

Safe and Dignified Returns?

A Rapid Assessment of the Experiences of Returned Internally Displaced Persons in Nam San Yang Village, Kachin State, Myanmar

Dan Seng Lawn



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



KACHINLAND
RESEARCH CENTRE

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About the Author

Dan Seng Lawn is an engaging political analyst and Director of Kachinland Research Centre. He obtained M.A (Political Science) from Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), India.

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Kachinland Research Centre (KRC)
MC 122, Shatapru Quater, Myitkyina, Kachin State, Myanmar
Facebook: Kachinland Research Centre
Email: kachinlandrc@gmail.com

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Lahpai Zau Gun
Chairperson
Kachinland Research Centre
Myitkyina

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Abbreviations

AG	Assembly of God
CPB	Communist Party of Burma
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAI	Development Alternatives Incorporated
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GAD	General Administration Department
ICRC	International Committee of Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
INGO	International Non Government Organisation
JST	Joint Strategy Team
MNDAA	Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (Kokang)
NDA-K	National Democratic Army-Kachin
NA-B	Northern Alliance Burma
NGO	Non Government Organisation
KDA	Kachin Defense Army
KHCC	Kachin Humanitarian Concern Committee
KII	Key Informant Interview
KIO/KIA	Kachin Independence Organisation/Kachin Independence Army
KRC	Kachinland Research Centre
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner For Refugees
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
UWSA	United Wa State Army

Executive summary

The renewed armed conflict between the Myanmar Army (also known as the Tatmadaw) and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) following the breakdown of the seventeen years long ceasefire between the two sides in 2011 created a major humanitarian crisis in Kachin State and northern Shan State. It has now been more than eight years since the armed conflict reignited in June 2011, during which more than 100,000 people have become IDPs living in various IDP camps across Kachin and Northern Shan State. IDPs have had to bear the brunt of the armed conflict and have faced various socio-economic hardships in the camps despite humanitarian support provided by INGOs and NGOs.

The intensity of fighting between the Tatmadaw and the KIA began to recede after the Tatmadaw overran one of the KIA's key strategic positions at Nhkram Gidon post in December 2016. In the same month, the Tatmadaw declared a unilateral ceasefire in Kachin and Shan state, opening up an opportunity for some IDPs to return home. It is in this context that the Nam San Yang returns process took place.

The Nam San Yang returns mark the first official IDP return process to take place since the unilateral ceasefire between the Tatmadaw and the KIA in December 2018. The return of IDPs took place in three stages during the first half of 2019. It is therefore an important litmus test for understanding how these programmes are implemented, the challenges facing returnees and what lessons can be learnt for future IDP return programmes. The study is particularly significant since it is the first in-depth study and detailed analysis about Nam San Yang after the IDPs returned. It also provides a set of wider lessons for stakeholders engaged in supporting future IDP return programmes.

Based on 75 qualitative interviews, 3 focus group discussions, 70 household surveys and 5 life stories conducted in Nam San Yang, the rapid assessment conducted by the Kachinland Research Centre (KRC) research team found the returnees have strong desire to return and believe that returning, despite ongoing risks of insecurity and a return to armed conflict, is more appealing than remaining as IDPs. They also have strong desire to exercise their own agency and resilience to seek to improve their lives, but they need support since some of the key challenges they face are beyond the individual capacity of households to address.

Reconstruction: There is an urgent need to build or rebuild safe and secure housing for IDP returnees, since many homes were heavily damaged or completely destroyed by the armed conflict. Returnees do not have the equipment to do this and there is a lack of skilled labourers to support this work.

Food and water security: In terms of food and water security, the second and third groups of returnees are more vulnerable since they have to rely solely on the subsistence support provided by Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, and the Tatmadaw. The majority of those IDPs that returned as part of the second and third batches said they had to worry about their daily food needs since the initial food aid that they were provided with will soon run out, their ability to buy nutritious food was quite low, and they are struggling to re-establish their own livelihoods. For the 150 students who have returned to study at the Nam San Yang boarding school, food security is not a major issue since the Catholic Church provides regular subsistence support for the boarders. However, the boarding house faces a shortage

of safe drinking water and bathing water, as do all returnees. As a result, during the monsoon season, many students suffer from diarrhea and skin diseases such as ringworm.

Education: The need for specifically tailored curriculum, teaching methods and personal development support for IDP students came out significantly in our research. Many IDP children have been outside of formal education for up to eight years. Teachers in Nam San Yang do not currently have specific training or support to address the educational and behavioural needs of these students. Furthermore, at the time of our field research, the school building had not yet been renovated and reconstructed. In terms of physical infrastructure, the school was not yet a safe and secure space for the students. Many young people have also been socialized in such a way that they rebel against Burmese education. The students refuse to speak the language as a form of political resistance, albeit one that then limits their opportunities to engage with the Burmese education system. Hence, many of the students with IDP background who are now studying in Nam San Yang are victims of the armed conflict and the environment where they grew up. Once again, this emphasizes the multi-dimensional challenges facing IDP returnees. This requires strategies that go beyond just initial efforts to support IDPs to return to spaces now deemed safe, and must focus on offering more comprehensive support to those that do return.

Health: There are two health services available in Nam San Yang: the Tatmadaw-run clinic and the rural health clinic established by the government. Most of the patients reported that they go to the Tatmadaw-run clinic since the service available there is better and a physician manages the clinic. In contrast, the rural health clinic has only nurses (there is no overseeing physician) and does not have sufficient medicine. When residents of Nam San Yang are seriously ill, they usually go to Waimaw or Laiza hospital. Diarrhea, having sores on the limbs, tinea (ringworm) due to the use of unclean water, and flu are the most common ailments. Currently there are no dedicated health care services for elderly returnees and pregnant mothers and children. The health challenges facing the Nam San Yang returnees intersect with the challenges they also face in accessing enough nutritious food and clean water.

Land rights security: One of the major concerns amongst the villagers returning to Nam San Yang was regarding security of land ownership. They were worried that their land could be reclaimed by the government under amendments to the Vacant, Fallow and Virgin Land Law passed on 11 September 2018 by the Myanmar Parliament, which stipulated that farmland classified as vacant, fallow or virgin needed to be registered with the government. The fact that most villagers did not have land tax receipts exacerbated these fears. Indeed, our research findings revealed that most of the returned villagers do not have any kind of land tenure documents. Among those who do have some kind of legal documents, none have land use registration certificates; they only have land sale and purchase contracts that were drafted locally.

Issues of landmines: The issue of landmines is a major risk for people returning to Nam San Yang and has resulted on large areas of the surrounding farmland being designated as restricted areas.. The returned families have not received adequate mining awareness and demining training Although the Tatmadaw has provided some demining services by clearing household compounds with a bulldozer, this service has been provided only to those who have household registration certificates. This has left those households that have returned but who are not on official government lists extremely vulnerable. There is also an urgent need for support in

demining Nam San Yang since the areas now designated as restricted seriously limits returnees' freedom of movement and access to their farmland. Almost all returnees expressed that this is a major impediment to enabling them to re-establish sustainable agricultural livelihoods. The returnees also expressed their perpetual worry that their children may become the victims of landmine explosions, although there has as yet (November 2019) been no landmine explosions since the return process began .

Livelihoods: The longer-term sustainability of IDP returns will largely depend on how successfully the returnees can rebuild their livelihoods. This research found that among all the challenges that Nam San Yang returnees face, reconstructing livelihood stands out significantly. Overgrown farmland and the presence of restricted areas are the major problems for the returnees in their effort to reconstruct their livelihoods since most of them are farmers by occupation. Some erstwhile farmlands are now consumed by forest and farmers require equipment, such as bulldozers to clear the forest, which they do not have the finances to purchase or borrow. The formal reopening of the trade routes between Nam San Yang and Laiza and Bhamo will also be important in enabling the village's economy to recover.

Policy recommendations

Recommendation for authorities and organisations involved in the Nam San Yang returns programme

- The **Myanmar government**, the **Tatmadaw**, the **KIO** and **aid providers** (INGOs, NGOs and churches) should increase humanitarian assistance to Nam San Yang returnees. Currently the level of aid provided by INGOs and NGOs is quite minimal and many of those who have returned will face severe food shortages over the coming months as the initial supplies they were provided run out. Most importantly, this should include nutritious food and clean drinking water in order to improve residents' food security and reduce the health risks caused by drinking dirty water.
- The **Myanmar government**, the **Tatmadaw**, the **KIO** and **aid providers** should consider seriously the villagers' priorities for resettlement and reconstruction mapped out in the petition letter sent to the Chief Minister in May 2019 when planning how they can support IDP return and resettlement. This petition provides a clear outline of the most pressing needs faced by returnees, and includes support for the village school and clinic, reopening of cultivable land, reconstruction of villagers' houses and roads, and providing electricity.
- Efforts to support resettlement and reconstruction should also consider non-material reconstruction, such as support for rebuilding the morale, self-esteem and community solidarity of the returnees of Nam San Yang. For example, many of those who have returned continue to live with the traumatic impacts of the armed conflict and displacement and would benefit from greater access to services that can provide psychosocial support.
- In the planning and implementation of return and resettlement, factors such as age, gender, education level and professional background should be considered, with special assistance given to vulnerable groups including widows and elderly persons, who

constitute the majority of returnees to Nam San Yang.

- Authorities should address the structural challenges facing Nam San Yang's economic recovery. Authorities should consider opening and securing trade routes with Laiza and Bhamo. This will reduce the price of goods in Nam San Yang and will also give residents the confidence to re-establish and invest in business activities. This will be important in ensuring that those IDPs who return do not become reliant upon humanitarian assistance indefinitely.
- Government authorities should provide support to those that return even if they do not have the required paperwork to formally access humanitarian assistance and other services. Authorities need to be aware of the fact that many of those who fled the conflict no longer have the paperwork required to formally access government support (such as their household registration certificate). This lack of paperwork should not preclude IDP returnees from accessing the services they need to rebuild their lives.
- Authorities should commit to clearing landmines in all areas of Nam San Yang village and surrounding farmland and roads, rather than only clearing the compounds of those households on the government lists. Only when the whole area is cleared of landmines and currently restricted areas are opened again will the returnees be able to reconstruct their livelihoods, community and local economy in a meaningful way. If this is not possible in the short-term, priority should be given to:
 - (1) Clearing landmines from household compounds that are not on official government lists but where returnees have resettled;
 - (2) Clearing landmines from paddy fields and farmland, and along the roads leading to paddy fields and farmland;
 - (3) Providing clear signs demarcating zones that remain restricted;
 - (4) Providing landmine awareness training
 - (5) Allow third party involvement in the demining process
- Further education support should be provided to the students who are now living and studying in Nam San Yang. This includes supporting teachers to develop teaching methods suitable for students with an IDP background, many of whom have been outside of formal education for up to eight years and have lost confidence in themselves and lost hope of the future. Educational provision should extend beyond the classroom and formal curriculum and should also focus on personal development.

Wider recommendations for those working with IDPs return programmes across Kachin State and Northern Shan State

- IDPs return programmes should only be considered for areas where there is no risk of a return to violence. Many IDPs continue to live with the trauma of previous outbreaks of armed conflict and displacement. It is imperative that future IDP programmes only work in areas where there is a credible commitment from all sides of the armed conflict that violence will not resume.
- Authorities and aid providers that are developing IDPs return programmes should

provide livelihood support for three years after IDPs return, rather than just providing one-off support in the form of initial food aid packages. Food insecurity remains one of the most severe challenges facing returnees. In many cases, it will take time for those that return to re-establish sustainable livelihoods, especially in areas where landmines prevent access to farmland, where jungle needs to be cleared to recover farmland, and/or where farmland has been taken by mining companies or agribusinesses. Providing sustained support for a number of years will alleviate the insecurity and stress that many returnees will face.

- At the same time, authorities need to address the overarching structural conditions that perpetuate vulnerability and insecure livelihoods for those that return. This requires doing more than just providing initial humanitarian support. Most importantly, this requires a commitment to reduce the risk of further outbreaks of violence to ensure that those who return do not become caught in a cycle of fleeing and returning. It also requires addressing livelihoods, land rights security and land mine issues. These have become cross-cutting issues, and should be prioritized in the planning and implementation processes related to returns.
- Authorities must ensure the land rights of returning IDPs and support should be provided to IDPs regarding how they can exercise their land rights when returning. The lack of land tenure documentation is likely to serve as a key factor motivating returns. This may motivate people to return to areas not yet free of armed conflict while land insecurity creates significant distress for those who have been separated from their land by the armed conflict. Supporting IDPs to understand and exercise their land rights should be an important aspect of future return programmes.
- Education provision and support for young people are likely to be important demands for returning IDPs. Those involved in devising IDPs return programmes should consider the specific educational challenges facing IDP children, many of whom have lived in the camps for a number of years without access to formal education. This should include developing tailored support for returning students that can allow them to catch up on the education they have lost and, importantly, can extend beyond the curriculum to provide support for personal development.
- Efforts to support IDP returns should consider non-material reconstruction, such as support for rebuilding the morale, self-esteem and community solidarity of returnees. Although the immediate priorities for IDPs are food, shelter and the opportunity to have a sustainable livelihood, psychosocial support will also be an important aspect for those seeking to rebuild their lives.
- Government authorities need to be aware of the fact that many of those who fled the conflict no longer have the paperwork required to formally access government support (such as their household registration certificate). This lack of paperwork should not preclude IDP returnees from accessing the services they need to rebuild their lives. NGOs and donors can play an important role in ensuring that this issue is understood and addressed by government authorities.

Introduction

As of 30 April 2019, according to UNOCHA's statistics, there are 106,537 IDPs living in 169 IDP sites across Kachin and Northern Shan State as a result of armed conflict broke out in Kachin State and the intensification of fighting in Northern Shan State since 2016. The discussion around the return of IDPs return to their homes has gained currency since December 2018, when the Myanmar Tatmadaw announced a unilateral ceasefire in Kachin and Shan State.

Against this backdrop of increasing number of IDPs, the Nam San Yang case is the first instance of IDPs returning since the outbreak of armed conflict in Kachin State in 2011. This report, hence, analyzes the return of internally displaced persons to their native village of Nam San Yang in Kachin State, northern Myanmar, in the context of the ongoing conflict between the Myanmar military (Tatmadaw) and Kachin Independence Army, (KIA), which resumed in 2011 following a seventeen-year ceasefire.

The armed conflict in Kachin State is deeply entrenched in political grievances over ethnic and religious identity issues, which led to the founding of the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) and its armed wing, the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), in 1962. Prior to this outbreak of conflict, the region had been peaceful since the Union of Burma gained independence from Britain in 1948 (The Nation 1954). The KIA/KIO subsequently engaged in continuous armed conflict with the Burma Army (also known as the Tatmadaw) and the Communist Party of Burma (CPB), until it was completely disintegrated in 1989. Intermittent and abortive peace talks in the 1970s and 1980s failed to reach a ceasefire agreement between the Tatmadaw and KIA.

The end of the Cold War, however, brought a change in the general political milieu of Myanmar, both within the Tatmadaw leadership as well as among ethnic armed organisations. Following the collapse of the Communist Party of Burma (CPB) in 1989, the military government agreed ceasefires in 1991 with the main CPB splinter groups, including the United Wa State Army (UWSA) and the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army Kokang (MNDAA) of the Kokang Self-Administered Zone. In the same year, the military government also reached a ceasefire with the National Democratic Army-Kachin (NDA-K), and with the KIA splinter group, the Kachin Defense Army (KDA), a year later. In this new political climate, the KIO leadership negotiated and reached a ceasefire agreement with the then-military government in 1994, with a clear demarcation line between the two sides. The ceasefire lasted for seventeen years until 2011, when war resumed after a series of skirmishes near the Taping hydroelectric plant, east of Bhamo. Since then, thousands of civilians have fled their home villages. By September 2018, nearly 100,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) were living in camps in areas under the control of the Myanmar government or KIO (hereafter called government-controlled and KIO-controlled areas), of which a further 14,000 were displaced in 2018.

Looking back over the past eight years, the fighting between the Tatmadaw and the KIA reached a climax when one of the KIA's strategic posts, Nhkram Gidon, was overrun by the Tatmadaw in December 2016. This Tatmadaw offensive may be seen as retaliation against attacks by the KIA and allied armies, collectively known as the Northern Alliance (NA-B)¹, on

¹The Northern Alliance was formed in 2016 and has been militarily active since December 2016. It is a military alliance between the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), Arakan Army (AA), Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army Kokang (MNDAA) and Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA).

Muse and Kutkai in northern Shan State (Thu Thu Aung 2016). Following the conflict over Nhkram Gidon, military engagement was scaled back in Kachin State. The Tatmadaw declared a unilateral ceasefire with the KIO/KIA and other members of the Northern Alliance in Kachin and Shan states on 21 December 2018, which expired in late September 2019.

Following the declaration by the Tatmadaw of a unilateral ceasefire on 21 December 2018, there was growing pressure around the question of returning IDPs to their villages of origin in Kachin State. The unilateral ceasefire declaration includes eleven points. Point number 9 of the ceasefire states a commitment to the prompt resettlement of IDPs in the declared areas of the ceasefire and the Tatmadaw's willingness to cooperate in the process of resettlement. With continued extensions of the ceasefire, which had initially been announced for a two-month period and was then extended multiple times until expiring in September 2019, the Myanmar government seemed to be motivated to continue working on IDP returns in the area. However, trust in their intentions remained low amongst the Kachin (Kachin State IDP Intention Survey, 2019). Some have conjectured that returns are motivated by a desire to reduce the visible signs of ongoing conflict that IDPs represent. China has also shown signs of taking a more active role in the peace process; in particular by urging the KIO to sign a bilateral ceasefire agreement with the Tatmadaw (Radio Free Asia, 8 March 2019). Civil society has also shown an interest in supporting IDP returns. The Kachin Humanitarian Concern Committee (KHCC)—a body that includes Kachin humanitarian and religious leaders, as well as two members of the KIO's IDP committee—estimates that 6,000 to 10,000 IDPs from 100 camps could be able to return home or resettle in the near term (Frontier Myanmar, 15 March 2019; International Crisis Group, 22 May 2019).

In the context of these growing pressures, on 30 January 2019, the Myanmar military's Northern Regional Command assisted seventeen families to resettle to Nam San Yang village in Waignmaw Township. On 5 March 2019, a further 29 families returned home with the assistance of the Tatmadaw, bringing the total to 46 families, including more than 200 individuals. In addition to that there are 17 immigrant worker families stationed in Nam San Yang. Ethnically, the Kachin returnees constitute the majority, and Lisu, Shan, Chinese and Burmese returnees are also resettling in Nam San Yang. There is speculation that additional returns may be planned for this village in the near future.

As one of the first instances of IDP returns in Kachin State following the KIA-Tatmadaw unilateral ceasefire, the Nam San Yang case therefore offers an important opportunity to analyse the challenges and contentious politics surrounding IDP returns in Kachin State.

Before the war broke out, Nam San Yang, a village of more than 2000 households, was an economically and socially vibrant entrepot town; due to its location between Myitkyina and Laiza, it served a strategic border town under KIO control, with a large flow of goods and people. Ethnically, the village was quite diverse, hosting migrants from as far as Kyauk Se in Myanmar's dry zone. The land surrounding Nam San Yang was fertile and the town had a booming agricultural sector.

Currently, it is geographically located at the epicentre of the conflict between the Tatmadaw and the KIA. The village is situated at the nearest gateway to the KIO's headquarter, Laiza, and a two-hour drive from both the state capital, Myitkyina, and the town of Bhamo. It is located in a grey area, where both Tatmadaw and KIO could exert their authorities, and thus, it is unclear who actually controls the area. Tatmadaw troops are currently stationed near the

village, which lies along the Myitkyina-Bhamo road, and KIO troops are also operating within four miles of the village, on the eastern and western sides of the main road.

Due to its strategic location and its significance as the first case of organized IDP returns following the recent conflict, conducting research on returns in Nam San Yang offers insights on the challenges facing IDP resettlement in a context of ongoing and unresolved armed conflict. By analysing the post-return experiences of Nam San Yang villagers, this research also aims to inform future IDP returns and resettlement programmes.

Although the Tatmadaw considered the return process to Nam San Yang village voluntary, many viewed that the Tatmadaw conducted the process without consulting the KIO or the KHCC and with little participation from the civilian government (Sai Wansai 2019; Kachin News Group, 9 May 2019). To date, little has been published about the experience and perspectives of those families that returned home, and no in-depth study has been conducted on this topic. Given that this is the first official return process to take place since the ceasefire, it is important to understand where the process worked, where it failed, and where there could be space for future improvements and coordination efforts. Since the returns in Nam San Yang, the Myanmar government showed signs of intent to resettle further villages. In February 2019, the General Administration Department (GAD) visited dozens of camps across the state to collect information about potential return or resettlement. This study, and the accompanying documentary film, seeks to incorporate the vital, but often marginalised, voices of those that returned to the ongoing debate about IDP returns.

The rest of this report is divided into four sections. Section 2 explains the research design and methodology that underpins the report. Section 3 provides a brief overview of the international legal framework that surrounds IDP return and resettlement processes and which provides a set of principles against which experiences of the Nam San Yang case can be assessed. This section also briefly explores the extent to which those IDPs who returned viewed the return process as upholding these principles. Section 4 analyses the experiences and challenges that returning IDPs have faced in Nam San Yang. The research addresses the following issues: (i) experiences of resettlement and reconstruction; (ii) Livelihoods; (iii) Land rights security; (iv) Human security; (v) Education and health; (vi) Governance; (vii) Future prospects. Section 5 sets out the paper's conclusions and recommendations.

2. Research design and limitations

2.1. Research aims and objectives

The Nam San Yang returns mark the first official return process to take place since the unilateral ceasefire between the Tatmadaw and the KIA in December 2018. With this in mind, the key aims and objectives of this research can be understood as follows:

1. To shed light on the conflict dynamics in Kachin State.
2. To help understand the post-return experiences of Nam San Yang villagers in order to inform stake holders, including authorities and donor communities, regarding future IDP returns and resettlement initiatives.
3. To explore the ways in which the return process worked, where it failed, and where there could be space for future improvements and coordination efforts.
4. To attempt to contribute objective information to inform the public debate around Nam San Yang returns.

2.2. Research design

The research addresses four major questions:

1. What motivated Nam San Yang villagers to return despite overwhelming popular opinion against the early return of IDPs to this village?
2. What kinds of socio-political, livelihood and security challenges do the returned IDPs face?
3. How do individuals exercise their own agency in the return process? What roles are stakeholders – including community and religious leaders, village administrators, the Tatmadaw, international nongovernmental organisations (INGOs) and local NGOs – playing in the return process?
4. To what extent did the Tatmadaw, INGOs, NGOs and Church groups engage in demining, reconstruction of infrastructure, and establishment of livelihoods and public services including health and education occur, and what effect did these actions have?

Informed and shaped by the key overarching research questions, this study used the household as the unit of analysis. The research aimed to cover all households living permanently in Nam San Yang. The field research team comprises of three male researchers and two female researchers, who together orchestrated the research design, data collection and analysis that underpins this report. The data collection process was conducted between 22 June 2019 and 20 August 2019. The field research team stayed at Nam San Yang for one and a half months.

2.3. Methodology

The research employed qualitative research methods consisting of semi-structured key informant interviews (KIIs) with village elders, authorities, Tatmadaw officers, members of Kachin Humanitarian Concern Committee, male and female villagers, and structured focus group discussions (FGDs) with male and female villagers. The study also employed a stratified sampling method, collecting survey data from returnees belonging to different ethnic groups.

In total, the research comprised 75 qualitative interviews, 3 focus group discussions (FGDs), 70 household surveys and 5 life stories.

The research team travelled to Nam San Yang for a pilot trip on the 22-23 June 2019, and again on 25-27 June. During these trips, they interviewed key individuals leading the return process as well as some returnees. Based on the information gathered during the pilot field trips, the researchers conducted a five-day research design workshop, on 28-29 June and 1-3 July. During the workshop, researchers developed survey questionnaires and guiding questions for in-depth qualitative interviews. Data was collected from the 5 July-20 August 2019, followed by a three-day analysis workshop. A validation workshop for the first draft of the report was held on the 16 September in Nam San Yang, in Laiza on the 18 September, and in Myitkyina on the 20 September. Prior to publication, the report was subject to an internal and external peer review process.

2.4. Limitations

In presenting and analysing research findings, KRC seeks to refrain from expressing any personal views of the researchers. The interpretation and analysis included in this report seek to reflect the data collected by KRC's research team.

However, any study cannot be completely free from subjective understandings. Given the controversial elements of the Nam San Yang return case, the researchers had to make a conscious effort to maintain an intellectual distance from the issue on the one hand, while also immersing themselves sufficiently to have a concrete understanding of the issues in Nam San Yang and the challenges facing those IDPs who returned. As in any qualitative research, this shifting balance may be seen as a possible limitation.

There is also the possibility that respondents were not fully open or transparent due to a lack of trust or a fear of consequences. The KRC research team sought to mitigate this limitation by staying in Nam San Yang for a prolonged period with the specific purpose building trust with respondents. There can also be potential issues related to gender or background of the research team, which may have affected trust – for example, if males were interviewing females, or if researchers were from a different church denomination than respondents. The research team sought to handle these issues by ensuring that respondents fully understood the purposes of the study and how the data collected would be used.

As far as possible, the research team endeavored to address these issues while conducting field research. The field researchers reported back to field research coordinator and lead researcher on daily basis in order to address any issues that arose during the data collection.

3. Situating the case of the Nam San Yang returns

The Kachin IDP return and resettlement process may be viewed from the paradigm of the United Nations Pinheiro principles, which state:

“All refugees and displaced persons have the right to return voluntary to their former homes, lands, or places of habitual residence, in safety and dignity. Voluntary return in safety and dignity must be based on a free, informed, individual choice. Refugees and displaced persons should be provided with complete, objective, up-to-date, and accurate information, including on physical, material and legal safety issues in countries or places of origin.”(UNHCR 2005: Article 10.1)

These principles, which stress the importance of voluntary, well-informed returns with safety and dignity, have served as a standard for organisations that provide humanitarian assistance to the IDPs in Kachin and Northern Shan State, including the Joint Strategy Team (JST)² and KHCC.

The research conducted for this report reveals that the IDP returns to Nam San Yang did not adhere to these principles. Some media outlets, capturing the prevailing sentiment of the time, viewed the returns as forced, and a Tatmadaw ploy for political gain (Kachin News Group, 18 February 2019). According to an interview with Kachin Newsgroup, published in Burma News International, the Chairman of the KHCC, Rev. Dr. Hkalam Samson, expressed his doubts about the Tatmadaw’s intentions:

“Regarding the Tatmadaw’s four-month unilateral ceasefire, we will have to see whether it is honest or a trick. The Burma Army announced this unilateral ceasefire after the KIO chairman brought up IDP issues...I don’t think it’s an honest action.

Another thing is that [the Tatmadaw] permitted Kachin IDPs to return to Nam San Yang village...The government didn’t know about it but later agreed to it because the Tatmadaw made it happen.... We don’t want IDPs to be forced to return home within this four-month period [of the unilateral ceasefire]... We don’t want IDPs to be sent back to their villages in military vehicles.

I think [the Burma Army] may be under political pressure...It’s impossible for all IDPs to return home within the remaining two months [of the unilateral ceasefire].

...If the Tatmadaw tries to pull a trick, we will lose trust in them. We can clearly see that the situation could worsen.” (Kachin News Group’s Interview with Rev. Dr. Hkalam Samson 2019)

Interviews conducted for this research with leaders of the Joint Strategy Team indicate that they share the same position, advocating for well-informed voluntary returns which prioritize the safety and dignity of IDPs in the return process in Kachin and Northern Shan States. Hence, this research found that those interviewed by the Joint Strategy Team are critical

²The Joint Strategy Team (JST) is a consortium comprising of nine local humanitarian agencies involved in the humanitarian response to Internally Displaced Persons affected by the armed conflict between the Tatmadaw and the Kachin Independence Army since 2011.

of the Nam San Yang return process, regarding it as a Tatmadaw scheme promoting its political agenda.

According to an article published by Frontier Myanmar, the KIO also views the Nam San Yang return case with suspicion. KIO spokesperson Colonel Naw Bu told Frontier on 22 August 2019 that the KIO wanted to sign a bilateral ceasefire before addressing IDP returns and resettlement.

“We’ve already said this to the government and military,” he said. “Unless there is a ceasefire, we will not cooperate with them on this issue” (Ye Mon 2019).

Regarding the case of Nam San Yang, Colonel Naw Bu also argued that the government and military had undertaken the IDP returns unilaterally, without consulting the KIO. In the interview he commented that after the villagers returned to Nam San Yang, the Tatmadaw asked the KIA to pull back one of its front-line outposts in the area. When it complied, the military then established its own checkpoint on the site (Ye Mon 2019).

Returnees’ response in relation to the principles of safety and dignity

However, this research also reveals that the leaders of the return process and those villagers who returned have a different perspective. According to one of the key leaders of Nam San Yang return process, Hpaula Gam H pang, a politically influential singer and composer who joined the Unity and Democracy Party Kachin State in 2009:

“I expected this kind of organization (KHCC) [to be involved] when IDPs began to talk about returning to Nam San Yang village. We have had some difficulties working together. We are trying to seek the best way.

I used to tell the villagers that I was like Saya Yaw Han [John the Baptist] in the Bible, who talked about Jesus coming. I tried to seek a way for the return of IDPs to Nam San Yang village before anybody came to help us. I hope this organization [KHCC] will do better on a national level. It’s very good. I support it.” (Kachin News Group’s Interview with Hpaula Gam H pang 2019)

This research found a significant lack of understanding among returned IDPs about the principles of safety and dignity in relation to their returns. According to KRC’s household surveys, all the respondents said that they returned with their own consent. Their notions of safety and dignity were found to be understood more from a pragmatic perspective than a normative one. When asked about how they understood the notion of returning in safety and dignity, most of the respondents replied that they felt they were responsible for their own safety and dignity, describing safety and dignity as things which they “have to create by themselves,” as shown in Figure (1) and Figure (2). This response may be seen to indicate that they want to exercise their own agency when it comes to the return process.

Do you think that a 100% security guarantee is needed before IDPs should return?

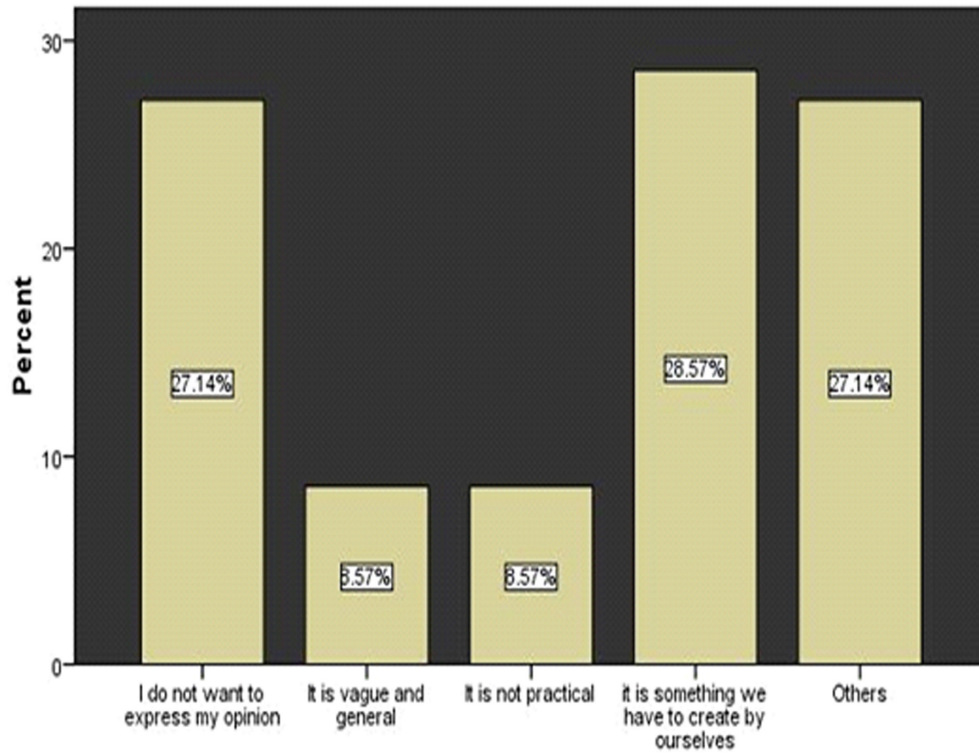
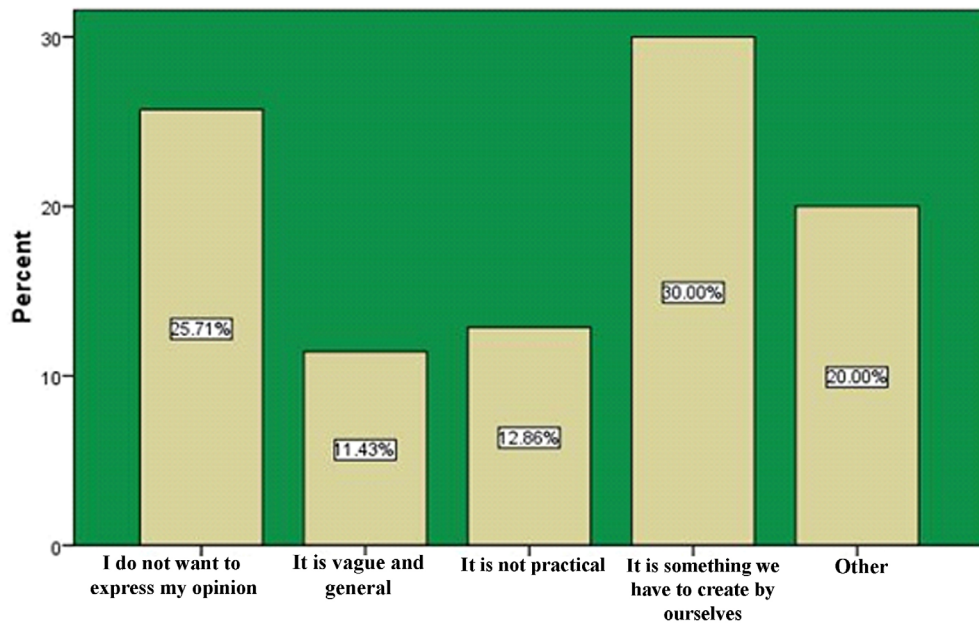


Figure (1)

How do you understand the phrase “return with dignity”?



Note: 75 Respondents explained their understanding on return with dignity, 20% of total respondents, faced difficulty to explain the phrase “Return with dignity”.

Figure (2)

When asked about his perception of safety in relation to returning, a male returnee replied:

“Nobody can give a guarantee. Even the safety of Myitkyina denizens cannot be guaranteed. That is the capital of Kachin State. Can you say that their security is guaranteed? Nobody can predict with certainty about one’s future. Our current condition is not particularly worse off. If something goes wrong again we will just return back to the camps, leaving everything here again. No government can guarantee the safety of our lives and properties. We can only rely on our own actions. Not even the safety and security of the Northern Commander is guaranteed, so numerous security forces have to guard him. Nothing can be guaranteed in this country.”

When asked about his perception of the concept of dignity in relation to returning, he replied in the same tone:

“That is a remote concept for us. Only the person who framed the concept will understand fully about it. For us it is simply returning back to our home and village. Therefore, before I returned back, I asked the village administrator, whether both the government and KIO allowed us to return back. He said both sides agreed for our return; therefore I decided to move back. If it were just a unilateral effort, frankly speaking, I would not dare to come back. Later we heard that KIO did not give 100% blessing for the return process. Returning to Nam San Yang is controversial for some organisations. Whatever may be the case, we do not want to miss any possible opportunity to return to our home. Whether the authorities concerned would grant us a guarantee for safety is up to them. If they grant it we will take it; if they don’t, we won’t. We will not be sad if they do not provide us a guarantee for safety. We have to stand on our feet. We cannot rely on somebody else for our fate.” (Personal Interview Code NSY 2058 2019)

Similarly, another male respondent described his understanding of the notion of dignity:

“Dignity is something that you have to create for yourself. We cannot wait for them(authorities) anymore to offer our dignity back to us.” (FGD conducted on 14 August 2019)

This analysis offers initial insights into the reasons why some IDPs decided to return to Nam San Yang. The next section of the report now explores the experiences of those who have returned and the ongoing challenges they have faced.

4. Key research findings

4.1. Resettlement and reconstruction

Background

For the purposes of this research, some distinctions may be made among the various returnees to Nam San Yang. It should also be noted that some households who were not on the list live in the village and vice versa.³ The discrepancy of the formal list of returned households and actual households living in the village reflects the complexity of the return process. This research focused on those households that had now returned to Nam San Yang and were living there permanently as of August 2019.

The first batch of ‘returnees’, which comprises seventeen households, represents those who did not leave Nam San Yang when the war broke out, staying in the village even during the times of active fighting in the area. With the exception of two or three families, this group may be seen as significantly better off than the later returnees. These households primarily engage in trade between Laiza and Bhamo since before the conflict broke out until the present, and hence may have a vested interest in the continued flow of goods and people in and out of Laiza and Bhamo. Some suggest that these families were key agents in orchestrating the return process, having good connections with authorities.

The second and the third batches of returnees constitute the actual IDP returnees. Among these, some registered under other household names since they lost their household registration certificates while fleeing. The lack of registration under their own names increases their vulnerability, hampering them from accessing aid (as shown later in this section); hence, they may be seen as the most vulnerable section of the returned Nam San Yang villagers.

Before the war broke out, Nam San Yang, a village of more than 2000 households, was an economically and socially vibrant entrepot town; due to its location between Myitkyina and Laiza, it served as a strategic border town under KIO control, with a large flow of goods and people. Ethnically, the village was quite diverse, hosting migrants from as far as Kyauk Se in Myanmar’s dry zone. The land surrounding Nam San Yang was fertile and the town had a booming agricultural sector. A nostalgic description given by one returned IDP shows the good days of Nam San Yang:

“I was registered in the third batch since the second batch was already full. In the past, day and night you would find motorcycles passing the village. The town was alive with teeming crowds, day and night. You see that side? In the past, you would find a busy row of shops like during a festival time. Every day was like a festival. Talking about how I feel about it now, I feel sad seeing the whole village consumed by bushes. In terms of the feeling of loss, it affects all of us equally. Those who had more, lost more; those who had less, they lost less. Nobody wants to lose his or her property” (Personal Interview Code NSY 2058 2019).

³The list is compiled by the village administrator and submitted to the Tatmadaw and Kachin State Government.

Loss of property and damage to housing

As shown in Figure (3), this research found that the total value of houses destroyed in Nam San Yang during the recent armed conflict was estimated as around 707,500 US dollars at the current exchange rate. This number only accounts for direct destruction of property, but does not include societal, generational or other economic losses.⁴

Type of building and value before the end of the ceasefire in 2011

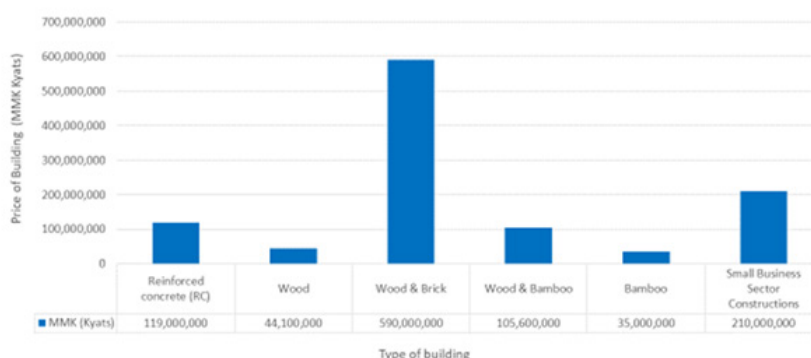


Figure (3)

According to the household surveys conducted for this research, returned IDPs so far received for reconstruction not more than 5,850,000 MMK (approximately USD 3,850), which was divided between 34 households. As shown in Figure (4) NGOs and INGOs did not play an active role due to the element of uncertainty involved in the Nam San Yang return process, while the Myanmar Red Cross Society provided small loans of between 200,000 MMK and 300,000 MMK to each household that returned. According to respondents, the financial support they received from the government and Tatmadaw was meager. Respondents said they had to rely substantially on themselves for covering the costs of resettlement and reconstruction.

Source of construction material and types of material received in the resettlement process

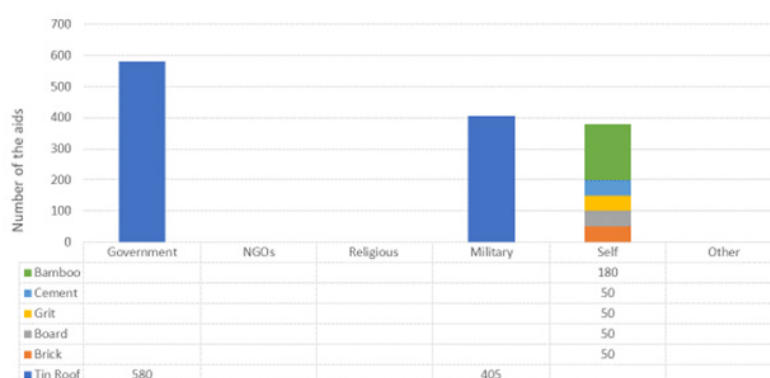


Figure (4)

⁴Only 44 households provided an estimated figure of the value of their property before the conflict broke out. The calculation is the sum total of the amounts given by the 44 households.

Currently, most of the returned IDPs are living in makeshift bamboo shelters. Household surveys found that most of the houses in Nam San Yang are still in need of total reconstruction (See Maps 1 and 2). Ten survey respondents said only minor reconstruction was needed, while six said half of their home needed reconstruction, and 28 expressed the need to reconstruct almost their whole house. The remaining 26 respondents chose not to respond.



Map (1) January 6, 2014 satellite imagery of Nam San Yang (Google Earth). Over all changes after four years of war.



Map (2) January 12, 2018 satellite imagery of Nam San Yang (Google Earth). Over all changes after eight years of war.

These findings suggest an urgent need to renovate or rebuild safe and secure housing for IDP returnees, especially in towns or villages like Nam San Yang, where homes were heavily damaged or completely destroyed by the armed conflict.

Preparation and motivation for returning

Apart from the lack of sufficient aid, the returned IDPs expressed that they could not prepare properly beforehand due to the short notice given that they would return, even though they foresaw the potential difficulties they would face after returning. Out of 70 household survey respondents, 51 said they foresaw the potential difficulties they would face after returning, while only 19 responded they did not foresee the potential difficulties. Eleven responded they could prepare beforehand, while 42 responded they could not prepare, though they foresaw the potential difficulties after return. Some said they returned because they thought that they would have better economic opportunities and financial independence from humanitarian assistance in their own village compared with remaining in the IDP camps.

Did you foresee the difficulties that you would face upon returning?

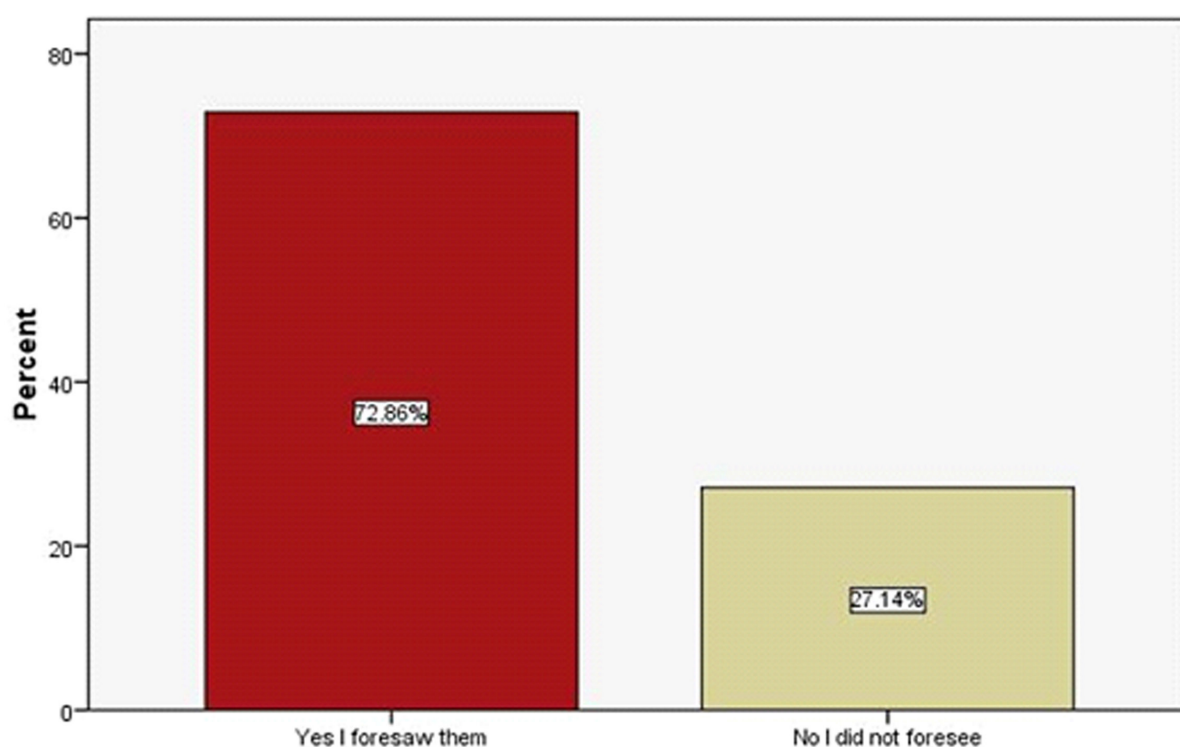


Figure (5)

Do you feel you were able to adequately prepare for the difficulties that you faced upon returning?

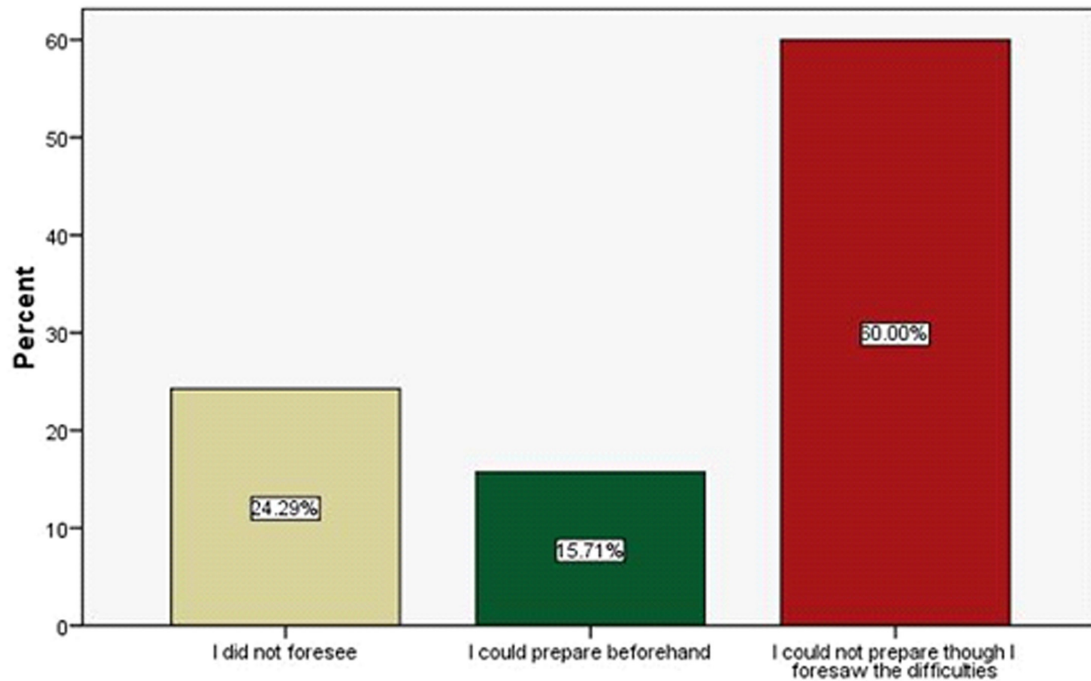


Figure (6)

In this regard a former male farmer, now aged sixty, stated:

"I am completely fed up with being an IDP for seven, eight years. We (elderly IDPs) got disease (high blood pressure), which we did not get when we were living in our own village. When I heard about the possibility to return home from the Fathers in the last Christmas mass, I thought that I would have a better chance in my village to recover my health, and I wanted to grow paddy to make seeds for the next year." (Personal Interview code NSY 2002 2019).

Another former male farmer, now aged forty eight, said:

"The reason I came back here was that in the IDP camp, we did not have space for keeping firewood. We had to keep it under our bed ... The whole family had to squeeze into a small place, and it was also difficult to look for jobs. We knew for sure that our family did not stand any chance in the IDP camp. Therefore, when we heard that we could go back we decided to go back." (Personal Interview code NSY 2004 2019).

Psychosocial and livelihood challenges

The reconstruction of returnees' livelihoods and morale should be considered alongside physical and infrastructure reconstruction in order to develop a holistic approach to reconstruction and resettlement. Though the returnees came back anticipating that they would have a better standard of living in the village than remaining in the IDP camp, they continue to face structural as well as psychological impediments to reconstructing their lives.⁵ The traumatic experiences of losing one's property and trade still loom large in the returnees' minds.

A former female trader and gold mine owner, who migrated from Kyauk Me in Shan State, explained the reason why she did not dare to start her own business again:

"Just recently, one of my former friends in trade asked me whether I would start running a shop selling rice. [He said] If I needed, he could provide me with the capital to open the shop. I am also well connected with rice traders, but I did not dare to take the offer and start my own business. I am still repaying debt from before the war broke out. If fighting breaks out again, I will be indebted again for a second time. Therefore, right now I am working at a banana plantation as a daily worker." (Personal Interview Code 2060 2019)

Such perspectives represent the challenges for returnees to rebuild self-esteem and recover from loss. Traumatic experiences faced during conflict and a sedentary lifestyle in the IDP camps for seven or eight years may affect IDPs' self-esteem and induce them to take a pessimistic outlook towards their futures.

For returnees to Nam San Yang, this research found that their living standard was considerably lower after returning compared to the standard of living they enjoyed before the outbreak of war. Nam San Yang has no electricity grid. As shown in Figure (7) and Figure (8), before the war broke out, 31.34% (22 households) owned personal generators. After eight years, only 7.14% (5 households) could currently afford a personal generator to electrify the house, marking a 24.2% decrease in the number of households with access to electricity. Instead of electricity, more families are lighting their houses using candles. Before the war broke out, only 28.57% (20 households) used candles for lighting their houses. Now, 54.29% (38 households) use candles for lighting their houses.

⁵See "Livelihoods" section, below, for further analysis of these structural impediments.

How do they solve the source of lighting for returnees to Nam San Yang before conflict resumed in 2011?

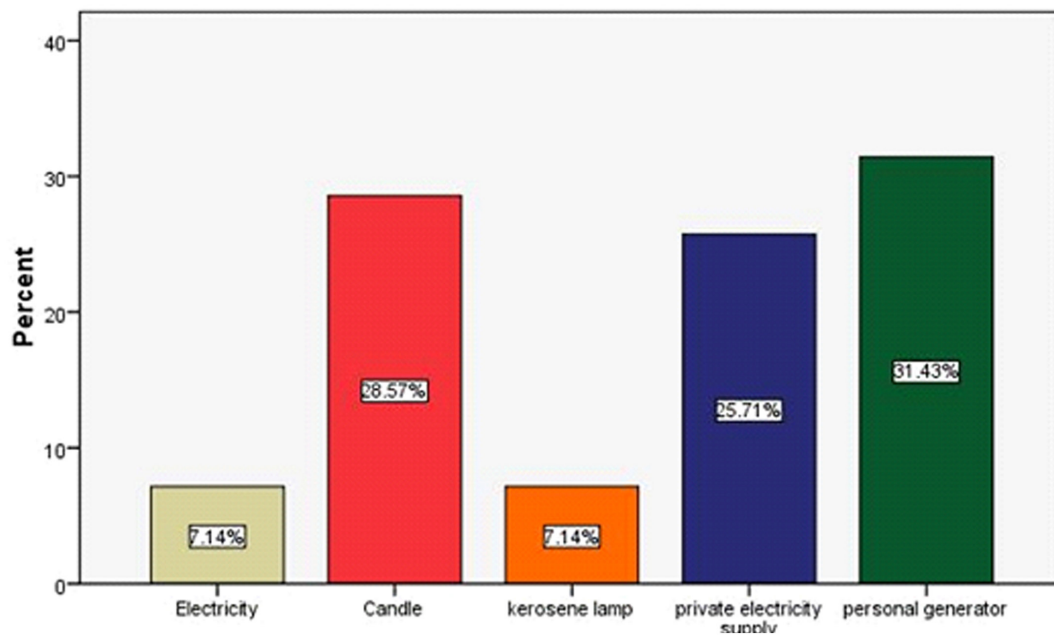


Figure (7)

How do they solve the current source of lighting for returnees to Nam San Yang?

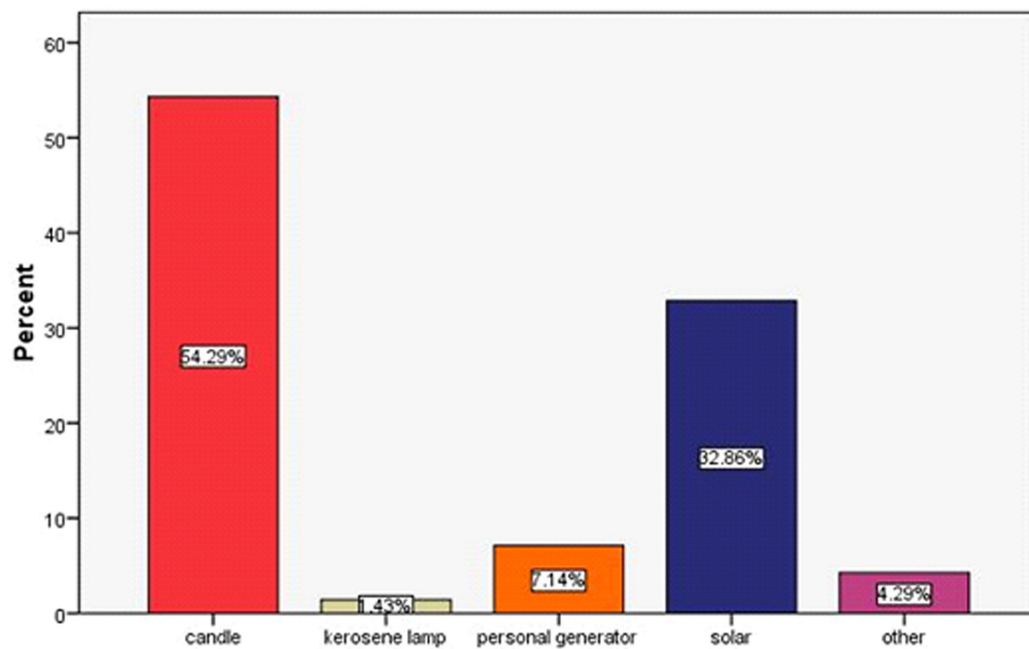


Figure (8)

Regarding their current standard of living, participants in one focus group discussion explained:

“We want Nam San Yang to become like before, with electricity and phone lines. In the past, Na Lone (a village next to Nam San Yang) was quite underdeveloped but now it is quite developed. Now, we need to use candles to light our houses. Some use solar power, charging their panels with a motorcycle battery. We do not have a mobile connection here; therefore, it is difficult for us to communicate. We cannot afford to buy a Chinese SIM card. 50 Yuan of phone credit will only last for 2 weeks at most. We want to freely move around [preventing this is the existence of restricted areas due to landmines] Although some of the returnees’ houses seem to be in good condition, their roofs are leaking. They [the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement] provided iron roof sheeting, 25 sheets per house, but some of us do not get it”⁶ (FGD conducted on 13 August 2019)

To address the challenges faced during resettlement and reconstruction, the returnees formed a provisional Resettlement and Reconstruction Committee and sent a petition letter to the Kachin State Chief Minister of Kachin State Government on 6 May 2019.⁷ The letter detailed the immediate needs for the resettled villagers and asked for government assistance in seven areas of need: (1) to reopen the government middle school for the 2019-2020 school year; (2) to reopen the village clinic; (3) to provide 50 acres of arable land before the cultivation season starts; (4) to provide materials for rebuilding villagers’ houses; (6) to help reconstruct village roads; and (7) to help electrify the village (Petition letter sent to Kachin State Government, 6 May 2019). As of September 2019 the government and Tatmadaw had only met the first two requests.

4.2. Livelihoods

The longer-term sustainability of IDP returns will largely depend on how successfully the returnees can rebuild their livelihoods. This research found that among all the challenges that returned villagers face, reconstructing livelihoods stands out significantly.

This study assessed the challenges that returnees experienced in establishing a sustainable livelihood, and explored the extent to which these experiences varied with respect to the following parameters: age, gender, occupation, and to the extent to which previously-farmed arable land had been destroyed or now fell within a restricted area demarcated by the Tatmadaw due to security reasons.

First considering age, as shown in Figure (9) the average age of returnees was 52 years. Looking at Myanmar’s average life expectancy of 66.8, the majority of the returnees may be seen as already in a declining stage of life. The researchers observed few young people in Nam San Yang, apart from students at the high school. The older age demographic of returnees may signify that returning to Nam San Yang is not an attractive option among the younger generation of those displaced, perhaps due to the lack of viable livelihood options.

⁶The reason why some households have not been able to access these provisions is because they do not have a household registration certificate and could therefore not register on the government list

⁷See appendix I

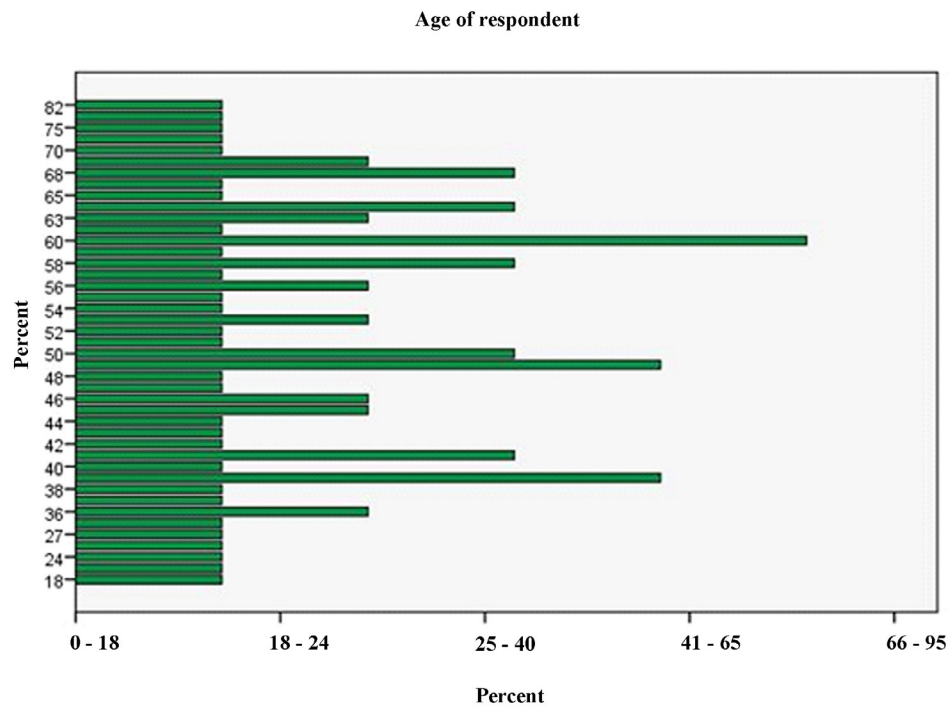


Figure (9)

Looking at gender, more of the returnees are female (58.57%), as shown in Figure (10). However, the kinds of jobs available currently in Nam San Yang are not conducive to women. As shown in Figure (11), most of the returnees could not sustainably rebuild their livelihood. Although women and elderly men make up the majority of returnees, these groups fared the least well regarding their ability to independently support themselves upon return.

Gender of respondents

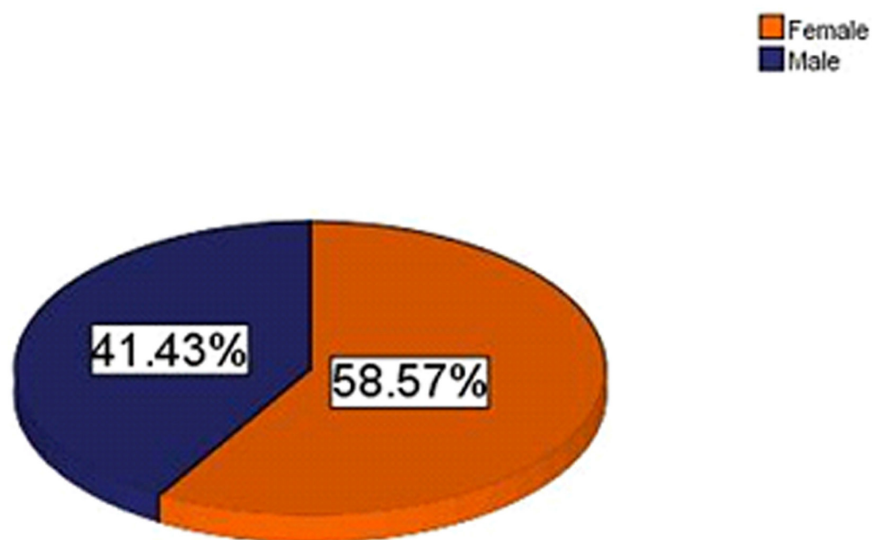


Figure (10)

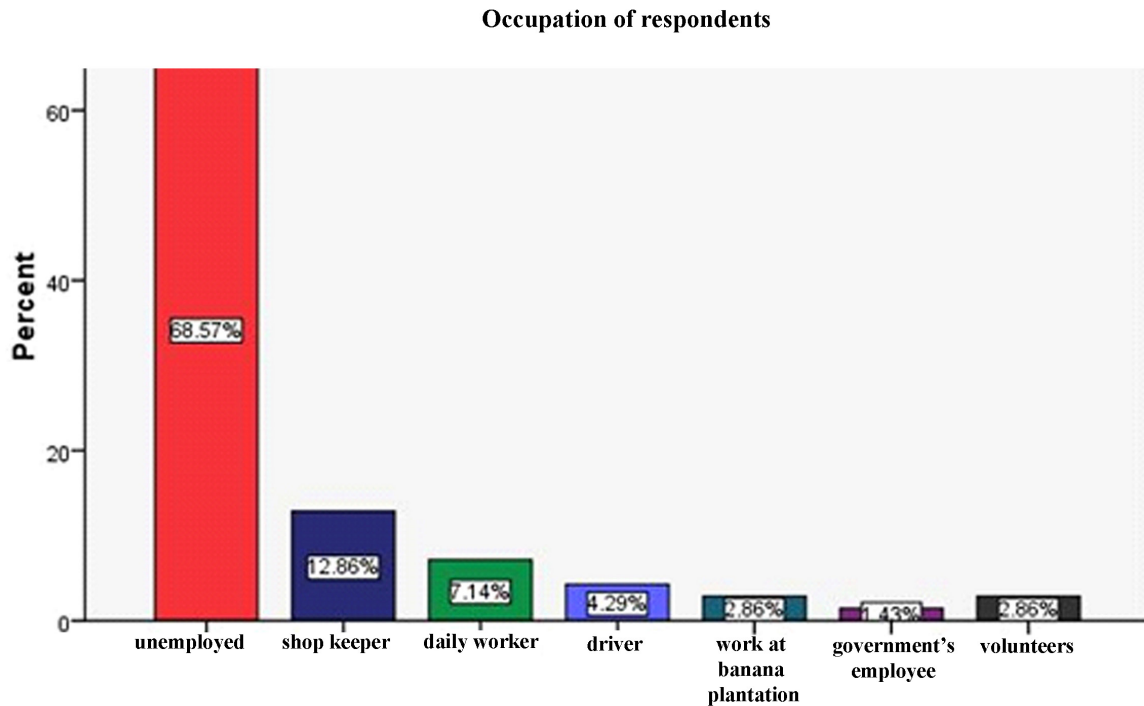


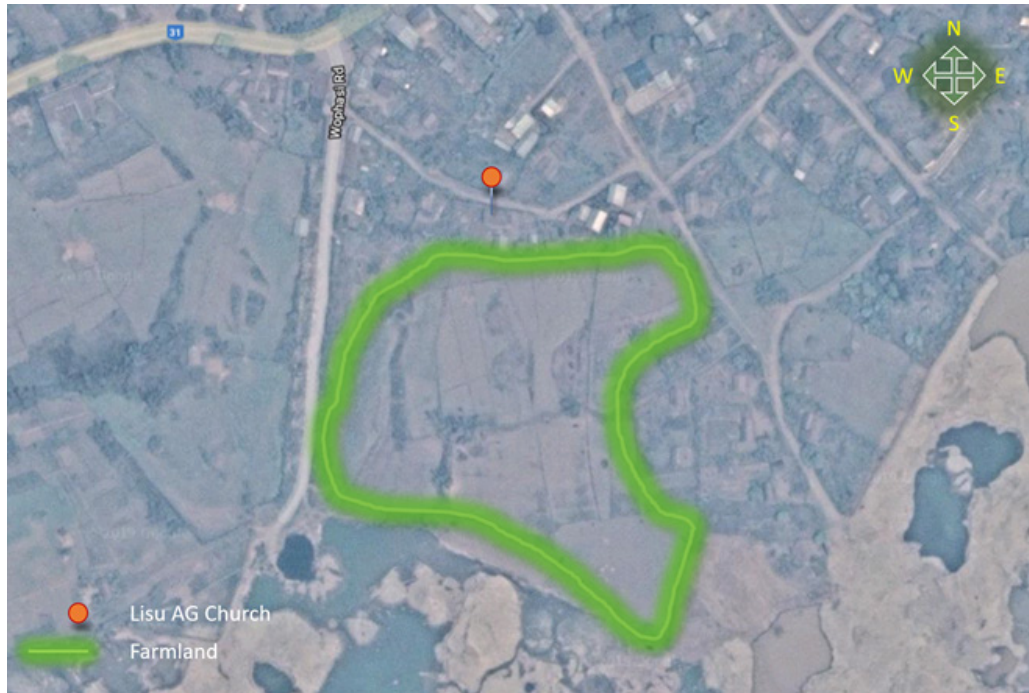
Figure (11)

Returnees have few livelihood options. The main choices are to work for daily wages at Chinese run banana plantations or work in gold mines operated by Chinese companies. Those who do not find work are left to rely on the support provided by the Tatmadaw and Myanmar government. Many returnees, however, including women and the elderly, are physically not fit to work on the banana plantations, where responsibilities for some laborers include carrying banana bundles from the hills. The research team observed from the interviews that the prevailing market price for carrying a bundle ranged from 8 to 11 yuan (1,600 MMK to 2,200 MMK), depending upon the season; a young and physically strong person could earn up to 500 yuan per day. However, most of these jobs seemed to be held by migrant workers from areas including Higyain,⁸ Bhamo and Tali.⁹ The researchers identified as many as seventeen migrant families living in Nam San Yang. At the same time, Nam San Yang returnees who worked on the banana plantations mainly took jobs washing banana bundles in liquid chemicals, for which they were paid 100 yuan per truck. Approximately they could earn up to 10,000 Kyats per day. Workers are not typically given gloves or masks, and the health risks of regularly handling the chemicals are as yet unknown.

A few returnees said they operated machines in gold mines around the vicinity of Nam San Yang. Prior to the conflict, some households conducted mining independently, but today companies have monopolised gold mining around the area, and independent mining is not permitted. Since the companies mainly use machines for mining, they need few labourers.

⁸Htigyain is a town in Eastern Sagaing Division in Northern Myanmar.

⁹Tali is a village in Shwegu Township in Bhamo District in North Eastern Myanmar.



Map (3) March 24, 2011 satellite imagery of Nam San Yang (Google Earth). Before conflict, the condition of Lisu AG church own farmland.



Map (4) January 12, 2018 satellite imagery of Nam Sang Yang (Google Earth). After conflict resumed, farmland destroyed by gold mining compare with Map (3). Small pounds are remaining impacts of gold mining during war time.

Most returnees, except for the 17 migrant families and those who could not register in the list, have to rely on the support provided by the Tatmadaw and government. However, this support was limited to a one-time provision of rice, cooking oil and salt. The third batch of returnees received the last support from the Government and Tatmadaw.¹⁰ Some returnees

¹⁰The Catholic Church could only provide subsistence support for the boarding students and no local NGOs and INGOs had provided subsistence support to the returnees.

thought that the distribution method was unfair. For example, one focus group discussion participant said:

“The third batch got subsistence support according to the number of family members on their household registration card. We, the first and second batch, got support only according to the number of people actually coming back.” (FGD conducted on 13 August 2019).

Previously, some villagers trapped eels for extra income. However, this activity is now under threat, as outsiders from as far as from Namti noq come to Nam San Yang for eel trapping, and do it on a larger scale than Nam San Yang residents. The villagers typically set no more than four eel traps, and would normally catch around two to three kilograms per day, which they would sell at 7000 kyats per kilogram in Wai Maw. In contrast, the outsiders typically set 15 to 20 traps at a time, enabling them to catch large quantities of eels, making it more difficult for villagers to catch eels around the area due to over trapping (FGD conducted on 13 August 2019).

4.3. Land rights security

One of the major concerns amongst the villagers returning to Nam San Yang was regarding security of land ownership. As shown in Figure (12), before they returned 34.29% of respondents said they worried about their property every day, 35.71% of respondents replied that they sometimes worried about the property they left in Nam San Yang, and only 18.57% said they did not worry about their property at all.

Before you came back to Nam San Yang did you worry about your property left at the village such as paddy field, house and farmland?

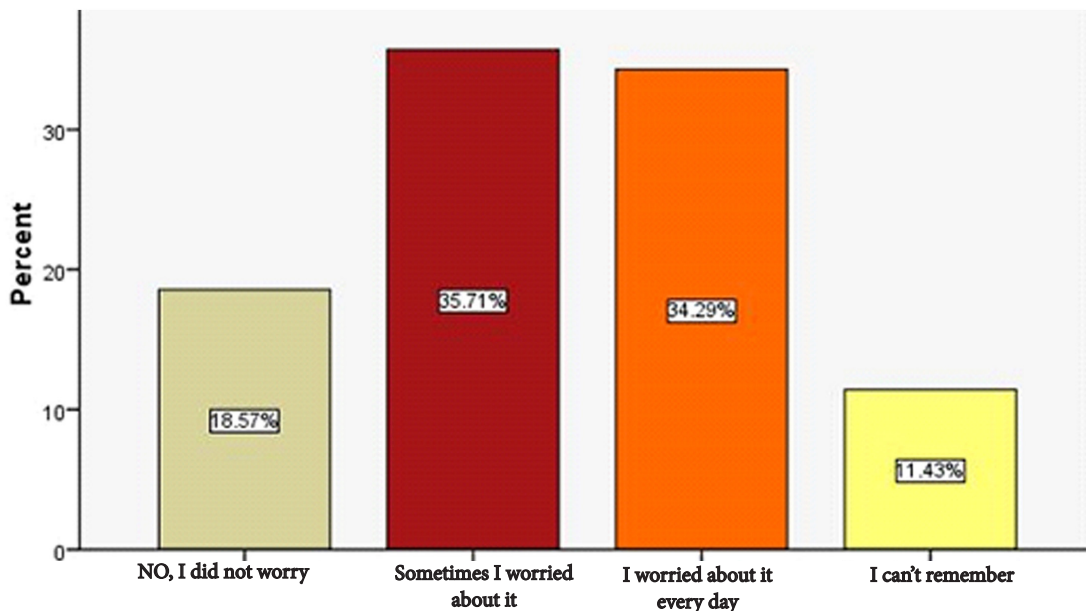


Figure (12)

One issue of concern for villagers is that their land could be reclaimed by the government under amendments to the Vacant, Fallow and Virgin Land Law passed on 11 September 2018 by the Myanmar Parliament, which stipulated that farmland classified as vacant, fallow or virgin needed to be registered with the government within the six months and stipulates that those found working or living on unregistered land will be considered trespassers, facing a punishment of up to two years' imprisonment or a 500,000-kyat fine (Nyein Nyein 2019).

The fact that most villagers did not have land tax receipts exacerbated these fears. Indeed, our research findings revealed that most of the returned villagers do not have any kind of land tenure documents. Among those who do have some kind of legal documents, none have land use registration certificates; they only have land sale and purchase contracts made locally. One reason that may account for the lack of documentation is that Nam San Yang was never fully under Myanmar government control.

For land that you previously farmed, do you have land tenure documents?

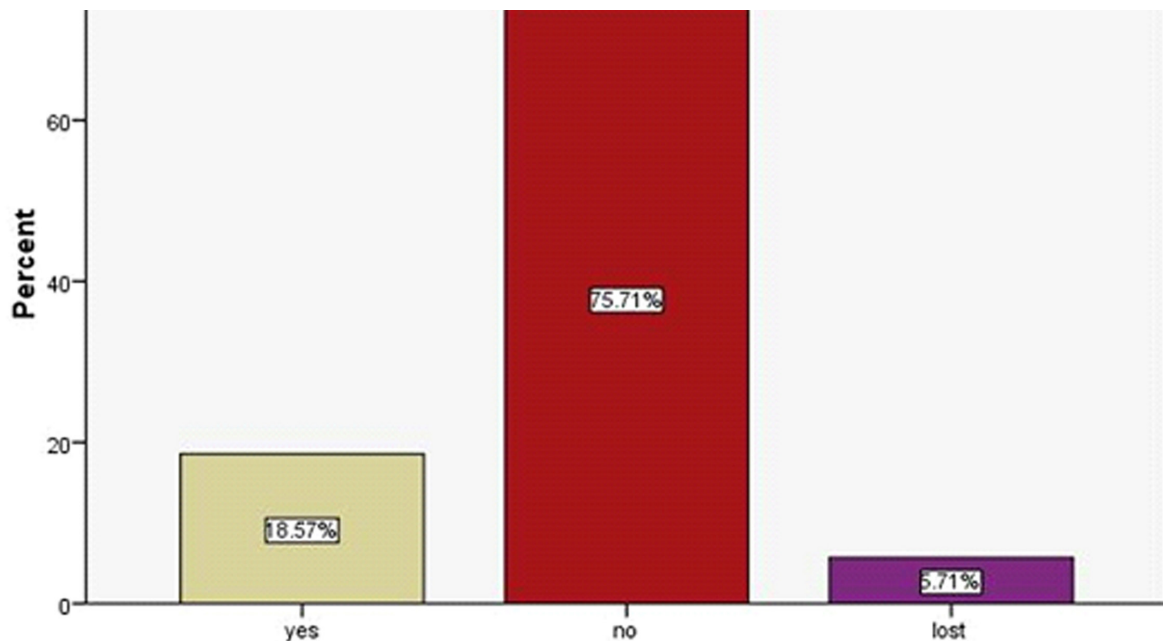


Figure (13)

As shown in Figure (13), only 18.57% of the respondents said they have land tax receipts (known as 'Pyayzar' in Myanmar language) for their house compounds, while 75.71% said they did not have any legal land tenure documents. 5.71% said they had documents before the conflict, but lost them while fleeing. As shown in the Figure (14), only 25.71% of returnees said that they possessed legal land tenure documents over paddy fields and farmlands, while 57.14% said they did not have legal land tenure documents. 7.14% said they lost their documents while fleeing.

For paddy field which you previously farmed, do you have any legal land tenure documents?

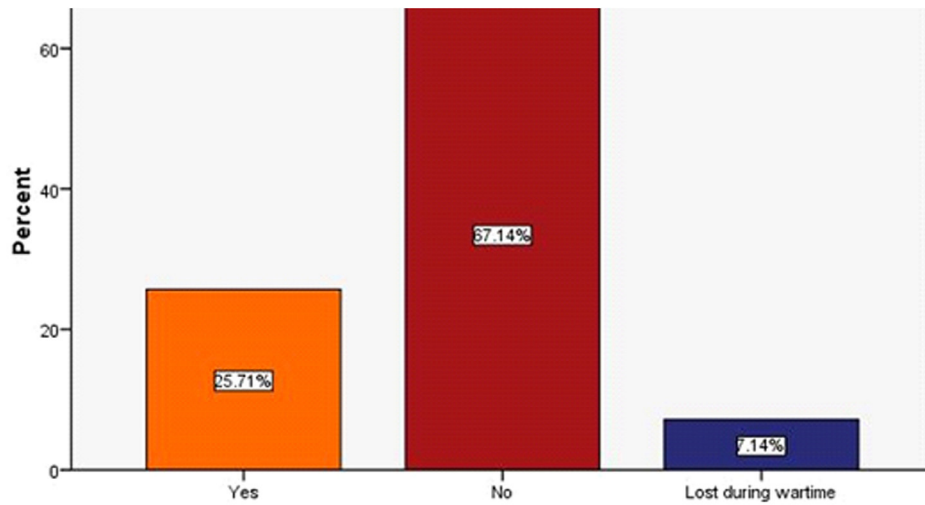


Figure (14)

This research found that many villagers from Nam San Yang were motivated to return in part by concern that people from Myanmar's Dry Zone in the centre of the country would come to Nam San Yang to acquire lands (FGD conducted on 13 August 2019).

These factors combined to motivate some villagers to return to Nam San Yang. Despite the prevailing fears surrounding land tenure insecurity which triggered some to return to Nam San Yang, surveys conducted for this research found that only a negligible number of people had actually experienced land disputes after returning, while 92.86% replied that they had not experienced any kind of land dispute after returning, as shown in the Figure (15). Furthermore, the risk of disputes amongst villagers over land is low because even though many do not have legal documents, their collective memory regarding local land tenure prevents these conflicts. The research found that the land grab issues either by immigrants or Government did not actually take place in Nam San Yang.

Did you experience any dispute regarding land use after your return?

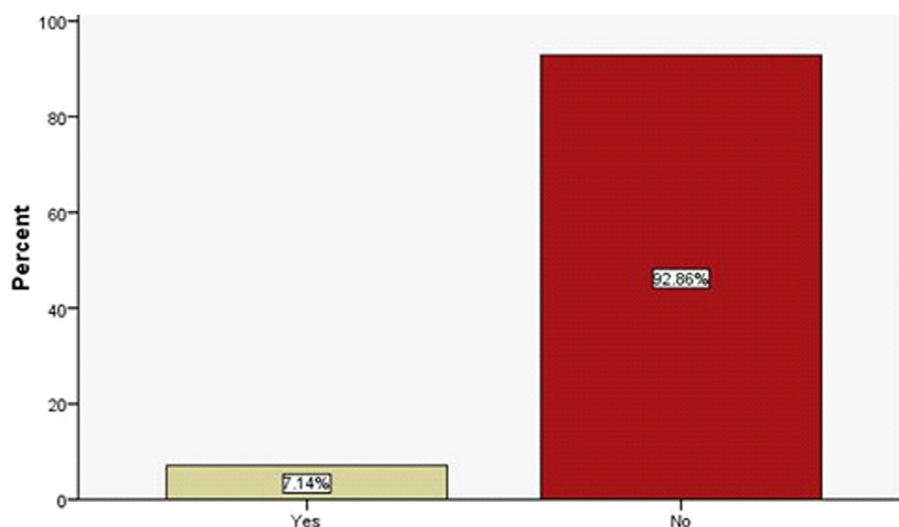


Figure (15)

However, aside from legal concerns related to land tenure, accessing arable land has become a major land rights security issue for the returnees. Some village land and farmland has been destroyed due to gold mining in the vicinity of Nam San Yang while they were living in IDP camps.

Concern about active land mines and overgrown farmland

In the absence of clear demarcation of landmine danger zones,¹¹ a large segment of returnees' arable land falls under areas designated as restricted areas by the Tatmadaw. Surveys conducted for this study found that 213 acres of paddy field and 656 acres of farmland fall under the restricted area.¹²

For those that did not resume farming upon return, main obstacle listed.

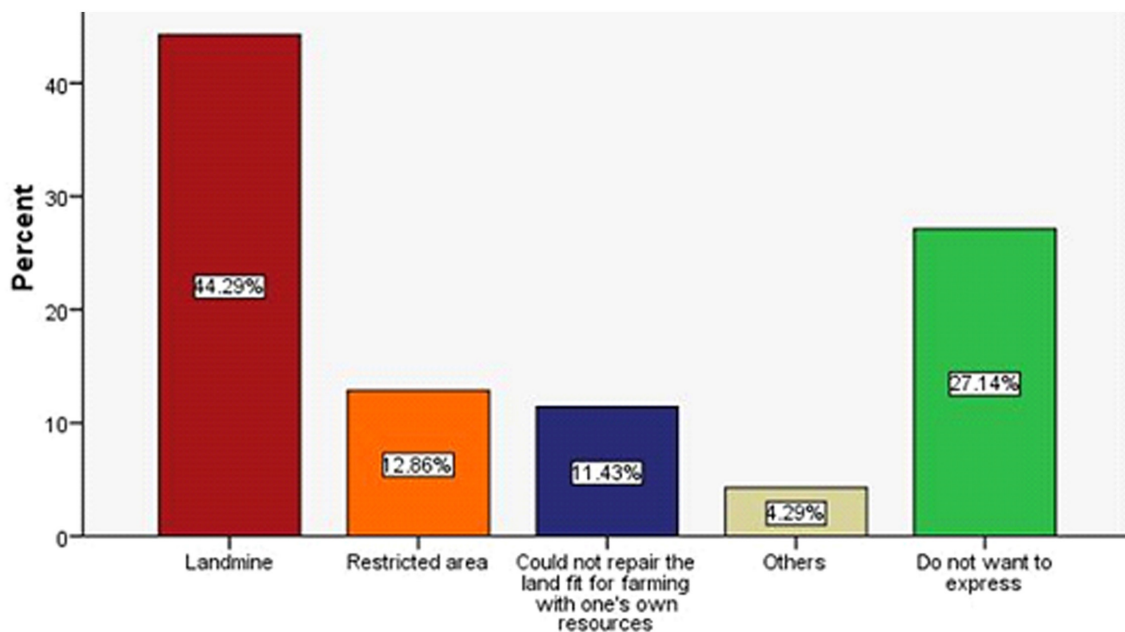


Figure (16)

Another issue for returnees is how to recover farmland which has since been overgrown with forest. As shown in Map (5) and Map (6), some erstwhile farmlands are now consumed by forest. Returnees may need a bulldozer to clear the forest, which is they do not have the finances to purchase or borrow.

¹¹There are no signposts warning about the danger of landmines.

¹²The total acreage of arable land still needs to be calculated to get a sense of proportion. It can only happen when all the Nam San Yang villagers return. Even so, these figures represent a significant loss of farmland.



Map (5) March 24, 2011 satellite imagery of Nam San Yang (Google Earth), which shown major farmland of village before war.



Map (6) January 12, 2018 satellite imagery of Nam San Yang (Google Earth), which shown major farmland had disappeared and forested due to abandon compare with Map (5).

In summary, livelihoods, land rights security and concerns about land mines and overgrown farmland have become cross-cutting issues in the Nam San Yang return case, and will continue to pose major challenges for the returnees. The research produced for this study also shows that although many returnees expressed fear of land being reclaimed due to their lack of land tenure documents, no land has in fact been reclaimed as villagers had feared. These findings reveal the specific challenges that face returnees and emphasize that greater priority must be given to supporting secure and sustainable livelihoods for returnees.

4.4. Human security

Food and water security

The second and third batches of returnees rely mainly on the rations distributed by the Tatmadaw and government for rice and gram seeds. The elderly returnees find it difficult to consume the rice, which they said is fluffy in comparison to the glutinous rice they are accustomed to eating; some of the returnees mix the fluffy rice with glutinous rice, which they buy or get from their remaining family members in the IDP camps.

Though the first batch of returnees (17 families) said they are able to afford their daily food needs, the majority of the second and third batches of returnees (67 out of 70 respondents) said they had to worry about their daily food needs (See Figure 17), and their ability to buy nutritious food was quite low. Nam San Yang does not have a market; for vegetables and meat, returnees have to rely on vendors who travel two or three times a week from Bhamo or Myitkyina, paying a basic consumer good price almost double that of Myitkyina or Bhamo. Consequently, returnees said that they could rarely eat meat. Many villagers also grow vegetables in their house compound.

Since you returned to the village, how often do you worry about food?

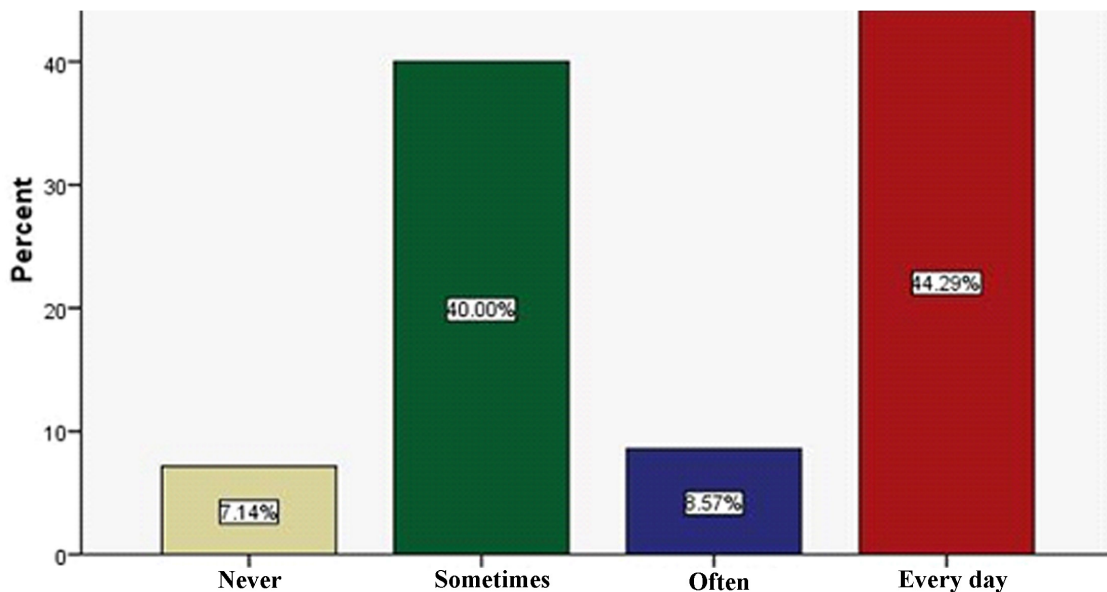


Figure (17)

On top of these challenges, the rations provided to the second and third batches of returnees will run out soon. Food insecurity poses a constant nightmare for many of Nam San Yang's residents. In this regard, women in one of our FGD aired their concern:

"It would be great if the authorities (Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and Tatmadaw) could provide more subsistence support to us. It would be quite great if the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement provide us more subsistence support. We do not know where support will come from after we use up the existing subsistence support." (FGD conducted on 13 August 2019).

Daily food insecurity is particularly a concern for those returnees who are not on the formal government list since they lost their household registration certificate, or for other reasons. One man, 68, said he and his family have not received any subsistence support from the government or Tatmadaw, and have to buy rice and other food from outside even though they provided their name to the authorities managing the IDP returns to Nam San Yang.¹³ He expressed:

"Here it is difficult to buy vegetables and meat since there is no [daily] market. Though we want to eat meat, we cannot [afford to] buy it here. Sometimes, when we can afford to buy meat, we have a proper meal, but most of the time we make do with salt and chilies." (Interview Code NSY 2017 2019).

Another elderly man expressed similar concerns:

"Since we lost our household registration certificate, we could not formally register on the list. Therefore, we could not go and receive the subsistence support. Now we have to order rice from Myitkyina. For one sack of rice we paid 45,000 kyats. We do not know what to do after we have eaten this last sack of rice." (Interview Code NSY 2037 2019).

Contrary to the general condition, food security is not a major issue in the Nam San Yang student boarding house since the Catholic Church provides regular subsistence support for the boarders. However, the boarding house faces a shortage of safe drinking water like other returnees. Since the total number of students is more than 150, the boarding house cannot afford to buy mineral water or to take the time to boil drinking water on a daily basis, leaving students drinking untreated drinking water. During the monsoon season, many students suffer from diarrhea. Bathing water is also an issue; students and returned villagers bathe in the nearby stream, where many contract minor skin diseases such as ringworm.

¹³It seems that by the time this household obtained formal registration, government authorities were no longer providing subsistence assistance.

Since you returned to the village, how often do you worry about drinking water?

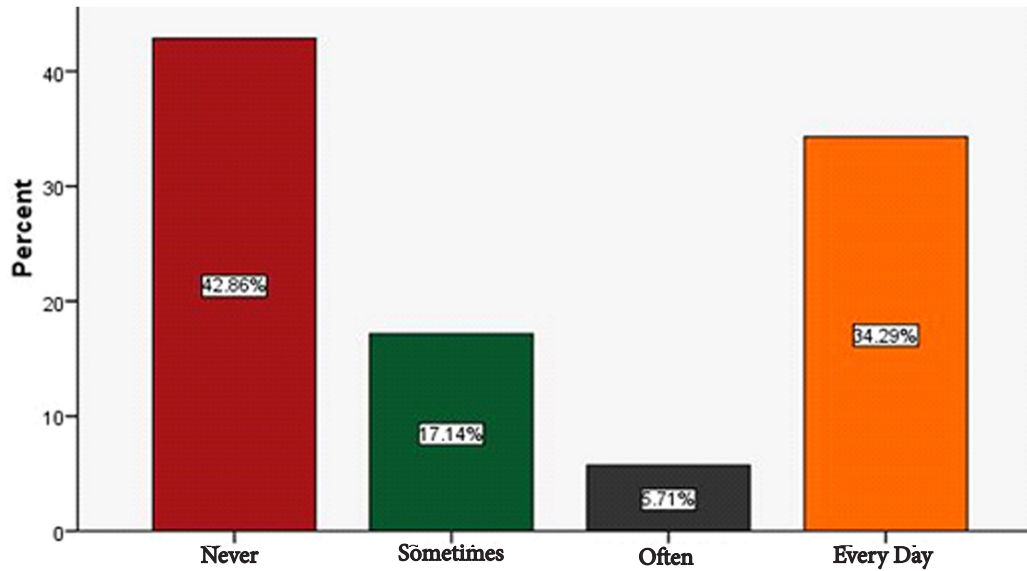


Figure (18)

Physical security

The presence of large restricted areas due to landmines significantly restricts the movement of the villagers; though the respondents equally mention that they feel safe and secure after they returned back to the village (see Figure 19), the fear of landmine explosions, at least in their imagination, is quite real. It is partly due to the fact the villagers have no clue where exactly the landmines are located in the vicinity of the Nam San Yang. Out of 70 respondents, when asked about whether they know the locations of landmines, 64 respondents answered no. This fear, real or imaginary, is deeply rooted in widespread lack of knowledge about the location of landmines.

Do you feel safe and secure since you returned back to the village?

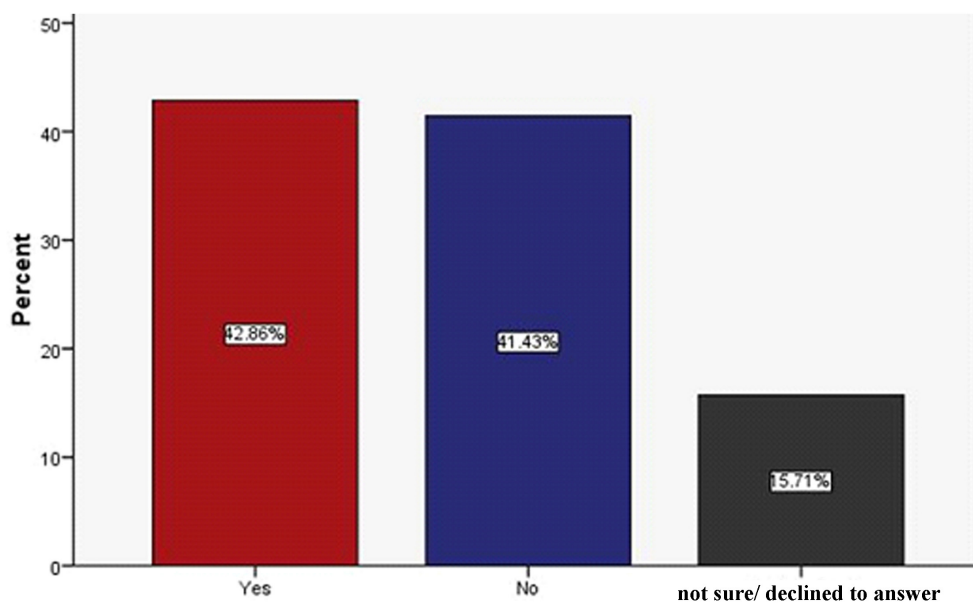


Figure (19)

Do you know where landmines are located?

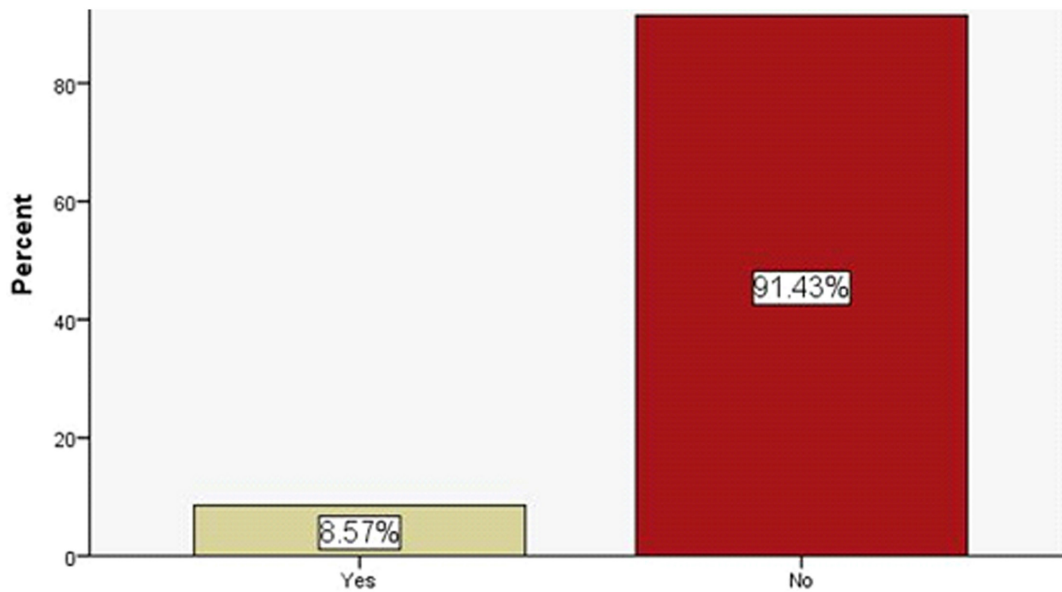


Figure (20)

More than half of the villagers had never come across even expired land mines (Figure 21), and so far no landmine explosions have occurred after the return. The lack of information about the locations of landmines also contribute for parents' worry about their children's safety (Figure 22); out of 70 respondents, 47 respondents answered they are living with their children; when asked about whether they worry about their children from the danger of landmine explosion, the majority of respondents (41 of them) answered they had to worry about it everyday (Figure 22).

How often do you come across seemingly expired landmines in the village?

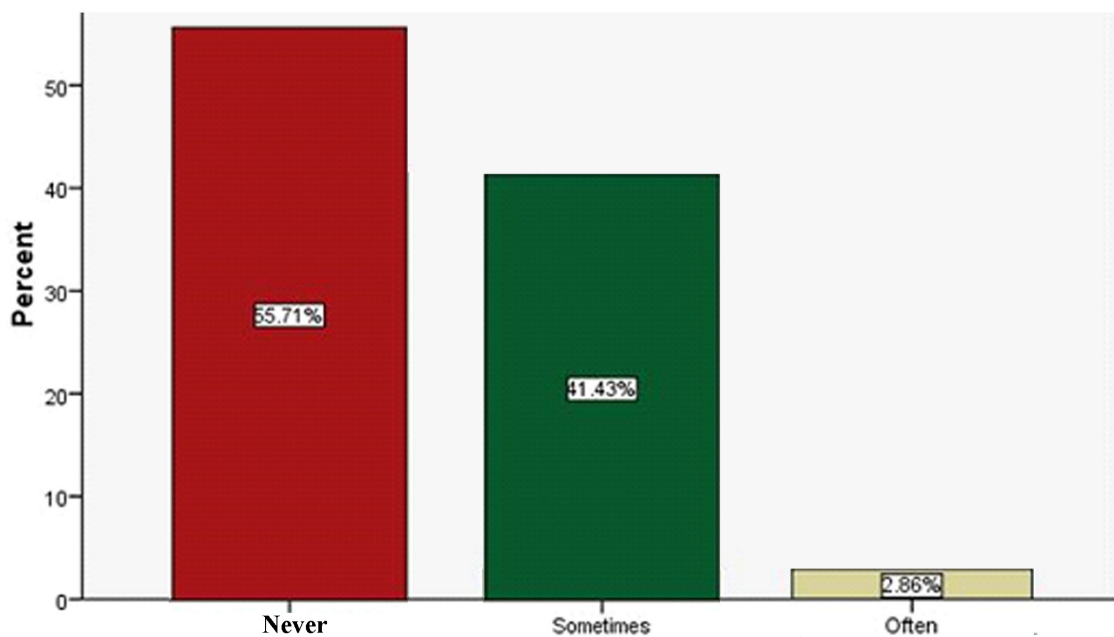


Figure (21)

How often do you worry about the danger of landmine explosions for your children?

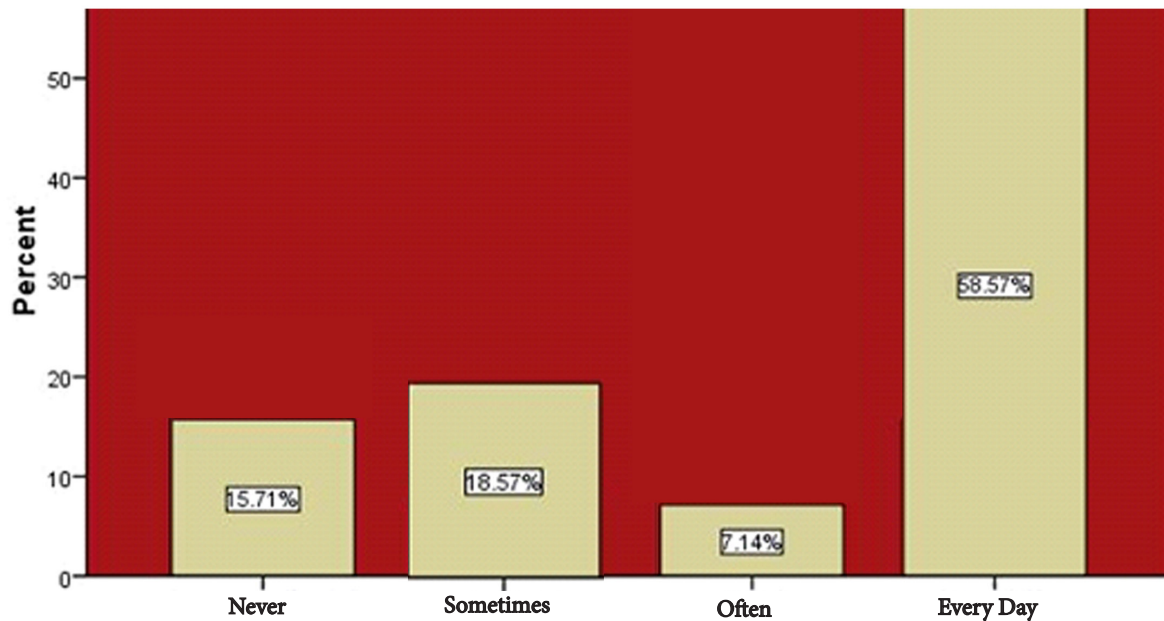
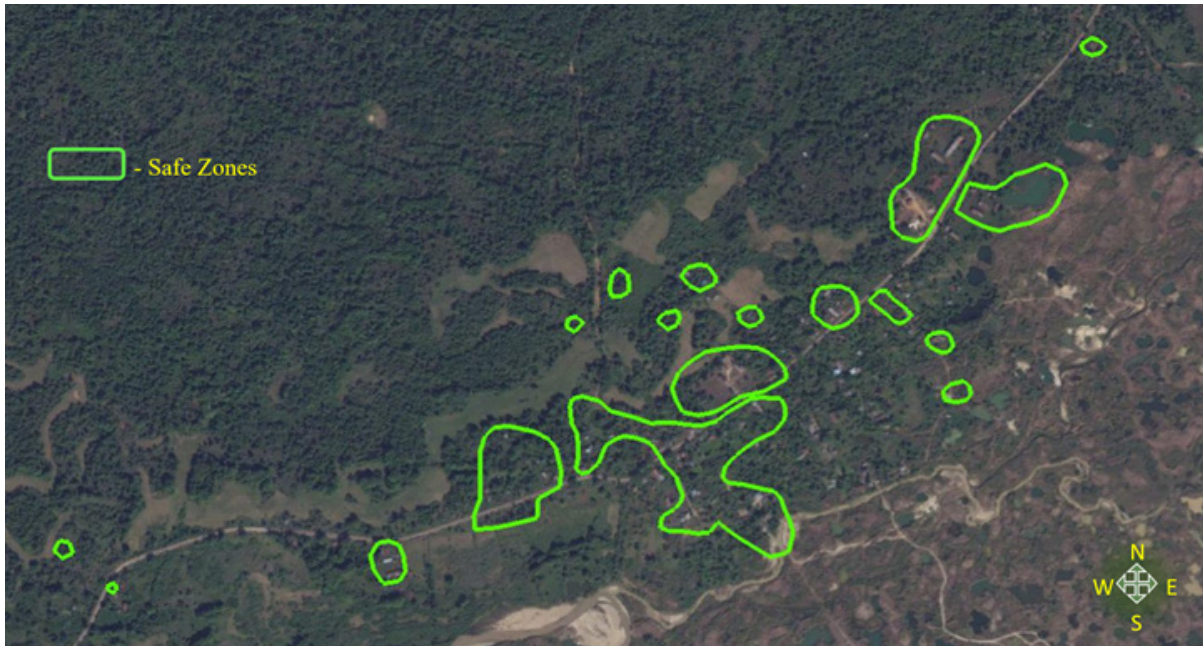


Figure (22)

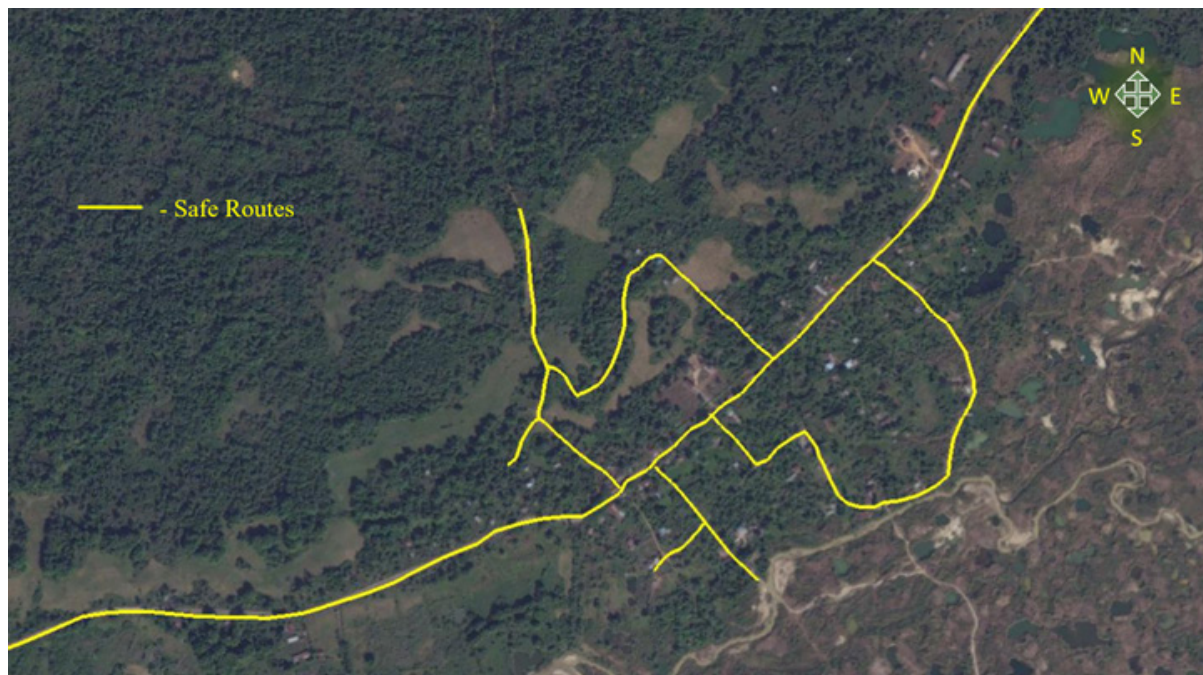
Therefore, the issue of landmine, regardless of the extent to which unexploded landmines are actually in the vicinity of the village, has become a major concern for the Nam San Yang returnees. This is largely, as mentioned earlier, due to the lack of information and the lack of clear demarcations of restricted areas; the villagers are advised not to go anywhere except for the places where the Tatmadaw had cleared the ground with a bulldozer. Only the households on the government's registration list benefited from this bulldozer clearance service. Those who are not on the list were unable to access this service. Hence some families have to take risks clearing their own compounds. One such family narrated this situation as follows:

“Mine clearing service is done only for those households which have household registration certificates and registered in the list. Since our family does not have a household registration certificate, we cannot request them to clear landmines in our compound. Actually a house like ours situated on the edge of the village needs more of such service. So we took the risk and cleared the compound by ourselves.” (Interview Code NSY 2037 2019)

On the other hand as shown in the maps below, there are limited areas considered as safe zones for the villagers to freely move around. This poses a major obstacle for their ability to move and have a secure livelihood. The key problem is that there is no specific demarcation of restricted zones. Since most of their farmlands fall under the restricted area, the impact is not just on their freedom of movement and daily security, but on their ability to have a sustainable livelihood as well.



Map. (7) January 12, 2018 satellite imagery of Nam San Yang (Google Earth), which shown the areas in which individuals can move safely.



Map. (8) January 12, 2018 satellite imagery of Nam San Yang (Google Earth), which shown the routes by which individuals can travel safely.

In the similar tone one of the participants in one of our FGDs expressed candidly about the difficulty:

“Since we cannot move beyond our house compound, sometimes it is difficult for us to go out and buy even a candle.” (FGD conducted on 14 August 2019)

The Tatmdaw did not tell the returnees that they could not go to their farms, it just said not to go to the places where landmines have not been cleared yet; but in real terms this does not make any difference. An elderly male returnee pointed out this difficulty:

“Currently we cannot literally go beyond our compound. We are being instructed not to go to that side (pointing to the forested areas.) Though we want to go to the jungle we dare not to go there.” (Personal interview code NSY 2018 2019)

There are no signposts warning about landmines and there is not clear demarcation of restricted zones. The returnees told the Research Team that after the return they only received two land mine awareness workshops provided by International Committee of Red Cross (ICRC). This creates a risky situation for the returnees, some of which have tried to solve the issues themselves, for example by first sending their cattle and only following if nothing happened to the cattle. If their farmland falls under the KIO controlled area, Nam San Yang residents received permission from the KIO to visit their farms; if there is landmine laid down in their way, the KIO removed the landmine for their safety.

Demining with the detecting device is a time consuming task since it detects and sounds an alarm for any metal object; therefore, Tatmadaw tried to clear with bulldozer, which is a costly but more time efficient undertaking. However, they could not provide this service for all the returnees. As a result the returnees are left with few opportunities to rebuild their livelihoods. One of the participants in a FGD lucidly describes how they remain in limbo after the return:

“Due to the landmine issue we do not dare to go to our farmlands, and while thinking to start our own business that does not need to go to restricted area we do not have capital to run business. Due to the landmine issue we have to satisfy ourselves going to and fro between the house and the church.” (FGD conducted on 14 August 2019).

This aptly sums up the impact of restricted areas due to landmine on the livelihoods of the returnees. Reconstruction of livelihoods cannot be implemented without addressing the issues of landmine and restricted areas. Livelihood and freedom of movement issues are two sides of the same coin.

4.5. Education and health

Education

The first step the returnees and authorities took after returning was reopening Nam San Yang School and student boarding house run by the Catholic Church. The total student population is around 150 students. From the village there are around 10 students; most of the students are from IDP camps in Laiza and Waimaw. Among the 12 teachers there is only one male teacher. Female teachers voiced that it would be useful in disciplining the students if there

were more male teachers. At the time of our field research, the school building had not yet been renovated and reconstructed, although the students had sufficient support for learning materials such as textbooks and pens. In terms of physical infrastructure, the school was not yet a safe and secure space for the students.

Some students in the boarding house are quite young, as young as 5 years old and they have to look after themselves—washing their own clothes, bathing etc. Nighttime bed-wetting is a big problem amongst the young students. Though the food provided to the students in the boarding house is nutritious, access to safe and clean drinking water is a significant challenge for the students. Due to the large number of students, the boarding house cannot afford to buy mineral water, or to boil all the water that is used. Instead, the students drink water from the nearby wells.

The teachers interviewed for this research considered their students to be unruly and disinterested in education. Some of the students want to relive their IDP camp experience in Nam San Yang. They want to live independently and freely, rather than live within the rules set by the school and boarding house. Teachers, therefore, complained about the challenges of teaching the IDP students. Some older students actually live outside the boarding house. The key reason is that teachers do not have experience of handling students with IDP background. The Principal of Nam San Yang School describes teachers' perception of the former IDP students as follows:

“Our intention for them is to continue to support them till they pass the University Entrance Class. After they pass the University Entrance Class it is up to their family's support for their college education. Nevertheless, since the school is opened as a special case in a special situation, the examinations below the University Examination Class are not quite lenient and flexible. They can easily pass exams. But the problem will arise when they have to sit for University Entrance Exam, which is not under the control of the school management. Right now we have to accept whomever the parents could afford to send to school. On the other hand the students develop negative self-image about themselves since they consider themselves as IDP children. That makes us more difficult to handle them. Some of them can be quite rebellious, feeling frustrated about their lives. Some are quite old for the class they are in. They seem to be attending the school only because their parents force them to go to school. They seem to lose interest in study completely.” (Personal Interview Code NSY 2001 2019)

That shows though the teachers know that the students with IDP background are different from the other students at the school that they have been teaching for many years, and they remain unsure how best to manage and work with the students who have come from the IDP camps. They did not have any formal training to handle the specific educational and behavioral needs of these students. These are fragile and delicate children who grew up in an extremely challenging environment and have spent up to seven or eight years in IDP camps and outside of formal education. The conditions demand new and sensitive teaching methods better tailored to supporting the needs of these students.

The unruly nature of the students is perceived to have much to do with a lack of motivation and their upbringing in the IDP camps, where the parents could not give much time to them since they had to seek work outside the camp. Many of these young people do

not have a role model to look up to; they view their future indifferently, they lack self-esteem and determination, when faced with slight difficulty, they want to give up easily, and they are less hopeful for the future. A Catholic brother who oversees the boarding house offered an apt description of the general psychological development of students with IDP background:

“The students of the Nam San Yang boarding house are not so idiotic when it comes to study. It has nothing to do with their intellectual faculty. Largely it has to do with their bad character—contemptuousness, having no sense of value, and no spirit of hard work. These psychological traits can be traced to their background history as IDP children; in the IDP camp setting many children with different characters jammed up in a small space and hence bad habits can be learned so easily. Therefore, the IDP camp environment allowed them to grow such psychological traits. They just lost hope in life and their future. These are helpless children who lost their ways and aims in life.” (Personal Interview Code NSY 2076 2019).

In the IDP camps the parents also lost control over their children. For some it can be extremely difficult to exercise parental authority. In this regard, Hpaula Gam Hpang described the general condition of IDP fathers in IDP camps where their own children no longer respect them:

“Father cannot teach the son. The son would reply that he has been fed by the camp not by the parents.” (Hpaula Gam Hpang 2019).

Quite a considerable number of IDP families are broken families due to the pressures of living in the camps or a result of the loss of the husband/father in the conflict. Children growing up in this family background tend to be more timid or rebellious.

Many young people have also been socialized in such a way that they rebel against Burmese education. Though they understand the Burmese language some of the students refuse to speak the language as a form of political resistance, albeit one that then limits their opportunities to engage with the Burmese education system.

Consequently, many students could not see beyond the 8th standard. They tend to think that if they do not pass the 10th standard they can still work at the banana plantations; for them schooling is of less practical value.

Hence, many of the students with IDP background who are now studying in Nam San Yang are victims of the armed conflict and the environment where they grew up. Once again, this emphasizes the multi-dimensional challenges facing IDP returnees. This requires strategies that go beyond just initial efforts to support IDPs to return to spaces now deemed safe, and must focus on offering more comprehensive support to those that do return.

Health

There are two health services available in Nam San Yang: the Tatmadaw-run clinic and the rural health clinic established by the government. Most of the patients said they go to the Tatmadaw-run clinic since the service available there is better and a physician look after the clinic. In contrast, the rural health clinic has only nurses (there is no overseeing physician) and

does not have sufficient medicine. Some villagers also expressed frustration and anger with the rural health clinic because they were provided with medicines without any explanation. Villagers said that when they are seriously ill, they usually go to Waimaw or Laiza hospital. Diarrhea, having sores on the limbs, tinea (ringworm) due to the use of unclean water, and flu are the most common ailments. Currently there are no dedicated health care services for elderly returnees and pregnant mothers and children. The health challenges facing the Nam San Yang returnees intersect with the challenges they also face in accessing enough nutritious food and clean water, as documented above.

4.6. Governance

Currently in Nam San Yang, the Tatmadaw, the village administrator, Catholic Church leaders and some influential lay leaders like Hpaula Gam Hpang, an influential vocalist and composer who joined the Unity and Solidarity Party Kachin State in 2009, exercise authority. They also served as major influencers steering the resettlement and reconstruction process.

Since Nam San Yang is considered a black area (a government term to designate territory under the control of an ethnic armed group), the Tatmadaw still handles administration, including rural development and village security. The Tatmadaw is considered responsible for resettlement and reconstruction, de-mining, clearing household compounds, and taxing local businesses. If aid organisations want to support Nam San Yang villagers, they have to first get permission from the Tatmadaw, in the form of guest registration and then they are required to collaborate with the government. The information about how many organisations successfully requested permission is still unknown.¹⁴

The village administrator also lies under the authority of the Tatmadaw, and has to collaborate with and support the Tatmadaw's activities, for example by helping villagers to apply for national ID cards and household registration certificates, and to support the needs of the government school.

Church leaders are partially involved in village administration because the villagers relied on the Catholic Church during the return process. Looking at the religious composition of the returnees more than 48% are Catholic Church members, 20% Buddhists, 15.71% Lisu Baptists, 12.86% Kachin Baptists and 2.86% are members of the Lisu Assembly of God (AG) Church. Since the majority are the members of Catholic Church, Catholic Church leaders have played an important role. The Catholic Church also leads village development activities by calling for community volunteer participation, including for reconstructing bridges, supporting boarding house activities, and clearing house compounds. The Church has proved effective at mobilizing mass participation amongst residents of Nam San Yang for these development initiatives.

¹⁴It seems that by the time this household obtained formal registration, government authorities were no longer providing subsistence assistance.

4.7. Future prospects

Most of the respondents shared mixed feelings regarding Nam San Yang's future prospects. On one level, they are hopeful that there will be no more armed clashes in Nam San Yang, and that within two or three years they can extensively reconstruct Nam San Yang to be like it once was. Others suggested a more cautious recovery time of closer to ten years, pointing out that with the continued existence of gold reserves and fertile land, they had hope that villagers could ultimately resume their livelihoods. However, some continue to feel insecure and uncertain about Nam San Yang's future. They are afraid that the war might break out again, and that the village may experience worsening drug problems, as had been the case at various times in the past.

In terms of the future expectations of those that have returned to Nam San Yang their foremost hope is the signing of a bilateral ceasefire agreement between the government and the KIA, followed by the official reopening of the Nam San Yang-Laiza road. The third most popular aspiration for the future is the complete return of all those Nam San Yang villagers who remain in the camps, followed by hopes for the withdrawal of Tatmadaw posts from Nam San Yang. These aspirations are documented in Figures 23-26, below.

Rating for the issue in 2020 Election (signing bilateral ceasefire agreement)

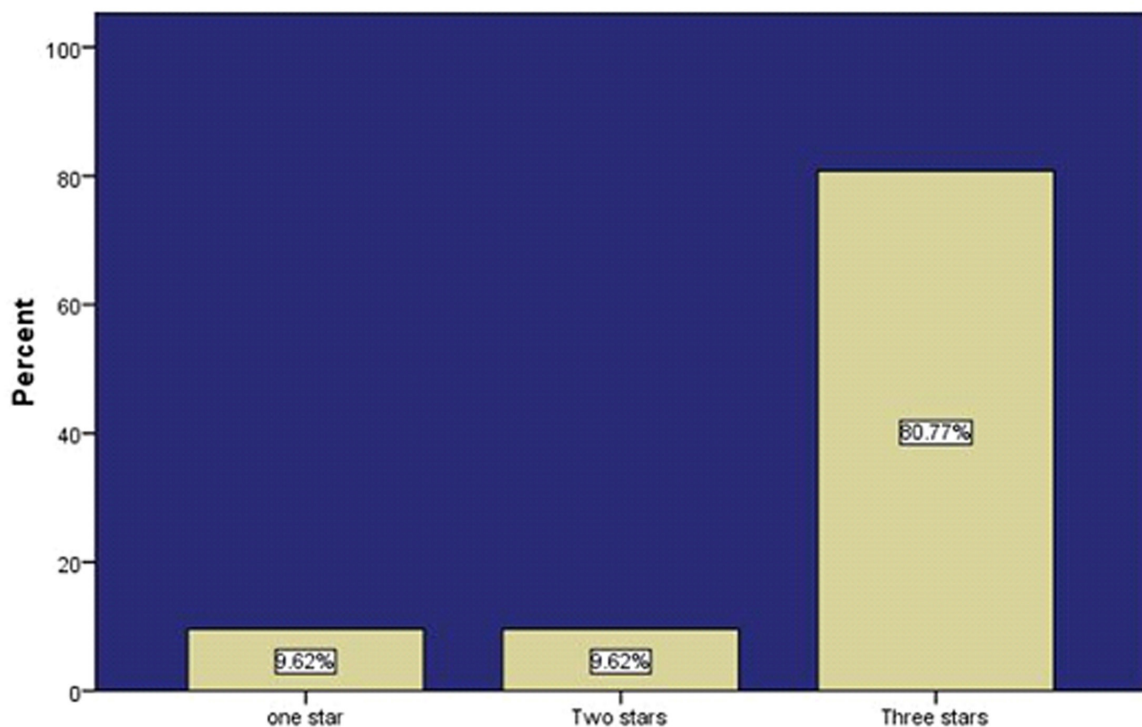


Figure (23)

Rating for the issue in 2020 Election (officially reopening Nam San Yang-Laiza road)

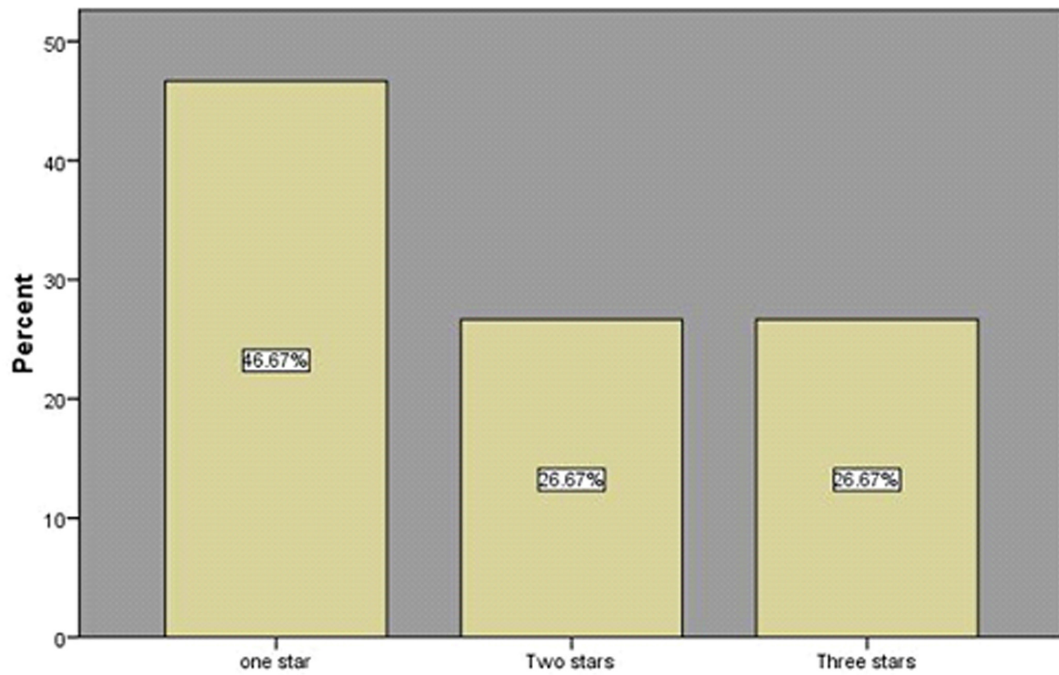


Figure (24)

Rating for the issue in 2020 Election (complete return of Nam San Yang IDPs)

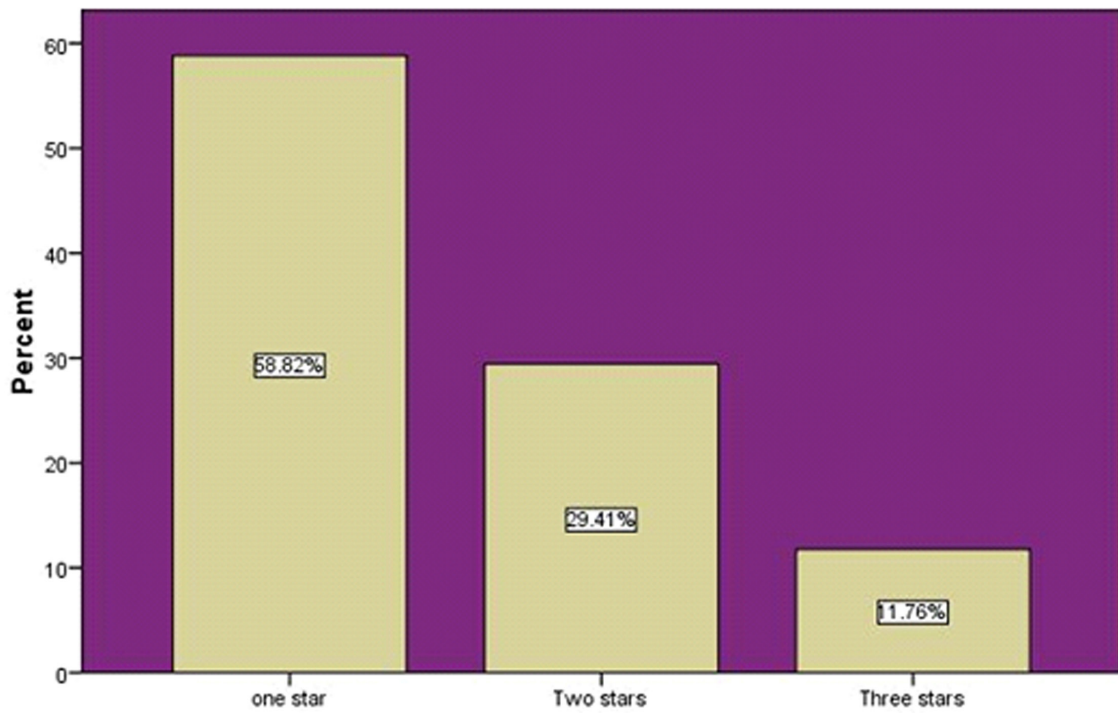


Figure (25)

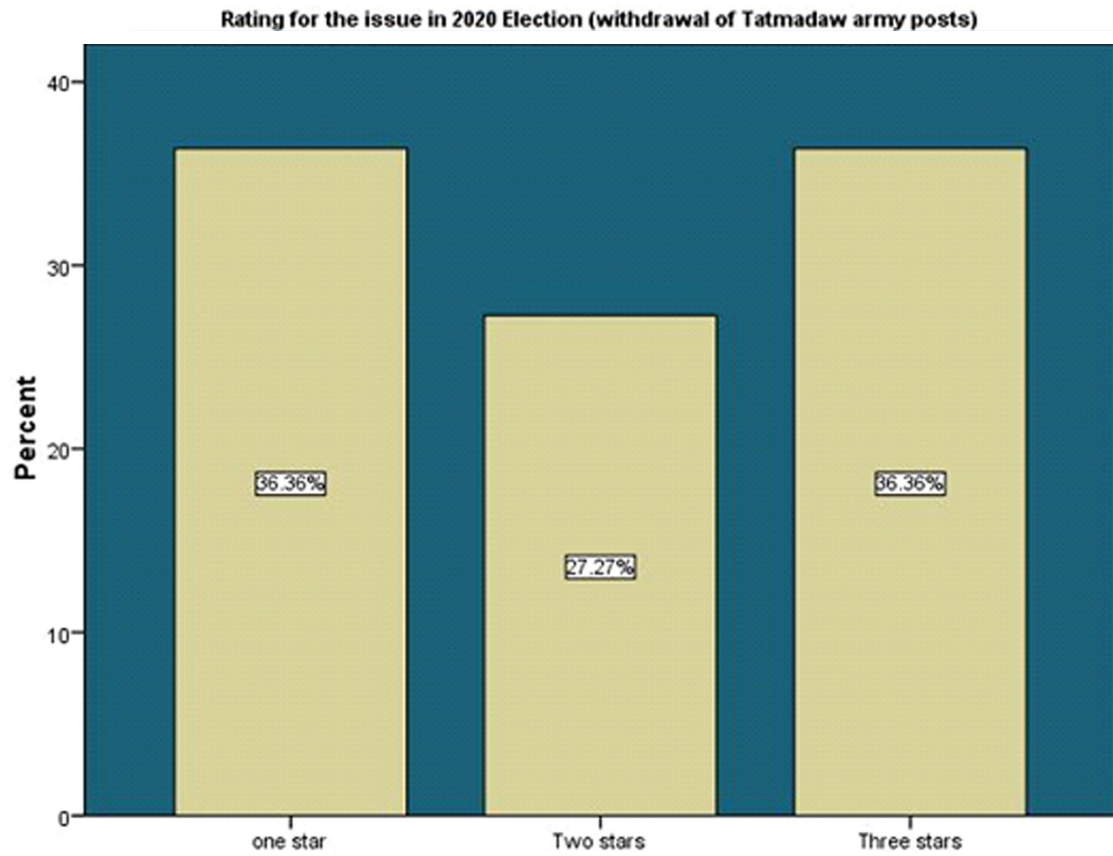


Figure (26)

To what extent do you worry about the resumption of conflict?

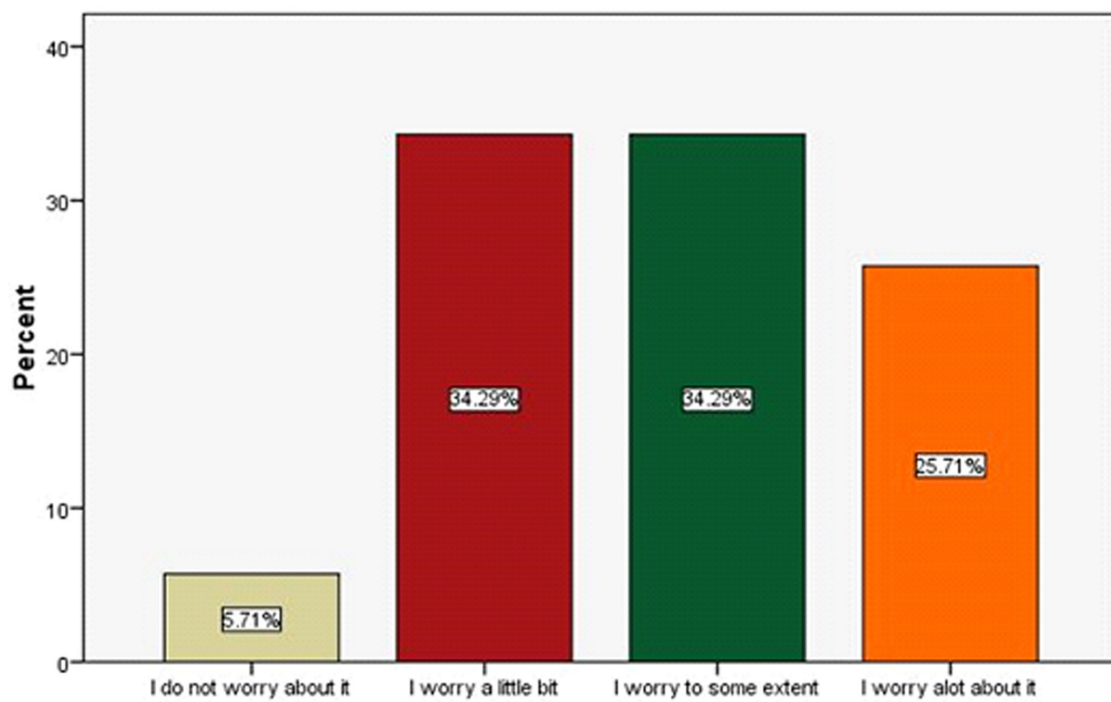


Figure (27)

The returnees' biggest concern is another outbreak of fighting; out of 70 respondents only 4 respondents answered that they do not worry about the prospects of further outbreaks of armed conflict war as shown in Figure 27. Hence, the uncertain situation of Nam San Yang has meant that many of those who have returned remain wary of the future and continues to remind them of their traumatic experiences of fleeing from Nam San Yang. The reflections offered by one female returnee captured this sentiment clearly:

“We have to always be alert. We should not sleep carelessly thinking that we have already come back. We have to be alert every time. Whenever I see returnees having late breakfast, I scold them that how could they be so careless while the situation of Nam San Yang is still uncertain. I asked them if the fighting suddenly break out what would you do? In the past we had to flee without being able to have breakfast. Since the political condition is still unstable we need always to be alert. Not everybody agreed our return case. We have to be careful.” (Personal interview code NSY 2033 2019).

Some returnee worries that Nam San Yang will face the same drug problems that the village experienced prior the recent armed conflict. A male elderly returnee expressed his concern about this issue as follows:

“I worry that Nam San Yang after people return may have the same drug problems like before. In the past it is a mining town. Therefore you see in those market areas heroine and yaba were freely available. It was incomparable. You would see dead bodies lying in the ground like in Phakant in its worse time. Till now I do not want to wear a leather jacket. I had seen many drug addicts laid dead wearing leather jackets. (Personal interview code NSY 2052 2019)

5. Conclusion

The return of IDPs to Nam San Yang exemplifies key challenges and issues related to IDP returns in Kachin State more generally. Public debate continues on the extent to which returns in Nam San Yang were conducted according to humanitarian principles of safety and dignity.

This research found that the returns exemplified the vitality of human fortitude and resilience amidst a bleak and gloomy political milieu. The research findings strongly suggest that it is important to take seriously the agency and free will of those who chose to return to Nam San Yang, rather than viewing them as passive victims of the conflict and the political calculations surrounding the issue of IDP returns.

However, at the same time, this research also demonstrates the profound structural challenges facing those that return, especially in terms of securing sustainable livelihoods. The research clearly shows that to improve the prospects for IDPs that have returned to Nam San Yang, attention must be focused on addressing the overarching structural conditions that perpetuate vulnerability and insecure livelihoods.

Firstly, this requires guaranteeing the cessation of violence. Without such a guarantee, it will be extremely difficult for Nam San Yang residents to plan and invest in their future, or to start to address the psychological toll of living in constant fear of having to flee again.

Secondly, this requires addressing the structural challenges facing Nam San Yang's economic recovery, especially opening and securing trade routes with Laiza and Bhamo, clearing landmines and re-opening restricted areas, and providing safeguards against the activities of mining companies that have moved into the area.

Thirdly, there is a need for a concerted and pragmatic approach to addressing specific challenges that are beyond the means of Nam San Yang returnees to resolve themselves. These include support in de-mining, facilitating access to the kind of machinery required to make overgrown arable land cultivable, and preventing discrimination against those who no longer have the paperwork required to formally access government support (such as their household registration certificate).

Addressing the structural causes of insecurity and vulnerability will help to ensure that those IDPs who have returned do not become victims or circumstances beyond their control. Instead, it will enable Nam San Yang to draw upon the determination, resilience and fortitude of those who are seeking to rebuild their lives and make a future in this once thriving village.

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စာအမှတ်၊ ၀၀၃ / န ဆ ယ (ကချင်)
ရက်စွဲ ၊ ၂၀၁၉ခုနှစ်၊ မေလ(၆) ရက်

သို့-
ဝန်ကြီးချုပ်
ကချင်ပြည်နယ်အစိုးရအဖွဲ့၊
မြစ်ကြီးနားမြို့၊ ကချင်ပြည်နယ်

အကြောင်းအရာ။

ကျေးရွာပြန်လည်ထူထောင်ရေးအတွက် လိုအပ်ချက်များ
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အထက်အကြောင်းအရာပါကိစ္စနှင့် ပတ်သက်၍ ကျွန်တော်/မတို့ ဝိုင်းမော်မြို့နယ်၊
နမ်ဆန်ယန်ကျေးရွာရှိ ကျေးရွာသူ/သားများမှ ရိုသေလေးစားစွာဖြင့် တင်ပြအပ်ပါသည်။

၁။ ကျွန်တော်/မတို့ ဝိုင်းမော်မြို့နယ်၊ နမ်ဆန်ယန်ကျေးရွာသူ/သားများအား ၂၀၁၉
ခုနှစ်၊ ဇန်နဝါရီလ ၃၀ ရက်နေ့မှစ၍ ၂၀၁၉ ခုနှစ် ဧပြီလ(၂၉)ရက်နေ့အထိ အိမ်ထောင်စုပေါင်း(၉၈)စု
တို့ကို သက်ဆိုင်ရာ ကချင်ပြည်နယ်အစိုးရအဖွဲ့နှင့် တပ်မတော်တို့မှ မိမိဇာတိမြေသို့ ကောင်းမွန်စွာ
ပို့ဆောင်ခဲ့ပြီး ဖြစ်ပါသည်။

၂။ အဆိုပါဇာတိမြေ နမ်ဆန်ယန်ကျေးရွာသို့ ရောက်ရှိနေထိုင်လျက်ရှိသော ပြည်သူများသည်
နှစ်ပေါင်းများစွာ စစ်ရှောင်(တိုက်ပွဲရှောင်)စခန်းအသီးသီးတွင် မှီခိုနေထိုင်ကြသူများဖြစ်ကြပြီး
ယခုတစ်ဖန် ၁၀အစပြန်လည်ထူထောင်ခြင်းဖြစ်သဖြင့် မိသားစုအသက်မွေးဝမ်းကြောင်းနှင့်
လူနေအိမ်များ အခက်အခဲမျိုးစုံ ကြုံတွေ့နေရပါသည်။

သို့ဖြစ်ပါ၍ ကျွန်တော်များ နမ်ဆန်ယန်ကျေးရွာသည် ကချင်ပြည်နယ်အတွင်းရှိ
စစ်ရှောင်(တိုက်ပွဲရှောင်)များမှ ပထမဦးဆုံး တရားဝင်နေရပ်ပြန်အခြေပြုနေထိုင်မှုအပေါ်
(စံပြ)ကျေးရွာအဖြစ် လိုအပ်ချက်များ ပံ့ပိုးကူညီပေးနိုင်ပါရန် လေးစားစွာ အသနားခံ
တင်ပြအပ်ပါသည်။

ပူးတွဲ။ အိမ်ထောင်စုတိုင်း၏ လိုအပ်ချက်ဖော်ပြပါဇယား။

ကျေးရွာပြန်လည်နေရာချထားရေး(ယာယီ)ကော်မတီများ၏ တင်ပြခြင်း လက်မှတ်။

မိတ္တူကို-

- ဝန်ကြီး၊ လုံခြုံရေးနှင့် နယ်စပ်ရေးရာဝန်ကြီးဌာန၊ ကချင်ပြည်နယ်အစိုးရအဖွဲ့။
- ဝန်ကြီး၊ လူမှုရေးဝန်ကြီးဌာန၊ ကချင်ပြည်နယ်အစိုးရအဖွဲ့။
- ဝန်ကြီး၊ လယ်ယာမြေနှင့် ဆည်မြောင်းဝန်ကြီးဌာန၊ ကချင်ပြည်နယ်အစိုးရအဖွဲ့။
- ဝန်ကြီး၊ လမ်းပန်းဆက်သွယ်ရေးဝန်ကြီးဌာန၊ ကချင်ပြည်နယ်အစိုးရအဖွဲ့။
- ဝန်ကြီး၊ စည်ပင်သာယာရေးဝန်ကြီးဌာန၊ ကချင်ပြည်နယ်အစိုးရအဖွဲ့။
- မြို့နယ်အုပ်ချုပ်ရေးမှူး၊ အထွေထွေအုပ်ချုပ်ရေးဦးစီးဌာန၊ ဝိုင်းမော်မြို့။

✓ လက်ခံ။

