at all
Do not know

151) Do you think people in your town/village including government officials need gender training?

Yes
No
Do not know

152) Which actor do you trust the most in your area?

Township administrator
Village tract administrator
Head of hundred households/head of ten households
Religious leaders
Elders
Members of Community-based Organizations
INGOs
Police officers
The Tatmadaw
Union Government
State Government
Nobody
Others: ... (please specify)
Do not know

153) Which actors do you trust the least in your area?

Township administrator

Village tract administrator
Head of hundred households/head of ten households
Religious leaders
Elders
Members of Community-based Organizations
INGOs
Police officers
The Tatmadaw
Union Government
State Government
Nobody
Others: ... (please specify)
Do not know

154) How do you assess the activity and actions of leader you trust the most?

Very good
Good
Somewhat good
Bad
Very bad
I have no leader
Do not know

155) Who is the most important actor in dealing with issues related to humanitarian needs in your town/region?

Township administrator
Village tract administrator
Head of hundred households/head of ten households
Religious leaders
Elders
Members of Community-based Organizations
INGOs
Police officers
The Tatmadaw
Union Government
State Government
Nobody
Others: ... (please specify)
Do not know

156) Who is the most important actor in dealing with issues related to development in your town/region?

Township administrator
Village tract administrator
Head of hundred households/head of ten households
Religious leaders
Elders
Members of Community-based Organizations
INGOs
Police officers
The Tatmadaw
Union Government
State Government
Nobody
Others: ... (please specify)
Do not know

157) What is your main source of information?

- Television
- State-owned newspaper
- Private newspaper
- Word of mouth
- Radio
- Phone
- Social Media (like Facebook)
- Communication app (WhatsApp, Viber, ...)
- Others (please specify): ...

158) What is your most trusted source of information?

- Television
- State-owned newspaper
- Private newspaper
- Word of mouth
- Radio
- Phone
- Social Media (like Facebook)
- Communication app (WhatsApp, Viber, ...)
- Others (please specify): ...
- I do not have access to any information
- I do not trust any information
- Do not know

159) Do you believe what you see on Facebook?

- Completely
- Sometimes
- Rarely
- Never
- I do not know

160) How do you verify rumors?

- I check the rumors with the village elders
- I check the rumors with the religious leaders
- I check the rumors with the Village tract administrator
- I check the rumors with the newspaper
- I check the rumors with the social media
- I do not check rumors
- I do not know
- Others: ...

161) How often do you use internet?

- Many times a day
- A few times a week
- A few times a month
- Rarely
- Never

162) In the even of a natural disaster, how do you assess your housing condition?

- Very resistant
- Resistant

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Somewhat resistant
No resistant
Not at all resistant
Do not know

163) Is your area prone to natural disasters?

Yes
No

164) Do you own a house/flat?

Yes
No

165) Do you own a car?

Yes
No

166) Do you own entertainment devices like TV and DVD players?

Yes
No

167) Do you own a farmland?

Yes
No

168) Do you own a factory/business?

Yes
No

169) How would you rate the quality of the service provided by public services in your area (healthcare, justice, police)

Very good
Good
Somewhat good
Poor
Very poor
I do not have access to any public services
Do not know

170) Do you think the public services in your town/village take into account the needs of women?

Totally
To some extent
No
Do not know

171) Are you a citizen of Myanmar?

Yes
No
Do not know

- 172) What identity document do you hold?
- Citizenship card (Pink card)
 - Associate citizenship card
 - Naturalized citizenship card
 - Three-Fold card
 - Foreigner registration certificate
 - Others: ...
 - No document

- 173) Does your identity document accurately state your ethnicity and religion?
- Yes
 - No

- 174) What do you think is the most important factor in making someone a citizen of Myanmar?
- Birth in Myanmar
 - Being Tinyinthar
 - Parents are citizens
 - Integration into society
 - Do not know

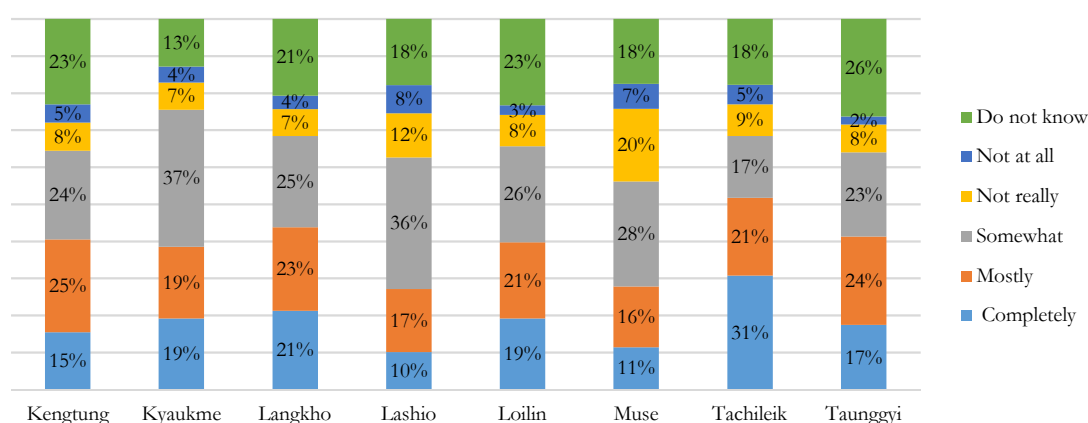
Appendix 5: Analysis of 2015 and 2017 election results in Shan State

The 2015 elections were praised by many national and international observers as being well-organised and, on the whole, fair. Millions of voters cast their votes and sent a strong message to the former regime by making the NLD the most powerful party in the country. The NLD not only achieved a majority and was put in a position to form a government at the Union level, but also became the largest party in most of the State and Region Parliaments. However, Shan State was one of the exceptions to the NLD's nationwide landslide.

Analysing the elections' results in Shan State

Although there were seven townships where it was not possible to hold elections due to on-going conflict, elections were held successfully in Shan State in November 2015. Comments on the organisation of the elections both from inside the country and from outside, and from both observers and voters, have been positive. Previous research in Shan State found that 40% of respondents considered that 2015 elections were completely or mostly free and fair, while another 26% believed that they were 'somewhat' free and fair. When looking at the results of the survey by district, the major discrepancies are Lashio and Muse Districts. In these areas, especially in Kutkai Township (Muse District) and Tan Yan Village Tract (Lashio District), armed conflict between the Tatmadaw and EAOs led to the displacement of many villagers prior to the elections, which may account for the higher number of those thinking the elections were not free and fair. Reports of migrants from China asking to be allowed to vote despite not showing proof of 180 days' residency in the district also created discontent, especially in the context of the issues faced by Muse District's Union Election Commission in correcting the voting lists.

Figure 1: Perception that the 2015 elections were free and fair by District



In the Amyotha Hluttaw, each of the Shan National League for Democracy (SNLD), the NLD and the USDP won 25% of the Shan State seats—the remaining seats being won by the Ta-Arng (Palaung) National Party, 17%, and the Pa'O National Organisation (PNO), 8%. However, the USDP took the largest share of the Pyithu Hluttaw seats (33%), as well as 33% of seats in the Regional Hluttaw (table 1)

In the 2017 by-elections (held to fill the seats left vacant following the 2015 elections), the SNLD won two seats in the Amyotha Hluttaw and four seats in the State Hluttaw, making it the most successful party. However, the Myanmar Times reported that both the USDP and the NLD complained about the alleged connections between the SNLD and the Shan State Progressive Party (who controlled some of the areas where the by-elections occurred) and thus the unfairness of the contest. Some interviewees also mentioned these complaint. Nonetheless, the results show the growing strength of the SNLD.

The results of the elections to the State Hluttaw show a number of interesting features. First of all, there were marked differences in the different areas. Constituencies in Shan East were responsible for many of the USDP's wins (15 of the 32 seats won in Shan State) and only one seat was won by the Lahu National Development Party, one by the Wa National Unity Party and five by the NLD. In Shan North and Shan South, the results were more evenly divided between Union-based parties and ethnic or Shan-

based parties. The SNLD got most of its representatives from Loilen District, in Shan South, while the PNO's only successes were in the Pa'O SAZ (Hopong, Hsiseng and Pinlaung) and Ta-Arng (Palaung) National Party representatives were elected in Shan North (Namhsan, Manton, Namkhan).

Across the State as a whole, the SNLD got more seats than the NLD, although connections between the two parties suggest that they might act as a block. Although only third in terms of seats won, the NLD gained the most votes across the State (27% of the total votes). For a similar number of votes, the USDP won 33% of the elected seats, while the SNLD received only 18% of the votes, but won 25% of the seats.

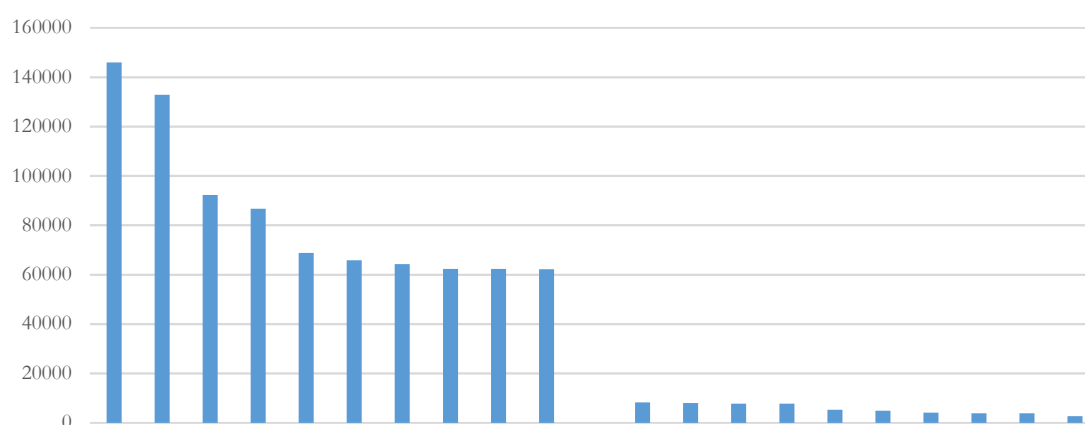
The number of candidates who stood without being elected and the differences in size and number of voters in the constituencies go some way towards explaining these differences. The latter is a serious issue in Myanmar, and especially in Shan State; the biggest constituency in Shan State Regional Hluttaw has 145,998 voters, the smallest one has only 2,644 voters, leading to a bias in favour of the least populated township in term of representation (figure 2). While absolute parity of representation is not achievable, the extent of this discrepancy suggests a need for reform. In this context, it should be noted that following the 2015 election, the Union Election Commission has made efforts to improve the system. However, most of the changes have focused on campaigning (such as the extension of the campaign period to two months).

Table 1: Elected candidates by Party and Hluttaw following 2015 election

Party	Number of Seats				Percentage of Seats			
	Anyotha Hluttaw	Pyithu Hluttaw	Regional Hluttaw	Total	% elected seats - Anyotha	% elected seats - Pyithu	% elected seats - Regional	% elected seats - Total constituencies
Independent Candidates	0	1	0	1	0%	2%	0%	1%
Kokang Democracy and Unity Party	0	1	1	2	0%	2%	1%	1%
La Hu National Development Party	0	0	1	1	0%	0%	1%	1%
National League for Democracy	3	12	21	36	25%	25%	22%	23%
Pa'O National Organization	1	3	6	10	8%	6%	6%	6%
Shan Nationalities Democratic Party	0	0	1	1	0%	0%	1%	1%
Shan National League for Democracy	3	12	24	39	25%	25%	25%	25%
Ta-Arng (Palaung) National Party	2	3	7	12	17%	6%	7%	8%
Union Solidarity and Development Party	3	16	32	51	25%	33%	33%	33%
Wa Democratic Party	0	0	2	2	0%	0%	2%	1%
Wa National Unity Party	0	0	1	1	0%	0%	1%	1%
Total	12	48	96	156	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 2: Elected candidates by Party and Hluttaw following 2017 by-elections

	Amyotha Hluttaw	Pyithu Hluttaw	State Hluttaw	Total
Shan National League for Democracy	2	-	4	6
National League for Democracy	0	-	1	1
Union Solidarity and Development Party	0	-	1	1

Figure 2: Eligible voters in the 10 biggest and the 10 smallest constituencies of Shan State Regional Hluttaw

Party politics in Shan State – a state of the art

A particularly telling fact about the elections in Shan State is the number of political parties who contested seats, whether in the Pyithu, Amyotha or State Hluttaw. A total of 32 parties presented 817 candidates in 156 available seats. However, only 11 parties won seats across all three Hluttaws.

The NLD and the USDP fielded the largest number of candidates (140 candidates for the NLD, 146 for the USDP). The Shan Nationalities Democratic Party (SNDP) and the SNLD followed, each fielding 121 candidates. However, numerically the most successful party was the PNO, 91% of whose candidates won their seats (table 3).

The success of the PNO reflects their focus on the Pa'O SAZ. All the PNO candidates stood in the SAZ and the PNO monopolised the seats in the area—at the expense of Pa'O National Liberation Organisation. The PNO benefited from the decision of the USDP not to contest seats in which PNO candidates were standing. This reflects the close connections between the PNO and the USDP, U Aung Kham Hti, chairman of the PNO, having been chairman of the Union State and Development Association, the forerunner of the USDP. Several other candidates also complained of intimidation by the PNO.

As noted above, the SNLD won the majority of the seats contested in the 2017 by-elections, making it the second most powerful party in the State Hluttaw and one of the few ethnic political parties to emerge as a key player alongside the EAOs. The SNLD benefits from the popularity of its leader and founder Khun Htun Oo. The SNLD was created in 1988 with three objectives: (1) the unification of the Shan ethnics; (2) the unification of the nationalities residing in Shan State; and (3) the promotion of a federal system based on eight States (one for each of the main ethnicities in Myanmar). Initial successes in the (annulled) 1990 elections, gave it a degree of weight and legitimacy as an actor in the State. However, the

demands brought to the National Convention (convened off and on between 1992 and 2007) were ignored and the SNLD boycotted the meeting in 2004 and most of its leadership, including U Khun Htun Oo, were later arrested. With the SNLD's leadership in jail in the run-up to the 2010 election, some of the remaining SNLD members formed a new party, SNDP.

According to a member of the SNLD the plan was always for the SNDP to merge with SNLD, but this has never happened.⁴⁴ An agreement in 2013 on forming an alliance has not yet led to any concrete results. This question of the merging of Shan-based political parties has taken on further importance in light of the successes of both the NLD and the USDP and the impact of splitting the vote on the results in elections and in the functioning of the Regional Hluttaw. Following the elections, the League for Shan State Ethnic Political Parties (LSSEP) was formed at the initiative of the SNDP. A first meeting was held in Yangon, but the SNLD was reportedly refused entry. As of today, membership of the LSSEP is shrinking, and the initiative seems to be fading away. This may be because it was in direct competition with the Committee for Shan State Unity (CSSU), an umbrella group of Shan-based EAOs, political parties and civil society organizations (CSOs). The CSSU aims to foster unity among the Shan, and between the Shan and other ethnic nationalities in the State, as well as promoting self-determination. In a meeting organized in May 2017, the need for a united front for the 2020 elections was clearly voiced: "Out of 55 townships in Shan State, Shan are majority in less than half of them. This we need to consider when planning for the 2020 general elections," claimed one of the leaders of the Committee.

Table 3: Number of candidates running for election per Party and Hluttaws

		Amyotha candidates	Pyithu candidates	Regional candidates	Total candidates	% candidates elected
1	Akha National Development Party	0	1	4	5	0%
2	Danu National Democracy Party	3	5	11	19	0%
3	Danu National Organization Party	1	2	4	7	0%
4	Eastern Shan State Development Democratic Party	1	2	4	7	0%
5	Federal Union Party	1	3	5	9	0%
6	Independent Candidate	4	14	20	38	3%
7	Inn National Development Party	1	1	2	4	0%
8	Inn National League Party	0	1	2	3	0%
9	Kachin State Development Party	1	0	0	1	0%
10	Kayan National Party	0	1	2	3	0%
11	Kokang Democracy and Unity Party	0	2	4	6	33%
12	La Hu National Development Party	1	9	17	27	4%
13	Lhaovo National Unity and Development Party	0	2	4	6	0%
14	Lisu National Development Party	0	0	2	2	0%
15	National Democratic Force	0	7	11	18	0%
16	National Development Party	3	1	0	4	0%
17	National League for Democracy	12	42	86	140	26%
18	National Unity Party	4	12	21	37	0%
19	Pao National Organization	1	4	6	11	91%

⁴⁴ Interview in Yangon Region on 8 April 2018

20	Peace for Diversity Party	0	1	0	1	0%
21	Shan Nationalities Democratic Party	9	37	75	121	1%
22	Shan Nationalities League for Democracy	9	37	75	121	32%
23	Shan State Kokang Democratic Party	1	3	7	11	0%
24	Ta-Arng (Palaung) National Party	3	7	14	24	50%
25	Tai-Leng Nationalities Development Party	3	0	0	3	0%
26	The 88 Generation Student Youths	0	0	1	1	0%
27	The Kachin National Congress for Democracy	2	0	0	2	0%
28	Union Pa.O National Organization	2	3	9	14	0%
29	Union Solidarity and Development Party	15	46	85	146	35%
30	United Democratic Party	1	1	0	2	0%
31	Wa Democratic Party	1	1	6	8	25%
32	Wa National Unity Party	1	5	10	16	6%
	Total	80	250	487	817	

Appendix 6: Additional charts

Figure 1: Membership of a CSO by Area

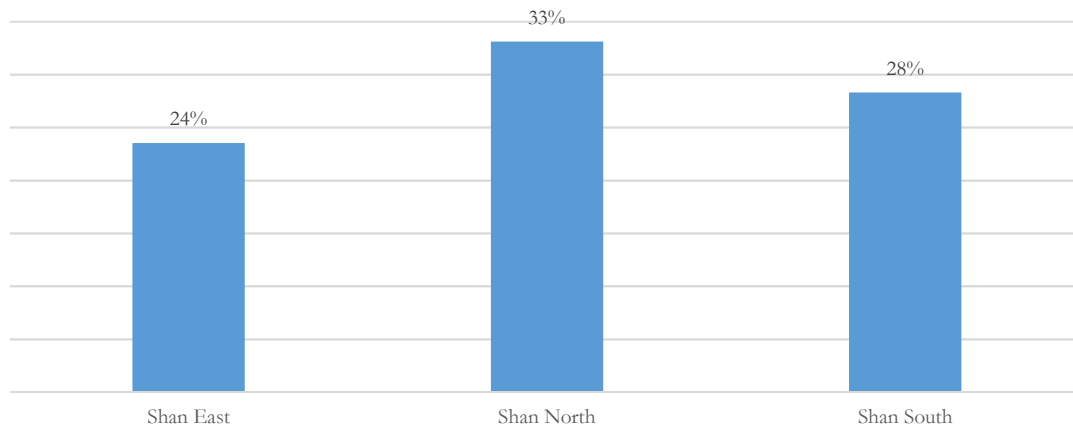


Figure 2: Respondents knowledge about the presence of displaced people in Shan North

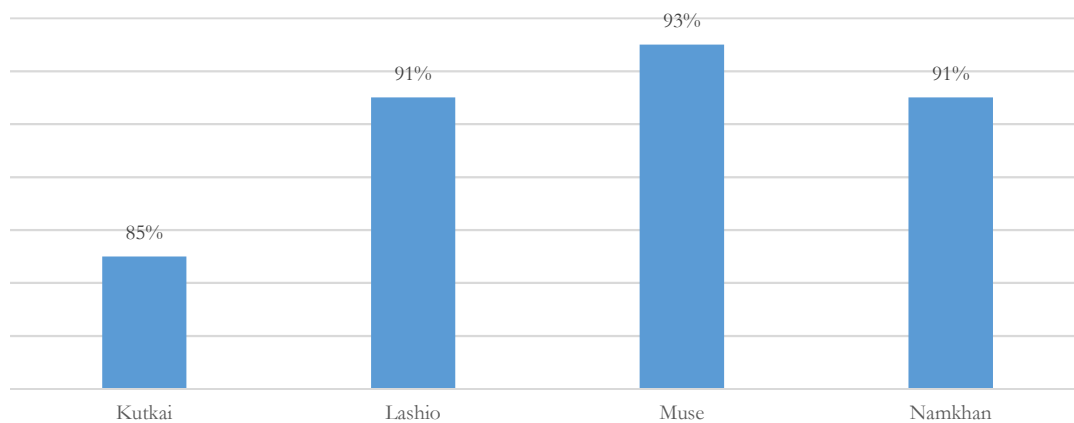
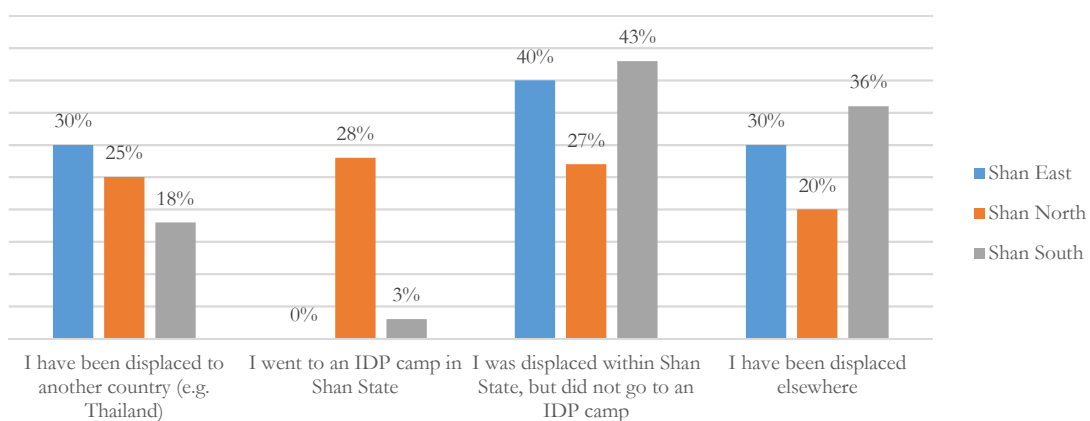


Figure 3: Place of displacement of the respondents if he has been displaced in the past or if he is currently displaced

(a) Displacement due to armed conflict



(b) Displacement for economic reasons

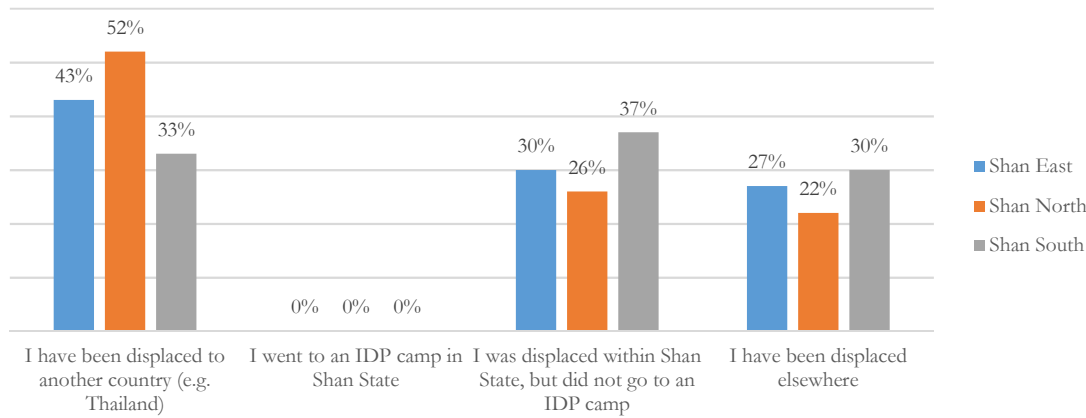


Figure 4: Ownership of a factory by Township

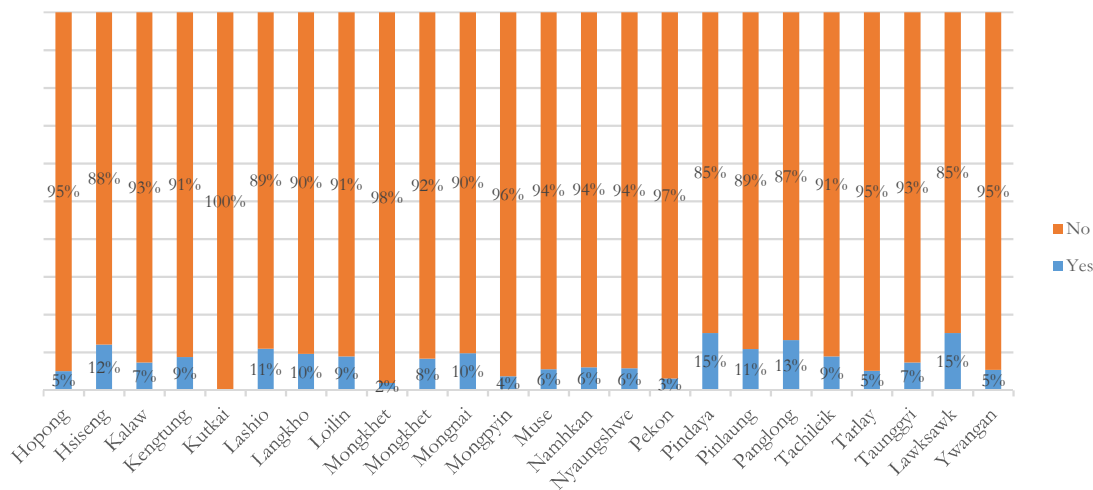


Figure 5: Access to medication by Area

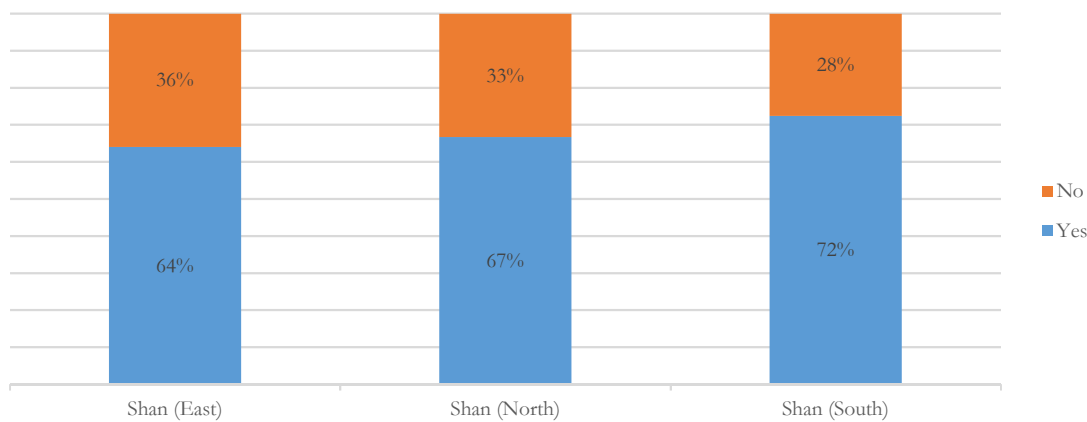


Figure 6: Opinions on whether or not the vocational trainings were useful by Gender

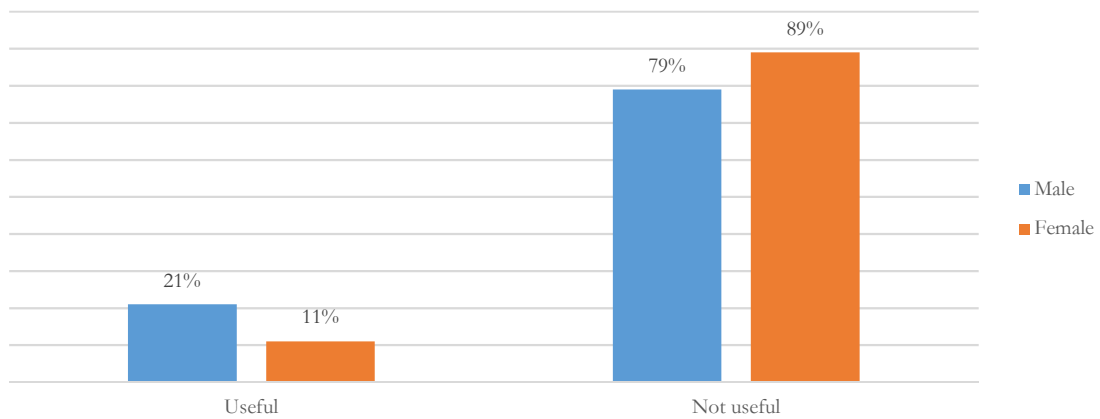


Figure 7: Do people have easy access to markets (responses from farmers) by Gender

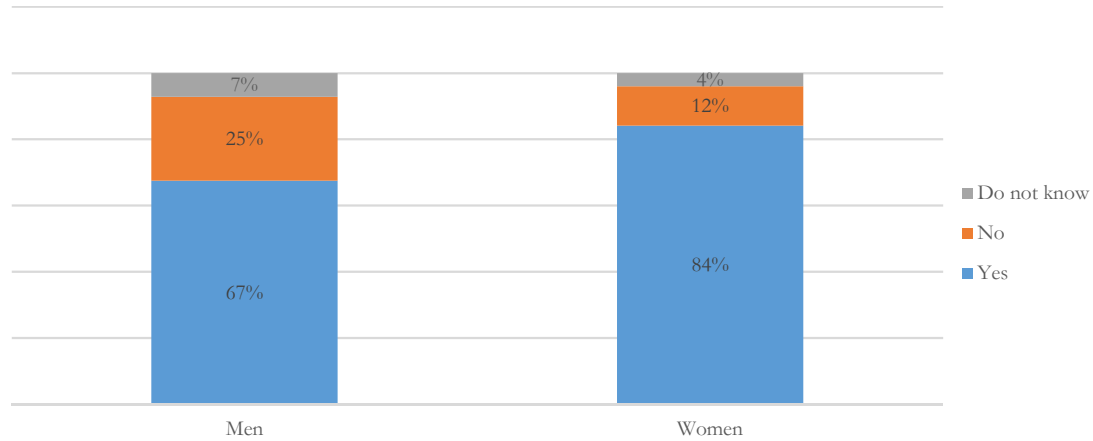


Figure 8: Access to food by Female Headed Households

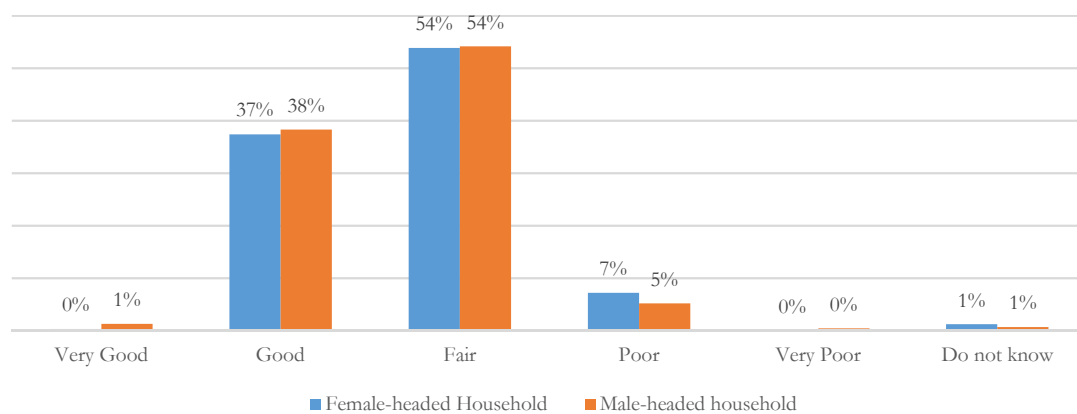


Figure 9: Source of Loans by Gender

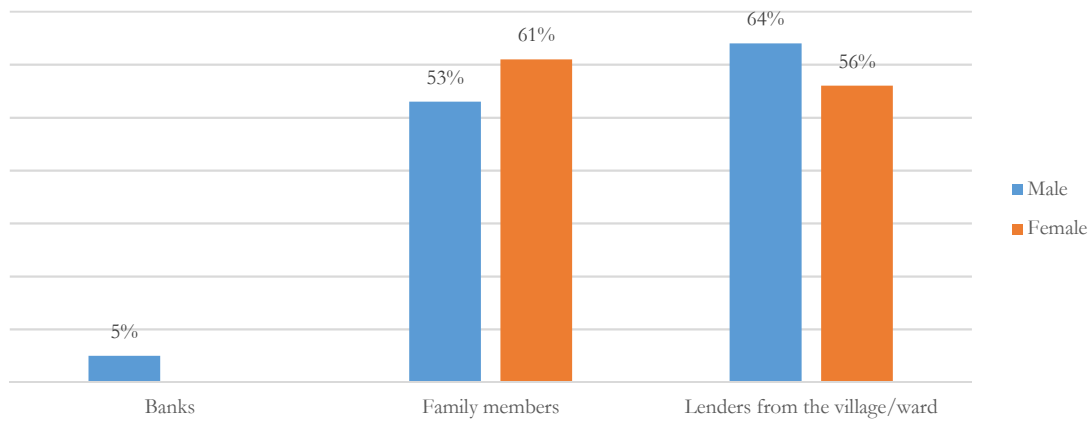


Figure 10: Where respondents usually go if sick, by Age

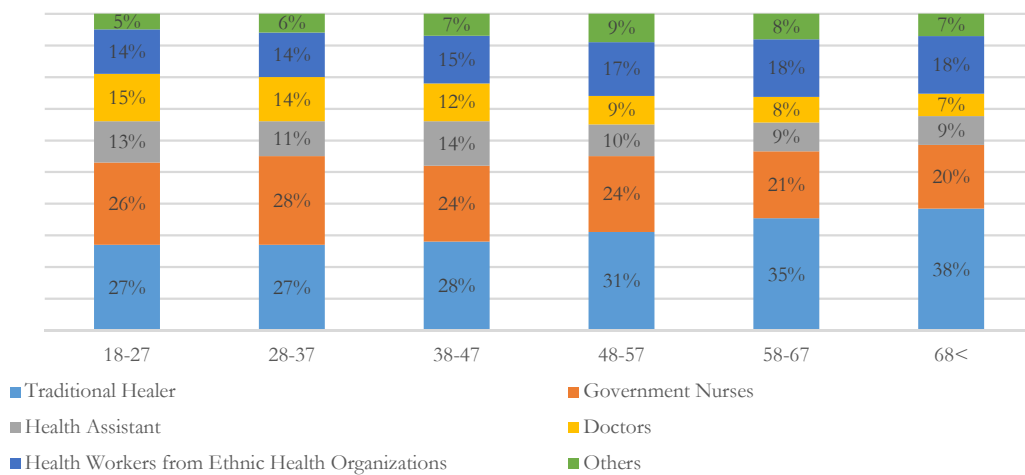


Figure 11: Cost related issues in accessing medical care by Gender

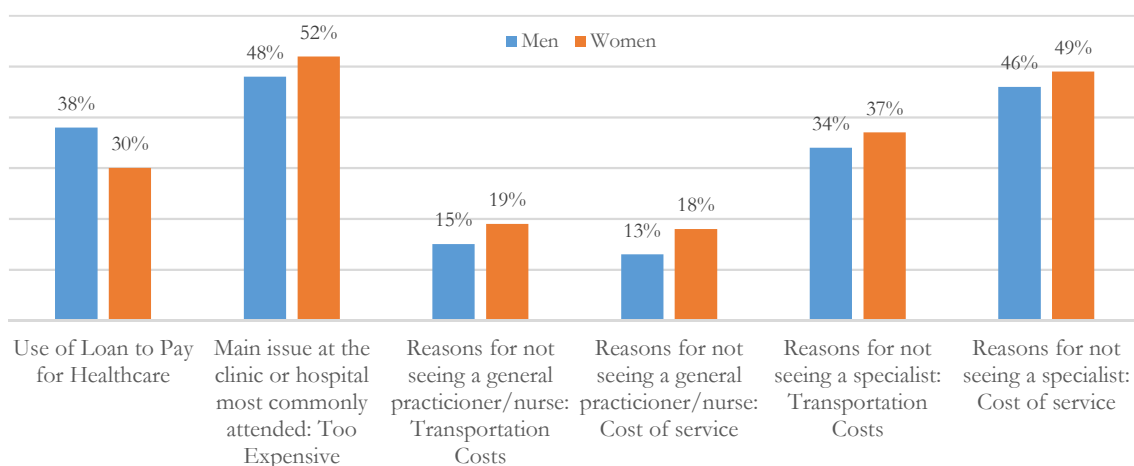


Figure 12: Ease of Birth Registration by Main Source of Income

