

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Six cross-line missions take place in January.
- Students in boarding houses in Kachin are in need of better living conditions.
- Many people remain displaced following violence in northern Rakhine.
- Adolescent girls in IDP camps in Rakhine and Kachin are at particular risk of violence and abuse.

## KEY FIGURES

### IDPs in Rakhine State

IDPs in planned camps	110,000
Other IDPs	28,000

### IDPs in Kachin State

IDPs in planned camps	81,000
Other IDPs	10,000

New IDPs (displaced in late 2013)	2,000
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Source: UNHCR, OCHA, CCCM



IDP woman, Kachin, Nov 2013. Credit: DRC/Kaspar Roelle

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## Cross-line missions reach Kachin displaced

In January 2014, six cross-line missions went to locations in areas beyond Government control in Kachin where approximately 30,000 IDPs are currently living. UN agencies and INGOs delivered supplies including food, education materials, medicine, shelter materials, hygiene kits, and fuel-efficient stoves. Cross-line missions supplement ongoing response efforts by local NGOs, who have more regular access to these areas. Assessments conducted as part of cross-line missions in January confirmed the need for more regular and sustained access for international humanitarian actors to all areas hosting IDPs to ensure their basic needs are met and protection concerns addressed.

One of the missions travelled to La Na Zup Ja and Bum Tsit Pa camps, which accommodate 1,300 IDPs, who were displaced following violence in the Nam Lim Pa area in November 2013. Forced to leave their homes at short notice and during winter, the situation for the 323 students, staying at the La Na Zup Ja boarding house, and 1,051 people in the newly-established Bum Tsit Pa (2) camp, is particularly concerning. The mission therefore carried out assessments to gain a better understanding of their needs, and also delivered food and essential basic items to all three IDP camps, including blankets, warm clothing and jerry cans, medicine, WASH and educational supplies. Assessments identified gaps in education, in particular for students in boarding houses, protection services, water and sanitation, health and nutrition, and livelihoods.

### Urgent shelter, water and sanitation needs for newly displaced

Housing solutions for both existing and newly displaced people are particularly critical. Some families are living in two-year-old makeshift shelters, which are in dire need of renovation; while 290 newly displaced families are staying in emergency tents in freezing temperatures. UNHCR and KMSS, a local NGO partner, are building 120 family units in February to meet the most urgent needs, with an additional 170 units required in Bum Tsit Pa (2) and 160 units in La Na Zup Ja. Many of the IDPs also still require blankets and warm clothes given the cold temperatures.



Bum Tsit Pa IDP camp, Kachin, Jan 2014. Credit: OCHA

The Shelter Cluster estimates that 20,000 to 25,000 IDPs are living in sub-standard shelters, have no shelter or are sharing spaces in collective centres in Kachin. An

*Water shortages are imminent, as hand-dug wells and streams dry up between February and April. It is essential that water systems are improved and properly maintained.*

additional 2,500 shelters need to be repaired or upgraded in 2014. To support the ongoing response, IDPs will also be provided with toolkits and training to maintain and repair shelters. Shelter activities are being planned in tandem with the WASH response to ensure new housing locations are fitted with adequate water and sanitation facilities.

Limited water supply is also a major concern for IDPs in all three camps, which are experiencing water scarcity due to lack of maintenance of supply systems, leading to leakages and damaged pipelines. This is partially a result of the temporary design of these facilities, which due to irregular access in the past have not been recently upgraded. Water shortages are imminent, as hand-dug wells and streams dry up between February and April. It is essential that water systems are improved and properly maintained.

Latrine coverage is low across all three camps, with most latrines unhygienic due to lack of water supply. Bathing and hand-washing facilities are inadequate. Additional latrines and bathing spaces, as well health education activities, are required. The WASH Cluster is prioritising the establishment of adequate water and sanitation solutions in new camp locations, as well as those which have inadequate facilities. Likewise, hygiene promotion activities are being prioritised to prevent outbreaks of water- and food-borne disease. As the displacement in Kachin and northern Shan states has become more protracted, many of the emergency water facilities in these areas fall below the minimum technical standards for construction. Priority activities for the WASH Cluster in 2014 therefore include upgrading of water facilities in camps; continuing to build semi-permanent latrines in camps; and reinforced hygiene promotion activities. Continued funding for Shelter, WASH and other priority areas is also required to meet the needs of displaced people.

## Displaced children in Kachin lack access to quality education

More than 60 per cent of the over 4,000 people forced to flee by the violence in the Nam Lim Pa area in November are children. Assessments conducted in January showed clear education needs and protection concerns for these boys and girls.

*Students have been learning in poorly constructed, makeshift extended classrooms and suffering from severely cold weather in the winter months, without sufficiently warm clothes and firewood*

Of those displaced, 323 students and 35 teachers are now staying at the boarding house in La Na Zup Ja, which already accommodated 144 students and 32 teachers. The newly arrived IDP students have placed increased pressure on already scarce resources and over-crowded facilities. Students are struggling due to cramped living conditions, with seven or eight students per dorm room, insufficient food to meet daily nutritional requirements, and lack of educational supplies. Students have been learning in poorly constructed, makeshift extended classrooms and suffering from severely cold weather in the winter months, without sufficiently warm clothes and firewood. The latrines at the boarding house are inadequate for the increased number of people, and there is serious water scarcity.

The girls and boys staying at the boarding house need better meals and nutritional supplements, appropriate learning spaces and dormitories, additional education materials, and water, and sanitation facilities, adequate winter clothing, and sufficient firewood and stoves. Similarly, the existing primary school in Bum Tsit Pa camp is now accommodating additional primary school students and



Temporary learning space, La Na Zup Ja, Jan 2014, Credit: UNICEF

needs additional materials, latrines and water supply.

Most of the parents of the 323 IDPs students from Nam Lim Pa attending the boarding school in La Na Zup Ja are accommodated in Bum Tsit Pa (2) camp, located two hours away on foot. Interviewed parents were supportive of their children attending the boarding school, despite being affected by the separation. They were relieved that their children receive accommodation, education and protection from potential recruitment, sexual abuse and trafficking. Humanitarian organisations have agreed that when support is provided to boarding houses, the principle should be to ensure they are not presenting protection risks to children and are instead helping mitigate them. A primary school in Bum Tsit Pa (2) camp could also be expanded to be able to accommodate more students, allowing students to study near their parents.

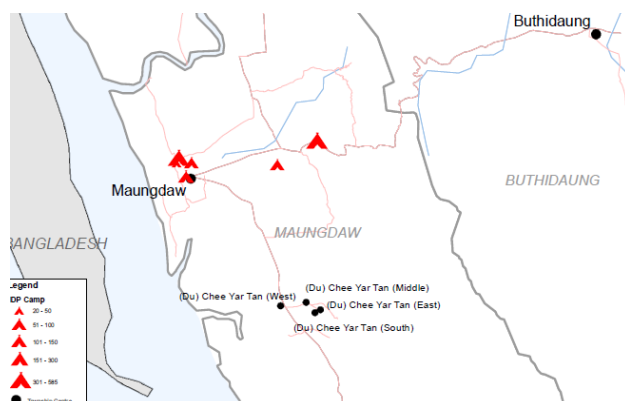
Established mechanisms such as boarding houses, designed to cope with remoteness of rural areas and livelihoods pressures, have been expanded to allow education to continue for as many children as possible during the conflict. Whilst arguably suited to the current needs of the situation and the high importance placed on education, this system also presents serious child protection concerns due to poor facilities and living conditions, limited supervision and care of the children and the lack of monitoring and referral mechanisms in place.

However, the prolonged displacement has seriously stretched resources and made access to quality education difficult for many children. Humanitarian organisations are conducting a comprehensive assessment of education needs in areas beyond Government control, including other boarding houses and early childhood development centers, to provide a complete picture of outstanding needs. The sector is underfunded despite the key role it can play in child protection, in developing and maintaining social cohesion and promoting recovery.

## Many people remain displaced following violence in northern Rakhine

Following a series of violent incidents in Du Chee Yar Tan village in Maungdaw Township, Rakhine State, on 13-14 January, there were reports of a policeman having been killed and of a number of Muslim civilians also having been killed or injured. Humanitarian organizations working in the area reported that over 2,000 Muslim civilians fled their homes as a result of the violence and that over 20 injured and traumatised people had been seen by NGO medical staff.

The UN shared information it had received with the Government and called for the Government to conduct an impartial investigation. The UN also called on the Government to ensure the full protection of all civilians and to enable safe and continued access by humanitarian staff to assess needs and provide emergency assistance to all those affected.



Authorities in Rakhine State confirmed that a large security operation took place on 13-14 January to search for the missing police officer, but insisted that there were no human rights violations and no killings of civilians. At a briefing on 28 January by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Rakhine Conflict Investigation Commission presented the initial findings of their investigation, emphasizing that it had not yet found evidence to support allegations of killings of civilians. At the request of the President of Myanmar, an

Investigation Commission has been established to investigate the incident, with another parallel enquiry by the Myanmar National Human Rights Commission.

On the evening of the 28 January, a fire destroyed 16 houses in Du Chee Yar Tan West, close to the site of the violent incidents. The fire was suspected arson, but no suspects have yet been arrested.

Humanitarian aid is being provided to people who have returned to Du Chee Yar Tan village by the Myanmar Red Cross Society and Rakhine State authorities. Meanwhile, humanitarian organizations remain concerned about the many civilians who remain displaced and continue to advocate with the Government for humanitarian access to assess and respond to the needs of all affected people.

## Adolescent girls in camps at risk of violence and abuse

*Participants in focus groups in Rakhine shared reports of adolescent girls being sexually assaulted or harassed while collecting firewood outside camps*

In January, humanitarian staff conducted a series of focus group interviews with adolescent girls and women in IDP camps in Rakhine and Kachin. In Rakhine, they met with five groups of women in three Rakhine and Muslim IDP camps. Based on discussions, it was clear that teenage girls were seen as the most vulnerable. The groups shared reports of adolescent girls being sexually assaulted or harassed while collecting firewood outside camps. In one camp, the girls reported four incidents in which girls had been targeted while collecting firewood and raped. The girls in the groups also expressed fear of being forced to marry by their families in order to access money, or of being targeted by men coming to the camps looking for girls to travel to other locations for work. Among the women it was acknowledged that intimate partner violence had increased dramatically since families had been confined to living in camps, with a lot of domestic tensions and abuse centered around food allocations in the home, where the men would reportedly take part of the food rations in order to sell and generate disposable income.

In Kachin, the team also spoke to five groups of displaced women and girls in the Laiza area. All groups stated that the primary reason women and girls felt compelled to leave their homes and flee to the camps was the fear of sexual violence. Another consistent report among each of the five groups interviewed was the identification of teenage girls as being the most vulnerable and at risk. Adolescent girls expressed great fear of being trafficked across the border to China; sharing examples of this happening to girls they knew. The women reported that sexual violence, sexual exploitation and intimate partner violence was common.

In Kachin, Metta Development Foundation, with support from UNFPA, is establishing eight centers for women and girls, providing a range of general and targeted services, including for survivors of violence. Services will include GBV case management, establishment of risk identification and reduction groups, and work with camp leadership to promote a safer environment for women and girls. The same approach will soon be implemented in six camps around Sittwe. Until these centres open, the international organisations are mapping available health and emotional support services, and are finalizing GBV-specific referral pathways to ensure that survivors, who wish to report are able to access life-saving health and psycho social support activities.