<u>**Overview: Myanmar Joint Peacebuilding Needs Assessment**</u>

Background

In the context of the ongoing peace initiative between the Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar and non-state armed groups, the cessation of conflict in much of the country offers an opportunity for the recovery and development of conflict-affected communities. To build a shared understanding of the situation in conflict-affected communities among a broad range of stakeholders (government, non-state armed groups, donors, NGOs and CBOs), including identifying needs and priorities, the Government in January 2013 requested support from the Peace Donor Support Group[1] for a joint needs assessment.

Joint Task Force and First Steps

A small task force[2] led by the Myanmar Peace Center (MPC) was established in February 2013 to develop the framework for such a joint needs assessment. Following initial discussions, the task force agreed to pursue a two-fold approach:
- an initial quick stocktake of existing information, to be completed by April, to identify existing data from a range of sources, including areas of inconsistent or contradictory data, and data gaps.
- a design team (comprising experts from the MPC, the MPSI, the World Bank and the UN) to propose possible methodologies and parameters for a joint assessment, also to be completed by April. The design team will aim to meet for informal discussions with a range of stakeholders, including government, non-state armed groups, conflict-affected communities and development partners, to inform their work.

Stakeholder consultations

The reports from the stocktaking exercise and the design team will form the basis for consultations with stakeholders, to take place after the Myanmar New Year. Consultations will focus on aims, expectations and concerns related to a potential Joint Peacebuilding Needs Assessment, as well as a review of available options moving forward.

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[1] The Peace Donor Support Group (PDSG) was convened in June 2012 by the Government of Norway at the request of President U Thein Sein in order to provide a common platform for dialogue between the donor community and the Government of Myanmar, and to better coordinate the international community's support to peace in general and the provision of aid in conflict-affected areas. The Government of Myanmar asked that the Group be initially composed of Norway, Australia, the United Kingdom, the European Union, the United Nations, and the World Bank.

[2] The task force is comprised of representatives from the Myanmar Peace Center, the Myanmar Peace Support Initiative, DfID, the UN, and the World Bank. At the request of the MPC, JICA and the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) are also providing technical advice to the group.

Disclaimer

The present report represents an effort to reflect the current understanding of the situation and needs in conflict-affected areas by an ad-hoc group assembled by the Task Force established under the Peace Donor Support Group (PDSG). As such, it does not necessarily reflect the position of any of the agencies or organisations that make up the PDSG or the Task Force.

Desktop Review of Needs and Gaps in Conflict-Affected Parts of Myanmar

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the context of the ongoing peace process, the Myanmar Government requested support from the Peace Donor Support Group (PDSG) for a joint assessment of needs in armed-conflict-affected border areas. Under the leadership of the Myanmar Peace Centre (MPC), a task force was established to develop the framework for such an assessment, to be carried out in cooperation with armed groups and other key stakeholders in ethnic areas. The assessment is intended to be carried out in two phases: (I) a desktop review ('stocktaking') of existing information on activities, needs and gaps; (II) a consultative 'joint peacebuilding needs assessment'. The present report represents the outcome of the first phase, carried out in the course of March and April 2013; a decision will then be made on proceeding to the second phase, which should be completed before the end of 2013.

Due to limitations of time, and because it would not have been desirable for this report to duplicate the work of existing information-coordination structures, it has relied primarily on 3Ws information already reported to and available through the Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU), and on assessments and other information at the disposal of the United Nations and The Border Consortium. There are armed-conflict-affected areas in all of Myanmar's borderlands. However, for practical purposes this report focuses on the south-east of the country. Phase II of the joint assessment process would not necessarily be limited to the south-east.

In the context of the ongoing peace process between the government and non-state armed groups, the conclusion of ceasefires offers an opportunity for recovery of armed-conflict-affected communities. If done in the right way – that is, in tune with the political process and using conflict sensitive approaches – initiatives to provide assistance can contribute to peacebuilding. However, if implemented without due attention being given to the context on the ground, interventions could undermine the peace. Crucially, initiatives to build trust, enhance security, build systems of local governance and justice, support rights, provide humanitarian assistance and promote development all need to happen simultaneously. Support for basic services alone does not build peace or prevent violence. Experience from other countries, and from almost a year of activities in support of the ceasefire process in Myanmar, reinforces the importance of a set of basic principles for interventions in border areas: taking the local context as the starting point for all initiatives, ensuring that these initiatives are locally driven and owned, that they do not overwhelm local capacities, and that they build trust by addressing the fears as well as the aspirations of communities.

Access to many areas has improved over the last one to two years. Nevertheless, access to large parts of the country, particularly those that have been affected by armed conflict, remains difficult or impossible for international organisations. Limited access in these areas is partly a legacy of the armed conflicts, and of related security constraints, but there are also bureaucratic and logistical impediments to access. Most major towns are easily accessible, but there are large disparities between different states/regions in terms of access to other areas.

The report contains considerable information on organisational presence, needs and gaps in the different sectors, and a number of key findings in this regard are provided in the final section of this report. However, some caution is required when making use of this information, for two reasons. First, there is a lack of reliable data in many sectors and geographical areas, and a lack of a census and other baseline information needed to interpret that data. Second, the report was written within a very short time-frame and is not based on a consultative process. Rather, it represents the outcome of a quick desktop-based review of information available or made available during this short time-frame. Third, one important limitation was that there is no comprehensive overview to date of the situation and activities in this geographic area – for many reasons, including some reluctance to share information. A key observation of this exercise is that information is much more difficult to obtain than it ought to be, and that as the number of agencies working in the country and the scale of interventions increases, it is crucial to promote the use of improved coordination and information sharing platforms such as MIMU.

I. BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

1. In the context of the ongoing peace process between the Government of Myanmar and non-state armed groups, the conclusion of ceasefires offers an opportunity for recovery and development of armed-conflict-affected communities. The Government of Myanmar requested support from the Peace Donor Support Group (PDSG)[1] for a joint assessment of needs in conflict-affected border areas. Under the leadership of Myanmar Peace Centre (MPC)[2] a Task Force[3] has been established to develop the framework for a possible 'joint peacebuilding needs assessment', which would be conducted in cooperation with armed groups and other key stakeholders in selected ethnic areas and should be completed by the end of 2013.

2. The present report presents the findings from an initial stocktaking of existing information resources as regards the activities of the government and organisations working in the south-east of Myanmar. The activities covered include the full range of support to communities in armed conflict-affected areas: humanitarian assistance, as well as (crucially) interventions to address other key concerns of the communities – landmines, security, rights, jobs, and so on. However, to date most of the support provided to these populations has been humanitarian and livelihoods assistance, and therefore most of the available information concerns those activities. It is important to note that this report is not the product of a consultative process. Rather it seeks to provide a rapid desktop review of the existing information that is readily available, as the starting point in developing a shared understanding of the situation, and as a basis for subsequent consultations with stakeholders as part of the joint peacebuilding needs assessment process.

3. The aim of the report is to provide:

    a. A snapshot of existing knowledge regarding support (both in-country and border-based) to conflict-affected communities, and the gaps;
    b. An overview of the present understanding as regards some of the needs and concerns of the ethnic groups and ethnic communities;
    c. An indication of how support in conflict-affected areas can strengthen the peacebuilding process.

   The report will contribute to an understanding of how support to the conflict-affected areas can be increased in the current context and within a peacebuilding framework. It would not be appropriate, however, for a non-consultative desktop process to provide any definitive prioritization of interventions nor to try to estimate the cost or scale of the interventions that would be required.

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[1] The Peace Donor Support Group (PDSG) was first convened in June 2012 by the Government of Norway at the request of President U Thein Sein in order to provide a common platform for dialogue between the donor community and the Government of Myanmar, and to better coordinate the international community's support to peace in general and the provision of aid in conflict-affected areas. The Government of Myanmar asked that the PDSG be initially composed of Norway, Australia, the United Kingdom, the European Union, the United Nations, and the World Bank. The group held its inaugural meeting with the President in Naypyitaw on 12 June 2012.

[2] The Myanmar Peace Centre (MPC) was established in October 2012 by a Presidential Decree to serve as the Secretariat to the Union Peace-making Central Committee and the Union Peace-making Work Committee. The Myanmar Peace Centre is tasked to provide policy advice and strategic guidance as well as coordinating government activities in the key areas of: ceasefire negotiations and implementation; peace negotiations and political dialogue; coordination of assistance in conflict affected areas and outreach and public diplomacy.

[3] The following agencies and organisations are represented on the Task Force: the Myanmar Peace Centre (MPC), the World Bank, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Myanmar Peace Support Initiative (MPSI), the United Nations and the Overseas Development Institute (ODI).

4. The present report represents an effort to reflect the current understanding of the situation and needs in conflict-affected areas by an ad-hoc group assembled by the Task Force, under the PDSG. As such, it does not necessarily reflect the position of any of the agencies or organisations that make up the PDSG or the Task Force.

METHODOLOGY

5. This initial stocktaking has been conducted as a desk study carried out in the course of March and April 2013. The information collection was carried out by a team of people seconded by some of the entities represented on the Task Force under the guidance of the Task Force itself.[4] The team collated and analysed information and data provided mainly by the Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU), some United Nations agencies, a number of international non-governmental organisations (INGOs), and The Border Consortium (TBC) as one of the organisations working from Thailand.

6. The methodology has a number of evident shortcomings and the report is therefore necessarily incomplete. Given the very short timeframe and the limited human resources to complete this initial review, the information collection was not as thorough as the team would have wished. The report is not based on a consultation with all actors involved in service provision in the south-east. Rather, it is a quick desk study of information easily available beforehand or made available at short notice by the actors mentioned above. In particular, it does not claim to comprehensively cover the activities of the Non-State Armed Groups (NSAG), nor the government.

7. It would not have been feasible or desirable for this report to duplicate the work of existing information-coordination structures such as the MIMU. It has therefore relied primarily on 3Ws information already reported to and available through that platform, and on assessments that have been made readily available. Limitations of time also precluded a wider and more thorough collection of data on assessments, current activities and future plans, and therefore the data included in this report cannot be regarded as comprehensive. In particular, it was not possible to reach out in a systematic and comprehensive way to government ministries, nor NSAGs, to obtain first-hand updated information. This needs to be addressed in the next phase.

8. The fact is, however, that much of the information that exists is not easily accessible, in part due to a culture of caution that developed under the previous government, when many initiatives had to be carried out 'under the radar' and could therefore not be publicised; and partly because there was only limited humanitarian and development activities, so that robust information sharing mechanisms were not developed. It is therefore likely that this report fails to capture a significant amount of information that exists within agencies but is not readily available more widely. It is on this basis that the report provides an overview of key knowledge gaps, and it can be used as a basis of further consultations to improve understanding of the situation.

GEOGRAPHICAL COVERAGE

9. There are conflict-affected areas in all of Myanmar's borderlands. However, for practical purposes, this report focuses on the south-east of the country. This is because, given the very limited time-frame for preparing the report, it was not feasible to cover all areas. There are a number of reasons why it may be relevant for the initial stocktaking of knowledge to focus on the south-east which, for the purposes of this report, is taken to include the States and Divisions adjacent to the Thai border – that is Tanintharyi, Mon, Kayin, Kayah, Shan (South) and Shan (East) – plus Bago Region (East). First, there has been long term support to populations in this area from both sides of the border. Second,

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[4] The information collection for the present report has been carried out by staff from MPC, MIMU, MPSI, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

the ceasefire agreements with the major armed groups in the area have resulted in a substantial decrease in armed conflict and attacks on civilians. Third, government restrictions on access into conflict-affected areas in the south-east are being relaxed and this has potentially opened up the space for additional humanitarian assistance to the area in the future and significantly improved the opportunities for the recovery and development.

10. The situation in Myanmar's armed conflict-affected areas has political causes, and nowhere is this clearer than in the south-east of the country. The scaling up of support to populations in these areas has the potential to promote a sustainable end to the conflicts if it takes place within an effective peacebuilding framework that is in tune with the political process and that takes the full range of grievances of the affected populations fully into account.

II. CURRENT POLITICAL-ECONOMY AND CONFLICT SITUATION

CONTEXT

Geography and hazard risk

11. Myanmar is a country of 677,000 square kilometres in area, with a series of mountain ranges along its borders with Bangladesh (193 km), India (1,463 km), China (2,185 km), Laos (235 km) and Thailand (1,800 km). There is no well-defined geographical entity corresponding to "south-east Myanmar". It is necessary for the purposes of this report, however, to delineate the area of interest in some straightforward way. In this report, "south-east Myanmar" is taken to include the States and Divisions adjacent to the Thai border, plus Bago Region (East)[5] [See Map 1 for an overview of States/Regions and townships in the south-east]. South-east Myanmar is characterised by mostly mountainous terrain made up of the Shan Plateau, a highland region that merges into the Dawna and Tenasserim Yoma ranges forming the physical boundary with Thailand [Map 2].

12. According to the Department of Meteorology and Hydrology, the south-east is somewhat protected from the most devastating natural hazards which are generally more likely to affect other parts of the country.[6] Three townships in the south-east are considered to be flood-prone - Hpa-An and Hlainbwe in Kayin State, and Laikha township in Shan (South).

13. Projections from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change have suggested that East Asia will be one of the areas worst affected by climate change due to long coastlines, climate-sensitive economies, and high levels of poverty and inequality. In south-east Myanmar, this risk is greatest along the coastline of Mon and Tanintharyi which houses much of the population of these states.

14. The south-east is also vulnerable to fire hazard, most notably in Mon and Shan (medium risk). While the other states of the south-east are considered to have a low risk of fire hazard, the losses can still be significant and the financial value of property losses due to fire in Tanintharyi were, with Yangon, the highest in the country between 2000 and 2007. Major fires are generally caused by climatic conditions, use of flammable construction and household materials, as well as unplanned development and other social factors.

Socio-cultural context

15. Myanmar is highly ethnically diverse, with 135 ethnicities officially recognised by the government. The Burman (or 'Bamar') ethnic group is the majority, with perhaps two-thirds of the population, while ethnic communities – the major being the Shan, Karen, Rakhine, Mon, Kachin, Chin and Kayah – are thought to collectively account for perhaps one third of the population. In addition, communities of Chinese and Indian origin account for perhaps 4 per cent of the population. However, all these population figures are uncertain and contested, since no ethnic census has been conducted in decades. It is also important to note that throughout Myanmar's history there has been cultural and ethnic interchange, and that ethnic populations should not be interpreted as unchangeable and isolated from each other.

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[5] Myanmar is made up of seven ethnic States (Chin, Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Mon, Rakhine and Shan) and seven Burman-majority Regions (Ayeyarwady, Bago, Magway, Mandalay, Sagaing, Tanintharyi and Yangon). For purposes of administration, Bago Division is split into two (East and West) and Shan State into three (North, South and East). States and divisions are subdivided into districts, then townships, then village-tracts (or wards, in urban areas), then individual villages.

[6] Department of Meteorology and Hydrology, Relief and Resettlement Department, *Hazard Profile of Myanmar*, July 2009.

16. The official language of Myanmar is Burmese, which is used in both government administration and the education system, and is the mother tongue of the Burman people. There are a large number of ethnic languages, most unrelated to Burmese and mutually-unintelligible. Based on information provided by radio stations, populations across the south-east have access to radio media in various languages. The government-owned Myanmar Radio and Thazin Radio stations both include broadcasting periods in Burmese and various other languages from areas of the south-east, namely Kayah (Kayah, Kayen, Gayka and Gayba), Kayin (Sgaw Kayin, Pwo Kayin), Mon and Shan languages. There is also localised Myanmar-language FM coverage around broadcasting stations in Myawaddy, Mawlyamine, Dawei, Myeik, and Kawthoung. MRTV is also available nationwide, providing Burmese-language broadcasts, although environment and topography can limit reception.

17. As is the case for the rest of Myanmar, there is a lack of recent census data for the south-east. Population data based on head counts annually collected by basic health staff employed by the Myanmar Ministry of Health suggests that the total population in the south-east is approximately 10 million as of 2011. MIMU data provide an overview of population and population density in the south-east and also shows that a large majority of the population in the south-east live in rural areas, with pockets of urban areas in Shan (South), Bago (East), Mon and Tanintharyi [See Map 3].

Political and historical context[7]

18. Myanmar has been at war with itself since its independence in 1948, a struggle mainly playing out in the country's ethnic borderlands. Historically, these areas have never been fully controlled by the State. In the British colonial period they were administered separately from central Burma as Frontier Areas, and as such had a considerable degree of local autonomy.

19. At the Panglong Conference in 1947 Shan, Kachin and Chin representatives from the Frontier Areas agreed to the formation of a Union of Burma in return for full autonomy in the governance of their areas and equal share of revenues. However, the Karen – one of the largest minorities – did not participate in these negotiations, sending only an observer team, and strong criticism was raised among other ethnic groups. The divides were deepened following independence the following year, when the 1947 Constitution came into force, and soon civil war broke out.

20. In the post-colonial period, the government was never able to exercise significant control over the ethnic borderlands. In the south-east, most of the territory apart from the major towns was controlled and administered by ethnic and political organisations in armed opposition to the central government (including the Karen National Union, New Mon State Party, Karenni National Progressive Party and the Communist Party of Burma).[8] Like much of Myanmar's periphery, the south-east has been mired in conflict for more than 60 years.

21. The nature of the conflict and its impact on the populations living in the area has changed over time, however. For much of the post-independence period, it was possible for the armed groups to hold and administer large stretches of territory. The Myanmar army was a (relatively) small and poorly-equipped light infantry force battling a large array of armed opposition groups who were reasonably well-funded and enjoyed the tacit or overt support of neighbouring countries.[9] The mountainous terrain further hampered the Myanmar army's operations. This meant that the armed groups were able to conduct conventional positional warfare, with uncontested administrative control of their territory,

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[7] For a detailed overview of the situation in Myanmar's border areas, see International Crisis Group, *Myanmar: A New Peace Initiative,* 2011.

[8] See Martin Smith, *State of Strife: The Dynamics of Ethnic Conflict in Burma*, Policy Studies, 36, East-West Center (Washington, DC), 2007.

[9] See Andrew Selth, *Burma's Armed Forces*, Eastbridge, 2002.

which was defined by a frontline that was fairly stable over time. The Karen National Union, for example, had education and health departments that oversaw a fairly extensive (if rudimentary) network of schools and clinics in the areas under its control, even if the vast majority of its resources were spent in support of its war effort.[10]

22. This situation changed dramatically following the military coup in 1988 that brought the State Law and Order Restoration Council (subsequently restyled as the State Peace and Development Council, SPDC) to power. This group of younger military officers embarked on a rapid enlargement and modernisation of the Myanmar armed forces, and more vigorously pursued the goal of bringing the hinterlands under central control to achieve "national reconsolidation".[11] This was carried out through a combination of more concerted military operations against ethnic areas, together with ceasefire deals with individual armed groups. The attitude of neighbouring countries also adapted to the new post-Cold War realities, and these countries began to place higher priority on good relations with Yangon, and put increasing pressure on ethnic armed groups to reach ceasefire agreements with the regime.[12]

23. From 1989 to 1996, the government agreed ceasefires with seventeen major groups, including six members of the National Democratic Front alliance, as well as a number of smaller breakaway factions.[13] However, these agreements failed to address core political grievances and two of the major armed groups – the Karen National Union and the Shan State Army (South) – did not agree to ceasefires at that time. The situation on the ground in south-east Myanmar during this period was characterised by a combination of Myanmar army offensives and the splitting or splintering of armed groups, which increased the complexity of the conflict in the area. The main armed opposition groups (the Karen National Union, Karenni National Progressive Party, and Shan State Army– South) were no longer able to hold any meaningful fixed territory and conducted low-intensity guerrilla warfare against the Myanmar army and, increasingly, clashed with ceasefire groups over territorial influence, resources, or as part of an SPDC war-by-proxy.

24. In 2009 the military government issued a new instruction requiring ceasefire groups to transform into 'border guard forces' under the command of the national armed forces. None of the major ceasefire groups – with the exception of the Democratic Kayin Buddhist Army – agreed. In September 2010 the government declared the ceasefire agreements "null and void" when the definitive deadline for armed groups to transform themselves into border guard forces had passed.

25. Access to some of these areas has improved somewhat since the signing of ceasefire agreements, which have improved security and reduced sensitivities on the part of the authorities. Improved road conditions have also facilitated easier access to some areas.

26. Finally in the course of a meeting with the President of Myanmar, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway was asked in January 2011 if his country would support the process towards peace on which the country was embarked. Specifically, Norway was asked to help in the materialization of the ceasefires in the areas where the government and the armed groups had reached an agreement, including the coordination of donor support. Responding favourably to this request, Norway launched two initiatives, the PDSG and the MPSI.

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[10] See Ashley South, *Burma: The Changing Nature of Displacement Crises*, Refugee Studies Centre Working Papers, 39, University of Oxford, February 2007, p. 10.

[11] "In connection with the maintenance of peace and tranquillity, the State Law and Order Restoration Council has laid down the second political objective – National Reconsolidation, accepting that national unity and reconsolidation is the most predominant task of this country as Myanmar is a union composed of 135 different national races." From Myanmar Government, *Basic Facts about Myanmar*, 2007.

[12] See Martin Smith, *Ethnic Groups in Burma*, Anti-Slavery International, 1994, p. 90.

[13] The six members of the National Democratic Front to agree ceasefires were the Shan State Progress Party (1989), Pao National Organisation (1991), Palaung State Liberation Party (1991), Kachin Independence Organisation (1994), Kayan New Land Party (1994) and New Mon State Party (1995).

THE PEACE PROCESS

Changing political context

27. The 2010 election of a semi-civilian government represented a break with the past. In his 2011 inaugural speech president Thein Sein promised an inclusive political process for all stakeholders, and has since then agreed in principle to address some of the longstanding political concerns of ethnic communities, and has expressed his support in principle to the possibility of some revisions to the constitution. Minister Aung Min, the president's chief negotiator, has expressed the view that the previous ceasefires failed in part because the people did not benefit from them. In September 2011 he also made clear that the government had dropped earlier demands for armed groups to become border guard forces, which would have seen them downsizing their armed forces and becoming subordinate to the national army. As of April 2012 ceasefires had been reached with 10 out of 11 major ethnic armies (the remaining group still fighting being the Kachin Independence Organisation).[14]

28. The ceasefires have led to some improvements for populations in conflict-affected areas, such as an easing of travel restrictions that make daily life easier by allowing farmers to spend more time in their fields and making it easier to get products to market. But while the new ceasefires are an important first step, much more is needed in order to reach a sustainable peace. The ceasefires must lead to an inclusive political dialogue that addresses the core grievances and aspirations of ethnic groups. This political dialogue will start with the armed groups, but for Myanmar to recognize and reflect its true diversity as a nation, this is a process that must ultimately involve the whole country, with the full range of stakeholders, including crucially the Burman majority.[15]

29. One of the key issues is that trust needs to be built between government and the ethnic armed groups as well as with the ethnic communities, which requires different sets of initiatives. To build trust between the government and the NSAGs there is a need for such things as separation of forces agreements, the establishment of credible ceasefire monitoring mechanisms, and, at the appropriate time, demining.[16] Building trust between the government and the ethnic communities themselves is a longer-term project that will require different kinds of interventions that build relationships and trust over a longer period of time.[17]

Key aspirations and concerns of ethnic groups

30. One of the biggest concerns of ethnic groups in relation to the peace process is that they perceive some parts of government as believing that the core problem is economic. While economic development and jobs are important, ethnic leaders point out that these things alone will not solve the core issues, which are political in nature.[18]

31. While many aspirations and concerns of NSAGs overlap, NSAGs differ in the extent to which they are really representative of their communities, and the concerns of the different groups are not always the same. Ethnic communities themselves also inevitably tend to focus more on concrete practical concerns related to their daily lives, rather than broader political concerns. Both of these sets of issues are covered in the following sections: some of the aspirations and concerns of the ethnic groups, which have been publicly expressed, as well as the practical concerns expressed by communities in the

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[14] International Crisis Group, *Reform in Myanmar: One Year On*, 2012.

[15] International Crisis Group, *Myanmar: A New Peace Initiative,* 2011.

[16] Landmines are in some cases used defensively by communities, and so they will only be prepared to have their areas demined when trust and confidence has increased.

[17] International Crisis Group, *Myanmar: A New Peace Initiative,* 2011; and Transnational Institute and Burma Centrum Nederland, *Ending Burma's Conflict Cycle? Prospects for Ethnic Peace*. Burma Policy Briefing No. 8, February 2012.

[18] Euro-Burma Office, *Myanmar Peace Process*, EBO Briefing Paper No. 1, 2013.

south-east which are often related to their suffering as a result of lack of physical safety, legal security and material security.

32. The ethnic groups feel marginalized and discriminated against from the centre, manifested in their lack of political influence on national and local politics, absence of social and economic development, lack of access to services such as health and education, and lack of rights, including in relation to culture and language. Many have seen this as being part of a "Burmanization" agenda, with consequences and grievances few ordinary Burmans are aware of.[19] Ethnic concerns are outlined in some more detail below.

33. *Greater political autonomy.* For decades, ethnic communities have been struggling for greater autonomy – a return to the 'spirit of Panglong', which promised them devolved authority over their regions. Ethnic leaders have moved away from the political goal of independence, and are pushing for a greater autonomy within a federal state in order to govern their own affairs, ensure they receive a fair share of the benefits from their natural resources, and preserve their identity, culture and language.

34. *Revenue sharing.* Many of Myanmar's most valuable mineral, timber and hydropower resources are located in the ethnic states and large-scale investment projects have thus focused on the borderlands [see Map 4 for an overview of development projects in the south-east]. Communities believe that they have not benefited from a fair share of the profits from these resources, and economic grievances related to resources have played a central role in fuelling the civil war. Under the 2008 constitution, region/state governments do not control or have authority to tax the majority of these resources. This power lies with the national government in the case of teak and other restricted hardwoods, all underground resources, including gemstones, and all large scale electric power production. While region/state budgets receive national contributions, there are no provisions for resource-sharing considerations to factor into the calculation of those contributions. Instead, the local population bears the burden of resource extraction, including environmental damage and loss of livelihood due to land confiscation and displacement.[20] Instability and lack of regulatory mechanisms have also opened up opportunities for illegal cross-border trading. The impact on the local communities from some of the activities described above has been severe, and the benefits in general very limited.[21]

35. *Economic development.* Ethnic communities feel that they have not had the economic opportunities they deserve. Part of the concern relates to the fact that they do not feel they have had a fair share of the revenue from the natural resources in their areas (discussed above). But also, communities in ethnic border areas feel that they have not had the same development opportunities as other areas, ever since independence. The lack of infrastructure highlights the lack of development and geographical isolation of the south-east [See Map 2 for an overview of the number of roads and waterways that can be used for transport].

36. *Human rights.* The human rights situation has been particularly serious in Myanmar's ethnic areas, and is a key concern of ethnic representatives. The worst violations have taken place in areas of insecurity or armed conflict, which are almost exclusively in ethnic nationality areas. Though human rights abuses have been committed by all parties to the conflict, the Myanmar army has been responsible for a large number of violations – including forced labour, portering, forced relocation, sexual and gender based violence and so on. The long-standing "self-reliance" policy of the army, whereby units in the field were expected to be self-sufficient – leading to confiscation of land, forced labour for cultivation of food and informal taxation – also had a significant impact on local

[19] Transnational Institute and Burma Centrum Nederland, *Ending Burma's Conflict Cycle? Prospects for Ethnic Peace.* Burma Policy Briefing Nr 8, February 2012.
[20] The Border Consortium, *Changing Realities, Poverty and Displacement in South East Burma/Myanmar,* 2012.
[21] Transnational Institute, *Developing Disparity*, February 2013.

populations. Most populations in conflict-affected areas have little means to access the state justice system in order to claim their rights.

37. *Security.* The security situation is also serious. The previous decades has seen a major militarization of ethnic areas, and the emergence of a plethora of armed groups, some aligned loosely with government, some in opposition to it, and some groups mainly focussed on criminal-economic activities. For local communities, this carries huge risks of abuse, and is also a major economic burden, since all groups extract resources from the civilian population to a greater or lesser degree.

38. *Equality and equal employment.* Minority communities across Myanmar feel strongly that they are not treated as equals by the Burman majority or by the government. They feel marginalized and discriminated against, both through an education system that is generally weaker than in other parts of the country, and in employment. Employment opportunities – particularly in State institutions – tend to be more limited for people from minorities. This includes the civil service and the military.

39. *Language and culture.* Ethnic leaders and their communities place a high priority on their ability to maintain and strengthen their languages and cultures, including the possibility to teach these in schools to students from their communities. While both the 1974 and 2008 constitutions provide all ethnic groups with the freedom to "use and develop their language, literature and culture, follow their cherished traditions and customs…"[22] and for every citizen to "have the right to freely develop literature, arts, customs and tradition they cherish",[23] given the position of the Burmese language as the official language and language of instruction in schools, there has been a sense by minority groups and communities that their language and culture are not achieving the recognition that they deserve, and teaching of ethnic languages in government schools had been blocked.

Key concerns and needs of ordinary people in ethnic areas

40. The concerns of the general population in these areas include the issues set out above, but villagers (including internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees) tend to place greater emphasis on issues relating to their daily lives, which have been devastated by decades of civil war and neglect. In this regard, physical safety, security and survival – including livelihood – are key concerns.

Physical Safety

41. As a result of decades of civil war and armed conflict in the south-east physical safety from armed groups (national army and NSAGs) as well as from landmines are key concerns to ethnic communities. Most conflict-affected areas suffer from chronic insecurity, underdeveloped and poor or non-existent provision of social services. The recent ceasefire agreements have led to a decrease in physical attacks on the civilian population, and the decline in counterinsurgency also means that the population has greater access to fields and markets. Despite some positive developments however, physical safety remains a key concern.

42. Based on its research as of October 2012 TBC has produced a map showing contested areas and areas of control in the south-east [See Map 5]. More research needs to be done to give an accurate and detailed representation of the current situation on the ground, but the map provides an illustration of the complex security situation in these areas.

43. *Recent displacement.* A positive development is that since the ceasefire negotiations in 2011 the number of displaced people has been significantly reduced[24] [See Map 6 for an overview of the numbers of IDPs per townships]. TBC data indicate that the number of

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[22] Article 21 (b) of the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma, 1974.
[23] Section 365 of the Constitution of the Union of Myanmar, 2008.
[24] The Border Consortium, *Changing Realities, Poverty and Displacement in South East Burma/Myanmar*, 2012.

IDPs has decreased by 50,000 during the last year, out of which 37,000 IDPs have attempted to return to their villages or resettle in surrounding areas. TBC data also indicate that there were no new destroyed, relocated or abandoned villages in the south-east in 2011, for the first time since their surveys began [Map 7]. However a prevailing sense of insecurity, both from fighting and from the lack of trust in the agreements are of concern. Landmines are another threat that limits the population's access to their lands and livelihoods, although some communities also use these defensively as a way to protect themselves and their crops. In its October 2012 report, TBC estimated that a total of about 400,000 individuals are still internally displaced in the rural areas of 36 townships in south-east Myanmar in Kayin, Kayah, Shan (South) and Shan (East) and Mon States, and Bago and Tanintharyi Regions.[25]

44. *Refugees.* As of January 2013, TBC has recorded a total number of 128,784 persons living in refugee camps on the Thai side of the border [Map 8]. UNHCR ProGres data on the 83,181[26] registered refugees in Thailand indicates an estimated 84 per cent are ethnic Karen and 12 per cent are ethnic Kayah. The remaining 4 per cent are of Burman, Shan, Rohingya[27] and Mon descent. The majority of registered refugees come from Kayin State (66 per cent), followed by Kayah (15 per cent), Tanintharyi (7.5 per cent), Bago (East) (5 per cent) and Mon (5 per cent). UNHCR has recently received reports from partners of about 280 refugees who, since 2012, have returned spontaneously from the "temporary shelters"[28] in Thailand to their places of origin. While figures and information have not been verified yet, it is reported that the majority are single males who returned on informal 'go and see' visits to assess the security and livelihoods situations or to cultivate their land.[29]

45. *Landmines.* Myanmar is one of the few landmine-affected countries in the world where little is known of the actual problem. Contamination is estimated to affect more than 5 million people, predominantly living in the east and south-east of the country, posing a potential threat to people's livelihoods, returns and key infrastructure routes. This, in combination with what could be the highest accident numbers in the world, indicates a significant problem [See Map 9 for an overview of the reported number of landmine incidents at township level in 2011, and Map 10 for an overview of townships with reported mine incidence or contamination in Myanmar].

Legal security/access to justice and the rule of law

46. Populations in the south-east have suffered from serious human rights abuses from both the national army and from NSAGs, as outlined in more detail above. They have limited access to justice, and combined with human rights violations and weak rule of law the consequence is a lack of trust in the government and the State itself. TBC finds that about half of the population surveyed in the south-east could not prove citizenship status, which further limits their access to rights and justice. Many communities are also distrustful of the NSAGs.

Material security (access to jobs/livelihoods, humanitarian and development assistance, etc.)

47. Poverty and access to livelihoods is a major concern to ethnic populations in the south-east. The TBC survey finds that 59 per cent of people in rural areas are impoverished. Exposure to economic shocks, natural hazards, human rights abuses, as well as capacity to deal with these shocks directly affect sustainability of livelihoods.[30] In the TBC survey conducted in 2010 the local population was asked to prioritise the two main shocks to

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[25] The Border Consortium, *Changing Realities, Poverty and Displacement in South East Burma/Myanmar*, 2012.
[26] As of end of December 2012.
[27] While the term 'Rohingya' is itself subject to dispute, it is used in this document because it is the term most commonly used to refer to this ethnic, linguistic and religious minority group.
[28] 'Temporary shelters' is the Royal Thai Government's term used to identify the refugee camps along the border.
[29] UNHCR internal reports, March 2013
[30] The Border Consortium, *Changing Realities, Poverty and Displacement in South East Burma/Myanmar*, 2012.

their livelihoods during the previous six months, 16 per cent of households reported military patrols, while forced labour (10 per cent), armed conflict (8 per cent), restrictions on movement (7 per cent) and forced displacement (7 per cent) were also significant factors.[31] These shocks negatively impacted on food security for 61 per cent of the TBC surveyed households. Coping strategies included buying cheaper or poorer quality food, reducing the number of meals or quantity of food per day, borrowing money, or selling assets.

48. *Lack of services.* Rural populations are suffering from a lack of access to basic services such as health and education [See map 11 for an overview of township population per doctor and rural population per midwife]. Until recently, humanitarian organisations have faced many challenges in accessing populations in the south-east. The authorities have imposed a number of restrictions on the activities of such organisations which has made it very difficult to deliver vital services to all those who are in need of them. That being said, many border areas have never been under the full administrative authority of the central government, and in these areas the provision of services might not be possible without first focusing on building relationships and trust. Without doing so, misperceptions could easily arise, and the expansion of government services could be misinterpreted as an attempt to expand control into these areas.

49. *Special economic zones (SEZs).* The government is promoting special economic zones to "encourage investment in sectors such as manufacturing in which there has been less investment than other sectors. The Special Economic Zone Law was enacted on 27 January 2011",[32] and several SEZs are being developed in the border areas. While they have been planned for a long while, the ceasefires with the NSAGs has allowed for these plans to move ahead. In the south-east, the Dawei Deep Seaport and SEZ in Tanintharyi region is being established under a memorandum of understanding signed in 2008 between the Thai and Myanmar governments. The seaport would shorten the travelling time of cargo ships to parts of South-East Asia, save transportation costs, potentially attract a large amount of foreign investment and create some employment in the region, while the opening of land transport to the Myanmar-Thai border gives the port an important geographical position as a gateway to ASEAN economies.[33] Many grassroots organizations have emerged in Dawei as a response to the land grabs by the companies and the government (the project covers an extensive area and involves the relocation of a number of villages)[34] and concerns have been expressed about possible environmental impacts of aspects of the project.[35]

50. Concerns have been raised by the national parliament, alleging that the planning of the SEZs lacked transparency and inclusivity, and possibly benefitted economic and political elites without clear benefits to the local population. A study of the perceptions of the local people suggests that the SEZ has led to some restrictions since the project began, limiting opportunities for some livelihoods (farming, fishing, foraging in particular). Moreover people are reluctant to leave their land, as they say they have not been told clearly where they will be relocated to or the amount of compensation they will receive. Daily labourers, farmers, fishermen and fishery workers, and elderly could be particularly at risk of loss of livelihoods, and the study found that many local people cannot take advantage of employment opportunities on the project because of insufficient education, fuelling community concerns that outsiders will benefit more.[36]

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[31] The Border Consortium, *Changing Realities, Poverty and Displacement in South East Burma/Myanmar*, 2012.
[32] Transnational Institute, *Developing Disparity*, February 2013.
[33] Southern Society Development Network, Dawei Development Association, Loka Ahlinn and Trocaire, *Local People's Understandings of the Dawei Special Economic Zone*, March 2012.
[34] Transnational Institute, *Developing Disparity*, February 2013.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Southern Society Development Network, Dawei Development Association, Loka Ahlinn and Trocaire, *Local People's Understandings of the Dawei Special Economic Zone*, March 2012.

A PEACEBUILDING AGENDA

51. While ceasefires are an important first step, much more remains to be done to bring sustainable peace to the south-east. Services need to be provided to the population, but the political causes of the conflict also need to be addressed. Concerns of the population are not based solely around needs and services, but also around security and justice, and future economic and political opportunities. Efforts to alleviate suffering should therefore be done in a way that builds trust and improves opportunities for peace. In this regard, experience has shown that greater participation of women in peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction is a key factor in promoting sustained peace.[37] Unless outside support is provided within the framework of a political dialogue that addresses core grievances, additional assistance and service provision alone will not bring sustainable peace – and delivered in the wrong way, such aid even has the potential to undermine the peace.

Global lessons from peacebuilding contexts[38]

52. *Transitions.* Global experience from numerous post-conflict situations suggests a number of key lessons for such situations. Global best practice and lessons drawn from other peacebuilding contexts can provide a rich source of information and suggest key priorities for peacebuilding in Myanmar, as well as best practice for donors in aid provision. Normally in such situations, there are multiple interventions that all need to happen at the same time. For example, political settlement, security, humanitarian aid, development and capacity building must all happen at once and be supported simultaneously.

53. *Knowledge and analysis.* Lack of adequate knowledge and analysis is a key barrier to effectively supporting peacebuilding. Weak conflict analysis and poor quality information (data, statistics, and so on) make it very difficult to provide clear and directed advice. As such there is a need early on to build up shared information and analysis in order to ensure that it is incorporated in policy or program design. One of the goals of the joint peacebuilding needs assessment would be to address this issue.

54. *Trust-building, peacebuilding and protecting space for local agency.* Peacebuilding is relationship-centred, and thus requires approaches that put relationships and trust building at the centre of relief, development, conflict prevention, reconstruction and reconciliation. There is also a need to better understand local strategies for security and protection, and protect the space for local community-based groups and civil society to carry out their work.[39] It is also important to assess and where possible build on and strengthen existing processes, networks, partnerships for building dialogue, trust-building, protection, community development, service delivery, and so on.

55. *Do No Harm: aid programs and conflict.* In order to make sure that interventions "do no harm" it is important to understand the relationships of power within a particular conflict context and how outside assistance might affect them. Also essential is the need to be conflict sensitive so that good intentions do not lead to negative unintended consequences. For example, humanitarian aid that benefits one group disproportionately might in fact lead to further conflict and increase the suffering that interventions are trying to alleviate. All aid programs involve a resource transfer of some kind, whether it is food, medical care, medical supplies or training. In conflict environments, these resources become a source of power and depending on how the delivery of the resources is carried out, can play a role in either exacerbating or mitigating the conflict. It is also important to move

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[37] Report of the UN Secretary-General, *Women's participation in peacebuilding*, A/65/354–S/2010/466, 7 December 2010; and Report of the UN Secretary-General, Women's participation in peacebuilding, A/65/354–S/2010/466, *Tracking Progress: 7-Point Action Plan*, 2010.

[38] This section is drawn from inputs provided by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI).

[39] See for example the work of the Local to Global Protection Initiative (www.local2global.info), including South et al. *Conflict and Survival: Local Protection in South-East Burma,* Chatham House, 2012; and South et al., *Local to Global Protection in Myanmar (Burma), Sudan, South Sudan and Zimbabwe*, ODI (HPN), 2012.

beyond the humanitarian technical focus on "needs", and to do so through engaging with the local population about their concerns in order to contribute to lasting peace.

56. *Humanitarian and development assistance.* International experience suggests that support for basic services, while critical, does not in itself build peace or prevent violence. If short-term assistance is not underpinned by systematic support it can end up raising expectations and may lead to increased frustration and tensions. Instead, there is a need for investment in a wider array of tools that support confidence building (such as demining and cash transfers). While development is good, prioritizing material assistance over peace and state building goals can actually undermine development and might exacerbate tensions. Based on global best practice experience, it is usually recommended that peace and statebuilding goals should be prioritized. This includes focusing on security, justice (fair allocation of resources), jobs/livelihood and the management of resources in a transparent way.

57. *Linking peacebuilding to economic development is essential early on.* There is a need to build linkages between sectors (economic, social, political): Linking growth, poverty and inequality is critical in post conflict economic recovery. Only focusing on growth is insufficient because the redistribution of benefits from economic recovery is crucial for conflict prevention/reduction. Elite capture of the benefits of growth will not promote peace.

58. *Five Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals.* A "New Deal" for engagement in fragile states was endorsed as part of the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan in November 2011. The New Deal articulates a set of Peacebuilding and Statebuilding Goals that precede the Millennium Development Goals and lay the foundations for sustained development in fragile contexts. These goals include: (1) legitimate politics, (2) security, (3) justice, (4) economic foundations, and (5) revenue and services. The Myanmar government has reflected the Busan principles in the Accord for Effective Development Cooperation between the government and development partners approved in Naypyitaw on 20 January 2013.

Developing a peacebuilding strategy

59. From these global lessons combined with the key concerns of the ethnic groups and communities in the south-east it is possible to suggest strategies and approaches for peacebuilding. These suggestions will need to be discussed with all stakeholders and validated against the concerns and aspirations of the populations living in conflict-affected areas.

   o *Assistance to take place within a peacebuilding agenda.* The situation in conflict-affected areas of Myanmar has political causes, and nowhere is this clearer than in the south-east of the country. Unless it is delivered within the framework of a political dialogue that addresses core grievances, assistance – including humanitarian aid – will not bring sustainable peace. However, assistance that is sensitive to the political process and takes into account security, rights and the sociocultural context can play a positive role. The five peacebuilding and statebuilding goals under the "new deal" could be a key reference point in prioritizing peacebuilding interventions.

   o *Acknowledge the multiple transitions that Myanmar is going through.* Myanmar is going through multiple transitions, including moving from a planned to a market economy, a centralized to more decentralized state, and from authoritarian to more responsive governance. Lessons from other contexts highlight how transitions can be both positive (from conflict to peace) and negative (from fragility to failure). In this context, many interventions need to proceed in tandem, with humanitarian relief taking place at the same time as development assistance, initiatives on security and trust-building, and political dialogue.

- *A need for interventions that bring security and build trust.* Interventions that are inclusive and promote participation are important in order for people to see the value of peace. Based on the concerns of ethnic populations, specific attention should be given to interventions that bring security and build trust. Interventions should be developed on the basis of consensus-building and consultation, not only because these are vital ways to build trust, but also because consultations can help to rebalance power relations – giving voice to the periphery rather than just the centre, and to communities rather than just elites. Thus, the process can be as important as the interventions themselves. On the other hand, if such projects are not inclusive and consultative, they might increase tensions.

Suggested modalities for interventions in conflict-affected areas:

- Ensure conflict sensitive programming that incorporates careful 'do no harm' assessments.

- Take context as the starting point for any intervention. Make sure that aid instruments take into account existing dynamics, processes, institutions and capacities and allow local communities to decide whether projects go ahead and how they are managed.

- Direct support towards reinforcing local ways out of crisis. Peace processes are most sustainable when locally driven and owned. The contexts of conflict-affected communities are all unique, with different local histories, experiences, and varying aspirations.

- Ensure that interventions address the concerns and fears of communities. Addressing insecurity is perceived by communities to be the most important factor in building trust in the process. Make sure that services provided go beyond humanitarian interventions and build trust, especially in relation to the five peacebuilding goals. Allow for aid modalities that can grow and evolve, and adapt to engage with the changing context, for example through decentralized service delivery that increasingly works with the State as peace agreements are developed.

- Make sure that benefits of peace are being shared equally – elite capture is a problem.

- Ensure that the different needs of different parts of the population (women, men, children, youth) are well understood, and the impact of interventions and the changing context on them are monitored.

III. WHO IS DOING WHAT WHERE (3W MAPPING)

CONTEXT

60. The Who does What Where (3W) database tracks the implementation of humanitarian and development projects to support coordination and promote more effective and efficient use of resources. The Myanmar 3W is maintained and regularly updated by the Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU) based on reports from contributing agencies. The Myanmar 3W is updated every six months and includes only projects that are reported as under implementation at the time the information was collected.

61. The present report has relied on information available to MIMU, since an existing round of data collection by MIMU was already underway in March, the results of which are reflected in this report. It would have been unhelpful to replicate data collection, and in any case it would not have been feasible to do so in the short time available for this report.

62. The MIMU 3W information on the south-east currently provides only a partial picture of assistance. The 3W indicates where agencies are working, but not the scope of a particular intervention or whether activities cover all populations or the gaps or unmet needs of vulnerable communities. Furthermore, the nature of agency presence varies greatly between organisations and sectors, depending on the way in which different organisations work and on how different programs and projects are implemented. As such it is not possible to directly compare or equate the presence of one organisation with that of another.

63. The May 2012 3W was limited to 3 sectors – Health, Education and Livelihoods. It included the work of TBC partners at township level only, and in three sectors. The 3W data from October 2012 are more detailed, covering 13 sectors and 97 sub-sectors down to village-tract level, but this reflected only country-based organizations and did not include any information from border-based groups. The data for the latest round (April 2013) includes three new sectors – governance, peace building/conflict prevention, mine action – and the activities of border-based organisations have been reported to MIMU through TBC, as a joint initiative particularly for the south-east region.

MAPPING OF THE SOUTH-EAST

64. The MIMU maintains updated base maps of all areas country-wide, as well as unique Place Codes with standard English transliterations and GPS coordinates to enable mapping to village level. There are several challenges for the south-east, including known villages that cannot currently be mapped, and differing definitions of administrative boundaries.

65. *Many known villages cannot yet be mapped.* Mapping for the south-east is particularly poor, with more than 8,000 (32 per cent) of known villages unable to be accurately mapped. Worst affected in this regard are Shan (South), Kayin and Tanintharyi. However, even for Bago (East) – which has the best data available among these states/regions – there are still a quarter of villages that cannot be accurately mapped. Access constraints, moving populations, establishment of new villages, lack of a system to routinely gather data on village locations, changing village locations, and villages being known by more than one name or by different names than on the government listing are the main reasons for this gap. MIMU is working with TBC and other agencies to strengthen this mapping through sharing of information and training of staff from agencies with field organizations to collect GPS coordinates. (See Annex 1 for further information on base maps – coverage of villages with coordinates.)

66. *Differing definitions of administrative boundaries.* There are some differences in the government and NSAG definitions of state/region, district, township and village tract boundaries in some areas of Mon, Kayin and Tanintharyi, and the two most eastern townships in Bago (East) are included in Kayin on some non-government maps. This makes it very difficult to produce agreed maps or maps reflecting scale of agencies work at village tract or township level.

MAY 2012 3W

67. The May 2012 3W captured the activities of 43 agencies providing health, education and livelihoods assistance to communities in the south-east, including 26 border-based and 37 in-country organisations. The data collection was limited to 3 sectors at township level and it cannot be seen as representative of all assistance delivered to the area.

68. Every township across the south-east had some level of agency activity in one of the three sectors, with the most frequently reported interventions in health (118 projects), followed by education (87) and livelihoods (69). Kayin tended to have a higher concentration of agencies in all three sectors, whereas parts of Kayah (townships bordering Thailand and Hpasawng) as well as parts of Shan (South) had the least.

69. *Health*. Agencies implementing health activities were most numerous across Kayin, Mon and Tanintharyi. In Kayah, health agencies were more numerous in the townships around Loikaw, and lowest in Shadaw and Mese where activities were provided only by border-based agencies. TBC partners reported activities of some level in all townships along the Thai border apart from the most southern township in Tanintharyi. According to the reported inputs, Bago (East) and Shan (South) had less concentration of agencies with 1 to 3 organisations active in 70-80 per cent of those regions [See Map 12 and 13 for an overview of assistance by this sector].

70. *Education*. Education is the second largest sector implemented by 21 organisations, 9 of which are border-based. Kayin, Mon and Tanintharyi have 4 to 7 organisations reporting project implementation on average per township. While the spread of activities of border agencies is similar to that in health, some northern and southern townships of Bago (East), south-east parts of Kayah and areas of Shan (South) and Shan (East) have no reported education projects by either in-country or border agencies [See Map 14 and 15 for an overview of assistance by this sector].

71. *Livelihoods*. Border-based organisations reported implementation of livelihoods activities in almost every township in Kayah, Kayin and Tanintharyi. Overall Myanmar-based and border agencies indicated some level of assistance provided to most townships across the south-east, although activities tended to be concentrated in Kayin, in parts of Kayah (Loikaw, Demoso, Hpruso), and in a smaller number of townships in Mon state and Shan (South). Townships in Kayin and almost half of the townships in Kayah each received assistance from 5 to 6 organisations. Shan (East) reportedly had the lowest coverage overall. About 70 per cent of Bago (East) has no projects reported, whilst a few townships of Shan (South) and Mon also had no reported projects. [See Map 16 and 17 for an overview of assistance by this sector].

OCTOBER 2012 3W

72. The MIMU October 2012 3W was a more comprehensive exercise with 13 sectors and 97 sub-sectors, though this gathered information only from organizations based in-country. In total 44 country-based agencies reported activities. In the states and regions across the south-east, activities were mainly concentrated in Bago (East), Kayah, Kayin, Mon and Tanintharyi. Tanintharyi and Kayah had the highest number of reported projects. [See Map 18 for an overview of the location of UN/INGO/NGO Projects under implementation in the south-east (village tract level) reported to MIMU as of 8 October

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2012, and Map 19 for an overview of the location of all organizations' activities reported to MIMU as of 8 October 2012 (village tract level).]

73. Across all sectors, interventions in the health sector were the highest (24 organisations) followed by education (14) and protection (12), primarily undertaken by INGOs. [See Annex 2 for an overview of country based organisation presence at township level by sector as of 8 October 2012.]

   o *Health sector.* The most frequent health intervention by the reporting agencies was HIV/AIDS programs, followed by reproductive health care, malaria program and health education.

   o *Education sector.* The main interventions in the south-east in the education sector were non-formal education followed by activities in early childhood development and formal education.

   o *Protection sector.* Projects related to awareness-raising on protection issues and people with disabilities are slightly higher than the rest.

   o *Livelihoods sector.* Assistance through agricultural extension and capacity building sub-sectors are also reported as highest amongst the agriculture and livelihoods sectors.

74. Country-based agencies reported project activities in many village tracts in Kayin, Mon and Tanintharyi, whereas a considerable number of village tracts of Thandaunggyi, Hpapun and Kyainseikgyi townships of Kayin had no projects reported. Only a low number of village tracts of Bago (East) and Taungoo townships were reported with activities, which were mainly health sector interventions, followed by education and livelihoods. A very low number of disaster risk reduction and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and protection activities were reported in that region. The extent of interventions was lower in Shan (South), where only one-third of village tracts were reported with activities in three main sectors, while a few projects in some other sectors were also implemented.

75. There are some limitations in presenting the 3W exercise for the south-east since some locations are still found as unmatched villages according to the administrative structure defined and annually updated by the General Administration Department under the Ministry of Home Affairs. In the October 2012 3W, 239 villages in Shan (South) that were among the inputs from agencies could not be matched. Additionally 193 villages in Tanintharyi, 147 in Mon and 107 in Kayin were unmatched. This means that they could not be included in the detailed matrix and mapping, which shows every single project line by each and every project of respective organisation.

APRIL 2013 3W

76. The MIMU April 2013 3W is a more comprehensive exercise than the October 2012 3W as it includes activities of both country-based and border-based agencies and adds three more sectors - governance, peace building/conflict prevention, and mine action. A total of 16 sectors and 127 sub-sectors[40] are included in this round. The April 2013 3W furthermore goes down to not only village tract level but also village level. This round of data covers both government and non-government controlled areas, although the precise delineation of these areas is not always known.

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[40] The 16 sectors are: Agriculture, Coordination, Disaster Risk Reduction, Education, Environment, Food, Governance, Health, Logistics, Mine Action, Non-agricultural Livelihoods/Infrastructure, Nutrition, Peace Building/Conflict Prevention, Protection, Shelter, and WASH. (See Annex 3 for descriptions of sectors and subsectors.)

77. Out of the 77 organisations that reported their activities, 63 are country-based and 14 are border-based organisations. Shan (South) has the highest number of organisations reporting their activities (37) followed by Mon (36), Kayin (34) and Bago (East) (26). Interventions are reported in all of the 48 townships across the south-east. Around 50 per cent of the village tracts are covered by organisations (1230 out of 2471 village tracts) with the highest percentage in Kayah (93 per cent) followed by Kayin (78 per cent) and Mon (78 per cent). Around 20 per cent of villages are reported to be covered (3260 out of 16,607 villages) with the highest percentage in Mon (47 per cent) followed by Kayah (46 per cent), Tanintharyi (33 per cent), Kayin (31), and Shan (South) (22 per cent). Bago (East) (0.8 per cent) and Shan (East) (0.2 per cent) have the least coverage [see map 20 for an overview of the presence of country-based and border-based organisations (all sectors) by township level].

78. Across all sectors, interventions in the health sector remain the highest (34 organisations) followed by education (23). In this round the third most reported intervention is non-agriculture livelihoods/infrastructure (19 organisations) followed by agriculture (17), WASH (17) and protection (15). Nutrition and shelter are reported with the least coverage with only two organisations each undertaking activities, while no agency is carrying out activities in the coordination sector.

- o *Health sector.* The most frequently reported health interventions remain the same as in the previous round, that is, HIV/AIDS programs, followed by reproductive health, malaria program and health education, while no agencies are reported to carry out activities related to mental health and psychological support and disease surveillance sub-sectors [see map 21 for an overview of assistance by this sector by township level].

- o *Education sector.* Differently from the previous round, the main interventions in this sector are reported to be related to quality basic education/formal education, followed by non-formal education and early childhood development. All sub-sectors are reported to be covered [see map 22 for an overview of assistance by this sector by township level].

- o *Non-agriculture livelihoods/infrastructure sector.* The most frequent interventions are reported in income generation; microfinance; vocational training and social recovery [see map 23 for an overview of assistance by this sector by township level].

- o *Agriculture sector.* The most frequent interventions are reported in agricultural inputs; livestock and poultry; planned production; provision of paddy plantation and cultivation; and capacity building (agricultural livelihood). The sub-sectors pest/disease control and agro-industry are not covered by any agencies [see map 24 for an overview of assistance by this sector by township level].

- o *Protection sector.* Promoting gender equality and empowerment of women is reported to be the most frequent intervention in this sector followed by sexual and gender based violence; awareness raising on protection issues; child protection; housing land and property; and persons with disabilities. The sub-sector of civil documentation is not reported to be covered by any agencies [see map 25 for an overview of assistance by this sector by township level].

- o *Governance sector.* Of the three new sectors the governance sector has the highest number of organisations reporting activities, 11 of these being country-based and one border-based. The main sub-sectors covered are strengthening civil society and human rights promotion and advocacy [see map 26 for an overview of assistance by this sector by township level].

79. In regard to the two other new sectors, the mine action sector is covered by three country-based organisations covering only mine risk education while The peacebuilding/conflict prevention is covered by three country-based organisations that are all engaged in conflict transformation and peacebuilding activities.

80. According to the submitted data, the highest presence of border-based organisations is in Kayin, Bago (East) and Mon and with the largest interventions in the food sector. The highest presence of country-based organisations is in Shan (South), Mon and Kayin with the most activities focused on the health sector, education and non-agriculture livelihoods/infrastructure.

IV. INTERVENTIONS AND GAPS

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

80. Humanitarian assistance to the south-east of Myanmar comes from two directions: eastward, from organisations based within Myanmar, and westward, from border-based organisations, with offices in Thailand, who provide assistance across the border. The cross-border assistance operation from Thailand emerged from a situation where significant parts of the south-east were under the administrative authority of armed opposition groups and where access to some areas was and remains logistically easier from across the Thai border.[41]

81. Government access restrictions for some areas of the south-east have improved over the past two years, with the newly-appointed government and state/region governments gradually reducing travel restrictions for areas covered by the newly-signed ceasefire agreements. For example, a number of organisations report increased ability to access areas of Kayah, Shan (South) and Tanintharyi. In addition, some projects such as the MPSI pilot project in Bago (East) have been able to work in areas previously inaccessible to foreigners.

82. Nevertheless, large areas of the south-east remain inaccessible to international organisations. Impediments on access include bureaucratic, logistical and security constraints. Limited access in these areas is partly a legacy of the armed conflicts which have affected these areas. Although some areas (such as major towns) are easily accessible, there are large disparities between States/Regions as well as within them. Lack of accurate information complicates the exact identification of conditions.[42] INGOs require a memorandum of understanding with a counterpart ministry in Myanmar. This can be a time-consuming process, partly because these understandings are usually only valid for one year and limited to a certain geographic area. There are also restrictions on access by organisations to their project locations, which requires travel authorisation requests to be submitted several weeks in advance. This creates considerable impediments to the effective management of projects. For certain locations – in particular in border areas – there is a requirement that international staff are accompanied on project visits by a government counterpart. However, partners of MPSI report that they regularly gain travel authorization within 3-5 days via MPC for visits to their project locations in the south-east. Recently, they have not been required to have a government minder. This indicates a tentative opening up of the space for international interventions in the south-east.

83. It should be recognised that despite the lack of international access to certain areas, a range of civil society actors (community-based organisations and local/national NGOs) also have access to the conflict-affected south-east, including to IDPs and adjacent communities affected by conflict. In many cases, these are faith-based (Christian, but also Buddhist) networks.[43] Although these activities have been ongoing, they also faced limitations due to bureaucratic and security constraints, which in turn meant important limitations on the capacity to deliver assistance. On 25 March 2013, the Karen National Union armed group issued a "policy on humanitarian operations" in its ceasefire areas, which requires local and international organizations wishing to operate in these areas to register and obtain approval, and enter into a memorandum of understanding with the

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[41] UNOCHA, *Review of Humanitarian Assistance to Vulnerable Populations in South-East Myanmar - Draft Two*, internal document, 2008.
[42] UNHCR, Summary Report on the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CAN) Meeting on Southeastern Myanmar, Kayah, Kayin, Mon States &Tanintharyi Region, May 2012.
[43] Ashley South, Memo, 2009.

group, who will issue operational permissions and identity cards for humanitarian workers, and assist them with safe passage and security.[44]

INTRODUCTION - SERVICES BY SECTOR

84. Generally, assistance has been provided to the south-east across various sectors of activity by the government, local communities and community-based organisations, local NGOs, international NGOs and the United Nations. Within the limitations set out at the outset of this section, this sub-section on services attempts to summarise the information available in terms of the activities ongoing, key issues and needs by sector, as well as a preliminary analysis of what the main gaps are in particular in terms of available information. It also describes information on future plans made available by organisations. The structure follows the list of key sectors used by the MIMU. It is important to note that this preliminary desk review does not in any way replace a more in-depth analysis by experts in these various sectors.

85. The analysis of the MIMU April 2013 data (see section 3) indicates that health is the sector with the highest coverage in terms of number of organisations (34) covering 81 out of the 84 townships, with only three townships in Shan (East) reported uncovered. Twenty-three organisations are supporting the education sector in a total of 63 townships, with the least coverage reported in Shan (South) and Shan (East). The third most reported intervention is non-agriculture livelihoods/infrastructure with 19 organisations covering 42 townships, with the highest coverage in Kayin (all townships) and the least in Shan (East) (one township only). Although only 15 organisations have reported activities in the protection sector, activities are carried out in all townships except Kyunsu and Lauglon of Tanintharyi. Nutrition and shelter are reported with the least number of organisations providing support – only two each. Nutrition activities are reported to be implemented in each State/Region (in many cases townships are not specified), while shelter assistance is reported to be implemented only in few townships in Tanintharyi, Mon and Kayin.

86. In Myanmar, spending in the social sector is very low: health and education combined accounted for a mere 1.5 per cent of GDP between 2000 and 2007, with the bulk of spending in education (78 per cent) and health trailing far behind. Although there have recently been increases, this low public resource allocation for the social sectors impacts on service delivery, leading to services not being available in remote areas, not of adequate standard, insufficient personnel, low salary levels, and low investment in capacity development.[45]

<u>Gaps</u>

87. Given the limitations of this report, which does not have access to all of the information at the disposal of organisations, due to the limited extent to which some of this information is shared, the identification of gaps is necessarily partial. For some sectors, information is available on the limitations of current service delivery by both the government and other actors and has been mentioned in this report. Depending on how much information is available on service delivery, this can be qualitative (nature of services) or quantitative (number of facilities, for instance). For most sectors, the report shows that there is an clear lack of information as regards gaps. Additionally, and except for health, education and protection sectors, the availability of disaggregated data by gender, age and diversity is limited, hampering the ability to understand particular needs and gaps. In many of the sectors, there is limited accurate baseline data available. In most sectors, there is a need for a comprehensive overview of needs assessments undertaken and the activities by sector (such as the education sector review). It should also be noted that much of the information obtained from assessments in the south-east is not disaggregated to specify

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[44] Karen National Union, *Policy on humanitarian operation in ceasefire zone*, 25 March 2013.
[45] Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development and UNICEF, *Situation Analysis of Children in Myanmar*, July 2012.

whether it concerns areas under government administration or other areas. This should be kept in mind in any planning of future assistance. Generally, better information is also needed on modalities for accessing all the ceasefire areas.

88. A key observation of this exercise is that information is much more difficult to obtain than it ought to be, and that as the number of agencies working in the country and the scale of interventions increases, it is crucial to promote the use of improved coordination and information sharing platforms.

Governance

Key issues and needs

89. Decades of conflict and high levels of displacement in the south-east have weakened traditional community support and leadership structures. Extreme poverty and lack of basic infrastructure have further decreased the absorption capacity of local communities. The participation of women in community management structures is believed to be generally low. Increasing cohesion within communities and re-establishing community self-management capacities, will be of particular importance in a return and reintegration process, as additional pressure on limited services and resources can initially weaken community structures.

90. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as part of its Human Development Initiative, has provided support to strengthen the capacity of poor communities and community-based organisations in selected remote border townships to plan and undertake development activities. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) and other organisations have introduced limited governance capacity support in the context of the project management and supervision modalities of MPSI projects in the south-east.

91. Although specific assessments are not available in regard to access to justice for the population in the south east, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar notes that although Myanmar's constitutional provisions guarantee the right of every citizen to equality, liberty and justice (article 21 (a)), in practice courts are not an accessible or viable means for people to seek justice, and that more proactive measures to improve people's understanding of their legal rights and improve access to the courts and other relevant institutions are needed.[46] Likewise, the TBC survey points out the importance of building accountable and responsive systems of local governance to promote access to justice.[47]

Gaps

92. As per the latest MIMU information, twelve organisations are reported to support the sector with quite a wide coverage (58 townships) and a main focus on strengthening civil society. While at central level there are many organisations supporting activities in the governance sector including advocacy and promotion of human rights, rule of law and access to justice, limited information is available on the extent to which these activities are implemented in the south-east.

Protection

Key issues and needs

93. People in south-east Myanmar currently face a number of protection-related risks and problems such as the lack of civil documentation (including birth registration, family lists and identity documentation in remote areas), landmines, access to land and livelihoods, forced labour, forced recruitment, trafficking, gender-based violence and, in

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[46] UN Special Rapporteur, Report on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, 6 March 2013.
[47] The Border Consortium, *Changing Realities, Poverty and Displacement in South East Burma/Myanmar*, 2012.

some cases, restrictions on movement. The protection concerns are often exacerbated for IDPs, and potentially refugees upon return. Additionally, there are still reports of forced contributions/taxation from military and non-state armed groups in the form of cash or livestock.

94. *Citizenship.* Lack of citizenship documentation makes it difficult for many people to claim their rights, access basic social services, or travel. Decades of conflict in south-east Myanmar have resulted in households unable to confirm their citizenship status. Findings from the TBC survey suggest that 47 per cent of the households surveyed fall under this category.[48] Furthermore, to contain movement of populations and persons linked to ethnic armed groups, the government in the past had limited distribution of ID cards ("citizenship scrutiny cards") in border areas. Ability to provide proof of citizenship appears to vary widely across the south-east, with constraints to obtaining citizenship cards most widespread in the conflict-affected areas of Kayah and Monghsat township in Shan (East). There is also a significant gender difference with about 60 per cent of men having a citizenship card, but only 48 per cent of women.[49] Since July 2011, the Immigration and National Registration Department of the Ministry of Immigration and Population has initiated the Moe Pwint Operation, which is an accelerated procedure to issue Citizenship Scrutiny Cards. The project is implemented in cooperation with Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC), who have developed a model of setting up a temporary "one-stop shop" in a easily accessible location that communities can come to. The mobile team, which includes community leaders, is able to reach people living in remote areas who have in the past had trouble reaching State services. The "one-stop shop" covers, free of charge, all the steps involved in issuing the Citizen Scrutiny Cards on the same day. To date, approximately 60,000 people have received national identity cards in Kayah and Kayin States.[50] Support has also been provided by UNHCR through a pilot project in Mon State including the production of leaflets in the local language to increase the Ministry of Immigration efforts in enhancing awareness of the Moe Pwint Operation within the communities.

95. In the particular case of refugees, birth registration was introduced in the temporary settlements in Thailand only in 2010. While the number of refugees with citizenship scrutiny cards is not known, measures to confirm Myanmar citizenship, and as such preventing statelessness from occurring, need to be addressed.

96. In the context of Myanmar citizenship laws and policies, persons not belonging to one of the officially recognized "ethnic groups" face difficulty in acquiring Citizenship Scrutiny Cards, despite the fact that there are relevant provisions available for them under the Citizenship Law. However, no mapping of statelessness in the south-east has yet been conducted and therefore no official figures or systematic identification exists. The Salone (commonly called sea gypsies or Moken) and Malay (commonly called Pashu) who live in the far southern Tanintharyi Region (in particular, the Myeik archipelago in the Andaman Sea, which is administered as part of Kyunsu township) are groups in the south-east who have been identified with undetermined nationality.

97. *Land tenure*. Land registration documents are held by township authorities and land tenure documents and deeds are not always recorded or respected. There are frequent reports of land expropriation (or "land grabbing") by the government, the Myanmar army, non-state armed groups, and private companies, often resulting in internal displacement without appropriate guarantees of compensation. Land occupants are forced out in favour of resource extraction projects (including mining and logging), infrastructure development, agribusiness concessions, industrial estates, and so on. Those already displaced from their own land are at particular risk of having that land

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[48] The Border Consortium, *Changing Realities, Poverty and Displacement in South East Burma/Myanmar*, 2012.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Information provided by NRC/MPSI.

expropriated. Those who have suffered land-grabbing are furthermore at risk of other abuses such as forced labour. Additionally, reforms introduced in 2008 provided some additional security of tenure, but failed to adequately recognise customary land user rights, the prevalent form of land rights in the upland areas of the south-east.

98. *Forced labour.* The ILO forced labour complaints mechanism has acted as a tool to educate, monitor and address forced labour practices by both the government authorities (civilian and military) and NSAGs in border areas. While the use of forced labour continues to be a concern, reports from all of the ceasefire areas indicate a considerable improvement. Additionally, ILO training of the judiciary, armed forces, police, and general administration personnel on rights and responsibilities in respect of forced labour has been commenced, and the Karen National Union, New Mon State Party and Shan State Army (South) armed groups have requested similar training for their Liaison Office personnel. Also, both the government and NSAGs have agreed to the introduction of community forced labour awareness raising activities in ceasefire areas in the south-east. [51] The Myanmar government has agreed to undertake joint investigations towards resolution (including restorative justice) in respect of unanswered comments of ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations on alleged forced labour abuses in cease-fire zones. Modalities are currently being developed for these investigations. [52]

99. *Child protection.* Myanmar is known to have a large number of children in armed conflict, including child soldiers, although there are no reliable estimates of the numbers[53] – with both the government and various non-state armed actors responsible for the recruitment of minors. On 27 June 2012, the United Nations Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting and the government signed a Plan of Action with regards to underage recruitment in the Myanmar army. Procedures are underway for the systematic identification and discharge of verified minors from the national forces. However, plans of action have not yet been agreed with all non-state armed groups in the south-east, and verification of the application of those deeds of commitment that have been signed (with KNU and KNPP) has not yet been possible. It remains to be seen whether the Plan of Action with the government will be successfully implemented.

100. *Sexual and gender-based violence.* Services, security and the rule of law are reported to be weak, as well as effective protection and response mechanisms to address sexual and gender-based violence. Survivors who seek legal aid have to report to the police before any examination and medical treatment and health care providers are obliged to report to the police before providing services to survivors of such violence. Additionally, community rejection and reluctance to provide support to survivors prevent comprehensive care. Community and individual lack of awareness to prevent sexual and gender-based violence, as well as under-reporting, remain major challenges. Access for survivors to adequate medical and psychosocial care, ensuring confidentiality, is extremely limited and there is a lack of adequate expertise.

101. *Protection monitoring.* Due to the size and remoteness of the operational area, compounded by access limitations and sensitivities, reliable and disaggregated information on the profiles and needs of displaced populations remains scarce. Data are available with individual agencies, but this is not comprehensive. Protection monitoring has been significantly hampered by limitations on humanitarian access, and the fact that government officials generally accompany agency staff on field missions, significantly

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[51] See International Labour Organization, reports of the Liaison Officer in Myanmar to the ILO Governing Body, March 2012, November 2012 and March 2013.

[52] Ibid.

[53] While there have been some estimates in the past, including some that suggest Myanmar may have the largest number of child soldiers in the world, the methodologies were generally weak – for example, relying on testimony from a small number of deserters, and extrapolating these figures to the whole of the army. The numbers also often failed to distinguish between the number of soldiers who were minors, and those who were minors at the time they were recruited but had since reached adult age.

compromising confidentiality. The collection of protection-related data, particularly where it is linked to armed conflict and displacement, is extremely sensitive, and sharing of protection-related information between agencies tends to be informal, through inter-agency meetings or bilateral discussions.

<u>Gaps</u>

102. No comprehensive protection monitoring system is yet in place. There is also a gap between data collection carried out by actors operating from Thailand, including community-based organisations and faith-based organisations, and by Myanmar-based actors. As a result, protection-related data and information are not fully analysed, consolidated or shared in a systematic manner. UNHCR has recently strengthened its protection monitoring and information management capacities – including through the establishment of a system for capturing and analysing patterns of spontaneous return – with a view to working towards obtaining a more systematic understanding and characteristics of IDPs and returning refugees, and the protection risks affecting them.

Mine action

<u>Key issues and needs</u>

103. According to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL)'s 2012 Landmine Monitor Report, landmines are concentrated in Myanmar's border areas with Bangladesh and Thailand, but are a particular threat in eastern parts of the country as a result of decades of insurgency and counter-insurgency. The ICBL estimates that 47 townships in Kachin, Kayin, Kayah, Mon, Rakhine, and Shan states, as well as in Bago (East) and Tanintharyi regions are affected by mine contamination, primarily from antipersonnel mines. Kayin and Bago are suspected to contain the heaviest mine contamination and have the highest number of recorded victims.[54] Landmines are widely used by both the national army and several Non-State Armed Groups.

104. In 2011, the ICBL recorded at least 381 new mine/explosive remnants of war casualties in Myanmar. These statistics are based on state and independent media reports as well as information provided by NGOs and other organisations, and are therefore necessarily incomplete and under-report the actual scale of casualties.[55]

105. Again according to the ICBL, there have been reports of use of mines by civilians and village guard groups, to prevent the entry or armed groups (including the national army) into their villages. This practice is especially prevalent in four village tracts of northern Hpapun township in Kayin.[56] In these cases, communities may be resistant to mine clearance until there is greater confidence in the durability of the peace process and the future conduct of armed group members and Myanmar soldiers vis-à-vis civilians.

106. In the absence of a non-technical survey, there are no detailed maps of mine contamination and the extent of the threat cannot be assessed accurately. However, it is suspected that Myanmar is one of the countries with the highest levels of mine contamination in the world. Contamination with mines further limits and aggravates the situation of people living in conflict-affected areas, as it impacts on their access to basic services and livelihoods, and causes and protracts displacement, among other issues. Similarly, landmine contamination and the lack of demarcation of mine fields is a major impediment to the safe return of IDPs and refugees.

107. Through the Presidential Decree of 26 October 2012 the MPC was given the responsibility to manage and coordinate all activities related to humanitarian mine action within Myanmar. In this context, shortly after a memorandum of understanding

[54] International Campaign to Ban Landmines, *Landmine Monitor Report Myanmar/Burma*, 2012.
[55] Ibid,
[56] Ibid.

was signed with Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), which among other things focused on helping set up the Myanmar Mine Action Centre. The Centre was then officially opened by the Norwegian Prime Minister in early November. In December 2012 the centre established a Mine Action Technical Working Group consisting of the INGOs, UN agencies and donors involved in mine action in Myanmar. The Technical Working Group is currently in the final stage of drafting the Myanmar National Standard. The standard will regulate all activities related to mine action and a first draft of the document will be completed in the end of March 2013. Through the memorandum of understanding it signed with NPA, the government has requested the organisation to support its broader mine action efforts; UNICEF is also providing assistance on mine risk education and the UN system has one mine action expert also providing assistance to the MPC.

108. Several organisations are already working in-country on landmine-related issues – including mine risk education led by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and UNICEF. Additional organisations are planning to work in Myanmar, together with the Mine Action Centre. Organisations include the Myanmar Red Cross Society, NPA, HALO Trust, Dan Church Aid, Danish Demining Group/Danish Refugee Council, Apopo, and the Humpty Dumpty Institute.

<u>Gaps</u>

109. There are still no activities related to survey and clearance of mined areas taking place in Myanmar. Very limited Mine and Explosive Remnants of War Risk Education activities aiming at informing communities at risk about the mine and explosive remnant problem has taken place. There is also very little in the way of victim assistance and support. As a first step to obtain more information, there is an urgent need to conduct a non-technical survey in order to get a better baseline on the extent of landmine contamination in the country.

Education

<u>Key issues and needs</u>

110. *State schools.* Government educational facilities in the 2 regions and 5 states in the south-east in 2009 included 297 (3.2 per cent) high schools, 495 (5.4 per cent) middle schools and 8,305 (91 per cent) primary schools.[57] High school students account for only 7 per cent of the total students. The Ministry of National Planning and UNICEF (2012) study finds that the net completion rate of primary school is only 54 per cent nationwide and much less in rural areas.[58] They also raised the issues of 'language barrier' as a significant factor for ethnic minority children dropping out of school; low quality of primary school; rote learning; and insufficient schools and teachers. More than half of rural schools lack teachers which results in multi-grade teaching. UNHCR's survey of 280 rural villages in Mon, Kayin and Tanintharyi finds that only 62 per cent of the villages have primary schools and 50 per cent of the school buildings are either unstable or have significant deterioration, while the ratio of teachers and students is 1:231. The TBC 2012 survey covering certain areas of the south-east suggests that only 67 per cent of the children between 5 to 12 years of age are attending school regularly. The main reasons for low school attendance and absenteeism cited are education costs, illness, work requirements for income or domestic chores, and specific to conflict-affected communities, access or distance and insecurity. Most children in the border areas have limited opportunity to continue their education beyond primary school.

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[57] Department of Educational Planning and Training, *List of Government Schools, Affiliated Schools and Educational Statistics of Education College*, 2012.
[58] Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development and UNICEF, *Situation Analysis of Children in Myanmar*, July 2012.

111. *Community schools.* Communities have established community-run primary schools for their children, where teachers are hired and supported with food and basic supplies. However, the teachers are still struggling for their livelihood. Because community schools are not recognized by the government, these schools attach their students to the nearest government schools to enable the students to join the government schools. The government also encourages these community schools to apply for recognition as "government-affiliated" schools and later upgraded to "government branch" schools. Community-supported schools often lack of the proper resources so that some classes have to be held outside. In general, the communities are heavily burdened in supporting community schools.

112. *Monastic schools* are overseen by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. For 2012-13, Ministry of Religious Affairs information indicates that there were 297 monastic schools (216 primary and 81 post-primary/middle schools) in the south-east with 46,427 students (47 per cent of whom were girls). The total number of students accessing these institutions has increased dramatically because of relatively low (or zero) cost of the monastic schools. Financial support for monastic schools is raised through contributions from local donors and, to a small extent, international NGOs and funding organisations. Teacher salaries are generally extremely low, and many schools lack appropriate and necessary equipment such as desks and chairs.[59]

113. *Karen schools.* A study carried out by Marie Lall and Ashley South on non-state ethnic education regimes in Myanmar describes a parallel education system implemented by the Karen community.[60] This study focused on two types of education: formal schools working independently, or semi-independently, of the state system and using Karen language/s in the classroom; plus a wide range of civil society actors involved in Karen language education. The former includes schools associated with non-state armed groups, as well as community-run schools and 'mixed' establishments; the latter includes the activities of groups and networks working in government-controlled and Karen National Union-controlled and/or influenced areas, and zones contested between the state and non-state armed groups. Local NGOs supported 1,130 schools in Karen-populated areas in 2011-12. The network shows the communities' great commitment to education under often extremely difficult circumstances. Nevertheless, this diverse education regime faces great challenges, including a lack of school and teaching materials. A particular issue facing the Karen nationalist education regime is its divergences from the government curriculum.[61]

114. *Mon schools.* Similarly, in Mon State a parallel educational system was developed by the New Mon State Party armed group. The above-mentioned study by Lall and South states that during the 2010-11 school year, the Mon National Education Committee administered 156 Mon schools and 116 'mixed' schools, with 808 teachers and 36,227 pupils; that teacher training is provided both in the state and in the non-state sector by international aid agencies, including UNICEF and JICA. The main concern raised by education officials was the low retention rate of Mon teaching staff due to the low salaries offered and the lack of adequate school infrastructure. To mitigate this, the parents and Mon community-based organisations are actively raising funds and income generating schemes in order to support the schools.[62] Other needs cited by the Lall-South study are the lack of school premises and materials, inadequate levels of NGO support for the Mon school system, the need for more teacher training and higher teacher salaries, and more importantly, the issue of legal recognition – or at least de facto acceptance – by the government. The study concludes that "if administrative

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[59] Myanmar Education Consortium, 11 May 2012.
[60] Lall-South, Education, *Conflict and Identity: Non-state ethnic education regimes in Burma*, March 2012.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.

difficulties can be resolved, the Mon education regime offers a model for a dual-language ('federal') approach to schooling in … Myanmar".[63]

<u>Gaps</u>

115. There are inconsistencies in the information coming from different sources, and the available data of the government is sometimes not reliable, such as statistics on student flows, drop-outs, repetition rates, and intake rates. One factor is the lack of an updated baseline, as the last census was carried out in 1983. The government's education information does not include non-state educational systems while information on faith-based schools supported by various NGOs is lacking.

Health

<u>Key issues and needs</u>

116. The Ministry of Health and UNICEF (2012) reported that every year in Myanmar, 56,000 children under five die and a great majority of them are younger than 1 month.[64] Child mortality rates are higher in the central plains, in rural areas, among the poorest families and among families without formal education. Severe postpartum haemorrhage is the main obstetric cause of maternal deaths, followed by hypertensive disorders of pregnancy. The principal causes of neonatal mortality are prematurity, birth asphyxia and sepsis, including pneumonia. Deaths are most common in home-delivered babies in rural areas. The main direct causes of deaths among children under-5 are respiratory infections, diarrhoea and malaria, exacerbated by underlying malnutrition.

117. Malaria continues to be the leading cause of morbidity and mortality. A total of 284 of Myanmar's 325 townships are endemic for malaria, especially in forested areas.[65] UNICEF was able to expand its anti-malaria campaign in some ceasefire and hard-to-reach villages by supporting volunteers in malaria prevention and treatment. More volunteers, health workers and funds are needed to cover all malaria-risk areas.

118. The World Health Organisation noted that approximately 87 per cent of the over-all expenditure on health in Myanmar is shouldered by the consumers.[66] The need to pay is a huge barrier to health care for people who are living in poverty in the south-east border states. The burden of health costs on consumers is a marker of inequity and poor social safety nets. Social security expenditure on health accounts for just 1.3 per cent of the total health budget.[67]

119. Myanmar townships have an average catchment area of 100,000-200,000 people and are responsible for managing all secondary and primary care services, including one to two station hospitals and four to seven rural health centres. Each rural health centre has four sub-centres at the village level, covered by a midwife and public health supervisor. Volunteer health workers (community health workers and auxiliary midwives) provide outreach services to village hamlets[68] [for an overview of township population per doctor and rural population per midwife, see Map 20].

120. Overall, the national health care system struggles to address the challenges of access, quality, human resources, management and organisation. Many health facilities lack basic equipment and supplies and do not have sufficient and/or appropriate health staff. The health assistant to population ratio is approximately 1:22,000, while the midwife to

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[63] Lall-South, Education, *Conflict and Identity: Non-state ethnic education regimes in Burma*, March 2012.
[64] Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development and UNICEF, *Situation Analysis of Children in Myanmar*, July 2012.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Countdown 2015 and WHO National Health Account Series.
[67] Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development and UNICEF, *Situation Analysis of Children in Myanmar*, July 2012.
[68] Ibid.

population ratio is approximately 1:5000 (ranging from around 500 to almost 7000 across the different townships). Service delivery is particularly weak in rural, remote and border areas.

121. Data collected by UNHCR in 280 villages in Mon, Kayin and Tanintharyi showed that 97 per cent of the villages had no health facilities, while of the 3 per cent that did, 20 per cent are rural health centres and 80 per cent are rural health sub-centres.[69] It also showed that a great majority of the health care providers are midwives but they service only 42 per cent of the villages and only 15 per cent of these villages receive daily health services from midwives. Ninety-eight per cent of the villages have no doctors, 96 per cent have no health assistant and 91 per cent have no community volunteer workers.

122. An IBIS assessment of reproductive health among populations living in villages in conflict-affected and rural areas in eastern Myanmar found that there was a profound lack of access to skilled birth attendants, and that unsafe abortion and post-partum haemorrhage were common among the respondents. The assessment identified a lack of sustainable supplies and trained health workers, medic turnover, logistical challenges in movement of people and supplies and poor access to family planning as the key challenges to reducing maternal mortality among the populations in the area.[70]

Gaps

123. Data included in the government's state and township health profiles is not always very reliable and updated. There is a lack of information on the facilities, services and capacities of health providers from the non-state actors and civil society, especially those operating from the other side of the border.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Key issues and needs

124. Safe drinking water, a sanitary environment and hygienic practices are important in maintaining good health. The urgency of addressing water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) problems is evidenced by various surveys from the government, and agencies working inside Myanmar and from Thailand.

125. Findings on household access to safe drinking water vary in various surveys. Government data about access to safe drinking water varies, with the Integrated Household Living Conditions Assessment reporting 69 per cent of households have access to protected water sources while the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey reports 82 per cent of households have access.[71] Access to safe drinking water is less in rural than in urban areas, and Kayin state has the lowest access. The TBC 2012 survey in the rural areas of south-east Myanmar found an average of only 27 per cent of families have access to protected water sources. Data collected by UNHCR in 280 rural villages in both government-controlled and NSAG-controlled areas in Mon, Kayin and Tanintharyi finds 54 per cent of the villages have no access to safe drinking water in their locations. Some villages located near the mining activities have reported water pollution of the streams and rivers where they collect their drinking water from.[72]

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[69] Data collected by UNHCR in 280 villages in both government-controlled and NSAG-controlled areas in Mon, Kayin and Tanintharyi during the period 2007 to 2012.

[70] Hobstetter M, Walsh M, Leigh J, Lee C, Sietstra C, Foster A. *Separated by borders, united in need: An assessment of reproductive health on the Thailand-Burma border.* Cambridge, MA: Ibis Reproductive Health, 2012.

[71] The Border Consortium, *Changing Realities, Poverty and Displacement in South East Burma/Myanmar*, 2012. p. 40.

[72] A field report from a UNICEF staff, December 2012.

126. Risks of water borne disease is exacerbated for households who do not have access to improved sanitation. TBC's survey (2012) in rural areas of south-east Myanmar recorded just 51 per cent of the households having access to latrines.[73]

127. In March 2011, a baseline survey was conducted by the Ministry of Health and UNICEF on the knowledge, attitudes and practice of the communities on water, sanitation and hygiene in over 6,000 households in 24 townships of 9 States and Regions across Myanmar.[74] Eleven townships of Bago (East), Kayin, Shan (South) and Tanintharyi were included in this survey. The survey was conducted in government-controlled urban and rural areas of the townships. The findings showed that only 17 per cent of households used a safe way to handle water before drinking. One third of households used unimproved water sources for drinking and half of these households did not use an adequate method of treating their water at home. In addition, about 19 per cent of the households said that they had difficulty in getting water in the summer, almost entirely due to the source drying up. About two-thirds of the households had to fetch water, and twice as many women fetched water than men. In terms of sanitation, only 25 per cent of the population actually defecate in hygienic conditions, while over 7 per cent of households defecate openly either in the field or in their house compound. Eight per cent of households with children under 5 said they had children suffering from diarrhoea during the two weeks preceding the survey. Lastly, 91 per cent of adults were eating their meals with their fingers, but only 40 per cent said they washed their hands with soap and clean water before eating.[75] Many schools also had latrine facilities but their condition is often poor, unsanitary and unusable for children.[76]

<u>Gaps</u>

128. Public sector service delivery for WASH is hampered by resource constraints, the involvement of multiple departments in several ministries in the government and limited coordination, and an insufficient focus on safe water and sanitation policies. The country has no specific water policy and no national drinking water standard.[77] There is no sector review in WASH since 1993. Despite the recent increase of the budget of the Ministry of Health, there is no increase in investment in WASH, which is an important component in ensuring good health considering the prevalence of diarrhoea and other water-borne diseases in many poor and rural communities. Furthermore, the focus on building latrines is still the dominant approach in the country, when current global best practice is to focus on changing behaviour and social norms to create open defecation-free communities.

Nutrition

129. Widespread malnutrition among children and women is a major challenge in Myanmar. Child malnutrition greatly increases the risks of morbidity and mortality and adversely affects intellectual and physical development. The Myanmar Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2009-2010 reported low birth weight prevalence of 8.6 per cent in the country and this figure may be higher because many babies are born at home and not weighed after birth. Bago (East) and Kayin have the highest percentage of low birth weight new-borns.[78] The survey also showed that the states of Kayin, Bago (East) and Tanintharyi have low exclusive breastfeeding rate as well as low timely introduction of complementary feeding in the country for children under 5 months. The Ministry of Planning cited (in a joint report with UNICEF) that the main causes of deaths among

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[73] The Border Consortium, *Changing Realities, Poverty and Displacement in South East Burma/Myanmar*, 2012.

[74] Ministry of Health and UNICEF, *Knowledge, Attitude and Practice Study into Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in 24 Townships of Myanmar*, October 2011.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development and UNICEF, *Situation Analysis of Children in Myanmar,* July 2012.

[77] Ibid.

[78] MICS, Myanmar Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 2009-2010.

children under 5 continue to be acute respiratory infections, diarrhoea and malaria, exacerbated by underlying malnutrition which contributes to about half of deaths.[79] Key underlying factors influencing maternal and child health are household dietary intake, access to safe water and sanitation and access to quality health services.[80]

130. According to a TBC survey of 2012 in rural areas of the south-east, less than half (45 per cent) of households have access to an adequately nutritious diet.[81] From a sample population of 2,668 children, TBC partners identified 4 per cent who showed moderate or severe wasting. The mean upper arm circumference tests also recorded a further 17 per cent who are suffering from mild acute malnutrition.[82] The Myanmar Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2009-2010 estimated that one third of rural children were moderately or severely underweight and moderately or severely stunted.[83]

Agriculture

Key issues and needs

131. Agriculture is the most important sector for the Myanmar's economy, accounting for about 40 per cent of the country's GDP, and between 25 and 30 per cent of exports by value. Principal crops consist of rice; beans and pulses, which have become major export crops; oil seeds; vegetables; and appreciable amounts of other crops, including maize, cotton rubber, sugarcane and tropical fruit crops. There are also substantial fishery resources in the major rivers and along the coastline. Fish and shrimp have now become major exports. Although reliable figures are not readily available, it is estimated that the agriculture sector contributes to about 70 per cent of employment.[84] However, about 29 per cent of the rural population is estimated to live below the poverty line with the highest poverty rate reported in Shan (East) (52 per cent) and the lowest in Mon (16 per cent).[85]

132. According to the TBC survey only 37 per cent of households are self-reliant in the south-east. Only 28 per cent of households have access to sufficient land and only 16 per cent have access to irrigation. Hpapun (63 per cent) and Kawkareik (55 per cent) townships in Kayin record the highest rates of landlessness.[86]

133. The latest TBC study noted that 16 per cent of the households in conflict-affected areas of the south-east still reported restricted access to their farm lands and markets with negative consequences on their food security and livelihoods.

134. Agricultural livelihoods are mainly for household subsistence and are labour-intensive, with a low agricultural productivity related to lack of capital assets such as land, draught animals and farm machinery. Only 10 per cent of rural household have access to farm machinery and just 16 per cent have access to draught animals, relying mainly on manual labour and simple farming tools.[87] In many cases farmers cannot afford quality inputs and, appropriate technology and have a very limited knowledge about what, how and when to cultivate. This is particularly true in Kayah where, despite the availability of land, the good quality of the soil, suitable weather for growing year round, and a

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[79] Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development and UNICEF, *Situation Analysis of Children in Myanmar,* July 2012.
[80] Ibid.
[81] The Border Consortium, *Changing Realities, Poverty and Displacement in South East Burma/Myanmar*, 2012.
[82] Ibid.
[83] MICS, Myanmar Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey, 2009-2010.
[84] Asian Development Bank, *Key Indicators for Asia and the Pacific (Key Indicators 2011)*, Manila, 2011.
[85] UNDP and Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development, *IHLCA, 2011, Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey in Myanmar (2009-10): Poverty Profile*, Yangon, 2011.
[86] The Border Consortium, *Changing Realities, Poverty and Displacement in South East Burma/Myanmar*, 2012.
[87] Ibid.

general availability of water for rain-fed agriculture, the agricultural productivity is the lowest in Myanmar.[88]

135. For most farmers, rural credit is scarce and expensive, which depresses input use, holds down production, reduces farmers' incomes, and ultimately increases their indebtedness. Additionally, poor market linkages make transporting agricultural products highly expensive and unprofitable, which further limits the agricultural sector.[89]

136. UNDP has been working in 11 townships of four States (Kayah, Kayin, Mon, Shan (East) and Shan (South)) implementing Human Development Initiative projects to provide support to poor communities in selected remote border townships to address their food security and basic social needs. Livelihoods support involved mainly direct cash provision for agricultural inputs, livestock raising, off-farm activities, as well as agricultural and livestock training, food bank support, vocational training, micro and small enterprise training, as well as investments in agriculture related infrastructure and forestry. In the transition to the new program, UNDP has recently developed township profiles with the main purpose of making concerned stakeholders aware about the interventions made so far, areas and beneficiaries covered and major achievements. UNDP has announced the ending of the HDI program. Most of the implementing staff were laid off in the last quarter of 2012 and the program will close by mid 2013.

Gaps

137. Seventeen agencies are currently supporting the sector ,covering 38 townships with the highest coverage reported in Kayin and Mon, where agencies report having activities in all townships except one in each (Myawaddy and Kyaikto, respectively), and the least in Shan (East) where assistance is provided only in Kengtung.

138. Despite the importance of the sector, needs assessments available seem to be limited in number and coverage and cannot therefore provide a full picture of the situation and the needs.

Food

Key issues and needs

139. According to the TBC 2012 survey, the proportion of households in debt in TBC-surveyed parts of the south-east is about 60 per cent, while the reported national average is 30 per cent,[90] with more than half of household debt induced by food shortages. Communities in Kyaukkyi in Bago (East) record the highest rates of indebtedness due to food shortages (92 per cent).[91] Additionally, a survey conducted by Mercy Corps in 2012 reveals that farmer yields in Kayah State, particularly of rice, largely do not meet the food needs of an average household, and places families at risk of food insecurity.[92] Only 16 per cent of households in Shadaw township have enough to eat during the whole year and no households in Hpasaung township reported having enough to eat throughout the year.[93] A high proportion of households facing rice shortages for at least three months prior to the harvest is found in Thandaung of Kayah, and Shwegyin and Kyaukkyi of Bago (East).[94]

140. Poppy remains an important source of cash income for achieving food security or, at least, for reducing periods of food shortage in Shan (East) and Shan (South). As per the

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[88] Mercy Corps, *Livelihood and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Assessment Summary Report*, 2012.
[89] Ibid.
[90] UNDP and UNICEF, *Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey in Myanmar (2009-10): Poverty Profile, Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development*, Yangon, 2011.
[91] The Border Consortium, *Changing Realities, Poverty and Displacement in South East Burma/Myanmar*, 2012.
[92] Mercy Corps, *Livelihood and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Assessment Summary Report*, 2012.
[93] Ibid.
[94] The Border Consortium, *Changing Realities, Poverty and Displacement in South East Burma/Myanmar*, 2012.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) survey,[95] the two areas account for the majority of opium poppy cultivated, with the largest share produced in Shan (South). Opium poppy is cultivated as a cash crop and poppy-growing villages are reported to have a considerably higher average household income than non-growing villages.

141. The Food Security Information Network has developed a Food Security Monitoring System that is conducted three times per year (pre-monsoon, mid-monsoon and post-monsoon) covering, to date, over 50 townships in Myanmar.[96] In the south-east, the monitoring system coverage is limited to a few townships in Shan (South), Kayah and Kayin. In August 2012, the monitoring system classified the food security situation in Pekon in Shan (South) and Bawlakhe (Kayah) as highly food insecure. The classification in Bawlakhe was due to remoteness, high food prices and declining income generation opportunities.[97]

Gaps

142. UNODC, the Food Security Monitoring System and the Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund baseline data for 2012 provide a wealth of information, but in the south-east this is limited to a few townships in a few states.

143. As assistance provided might be seasonal and short-term (wet season months and months prior to the monsoon harvest, the most difficult in terms of feeding the household), the number of organisations working in providing food assistance might be higher than the actual reported. It is worth mentioning that out of the nine organisations that, in the MIMU April 2013 data, report providing food assistance, six are border-based organisations. The widest coverage is in Kayin (five townships out of seven) while no food assistance is reported being provided in Bago (East).

144. The UNODC survey highlights that a better understanding of the decision-making process of households regarding their food security and cash income strategies is needed. That will help in developing more targeted alternative livelihood strategies.[98] There might also be a need to better understand whether, in case emergency interventions are needed, they should be cash or food-based.

Non-agricultural livelihoods/infrastructure

Key issues and needs

145. While it is believed that the planned industrial zones in Dawei (Tanintharyi) and Hpa-an, Myawaddy and Phayathonzu (Kayin) might increase local employment opportunities,[99] job opportunities outside the agricultural sector remain scarce. Casual labour is the most important source of income as identified by 27 per cent of households, which suggests a high rate of vulnerability to seasonal employment. Only 17 per cent have more reliable sources of income from petty trade and the sale of agricultural crops.[100]

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[95] UNODC-Myanmar, *South-East Asia Opium survey 2012*, Lao PDR, Myanmar, 2012.

[96] The Food Security Information Network uses a joint approach of limited quantitative data collection, followed by a qualitative review of the food security situation. Quantitative data collection is sentinel site-based, with FSIN partners (UN agencies, INGOs as well as local NGOs and community-based organisations) collecting information in monitored townships.

[97] Food Security Information Network, *Food Security Monitoring Bulletin*, August 2012.

[98] UNODC-Myanmar, *South-East Asia Opium survey 2012*, Lao PDR, Myanmar, 2012.

[99] Acted, *Aligning Vocational Training with Myanmar Job Market Needs*, 2012. Note also that in the Government of Myanmar-ILO Memorandum of Understanding, and associated action plans, approved by the Myanmar cabinet in July 2012, the establishment of Special Economic Zone liaison committees in communities in proximity to such zones was agreed with an view to a) monitoring rights infringements during construction and operation, and b) maximize opportunities for local communities to benefit from the introduction of these zones, including through vocational training and subsequent employment.

[100] The Border Consortium, *Changing Realities: Poverty and Displacement in South East Burma/Myanmar,* 2012.

146. The job market is mainly informal and most hiring is done within the family and close friends circle, regardless of qualifications. Additionally, many construction companies come from outside the States/Regions and often hire labourers from outside as well.

147. A job market needs assessment carried out in Kayah by ACTED points out that few business opportunities are available and that, in general, the population lacks the skills and knowledge to expand into livelihood options other than the agriculture or government sectors.[101] In Loikaw, most of the companies based on agri-business and hardware material trading across the Thai border are small and family-based, providing few job opportunities. Limited sales and a low local purchasing power are perceived as the main problems. Major needs are for sales and marketing staff, computer operators, masons and engineers for construction sites and daily labourers. The survey identifies a number of vocational training needs relevant to the local context, such as sales and marketing; masonry; hospitality, tourism and catering.[102]

148. The ILO is currently commencing the initial stages of a large Start and Improve Your Business training of trainers programme for nationwide application including in the south-east.

149. Another recent needs assessment carried out in Kayah by Terres des Hommes points out that although vocational training initiatives exist, the youth living in the most remote areas are out of reach of these opportunities and that the very stringent government criteria for entering technical schools exclude a large number of adolescents in need of support. The few who have received training find it difficult to start their own small business or find a job because there is a lack of access to small credit or start-up capital, nor is it not easy to get access to the labour market. In fact, according to the Financial Institutions of Myanmar Law 1990, financial institutions are not allowed to provide uncollateralized credit. Small and micro-entrepreneurs who could not provide collateral to banks have to rely on informal money lenders for credit, with average reported monthly interest rates of around 10 per cent.[103]

150. Remittances play an important role in ensuring basic survival for many families. Although illegal economic migration is difficult to quantify, there are reports of some villages where about 50 per cent of the households have at least one member working abroad – Thailand in particular – and sending remittances.[104] While officially recorded remittances in 2009 accounted for only 0.4 per cent of GDP, a 2008 university study calculated remittances were nearly five times higher than the official reported figures[105] and were overwhelmingly used to assist families in their basic survival. The extent of impact of remittances on livelihoods is however hard to measure since most money is sent back through informal networks.

151. Although the Thai-Myanmar border represents an important commercial point for the country, the area's economic development continues to be hampered by the underdeveloped banking industry and poor communication infrastructure. An example is provided by the roads from Ye and Yebyu that are impassable during the monsoon season, when the only access is by boat. As a result, food prices are almost double those in nearby towns, and opportunities for casual labour, mostly in the logging industry, is limited to the dry season.[106]

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[101] Mercy Corps, *Livelihood and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Assessment Summary Report*, 2012.

[102] Acted, *Aligning Vocational Training with Myanmar Job Market Needs*, 2012.

[103] www.undp.org.

[104] Acted, *Aligning Vocational Training with Myanmar Job Market Needs*, 2012.

[105] Burma Economic Watch, *Migrant Worker Remittances and Burma: An Economic Analysis of Survey Results*, 2008.

[106] The Border Consortium, *Changing Realities, Poverty and Displacement in South East Burma/Myanmar*, 2012.

152. The number of organisations working in the non-agricultural livelihood and infrastructure sector appears to be quite high, according to the data provided by the MIMU in April 2013, with this sector reported as the third in terms of number of organisations, most of them country-based (17 out of 19) and working mainly in the sub-sectors of income generation and micro-finance. The highest geographical coverage is reported in Kayin, with activities in all townships, while only two townships are reported covered in Shan (South). The limited number of assessments available seems however covering only a few geographical areas (Kayah State in particular). Disaggregated data by gender, that can help in analysing differences in opportunities, seem also to be scarce. Although there are organisations providing support in rehabilitation of community infrastructure there is no information available on cash-for-work activities that might support not only rehabilitation of infrastructure but also provide households with cash, in particular when labour opportunities in the agricultural sector are not available.

Shelter

Key issues and needs

153. While official country-wide figures suggest that only 32 per cent of poor households have adequate roofing (mainly consisting of pieces of tin, zinc, corrugated galvanized iron and/or wooden tiles),[107] the surveys conducted by TBC and partners in rural areas of south-east Myanmar found these standards are met for only 16 per cent of households.[108] Construction materials for walls and flooring appeared not so related to household wealth but more related to local availability of material such as bamboo, grass and leafing.[109] The proportion of households with adequate shelter in south-east Myanmar is particularly low in Kayah (Hpasawng township), Kayin (Hpapun and Hlaingbwe), Bago (East) (Kyaukkyi and Shwegyin), Shan (East) (Monghsat) and Tanintharyi (Palaw).

Gaps

154. While there is currently very limited information on the present situation and needs for shelter, it is considered to be a major need for most vulnerable returnees and people affected by natural disasters, as they might lack financial means or manpower to re-construct their dwellings. Activities are reported only in Tanintharyi, Mon and Kayin and in a limited number of townships, with a high prevalence in Tanintharyi.

Disaster risk reduction

Key issues and needs

155. Myanmar is one of the most disaster-prone countries in Southeast Asia and is exposed to multiple natural hazards which include cyclones, storm surge, floods, landslides, earthquake, tsunamis, drought, and fires.[110] The south-east is prone, for example, to the effects of seasonal flooding and landslides (in August 2012, for instance, localised floods in various areas of Kayin, Mon, Bago (East) and Tanintharyi caused the temporary displacement of over 20,000 people),[111] forest fires (which affect Shan, Bago

[107] UNDP and Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development, *IHLCA, 2011, Integrated Household Living Conditions Survey in Myanmar (2009-10): Poverty Profile*, Yangon, 2011.
[108] The Border Consortium, *Changing Realities, Poverty and Displacement in South East Burma/Myanmar*, 2012.
[109] liftfund.org.
[110] Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Department, *Myanmar Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction* (MAPDRR), 2009 and 2012.
[111] The Border Consortium, *Changing Realities, Poverty and Displacement in South East Burma/Myanmar*, 2012. p.30

(East) and Kayah in particular) and tsunamis (such as the 2004 tsunami, although it only had a minor impact on Myanmar).[112]

156. Myanmar significantly increased momentum on disaster management efforts after Cyclone Nargis. In addition to the Myanmar Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction, the country has developed a disaster risk management framework, and recently adopted a new natural disaster management law. UN agencies, international organizations and other stakeholders have supported the government's efforts in this regard.

157. In the south-east, some of the organisations active in disaster risk reduction include Action Aid, Save the Children, UNDP, World Concern, Karuna Myanmar Social Services, Malteser, World Vision, Myanmar Red Cross Society, and Care. The Myanmar Action Plan identified several potential projects for south-east Myanmar when it was drafted in 2009, including a small grants program under the leadership of the General Administration Department (Ministry of Home Affairs) which included Tanintharyi Region and Mon State, cyclone preparedness programs for coastal regions (including several townships in Mon State), community-based resource management programs (including in Shan State), and trainings on landslide mitigation. No information was available for the present report about their status of implementation.

158. In addition to the above, several disaster risk reduction projects are ongoing at the moment. Save the Children's Civil Society Capacity Building activity (training) will be completed in the end of March 2013. The trainings were conducted in five townships in the south-east: Hpa-An, Myawaddy, Loikaw, Dawei and Kawthaung. The needs identified include awareness, preparedness and government actions on disaster risk reduction. World Concern is working in different sectors, including disaster risk reduction. Community awareness-raising activities are ongoing in 28 villages in Kyaikhto and Bilin townships in Mon State, as part of this three year project running until the end of 2013. UN HABITAT in March 2012 visited Hpa-An as part of its 'Safer Settlements and Urban Research Project'. Technical support was envisaged at that time for the Hpa-An city development.

Gaps

159. In general, the needs in the region include technical knowledge, material and equipment, preparedness, infrastructure as well as political will for disaster preparedness. Reactive approaches are applied for disaster response which should be replaced with proactive approaches. Disaster risk management systems and policies are in place at the national level but not yet implement in the lower level or not yet applicable. Community participation in developing disaster mitigation strategies will be important. Information gaps exist both in terms of comprehensive mapping of risks, as well as comprehensive mapping of activities on the ground.

Environment

Key issues and needs

160. Myanmar is rich in biodiversity because of diverse ecosystems at different elevations from sea level to high mountainous region, and a long coastline. Myanmar is also a country prone to heavy rainfall, as floods regularly occur during the mid-monsoon period (June to August) in areas traversed by rivers or large streams. Cyclones, landslides, earthquakes, tsunami, fire and drought are also very real threats to Myanmar's environment.

161. According to the most recent (2009-2010) Myanmar National Environmental Performance Assessment, priority concerns in regard to the environment are related to

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[112] Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement Department, *Myanmar Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction* (MAPDRR), 2009 and 2012.

forest resource degradation; land degradation; water resource and quality status; threat to biodiversity; inadequate solid waste management; climate change; and impacts of mining industry.

<u>Gaps</u>

162. A comprehensive and detailed assessment that incorporates also the south-east, is provided by the Environmental Performance Assessment. According to MIMU April 2013 data, a limited number of agencies are currently providing support to the sector and only in eight townships across the south-east. More information is needed in regard to the assistance currently provided in the sector.

Coordination

<u>Key issues and needs</u>

163. To date no regular operational coordination platform exists to ensure coherence of the international community's response to the former conflict areas. Those initiatives that have been launched, such as the South-East Consultation Platform (led by UNHCR and consisting of UN, NGO, donor, government and other partners), have been useful, but meet infrequently. Consideration is being given by the PDSG to support monthly coordination meetings jointly chaired by the PDSG secretariat and the MPC.

164. Strategic coordination by the donor community is to be addressed through a reinforced and expanded PDSG.

165. Monthly inter-agency coordination meetings, chaired by UNHCR and attended by humanitarian partners, are currently held in Mawlamyine (Mon State), and Myeik and Dawei (Tanintharyi Region). In Kayah there are bi-monthly meetings with a rotation among all the agencies in coordinating, compiling and distributing minutes. Additionally in Loikaw the Kayah State government operates a coordination body for UN/NGO/INGOs that meets monthly.[113]

166. In January 2013, UNHCR initiated cross-border meetings. While for the time being these meetings are for the purpose of internal coordination, they will become wider fora that should include all stakeholders (including refugee representatives) and contribute to essential cross-border coordination and information sharing.

<u>Gaps</u>

167. No information is currently available on coordination in Shan (South) and Shan (East), and there is no sufficient information on existing coordination fora between authorities and agencies. Additionally, dates of meetings, agenda and minutes distribution is currently limited to actors already present in the area or those who make specific requests, such as agencies interested in expanding their presence in the south-east. The participation of organisations that are working mainly in non-government controlled area seems still to be limited and some organisations are still reluctant to share information widely.

FUTURE PLANS

168. Many actors, whether humanitarian or development, have shown an interest in expanding their presence or scaling up their activities in the south-east and a number of needs assessments, many of them multi-sectoral, are currently ongoing or planned. The list below provides a very partial overview of future plans, whether in regard to needs assessments or actual implementation of activities.

[113] UNHCR-Myanmar, Summary Report on the Comprehensive Needs Assessment Meeting on Southeastern Myanmar, Kayah, Kayin, Mon States &Tanintharyi Region, May 2012.

Plans of the Myanmar government

169. In 2012, after more than 30 years, the government has started preparation of the Population and Housing Census under the leadership of the Ministry of Immigration and Population and supported by the UN. The census will take place in 2014. The government has committed to conducting the census in line with international standards by ensuring confidentiality of personal data, full participation of all groups and individuals in the country and adherence to UN Global Standards on Census Taking. The Department of Population has been leading efforts in the areas of making enumeration area maps, designing of census questionnaire, developing communication and publicity plan, and setting up information technology infrastructure. The United Nations Population Fund has been tasked to provide technical support, establish monitoring, oversight and quality control mechanisms to ensure adherence to international standards in census taking, and assist the government in resource mobilization.[114]

170. In October 2012, the government published a second draft of its Framework for Economic and Social Reforms, developed in consultation with senior officials of various ministries and departments of the government. It outlines "policy priorities for the government in the next three years while identifying key parameters of the reform process that will allow Myanmar to become a modern, developed and democratic nation by 2030".[115] Depending on the implementation of the Framework over the years to come, it will be important to take it into consideration in any planning of activities also in the conflict-affected regions of the country.

Multi-sector

171. Five Peace Building Fund projects will be implemented in Mon and Kayin, coordinated by the Office of the Resident Coordinator and led by a number of UN agencies including UNHCR, UNICEF, International Organisation for Migration, UN Women, and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation. The projects will particularly target women and youth and will support government social services in ethnic minority areas, issuance of Citizenship Scrutiny Cards or the alternative civil documentation, women's empowerment through peace building and gender-based violence prevention; empowering ethnic youth as peace builders; and strengthening capacities of local media in support of peace building and local development. The women's empowerment project builds on workshops that UN Women has been organizing in Yangon in October 2012 and in Mon in February 2013 with women's groups on women's leadership and participation in peacebuilding. A similar workshop is being planned by UN Women for Kayah.

172. In response to a request from the government (Ministry of Border Affairs), the UN Country Team identified a tentative list of "possible interventions in these areas which the UN system can deliver, in the short term period, together with its partners", based on needs assessments. The initial list of activities focused on humanitarian assistance, which would then be expanded after a comprehensive identification of needs "to include other recovery and development deliverables on a longer term basis, in line with the four Strategic Priorities identified in the UN Strategic Framework (2012-2015)". The proposed activities focused on food distribution, livelihoods and community development, primary education support, health, WASH, protection/monitoring of rights issues, shelter and non-food items, community confidence-building and land mine action.[116]

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[114] UNFPA News, UNFPA and Ministry of Immigration and Population, Launch 2014 Population and Housing Census Project.
[115] Ministry of Planning, *Framework for Economic and Social Reforms - Policy Priorities for 2012-15 towards the Long-Term Goals of the National Comprehensive Development Plan*, 14 December 2012
[116] UNCT, *UN agencies proposed deliverables in ceasefire areas*, 30 March 2012.

173. The World Bank is planning to provide support to the MPC, including for monitoring and evaluation of assistance to conflict-affected communities, and technical support for the conduct of a joint peacebuilding needs assessment. The World Bank also intends to support a community-driven development project in conflict-affected communities, to complement the government's national community-driven development project.

174. The European Union is designing a new program to "Support Peace, Reconciliation, and Development of the Ethnic States of Myanmar" which will have an allocation of about 20-25 million Euros in 2013. In this context a socio-economic analysis is currently ongoing in Kayah State that will inform development assistance. The analysis will be completed in May/June 2013.

175. TBC and partners are planning a multi-sectoral village-level assessment across 20 townships in six States and Regions in the south-east in 2013, with field work tentatively planned for May and June. TBC have been collaborating with UNICEF and EU-funded NGOs in regards to standardising survey design of their assessments planned for Kayin and Kayah States, respectively, so that efforts are complementary.

176. The Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT) is ready to support the Myanmar Peace Support Initiative as new food insecure areas have emerged in ceasefire areas including Mon and Kayin states.[117]

177. The Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) is expanding thematically and geographically into the south-east through inputs into non-formal, vocational and life skills training that will be based on market surveys.[118]

178. Terres Des Hommes Italia will follow up on its assessment in Kayah with the main objective of project strategy and draft a concept note which will include the dissemination of a child-rights-based approach in boarding schools; vocational and agricultural training to facilitate access of adolescents to the job market; and capacity building and strengthening of youth community-based organisations.[119]

179. A UNDP Bureau of Crisis Prevention and Recovery team has recently undertaken field visits to Shan (South) and Shan (East) (as well as Chin State and Kachin State). The mission is a joint effort with Ministry of Border Affairs and UNDP to study the feasibility of livelihoods support and social cohesion in the self-administered zones of north-eastern and southern Shan State.

180. JICA is currently up-scaling its support to ethnic minority areas, focusing on Kayin and Mon States and is currently undertaking the "Preparatory Survey for the Integrated Regional Development for Ethnic Minorities in the South-East Myanmar". The survey aims at identifying needs for priority infrastructure as well as livelihood activities that will support integrated regional development as well as return and reintegration of IDPs and refugees. The survey is planned to be completed by July 2013.[120]

181. The Japan Platform (a equal partnership of NGOs, business community, and Government of Japan) has just signed a memorandum of understanding with the Myanmar Peace Centre to start a three-year program to support returnees in Kayin State

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[117] lift-fund.org.
[118] Norwegian Refugee Council, *Myanmar Fact Sheet*, October 2012.
[119] Terre des Hommes Italia, *Summary of findings of assessments in Kayah State* (education, protection), March 2013.
[120] JICA, *Outline on "Preparatory Survey for the Integrated Regional Development for Ethnic Minorities in the South-East Myanmar"*.

in the sectors of income generation, education, social reintegration of children in armed conflict including child soldiers, health care, water and sanitation and protection.[121]

182. UNHCR is currently re-orienting its engagement in order to pave the way for durable solutions for IDPs (and eventually, refugee returns) inter alia, through an increased focus on advocacy and building national capacity, IDP and refugee protection, strengthening coordination on protection and durable solutions, and targeting interventions in actual and potential return areas. Activities include support to community self-management structures and community mobilisation to reduce key protection risks, through awareness campaigns and training, prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence; support to extremely vulnerable individuals including survivors of mine accidents; legal assistance and legal awareness training; and interventions to address critical gaps in basic services, including health and potable water. While support to spontaneous returnees is currently being provided through distribution of household items and protection monitoring, UNHCR plans to complement this with a small number of pilot projects for a more integrated package of support addressing key challenges to legal, physical and material safety in locations where there is an increased momentum of spontaneous returns.

183. MPSI is currently in the process of developing the second phase of pilot projects in Karen areas (Kyuakkyi, Dawei and Myeik). The interventions are likely to include longer-term livelihoods support to IDPs. A second phase of Mon pilots in in the area of Krang Batoi is also planned and will likely include small scale, local infrastructure projects. MPSI is working with the NPA, ILO and local organisations as implementing partners.

Individual plans by sector

Education

184. As mentioned above, the government plans to conduct a census in 2014, which will provide important baseline data for programs, including education activities. More importantly, the Comprehensive Education Sector Review is currently ongoing. The duration is two years from February 2012. This review is led by the Ministry of Education with assistance from various development partners with a view to assessing the needs, gaps, and quality of education in order to help clarify the future direction of the education system.

185. In Mon State, UNICEF will conduct a study on "Analysis of the delivery of social services in Mon State for children with focus on education". This study is to inform further actions in Mon State in particular regarding policy development and support. UNICEF will also be building capacity in decentralized education planning and management with both State and non-State actors.

186. MPSI is supporting the Mon National Education Committee to develop a proposal to address some of their longer-term funding needs, including the rebuilding of school facilities, teacher training, teacher salaries and curriculum development.

Health

187. The government's National Health Plan is still being formulated. The World Health Organisation is assisting the government in this effort. Within the health sector, the government will focus on a number of innovative measures in health financing such as a voucher system for maternal and child health care, special funds for destitute mothers and strengthening township-level health financing. Particular attention will be paid to

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[121] Japan Platform, *Japan Platform & Myanmar Peace Centre - Signing for Memorandum of Understanding for Reintegration Assistance Program for Refugees/IDPs of Myanmar – Three Year Program for the Returnees in Myanmar,* News Release, 25 March 2013.

allocating more resources to rural primary health care, infectious disease controls and maternal and child health, in view of the acute need to improve health indicators in all these areas.[122]

188. UNICEF supports an expanded program on immunization nationwide. Its anti-malaria program covers 36 townships in the 7 border states, while its maternal and new-born child health program covers 40 townships in the border states. Non-covered townships constitute the gap in its assistance.

WASH

189. UNICEF in collaboration with the relevant government and civil society partners is preparing to start a new sector review on WASH.

Protection

190. With the support of UNHCR, NRC, Danish Church Aid, OCHA and UNICEF, the Joint IDP Profiling Service has recently completed a scoping mission in south-east Myanmar with the main aim to assess whether it is feasible and desirable to conduct an IDP profiling. Such an exercise would collect reliable information on IDPs disaggregated by sex, age and location. This is important in order to be able to design an effective strategy for support to durable solutions, targeting, improved advocacy and fundraising.

191. A refugee camp profiling exercise covering both the registered and unregistered refugee population residing in the temporary shelters in Thailand (128,199 individuals) will be carried out by the Mae Fah Luang Foundation on behalf of UNHCR in 2013 and into 2014. The comprehensive exercise will permit updating of data on areas of origin (Regions/States, districts and townships, and village tracts/villages) and will assess the intentions of refugees, whether that would be for eventual voluntary return, resettlement to a third country or other durable solution possibilities. In the event that conditions become conducive to return and for those refugees that intend to do so, then information about their desired or intended destination(s) will be captured in the survey (this may include places of origin or prior habitual residence, or other locations in Myanmar). The major focus of the survey is about future livelihoods, household and family security issues, as well as about past, present and possibly future skill-sets that will help the refugees to return to a normal life outside the camp. This information will also help in identifying both the major return areas and all other locations along with indications of the possible number of refugees intending to return to those areas. The result of the profiling will be used to support not only the refugees in their own preparations for a durable solution but also the Government of Myanmar, humanitarian and development agencies, donors, ethnic and community leaders and the receiving communities to help in preparing the conditions that would support a sustainable voluntary return and reintegration.

192. The Immigration and National Registration Department of the Ministry of Immigration and Population and NRC are currently developing plans to expand the one-stop citizenship registration process known as the Moe Pwint Operation (currently being implemented in Kayah and Kayin) to Bago (East), Shan (South) and Tanintharyi Region. The project has the potential to expand further into other conflict-affected border areas.[123]

193. In 2014, UNHCR will undertake further research on statelessness in Myanmar, including in the south-east, to better identify groups who are stateless and at risk of statelessness.

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[122] Ministry of Planning, *Framework for Economic and Social Reforms - Policy Priorities for 2012-15 towards the Long-Term Goals of the National Comprehensive Development Plan*, 14 December 2012.
[123] Norwegian Refugee Council, *Myanmar Fact Sheet*, October 2012.

194. ILO is planning a labour force sample survey with associated school-to-work transition analysis commencing July 2013. This survey will include 30,000 households in selected urban and rural areas. Results are expected to be published in the third quarter of 2014.

DELIVERY CAPACITIES

195. The sections above have already provided a broad overview of the services provided by the government, as well as by national and international organisations at the moment (and according to the information available). Very little concrete information is available on the detailed capacities of these actors to increase service provision if additional funds become available.

196. Service provision by the government faces a number of constraints. These include limited funds for human resources, equipment and infrastructure, as well as the limited number of qualified staff available. For local and international organisations, unimpeded access to all people in need remains a major impediment – this includes bureaucratic constraints, but also logistics and the limited transportation infrastructure in these areas. Funds would be able to mitigate some of these factors, should access be granted. However, implementation of new projects will require prior needs assessments and engagement with all actors and communities in the area of implementation. International partners should keep in mind the limited absorption capacity of some of the local NGOs and community-based organisations – meaning that additional funds and projects require investment in capacity-building, which in turn necessitates long-term engagement. Actors should be realistic about the capacity of villages to manage and maintain new infrastructure in these areas.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND WAY FORWARD

BUILDING PEACE IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED AREAS

197. This report presents the findings of an initial stocktaking of existing information as regards to the activities of agencies and organisations working in the south-east of Myanmar. It has been carried out as a desktop review by a small team over the course of March and early April 2013. The purpose of this report is to identify the information that is readily available on needs and gaps, as well as information gaps themselves.

198. **The stocktaking exercise reveals that much of the existing information is either scattered and therefore not easily collated, or it exists in silos and is much harder to access than it should be.** This report therefore cannot seek to be comprehensive, but aims to give a broadly accurate picture, and can hopefully catalyse further information sharing and consultation. A key recommendation going forward is that much better use must be made of the information-sharing platforms already in place in Myanmar, including in particular the MIMU. **Improved coordination between all actors in the south-east will be necessary for strategic provision of assistance to the area.**

199. It is clear that the concerns of the population are not based solely around humanitarian/development needs and services, but involve crucial security, rights and justice issues. In a conflict-affected context, peacebuilding is key, and efforts to alleviate suffering should aim to build trust and improve opportunities for peace. **Unless interventions take place within the framework of the political dialogue process that could begin to addresses core grievances, assistance will not bring sustainable peace – and delivered in the wrong way, such aid even has the potential to undermine peace.** Thus, while ceasefires and political reform are increasing the humanitarian access to provide assistance in conflict-affected areas, many of the issues and concerns of the ethnic groups remain as complex as ever and will have to be addressed through the political dialogue. Outside actors therefore have to be particularly responsible in providing support, as assistance that is not context and conflict sensitive can serve to exacerbate tensions and conflicts on the ground. However, this must not be used as an excuse to delay provision of assistance. There is a humanitarian imperative to provide timely assistance that can be vital in supporting lives and livelihoods. **Moving ahead to provide assistance in a timely, inclusive and consultative way, underpinned by systematic support that invests in tools that strengthen confidence building, is therefore key.**

200. Providing assistance in conflict-affected areas is different from providing assistance in areas previously not accessible but spared from conflict. **In a conflict setting, outside assistance must be careful not to exacerbate tensions, and should be designed to support confidence and trust building that leads to improved relationships between government, NSAGs and local communities. Detailed 'Do No Harm' and peace/conflict assessments are crucial in order to promote a conflict-sensitive approach.** Thus, for example, some former conflict areas have never been under the authority of the Myanmar State, and expansion of service delivery structures to these areas to meet the needs of the population will not be uncontroversial, as it may be seen as an unwelcome expansion of government administrative control, unless carried out in combination with trust-building processes and in a fully consultative way.

201. More generally, the process of identifying needs and priorities has to be inclusive and consultative. For example, many armed groups (as well as community based organisations that have worked in partnership with these groups) have developed long-established – yet under-resourced – structures in the fields of education, health and local administration. These structures and community-based organisations will have a key role in service delivery going forward. It is important that these groups enjoy a sense of

shared ownership, or they are likely to mistrust the process.[124] **Trust and legitimacy is built gradually, and it is therefore important to identify confidence-building measures that can demonstrate good will and contribute to the process of building trust, in tandem with the delivery of assistance.**

202. Conflict-sensitivity also means ensuring that outside support does not overwhelm local initiatives and groups. The space for local community-groups and civil society organisations must therefore be protected, in order to not make the community more vulnerable once outside actors leave, or undermine local capacity. **Outside actors should assess and where possible build on and strengthen existing processes, networks and partnerships for building dialogue, trust-building, protection, community development, service delivery, and so on.**

Risks

203. While the ceasefires signify an important step in the right direction and have led to some improvements in terms of the safety for the population in south-east, much more is needed to achieve a sustainable peace. There are certain risks that if not taken into account could seriously hamper the process.

204. *Risks in the context of delivery of assistance*. As noted above, assistance has the potential to have negative as well as positive effects on peacebuilding. **Assistance therefore needs to take the context into account, adopting a conflict sensitive approach (through analysis, dialogue and consultation with local actors) so as not to exacerbate tensions.** Conflict sensitivity, however, is not enough. With an increasing number of actors wanting and now having access to operate in conflict-affected parts of Myanmar, there is a risk of too much aid going into the areas too quickly and in an uncoordinated way. This has the potential to disempower local actors already in place and as such hamper the local ownership of the process. Beyond the initiatives being less sustainable, this might also make the communities increasingly vulnerable to future risks.

205. *Risks relating to land issues*. **Addressing issues of land tenure and access to land is crucial, as failure to do so risks hampering the whole peace process.** Land is a politically and economically contentious issue in Myanmar, particularly since land is becoming an increasingly valuable resource over which there is enormous competition, there is little security of land tenure, and in many cases land rights are not formalized – particularly in border areas where customary rights are common. The Transnational Institute reports that the "acquisition of land for agribusiness is expected to become one of the biggest threats to local access to land and to people's livelihoods as the country's new land laws, government promotion of private industrial agriculture and the Foreign Investment Law all take effect".[125] While development projects can provide jobs for the rural poor, land acquisitions for development projects can cause widespread economic and political instability[126]. While land is an issue across Myanmar, lack of formal land tenure and user rights particularly threatens the livelihoods and food security for populations in upland and border areas, including the south-east. In many of the ethnic communities, customary law governs land rights, but may not always be recognized by the government in law or practice. Moreover, the fact that Myanmar's borderlands are adjacent to areas of huge economic growth – China and Thailand – and the fact that they were previously inaccessible to outsiders increases the risks for a land grabbing rush by commercial actors, which makes the population in these areas particularly vulnerable.

206. *Creating the right interventions*. In order to achieve a sustainable resolution of the conflict, key stakeholders need to see tangible benefits from peace, including in social, economic and security gains. In this regard, **it must be recognized that the NSAGs**

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[124] Ashley South, *On Broadening the Peace Process*, Myanmar Times, 25th March 2013.
[125] Transnational Institute, *Developing Disparity*, February 2013, p.41.
[126] Ibid.

have different (but overlapping) concerns from the communities in their areas. Peace will not be sustainable unless both the NSAGs themselves, and the communities, see tangible benefits from interventions. Thus, for example, economic development – especially large-scale projects – cannot just benefit elites, but need to benefit local communities "who also should have a say in how these are developed and managed".[127] The risks in not doing so "might hamper the conflict resolution process as well as contributing to new grievances among ethnic communities contributing to [Myanmar]'s conflict cycle".[128]

207. *Shared approaches can promote improved risk-awareness and risk-mitigation.* Interventions in conflict-affected areas come with certain risks. While outside actors will have differing levels of risk tolerance, and other limitations, international experience shows that donors can move their collective risk threshold by being willing to share analysis and information on risks and on measures to mitigate them. **One possibility would be for donors and other stakeholders to establish a joint risk management structure in order to monitor agreed principles, along with a joint response mechanism to problems that arise.** Such an approach has been effective in other situations.[129]

Key information gaps

208. Gaps in basic knowledge needed for programming, including lack of detailed information on and mapping of conflict areas and the lack of a census or other baseline data, makes it difficult for outside actors to operate in conflict areas.

209. Given the limitations of this report, which does not have access to all of the information at the disposal of organisations – due to the limited extent to which some of this information is shared – the identification of gaps should be seen as preliminary and non-comprehensive. For some sectors, information is available on the limitations of current service delivery by both the government and other actors and this has been referred to in the present report. Depending on how much information is available on service delivery, such information can be qualitative (relating to the nature of services) or quantitative (relating to the number of facilities, for instance). For most sectors, the report shows that there is a clear lack of information as regards gaps. In many of the sectors, there is limited accurate baseline data available. **In most sectors, there is a need for a more comprehensive overview of needs assessments undertaken and the activities by sector (such as the education sector review). Generally, better information is also needed on modalities for accessing all the ceasefire areas.**

210. There are a number of **specific information gaps that have become apparent** in the course of this stocktaking exercise, and which could potentially be addressed as part of the future joint peacebuilding needs assessment, including the following:

   o There is a need for a stakeholder analysis – which should also assess the capacities that various stakeholders have to provide services and support (including government, NSAGs, communities and international actors). For example, there should be more information on capacities and mechanisms of communities for social protection.

   o More information is needed on assistance activities by NSAGs. There is also a lack of information on governance in ceasefire areas, and a need to find out more and link closely with any initiatives being undertaken in the governance sector.

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[127] Transnational Institute, *Developing Disparity*, February 2013.
[128] Ibid.
[129] For example, the joint "Basic Operating Guidelines" in Nepal, and the joint response mechanism established there.

- Gathering of additional information on service provision from various government entities (at both central and region/state levels and from different ministries) is also needed.

- More research needs to be conducted on access to markets and market functioning in conflict-affected areas.

211. **More information is required on land rights issues in border areas**, given the extent of concern over land grabs, and *de jure* and *de facto* insecurity of tenure, including as a result of lack of legal recognition of customary rights, displacement and lack of recourse in case of injustices.

Coordination and information sharing

212. The stocktaking exercise has revealed how difficult it is to obtain critical information needed for programming in conflict-affected areas. While in the past agencies had to be very careful with the information they shared, the context of operating in Myanmar is changing rapidly, and there needs to be a new willingness to share information. Lack of adequate knowledge and analysis is a key barrier to effectively support peacebuilding. Weak conflict analysis, poor quality information and lack of attention to gathering and sharing of disaggregated data make it very difficult to develop effective and coordinated programming. As such, taking advantage of existing information sharing platforms to build up a rich body of shared information will be to the benefit of all. The most obvious platform is MIMU, which is already in place. **Agencies should place a high priority on sharing 3W information, as well as assessments, analyses, and future plans with MIMU, and donors should consider mandating organisations to share such information with MIMU as a requirement of their grants.**

213. Because of the lack of reliable information needed for programming and interventions, and with an increasing number of organisations entering Myanmar, there is a great need for assessments and analysis. However, **there is a risk when a large number of organisations carry out individual assessments, often targeting a narrow section of the population, that has already been noted to lead to "assessment fatigue" on the part of the population.** This is not merely an inefficient use of agency resources and an annoyance to the populations, it can be a real risk, for two reasons. First, assessments bring with them expectations of delivery, and there is a risk that the number of assessments increases without any tangible benefits flowing to the population. Second, a flood of uncoordinated assessments has the potential to prolong the period between a ceasefire being agreed and the transformation of the situation on the ground, which can be a risk to the peace process.

214. **There is a lack of coordination between actors.** Previously, with a limited set of organizations operating in Myanmar this was less of a concern. However, as the number of organizations working in Myanmar and the size of the resource envelope both increase, and with new access to previously inaccessible areas, there is a critical need for enhanced information-sharing and coordination. **There is also a need to bridge the divide between border-based groups and those operating within Myanmar.** The border-based groups have significant capacity and experience, as well as longstanding interactions with both NSAGs and ethnic communities, and they will be an important component of peacebuilding activities going forward. It is therefore important that coordination and information sharing includes these groups, and that the relevant platforms for doing so are sensitive to their concerns.

215. There is a need for better communication with the local communities (and international actors) as regards the plans of the government for development of conflict-affected areas, since there are already significant community concerns about potential government plans. As much as possible, local community stakeholders – including IDPs and refugees as well as NSAGs – should be involved in the formulation of these plans. Communities are, for example, worried about the government's plans for the

development of certain areas, and whether these will have a community development focus or a private sector focus. **More clarity on government plans may alleviate some of these worries.**

THE WAY FORWARD

216. The present stocktaking exercise is suggested to be followed by a second phase: a consultative and inclusive joint peacebuilding needs assessment. A design team (comprising experts from the World Bank and the UN) has been fielded to Myanmar to advise on possible methodologies and parameters for such an assessment. The design team met for informal discussions with a range of stakeholders, including government, non-state armed groups, conflict-affected communities and development partners, in Myanmar and Thailand, to inform their work. The team finalized a concept note reflecting its findings and suggestions on 9 April.

217. The report from the present stocktaking exercise and the advice from the design team can be the basis for discussions among key stakeholders on the way forward – in terms of immediate programming decisions for timely support to conflict-affected areas, as well as a decision on whether to move ahead with the joint peacebuilding needs assessment, and if so the agreed modalities for doing so. This second phase assessment is not limited to the south-east, but is intended to look at conflict-affected areas more broadly; the selection of geographical areas to be focussed on will be decided as part of its initial consultations.

218. Notwithstanding the limitations inherent in a desktop review, **the present report can already provide a basis for moving ahead quickly to address the peacebuilding needs on the ground in conflict-affected parts of south-east Myanmar.** While there is, as already noted, a problem of data fragmentation and information gaps, much is already known about the peacebuilding needs in conflict-affected areas, the priorities of the NSAGs and the population, and the risks. Interventions by numerous organizations – both in-country and border-based – are already ongoing. There is thus enough information to guide prioritization and programming for a scaling up of assistance to these areas, before waiting for the more systematic assessment of needs that will come out of a future peacebuilding needs assessment.

Key findings on priority interventions

219. **The following list of key needs, which should be seen as tentative and non-comprehensive – and which will need to be validated through a consultative process such as the joint peacebuilding needs assessment – emerges from the present desktop review of existing information (presented in no particular order):**

   o A more accurate and finer-grained understanding and mapping of conflict-affected areas is needed, a fundamental requirement for designing a peacebuilding strategy. *Action*: The international community, through the PDSG, needs to fully commit to supporting and responding to the findings of any 'joint peacebuilding needs assessment'. In addition, the multi-donor trust funds (LIFT, 3MDGs, MDEF) need to develop peace-building strategies in collaboration with the PDSG.

   o Given the high number of IDPs, there must be a clear focus on durable solutions in areas where they are present – this needs to include both the IDPs and the host communities. *Action*: Priority should be given to not only acknowledging the criticality of engagement with community-based organisations, but also the necessity of building the capacity of such structures, which in turn means accepting that interventions may not initially be "state of the art".

   o Mine contamination impacts on all sectors and needs to be addressed as a priority, with an urgent need for a non-technical survey on mine contamination. Mine

action (including mine risk education, demarcation, clearance, and so on) is essential for any assistance activities to be implemented. Mine action must be occur in the context of confidence and trust building, since landmines continue to be laid, including by civilians for protection. *Action*: The PDSG needs to insist that the different mine action entities agree to collaborate and leverage the relative strengths of each in the context of Myanmar.

o Information on needs and concerns of communities suggests that priority should be given to the livelihoods sector. Access to land and inputs is limited, and there is low productivity. *Action*: In terms of initial response into the ceasefire areas, food security needs to be prioritized.

o Access to markets is still very limited, and this is closely linked to issues such as local infrastructure development and the lifting of constraints on movement of people and goods. There is a need for more research on markets. *Action*: Cash-for-work and labour-based approaches which can address the need for rehabilitation of rural infrastructure, create employment (particularly for surplus agricultural labour outside the key planting and harvesting periods) and support livelihoods need to be supported.

o There is poor coverage and quality of health and education services, and a lack of reliable and up-to-date data on facilities, services and capacities. *Action*: Urgently address the need for more data.

o Widespread malnutrition among women and children appears to be a significant problem, resulting from factors including poor household dietary intake, poor access to safe water and sanitation, and poor access to quality healthcare. *Action*: Nutrition interventions need to be implemented as a matter of urgency.

o There are very few WASH programs being delivered in the south-east, and a great need for safe drinking water sources and improved sanitation (latrines, but importantly behaviour change). *Action*: The WASH sector review needs to be carried out urgently.

o There is a lack of a comprehensive protection monitoring system. *Action*: Strengthen existing mechanisms, including ILO forced labour monitoring structures, the workings of the Ceasefire Liaison Offices, and the development of civil-military liaison capabilities among the different armed forces.

o Land rights – including security of tenure and the risk of land grabbing – is a key area of concern that needs to be addressed. *Action*: More detailed information also needs to be gathered on land rights issues.

o The report clearly shows that there is a need for stronger coordination and better information-sharing. This concerns interaction between international actors, within government entities (horizontally and vertically), and communication with communities and NSAGs. *Action*: PDSG to review with MPC and the government measures that could be put in place.

o Overall, there is a lack of baseline data and of analysis on gaps, which needs to be addressed. *Action*: Conduct comprehensive sector reviews.

Principles for peacebuilding in the Myanmar context

220. In closing, it is relevant to underline the importance of a number of **key principles governing peacebuilding interventions in Myanmar**. Experience derived from almost one year in support of the ceasefire processes in the country has confirmed the relevance of a number of the points underlined in the Paris Principles and reaffirmed in the Busan Declaration. Key among these principles is the acknowledgement of the capacity of

communities to emerge from conflict. An understanding of the context must serve as the bases for any intervention. Assistance aimed at supporting peacebuilding must also accommodate and be appropriately sequenced with the political process. And the tangible benefits of peace to be provided to affected communities need to address the fears and vulnerabilities of these communities. Thus, addressing such issues as security and the establishment of governance structures that tap into familiar systems, need to be given as much priority as the actual provision of assistance. The key peacebuilding principles could be summarized as follows:

221. *Take context as the starting point for any intervention.* The international community needs to acknowledge and accept its often limited understanding of the complexity of the processes they are engaging with. But in doing so there is an equal need to recognize the very high levels of knowledge local people have, and the realities of the local forces they must contend with. Aid in conflict-affected areas is intrinsically political and as a result it is essential that international aid be in tune with and not undermine the political process. It is critical for the international community to respond quickly at crucial political moments, with conflict sensitive programming that incorporates careful 'do no harm' assessments.

222. *Peace processes are most sustainable when locally driven and owned.* The contexts of conflict-affected communities are all unique, with different local histories, experiences, and varying aspirations. Support should be directed towards reinforcing local ways out of crisis. Mainstream international community assistance instruments need to focus on empowerment and process, rather than service delivery per se. It may not be easy for international actors to accept that good-enough locally owned processes are likely to be superior to ungrounded state of the art interventions. Aid instruments must take into account existing dynamics, processes, institutions and capacities and allow local communities to decide whether projects go ahead and how they are managed.

223. In supporting local structures it is also important to distinguish between different levels of civil society. In this regard, there is an important distinction between "civil society organizations" and "community based organizations". The traditional civil society more accessible to the international community is generally made up of elites who have some knowledge of English. In contrast, less accessible community based organisations are for the most part small, local and involved in small-scale interventions. As a result they are generally better placed to reflect the community's perceptions of the peace process. The traditional civil society, when sensitive to the potential of community based organisations, can help interpret the perceptions and concerns of communities to larger and external agencies. But the risk to avoid is that they overpower local agency through the imposition of externally driven interventions.

224. *Interventions need to address the concerns and fears of communities.* Addressing insecurity is perceived by communities to be the most important factor in building trust in the process. And in addition to the provision of tangible assistance, communities express as equally important the re-establishment of law and other forms of acceptable governance. In this regard, acceptable governance is seen in terms of the integration of state services with locally owned and implemented systems (rather than the displacement of non-state systems with state systems).

225. *Coordination mechanisms between international actors need to be practical.* Given the importance of allowing international support of the peace process to be locally driven, there is a strong argument in favour of international support being 'light footed'. The coordination should introduce conflict sensitivity and political analysis into the international community's interactions with non-state (civil society organisations/community-based organisations and NSAGs) and state systems of governance and service delivery. In its efforts to interact with other stakeholders, there is a need for coordination structures to distinguish between consultation and information-sharing. Finally it is essential for the international community to manage

expectations arising from its support. The mantra should be to under-promise while attempting to over-achieve.

226. *Unhindered access is an essential first step to create confidence.* While today not all stakeholders may necessarily believe that the peace process is sound, there is clearly hope that it can be so. For communities in extremely isolated areas, the presence of assistance actors represents an important break from the past. But unhindered access also must include the ability of populations to move freely and to access existing and future services.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

DFID	United Kingdom Department for International Development
ICBL	International Campaign to Ban Landmines
IDP	internally displaced person
ILO	International Labour Organisation
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MIMU	Myanmar Information Management Unit
MPC	Myanmar Peace Centre
MPSI	Myanmar Peace Support Initiative
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NRC	Norwegian Refugee Council
NSAG	non-state armed group
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
PDSG	Peace Donor Support Group
SEZ	Special Economic Zone
SPDC	State Peace and Development Council
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WASH	water, sanitation and hygiene
3W	Who does What Where

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