

# **Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment and Qualitative Study of selected communities in Ye Township, Mon State**

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## **List of Abbreviations**

AMW: Auxiliary midwife

ARI: Acute respiratory infection

EPI: Expanded Programme of Immunizations

HASP: Health Assistance and Social Protection

KNU: Karen National Union

MW: Midwife

NMSP: New Mon State Party

TBA: Traditional birth attendant

RHC/sub-RHC: Rural health centre

U5: Children under 5 years old

## **1. Methodology**

### **1.1. Multi-sectorial quantitative assessment**

The area under study is situated in Ye Township, Mon State, where IOM is implementing the Health Assistance and Social Protection (HASP) project funded by SDC.

This assessment was conducted in 37 villages plus 14 migrant clusters (Ah Baw Kyar Tan migrant cluster is counted as three smaller clusters due to its large size). Indeed, as the great majority of Ye Township's villages are affected in many different ways by out-migration (locals, majority of whom are Mon and Kayin ethnics going to Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore), the necessity to compensate the lack of labour due to this out-migration brings to the region an important number of in-migrants coming from various other regions of Myanmar, principally Ayeyarwaddy and Bago. While some of these migrants only come on a seasonal basis, others stay for years and then form migrant clusters close to their work places.

These 51 communities in total were selected by IOM based on the lack of health facilities, difficulties of access to health facilities and a higher degree of assumed poverty according to the IOM team's experiences in the field. Geographical and ethnic distributions were also taken into consideration in selecting the target communities.

This assessment covered the fields of migration (both in-migration and out-migration), livelihoods, water and sanitation, health and education. The assessment tools consisted of two sets of questionnaires (see annex 1, attached), one assessing needs at the community level and the other assessing needs at the household level. The community level questionnaire has been adapted into two different questionnaires to take into account the differences between villages and migrant clusters, especially in terms of migrations and access to services (e.g. education, health) that is generally limited for in-migrants.

The assessment has been implemented by a team made of 5 Community Service Providers (CSPs) and 15 Outreach Health Workers (OHW) working for IOM. The assessment team was trained over 3 days by the international consultant team who designed the questionnaires and analysed the results.

One limitation for the quantitative assessment lies in the fact that the team in charge of analysing the results was unable to visit all the assessed locations and was not present for both data collection and data entry. For these reasons, some inconsistencies persist in the database that compromise the use of some information. Consequently, we indicate where relevant if the reader should be careful with the interpretation of the results.

### **1.2. Qualitative assessment**

In addition to the quantitative assessment, the authors also conducted a qualitative assessment looking on the impact of migration in the area (both in and out-migration). The

team, consisting of an international researcher and two national researchers, spent 10 days in Ye during which they visited five migrant clusters and six villages (see Ttable 1). The team conducted semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and key informant interviews according to a set of question guidelines presented in the Annex 2.

**Table 1: List of visited locations: qualitative assessment**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Village Tract</b>	<b>Type</b>
23.05.2014	U Ko Oo Stone Mine	Ka Lawt Gyi	Cluster
23.05.2014	14 Miles	Man Aung	Cluster
25.05.2014	Nat Gyi	Kyaung Ywar	Village
26.05.2014	Taung Bon	Taung Bon	Village
26.05.2014	Kawt Ha Yine	Taung Bon	Cluster
26.05.2014	Thaung Pyin fishing camp	Taung Bon	Cluster
27.05.2014	Ann Din fishing Camp	Ann Din	Cluster
28.05.2014	Bu Tar Kone	Hnit Kayin	Village
28.05.2014	Ku Toet Seik	Kawt Dut	Village
28.05.2014	Kar Seik/Ku Toet Seik	Hnit Kayin	Village
29.05.2014	Yin Tein Wa	Yin Yei	Village

Additionally, key informant interviews were conducted in Ye Town with political leaders, representatives of Mon associations, migrant smugglers, and health authorities.

## 2. Findings of the quantitative assessment

### 2.1. Overview of the assessed locations

As shown in Figure 1, 21 of the 37 assessed villages are dominated by the Kayin ethnic group, 10 by the Mon and 6 are of mixed ethnicities (of which 5 are majority ethnic Burmese).

Whether Mon or Kayin villages, the main sources of income for these communities comes from agriculture, with a high tendency to replace former “traditional” agricultural practices such as irrigated paddy, betel nut and palm trees with rubber plantations. According to villagers in 13 of the 37 villages, rubber cultivation is now the primary source of income, followed by casual labour (10), other agricultural activities (including betel nut and palm trees) and fisheries (see Figure 2). Interestingly, of the 13 villages that that rely predominantly on rubber cultivation, 10 are Kayin villages and only 2 (Ka Lawt Lay West and East) are Mon, while the last one, Shwe Pyi Thar, is mainly Burmese. Apart from being more represented in this sample, Kayin villages are generally situated in hilly areas more suitable than plains for rubber cultivation. However, Mon villagers, where and when possible, tend also to replace their cultures with rubber plantations.

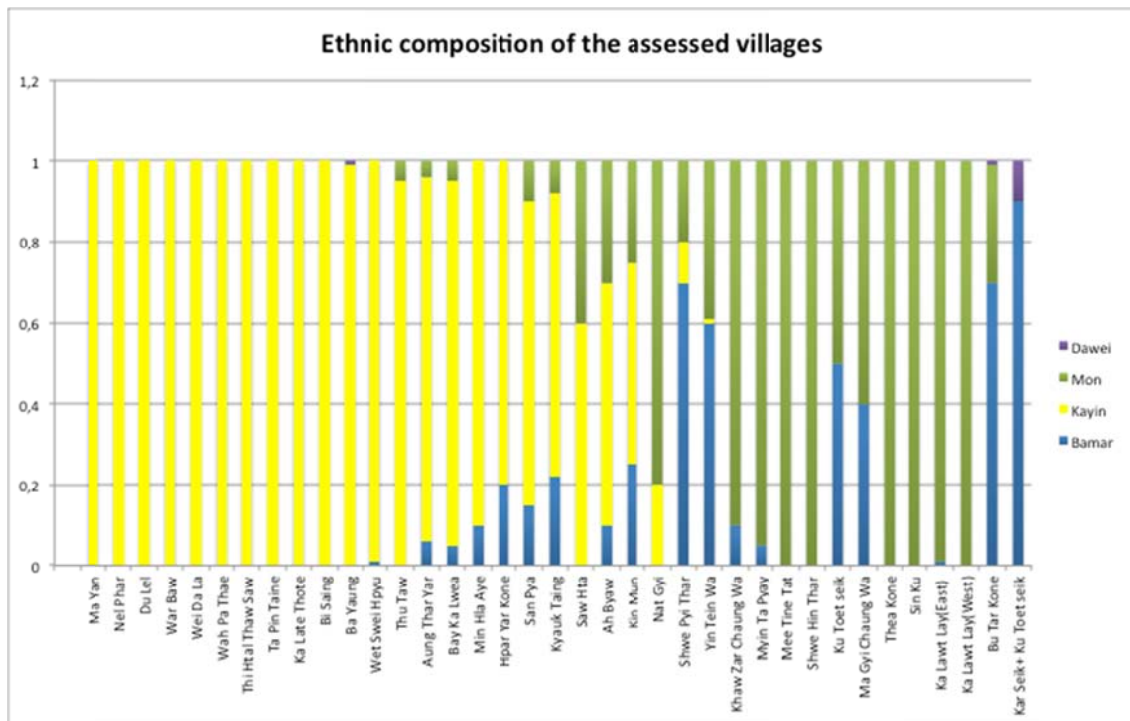
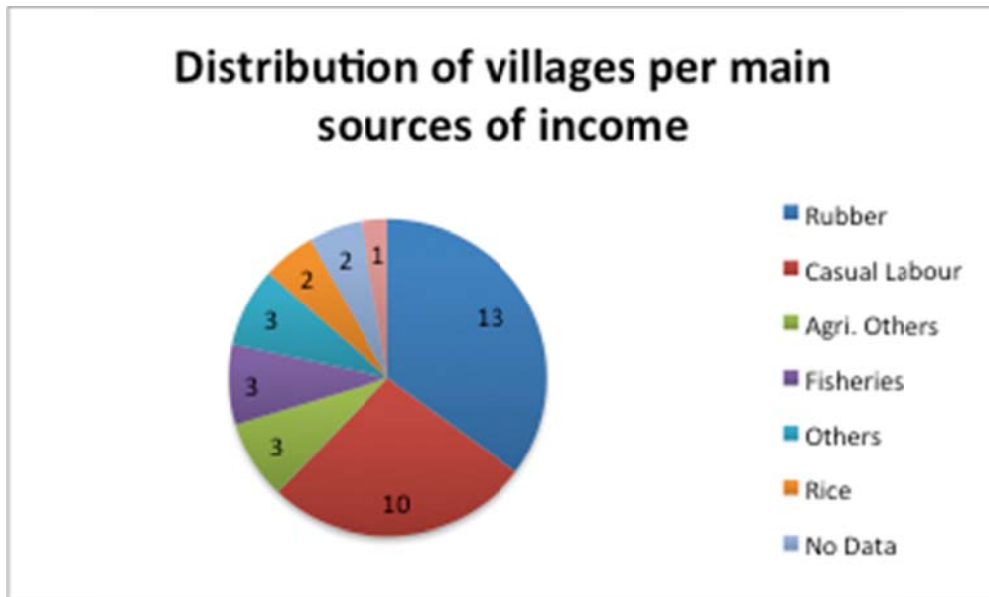


Figure 1: Ethnic composition of the assessed villages



**Figure 2: Main livelihoods of the assessed villages**

The assessed clusters were formed at different time periods - with some dating back approximately 40 years and the most recent at 2 years (see Table 2). The livelihoods of most of the migrant communities are shared between small-scale fisheries and a variety of casual work (e.g. seasonal agricultural work and other manual jobs). Remarkably, Ball Lone Kwin cluster and Kone Sone cluster are composed principally of ethnic Mon (see Figure 3), which explains why they find more work in agricultural activities. Indeed, while seasonal in-migrants such as rubber tappers are often located in the rubber plantations, year-round migrants and households are generally not accepted to settle within the village, hence the progressive growth of clusters at village peripheries.

The creation of some of these clusters, such as 14 Miles, seems to relate to settlement arrangements made between the first in-migrants and the local authorities from the central government (in particular the offering of land) in exchange for information concerning the movements of ethnic armed groups such as the NMSP and the KNU.

**Table 2: Approximate age of the different migrant clusters**

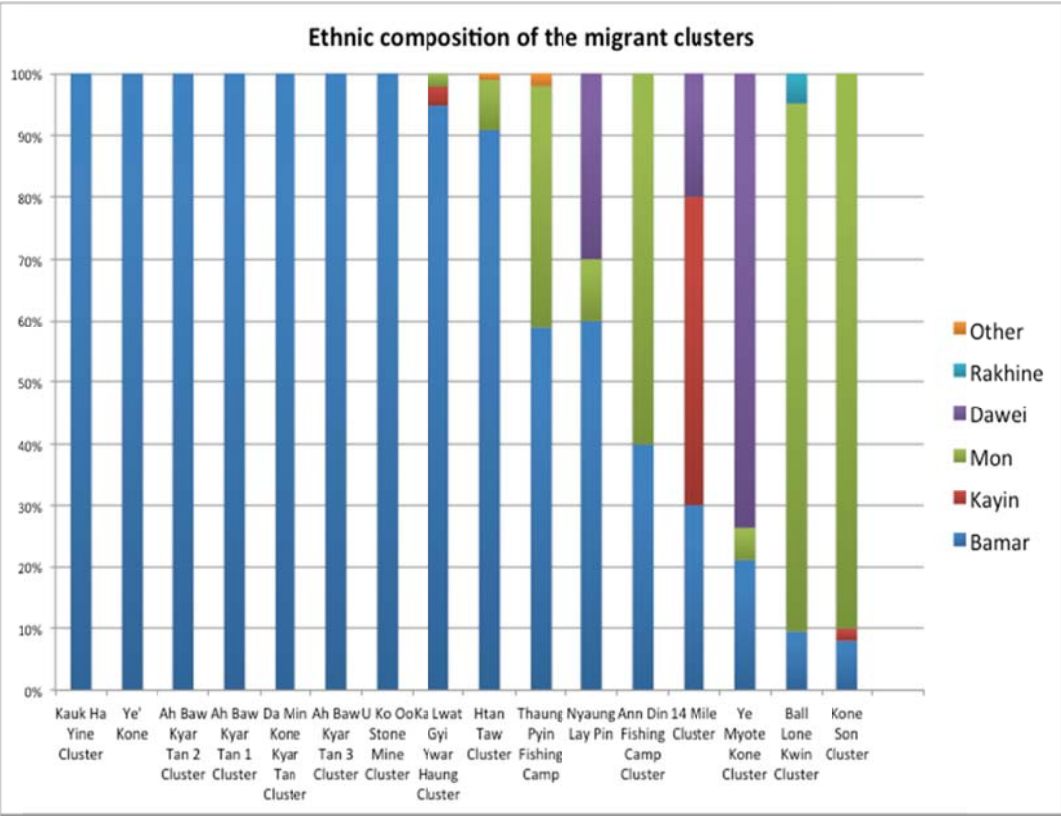
Village tract	Clusters	Age (in years)
A Baw	Ah Baw Kyar Tan 2 Cluster	39
A Baw	Ah Baw Kyar Tan 1 Cluster	30
Ka Lawt	Ka Lwat Gyi Ywar Haung Cluster	30
Thaung Pyin	Thaung Pyin Fishing Camp	26
A Sin	Da Min Kone Kyar Tan Cluster	23
Han Gan	Kone Sone Cluster	22
A Baw	Ah Baw Kyar Tan 3 Cluster	20

Ah Sin	Htan Taw Cluster	20
Ann Din	Ann Din Fishing Camp Cluster	20
Taung Bon	Kauk Ha Yine Cluster	18
Chaung Taung	Nyaung Lay Pin	16
Man Aung	14 Mile Cluster	15
Chaung Taung	Ye Myote Kone Cluster	14
Han Gan	Ball Lone Kwin Cluster	14
Taung Bon	Ye' Kone	10
Ka Lawt Gyi	U Ko Oo Stone Mine Cluster	2

**Table 3: Main livelihoods of the migrant clusters**

Cluster name	Most important livelihood	2 <sup>nd</sup> livelihood
Ka Lwat Gyi Ywar Haung Cluster	Casual Labour	Fisheries
Kone Sone Cluster		Rubber
Kauk Ha Yine Cluster		Paddy
14 Mile Cluster		Small trade
Ye' Kone		Fisheries
Ah Baw Kyar Tan 2 Cluster	Fisheries	Casual Labour
Ah Baw Kyar Tan 1 Cluster		Casual Labour
Thaung Pyin Fishing Camp		Casual Labour
Da Min Kone Kyar Tan Cluster		Casual Labour
Ah Baw Kyar Tan 3 Cluster		Casual Labour
Htan Taw Cluster		Casual Labour
Ann Din Fishing Camp Cluster		?
Nyaung Lay Pin		Casual Labour
Ye Myote Kone Cluster		Casual Labour
U Ko Oo Stone Mine Cluster		Mining
Ball Lone Kwin Cluster	Rubber	Paddy



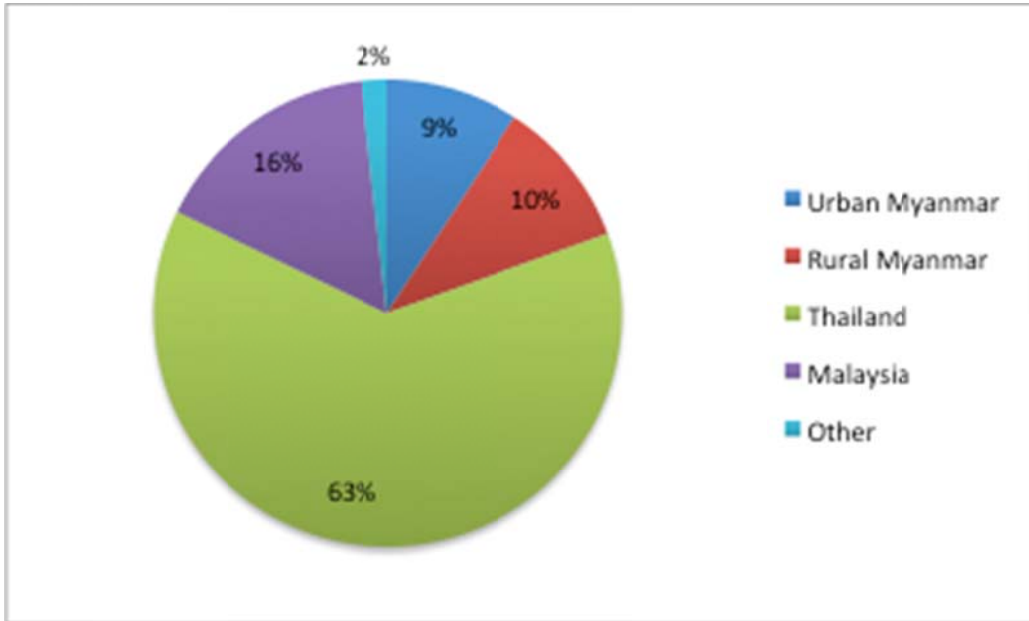


**Figure 3: Ethnic composition of the migrant clusters**

**2.2. Out-migration patterns out of local villages**

Out-migration varies minimally between the different ethnic compositions, with an average of 12% for villages comprised of at least 50% ethnic Burmese, 12% for Kayin-dominated villages and 10% for Mon-dominated villages.

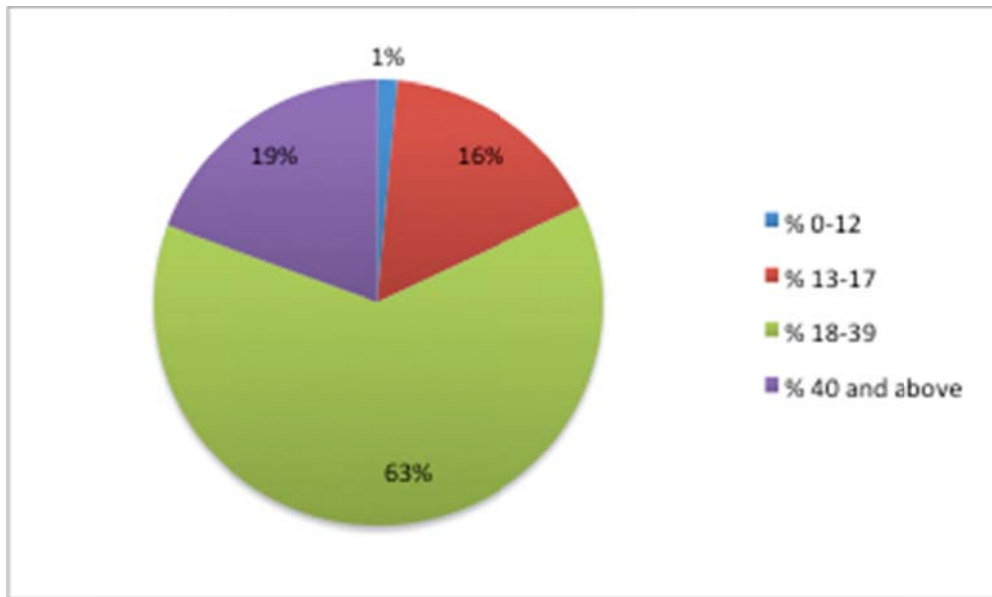
The bulk of the out-migration continues to head to Thailand and Malaysia, while much smaller numbers migrate to urban or rural Myanmar. Migrations to Singapore and Korea, according to the interviews, remain very small. However, the figures provided in the database are not fully reliable because out-migrating households are not always recorded due to the fact that out-migration is often irregular and villagers tend to underreport it. Figure 4 is an attempt to provide the proportion of out-migrant households per destination, keeping in mind the relative reliability of these figures. Interestingly, those migrating to rural and urban Myanmar seem to be mostly from Kayin-dominated and Burmese villages.



**Figure 4: Main destinations of out-migrations**

The 18 to 39 year old category represents 63% of out-migrants, with no major differences seen in their ethnic composition or the main livelihoods of their villages of origin. Compared to the national average where the same category represents around 36% of the population<sup>1</sup>, this shows how significant this category is when it comes to out-migration: working-age individuals clearly constitute the core of the movement.

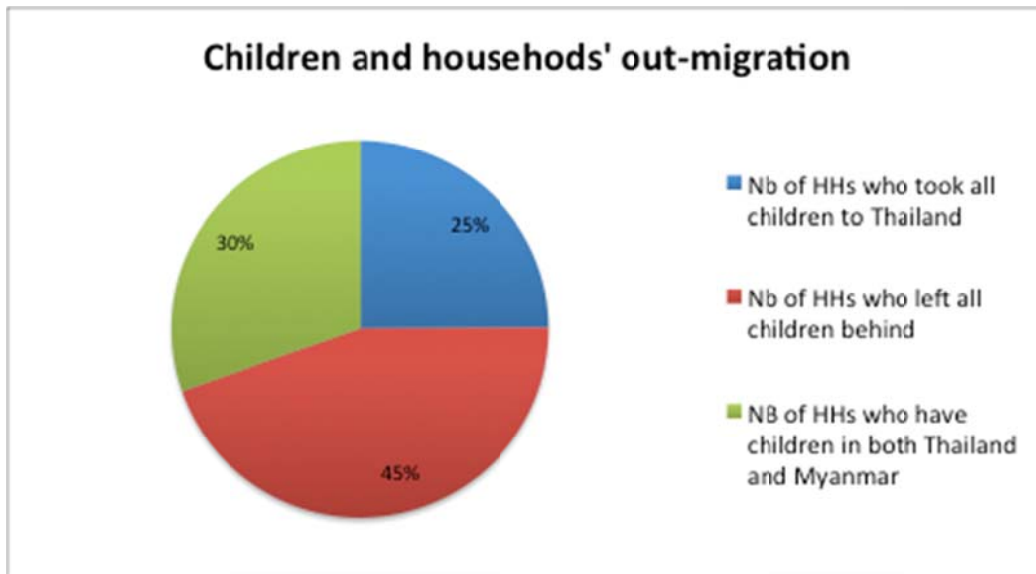
<sup>1</sup> Myanmar Health Statistics 2010, Ministry of Health, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, p. 9.



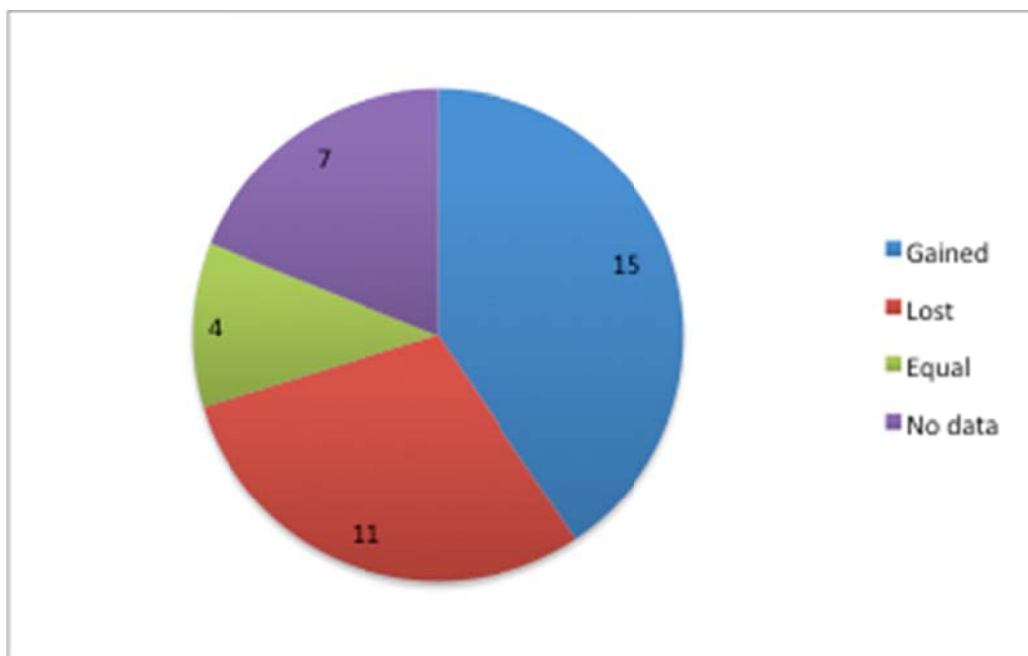
**Figure 5: Out-migration per age-categories**

Unfortunately, information regarding the proportion of out-migrant households compared to those migrating as individuals is not sufficiently reliable to be taken into account here. We can, however, look at the distribution of reported out-migrant households between those leaving all or some of their children behind and those taking their children to Thailand. Among the 233 households reported to have out-migrated, 45% had left their children behind, 30% had children both in their village of origin and at their destination, and only 25% brought all of their children to Thailand.

According to qualitative interviews, infants generally remain in Thailand with their parents until they can be weaned and then sent back to their village in Myanmar. Some children, generally aged 15 and above, stay and working together with the parents in Thailand, however.



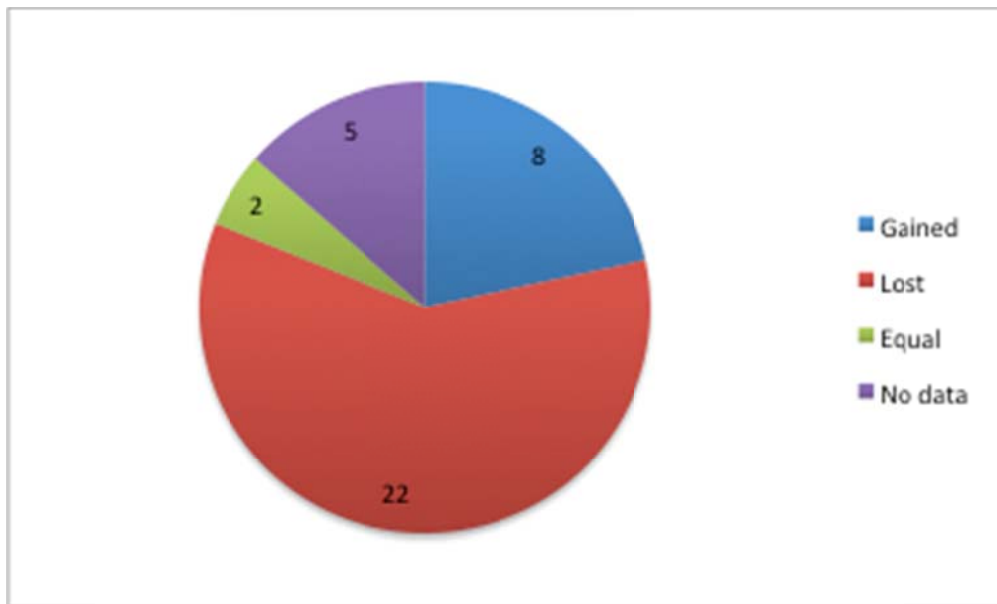
**Figure 6: Children and out-migrating households**



**Figure 7: Gain and loss in household income during the past 10 years**

In terms of household-level migration, it seems that few households migrate on a permanent basis. When evaluating the changes in household' income and composition in the assessed villages during the past ten years (Figure 7), 15 of the 37 communities noted having more households that gained income with an average 83% of households in these villages gained income. 11 of the 37 communities reported having lost the income in general, with an average 88% of households losing income in these villages.

To the contrary, with respect to the working age category (Figure 8), 22 of the 37 villages noted having more households that lost adults than households that gained (an average of 87% households lost adults while just 13% gained), while only 8 households reported having gained working-aged adults (an average 75% adults gained). This supports the idea that most of the out-migrants leave to work in other countries (particularly Thailand) but tend to return to their village of origin either when getting old or having saved enough money.



**Figure 8: Gain and loss of working age adults during the past 10 years**

### 2.3. In-migration patterns in villages

The rate of in-migration (Figure 9) is higher in villages composed of at least 50% ethnic Burmese (across all the assessed villages, ethnic Burmese constituted an average of 25% of the in-migrants), showing the dynamic settlement process of in-migrants in some villages. Mon villages (60% ethnic Mon and above) show a slightly higher rate of in-migration (8%) than Kayin villages (6%).

According to Figure 10, permanent in-migrants represent a greater percentage of the total population (11%) than seasonal in-migrants (only 3% of the total population). However, we must keep in mind that permanent in-migrants are generally counted in the villages' official lists while seasonal in-migrants are not, meaning that the respondents with access to the official lists (local government officials etc.) most probably do not know the exact number of seasonal migrants in each village. In addition, most permanent in-migrants migrate as households, so if we compare the composition between the two categories, seasonal in-migrants show a slightly higher proportion of men (64%) than permanent migrants (58%) and, to the contrary, a lower proportion of children under 18 (24% versus 29% for permanent in-migrants).

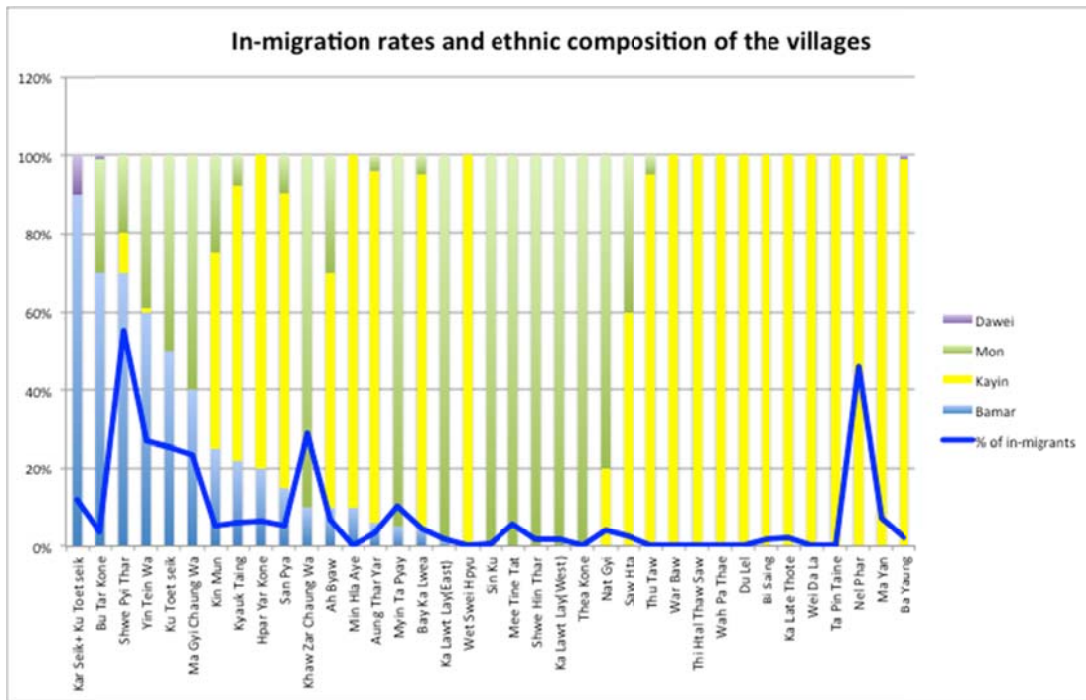
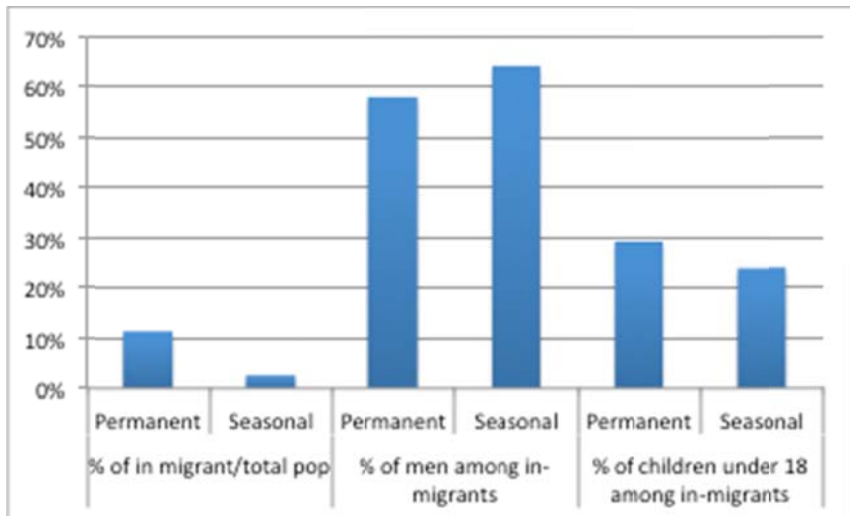


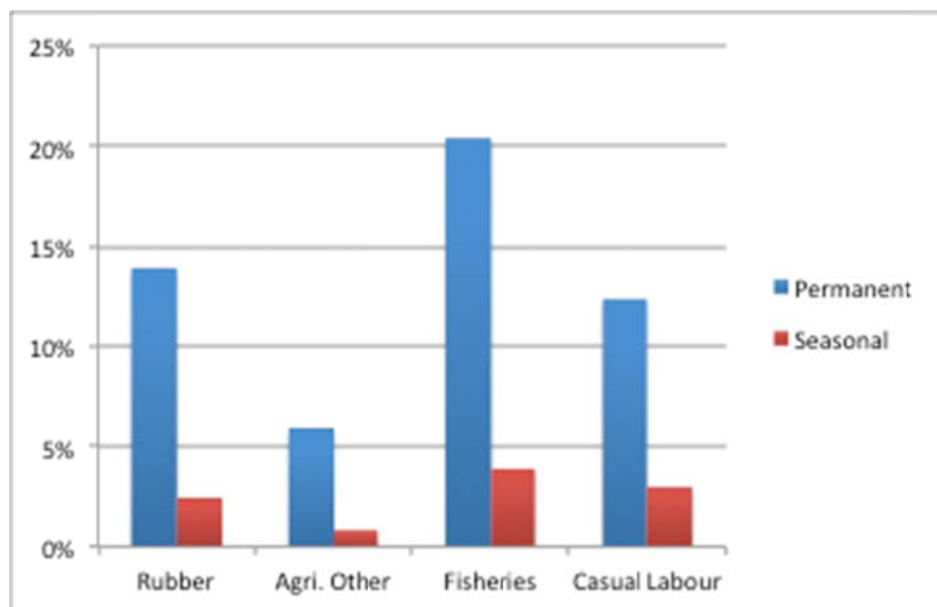
Figure 9: In-migration per ethnic composition of villages



**Figure 10: Distribution of permanent and seasonal in-migrants among 37 villages**

When disaggregating the data on the main livelihoods of the assessed villages (Figure 11), communities relying principally on fisheries and casual labour as sources of income logically show the highest proportions of in-migrants. Indeed, in-migrants coming from the Ayeyawaddy Region are generally skilled in small-scale fishing and rely on daily work opportunities for the remainder of their income.





**Figure 11: Percentage of permanent and seasonal in-migrants among total population**

#### **2.4. Population characteristics in migrant clusters**

The proportion of children in the clusters' population (Figure 12) shows that in general children under 5 years old are over-represented (average 11%) compared to the national average (8%) while children aged 5 to 17 years old are generally under-represented (16% in clusters against 24% for the national population).

When disaggregated according to the clusters' main livelihoods, clusters in which fisheries and casual labour are the main sources of income show the highest proportion of children aged under 5 and from 5 to 17 years old (Figure 13). This links to the statement made above that villages relying on fisheries and casual labour as the main sources of incomes show the highest proportion of in-migrants and that in-migrants on the long term may definitely settle in the region, principally around clusters practicing these livelihoods (such as Ann Din, Ah Baw Kyar Tan or Kauk Ha Yine).

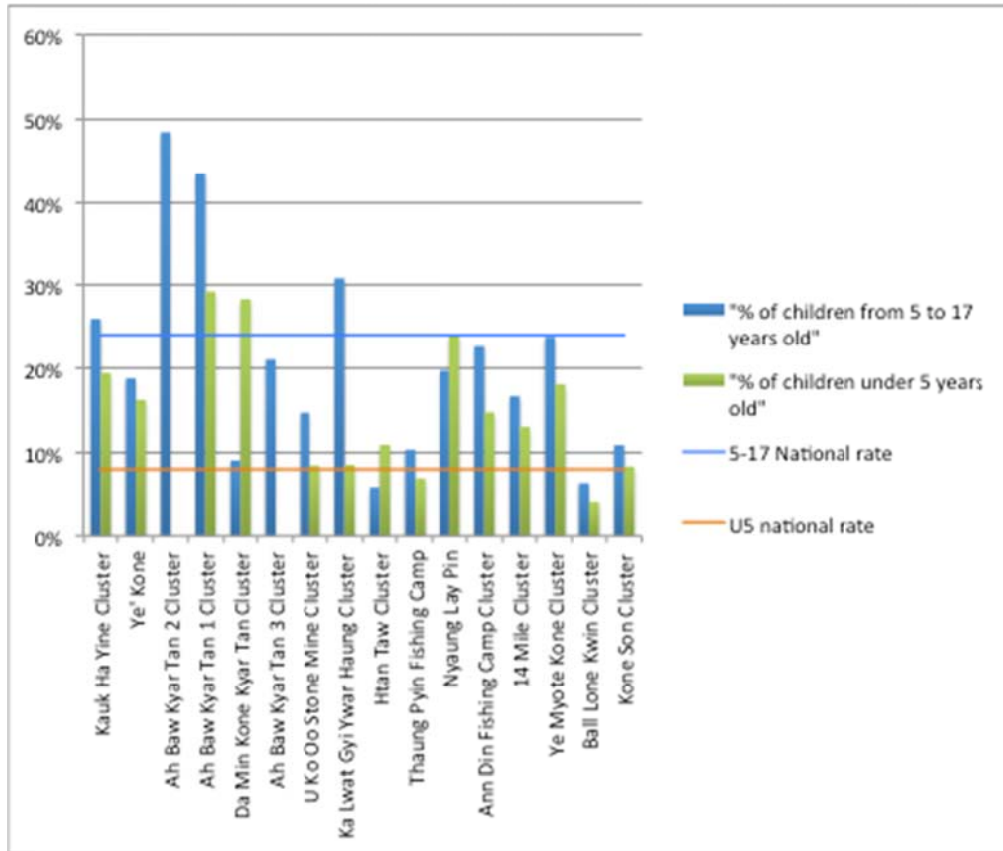


Figure 12: Proportion of children in migrant clusters

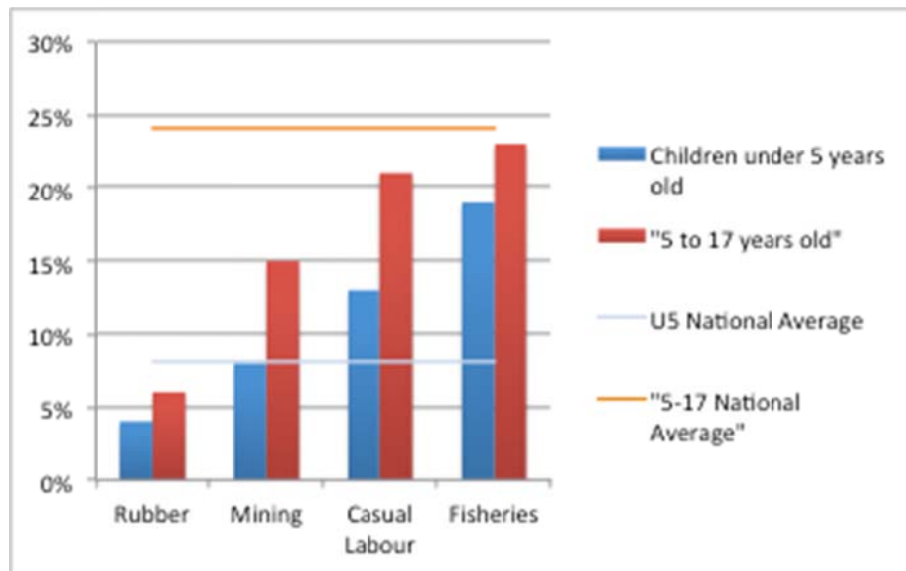
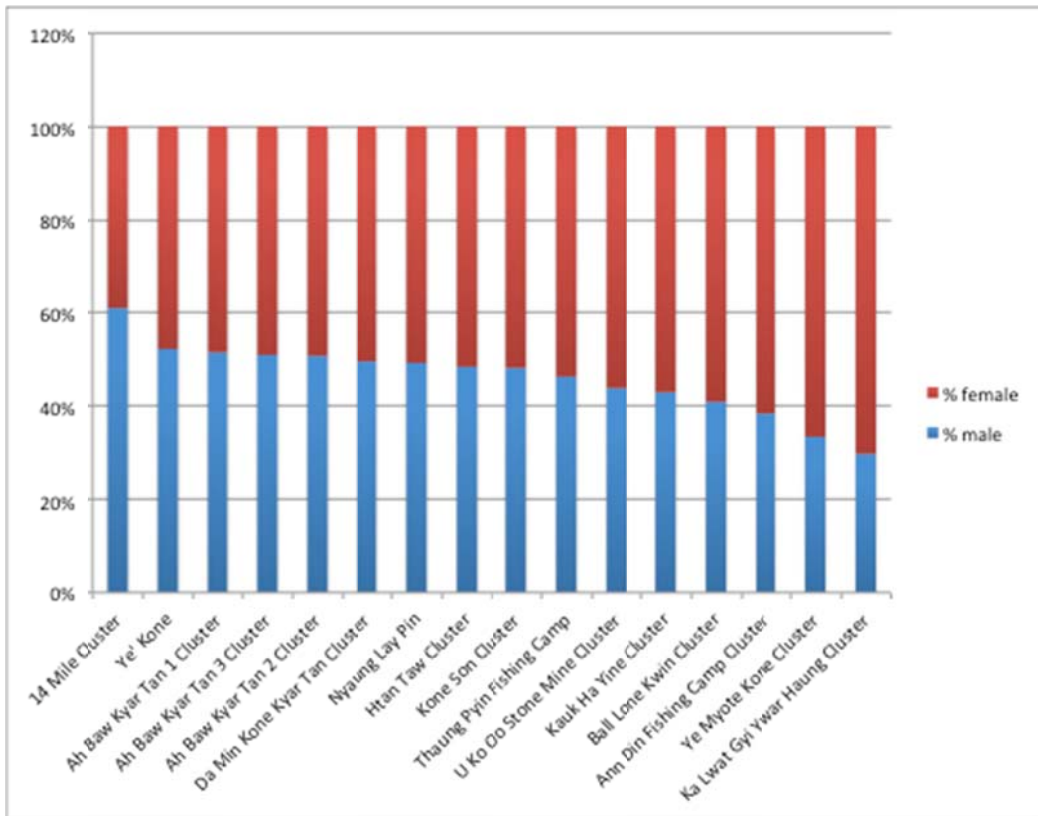


Figure 13: Proportion of children in clusters according to main sources of income

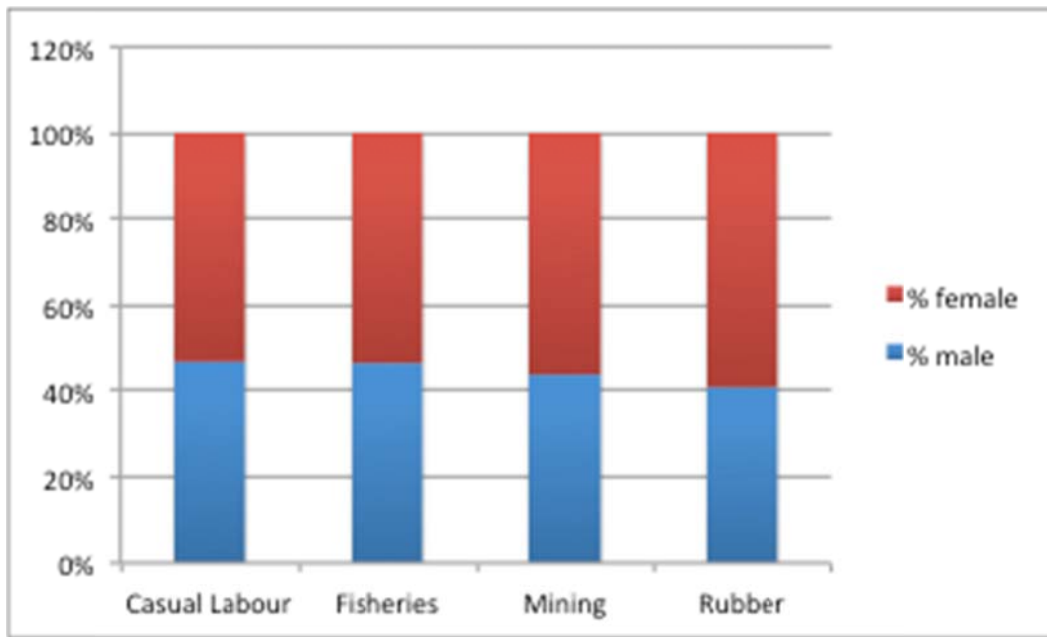
The community which main livelihood is from employment at rubber plantation shows the lowest proportion of child migrants, especially those aged 5 to 17. However, since only one

cluster (Ball Lone Kwin) stated that most of its migrants relied on rubber, we cannot assume that this finding is representative. This supports, however, the fact that most migrants working as rubber tappers are generally individuals or households living without their children (with the exception of infants that mothers have to breast-feed) and they prefer to leave their children in their villages of origin. The same goes for stone mining clusters which are precarious by nature as not only do they tend to move with the carriers, but, like rubber tappers, they have far fewer work opportunities during the rainy season so a large proportion of them return to their villages to work in other livelihoods (generally daily labourers in paddy). Frequent movement makes schooling difficult or even impossible for children, motivating migrants to leave their children behind.

Gender distribution varies greatly from one cluster to another (see figure 14), with an average of 44% male compared to 56% female. However, these variations are not seen when the clusters are grouped according to the main livelihoods as shown in Figure 15.



**Figure 14: Gender distribution in clusters**



**Figure 15: Gender composition of clusters according to main livelihoods**

Figure 16 shows the ratio of permanent in-migrants versus their seasonal counterparts in each cluster. As expected, males account for a greater proportion of seasonal than permanent in-migrants (Figure 17) while children under 18 account for a smaller proportion. This underlines the fact that in-migrants often migrate for seasonal employment without their children and then bring the remainder of the household if employment opportunities are good enough.

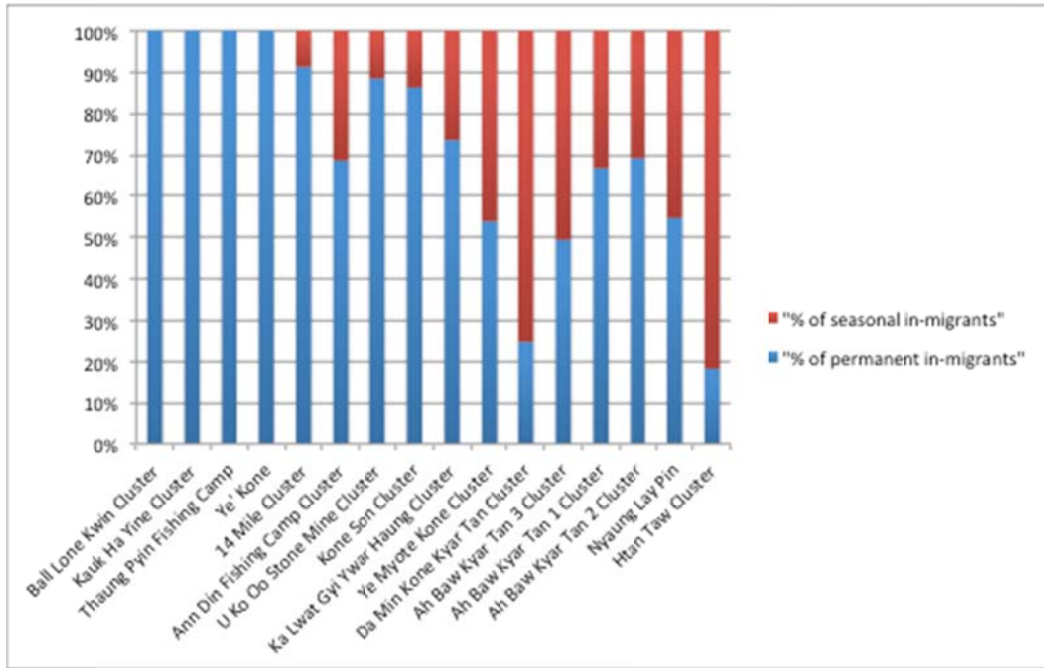


Figure 16: Ratio of permanent to seasonal in-migrants in clusters

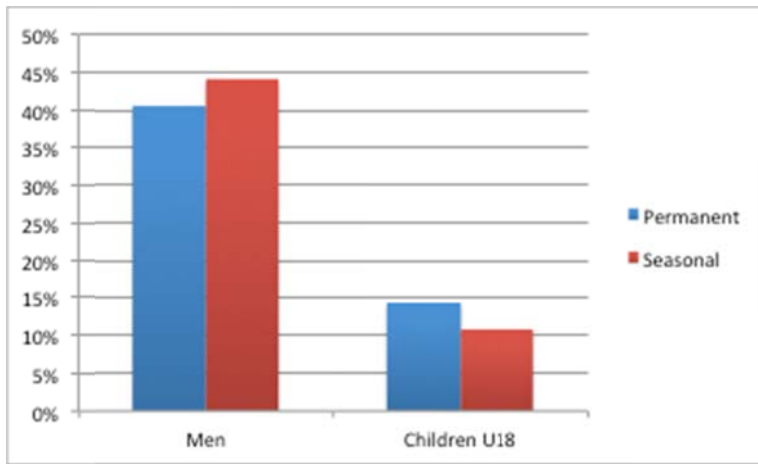
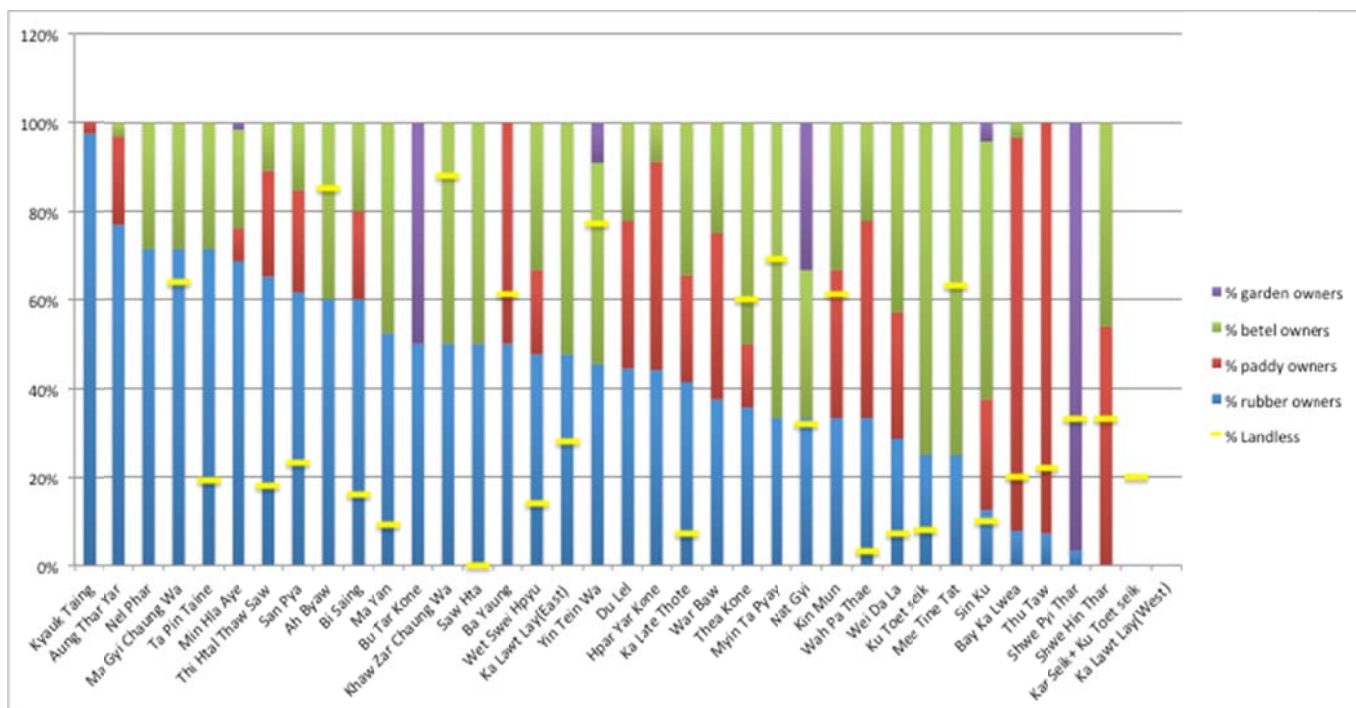


Figure 17: Proportion of men and children under 18 among migrants

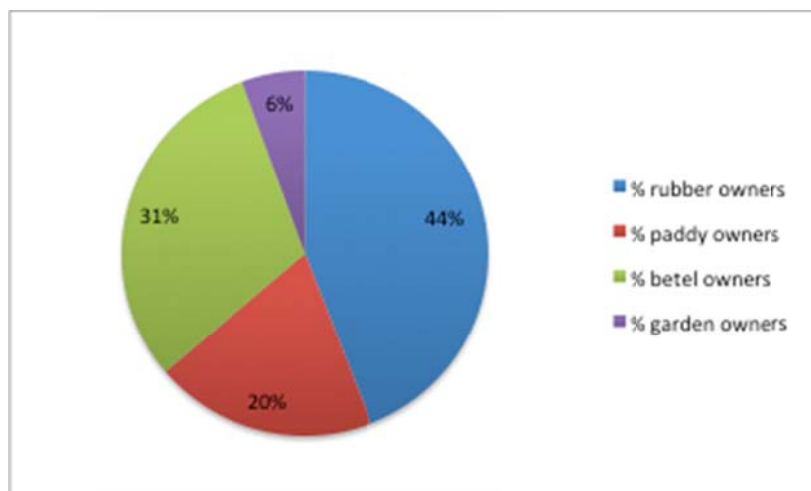
### 2.5. Land use and landlessness in villages

15 of the 37 assessed villages have rubber and gardens (including betel palm trees) but no paddy fields (Figure 18). In villages where paddy fields and rubber plantations are both present, there are on average 4 times more rubber owners than paddy field owners. Finally, only 3 villages have rice fields but no rubber plantations.



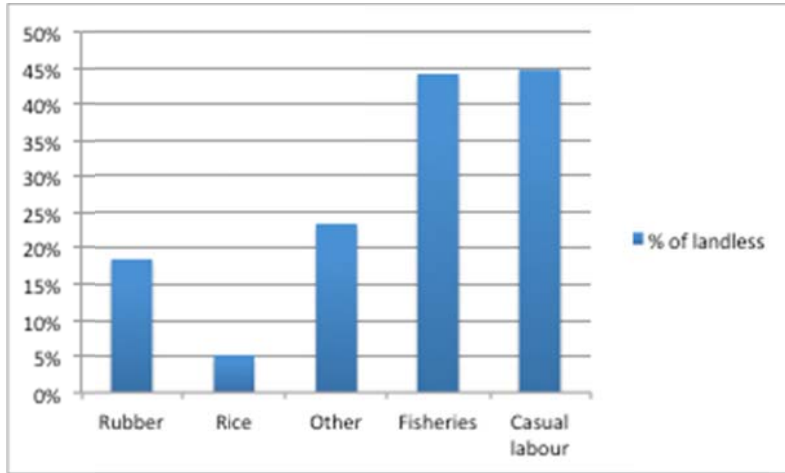
**Figure 18: Distribution of land owners regarding land use among the villages**

As a whole, rubber land owners dominate with 44% of the total land in the villages (Figure 19), followed by paddy land owners (31%) and betel nut palm tree land owners (20%).



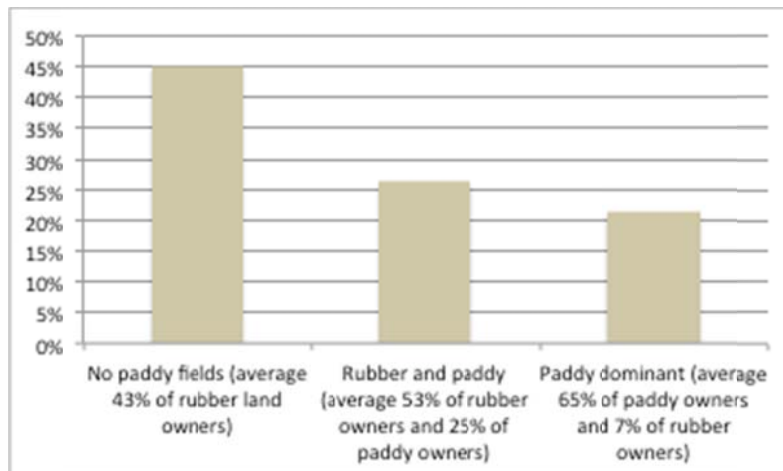
**Figure 19: Average distribution of land use among the 37 villages**

When looking at landlessness, it is not surprising to find higher percentages of landlessness among villages relying on fisheries and shows that landlessness is higher in villages dominated by rubber cultivation than those relying principally on paddy cultivation (Figure 20).



**Figure 20: Landlessness and villages' main livelihoods**

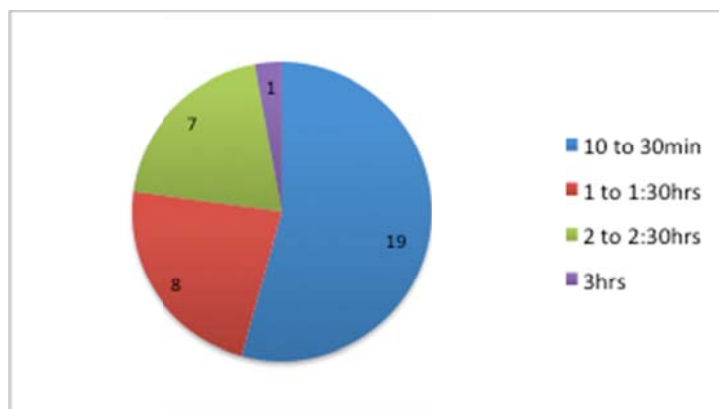
This seems to be confirmed when comparing the main types of agriculture per village, in terms of paddy versus rubber (Figure 21). Where there are no paddy field owners (15 villages in total), an average 45% of the population is landless, while where there are both paddy fields and rubber land owners, landlessness falls to 26% and 21% for villages where land use is dominated by paddy. This suggests that the transfer of livelihood from paddy fields to rubber plantation tends to concentrate more land into the hands of fewer individuals. Such transformation also demands a much greater initial investment. In support of this, according to interviews, land prices started to increase with the success of rubber plantations in the mid-1990s. One explanation could be that paddy fields owners had incentives to sell their land to wealthy individuals willing and able to invest in rubber fields. We discuss this further in the impacts of migration on land use in part 3 (Main Challenges).



**Figure 21: Average percentage of landless between rubber and paddy cultivation**

## 2.6. Health

The 37 villages assessed were partly chosen because of their lack of access to health services. It is therefore unsurprising to see that only two of them (Ku Toet Seik and Bu Tar Kone) have a sub-Rural Health Center (RHC)/RHC and that others have no health facilities whatsoever in their locations. Among the villages without health facilities, 19 are between a 10min and 30min drive by motorcycle from the nearest facilities (Figure 22) while the most remote villages are 3 hours away from the nearest health facilities. Similarly, only 9 villages have auxiliary midwives (AMWs) stationed in the villages.

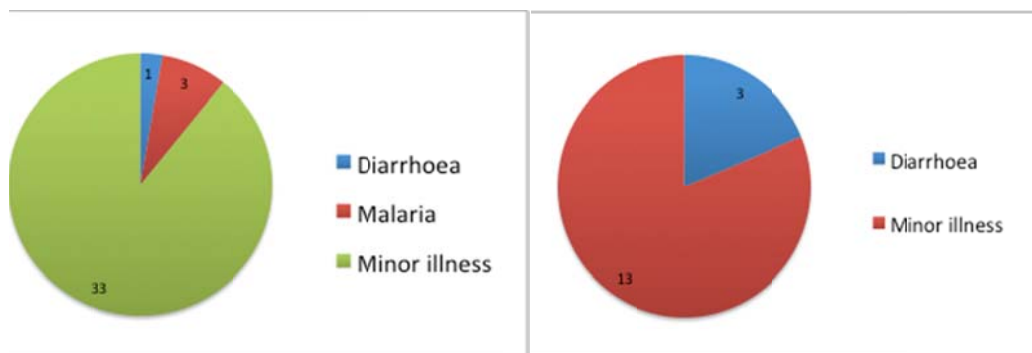


**Figure 22: Time (by motorcycle) to reach the nearest health facility in villages**

While there is no health facility present in any of the migrant clusters, all clusters are situated within 25min drive by motorcycle to health facilities present in the nearby villages. Further, accessing migrant clusters is not a problem as they are generally situated nearby large villages or on main roads in case of 14 miles and U Ko Oo stone mining clusters. 5 out of the 16 clusters even have access to a hospital situated in the nearby villages.

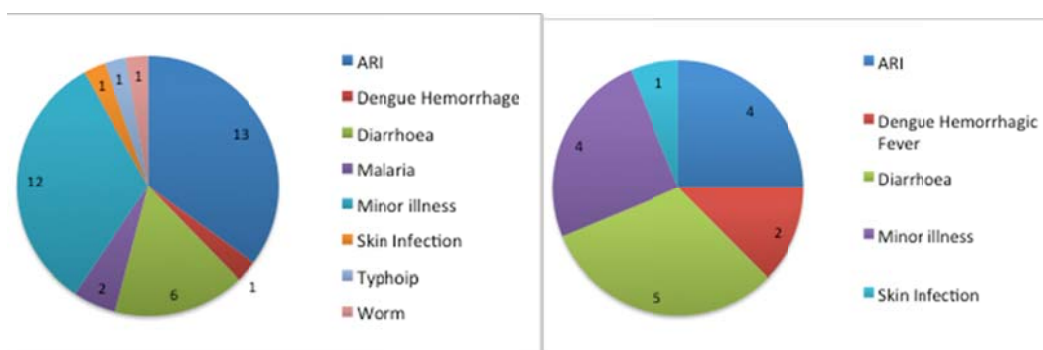
In most of the assessed villages (31 out of 37) and clusters (13 out of 16), adults suffer mainly from minor illness (see Figure 23). Diarrhoea affects 1 village and 3 clusters while malaria is the main problem for 3 villages – Min Hla Aye and Kin Mun (Kyaung Ywar village tract) that are remote and Ka Late Thote (Hnit Soke village tract). Remarkably, none of the other villages reported malaria as the second main health problem and only 5 villages reported it as the third main problem. Suspected Dengue Haemorrhagic Fever is reported as the third main health problem in only one village (Ka Late Thote where malaria is the main health problem). This can be explained by the health campaigns implemented by various organisations including IOM and Medical Action Myanmar resulting in an average 62% of villagers using mosquito nets.





**Figure 23: Main health problems for adults in villages (left) and in clusters (right)**

As for children, the most common health issue (Figure 24) is acute respiratory infection (ARI) in villages (13 out of 37), and is the case for 4 out of 16 clusters (Ah Baw Kya Tan 2, Kauk Ha Yine, Taung Pyin and Ye Kone). Minor illness is the main health issue for children in 12 villages and 4 clusters. Malaria is the main health problem for children in 2 villages of Kyaung Ywar village tract, the same villages that reported it as the main health problem for adults. Clusters which are generally situated on main roads or near the sea are not affected by malaria. The main health issue in 5 of the 16 clusters is diarrhoea (Ball Lone Kwin, Htan Taw, Ye Myote Kone, Ann Din and Kone Son). While 1 of these 5 clusters (Ann Din fishing camp) has to buy water, the others have access to tube wells. 2 of them – Ye Myote Kone Cluster (Chaung Taung village tract) and Kone Sone Cluster (Han Gan village tract) reported having inadequate supply of drinking water during the dry season.



**Figure 24: Main health issues for children in villages (left) and clusters (right)**

3 villages reported having faced a higher occurrence of disease in the past year. Ka Late Thote (Hnin Sone village tract) and Aung Thar Yar (Lane Maw Chan village tract) faced an increased number of cases of diarrhoea and Saw Hta (Kyaung Ywar village tract) reported a higher number of measles cases.

Regarding clusters, two situated in Taung Bon village tract – Kauk Ha Yine Cluster and Ye' Kone cluster – reported a higher occurrence of dengue haemorrhagic fever and Thaung Pyin fishing camp reported diarrhoea.

While 29 of the 37 assessed villages received children under 5 and pregnant women immunization, Hpar Yar Kone (Lane Maw Chan village tract), Min Hla Aye and Myin Ta Pyay (Kyaung Ywar village tract) and Ma Gyi Chaung Wa (Ma Gyi village tract) did not receive any expanded programme of immunization (EPI).

All clusters except U Ko Oo stone mine received children under 5 and pregnant women immunization. There are the different health seeking behaviours for villages and clusters regarding minor ailments, emergencies, child birth and family planning (figures 25 to 28).

While minor ailments seem to be addressed by a wide range of stakeholders in villages (depending on who is available), in clusters most rely on family. Whoever people go to see for minor ailments, the cost rarely exceeds 1,500MMK. Emergency medical costs on average 180,000MMK according to the respondents in both clusters and villages.

Interestingly, the cost of child birth is always higher for clusters' inhabitants than for villagers (Table 4). Logically, the difference increases with the cost of child birth, so for delivering with a Traditional Birth Attendant (TBA) there is a difference of 2,000MMK while with a midwife the difference is of 12,000MMK. This can be explained firstly by the fact AMWs and MWs have to come to the cluster which increases their transportation costs, and secondly because most of the health providers ask for retributions which are not fixed and therefore may charge migrants more simply because they are not locals.

**Table 4: Average prices for a child birth with different providers among villages and clusters**

	<b>TBA</b>	<b>AMW</b>	<b>MW</b>
<b>Village</b>	11,000	12,000	28,000
<b>Cluster</b>	13,000	18,000	40,000

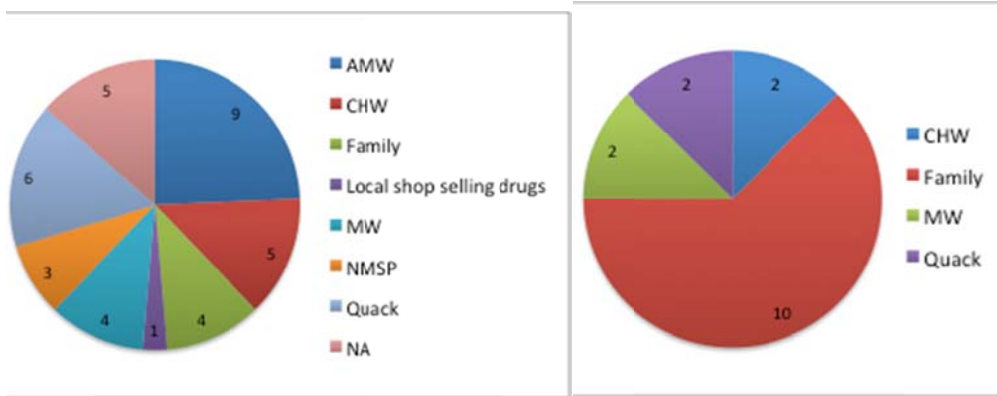


Figure 25: Health seeking behaviour for minor ailments among villages (left) and clusters (right)

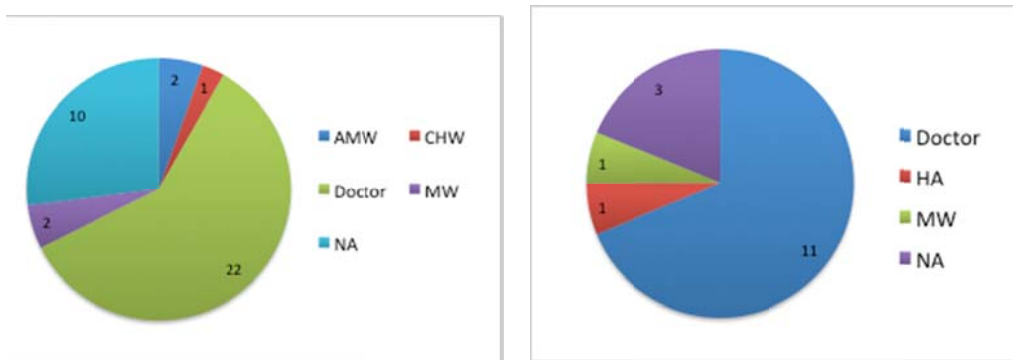


Figure 26: Health seeking behaviour for emergencies among villages (left) and clusters (right)

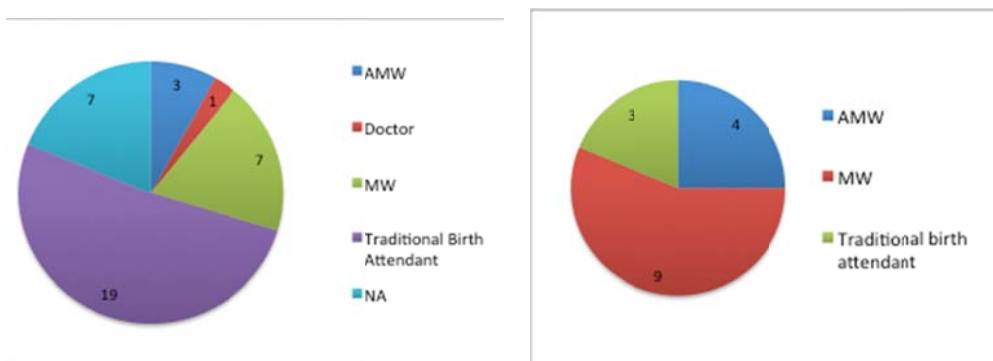
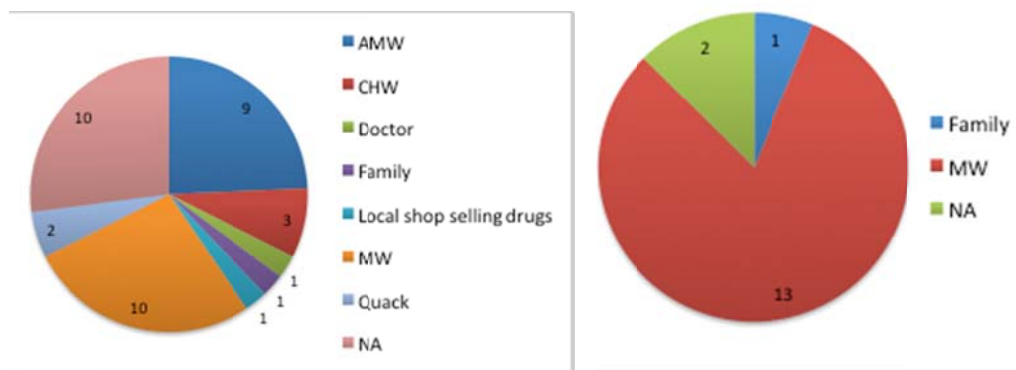


Figure 27: Health seeking behaviour for child birth among villages (left) and clusters (right)



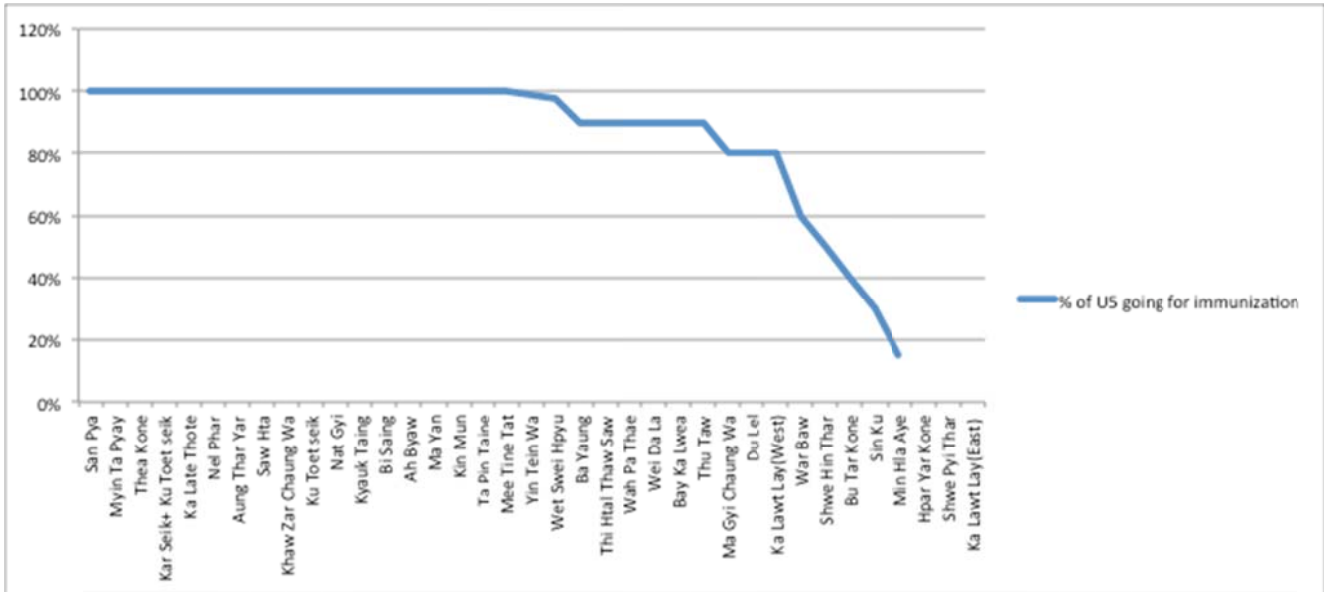
**Figure 28: Health seeking behaviour for family planning among villages (left) and clusters (right)**

In 5 of the 37 villages, women deliver either at home or at the nearest sub-RHC/RHC, in 7 women deliver either at home, sub-RHC/RHC or hospital, and in 6 women deliver either at home or at the hospital. In clusters, except from Kauk Ha Yine and U Ko Oo Stone mine, home is a usual place for delivery. Sub-RHC/RHC is also frequented by migrants, except those living in Ah Baw Kyar Tan 1 and 3, 14 Mile, Thaung Pyin, Ball Lone Kwin, Nyaung Lay Pin, U Ko Oo Stone Mine, Ye Myote Kone, Kone Son and Ka Lwat Gyi Ywar Haung clusters.

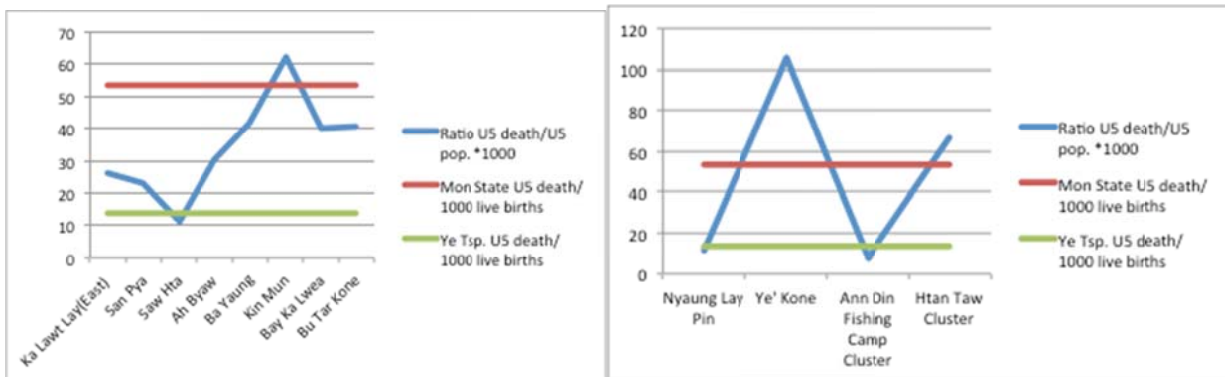
In 36 out of the 37 villages women receive antenatal care, while only in Mee Tine Tat did women seem not to receive antenatal care at all. The most common location for receiving antenatal care is the sub-RHC/RHC (22 villages out of 37). The second most common location is the TBA (20 of the 37 villages), while in only 6 of the 37 villages women also go to the AMW. Finally, in only 5 villages do women visit to the hospital, and in 2 villages, women consult a quack. Among those who visit the RHCs, in 10 villages women also consult with the traditional birth attendant or AMW (4 of the 10). In clusters, all women have access to sub-RHC or RHC for antenatal care. Some women also consult with the TBAs, while in Ah Baw Kyar Tan 1, 2 and 3 as well as in Htan Taw cluster some women also consult with the AMWs.

For post-natal care, the situation is reversed with more women consulting with the TBAs (21 out of 37 villages), 16 to RHCs, 11 to AMWs, 3 to hospitals and 3 to quacks. In 18 of the 37 villages 100% of the children under 5 go for immunization (Figure 29). In Min Hla Aye (Kyaung Ywar village tract) only 15% of the children under 5 received immunization, as the AMW is not reaching the village which is 3 hours' drive from the nearest facility by motorcycle.

In clusters, 13 of them show principally to the RHC for postnatal care and, between 60% and 100% of the children under 5 received immunization (average 86%).



**Figure 29: Percentage of U5 children going for immunization in the villages (data not available for Shwe Pyi Thar and Ka Lawt Lay East)**

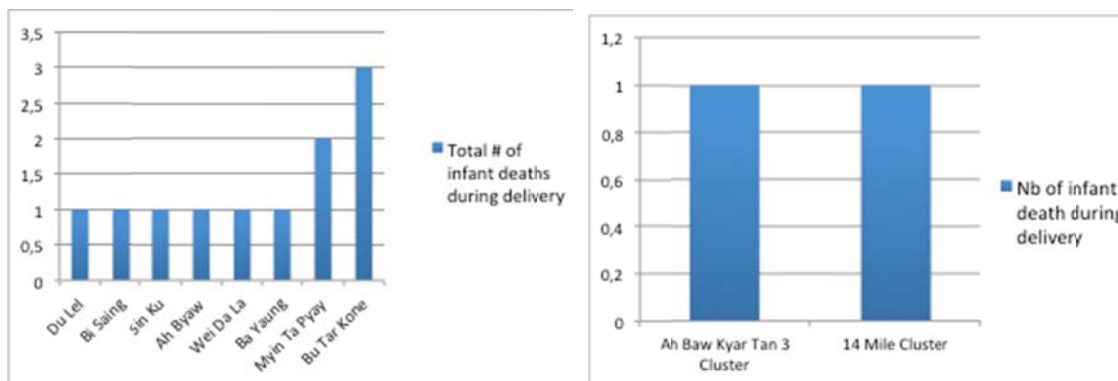


**Figure 30: U5 death in villages (left) and in clusters (right) between April 2013 to March 2014 (Mon State U5 death rate from Myanmar Health Statistics 2010, p. 72, Ye Township rate from Health Profile Ye Township, 2013)**

8 of the 37 villages and 5 of the 16 clusters had U5 death cases during last year (April 2013 to March 2014) which is quite telling, especially for clusters. Surprisingly, none of the villages concerned reported any disease outbreak while among the concerned clusters only Ye Kone (Taung Bon village tract) reported diarrhoea last year. When compared to the Mon State rate of U5 deaths<sup>2</sup>, Kin Mun village with 2 deaths out of a total U5 population of 32

<sup>2</sup> Myanmar Health Statistics 2010, Ministry of Health, Republic of the Union of Myanmar, p. 70.

children, Ye Kone cluster with 2 U5 deaths out of a total of 19 children under 5 and Htan Taw cluster with 10 U5 deaths out of a total of 150 children under 5 seem above average (Figure 31). However, when compared to the Ye Township U5 death rate<sup>3</sup>, most of the affected villages (except from Saw Hta) and clusters (except from Ann Din fishing camp) are above the standards.



**Figure 31: Infant deaths during delivery (April 2013 to March 2014) among villages (left) and clusters (right)**

Of the 8 villages that faced infant death during delivery (see figure 31), 6 reported principally attending the TBA for delivery, 1 to MW and the other to AMW. Regarding 14 Miles cluster, the death occurred due to a lack of referral mechanism following complications of pregnancy (retrograde diagnosis revealed ante-partum haemorrhage – concealed type) before the delivery.

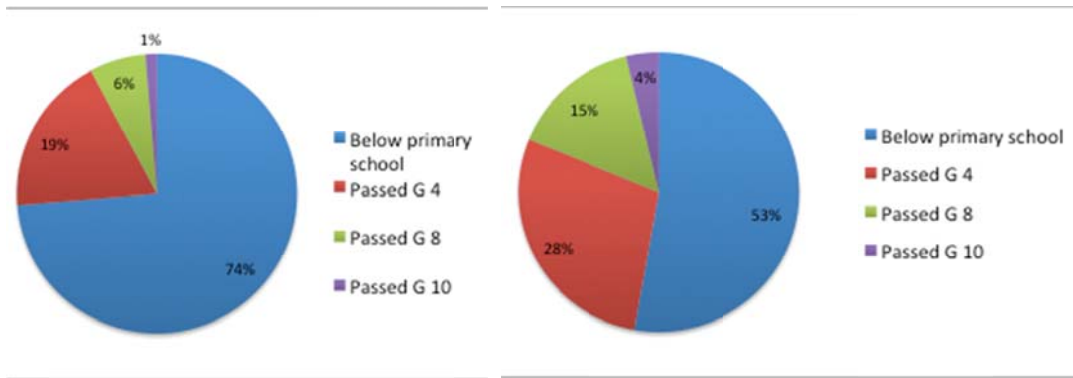
Finally, 3 villages each faced 1 case of maternal death, namely Kyauk Taing and Kin Mun (Kyaung Ywar village tract) and Yin Tein Wa (Yin Yei village tract). Only one cluster, Ah Baw Kyar Tan 3, faced 1 maternal death during delivery.

## 2.7. Education

33 of the 37 villages at least have a primary school. Of the four others, Ta Pin Taine (Hnit Hnit Soke village tract), Ma Yan (Kyaung Ywar village tract) and Thi Htal Thaw Saw (Ka Nin Ka Mawt village tract) are remote villages while Kar Seik/Ku Toet seik (Hnit Kayin village tract) has access to a school in the main village, Hnit Kayin.

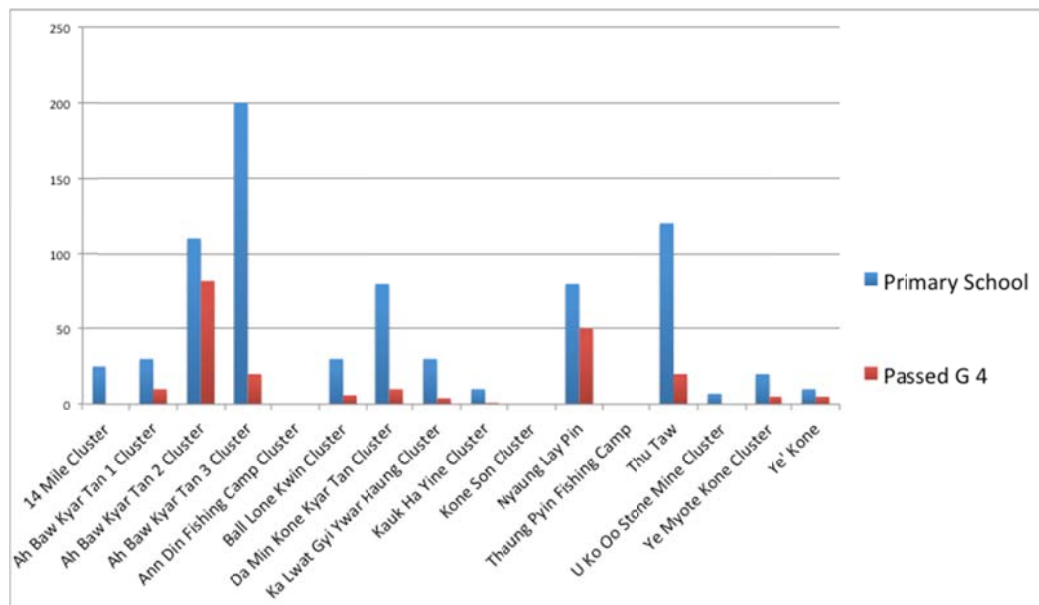
Comparing the education level of the villagers over the past 10 years with school attendance during last year (Figure 32), it seems quite clear that the level of educational attainment is improving. While only 19% of the total villagers reached middle school, during last year 28% of the children were attending middle school.

<sup>3</sup> Health Profile Ye Township, Mon State, 2013.



**Figure 32: Education level of the villagers during past ten years (left) and school attendance during last schooling year in villages (right)**

However, the situation regarding clusters is more complicated. As shown in Figure 33, there are very few children attending middle school. In some clusters, such as Ann Din fishing camp (no school and the nearest is too far to travel to/from in a day), Kone Sone cluster and Taung Pyin fishing camp (also too far), no children are able to attend school. Another issue for many migrants, as told during the qualitative interviews in Kauk Ha Yine cluster, is having no household registration papers which prevent many children from attending school. Further, as noted section 3.1.1 above, authorities are often reluctant to provide such papers to migrants.



**Figure 33: School attendance in clusters for last schooling year**

The main reason for school drop-out whether in villages or clusters is the cost of sending a child to school (see Figures 34 and 35). Note that for clusters this also includes the opportunity cost of having a child at school rather than bringing in additional income.

Interestingly, some clusters and villages stated that children having to migrate with their parents was the main reason for school dropout. Of the 5 villages, Wet Swei Hpyu, Ka Late Thote and Thu Taw are remote Kayin villages, while the Mon village of Khaw Zar Chaung Wa is situated near the town of Khaw Zar from where out-migration is actively undertaken, especially to Thailand. Finally, Shwe Pyi Thar is one of the few Burmese dominated villages. The two clusters stating this as the main reason for school dropout are Ka Lwat Gyi Ywar Haung Cluster and U Ko Oo Stone Mine Cluster, while 14 Mile Cluster note it as the 3<sup>rd</sup> main reason.

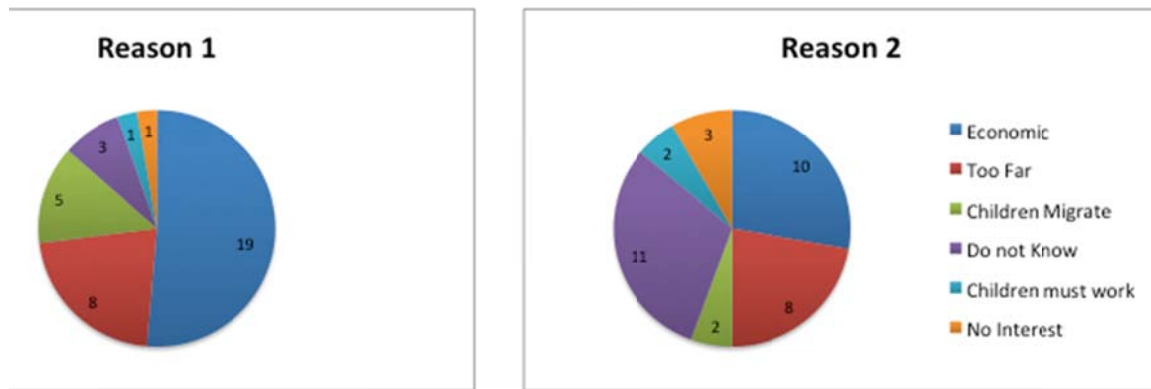


Figure 34: The 3 main reasons for school dropout in villages

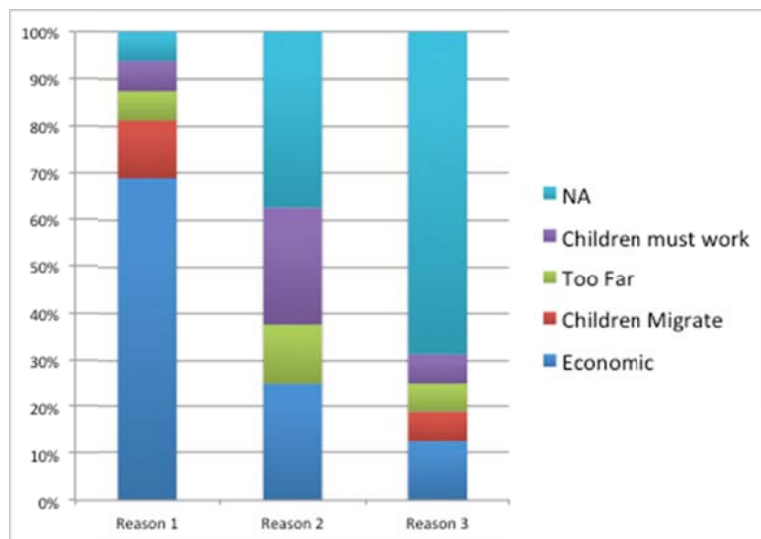
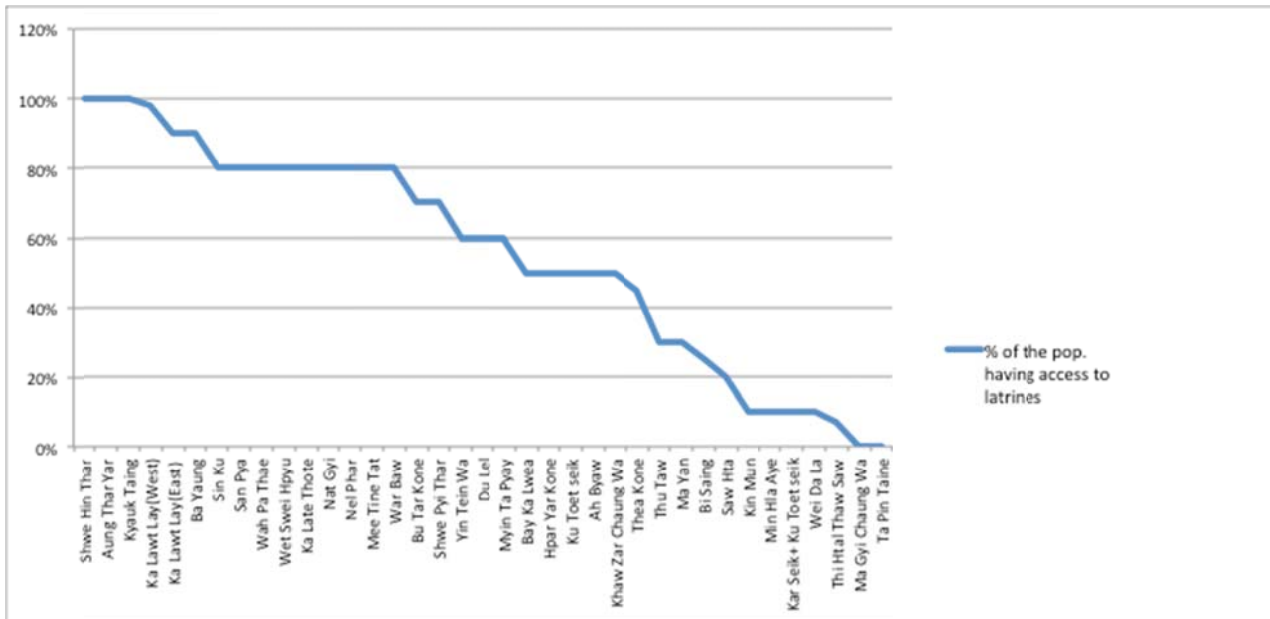


Figure 35: The 3 main reasons for school dropout in clusters



## 2.8. Water and sanitation

23 villages note having water supply issues during the dry season, most of them relying on streams and tube wells. Among these, Kar Seik/Ku Toet Seik and Yin Tein Wa villagers need to buy water from other villages while 5 of them – Bay Ka Lwea, Nat Gyi, Net Phar, Ah Byaw and Thi Htal Thaw Zaw - rely only on mountain streams for both drinking and fresh water.



In 25 villages, at least 50% of the population has access to latrines, for an average 56% among all villages (Figure 36). However, the data obtained does not reveal any link between the percentage of the population having access to latrines and the 5 villages stating that diarrhoea is the main health issue for children since between 50% to 90% of the population of those villages have access to latrines.

As shown in figure 36, excluding Ye Gone and Kauk Ha Yine clusters' (where 80% of the population have access to latrines), on average only 20% of the populations living in clusters have access to latrines. The supply of fresh water is also an issue and most of these clusters have to buy water from nearby villages. Fresh water availability is an issue for all villages and clusters in the area, especially during the dry season.

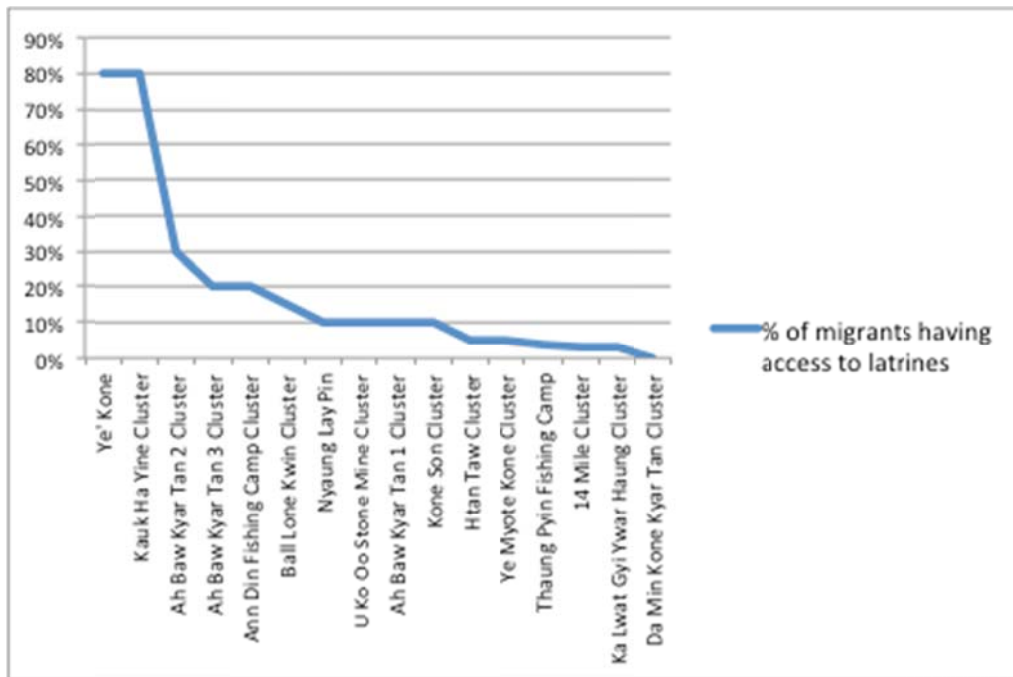


Figure 36: Percentage of access to latrines in clusters

### 3. Main challenges

This part builds upon the results of the quantitative assessment, adding context through the findings of the qualitative assessment.

#### 3.1. Migration challenges

##### 3.1.1. *Relationship between locals and in-migrants*

According to villagers, the main challenge brought by out-migration is absence of workforce in the villages. Out-migration of locals necessitates an influx of internal migrants to compensate for the lack of labour. Yet, as noted by local villagers in 3 village, one of the issues related to such out-migration of the locals and in-migration of internal migrants from other places in Myanmar is growing conflict between the locals and in-migrants.

In-migrants can be categorized as follows:

- Those diffused geographically who work in rubber plantations. They are generally seasonal migrant workers but with time may progressively settle in the village they work for. Some of them marry with local Mon people. The migrant households coming to work in rubber plantations tend to leave their children behind due to the seasonality of their work.
- Those working for stone mining (quarry) activities, migrating in groups and “affiliated” to a foreman who is in contract with one of the mine auctioneers. These groups are relatively mobile: some go back to their places of origin during the rainy season when workloads decrease, especially if they have paddy fields in their villages of origin. Their mobility is nevertheless hampered by the foremen’s will to build up their workers’ loyalty, as there is competition amongst foremen for skilled labour in this employment sector. Coercive means of maintaining workers on-site are also used, such as not giving them their full salary if they leave. These in-migrant communities can be considered as clusters but contrary to other types of migrant clusters (see below), they are often mobile as they move with the mines and road construction projects.
- Year-round clusters that are continuously expanding. They are composed mostly of daily labourers who originally came to work on rubber plantations and paddy fields and then settled outside existing Mon villages to work in small scale fisheries and perform daily labour. They then call other villagers from their villages of origin. Some also came when marine fishing activities were booming (e.g. fish bladders as in the case of Ann Din fishing camp) and then stayed to work in activities such as bamboo rafts trawling and smaller activities such as small tiger (stow) nets trawling.

There is a clear pattern regarding local and in-migrant relationships. Interactions between the two communities are in most cases strictly restricted to the economic sphere. Only a

few in-migrants who arrived many years ago settled in Mon villages and eventually married Mon or Kayin people. In-migrants generally have a restricted access to resources:

- Most of them cannot obtain a family list (*ein htaung su sayin*) which is necessary to obtain an ID card. As pointed out in Table 6, the need to obtain an authorization to settle from local land owners and authorities is also a way to limit the clusters' formal expansion.
- They generally do not have access to land ownership in the region (Table 6), which is partly related to the above. Only a few in-migrant settlers (such as in Kauk Ha Yine) have been able to buy housing land in their cluster and it is even less likely to happen these days given the sky rocketing land prices seen this year.

This strategy of limiting access to regional resources (administrative, economic) seems to be a way to deal with the phenomenon of out-migration resulting in the necessity to bring “outsiders” to the Mon-dominated areas. As told by a small group of wealthy Mon individuals, “Burmese are good to *use* [at work]”, as they are “submissive” and “cheaper” compared to Mon workers. However, the local communities/authorities feel that the Burmese “colonization” of the region has to be contained, i.e. by restricting them to a low socio-economic level. Indeed, it is not a coincidence that intermarriage between Mon and Burmese in-migrants happens mostly among fishing communities – communities that are still considered as marginal and lower class on the local socio-economic scale. For the same reasons, those patrons who prospered thanks to fishing activities have generally reinvested their money into agricultural businesses. The nature of the Mon-Burmese relationship is also linked to the former government’s strategy of giving land to Burmese in-migrants to “monitor” the movement and activities of insurgent armed groups. For this reason Mon people maintain a distrustful attitude toward Burmese people.

### 3.1.2. *Social outcomes of migration*

In some communities, villagers also pointed out the disruption of social cohesion (including drug use) as an outcome of out-migration.

Indeed, a large proportion of working age adults is migrating. As observed above, 63% of out-migrants belong to the 18 to 39 years old category while the same category represents around 36% of Myanmar’s total population. Further, almost half of migrating households leave one or more children behind, generally in the care of the elderly in the households. To give an idea of the extent to which out-migration networks between Mon State and Thailand have been established, couples giving birth to a child in Bangkok can send the newborn by bus, accompanied with “nurses” to their home village in Myanmar. In addition, elders interviewed during the qualitative assessment noted having great difficulties bridging the generational gap with their grandchildren and therefore have less control over them. Drug use is one of the outcomes of out-migration according to elders in the qualitative assessment. The most commonly used drug in the area is meta-amphetamine tablet.

According to some villagers the price is only 100MMK per pill produced locally in rubber plantations. Many (Mon) villagers said that drugs can be bought in Kayin villages (e.g. Don Pi and Hnit Soke village in Ye Township). According to the same informants, Kayin authorities (KNU) ordered the manufacturers not to sell to Kayin people. If the augmentation of drug use can be attributed to the lack of care children receive when their parents are abroad, this is corroborated by the fact that most users are locals rather than in-migrants. Besides drug use issues, parent-child relationships are often reduced to remittances, which cannot teach moral values and know-how about the region, its livelihood and culture. The teaching of Mon values is therefore often limited to 3 months (March-April-May) per year during the Mon Culture and Literature program developed by the association of the same name.

Migration also affects migrant clusters' communities. As underlined in table 6, the greatest challenge is the lack of care migrants can provide to their children due to the seasonal and mobile nature of their work. This is especially true for those who left their children behind but it is also the case for migrants having to work all day and do not have the necessary social networks (as they do in their place of origin) to take care of their children. Indeed, it was also observed during the qualitative study that some children have to quit school in order to take care of their younger siblings. The other fact is that migrants from clusters have also started to migrate to foreign countries, especially to Thailand. Among other outcomes, trafficking (as pointed out by migrants living in Ah Baw Kyar Tan cluster, one of the largest clusters in the Township) affects those who attempt to reach Thailand as Burmese workers coming from other regions have less knowledge of employment networks abroad.

**Table 5: Migration challenges among residents of migrant clusters (out of 14 clusters)**

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Occurrences</b>
Can't care children because of migratory works/can't send them to school	9
Insufficient job opportunities/irregular jobs	6
Difficulty to get a shelter because of prices and need permissions from owners	4
Lack of workforce	2
Migrate due to insufficient income in daily basis	2
Can't return back to native towns for some migrant workers for social and other temporary events	1
Cluster is situated in the isolated place	1
Do not accept from school the migrant's children with no birth registration	1
No challenges	1
Owners give the indemnity to the left family members from the hands of the brokers but some brokers do not pay back to them	1
Some migrants threat to social cohesion with their bad habits	2
Suffer from some trafficking	1
There is no space or no own land for cultivation	1
When the migrant workers dead in the sea, their family members form other state and divisions can't know	1

### 3.1.3. *Migration and livelihood*

As seen in table 7, migration is strongly linked to local livelihoods, and according to the villagers these are not stable enough nor profitable enough to start their own business. Along the same lines, Mon youth are keen to migrate in order to save some capital by earning better wages (even from low paid jobs) in foreign countries.

**Table 6: Livelihood challenges according to villagers**

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Occurrences</b>
No regular jobs	31
No start-up money to invest	14
Income and expenditure are not balanced	6
Do not own the own land of cultivation/less number of land owners	5
Low value of rubber this year	3
Financial difficulties	2
Less number of workforce in the village	2
Low salary rate for daily workers	2
Seasonal jobs make it difficult to get permanent workers	2
Bad transportation makes difficult to exchange the local products	1
Can't stand the family in good status due to low salary rate in migrant worker	1
Can't work in rainy season due to flooding	1
Difficult in livelihood due to lack of good lands to cultivate	1
Do not get the advance money from the owners when the migrants face with emergency situation	1
Do not get the fishes in the half of the trip which goes to sea especially in rainy season	1
Do not get the full wages from the owners	1
High interest rate to borrow the money	1
Less job opportunity due to low education level	1
Need the proper knowledge on gardening	1
No challenges	1
No proper technique for cultivation and gardening	2
Unstable weather condition makes difficult to do the cultivations	1

Out-migration and the accumulation of capital have a certain impact on local land tenure and land use. Mon migrants invest in land available locally to transform it into rubber plantations as soon as they have saved enough money. Paddy cultivation is progressively abandoned and few people maintain their fields and those who continue do so more for tradition than for profit. This may also impact on the will to sell paddy lands (especially if inappropriate for rubber cultivation) to investors. Indeed, around Ann Din village, for example, hundreds of acres have been sold to a Myanmar-Japan joint venture for a charcoal purification project. This also relates to the peace building process which makes investments in the area more secure, together with the opening of East-West Southeast Asian corridors, for instance, the one passing through Dawei. This also relates to a general

disinterest in paddy cultivation, which results in weak production rates compared to rubber (despite the decrease in rubber prices this year). However, landlessness seems to be increasing with the conversion of paddy fields to rubber plantations, which suggests an increase in land concentration coming along with this transformation process (cf. 2.5 Land use and landlessness). Also regarding land use, migration and an increase in available investments led to saturation in the demand for land purchase, especially in low-lying Mon villages. While this may represent a hindering factor for small landholders wishing to buy land in the area, many Mon investors have already purchased land in other parts of Myanmar – also to cultivate rubber trees – such as in Mawbi or Hlawga near Yangon, but also in Rakhine, Ayeyarwaddy and even around Nay Pyi Taw. This process is facilitated by the fact that rubber is one of the industrial crops promoted by the government, making it easier to buy and transform paddy fields into rubber plantations.

The fact that out-migration is so widespread in the region results in a lack of affordable workforce locally, including: rubber tappers, miners, paddy field labourers, and fishermen. Hence the absent Mon labour is replaced by a Burmese workforce (and marginally by Mons coming from other areas such as the surroundings of Bago town) coming mainly from Bago and Ayeyarwaddy Regions, and to a less extent the Dry Zone and Sagaing Region. Wages offered to labourers in Mon State (around 4000MMK/day) are at least twice the wages a daily worker can earn in Ayeyarwaddy Region or Dry Zone. Yet it is not enough for Mon workers when compared to the wages they earn in Thailand (around 300Baht/day or 9000MMK/day for unskilled jobs). It seems, however, that a lack of labour force as a result of out-migration is affecting more Kayin villages than Mon villages, notably because Burmese in-migrant labourers do not participate in the livelihood of Kayin villages as much as in the Mon ones. Kayin villages' livelihood (rubber plantation, paddy fields and gardening) is thus more threatened by the lack of available workforce given that out-migration is affecting both communities at the same level.

Finally, out-migration has an economic impact rooted in the de-localized nature of development in Mon State. The term “de-localized” refers here to the fact that economic development relies on investments which are earned outside the region, for instance, in Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore. In addition, there is local economic participation of the in-migrants in the different livelihoods of the region, principally rubber and fisheries, the outcomes of which go beyond the Mon State – except for the goods bought locally on a daily basis – as in-migrants mostly reinvest their money in their places of origin. Indeed, seasonal workers are generally not willing to stay in the region. The migrants living in such clusters seem to be, on the other hand, families having no other places to live, as in the case of those residing in Kauk Ha Yine cluster who came from a village situated on the bank of the Sittaung River and disappeared with a massive landslide in 1998. On the other, there are those who came to profit by marine fisheries as in Ann Din fishing camp and stayed after business opportunities declined. It is more or less the same for the Burmese community of Ku Toet Seik village where the first settlers came to work in salt production and later



transformed themselves into ferry carriers when the salt market collapsed. Quarries' exploitation brings about the same issues or even worse given that investments do not benefit Mon State and that profits mainly end up in the hands of military officials. Adding to this, land use and income generation for rubber plantation depend on a foreign market that declined this year (as pointed out by 3 communities).

### 3.2. Health challenges

Obviously, the lack of transportation and the bad condition of roads (especially in remote areas) make it difficult to access proper health care and referral systems. The second main challenge is the lack of money to afford health expenses, especially in the case of emergency (Table 8). The irregularity of MW visits and bad referral systems are probably the main cause of death for children under 5 and during delivery (for both children and mothers). This is also the case for clusters where most migrants also have difficulties showing to proper health centres (Table 9).

**Table 7: Health challenges brought out by villagers**

Challenges	Occurrences
Bad communication/transportation (esp. monsoon) hinders access to health services	29
Financial difficulties to afford health expenses	27
No rural health center and no AMW	18
Lack of extra persons to care the ill person	7
Low health education	4
No challenges	2
No medical supply	2
Midwife and villagers have the low relationship	1

**Table 8: Health challenges according to migrants (clusters)**

Challenges	Occurrences
Financial difficulties to access health services	13
No health centre/far away	7
Difficult to go to clinic in emergency situation from various aspects	1
Low health education status in most of the migrant workers	1
No challenges	1
No extra person to care the ailments	1

As described in the health section, malaria, TB, dengue and other severe diseases have been more or less eradicated through intervention by the health agencies in the area as well as better awareness programs by the government. Yet, ARIs are still important health issues for children if they cannot be cured rapidly.

Interestingly, the “lack of extra persons to care for the ill” is another consequence of out-migration, linking to the migration challenges such as threat to social cohesion or to families. The same issue has been underlined by one cluster (Ye Gone) noting that in-migrants are also increasingly heading to Thailand. Another outcome of out-migration, according to the Ye Township Medical Officer, is the fact that for those migrants who received health care in Thailand and need regular follow-ups, local health staff (from Ye Township) are often unable to read and interpret the diagnosis and treatments prescribed by Thai doctors.

### **3.3. Education challenges**

Regarding education, whether in clusters or villages, it seems that many children face financial difficulties to attend school regularly and this is worse after primary school (Tables 10 and 11). This somewhat explains the high dropout level after the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Many villages are also only equipped with primary schools so transportation costs and difficulties during the rainy season account also for drop outs. Interestingly, both cluster and village communities underlined the lack of interest in following a complete education, not only from the children but also from the parents’ perspectives. Indeed, our interviews with youth living in villages (principally Mon) showed that few projected themselves in post-diploma studies and most simply don’t project themselves in employment in Myanmar. The “future” is overseas; Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Korea for those who can afford to travel there. The development of migration networks as well as the opening of several land checkpoints between Myanmar and Thailand also facilitate migration. Further, at least until the current working age generation, there existed a strong language barrier to attend schools teaching in Burmese for children who speak Mon or Kayin and only some Burmese. Recently opened schools that teach the Myanmar curriculum in Mon language and now endorsed by the central government could counterbalance this issue. This emigrational context is logically affecting the children of Burmese in-migrants as well since their parents also migrate to find work and they are now even picking up again with further migration abroad.

**Table 9: Education challenges according to villagers**

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Occurrences</b>
Need improvement in school structure and teaching materials	28
Financial difficulties (especially for middle and high school)	25
School too far (especially after primary school)	15
Insufficient number of teachers	13
Need for school beyond primary level school	7
Less interest in education/more interested in business (children and parents)	5
Need the primary school	4
Can't go to school because of their parents work's nature (migration)	1
Children need to work for family business	1
Language is difficult to attempt the Government school	1
Need the government approved school	1
No challenges	1

As already underlined in the relationships between locals and in-migrants, the limited access to birth registration for in-migrants' children living in the clusters prevent many of them from attending school.

**Table 10: Education challenges for migrant clusters**

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Occurrences</b>
Can't attempt the school due to financial difficulties	15
Need one school and teacher in the cluster	5
Parent's work nature makes it difficult to attempt the school	3
Children can't go to school due to no birth registration card	2
Children need to do the work for family financial problem	2
Can't go to school some migrants who go to Thailand	1
Just can attempt for read and write to school	1
Need some kind of transportation for school going children	1
Need to care from the elder one to younger one in the absent of parents so children can't go to school	1
No umbrella and no raincoat for the school going children in rainy season	1
The school is situated far away from the cluster and children can't go every day to school	1
The space of the school is not enough for children	1

### **3.4. Watsan challenges**

The lack of water in the dry season remains a challenge for many villages that could be addressed (for most of them) by pipe systems collecting water from nearby streams. Latrines are also needed as only 56% of the population has access to latrines (Table 12).

**Table 11: Watsan challenges in villages**

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Occurrences</b>
Not enough water (not enough wells) in dry season	21
Need pipes to get the water from the mountain/source far away	14
Need Latrines	12
Not enough money to build latrines	11
Bad Quality of Water	8
Lack of knowledge in water and sanitation	3
Need water collecting tanks	3
Need to buy the water	2
Can't collect the money to dig up the well	1
Communicable disease due to lack of latrines	1
No challenges	1
No space to build the latrine	1
There has no shelter and cover in the well	1
Villagers have the low corporation in the sanitations	1

For migrants living in clusters, once again challenges related to Watsan are mostly linked to their in-migrants status, which puts them lower in terms of access to services, whether because they live out of reach of water supplying systems or because land owners (who are from the nearby villages) do not allow them to improve their socio-economic status (Table 13).

**Table 12: Watsan challenges in migrant clusters**

Challenges	Occurrences
Need to buy water / Water sellers prioritize villagers / Not enough supply to cluster	8
Not enough water wells/water (esp. in dry season)	7
Bad quality of water	5
Do not have enough money to build the latrine	3
Not enough latrines	3
Owners don't allow to build latrines	2
Need material and knowledge to build latrines	2
No challenges	2
The sandy land makes the difficult in making of the pit	2
Need support to dig up wells	1
Need the water container for drinking water	1
No health education to build the latrine	1

### 3.5. Most affected villages and clusters

The remote areas of the east of Ye Township are the most affected areas when looking at cross-cutting issues such as health, educational, livelihood and watsan. Villages such as Kin Mun, Ah Byaw, Ba Yaung or Bi Saing are among the most affected. In general, Hnit Soke and Kyaung Ywar village tracts can be considered as particularly vulnerable areas.

Those villages relying mostly on casual labour, such as Yin Tein Wa and Ah Byaw, are also more vulnerable, notably in terms of health issues. For these reasons, more remote villages would deserve to be studied and eventually integrated in health and WATSAN projects.

Among clusters, Htan Taw, Ye Kone, Ann Din Fishing camp and Nyaung Lay Pin are the most vulnerable in terms of the main fields of this assessment, including access to education which is always less than 50%, children under 5 mortality and off & on diarrhoea among children. Thaug Byin fishing camp is also vulnerable for its location by the sea and is quite difficult to access during high tides, while it lacks most of the basic facilities (school health centre, latrines) and fresh water is difficult to supply due to its geographic location.

Besides these particularly vulnerable areas, work in health, WATSAN and education infrastructure remains to be done in villages situated far from the main roads and points of communication.

## 4. Discussion and recommendations

### 4.1. The use of remittances: any impact on communities' development?

#### 4.1.1. *The different uses of remittances*

Out-migration (as with in-migration for the Burmese) is a strategy to cope with poor employment opportunities and low wages in the places of origin. However, whether the money earned abroad benefits the local development is far from obvious.

The two types of remittances utilization that dominate the use of remittances from out-migrations (especially to Thailand) are for household consumptions and for financial investment, the former being surely the most widespread as it is more easily achieved (needs less money).

Thanks to remittances, most visited Mon villages seem to face few economic difficulties (explaining the higher proportion of Kayin villages selected for the needs assessment). Remittances are mostly used to buy personal assets (house equipment, cycles, phones, etc.). Investment transfers are mainly used to buy land either to grow betel nuts or rubber trees, the latter tending to take over the former despite bad prices this year. It is worth noting here that this kind of investment also has an impact on out-migration. Regarding the low price of rubber on the market in early 2014, many houses (both Mon and Bamar workers) had to send one or more persons to Thailand in order to compensate for the lack of income from the rubber activities. In fact, migration to Thailand can be considered as the main direct coping strategy for economic crisis in this region. Whether these family transfers can be considered as a sign of investment in the "territory" is not sure: given that most migrants cannot invest in Thailand they instead invest in Mon State and rubber cultivation is the one of few options at the moment. Fisheries do not represent a field of investment: it is seen as a low-class job and fishermen communities are seen as being in a low-class socio-economic category. Investment transfers are also used for improving and/or exploring new types of out-migration. With more investment capital, people prefer migrating to Malaysia and then Singapore where wages are higher. Malaysia was the most praised destination in recent times but it seems that employment opportunities there are decreasing. Hence, the forthcoming destination of choice seems to be Korea which supposedly offers better employment opportunities. In big villages such as Taung Bon some of the remittances have been invested in Korea language learning centres opened by individuals to facilitate migration to Korea. Remittances are transferred from Thailand to the households through private traders operating on both sides of the border - the traders are usually Mon for the Mon migrants and Kayin for the Kayin migrants. Transfers are performed by phone and cost only 1,000 to 2,000MMK per transfer, up to 10 lakh (MMK). The operators make their profit on the exchange rates between THB and MMK.

#### 4.1.2. *Youth associations*

The most important stakeholders in community transfers are the local youth associations. Youth associations in Mon villages traditionally rely on two types of funding: an “inscription fee” which is small but regular and individual participation, generally for those former students who went to work abroad. They are in most cases organized to take care of the village’s social and religious affairs such as funeral services, health support and providing financial support to elders and students (to obtain matriculation in order to attend university). However, only the associations in large villages which rely on remittances from those working abroad have enough capital for local developments such as villages’ inner road construction/rehabilitation, contribution to pagodas, etc. Such associations can be found in Taung Bon for example. Yet, even the Youth associations that do not have much capital remain the most important community based organizations locally that could be entrusted in the case of development projects (a list of villages under study where such associations are present is provided in Annex 3). Youth associations act therefore as the main relaying mechanism for community oriented remittances. They may nevertheless compete with other interests, such as administrative authorities (village headmen) who sometimes feel dispossessed from their unifying capacity among the communities, as many villagers prefer to trust civil associations rather than such authorities that they often find illegitimate. This results in some villages (such as Taung Bon) remaining in a status quo regarding road construction.

The rest of the remittances that we could assimilate to community transfers are for religious purpose (some villages such as Taung Bon have at least 8 different monasteries). It seems that in general the concept of “public services” – i.e. services under the central government’s responsibility – dominates the concept of “community”, and therefore what is in the public domain should logically be taken to be under the control of the government rather than the community members. This attitude can be attributed to at least two factors: a history of political instability due to the conflicts between local armed groups and the central government, and the fact that Mon identity expresses itself especially through religious events. The first factor is amplified by a greater history of mobility of Mon population, whose territory has been taken over many times, first in what is now Cambodia and Thailand and later by the neighbouring Burmese Kingdoms. This history impacts also on the expression of Mon identity: as the first repository of Buddhism, this identity is intrinsically linked to religion. Further, Mon claiming to be a “monolithic” identity (one ethnic group only with no sub-components), it did not need to rely on the territory to forge unity in conflictive relationships, contrary to the Kayin for example. This partly explains the fact that other areas under the control of ethnic armed groups receive more support for local development than the Mon ruled areas. And this disconnectedness with the territory is somehow well expressed by the Hintha always heading toward the lost capital of the Mon Country – a parable of the lost hegemony of the Mon – that is Hantawaddy, now known as Bago.



As a result, the community expresses itself especially through cultural events (Mon teaching schools, religious events) rather than through developing public infrastructures and services, and as a result the current economic development of Mon State appears to be kept at an individual level with little knock-on effect to the local economy.

#### **4.2. Social outcomes of migration**

The social benefits of migration are quite difficult to identify. They are mostly visible in terms of living standards – better houses, greater facilities such as phones, latrines, motorcycles, etc. – and religious events. However, behind these social representations lie a number of problems, especially regarding child care and social cohesion.

##### *4.2.1. Child care and social threats*

Indeed, out-migration represents an obstacle to taking care of children. It seems that families tend to leave their children behind rather than bringing them to Thailand and, as already noted above, those who are born in Thailand can be brought back to the village quite easily. A few households who decided to live “definitively” in Thailand may bring their entire family with them. Although, in terms of Myanmar cum Mon education, the fact that children stay behind may be a good strategy to maintain educational and cultural ties with the country and community of origin, it is uncertain whether the migrants can afford, and support from a distant location, the schooling of their children. Indeed, when looking at the quantitative data, few children are present after middle school. Factors such as the distance to school if not available in the villages, the cost of schooling (despite some efforts from the government to provide free access to children) and of course the “opportunity cost” of a child not working are resulting in high dropout rates.

Besides schooling issues, drug use, threat to social cohesion and the spread of sexually transmitted infections (particularly HIV, notably through returning migrants) seem to be issues on the rise and should be taken into account in any development project.

##### *4.2.2. Women’s empowerment*

Thanks to greater exposure of girls who migrated to Thailand to reproductive health information and more liberal moral standards, contraception is a subject that migrant girls and women are aware of and that they can broach without shame. According to some informants birth rates decreased accordingly in the region over the past decade. Health seeking behaviour also changed thanks to greater financial capacity (at least in Mon villages), with more people seeking care in hospitals, whether in Mawlamyine or Yangon. However, as we have seen, this largely relates to migrants in the higher economic classes, rather than the small scale cultivators and daily labourers mostly found in IOM’s implementation area.

Girls are also more involved in culture than before. This can be attributed to both empowerment and greater awareness about preserving Mon culture, an awareness which is

proportional to the distance Mon youth – from both sexes – is taking with it. To counterbalance this, the peace-building process allowed some schools teaching the Myanmar curriculum in Mon language to be endorsed by the central government.

### **4.3. Impact of the peace process**

The peace process has undoubtedly had positive impacts on local governance and livelihoods, yet it also raises new issues. Freedom of speech, less conflicts and greater security in general are welcomed outcomes. Land owners also pay less “taxes” to the different insurgent groups. On the other hand, mix areas – both under the control of the government and insurgent groups – are currently left with no proper governance. This is expressed notably in land registration where in these mixed areas landowners, despite the new farmland law, have received no visit from SLRD officers and received no signs of their application being processed neither from insurgent groups nor the government. The other issue raised by the peace process is the new opportunity to invest. As an example, at least two projects are on-going in the area, one relating to charcoal purification and the other opening a marble mine. These require massive land purchases with money that mainly belongs to foreign investors. With attractive sums of money available to those who sell their land, the impact is once again forecasted to only marginally benefit regional development. However, the peace process also allowed the creation of new civil society organisations, such as the Democracy Amyo Tha association, to raise awareness locally.

Last but not least, the peace process has also been accompanied by the implementation of governmental development plans (notably to improve road communications) in the region. Nevertheless, here as well as in other regions, local authorities often misappropriate the money that should be dedicated to road construction and rehabilitation.

Finally, despite these new opportunities (most notably to promote Mon culture within the Myanmar context) made available by the political transition and the peace process, Mon identity seems to barely find its place in the nation but exists in a stronger way in the borderland. The common statement that the Mon language facilitates learning the Thai language, brought opposition from the Burmese people who cannot speak Thai (or speak it at a lower level than the Mon people), and whether it is linguistically justified or not, it became a part of this identity and an opposition marker for the Mon. The town of Mae Sot, located on one of the trans-border roads, is said to be a Mon toponym meaning “where the Burmese died” – *ha mè chot*. Further, another distinctive trait of the Mon is their existing networks with Thailand. The Burmese workers coming from Ayeyarwaddy indeed migrate less often to Thailand for they have no or fewer networks to facilitate their migration than the Mon. However, this pattern is evolving and in some long established migrant clusters such as in Kawt Ha Yine or Bu Tar Kone, Burmese are also profiting from the same Mon networks and finding employment opportunities in Thailand. These markers help in understanding the extent to which the Mon identity is rooted in the borderland, hindering their benefit from any nation-based developmental effort.



## 5. Annexes

### **Annex 1: Quantitative questionnaires (see attached excel file)**

### **Annex 2: Interview guidelines for the qualitative assessment**

#### **How the remittances are used in the households?**

Exploring whether remittances represent merely an attempt by migrants to fulfill obligations of the societies they left behind—to provide for aged parents and other relatives, for example—or whether the process is more complex, we'll assume three main models of financial outcomes: family transfers, investment-related transfers, and community transfers.

- Family transfers (total remittances sent to the origin family)
  - o Symbols of economic achievement: housing, other assets (cycle, phone, Tv/satellite, etc.)
  - o Symbols of social achievement: religious (e.g. private donations) and social (e.g. weddings, funerals), education (children sent to Mawlamyine, Yangon), health seeking behavior (to Mawlamyine and Yangon)
  - o Linking economic and social: e.g. education and work opportunities locally and abroad
  - o Remittances may be used to further finance the out-migration of other family members – Has their migration strategy changed as a result of larger initial capital to aim for “better” migration opportunities (e.g. migration to countries other than Thailand)?
  
- Investment transfers (sum of all investment-related remittances sent by the migrant to finance own investments in place of origin):
  - o Origin of investments in local businesses
  - o Rubber plantations
  - o Fisheries
  - o Trans-regional and transnational goods (food, clothing, etc.) and services (phone)
  
- Community transfers (total remittances that are sent towards community development projects in the origin community):
  - o Roads, infrastructures, electrification
  - o Local improvements in education/health/water
  - o Religious (monks' funerals, community religious events) and social (associations, mutual help) affairs

Money transfers systems (organization of money transfers between destination and origin) and the role of local associations vs. individuals in using remittances will serve as an entry point to explore the above points.

**How the out-migration changed the livelihood patterns of the villagers (historical) also in relation to the land ownership**

- Impact of remittances on land ownership and transformation of land use (e.g. from paddy to rubber cultivation)
- Impact of transregional and transnational migrations on local labor markets, the increase of local wages (linking to in-migration)
- Migrations' induced patterns of consumption and creation of new employments (phone, cycle, internet, computer shops, etc.)
- Benefits and costs of an economy turned toward foreign (Thai) markets (e.g., fisheries, rubber)

**Social benefits and costs of migration**

- Drug use
- (re-) Valorization of education
- Transborder vs. national space and the use of Mon language (e.g. better recognition of Mon in Thai than in Burmese setting)
- Political, environmental and developmental discourses
- The importance of social networks and institutions in the remittance process: migrants' associations at origin and role in migration
- Gender based empowerments
- Its impacts on children and elderly

**How the communities want their communities to be in 5 – 10 years time**

- Frequency of return to origin/length of stay in destination
- How do individuals refer to their community: household/village-based migration, valorization of households' vs community's achievements
- Relationship between out-migrants and their family/community (e.g. inclusion of migrants in religious/community events)
- Exploring current household/community based events and activities
- Is migration a rite of passage?

**How the community wisdoms are handed over from generation to generation in this highly out-migration impacted communities**

- Household/community decision making and role of migrants
- Mon identity in-between "burmanization" and "thaiization" processes (language, customs, etc.)
- Shifting units of handover? From family to community (youth associations)

- A-local or “global” identity patterns? (ethnic markers vs. local knowledge)

**Issues related to in-migration of non-ethnic population in the ethnic areas**

- Rise of Burmese-speaking Mon and Mon-speaking Burmese
- Labor inequalities “wanted”?
- Competition on new employment opportunities between in-migrants and locals: Mon “in-between”?
- National registration process and empowerment of in-migrants
- Inter-marriages
- Perceived tensions and forecast outcomes

**How the peace processes impacted on the communities (positive and negative)**

- Local economic conditions under conflict
- Current economic opportunities (e.g. plantation increase, decrease of various political entities and related dangers/taxes)
- Improvements in roads, communications (see relationships balance between out and in-country)
- Impact of increased presence of central government (land confiscations, taxes and tolls)
- Introduction of foreign investments (mining) and local development

Political tensions (All Mon Region Democracy Party vs. Mon Democratic Party)

**Annex 3: Villages in which local youth associations are active**

<b>Village</b>	<b>Village tract</b>
Bu Tar Kone	Hnit Ka Yin
Aung Thar Yar	Lane Maw Chan
Nat Gyi	Kyaung Ywar
Myin Ta Pyay	Kyaung Ywar
Saw Hta	Kyaung Ywar
Min Hla Aye	Kyaung Ywar
Ah Byawt	Kyaung Ywar
Kyauk Tine	Kyaung Ywar
Nel Phar	Kyaung Ywar
Yin Tein Wa	Yin Yal
Thea Kone	Kaut Hline
Mee Tine Tat	Kyone Nyal
Thi Htal Thaw Saw	Ka Nin Ka Maut
Wel Da La	Ka Nin Ka Maut
Wah Pa Thae	Be' La Mu
Thu Taw	Be' La Mu
Ba Rown	Be' La Mu
Du Lal	Done Phi
Bi Zine	Dhone Phi
Sin Ku	Kaut Hline
San Pya	Dhone Phi
Bay Ka Lwal	Dhone Phi
Wat Swal Phyu	Be' La Mu
Ka Lot Lay (East)	Chaung Taung

**Annex 4: Map of the quantitative assessment (see attached jpg file)**