

Education Survey 2005

ZOA Refugee Care Thailand

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ZOA Refugee Care

ZOA Refugee Care (ZOA) is a Netherlands-based NGO established in 1973. It provides support to refugees, displaced people and victims of natural disasters. ZOA works in various countries in Asia and Africa. At the moment, it is implementing projects in Afghanistan, Angola, Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, Ethiopia, Liberia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand and Uganda. Since 1984, ZOA has been working with Burmese refugees living in camp settlements in Thailand. Currently, ZOA implements projects in seven refugee camps along the Thai-Burmese border in the areas of general education, vocational training, and food and shelter. ZOA presently employs 45 staff members. Our main office is in Mae Sot, with field offices in Mae Sariang, Mae Sot and Kanchanaburi.

Since 1997, ZOA has been providing support to Burmese refugees in Thailand to enable them to manage and improve their own community education system. This support is provided through our Karen Education Project (KEP), the fourth phase of which started as per January 2006. The main intervention areas of KEP are in-service teacher training and support, curriculum and textbook development, institutional capacity building, community development, and the provision of operational services, such as school construction, payment of teacher subsidies and the provision of school supplies. The challenge for the future will be to assist the further improvement of the quality of education and to ensure sustainability of project interventions in a protracted refugee situation, with a considerable degree of uncertainty about future scenarios for the refugees.

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The views expressed in this report do not represent the views of ZOA Refugee Care Thailand and any errors or omissions are the responsibility of the main author (Su-Ann Oh) alone.

Preface

In 1996, the Coordinating Committee for Displaced People in Thailand (CCSDPT) carried out a survey to assess the educational situation in the camps along the Thai-Burmese border and to identify needs so as to provide educational services to the refugees. On the basis of this assessment, the Royal Thai Government (RTG) agreed to the establishment of structured educational initiatives in the camps, with the assistance of international NGOs. As a result of RTG approval and agreement among CCSDPT members, ZOA started its Karen Education Project (KEP) in 1997.

During the implementation of KEP, ZOA carried out two follow-up surveys in 2000 and 2002. These surveys provided a general overview of the state of affairs in the education sector in the refugee camps. This Education Survey 2005 is the third update on the educational situation in the Karen camps. As in the previous surveys, it provides a general picture of the camp education sector, including demographic indicators, data on enrolment, dropout, and parental involvement, as well as a range of other topics.

However, in this survey we wanted to go beyond the execution of just “another survey”. First of all, we decided to include a broader range of topics in the survey in order to obtain a more complete picture of the camp education system. Secondly, in relation to the strategic direction that ZOA has decided to go in the context of KEP, we wanted a stronger focus on including data in relation to the quality of education. Finally, as far as the process is concerned, we focused on ensuring maximum community involvement in the data collection and analysis process, and making the survey a learning experience for ZOA staff as well as community members. In that sense, the education survey does not only provide a basis for determining capacity-building activities in the future; it has also been a capacity-building intervention in its own right. We believe the survey has contributed to the acquisition of research and analysis skills among local staff as well as camp communities.

What is the relevance of the Education Survey 2005? First of all, there is an important benefit for ZOA Thailand: the Education Survey will serve as a resource for baseline information, laying the foundation for progress measurement of the interventions under the recently established KEP IV project. Secondly, ZOA and other organizations will be able to use the information as an input for (re)thinking future activities. The availability of “real” information, gathered through a careful research process, might be helpful in this regard. ZOA also plans to use the outcomes of the survey to carry out additional, more in-depth research in areas such as in-service teacher training, curriculum development and non-formal education. Finally, the Education Survey has identified existing needs or “service gaps” that are not or insufficiently addressed through community or NGO initiatives. This survey could contribute to coordinated discussions with various stakeholders to determine strategies to fill these gaps.

Related to this, we emphasize that the Education Survey is by no means intended to be for ZOA's internal use only. We believe it is relevant for many agencies and individuals playing a role in education sector activities along the Thai-Burmese border. We would appreciate it if other stakeholders access the information provided in this document, and use it for the important common goal of improving the educational services provided in the refugee camps. The inputs that we received from various actors outside ZOA, both in the preparation and the implementation of the survey development process, are much appreciated in this regard.

Finally, we welcome any feedback and suggestions in relation to the Education Survey 2005.

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- Questionnaires in English, Karen and Burmese
- Focus group questions
- Feedback from camp residents

Executive Summary

The Education Survey 2005

The Education Survey 2005 was undertaken to

- collect information on the current educational landscape in the seven predominantly Karen refugee camps along the border
- ascertain the real educational needs of residents in camps
- act as a baseline study for future reference
- improve ZOA activities
- provide useful information for stakeholders.

The survey was conducted between July and November 2005 in seven refugee camps along the Thai-Burmese border: Mae La, Umpiem-Mai, Nupo (Tak province), Mae La Oon, Mae Ra Ma Luang (Mae Hong Son province), Don Yang and Tham Hin (Kanchanaburi province).

The topics included in the survey were

- student dropout; parental, teacher and community support to students; the learning experience; special education
- teacher turnover; support provided to teachers; job satisfaction and teacher motivation
- ZOA teacher training; resident teacher trainer (RTT) training; school management training for principals
- the instruction of languages; secondary and primary Arts programmes
- adult education courses attended and those that respondents would like to attend; obstacles to participation.

The Education Survey was a participatory exercise involving various stakeholders and camp residents through consultation, data collection and feedback. Questionnaires and focus group interviews were used to interview at least 17% of the target population for all groups except families (12%). The sample was chosen based on proportional random sampling by gender, religion, type of school and educational level. In total, 4508 camp residents were interviewed by questionnaire and 77 in focus groups.

Refugees from Burma

In 2005, there were 120,842 residents in the seven camps, 51% of whom were male and 49% were female. Mae La had the biggest population at about 49,000 and Don Yang the smallest at approximately 4,300. There were 21,331 families in the seven camps and 43,418 children between the ages of 0 and 12; 53.4% were male and 46.6% were female. Children made up 35.9% of the total population.

The demographic characteristics of the parents we interviewed were as follows:

- 60.4% of the respondents were female and 39.6% were male.
- The majority was Skaw Karen (73.8%), followed by Pwo Karen (17%) and by Muslim (6.5%).
- The majority (58.5%) was Christian, 29.3% were Buddhist, 11.1% were Muslim. The rest were either Animists, have no religion or have another religion.
- 91% of the respondents were married, 7.3% were widowed, and 1.6% were either separated/divorced or single.
- The number of children per family ranged from zero to 15, with the most frequently (23.4%) occurring number being four children.
- The number of people living in the household ranged from one to 19. The most number of respondents reported that there were six people living in their household.
- The majority of the respondents (91.8%) was from villages, the rest were from towns, cities and refugee camps.
- Before coming to the refugee camp, the majority of respondents (86.3%) had been living in a village; the rest in the forest, refugee camp or in a town or city.
- The majority of respondents came to the camps because they were running away from soldiers.
- Almost a third of the respondents had no education; 13.9% have completed Standard 4.
- About 25% of men interviewed had no education, whereas about 36% of women did not. At all levels except Standard 2, the percentage of women completing a standard was lower than for men.
- Only 4.6% of men and 3% of women have completed high school education.

- The majority of respondents had been farmers before coming to camp (56.8%).
- The largest percentage (36.6%) of respondents was currently involved in 'housework', followed by 'trading/shop/restaurant work' (21.4%) and 'day labour outside the camp' (18%).
- Of those who responded, 44% earned 0B per month; about a quarter earned 1-100B; about a fifth earned 101-500B; 8.2% earned between 501 and 1000B, and 1.4% earned more than 1001B.
- For household income, 77.6% of the respondents reported earning some income; 23.2% had no household income. About a quarter earned 1-100B per month, almost a third earned 101-500B, and 15.9% earned 500-1000B. A small minority earned more than 1000B.

Education in the Camps

Educational activities in the camps are managed by a variety of camp level and central organizations that make up the kaleidoscope of policy-makers, coordinating bodies, providers and funding bodies.

The different types of learning activities provided in the camps are primary, middle and secondary schooling; post-secondary education; vocational courses; night schools in certain camps; literacy and language courses; and awareness-raising programmes.

Learners in general education

Student enrolment

In the beginning of the 2003-4 school-year, the gross enrolment rate (GER) indicated that for all camps, except Don Yang, 99-100% of the children and young people of school-going age were enrolled in school. In Don Yang, the figure is much lower, at 93%. The GER is roughly equal for males and females. At the end of the school year, the GER was actually higher even though the population of five to 17 year-olds fell.

Student dropout

- The rate of student dropout was 3.3% for 2003-4 and 5.4% for 2004-5.
- Students were dropping out at the end of the primary and middle school.
- Student dropout was the highest in Tham Hin and Don Yang camps for 2003-4 and 2004-5.
- The percentage of male students dropping out is slightly higher than for female students.
- Young men are dropping out earlier than young women.

Students are dropping because of

- marriage – those who drop out because of marriage were mostly young women (77%).
- problems with learning at school - a larger percentage of young men (60%) than women (40%) are finding difficulties in learning at school. Their most urgent concern at school were
 - 'The classrooms are too crowded and noisy'
 - 'I don't understand the textbook'
 - 'I was afraid to ask for my teacher's help'.
- having to help family by working - more young men (57.9%) than women (42.1%) said that they have to help their family by working.

Students with special education needs

Of those who responded to whether they had children with special education needs, 157 families of the 2615 we interviewed responded positively (6.6%). About 60% of these reported that their child was in a special education programme.

On the whole, the parents believed that there were favourable outcomes from their children having joined a special education programme.

- 95.5% agreed or strongly agreed that their child had learnt to cope with daily life.
- 90.9% agreed or strongly agreed that their child had improved physically.
- 95.5% agreed or strongly agreed that their child was able to communicate better.

- 77.3% agreed or strongly agreed that their child played with other children more since joining a special education programme, 15.9% disagreed, and 4.5% strongly disagreed.
- 84.1% agreed or strongly agreed that their child was able to attend school since joining a special education programme, while 9.1% disagreed, and 4.5% strongly disagreed.

Teachers reported needing the following type of support to teach children with special education needs in descending order:

- specially designed teaching materials
- more techniques on how to teach
- outside support for students
- more techniques on how to teach
- more understanding of students' needs.

The learning experience

Languages taught at school

In general, both teachers and principals believed that Skaw Karen should be taught at all levels, in particular from KG onwards. This was followed by English and Burmese, both from KG onwards. The majority believed that Thai should be taught at secondary level only.

Secondary Arts programmes

- Most secondary schools offered sewing (20.4%), music and drawing (17.5% both) and knitting (16.5%).
- Of those who responded, 63.6% of principals reported that there are not enough materials and resources for Secondary Arts programmes.
- Of the 640 secondary students who responded, 82.5% of them reported that they were involved in Secondary Arts programmes; 96.3% said that they would like to be involved in Secondary Arts programmes.
- The top three programmes they would like to be involved in are first aid, typing and music.
- Only 0.4% of the respondents said that they did not like any of the Secondary Arts activities.

Primary Arts programmes

Almost all schools offered primary level education. Of the primary students who answered, 85.1% of them were involved in Primary

Arts programmes and 14.9% were not; 99.1% liked the programmes.

Of those who responded, 64.6% of the principals reported that there were enough materials.

Students' concerns

Primary students' most urgent concern was overwhelmingly 'Classrooms are too crowded and noisy' - 47.7% thought it was the most urgent concern. The second contender was 'I'm afraid to ask for my teacher's help' (10.1%). The other significant most urgent concerns were 'I don't understand the textbook', 'The language is too difficult' and 'I have to study too many languages'.

Secondary students had similar concerns to primary students: 'The classrooms are too crowded and noisy' was consistently the largest number picked for most, second most and third most urgent concerns.

Support for learning

The students in the survey reported that their parents provided support in the form of encouragement and personal welfare, while their teachers and principals offered extra help in studies and advice on further education opportunities.

School students also receive extra academic help from CBOs. Moreover, KWO and KYO/KSNG offer courses to students who require extra help in languages and subjects taught at school.

Educational staff

Teachers leaving

- The rate of teacher turnover over the past two years has risen. For all camps except Don Yang, the teacher turnover rate rose between 2003-4 and 2004-5. The rate decreased in Don Yang camp.
- In both years, Tham Hin camp had the highest teacher turnover rate. In 2004-5, one quarter of the teachers left.
- For Nu Po camp, almost one fifth of the teachers left.
- The rate of female teachers leaving rose by almost twice the rate from 2003-4 to 2004-5.
- Almost a third of teachers interviewed reported that they were thinking of leaving.

Teachers are leaving to

- Retire - a quarter of those who are thinking of leaving.
- Resettle - of those who are thinking of leaving for reasons other than retirement, almost half are leaving because of resettlement.
- Further their studies - for those who are not thinking of moving to another country and/or retiring, the main reason for leaving teaching was to further their studies. This was mostly adults aged between 17 and 29 years.
- Look after their children and to stay at home - more women (88.2%) than men (11.8%) are thinking of leaving to stay at home and to look after children.

Teachers would be persuaded to stay if they

- were given a higher subsidy
- were able to attend a self-development course while on the job
- were given perks
- were to receive more recognition from KED.

For teachers, their most urgent concerns were that

- their salary is too low
- the classrooms are too crowded and noisy.

Teacher training needed

The training needed as reported by teachers in descending order are:

- teaching methods
- assessing students' progress
- subject matter
- lesson planning
- how to use textbooks
- classroom management
- general knowledge.

Training for RTTs

In general, RTTs are learning a variety of skills and content in different types of training provided by ZOA. However, it may be the case that the terms used to describe the training sessions and what is taught in them are not completely clear.

Over a third of RTTs chose 'Trainers have to constantly train new teachers' as the most urgent concern, and almost a fifth chose 'The training for trainers is inadequate'.

We asked the RTTs how ZOA training for RTTs can be improved. The most common answer was to provide more training and to increase the duration of training. They wanted the organizational aspects of training to be improved, upgraded training, more evaluation and feedback and more opportunities for exchange of ideas with RTTs from other camps.

Training for Principals

Of those who replied, 83.3% had attended a school management training course in the camp. They reported learning about planning, conflict resolution, decision-making, and observing and giving teachers feedback; 90.9% felt that they had the support needed to apply what they had learnt.

Adult education

We spoke to teachers, people who dropped out of school and representatives from families about the types of adult courses they have attended and what they would like to attend.

Course attendance

- Between 27.3% and 44.7% of all the respondents have attended a course.
- The majority of people attended courses that would be of practical use: agriculture, sewing, English and Thai
- Out of the three groups interviewed, teachers and those who had dropped out had high levels of attendance, whereas representatives of families had lower levels.

Desire to attend courses

Teachers and respondents who had dropped out of school were very interested in attending courses:

- 92.2% of the former wanted to attend a language course
- 90.6% of the latter wanted to attend a vocational course.
- The percentage of representatives of families who wanted to attend courses was much lower than that of teachers and students who had dropped out school.

The courses respondents wanted to attend were:

- vocational courses: sewing, animal raising, agriculture, medical courses and computing.
- awareness-raising programmes: the most popular options were first aid and domestic violence. Respondents were also interested in a variety of socio-political and health-related courses.
- language courses: English and Thai.

The obstacles to respondents attending courses were:

- lack of time
- lack of money
- having to look after children - 79.8% of those who chose 'have to look after children' as an obstacle were women
- not having any education
- being too old.

The other obstacles mentioned were health-related, disabilities, lack of information, work and old age.

Different groups had different obstacles to attending courses. People who had dropped out of school chose similar obstacles to teachers

- lack of money
- no time
- courses are not held at a convenient time

but they also indicated that having to look after their children was an obstacle.

For representatives of families, the concerns were about

- not having enough time
- having to look after their children
- lack of money
- not having any education.

For those who chose 'I don't have any education' as an obstacle, 46.1% had no school-based education and 78.7% had not completed primary level education.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were generated from the data, from consultation with the ZOA staff, the KED, NGOs and camp residents.

Systematic data collection

Currently, ZOA collects data on student enrolment and the number of teachers by gender and religion. In order to use the data for evidence-based decision-making at the school, camp, NGO and KED level, it is necessary to have a system so that the data is collated and standardized across all schools and camps.

More accurate data from all seven camps is needed on

- the number of children and young people of school-going age
- students leaving and their reasons for doing so
- student assessment
- teachers leaving and reasons for doing so
- teachers' training records
- adult and non-school going learners' course attendance.

The collection of this data should be incorporated into the work routine of schools and it should be made available to all so that they have an accurate picture of the current situation and can then use it to plan.

Gender

Gender affects educational attainment, literacy rates, student dropout and teachers leaving in different ways. Societal expectations and the gendered division of labour within the household affect the genders differently, and this has an impact on their schooling and learning experience.

Women's educational levels and literacy rates are typically lower than that of men. There are currently efforts to address women's

needs for educational attainment which take into account the logistical difficulties of housework and looking after the family. More efforts along this vein would help in providing learning opportunities which fit into both men and women's familial and work responsibilities.

It is recommended that more nuanced information on the learning difficulties that male students face in schools vis-à-vis their familial and economic situation be collected so that we have an accurate picture of how school is failing them.

Changes to schooling rules regarding attendance of young people who marry young and sex education would help to reduce school dropout due to early marriage.

An integrated learning system

The general education system is separate from the set of vocational and adult learning programmes available in the camps. While it is not feasible to combine them, a system that integrates them would create clear progression routes, build on general, vocational, craft and professional learning, and reduce the duplication of courses and resources. This is particularly important as there are few progression routes beyond Standard 10. At the moment, it seems that progression is horizontal across the different learning systems. It could be designed so that it is both horizontal and vertical, so that learners build on what they have learnt. This might be done in the form of a modular, credit system which provides people with an awareness of their progression.

Student participation and the learning experience

To improve the learning experience and to ensure that students are benefitting from good quality education, a holistic approach is needed in schools and in the communities.

The quality of the school infrastructure for certain camps is having a negative impact on students' ability to concentrate and teachers' ability to teach. There are three main ways of alleviating the situation: innovative classroom design within physical limitations, increased financial support, and lobbying the RTG.

Detailed and context-specific information on the learning experience of students in and out of school needs to be collected: e.g., how students engage with the teaching and the teaching materials, the relationship between students and teachers, students' experience of the school structure, students' learning

activities outside the school. What has already been identified in this study is that students have difficulties approaching their teachers for help. This is a cause for concern and is related to the problems teachers have with classroom management and overcrowded classrooms. Research shows that the quality of the relationship between a student and his/her teacher is crucial in the learning process and in students' motivation to engage in socially constructive behaviour. Training, mentoring, group support and so on are different ways of supporting teachers in learning how to establish good relationships with their students.

The number of languages in the curriculum has to be examined carefully, especially in light of the recent policy set out by the Thai Ministry of Education. Thai language courses are to be introduced into the curriculum at all levels. Students are already overloaded with three languages from the time they begin school. It may be possible to lessen the load by reducing formal teaching in Burmese and English, and introducing after-school language clubs which use games, puzzles and different forms of media to immerse students in these languages.

Teachers need to be better equipped to assess students' progress in formal and informal ways. Besides examinations and keeping records, teachers may use student-led assessment, where students assess their own work with the support of their teacher, and/or assess their classmates' work.

It is recommended that the needs of vulnerable student populations be considered. For example, students with special education needs, orphans, those in non-mainstream schools, unaccompanied minors and new arrivals have different educational and practical needs.

More research needs to be done on the school experience of the other minority groups, such as the Muslims. This would help to inform ZOA work on inclusive education and incorporating Education for All into its work.

The issue of student dropout needs to be discussed with community leaders (KED, KRC, camp community), parents, school management, teachers and headteachers. In particular, more needs to be done to address school policy relating to early marriage or unexpected pregnancy. At the same time, sex education would help to raise awareness about this among young women. Greater parental involvement in the process of schooling and learning would also help to reduce student dropout. This involvement should include formal and informal school- and learning-related activities,

not just relationship-building ones, so that parents become engaged in the learning experience of their children.

Clear alternative options beyond high school should be introduced. Current attempts at establishing distant learning and non-formal programmes will help to alleviate the problem. This could be supplemented by more medical courses and occupational/professional courses which NGOs may be able to provide. It would be advisable to consider work-based learning programmes which would equip young people with work skills and some sort of income.

Teachers leaving

Due to resettlement and economic pressures, large numbers of teachers are leaving the profession. This puts a strain on the education system. The key to maintaining the status quo is to keep as many teachers (who are not being resettled) as possible from leaving.

The economic issues underlying the reasons for teachers leaving have to be addressed.

- More effort needs to be made to find funding for teacher subsidies.
- Besides monetary contributions, care or household packages made up of essentials for the household might help to alleviate economic pressures. This package might consist of vegetables, fruit, soap, and other regular household items.
- There is currently a move to pay teachers monthly instead of quarterly. This is a step in the right direction.
- Coordination between NGOs about wage scales would help to reduce competition between NGO sectors.

Flexible teaching arrangements would enable teachers to work part-time so that they have more time to supplement their income, look after the household and/or further their studies.

Another possibility is to utilize the experience and knowledge of teachers who have already retired. Often, retired teachers find difficulty in travelling to school everyday. It may be possible to arrange for students to go to them instead.

The causes of teachers leaving have to be looked at in detail as well. For certain schools, management problems were causing teachers to be laid off or to leave. In this area, conflict resolution techniques might be usefully employed.

Greater recognition of the valuable work that teachers do should be given. This can be done in a variety of ways: encouragement from leaders, fostering a school culture which recognizes teachers' work, community recognition and so on.

Teacher wastage is inevitable. Therefore, there should be inbuilt mechanisms to ensure that

- the knowledge and expertise of those who leave are handed over to other staff members through continual and regular staff training and mentoring by staff
- there is systematic recruitment and training of new staff members.

Teacher training

There needs to be a systematic assessment of teachers' training needs. More nuanced information on the training needs of teachers is needed. For example, what types of teaching methods? In what context, for what purposes, for which subject, and which teachers (new or senior)?

At present, secondary teachers need more training in the content of the subject matter, whereas primary teachers need help with teaching skills and managing big classes.

There should be greater coordination between NGOs about what is covered in the different training programmes. The variety of training programmes offered cover similar areas of content and skills. We do not know to what extent they are related or overlap. It would be useful for teachers to have review sessions about the different training programmes and what they have learnt from them, in order to consolidate their learning and to come up with ways of applying their knowledge and sharing it with other teachers.

The training programmes have slightly different names and purposes - it is not always clear what the different training programmes are about, and it seems also that teachers are not always clear about the content of training programmes. There needs to be an identification of common concepts and vocabulary of the training courses and content.

Teachers need regular follow-up support to apply what they have learnt.

Training for RTTs

The organizational aspects of training for RTTs have to be addressed. RTTs should know in advance when training takes place, what type of training it is and what they need to arrange.

As in teacher training, it is necessary to examine the content provided to RTTs and to work out if and how different organizations overlap in their provision of training.

More differentiated training for RTTs, based on their current knowledge, experience and skills would help towards finetuning their skills.

More opportunities for RTTs to meet up to exchange and share ideas would be very useful, and would help to increase the sustainability of expertise within the camps.

A systematic monitoring, evaluation and feedback process should be established to support RTTs in their work.

Non-school learner groups and their needs

The provision of courses and their delivery should take into account the interests of different groups of learners.

Learner needs

Those with higher levels of education have different learning needs and aspirations.

- Young teachers are interested in computer and medical courses whereas older teachers are more interested in sewing and agriculture.
- Those who left school without completing Standard 10 are interested in language courses and
- Those from the families target group have interests in sewing and agriculture.

Basic skills training

- There is a need to promote literacy for those who are not functionally literate, through camp-wide campaigns, and through literacy-rich teaching and everyday settings (e.g., parent-child reading sessions).
- Campaigns to raise awareness about the purpose and advantages of learning and education would help to increase participation among those in the family target group.
- It is possible to raise the standard of basic education by incorporating basic Maths, Science, literacy and numeracy skills into learning activities and programmes. For example, the vocational courses incorporate basic Maths in their sewing courses and Science in the agriculture training programme. This 'stealth' learning must be made visible to the learners and to the community so that learners know that they can progress to other types of courses which require basic skills.

Access to courses depends on educational level and social networks –more effort needs to be made to reach those learners who do not have as an extensive network as others.

The needs of other learner groups should also be taken into consideration: e.g., students who failed to enter post-secondary education and adults who did not have the chance to attend further and higher education.

Health-related courses are in high demand. Medic courses and first aid courses should be made available to those who are interested, not just those with higher level schooling.

Delivery of learning: innovative ways of and settings for learning and teaching

There is a need to introduce innovative ways of learning and teaching which are recognized by the community and which guide learners to understand what they have learnt, as well as mapping out what they learn in accordance with school-based knowledge. Moreover, it is necessary to build on the content and procedural skills that adults already possess. This could be done by

- sending teachers to learners' place of work when and where convenient
- introducing nonformal ways of learning on-the-job. For example, NGOs, CBOs, committees and other organizations and bodies within the camps could, as part of their

organizational policy, provide recognized, structured and relevant on-the-job-training for their staff in both basic and higher level skills.

It is recommended that further investigation be conducted into alternative forms of provision which take into account the content and practical needs of learners. This would identify gaps and overlaps, and help to integrate new activities with what is already available in the camps.

Acronyms

AMI	Aide Medicale Internationale
ARC	American Refugee Committee
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CCSDPT	Coordinating Committee for Displaced People in Thailand
CHE	Community Health Education
COERR	Catholic Organization for Emergency Relief and Refugees
DARE	Drug Awareness Rehabilitation Education
DKBA	Democratic Kayin Buddhist Army
EIP	English Immersion Programme
FSP	Further Studies Programme
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
HI	Handicap International
ICS	International Child Support
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
KED	Karen Education Department
KEP	Karen Education Project
KEWG	Karen Education Workers' Group
KEWU	Karen Education Workers' Union
KHWA	Karen Health and Welfare Association
KKBBS	Kawthoolei Karen Baptist Bible School
KNU	Karen National Union
KRC	Karen Refugee Committee
KSNG	Karen Students' Network Group
KTWG	Karen Teachers Working Group
KWO	Karen Women's Organization
KYO	Karen Youth Organization
LMC	Leadership Management Course
MI	Malteser International
MOI	Ministry of Interior
NHEC	National Health and Education Commission
NER	Net Enrolment Ratio
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PDC	Personal Development Course
POC	Persons of concern
REK	Resident Employee Karen Education Project
RTG	Royal Thai Government
RTT	Resident Teacher Trainer
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TBBC	Thai-Burmese Border Consortium
TPC	Teacher Preparation Course
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
VT	Vocational Training
WE/C	World Education/Consortium

Chapter 1 | The Education Survey

If we are to teach real peace in this world, and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with the children.

Mahatma Gandhi

ZOA undertakes an education survey every three years in order to document the educational landscape, to make systematic comparisons across time, and to generate discussions and recommendations for future strategies.

This survey has retained many of the characteristics of the previous surveys. However, it is different from the others in that it was conducted on a much larger scale: approximately 4500 interviews were conducted, supplemented by focus group interviews and visual documentation, as compared to about 400 respondents in the previous surveys.

Moreover, we adopted a participatory approach in the conceptualization, conduct and consultation of the survey. Various stakeholders were consulted about the content of the survey; training was given to camp residents so that they could conduct interviews; a photo exhibition of the results was used to solicit feedback and comments from all camps. The feedback from the camps is included in the CR-ROM accompanying this report.

The survey was conducted between July and November 2005 in seven refugee camps along the Thai-Burmese border: Mae La, Umpiem-Mai, Nupo (Tak province), Mae La Oon, Mae Ra Ma Luang (Mae Hong Son province), Don Yang and Tham Hin (Kanchanaburi province). While it is recognized that there are refugees in Thailand who do not live in the camps, this survey looks specifically at those in the seven refugee camps mentioned above. This is because the majority of ZOA services support the provision of education in the refugee camps¹.

¹ ZOA also supports two Karenni camps in the north of Thailand and some Thai villages.

The topics that were included in the survey were generated by consultation with members of the Karen Education Department (KED), ZOA staff, other Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) involved in the provision of educational services to refugee camps, and members of the camp communities. Besides general background and personal information, the topics cover a range of issues which are set out in Table 1.

Table 1 | Main topics covered by the Education Survey

Students	student dropout; parental, teacher and community support to students; the learning experience; special education
Teachers	teacher turnover; support provided to teachers; job satisfaction and teacher motivation
Training	ZOA teacher training; resident teacher trainer (RTT) training; school management training for principals
Curriculum	the instruction of languages; secondary and primary Arts programmes
Adult learners	courses attended and those that respondents would like to attend; obstacles to participation

During these consultation sessions, the decision regarding which target groups to interview was also made. The target groups fall into the categories set out in Table 2.

Table 2 | Target groups and corresponding sample groups

Target groups	Sample groups
Parents	Families
Students	primary students (in Standard 4) secondary students (in Standards 7 and 10)
Former students	people who left school before completing Standard 10
School staff	principals teachers
ZOA camp staff	resident teacher trainers (RTTs); they are hired by ZOA to provide regular in-service training to teachers.
Former school staff	former teachers
Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)	CBOs are organizations set up by the camp communities to provide services and training for different groups within the community. For example, the Karen Women's Organization (KWO) provides a host of training programmes, such as adult literacy courses, weaving and socio-political awareness courses.

The respondents for families, students, school staff and ZOA staff were interviewed using a questionnaire designed for that particular target population. We also conducted focus group interviews with former teachers and representatives of CBOs (for details, see Research methods below).

On the whole, the survey looks specifically at the target groups and educational institutions served by the ZOA Karen Education Project (KEP). It is not an exhaustive survey of all the different types of educational programmes on offer in the camps. Hence, it does not examine nursery, kindergarten and post-10 education, nor other courses and training programmes offered by different organizations. We have, however, collected some data on language, vocational and awareness-raising programmes so as to better understand the needs of residents who are not in the schooling system.

Limitations of the survey

The most obvious limitation of surveys is that most of the data collected is self-reported. For a variety of reasons, respondents do not always give accurate answers. This is inevitable and we have taken this into account by collecting data from different target groups and sources.

The other limitation is that we are only able to gather surface information rather than in-depth information. To address this, we are consulting with different organizations and individuals about the data so that we may contextualize the findings.

For certain target groups (former teachers and representatives of CBOs), we have tried to address this weakness by conducting focus group interviews. The trade-off, of course, was that we were unable to speak to a large number of them, so the in-depth information we collected is limited by the small numbers interviewed.

We would also like to point out the difficulties associated with comparing across time. First, our data is not based on a longitudinal study; this means that the respondents who were interviewed were different in each survey - our data does not track individual respondents over the past 10 years. Second, the sample numbers for each survey vary. In 1996, 301 people were interviewed, compared with 345 in 2000, 932 in 2002 and 4508 in 2005. The validity of comparisons across time cannot be guaranteed. Finally, the questions asked were also slightly different; this may have had a bearing on the nature of the data collected.

Research methods

We used questionnaires and focus group interviews in the survey. They are listed with the corresponding target groups in Table 3.

Table 3 | Research tools used and corresponding target groups

Research tools used	Target groups
Questionnaires	Families Students School staff ZOA staff - resident teacher trainers (RTTs)
Focus Group Interviews	Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) Former teachers

The data collected was supplemented with statistics from schools, camp committees, the Thai-Burmese Border Consortium (TBBC) and ZOA, and interviews with representatives of NGOs (World Education/Consortium) and KED.

Questionnaires

The primary research tool used was the questionnaire. We designed seven different questionnaires for the target groups listed in Table 2.

From the beginning, it was agreed that the survey would contain questions from the previous education survey (2001) so that comparisons could be made across time. Hence, some questions and indicators were taken from previous questionnaires and others were developed from consultation with a variety of stakeholders.

All the questionnaires are in Karen; the questionnaires for families and students were also translated into Burmese. Copies of all the questionnaires in Burmese, English and Karen are in the CD-ROM that accompanies this report.

The questionnaires and Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) data forms were piloted in July 2005 before the survey proper. Changes were then made to them in light of the problems encountered and suggestions given during the pilot. The data from the questionnaires was entered into SPSS, a statistical software programme.

We interviewed at least 17% of the target population for all groups except families. We used proportional random sampling by gender, religion, type of school and educational level. Due to the large number of families in all seven camps, we decided to interview only 10% of this group. Table 4 shows the sample populations and the corresponding target populations in all seven camps.

Table 4 | Sample population and corresponding target population for questionnaires

	Sample population	Target population	% of Target Population
Families	2615	21331 ^a	12.3
Students			
Primary students (Standard 4)	668	3260 ^b	20.5
Secondary students (Standards 7 and 10)	641	3657 ^b	17.5
People who left school before completing Standard 10	141	NA ^c	NA
School staff			
Principals	57	65 ^b	87.7
Teachers	337	1391 ^{bd}	24.2
Resident teacher trainers (RTTs)	49	73 ^b	67.1

^a Taken from TBBC² statistics.

^b Taken from ZOA internal statistics, figures compiled from information collected in June 2005.

^c There are no accurate numbers for this target population.

^d This figure does not include the number of vocational and Arts teachers in schools.

² We would like to thank Paeh from TBBC for her help in obtaining these figures and for explaining them.

The camp education survey teams were given the numbers of individuals to interview with specified selection criteria. They were then asked to identify individuals in the different zones in the camp. While efforts were made to ensure that the respondents were randomly selected based on our selection criteria, it was not always possible to do so. Respondents for the different target groups were identified using different techniques. Students were chosen on a random basis. Those of the other target groups were chosen using a quasi-snowball method.

Focus group interviews

We interviewed representatives of CBOs and former teachers. We conducted one focus group interview for each group in each camp. Each focus group consisted of six to 10 participants. The total number of participants in our focus group interviews is listed in Table 5.

Table 5 | Focus group interview participants by camp

	Mae La	Umphiem-Mai	Nupo	Mae La Oon	Mae Ra Ma Luang	Don Yang	Tham Hin	Total
CBOs	6	7	6	4	9	3	3	38
Former teachers	5	6	10	4	6	5	3	39

Representatives of all CBOs were asked to attend. These included the Karen Education Workers' Group (KEWG), the Karen Youth Organization (KYO), the Karen Students' Network Group (KSNG), the Karen Education Workers' Union (KEWU), the Karen Women's Organization (KWO), Handicap International (HI), Aide Medicale Internationale (AMI), American Refugee Committee/Community Health Education (ARC/CHE), Malteser International (MI) among others. There are branches of these CBOs in almost all camps. We did not interview them in all camps.

The participants had the choice of whether to participate in the focus group interviews. Thus, there is an element of self-selection and this may be particularly significant for the focus groups with former teachers. Those who agreed to participate may have had more socially acceptable reasons for having left teaching than those who declined. This is taken into account in the analysis.

The number of participants in the focus group interviews is low: we do not intend to generalize our findings across these target groups. However, we have used the information from these interviews to contextualize the survey data and to begin to conceptualize the issues that have emerged from the interviews.

For the representatives of CBOs, we asked them about their views regarding the provision of nonformal and adult education in the camps and their links with schools and students. For former teachers, the discussion revolved around their reasons for leaving teaching and strategies which might have persuaded them to stay in teaching. All the focus group questions are included in the CD-ROM.

Structure of the report

This chapter serves as an introduction to the nature and scope of the Education Survey. In Chapter 2, we provide a brief summary of the flight of Burmese nationals into Thailand, and the social and demographic structure of the refugee camps. We then introduce the education system and educational activities available in the camps in Chapter 3.

The findings from the survey are presented and discussed in Chapters 4 to 7. We examine school participation, the learning experience, issues pertaining to educational staff and adult learners.

Chapter 8 is the final chapter and it concludes the report with a series of recommendations.

Chapter 2 | Refugees from Burma³ in Thailand

...there is no intrinsic paradigmatic refugee figure to be at once recognised and registered regardless of historical contingencies. Instead... there are a thousand multifarious refugee experiences and a thousand refugee figures whose meanings and identities are negotiated in the process of displacement in time and place.

Soguk (1999, p.4)

This chapter summarizes the circumstances in which Burmese nationals fled to Thailand and the conditions that they face in the host country. It is not meant to be a comprehensive account but to act as a background for contextualizing the educational endeavours in the refugee camps.

Refugees from Burma

Refugees from Burma fleeing persecution, fighting and forced labour have been crossing the border into Thailand since 1984. At the border, approximately 140,000 refugees live in 10 official refugee camps; these camps have been in existence in one form or another since 1984. There are approximately 50,000 Karen living outside the camps and at least 150,000 ethnic Shan *prima facie* refugees living in Thailand (Lang, 2002). It is also estimated that there were at least 250,000 other people from Burma living in 'refugee-like' conditions (USCR, 2003).

The majority of the residents in the seven camps served by ZOA fled from the Karen State; many of them are ethnically Karen. The residents of the two camps in the north at the border between the Karenni state and Thailand are mostly Karenni. Having said this, the population in the refugee camps is composed of different ethnic groups representing the diversity of ethnic groups in Burma⁴:

³ In 1989, the military government re-named Burma as Myanmar. In this report, the term 'Burma' will be used to refer to the country, and Myanmar will be used where quoted by that name.

⁴ For a description of the different ethnic groups and a history of ethnicity, politics and war in Burma, see Smith (1984, 1999, 2002).

Burman⁵, Chin, Indian, Kachin, Mon, Naga, Rakhine (Arakan) and Shan among others.

The legal definition of a refugee, as defined by the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, is a person who has been judged to have 'a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion'. Thailand has historically accepted refugees within its borders although it is not a signatory to the Convention and is therefore not legally bound to comply with international law on the protection of refugees. It uses the terms 'persons fleeing from fighting', 'persons of concern (POC)' and 'temporarily displaced people' to classify Burmese nationals who cross the border seeking asylum.

Demographic and social structure of the seven refugee camps

Camp locations

The camps are spread out along the border between Thailand and Burma and their geographical locations are varied. Umphiem-Mai, Nu Po, Mae Ra Ma Luang and Mae La Oon are in mountainous areas. Umphiem-Mai is located in a mountainous range where the average temperature is much lower there than in the other camps. The location of the camps determines to some extent the needs of the residents – resources for firewood, food, the need for warm clothing, accessibility, transport and communication links. The degree to which Ministry of the Interior (MOI) regulations are applied also differs across camps.

Camp population and structure

According to the statistics provided by TBBC, there were 120,842 residents in the seven camps in July 2005, although this number changes constantly. In total, 51% of the residents were male and 49% were female. Mae La had the biggest population at about 49,000 and Don Yang the smallest at approximately 4,300. Table 6 shows a breakdown of the population by camp and gender.

⁵ 'Burman' refers to the majority ethnic group in Burma. 'Burmese', on the other hand, refers to language, citizenship and other national terms. Since 1989, the military government has used 'Bamar' instead of 'Burman' and 'Myanmars' for 'Burmese' (Smith, 2002).

Table 6 | Camp population by gender

Camp	Population		Total
	Male (%)	Female (%)	
Mae La^a	24960 (50.9)	24065 (49.1)	49025
Umphiem-Mai^a	9849 (51.5)	9287 (48.5)	19136
Nu Po^a	5947 (50.3)	5880 (49.7)	11827
Mae La Oon^b	7970 (52.2)	7309 (47.8)	15279
Mae Ra Ma Luang^b	6453 (51.6)	6059 (48.4)	12512
Tham Hin^c	4238 (48.6)	4480 (51.4)	8718
Don Yang^c	2177 (50.1)	2168 (49.9)	4345
Total	61594 (51.0)	59248 (49.0)	120 842

^a TBBC Monthly Report of Population (July 2005)

^b TBBC Monthly Report of Population (November 2005)

^c TBBC Monthly Report of Population (October 2005), includes 'persons of concern' (POC)

As the next table shows, there were 21,331 families in the camps and 43,418 children between the ages of 0 and 12; 53.4% were male and 46.6% were female. Children made up 35.9% of the total population.

Table 7 | Number of families and children by gender and camp

Camp	Families	Children 0-12 years		
		Male (%)	Female (%)	Total
Mae La^a	7557	8070 (51.5)	7597 (48.4)	15667
Umphiem-Mai^a	3335	5311 (61.7)	3291 (38.2)	8602
Nupo June^a	2941	2322 (51.6)	2174 (48.3)	4496
Mae La Oon^b	2737	2864 (51.8)	2665 (48.2)	5529
Mae Ra Ma Luang^b	2171	2201 (51.3)	2086 (48.7)	4287
Tham Hin^c	1736	1723 (49.6)	1753 (50.4)	3476
Don Yang^c	854	712 (52.3)	649 (47.7)	1361
Total	21331	23203 (53.4)	20215 (46.6)	43418

^a TBBC Monthly Report of Population (July 2005)

^b TBBC Monthly Report of Population (November 2005)

^c TBBC Monthly Report of Population (October 2005), includes 'persons of concern (POC)'

It is difficult to obtain precise statistical information on the population structure of the camps due to a number of reasons. First, the population is constantly in flux, with new refugees arriving and residents leaving every month. Moreover, there are many who leave and return regularly. Second, while there are statistics collected within the camps, there are many residents who, for one reason or another, are not registered in the camps. Third, the camp statistics are used for distributing rations, and are based on gender and limited age categories. Thus, although these figures are useful, they do not provide information on ethnicity and religion⁶. Fourth, the statistics collected by the UNHCR⁷ are used for

⁶ Even this is difficult to ascertain in reality, as classifications are never clear. For example, there is a community within the camps which uses a number of labels to identify itself: Muslim, Black Karen, Indian. In interviews and discussions, the majority reported their ethnicity as 'Muslim'.

⁷ We would like to thank Mr Thirawat from UNHCR for this information.

registration purposes using the definition 'persons fleeing from fighting'. This means that the statistics do not distinguish between those who live in the camps and those who do not.

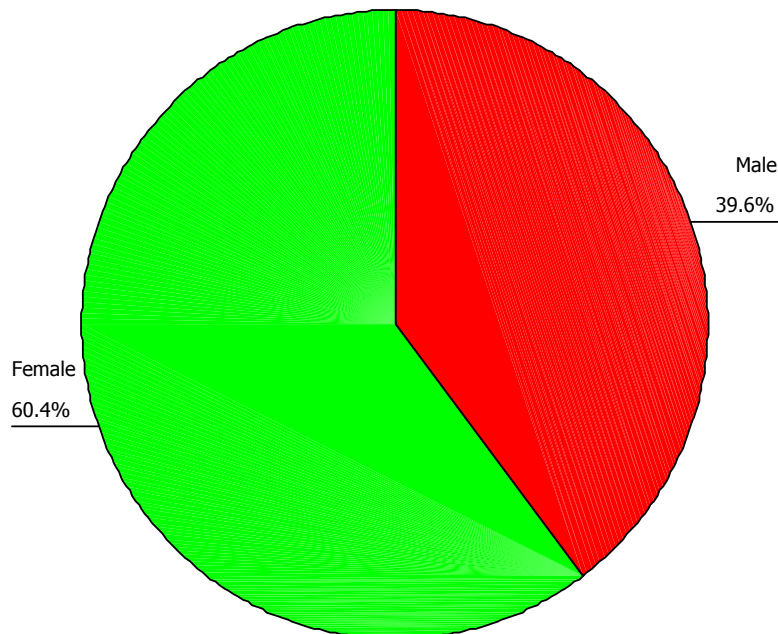
Sample profile

In the absence of camp-wide data, we present the demographic information collected from our respondents. Although we collected information from other groups, we only present data from respondents from the family target group so as not to distort the picture. The profiles of other groups are presented in separate chapters. We have also collated information from the previous surveys to compare data across time. As mentioned before, the comparisons have to be read with caution as the sample numbers and the type of questions asked are different for each survey.

Gender

In our sample, 60.4% of the respondents were female and 39.6% were male.

Figure 1 | Gender



Ethnicity

The respondents were made up of Skaw Karen (73.8%), Pwo Karen (17%) and Muslim (6.5%). The other ethnic groups are listed in Figure 2.

Figure 2 | Ethnic group

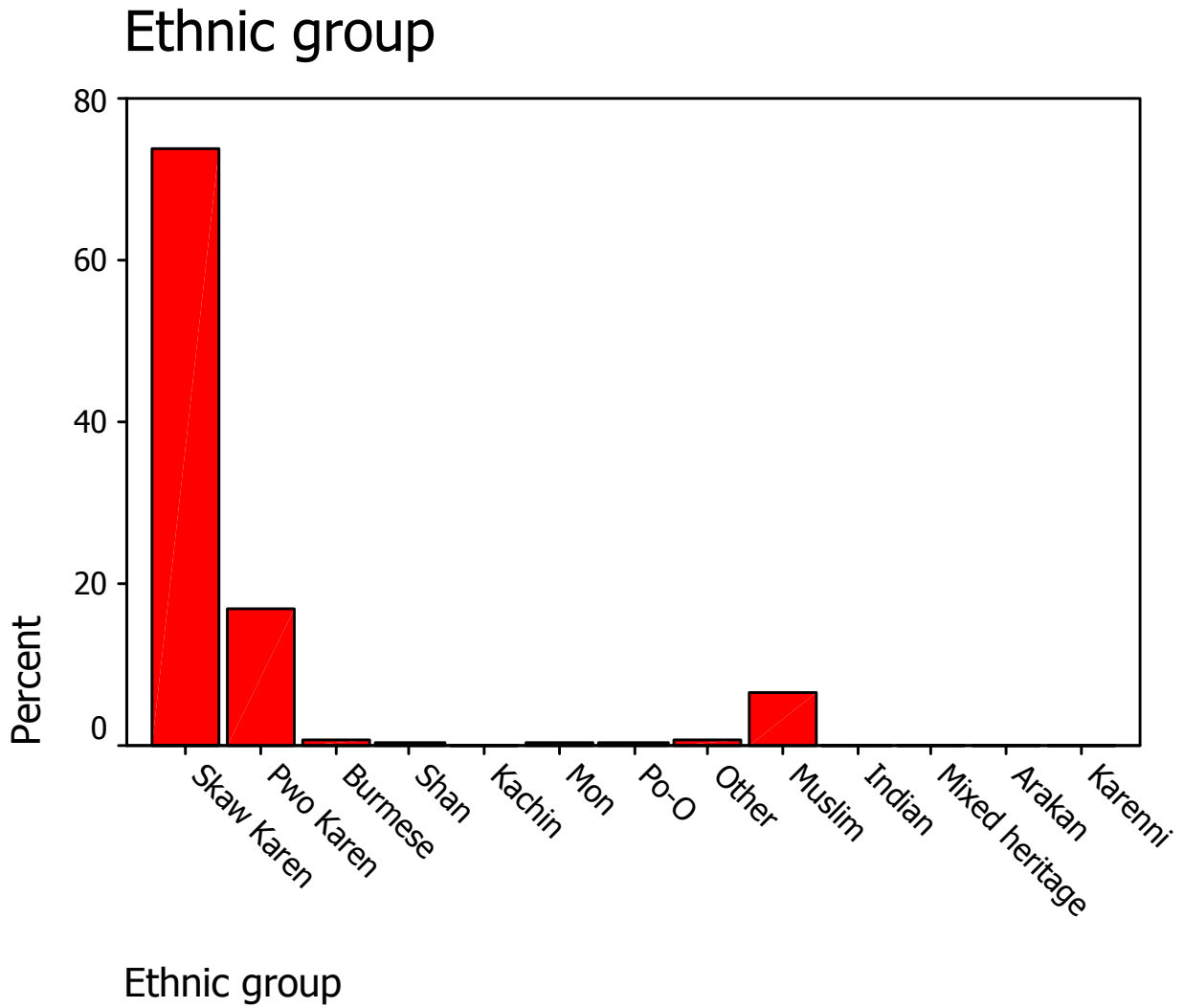
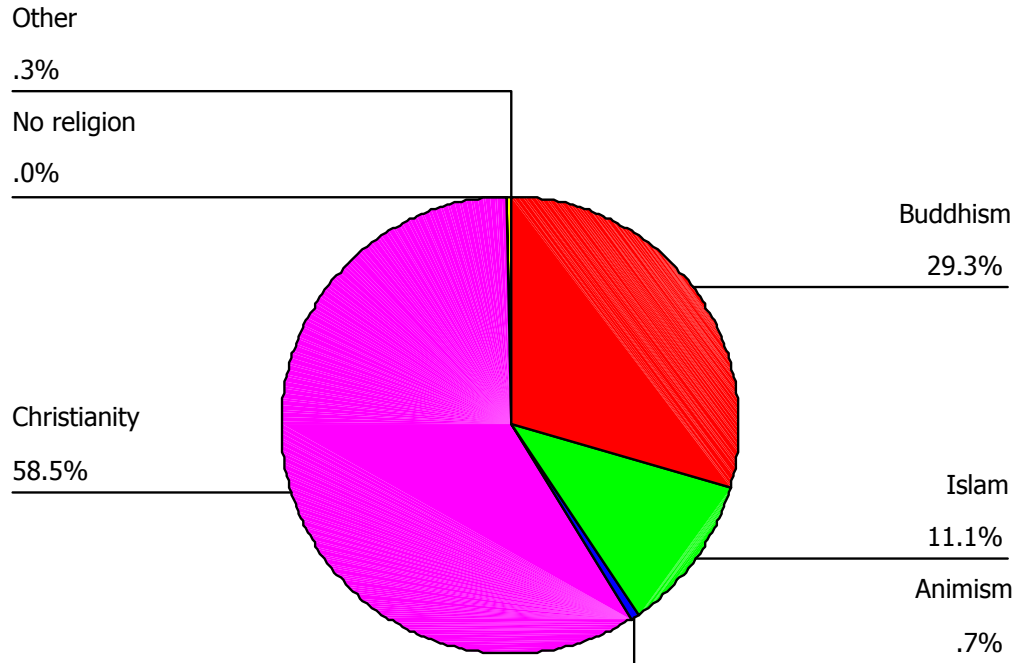


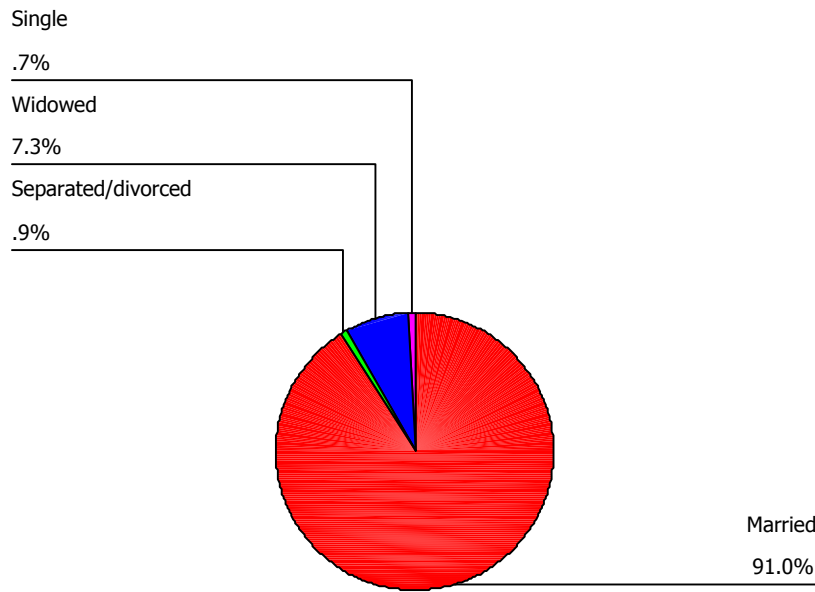
Figure 3 | Religion



Religion

The majority (58.5%) of respondents was Christian, 29.3% were Buddhist, 11.1% were Muslim. The rest were either Animists, had no religion or had another religion.

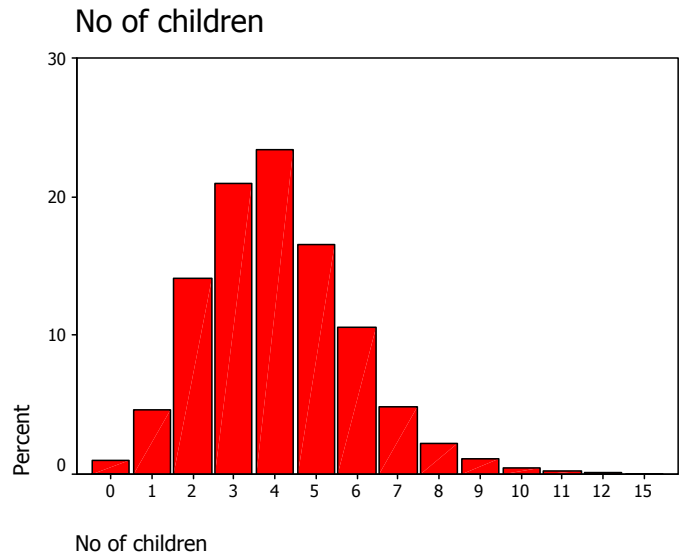
Figure 4 | Marital status



Marital status
 In our sample, 91% of the respondents were married, 7.3% were widowed, and 1.6% were either separated/divorced or single.

Number of children
 The number of children per family ranged from zero to 15, with the most frequently (23.4%) occurring number being four children.

Figure 5 | Number of children



Number of people in the household

The number of people living in the household ranged from one to 19. The most number of respondents reported that there are six people living in their household.

Figure 6 | Number of people in the household

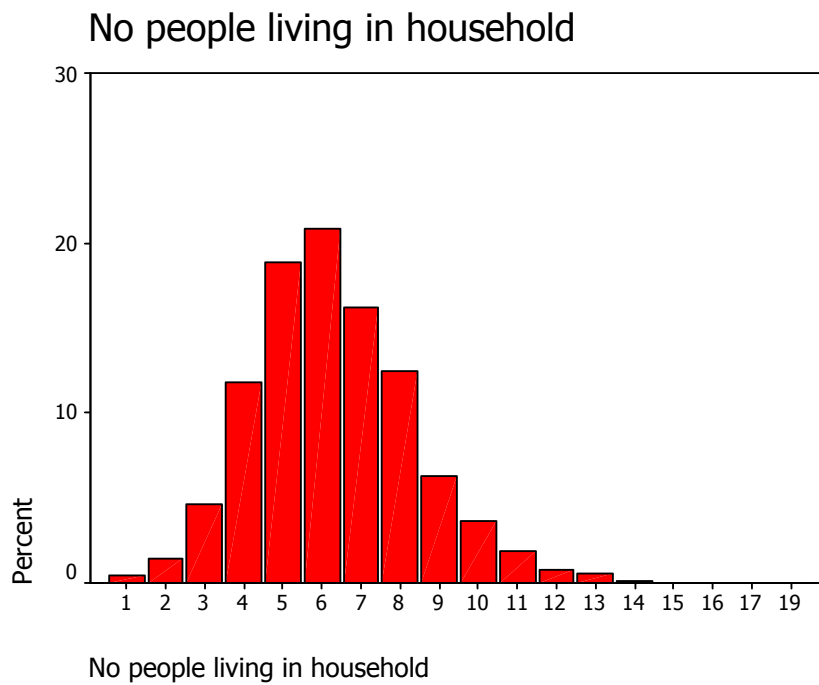
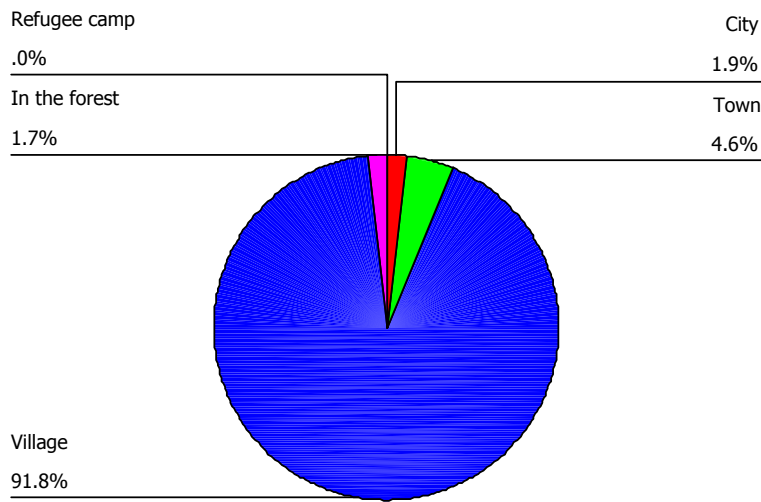


Figure 7 | Type of place of residence



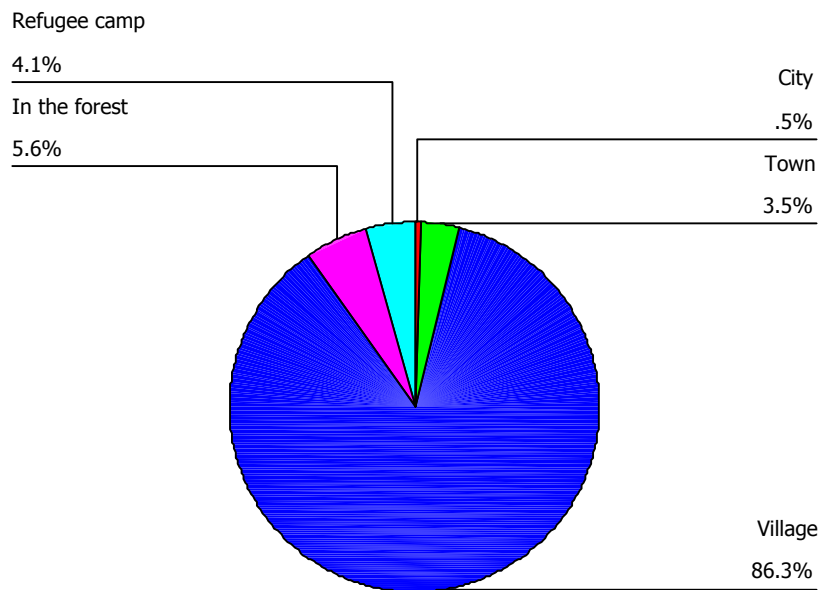
Type of place of residence

The majority of the respondents (91.8%) were from villages, the rest were from towns, cities and refugee camps.

Figure 8 | Type of place of residence before camp

Type of place of residence before camp

Before coming to the refugee camp, the majority of respondents (86.3%) had been living in a village, 5.6% in the forest, 4.1% in a refugee camp and the rest in a town or city.



Reasons for leaving

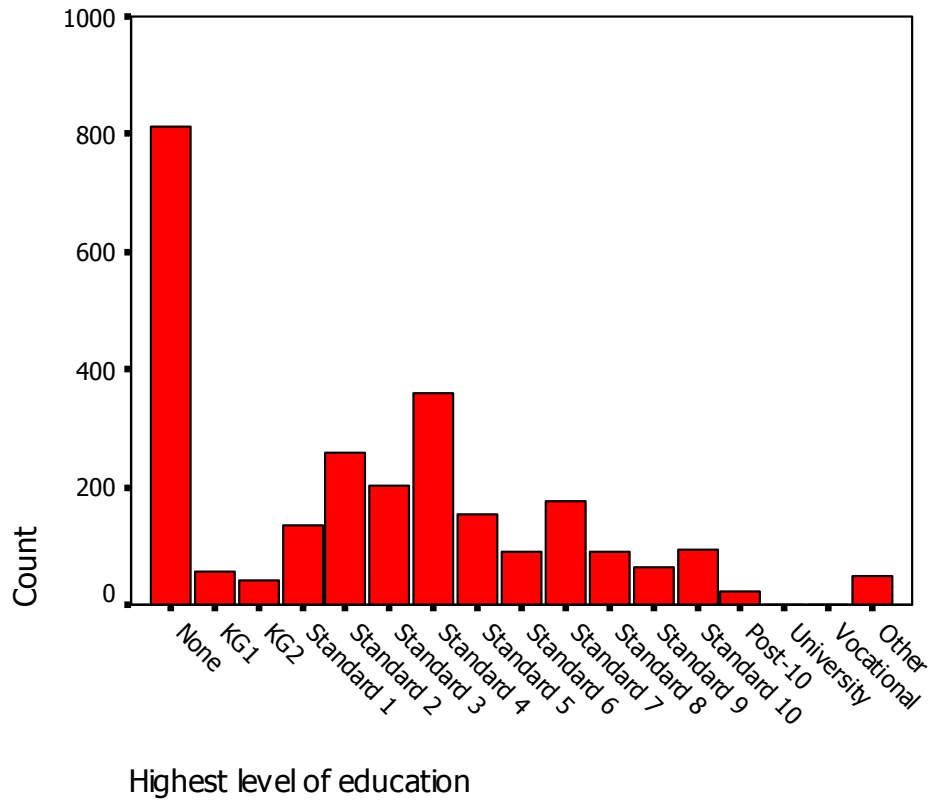
Respondents could choose as many reasons as they wanted to for having left Burma. We combined the total number of responses from all respondents. So, for example, in a sample of only two respondents, if respondent A chose options 1 and 2, and respondent B chose options 2 and 3, these amounted to four responses altogether. We then calculated the number of times (in percentage form) each option was chosen. So, in our example, option 2 was chosen twice out of four times, making it 50% of all responses.

The majority of all responses (65.5%) was 'Running away from soldiers' and 'Running away from fighting'. Of all responses, 13.7% was 'Had to pay a lot of tax'. The other responses were spread out between 'Born here', 'Not enough money', 'No paid work' and 'To study'. The other reasons which were given were fleeing from forced labour, and the death of parents and relatives.

Highest education level

Almost a third of the respondents had no formal education, 13.9% had completed Standard 4. The rest were distributed amongst the different levels as shown in Figure 9. These figures are similar to the 1996 findings.

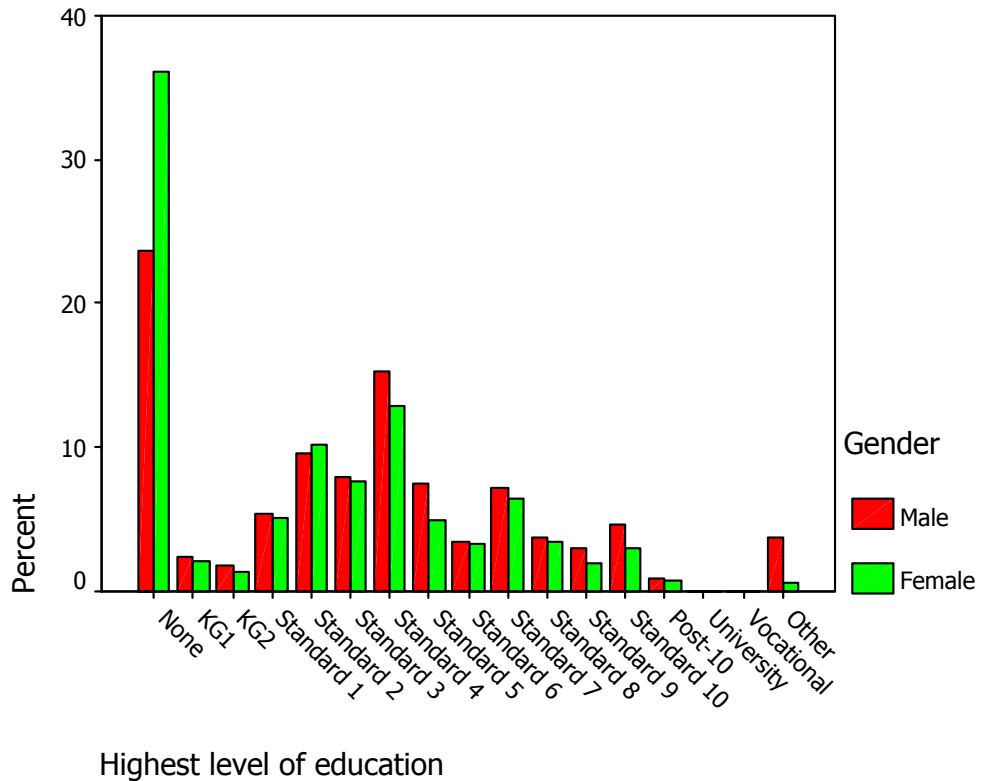
Figure 9 | Highest level of education



In our sample, about 25% of the men and about 36% of women had no education. These figures are lower than those for 1996 and 2000. Comparing across gender, 70% of those without education were women.

At all levels except Standard 2, the percentage of women completing a standard was lower than for men. This reflects the pattern found in the previous three surveys. Only 4.6% of men and 3% of women had completed high school education; this is a much lower percentage than reported in the 1996 survey.

Figure 10 | Highest level of education by gender



Literacy

In this survey, respondents' levels of literacy were self-reported. We did not assess their literacy using tests. Respondents were asked how well they speak, write and read Skaw Karen, Burmese and English.

Of the respondents whose home language was Skaw Karen, slightly more than half reported being able to read and write Skaw Karen 'easily', and about a fifth reported not being able to read or write Skaw Karen. The percentage of those with reading ability is higher than those with writing ability.

Table 8 | Reading and writing abilities of Skaw Karen-speaking respondents (percentage)

Skaw Karen	Easily	Moderately	With difficulty	Not at all
Reading ability	58.6	14.7	8	18.8
Writing ability	55.9	15.8	8	20.3
Burmese				
Reading ability	23	23.8	14.9	38.3
Writing ability	21	24.1	15.5	39.4
Speaking ability	30.5	25	18.4	26.1

Their literacy level for Burmese was much lower than for Skaw Karen. Only about a fifth of the respondents were able to read and write Burmese 'easily', almost a quarter read and wrote Burmese 'moderately', about 40% were not able to read or write Burmese. However, their oral literacy in Burmese was higher than their writing and reading ability.

For Skaw Karen, the reading and writing abilities of women was lower than men across all levels, as shown in Figures 11 and 12.

Figure 11 | Reading ability in Skaw Karen by gender

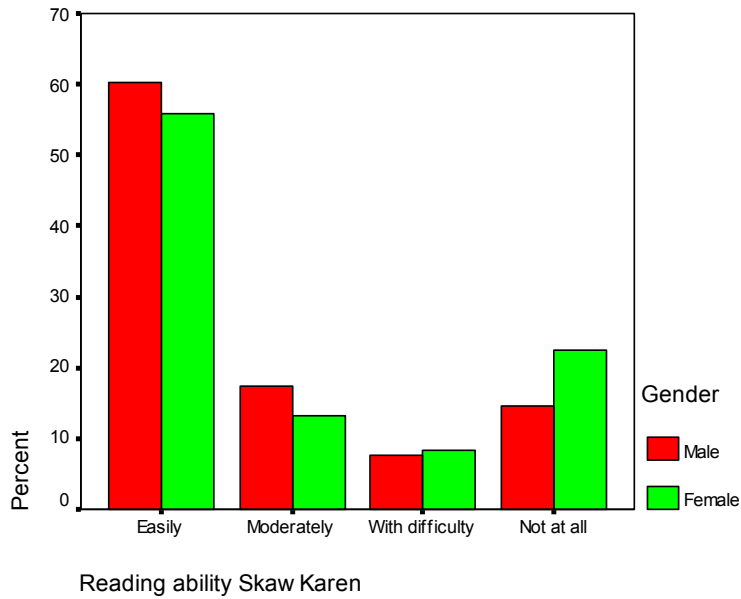
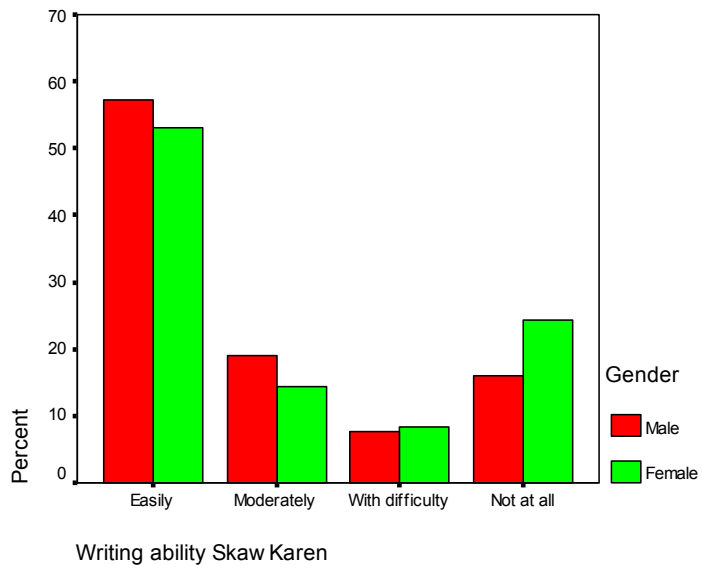


Figure 12 | Writing ability in Skaw Karen by gender



For Burmese speakers, about 60% read and wrote Burmese 'easily' or 'moderately'. About a quarter did not read or write Burmese.

Table 9 | Reading and writing abilities of Burmese-speaking respondents (percentage)

Burmese	Easily	Moderately	With difficulty	Not at all
Reading ability	43.7	21.7	11.2	23.4
Writing ability	40.7	22.7	11.2	25.4

The reading and writing abilities were markedly different for both genders. In general, women's reading and writing abilities in Burmese was much lower than men's. When we compare the reading and writing abilities of both groups of women, the percentage of Burmese-speaking women who could not read or write at all is lower than that of Skaw Karen-speaking women.

Figure 13 | Reading ability in Burmese by gender

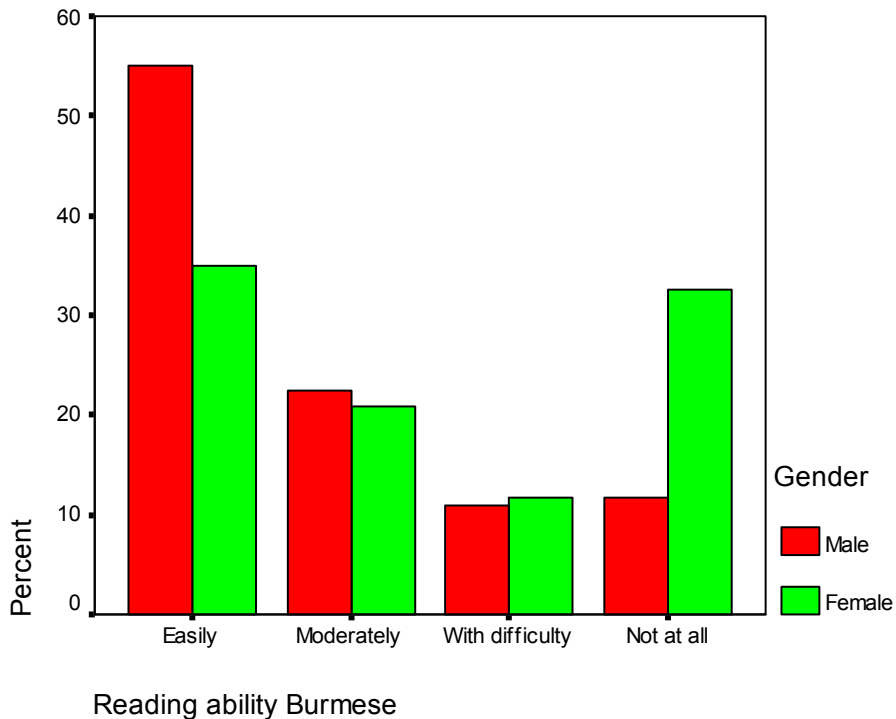
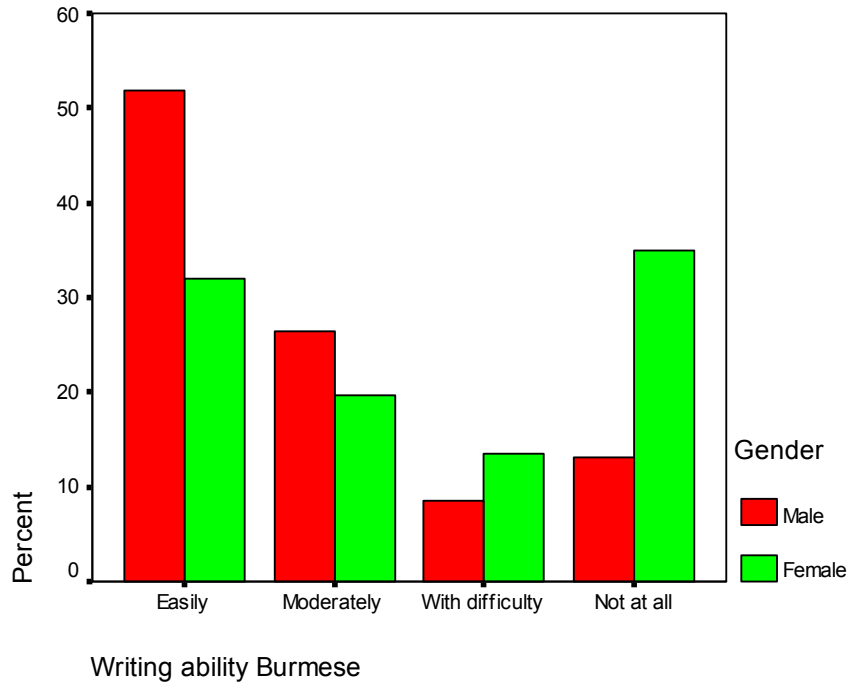


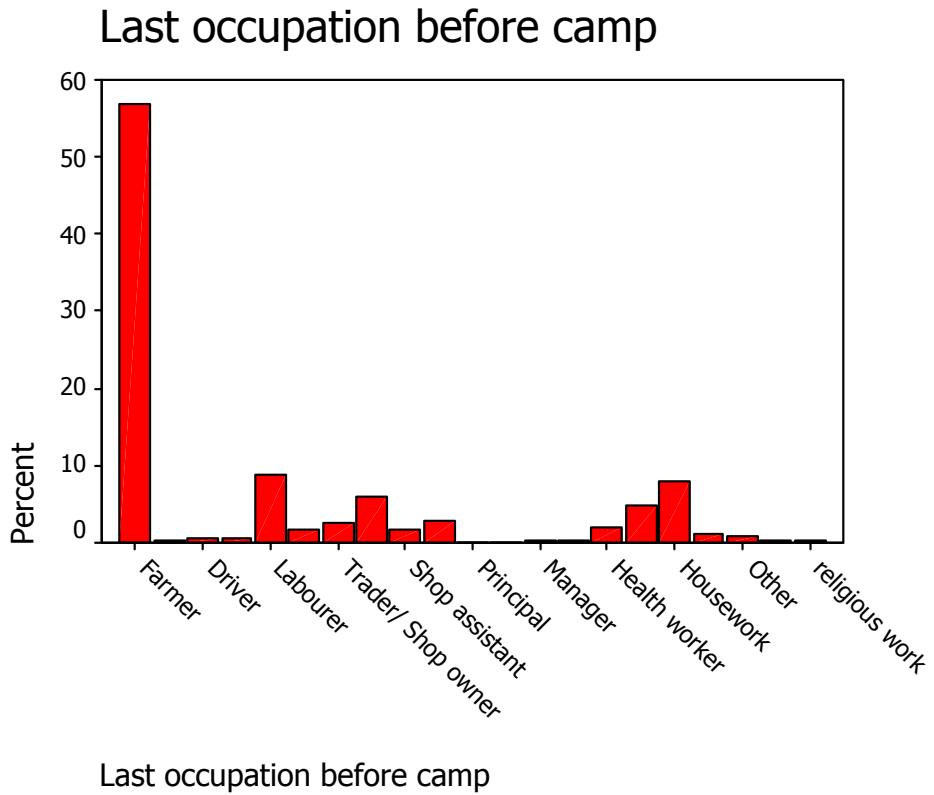
Figure 14 | Writing ability in Burmese by gender



Occupation

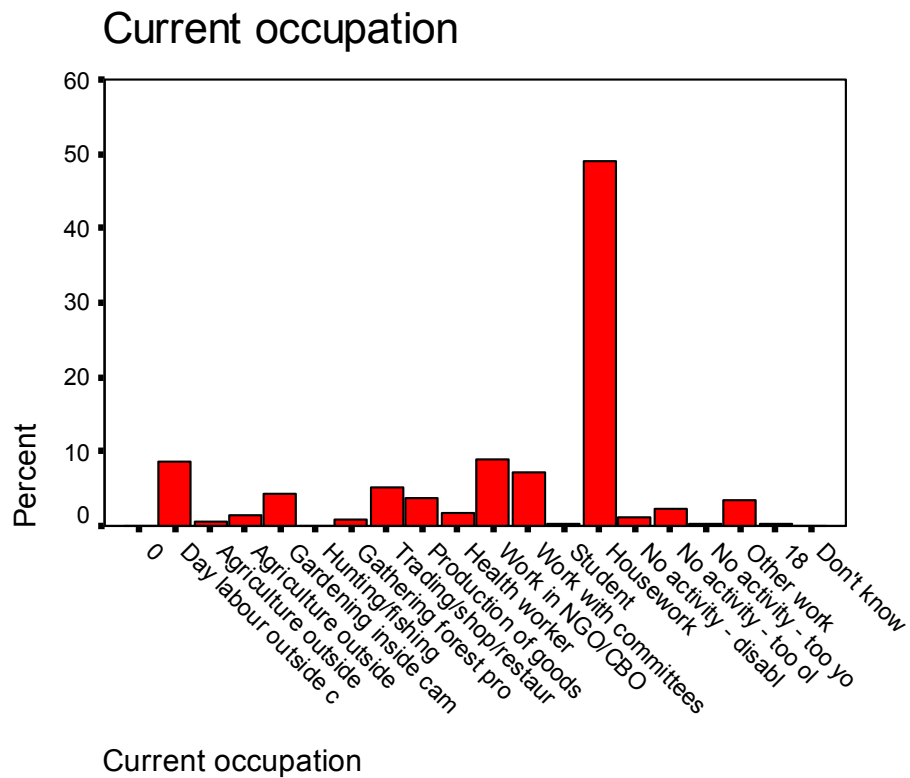
The majority of respondents had been farmers before coming to camp (56.8%), followed by labourers (8.7%).

Figure 15 | Last occupation before camp



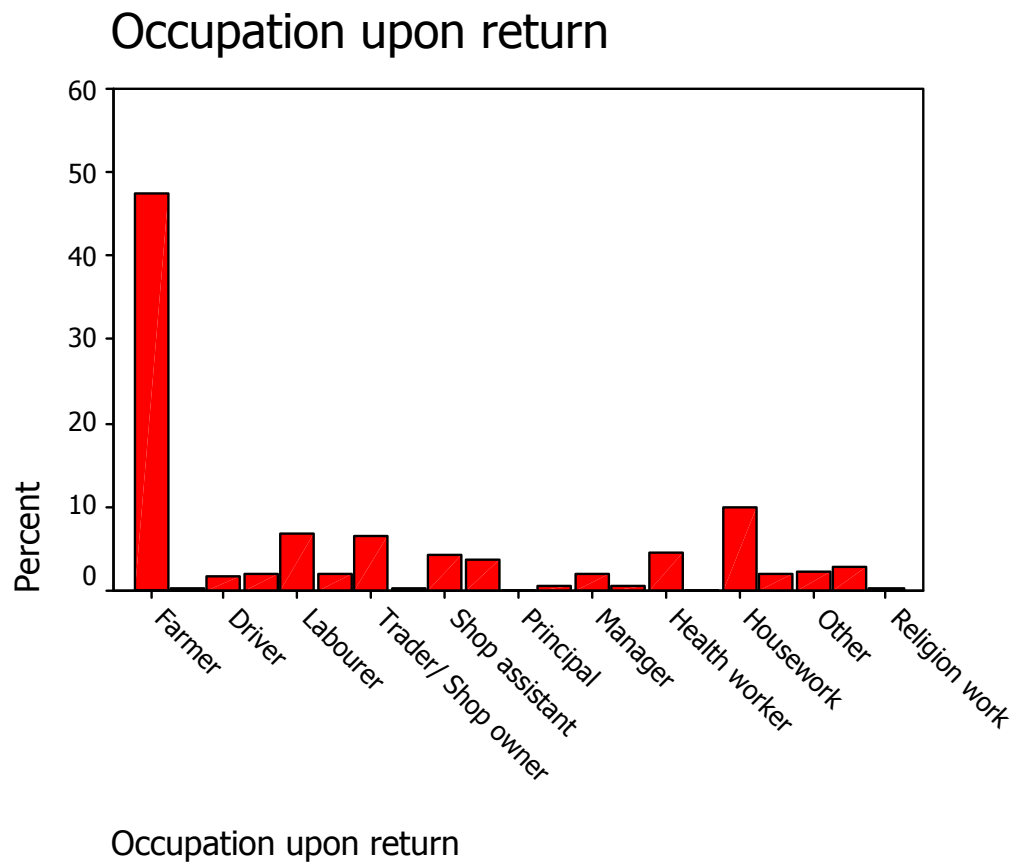
Regarding current occupation, the largest percentage (36.6%) of respondents was involved in 'housework', followed by 'trading/shop/restaurant work' (21.4%) and 'day labour outside the camp' (18%). The current occupation of respondents is markedly different from those of the 1995 survey, where 40.6% were involved in agriculture, followed by day labour (18.5%) and gardening (13.4%). Tightened restrictions on farming inside and outside the camp have greatly reduced camp residents' subsistence opportunities. Further, a higher percentage of respondents are now involved in housework than previously.

Figure 16 | Current occupation



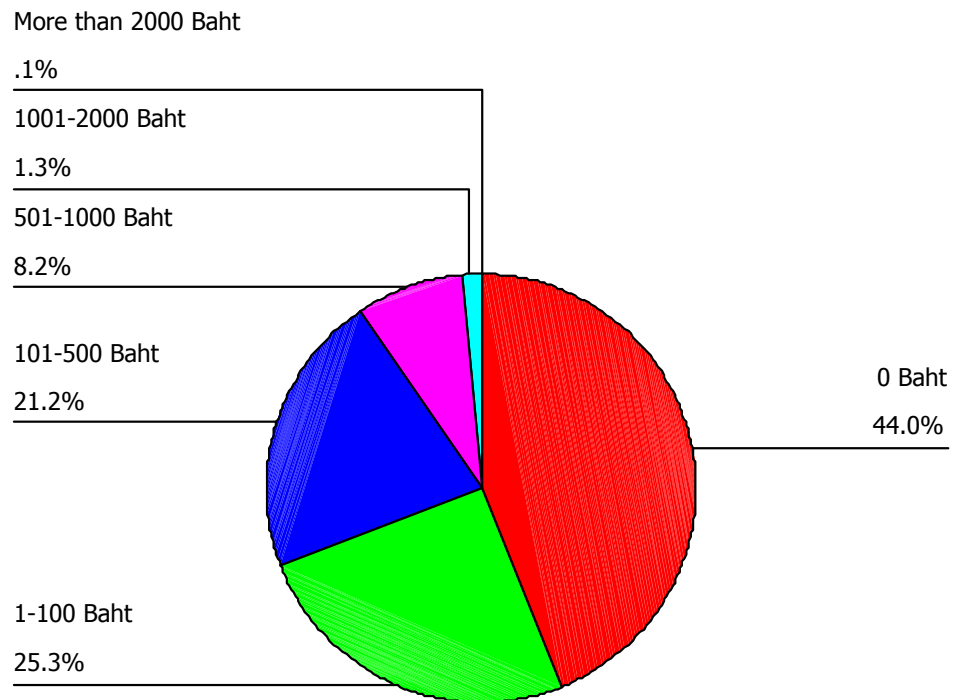
When asked about what they thought their occupation would be upon return to Burma, 47.6% said that they would be farmers, 10.1% said that they would be doing housework. The rest were spread out among several different types of work as shown in Figure 17.

Figure 17 | Occupation upon return



Income

Figure 18 | Monthly personal income

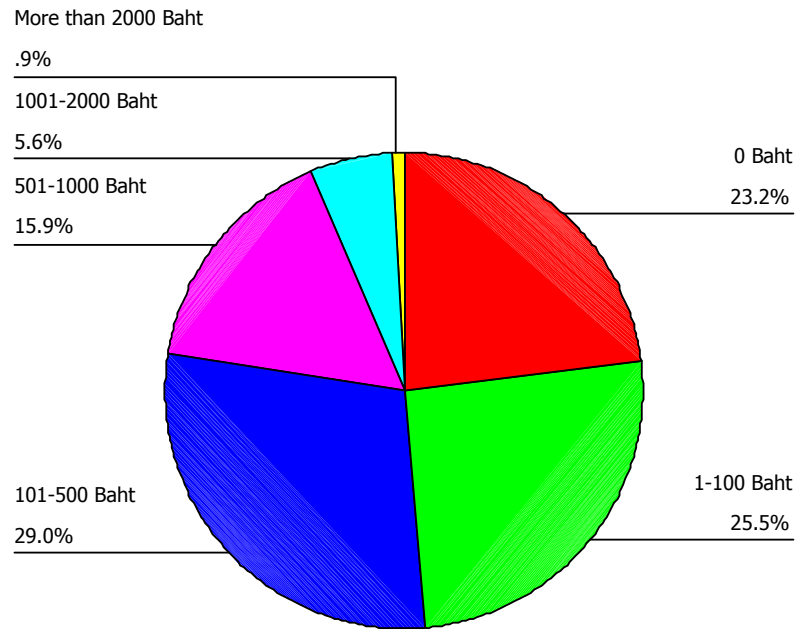


Of those who responded, 44% earned 0B per month; about a quarter earned 1-100B; about a fifth earned 101-500B; 8.2% earned between 501 and 1000B, and 1.4% earned more than 1001B.

In 2000, only 2% of the sample was able to earn income from day labour which was around 200B per month. In that year, only 7% of the respondents reported earning a monthly income from work inside the camps.

Figure 19 | Monthly household income

For household income, 77.6% of the respondents reported earning some income; 23.2% had no household income. About a quarter earned 1-100B per month, almost a third earned 101-500B, and 15.9% earned 500-1000B. A small minority earned more than 1000B.



The income levels reported are higher than those in 1996 and 2002. In 1996, mean household income was 187B. Very few respondents had no income, over 40% had mean monthly incomes of less than 100B, less than one quarter over 300B and almost no households have average monthly incomes over 750B. The majority of households were involved in subsistence agriculture.

In 2002, 43% had no household income, about a quarter earned between 20-100B, 13% earned 101-300B, 9% earned 301-500 and 11% over 500B.

Some care needs to be taken in interpreting levels of income. First of all, inflation has to be taken into consideration. Second, the camps have their own economy and prices are different from the rest of Thailand. Third, income only measures monetary exchanges. This is significant because there are many non-monetary transactions, and the household income is supplemented by some subsistence agriculture, non-monetary activities and goods.

At present, there are tighter restrictions on working outside the camps and on foraging, hunting and gathering food in the vicinity. This effectively causes a fall in the non-monetary income of residents.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided basic information on the social and geographic nature of the camps. It serves as a backdrop to the next chapter which looks at education in the camps in detail.

Refugees from Burma fled to escape fighting, forced labour and poverty. They are spread out along the Thai-Burmese border in camps of varying sizes, densities and geographical locations and in various towns and cities in Thailand.

Those who reside in refugee camps are supported by NGOs that provide basic rations, technical and material support, health and education and a host of other services. The residents have also formed their own camp committees and local organizations that coordinate and provide services for camp residents.

Our sample of respondents was taken from a list of all the families that live in the seven camps served by ZOA. The majority of them are Karen, followed by a group that identifies itself as 'Muslim'. The majority of the Karen respondents are Christian, but a sizeable majority is Buddhist. Almost all respondents were married and their household size ranged between one and nineteen.

The majority of refugees came from rural areas in Burma and slightly more than half were farmers. Slightly more than a third reported that their current occupation is housework, followed by trading and day labour. Almost half of all respondents did not earn any monetary income, while an equivalent proportion earned between one and 500 Baht per month.

On the whole, the level of formal schooling received was low: almost a third had no formal schooling, slightly more than 10% had primary level schooling, less than 5% had secondary level schooling, and about 1% had post-secondary level schooling.

Chapter 3 | Education in the Refugee Camps

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.

Nelson Mandela

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, a *system* is 'a set of things working together as a mechanism or interconnecting network'. It is pertinent to say, for general education, that there is an education system in the seven camps. By general education, we mean primary and secondary education provided in schools. By education system, we mean that there is an organizational framework for policy-making, coordination and programme delivery. These are governed by a nascent set of regulations and standards which are under review. As compared to other emergency education situations, the general education provided in all seven camps is relatively standardized and comprehensive. This system, however, is not all encompassing. Organizations and individuals may set up schools independently.

With regards to other forms of education such as adult education, there are mechanisms and strong formal and informal organizational structures which attempt to reduce the duplication of educational activities within the same camp and to serve the needs of different learners, given the restrictions on resources and capacity.

Management of educational activities in the camps

There is a myriad of local and international organizations and bodies involved in overseeing, providing and supporting educational activities. The division between policy-makers, providers and funders is not always clear-cut as indicated in Table 10.

Table 10 | Policy-makers, providers, funders and coordinators

	Policy-maker	Provider	Funder	Coordinator
Camp education/ VT committee				✓
CBOs		✓		
KED	✓			✓
KRC				✓
NGOs		✓	✓	
NHEC	✓			✓

Policy-makers

In general, policies are made at both the camp level by the Karen Refugee Committee (KRC) and at the central level by the Karen Education Department (KED). These are supported by the Camp Education Committees and the Vocational Training (VT) Education Committees. The KED is limited in its activities by the fact that it does not have legal status in Thailand, and its staff members have difficulty travelling to the camps. This means that while it represents itself as the Education Department of the Karen, it does not actually have much contact with camp residents or control over what happens in the camps. The purpose of the KED is to oversee education in Karen schools, both inside the Karen State and the predominantly Karen refugee camps along the Thai-Burmese border. Administratively, the Karen State is divided into seven districts. Each district has an education officer who is in charge of managing education in his/her area. This is also the case in the refugee camps.

The National Health and Education Commission (NHEC) represents the interests of Burmese ethnic minority groups. It organizes curriculum development and teacher training, and promotes a standardized approach towards education and health services among the different ethnic groups (Lamberink, 2002). Although it attempts to generate and implement policy, it has difficulties doing so due to the restrictions on coordination and funding.

Coordinating bodies

The Karen Refugee Committee (KRC) plays a coordinating role between the camp schools, the KED, NGOs and donor agencies. To a certain extent, the KED also plays a coordinating role within the camps, and between camps and the Karen State. The NHEC plays a coordinating role between different ethnic minority groups beyond the camp level.

At the camp level, the Camp Education Committees and the Vocational Training (VT) Education Committees act as coordinating and information-sharing platforms for the various camp bodies. There are also informal networks between these organizations and bodies.

The Education Committee coordinates the activities between camp schools. This committee comprises school principals and members of the Camp Committee.

Providers

In theory, the KED is responsible for primary, secondary and post-secondary education for children in the camp, although its focus is on primary and secondary education. Whether it does so is a matter of dispute within the camps. Other organizations such as the CBOs (sometimes in collaboration with NGOs) and some NGOs provide educational programmes for the community as a whole and training for their own staff. The educational programmes provided to the community may be stand-alone courses or they may be connected to schools, but the NGOs do not run schools under the jurisdiction of the KED. There are schools which have been set up and are run independently from KED management. Many of them use the curriculum that is approved by the KED.

Funders

The NGOs and other donors fund KED schooling, other non-school learning programmes and training for educational staff.

Different types of learning activities provided in the camps

Table 11 | Educational programmes in the seven camps

Type	Target group	Content	Institutions	Organi- zation
Primary, middle and secondary schooling	Children and young people of school-going age	General education using KED-approved 'curriculum', Arts programmes and some vocational programmes	KED-registered/ approved schools run by school committees	KED
Post-secondary schooling	Young people who have completed secondary schooling	General education; specialized courses: English, leadership, medic courses; KED-approved 'curriculum'	Post-10 schools	KED
Religious learning	Children and young people of school-going age	Religion	Bible schools Buddhist schools Koranic schools	Religious school committees
Vocational	Adult learners, dropout students, post-10 students, persons with disability	Automechanic, radio mechanic, agriculture, sewing, weaving, cooking, basket weaving, music, computers; KED-approved 'curriculum'	Vocational schools	VT committee, ZOA, TBBC, CBOs
Night schools	Adult learners, children and young people who stopped going to school	KED-approved 'curriculum'	Night schools – only in Tham Hin and Don Yang	
Literacy courses	Adult learners, children and young people who stopped going to school	Skaw Karen, Pwo Karen, and Burmese language courses; KED-approved 'curriculum'	At students' houses, CBO premises	CBOs
Language	All	English, Thai; KED-approved 'curriculum'	CBO premises	CBOs
Craft	All	Soap-making, candle-making, weaving, knitting	CBO premises	COERR
Awareness-raising	All	HIV, mine risk, domestic violence	CBO premises	CBOs

Primary, middle and secondary schooling

Primary schooling consists of kindergarten A and B, and Standards 1 to 4; the middle cycle runs for three years from Standards 5 to 7. High school begins in Standard 8 and ends in Standard 10. There is no official corresponding age for the different levels, as there is a constant stream of new arrivals. Young people have often had their schooling disrupted in Burma; this means that they tend to enroll in lower grades than would be expected for their age.

The academic year begins in early June and ends in March the following year. There is a two-week break in October and a week at Christmas. The school week begins on Monday and ends on Friday. In general, students attend 35 periods of class lasting 45 minutes each.

The curriculum and the syllabus

A curriculum is the aggregate of courses of study given in a learning environment. The courses are arranged sequentially to ensure progression from lower to higher levels. In schools, a curriculum spans several grades. For example, we start with addition and multiplication in Mathematics in the lower grades and progress towards calculus in the higher grades.

A syllabus is a basic structure which sets out the requirements of a course of study. In schools, this is set up for each subject at each grade, and includes content, recommended textbooks, staff and student expectations, examination dates and, grading criteria and policies.

The content taught in the schools in the refugee camps is more akin to a set of syllabi for each grade and for each subject than to a curriculum, and this only applies to some subjects. This came about because the teaching content was developed by ABWAID in 1997, where only teachers' guides and workbooks were produced. In other words, the syllabi were created without a framework which linked them sequentially. This then became known as the 'curriculum'.

ZOA and the KED curriculum unit are now addressing both the misconceptions and the need for an overall curriculum framework which ensures coherent progression between the grades⁸. The curriculum framework is currently being developed, and it would be worthwhile to develop syllabi for all subjects which link across the grades.

The subjects taught in the schools in the camps are set out in Table 12.

Table 12 | Subjects taught in the schools in the camps

Subjects	*KG – Standard 4	Standards 5-10
Burmese	✓	✓
English	✓	✓
Karen	✓	✓
Maths	✓	✓
Geography	✓	✓
History		✓
Science		✓
Health	✓	

*KG – Kindergarten

There are some craft, arts and vocational activities offered in schools. In addition, the different CBOs offer a host of short-term and/or one-off awareness-raising programmes in schools.

Assessment

Schools set their own tests. Normally, three tests are conducted over the academic year. The grade achieved by a student is calculated by combining the scores of all three tests.

The KED sets standard examinations for students in Standards 4 and 7. The examinations are conducted at the end of the academic year in late February/early March.

Progression

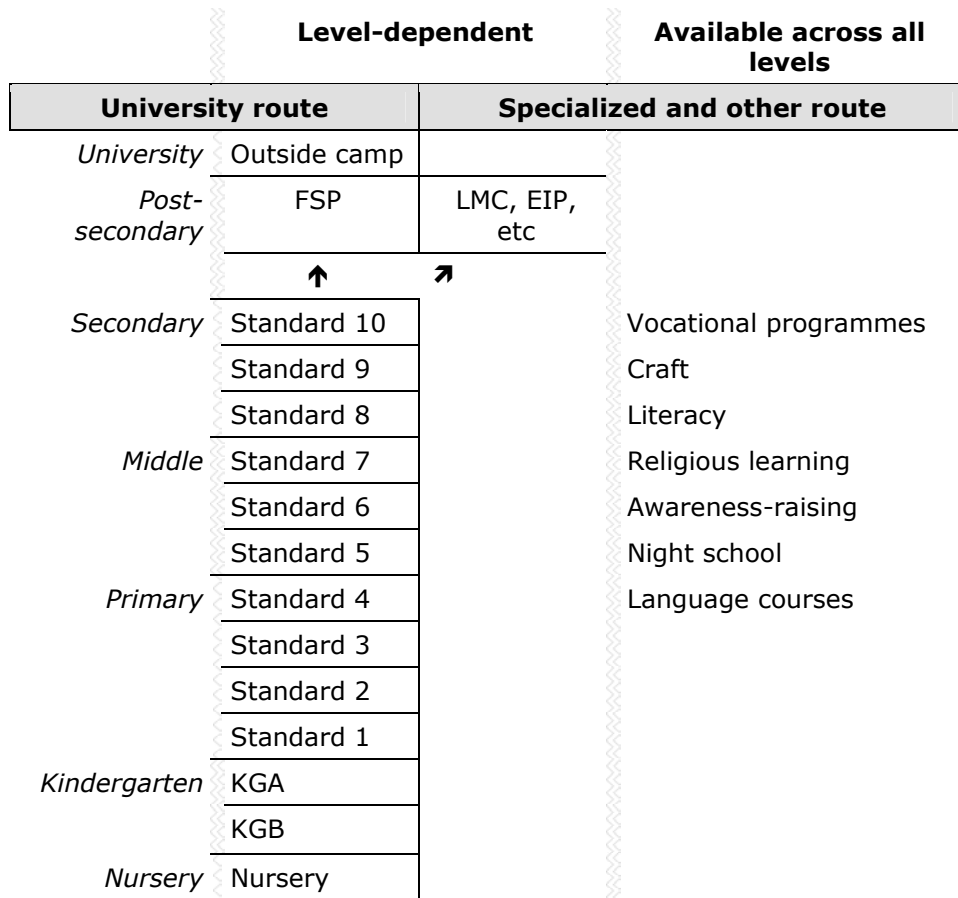
Students who fail repeat a level. If they fail twice, they are promoted to the next level. This may seem contrary to conventional ideas about assessment and progression. However,

⁸ We would like to thank Kyaw Moo of the KED for providing this information.

there are no alternative educational institutions and so this is a way of keeping students in learning and in school.

The progression route for the different types of educational programmes are set out in Figure 20. Completion of general education is required to gain access to post-secondary schools. Only certain post-secondary schools prepare students for entry into higher education. The other educational activities are available to all regardless of their education levels.

Figure 20 | Progression routes within the camps



FSP – Further Studies Programme
 LMC – Leadership Management Course
 EIP – English Immersion Programme

The institutions

There are 58 mainstream schools in the seven refugee camps. Table 13 shows the number of schools by camp.

Table 13 | Number of primary and secondary schools in the camps

Camp	Mae La	Umphiem-Mai	Nu Po	Mae La Oon	Mae Ra Ma Luang	Tham Hin	Don Yang	Total
No. of schools	24	7	8	7	10	1	1	58

Table 14 sets out the different types of schools.

Table 14 | Different types of schools in the camps

General education schools	Religious schools
Schools set up by the camp community	Bible schools
Schools set up by the Muslim community	Buddhist schools - 'thirisanda'
Mission schools	Koranic schools

Schools set up by the camp community receive financial support from ZOA and other organizations. These include 'Muslim' schools. They are 'Muslim' in that they are set up by the Muslim community, and predominantly attended by Muslim students. These schools do not teach religion.

Similarly, mission schools are similar to mainstream schools except that they were set up by missionaries, and they receive funding from other sources as well as ZOA.

Religious schools are different from mainstream schools in that they teach religion. Some teach religious content only while others combine religious teaching with other content.

The day-to-day management of ordinary schools is overseen by the School Committee. All the schools in the Karen education system have a School Committee – this is usually made up of parents, teachers and camp committee members.

Funding

In general, schools charge school fees. However, most parents have difficulty paying them. It is often the case that children whose families are unable to pay school fees are allowed to attend school. The School Committees administer the income from school fees.

The funds for running schools and the education system come from a variety of sources. ZOA funds a majority of the costs: school buildings, teaching and learning materials, textbooks, sports equipment, RTT and principal subsidies. ZOA and World Education/ Consortium are responsible for teacher subsidies, which is currently 500B per month. Other NGOs such as COERR, ICS and TBBC are also responsible for school materials and other support.

Infrastructure

As mentioned above, the policies of the Royal Thai Government (RTG) directly and indirectly affect the educational structure and opportunities in the camps. As the refugees are not allowed to build permanent structures in the camp, all the schools and classrooms are temporary and open-air⁹. They are constructed out of bamboo and dried leaves. A typical classroom has benches and tables fixed to the ground. There is usually a blackboard in the front of the classroom. The classrooms are divided by bamboo screens which are not effective in blocking out noise from other classes. There is no electricity nor are there science laboratories.

ZOA is currently funding school construction in Nu Po camp and in Mae La, and is looking into ways of enhancing the learning environment through improved school design, given the restrictions on building materials. ZOA also maintains school buildings in Mae Ra Ma Luang, Mae La Oon, Tham Hin and Don Yang. COERR also contributes to school building construction in Tham Hin and Don Yang, but this is managed by ZOA. ICS maintains school buildings in Mae La. ICS and COERR are jointly responsible for school buildings in Umphiem-Mai.

⁹ According to UNHCR (2003), Thailand has the highest number of temporary and open-air classrooms in the 22 host countries surveyed in its note on refugee education. The other countries are Algeria, Bangladesh, Botswana, Burundi, Congo, DR Congo, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Iraq, Kenya, Namibia, Nepal, Pakistan, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Yemen.

Post-secondary education

Post-secondary education is commonly referred to as Post-10 education. Post-secondary education can be categorized into three types: those that offer a general course of studies (e.g., Further Studies Programme (FSP)), those that prepare participants for a vocation (e.g., Teacher Preparation Course (TPC), Nurse/Medic Training), and, finally, those that equip students with specific skills (e.g., English Immersion Programme (EIP), Leadership Management Course (LMC), Kawthoolei Karen Baptist Bible School (KKBBS)). Although the latter two types are vocational in that they prepare students for specific kinds of work, they are administered differently from what are commonly called vocational training (VT) programmes. Also, students are required to have passed Standard 10 and entrance examinations to attend these courses. For VT programmes, students are not required to possess any particular educational qualifications.

There are very few post-10 programmes, particularly when we compare the number of places to the number of high school graduates. The demand for places is high and the progression route for students who do not succeed in entering post-secondary education is limited, as can be seen in Figure 20. This issue has been identified by ZOA, KED and camp residents; currently, there are discussions taking place about introducing distance education and other programmes to address the needs of these students.

Vocational learning¹⁰

There are different vocational training programmes offered by the various organizations which work within and with the camps. The programmes offered by schools and CBOs in collaboration with ZOA are sewing, basket weaving, bakery, tinsmith, blacksmith, auto-mechanic, stove making, music, agriculture, goat-raising, radio mechanics, knitting, cooking, carpentry, typing and stove-making. The target groups include dropout students, the disabled, adult learners, young learners, women, teachers, persons of concern (POCs) and residents in general. The courses last between one week and three years.

¹⁰ We would like to thank Hans Odijk for providing this information.

Table 15 shows the types of CBOs involved in the provision of vocational training and Table 14 sets out the different types of courses offered in the camps.

Table 15 | CBOs and partner institutes involved in the provision of vocational training by camp

Camp	High School	Camp VT Committee	DARE	HI	KHWA	KWO	KYO
Mae La					✓	✓	✓
Umphiem-Mai		✓				✓	
Nu Po		✓					
Mae La Oon		✓				✓	✓
Mae Ra Ma Luang	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
Don Yang		✓				✓	
Tham Hin		✓				✓	

Source: ZOA Vocational training January to June 2005
 DARE – Drug Awareness Rehabilitation Education
 HI – Handicap International
 KHWA – Karen Health and Welfare Association
 KWO – Karen Women’s Organization
 KYO – Karen Youth Organization

Table 16 | Vocational training courses offered by camp

	Agriculture	Auto Mechanics	Bakery	Basket Weaving	Blacksmith	Carpentry	Goat Raising	Knitting	Music	Radio Mechanics	Sewing	Stove Making	Tinsmith	Typing	Weaving
Mae La	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓	✓				
Umphiem- Mai	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓		✓				
Nu Po		✓							✓		✓			✓	
Mae La Oon	✓	✓	✓				✓				✓		✓		✓
Mae Ra Ma Luang		✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓	✓	✓		
Don Yang	✓	✓	✓								✓	✓	✓		
Tham Hin		✓	✓								✓	✓	✓		

Source: ZOA Vocational training January to June 2005

Night Schools

Night schools were started in Tham Hin and Don Yang camps for teachers and adults who would like to continue with their studies. The KED-approved curriculum used.

Literacy and language courses

Literacy and language courses are provided by various CBOs and supported by different organizations. There is a variety of teaching modes ranging from class-based to home-based teaching.

Awareness-raising programmes

Awareness-raising programmes are conducted by CBOs and NGOs on a variety of social and health issues: HIV, domestic violence, politics, sanitation, drugs and so on.

Conclusion

There is a multitude of educational programmes and activities in the seven refugee camps which, to a certain extent, cater to the needs of different learner groups. The programmes are loosely related through coordination between committees, organizations and camp bodies. Undoubtedly, these programmes do not serve the needs of all, as there are restrictions placed by the MOI. Moreover, the size and the variety of programmes are limited by the level of internal and external funding. Nevertheless, education is highly regarded by camp residents, and current educational opportunities are being taken up by camp residents.

Chapter 4 | Learners in general education

Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.

W. B. Yeats

This chapter examines the participation of students in primary and secondary schools in the seven camps. This is followed by an examination of student dropout and students with special education needs.

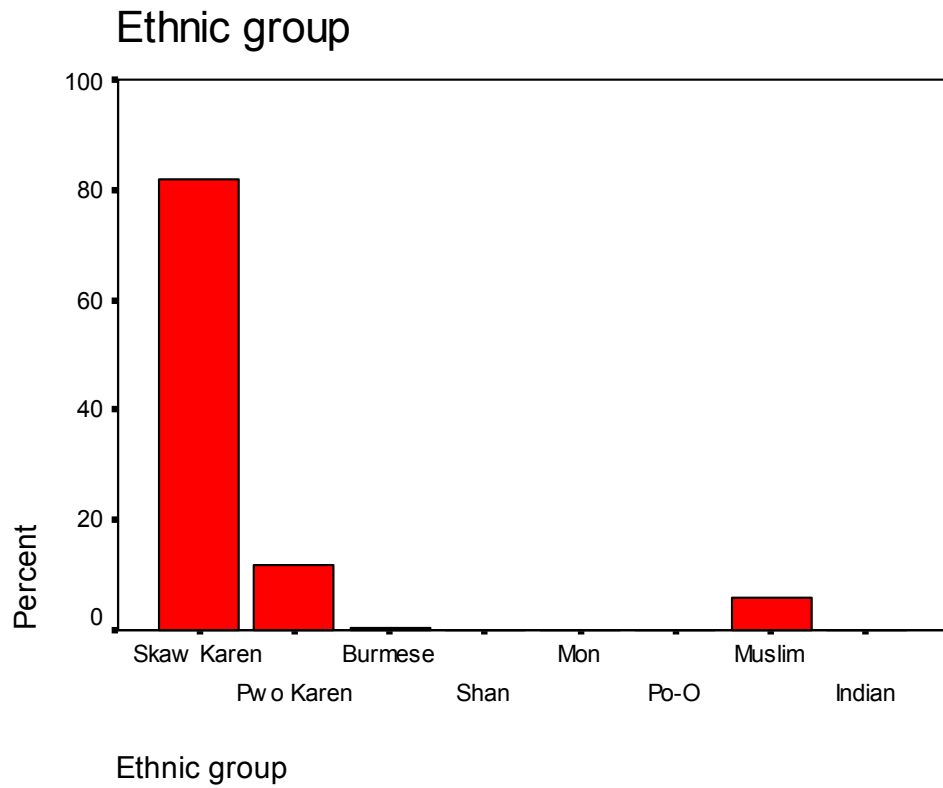
Sample profile

We interviewed 662 primary students (51.5% of the student sample), 624 secondary students (48.5% of the student sample) and 141 people who had dropped out of school. The profile of those who dropped out is presented separately in the section on student dropout.

There were 344 (51.9%) female primary students and 319 male primary students (48.1%); 330 female secondary students (51.5%) and 311 male secondary students (48.5%) in our sample.

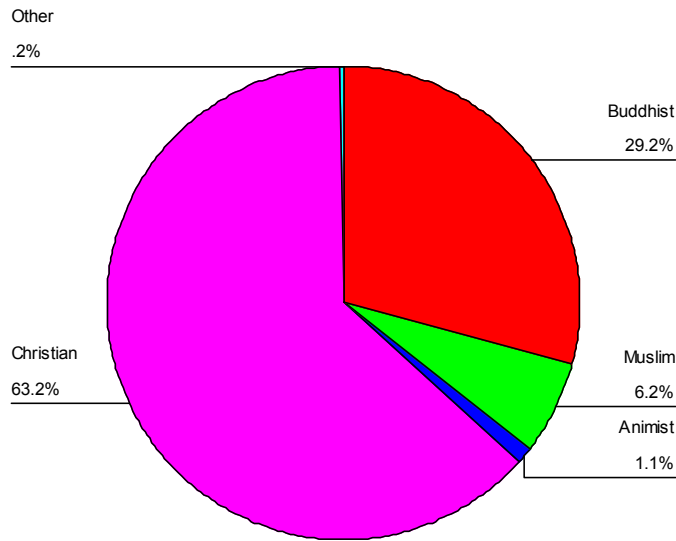
The majority of primary and secondary students were Skaw Karen (81.9%), 11.6% were Pwo Karen and 5.7% were Muslim. The rest were Burmese, Shan, Mon, Pa-o, Indian and 'Other' as shown in Figure 21.

Figure 21 | Primary and secondary students interviewed by ethnic group



The religious affiliations of our sample were: 63.2% Christian, 29.2% Buddhist, 6.2% Muslim, 1.1% Animist and the rest were classified under 'Other'.

Figure 22 | Primary and secondary students interviewed by religion



The majority of the primary students were between the ages of 12 and 14, whereas the majority of secondary students were between the ages of 15 and 18. In the primary student sample, the age category with the largest number of respondents was 13, and for secondary students, it was 17.

Table 17 | Age range and mode of students

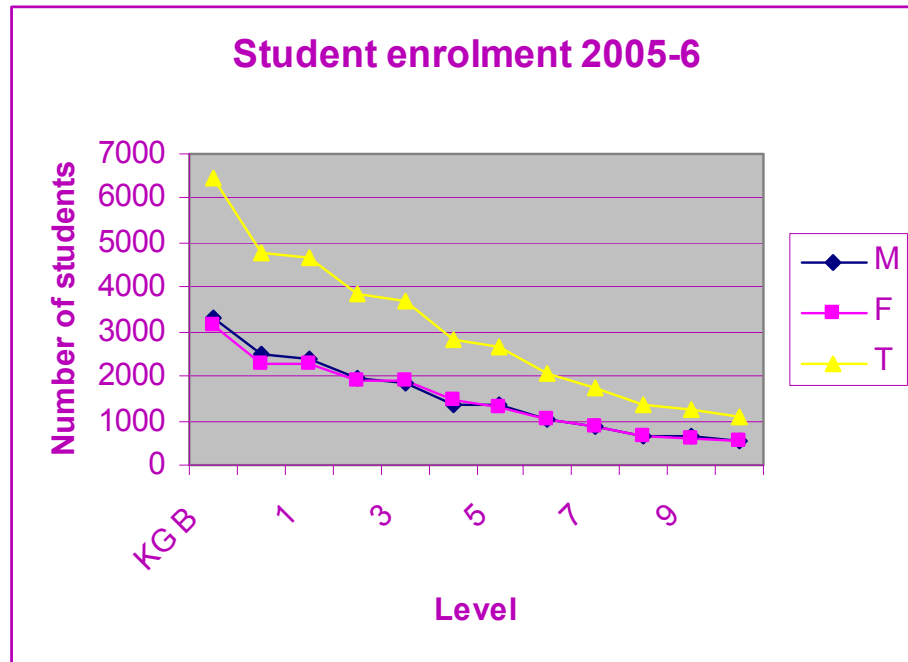
	Primary	Secondary
Range	9-22	10-29
Mode	13	17

Participation in primary and secondary education

We have calculated ratios for gross enrolment and dropout. These ratios provide us with an idea of the extent to which children and young people are enrolled in schools and their progression throughout their schooling career. However, the difficulty of using these rates is that they rely on an official school and graduation age. There is an assumption that there are age-specific grades in schools and that there is an age range for attending school. In many situations, including refugee situations, this does not apply as 1) there is no official age for school grades, and 2) students' schooling has been disrupted by fighting and fleeing.

The total enrolment of students in the beginning of the 2005-6 school year was 36,464 students for KGB to Standard 10 including special education students; 50.6% were male and 49.4% were female. Participation of both genders is roughly equal across all grades. The enrolment numbers fall as we go up the school grades, as shown in Figure 23.

Figure 23 | Student enrolment in 2005-6



Gross Enrolment Rate¹¹

In the beginning of the 2003-4 school year, the gross enrolment rate (GER) indicates that for all camps, except Don Yang, 99-100% of the children and young people of school-going age were enrolled in school. In Don Yang, the figure is much lower, at 93%. The GER is roughly equal for males and females. At the end of the school year, the GER was actually higher even though the population of five to 17 year-olds fell.

Table 18 | Gross enrolment ratio for 2003-4

		Tham Hin	Don Yang	Nu Po	Umphiem-Mai	Mae La	Mae Ra Ma Luang	Mae Khong Kha ^a	Total
Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) (Standard for begin and end year: >=80%)									
GER (begin year)	M	100%	94%	100%	99%	100%	99%	145%	105%
	F	100%	93%	100%	100%	100%	101%	147%	105%
	T	100%	93%	100%	99%	100%	100%	146%	105%
GER (end of Year)	M	127%	117%	116%	131%	140%	134%	125%	131%
	F	131%	116%	123%	123%	143%	120%	124%	130%
	T	129%	116%	119%	127%	141%	127%	125%	130%
GER (annual change)	M	27%	24%	16%	32%	40%	36%	-14%	24%
	F	31%	25%	23%	24%	43%	19%	-16%	24%
	T	29%	25%	19%	28%	42%	27%	-15%	24%
Population change	T	-27%	-24%	-26%	-20%	-35%	-24%	4%	-25%

^a Mae Khong Kha camp was moved to another location in Thailand and is now called Mae La Oon camp.

¹¹ The Gross Enrolment Rate (GER) is the total enrolment in a specific level of education, regardless of age, expressed as a percentage of the official school-age population corresponding to the same level of education in a given school-year. It is widely used to show the general level of participation in a given level of education. It indicates the capacity of the education system to enroll students of a particular age-group. It is calculated by dividing the number of students enrolled in a given level of education regardless of age by the population of the age-group which officially corresponds to the given level of education, and multiplied by 100. This definition was taken from the World Bank, available at <http://devdata.worldbank.org/edstats/RegionalIndicators/caribbean/definition.html>

We do not have the GER for 2004-5 and 2005-6 because we do not have figures for the number of children between five and 17 in the camps for those years.

We have not included figures for Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) and repetition rates. The NER is the enrolment of the official age-group for a given level of education expressed as a percentage of the corresponding population. This shows the extent of participation in a given level of education of children or youths belonging to the official age-group corresponding to the level of education. We are not able to calculate the NER as it is dependent on the official age-group of learners. There is no official age-group for each grade as there are constant inflows of refugees who may not have had schooling for several years.

The repetition rate is the proportion of pupils from a cohort enrolled in a given grade at a given school-year who study in the same grade in the following school-year. It measures the phenomenon of pupils repeating a grade, and its effect on the internal efficiency of educational systems. In addition, it is one of the key indicators for analyzing and projecting pupil flows from grade to grade within an educational cycle. We do not have repetition rates because the figures for these are not reliable.

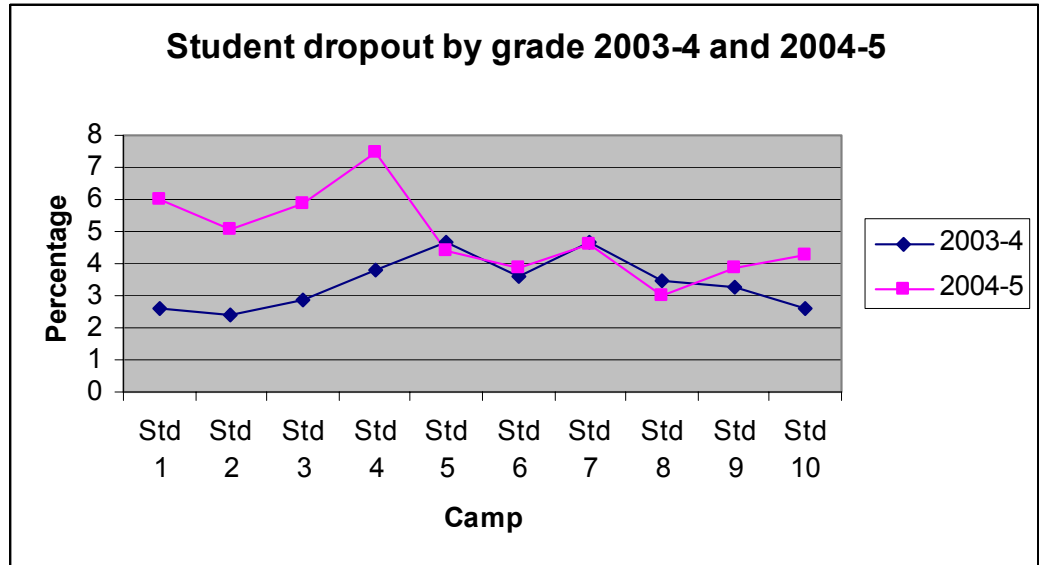
Dropout

We defined students who dropped out as those who left school before completing a school year, and those who did not complete school up to Standard 10.

The statistics on student dropout were collected from principals. For the dropout rate, we used enrolment figures for the beginning of the school year. There are limitations in interpreting these numbers because not all principals have kept records of student dropout for the past two years. Moreover, the numbers given do not distinguish between those who dropped out and those who left to go to another school or course.

The rate of student dropout was 3.3% for 2003-4 and 5.4% for 2004-5. Student dropout was the highest in Standards 5 and 7 in 2003-4. In 2004-5, the highest dropout occurred in Standards 4 and 7. In other words, students are dropping out at the end of the primary and middle cycles.

Figure 24 | Student dropout by grade 2003-4 and 2004-5



Student dropout was the highest in Tham Hin and Don Yang camps for both years and the percentage of male students dropping out is slightly higher than for female students.

Figure 25| Rate of student dropout by gender 2003-4

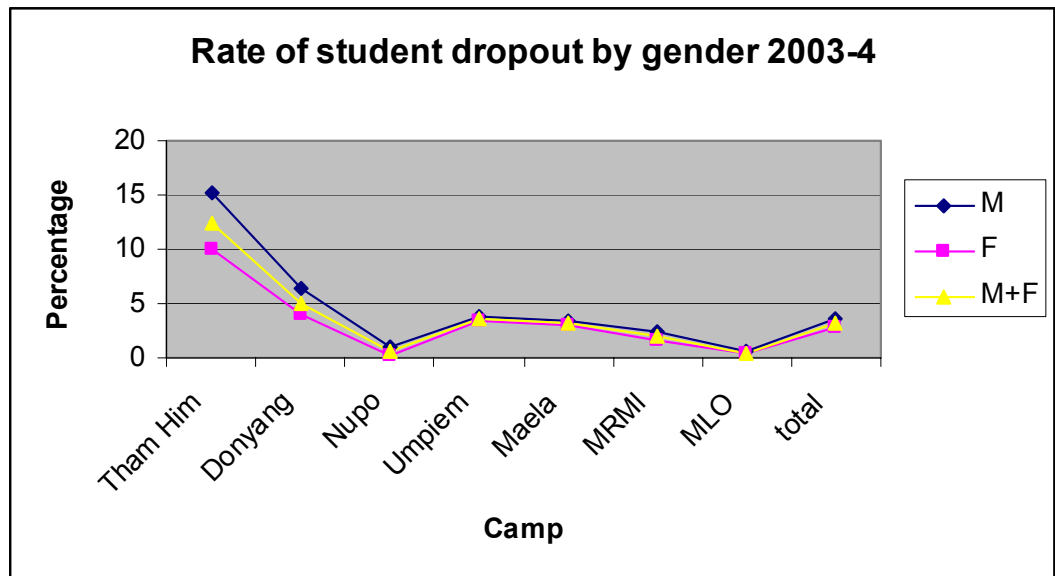
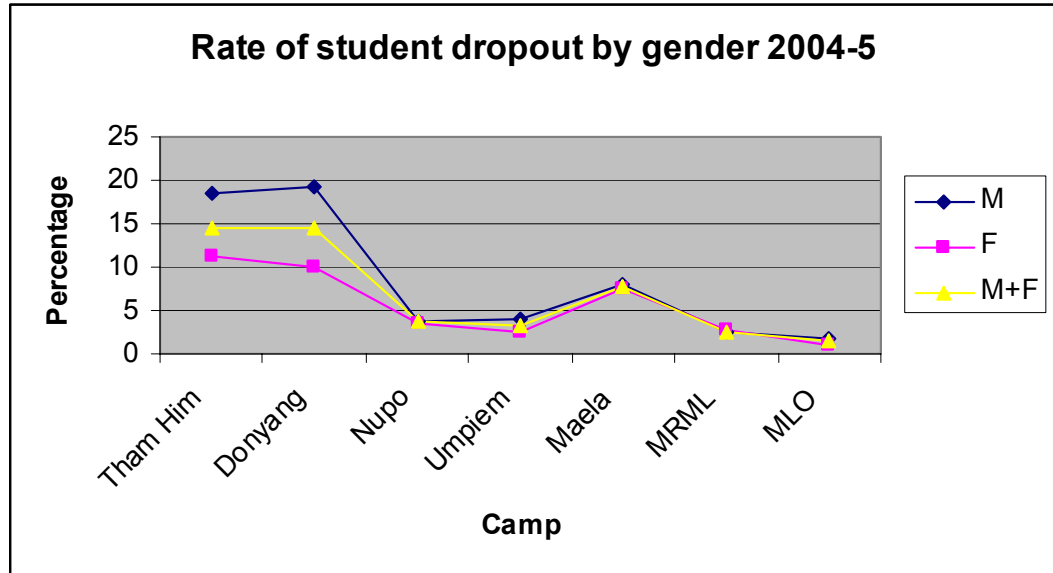


Figure 26 | Rate of student dropout by gender 2004-5



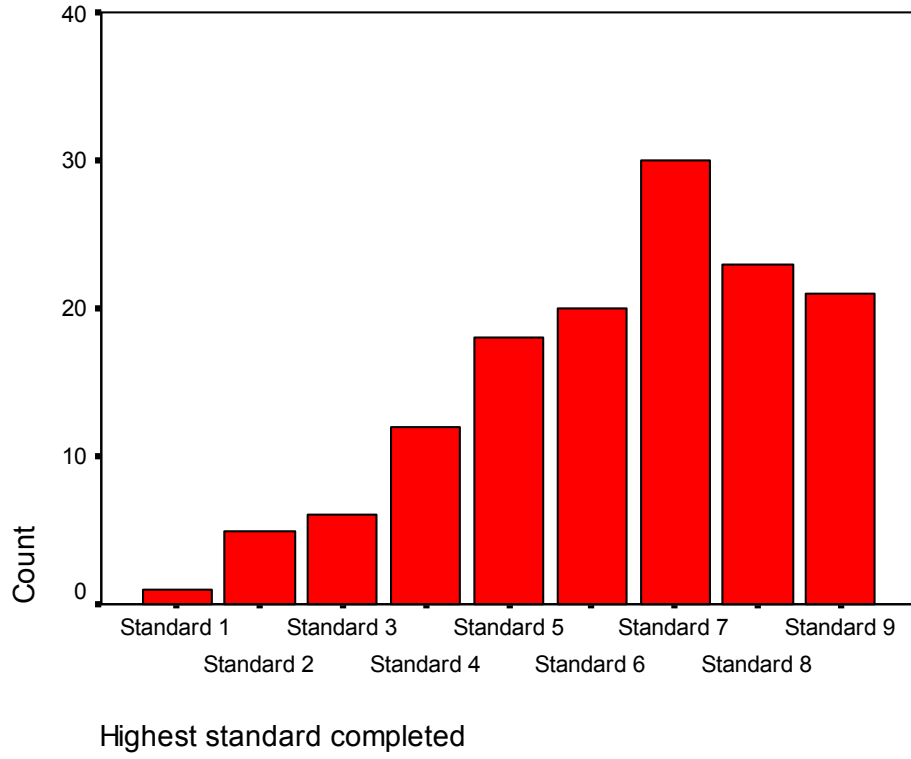
In the Education Survey, we interviewed 141 people who dropped out of school from all camps except Don Yang. We were not able to locate people who had dropped out of school in that camp.

In our sample, 58.2% were female, 41.8% were male; the majority (87.8%) was Skaw Karen, 8.6% were Pwo Karen, 2.2% were Muslim, 1.4% were Shan. Most of the respondents were Christian (78%), followed by Buddhist (18.4%), Muslim (2.1%) and other (1.4%).

The age range of our respondents was nine to 38 years old. The most number of respondents were 19 years old.

Figure 27 shows that, for this sample, dropout seemed to occur mostly between Standards 7 and 8. Almost 30% of those interviewed had Standard 7 as their highest level of education and the rest were spread out among the different standards.

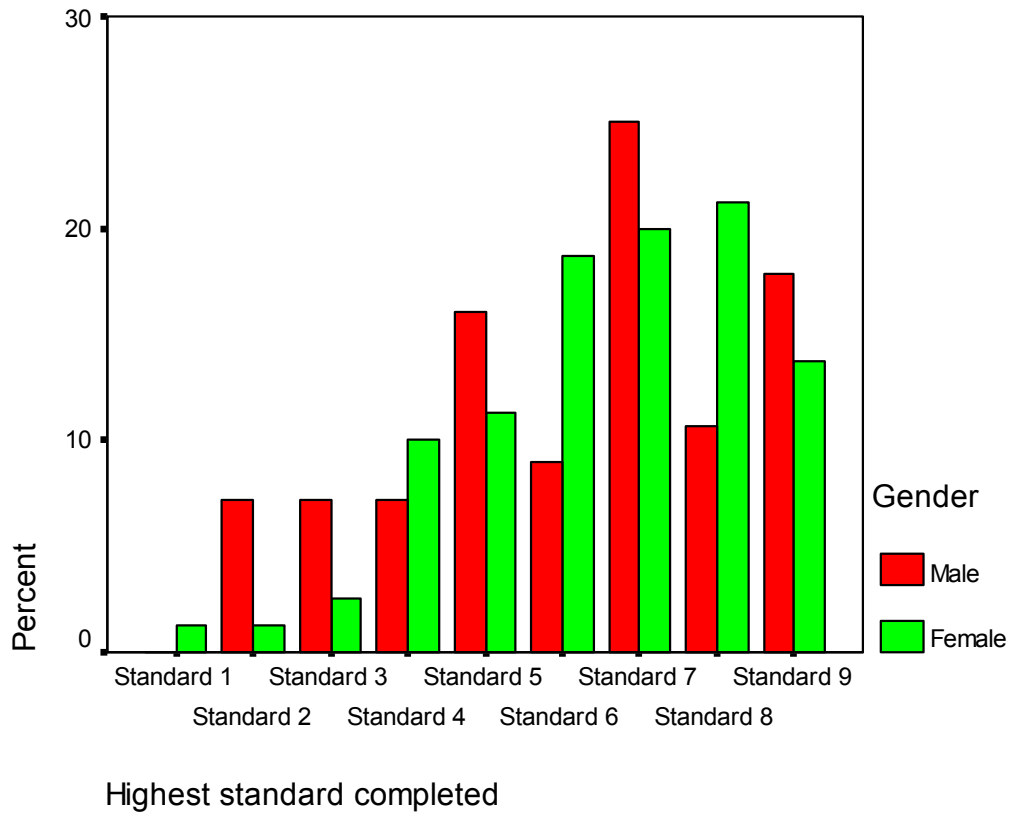
Figure 27 | Highest standard completed



The majority of respondents (76.5%) left school once, 16.2% left twice, 4.4% left three times and 3% left more than four times.

Young men dropped out earlier than young women. For men, the highest percentage dropped out after Standard 7 (25%), followed by Standard 9 (17.9%) and Standard 8 (10.7%). The most number of women stopped school at Standard 8 (21.3%), followed by Standard 7 (20%) and Standard 6 (18.8%).

Figure 28| Highest standard completed



The reasons for dropout

Respondents were asked to select all responses which were relevant to why they left school. They may have picked more than one response. So, for example, in a sample of only two respondents, if respondent A chose options 1 and 2, and respondent B chose options 2 and 3, these amounted to four responses altogether. We then calculated the number of times (in percentage form) each option was chosen. So, in our example, option 2 was chosen twice out of four responses, making it 50% of all responses.

The three reasons which had been chosen the most were:

1. Marriage (38.6% of all responses)
2. Problems with learning at school (14.2% of all responses)
3. Having to help family by working (10.8% of all responses)

Marriage

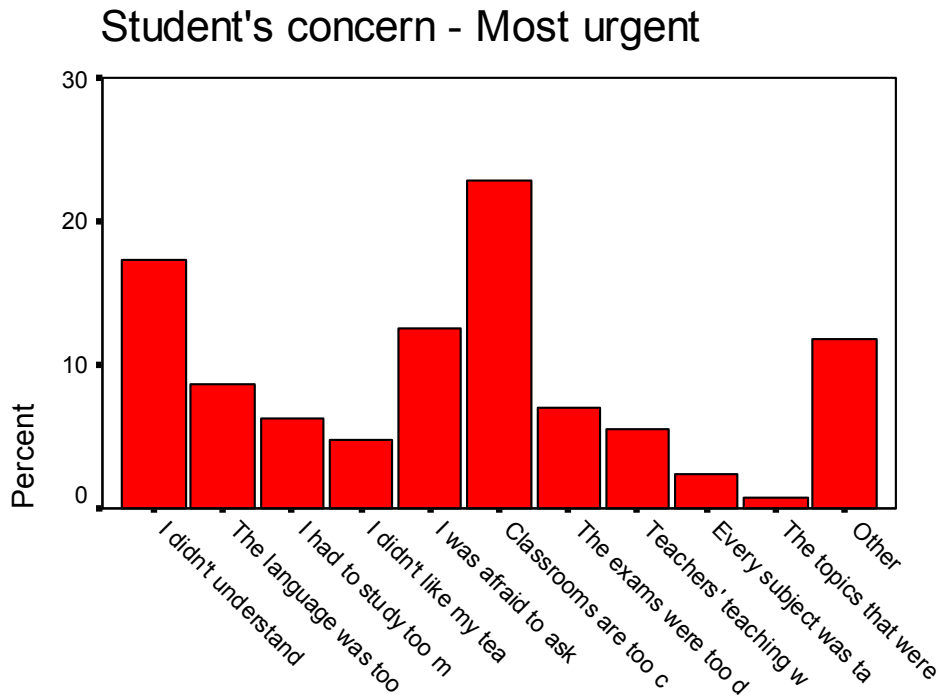
For the 137 people who answered the question about reasons for dropout, 49.6% selected marriage as the reason for dropout. A crosstabulation by gender shows that 77.9% of those who cited marriage as a reason for dropout were young women and 22.1% were young men. This is a difference of 55.8%.

Problems with learning at school

For those who picked 'learning difficulties' as a reason for dropout, 60% of them were men and 40% young women. It seems that a larger percentage of young men than women are finding difficulties in learning at school.

Looking at what they chose as their most urgent concern when they were at school, we found that the statement 'The classrooms are too crowded and noisy' was picked the most: 22.8% of respondents said that this was their most urgent concern at school. This was followed by the statement 'I don't understand the textbook' - 17.3% of respondents picked this; 12.6% had as their most urgent concern 'I was afraid to ask for my teacher's help'.

Figure 29 | Students' most urgent concern



Student's concern - Most urgent

The labels on the x-axis are:
 I didn't understand the textbook
 The language was too difficult
 I had to study too many languages
 I didn't like my teacher
 I'm afraid to ask for my teacher's help
 Classrooms are too crowded and noisy
 The exams were too difficult
 Teachers' teaching was not clear
 Every subject was taught in English
 The topics that are taught in school are not interesting
 Other

Have to help family by working

In our sample, 57.9% of those who cited this reason were young men, 42.1% were young women. This is a difference of 15.8%. Also, out of all responses, 9.7% were attributed to lack of money. Economic pressures have a substantial impact on student dropout.

Potential dropout

We asked current primary and secondary students if they believed that they would complete the school year. For primary students, four students (0.6% of respondents who answered the question) believed that they would not complete the school year and six did not know (0.9%). The reasons were: 60% said that they were moving, 20% said that it was due to learning difficulties and 20% said that they had to look after siblings.

When asked if they believed that they would go on to the next standard, five students said 'no' (0.8% of those who answered), and four did not know (0.6%). The reasons given were because they were moving to another place in Thailand, moving to another country, they had to help their family by working, and they had learning difficulties.

Of the 632 secondary students who responded to the question on whether they would complete the school year, 98.3% believed that they would, 0.8% thought not, and 0.9% did not know.

The reasons given by the six students who believed that they would not complete the school year were that they were moving to another place in Thailand (not camp), moving to another country and had to look after their siblings.

Of the 638 who responded to this question, 98.6% believed that they would be going on to the next standard, 0.9% thought not, and 0.5% did not know.

Only two students gave reasons why they would not be going to the next standard: they were moving to another place in Thailand that was not a refugee camp, and their parents did not want them to continue.

Discussion

Student dropout is normally due to a combination of factors – social, economic and personal. In our sample, the reasons for dropout seem to be rooted in socio-cultural, economic and school-related factors.

First, dropout is affected by the socio-cultural norms that determine the gendered nature of labour. This does not mean that women are facing discrimination because of their gender but rather that the gendered division of labour and the social expectations of the roles men and women play affect their participation in school.

For women, marriage was the most significant reason for dropout. Looking at the responses given by primary and secondary students about expectation of dropout, less than 1% believed that they would drop out. In addition, looking at the reasons for possible dropout, marriage was not one of the reasons. It is likely that female students are dropping out to get married because of unexpected pregnancy.

Along the lines of gender difference in reasons for dropout, of those who gave 'looking after siblings' as a reason for dropout, 83.3% were young women and 16.7% were young men. Women's roles as carers affect their participation in school.

For young men, their roles are tied to economic factors – they are more likely than women to stop school to help their family by working. Their role in securing or supplementing the household income affects young men's participation in school.

The other significant reason for leaving was learning difficulties experienced in school. A much larger percentage of young men than women chose this as their reason for leaving. In many countries, the trend is that young men are doing worse in school than young women. Different reasons have been put forward: men's disenchantment with schooling, the nature of learning in school does not suit males, and so on. We need more information about the learning difficulties faced by young men and women in the camps before we can accurately address them.

Students with special education needs¹²

We defined a person with special education needs as anyone who is blind, deaf, has behavioural difficulties, physical disabilities, and/or learning disabilities.

Although many students with special education needs do not attend school, there is a percentage that attends Standards 1 and 2. They do so under the Inclusive Education programme run by World Education/Consortium. We have included students with special education needs in this chapter as we interviewed teachers about them.

Special education in the seven camps is overseen by World Education/Consortium. It provides all special education stipends, materials and training for Mae La, Nu Po, Umphiem-Mai, Tham Hin and Don Yang camps. The following table shows the type of provisions that each camp receives for special education by organization.

¹² We are grateful to Ms Owaypawm Daodveanchai, Mr Surahdaj Nateeruterones and Ms Phaitoon Natnirundon from World Education/Consortium for providing background information about special education in the camps and for their input in the analysis of the findings.

Table 19 | Special education provision by camp and organization

	Stipends	Materials	Construction	Training	Managed by
Mae La	WE/C	WE/C, ZOA	WE/C, ICS	WE/C	WE/C
Umpiem-Mai	WE/C	WE/C, ZOA	WE/C	WE/C	WE/C
Nu Po	WE/C	WE/C, ZOA	WE/C	WE/C	WE/C
Mae La Oon	ZOA	WE/C	WE/C	WE/C	KWO
Mae Ra Ma Luang	ZOA	WE/C	WE/C	WE/C	KWO
Tham Hin	WE/C	WE/C	WE/C	WE/C	KWO
Don Yang	WE/C	WE/C	WE/C	WE/C	KWO

WE/C – World Education/Consortium
 KWO – Karen Women’s Organization
 ICS - International Child Support

World Education/Consortium runs schools for the deaf and blind in the camps, as well as early intervention and inclusive education programmes. The early intervention programme consists of home visits, nursery visits and centre-based activities. Students who are able to progress from the early intervention programme to mainstream schools enter the inclusive education programme. They are assigned a teaching assistant who assists them at school and tutors them at home.

We interviewed family members about the special education programmes their children were in and asked them to evaluate the programmes. Of those who responded to whether they have children with special needs, 6.6% said ‘yes’, which is 157 families out of the 2615 we interviewed.

Out of these 157 families, 140 responded to the question on whether their child was in a special education programme: 40.7% of parents reported that their child was not in any special education programme, and 59.3% reported in the affirmative.

We asked parents with children who are in a special education programme about their children's progress since entering the programme. On the whole, the parents believed that there were favourable outcomes from their children having joined a special education programme.

Parents saw improvement in their children's physical coping skills and their communication skills. Since joining a special education programme, 95.5% agreed or strongly agreed that their child has learnt to cope with daily life, and 90.9% agreed or strongly agreed that their child improved physically. With regards to communication, 95.5% agreed or strongly agreed that their child is able to communicate better.

The improvement was lower but still high for children playing with other children, and attending school: 77.3% agreed or strongly agreed that their child played with other children more since joining a special education programme, 15.9% disagreed, and 4.5% strongly disagreed.

84.1% agreed or strongly agreed that their child is able to attend school since joining a special education programme, while 9.1% disagreed, and 4.5% strongly disagreed.

Support that teachers need

Of the teachers interviewed, 44.4% reported that they have students with special needs, and 55.6% reported in the negative. Of those who had students with special needs, the majority (54.3%) said that they did not have any help in teaching students with special educational needs, while 45.7% said that they did.

Teachers were asked to select all the different types of support they needed. We combined all the responses and calculated the percentage of responses each option received. So, for example, in a sample of only two teachers, if teacher A chose options 1 and 2, and teacher B chose options 2 and 3, these amounted to four responses altogether. We then calculated the number of times (in percentage form) each option was chosen. So, in our example, option 2 was chosen twice out of four responses, making it 50% of all responses.

Of all the options chosen, 'specially designed teaching materials' was chosen the most at 20.1%. This was followed by 'more techniques on how to teach' (17.6% of all responses), outside support for students (14.7% of all responses) and more understanding of students' needs (12% of all responses).

Discussion

The number of parents who reported that their child needs special education but whose children are not in any is significant at about 40% of respondents. This may be that they are not aware of the programmes available and that there might be some help for them.

In addition, there may be some under-reporting by families and teachers of the number of children with special education needs. First, they may not be aware of these needs or they may not be able to identify them. Second, they may believe that special education needs only apply to severe cases of disability.

On the whole, parents reported seeing an improvement in the physical, communication and social skills of their children after attendance in a special education programme.

Teachers reported needing extra help in pedagogical techniques and teaching aids, as well as more understanding to teach students with special education needs.

Conclusion

In terms of participation, it is safe to say that enrolment in schools in the camps, according to the figures used for the beginning of the school year, is almost 100% and school enrolment by gender is roughly equal to the percentage of males and females in the population as a whole.

For those of school-going age, the issue is not whether they enroll in school, but whether they stay. Many young women are having to leave school because of marriage, or unexpected pregnancy. They are only allowed to return after a year. Whether young women should have to stop their schooling because of pregnancy is a debate that has to be considered. Also, the practical exigencies of motherhood make it difficult for young women to return to school after a year out. Some organizations, like the KWO, are addressing this issue by providing schooling for young mothers in their homes. This is an important remedial action. However, in order to address the cause, more needs to be done to prevent unexpected pregnancies among young women of school-going age, and/or to promote the acceptance of young mothers in schools.

Economic pressures affect both young men and women but they seem to do so more strongly for young men. We may not be able to solve their economic problems but we may be able to address their learning needs. The solution for many students who drop out due to economic and personal reasons may not necessarily be the provision of more school-based learning. Instead, learning on the job or at home, in non-school settings, at individualized times, with appropriate content and pace may be more relevant and useful. This is discussed in further detail in Chapter 7.

For students with special needs, teachers in mainstream schools need more knowledge about identifying their needs and about pedagogical techniques and tools for teaching them.

Besides students with special education needs, there are other student populations whose educational needs may not be adequately supported. They have not been included in our survey but they deserve some mention. While we do not have information on new camp residents, we believe that the needs of newly arrived students, with regards to language and learning at school, will be different from those who have lived in the camps for sometime. Other vulnerable groups we have identified are orphans and unaccompanied minors. In order to better serve vulnerable and disadvantaged groups like these, further investigation is required to assess their educational and personal needs.

Enrolment and dropout statistics tell us about the number of students who attend school in the camps and the patterns of participation. This has enabled us to analyze, to a limited extent, the changes across time, and to pinpoint certain times, grades or camps where there are patterns of participation and dropout which are significant. However, in order to understand what is happening in schools and how students are experiencing learning, we need to explore what is happening within schools and classrooms. We turn to this in the next chapter.

Chapter 5 | The Learning Experience

My idea of education is to unsettle the minds of the young and inflame their intellects.

Robert Maynard Hutchins

In this chapter, we look at certain aspects of the student's learning experience: languages taught in school, school Arts programmes, students' concerns and the support they receive from parents.

Languages to be taught

Due to the uncertain nature of the political situation, the policy on the number of languages to be taught at school has been to teach three languages throughout all levels: Karen, Burmese and English. The intention is to ensure literacy in the mother tongue (Karen), to prepare for repatriation (Burmese), to maintain contacts with the international community and to prepare for potential resettlement (English). While this helps to cover all possible scenarios, it requires huge investment in time and teaching, at the expense of other subjects and activities. The teaching of these three languages takes up a considerable amount of the school curriculum (approximately 30% of the time) (Thomas and Reyes, 2005).

We asked teachers and principals which languages should be taught in school and at which level. In general, both teachers and principals believed that Skaw Karen should be taught at all levels, in particular from KG onwards. This was followed by English and Burmese, both from KG onwards. The majority believed that Thai should be taught at secondary level. More teachers than principals believed that Pwo Karen should be taught at secondary level while principals thought that it should be taught at primary level.

For principals, there was no noticeable difference between ethnic group and choice of language of instruction.

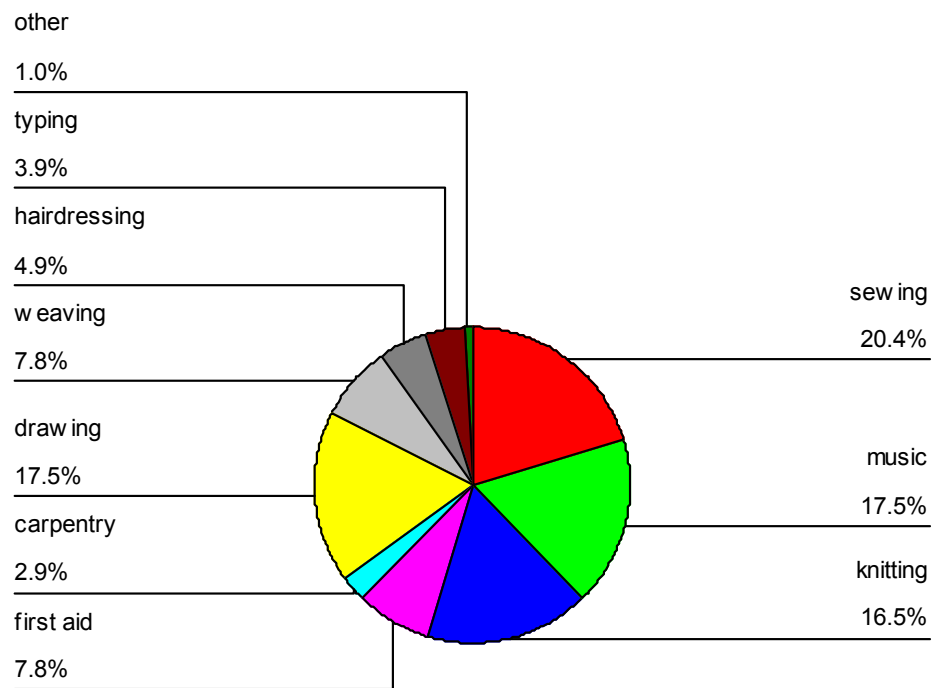
Arts Programmes

ZOA provides materials and funds for Arts programmes in secondary and primary schools.

Secondary Arts

The types of programmes offered by secondary schools are shown in Figure 30. The activities which were offered by most secondary schools were sewing (20.4%), music and drawing (17.5% both) and knitting (16.5%).

Figure 30| Secondary Arts Programmes offered by all secondary schools



Most schools offer sewing, music, drawing and knitting. The 'other' category represents cooking.

The most number of schools offer two periods of Arts programmes per week and the range of periods offered is between one and 15; 63.6% of principals responded that there are not enough materials and resources for Secondary Arts programmes.

Of the 640 secondary students who responded, 82.5% of them reported that they were involved in Secondary Arts programmes.

Students were asked to circle all activities they attended. We combined the total number of responses from all respondents. So, for example, in a sample of two students, if student A chose music and sewing, and student B chose sewing and drawing, these amounted to four responses in total. We then calculated the number of times (in percentage form) each option was chosen. So, in our example, sewing was chosen twice out of four responses, making it 50% of all responses.

The programmes that students attended in descending order of number of responses are shown in Table 20. The first column of numbers indicates the percentage of responses received for each option. The second column shows the percentage of respondents who chose that option.

Table 20 | Secondary Arts programmes attended by respondents

Programme	% of Responses	% of Respondents
Music	30.1	35.8
Sewing	25.1	29.8
Drawing	16.7	19.9
Knitting	11.3	13.4
First aid	6.6	7.8
Weaving	4.3	5.2
Typing	3.5	4.2
Hairdressing	1.4	1.7
Carpentry	5.8	1.0
Total responses	100.0	118.7

118 missing respondents; 523 valid respondents

When asked if they would like to be involved in Secondary Arts programmes, 96.3% said 'yes'. We asked the students what type of activities they would like to attend. They could choose more than one option. The activities that were chosen and the proportion they represent out of all activities chosen are arranged in descending order in Table 21.

Table 21 | Secondary Arts programmes that students would like to attend

Programme	% of Responses	% of Respondents
First aid	18.4	55.3
Typing	7.9	54.0
Music	7.3	52.0
Sewing	11.3	34.1
Drawing	9.8	29.4
Knitting	8.3	25.0
Weaving	7.8	23.6
Hairdressing	4.7	14.1
Carpentry	4.0	12.2
None	8.4	1.3
Total responses	100.0	301.1

26 missing respondents; 615 valid respondents

Only 0.4% of the respondents said that they did not like any of the Secondary Arts activities. The activities that they disliked in descending order are:

Table 22 | Secondary Arts programmes that students did not like

Programme	% of Responses	% of Cases
Hairdressing	16.1	35.3
Knitting	14.3	31.4
Carpentry	12.4	27.2
Drawing	11.9	26.1
Weaving	11.9	26.1
Sewing	10.3	22.6
Music	4.8	10.4
First aid	2.9	6.4
Typing	2.7	5.9
None	12.8	28.0
Total responses	100.0	219.4

27 missing cases; 614 valid cases

The best time to attend these activities, according to them was during the weekend (31.1% of all positive responses), followed by after school (28.7% of all responses) and during the holidays (28.2% of all responses).

Primary Arts

Of the 56 principals interviewed, 47 (85.5%) offered Primary Arts programmes in their school. There are 49 schools offering primary level education. Of the primary students who answered, 85.1% of them were involved in Primary Arts programmes and 14.9% were not.

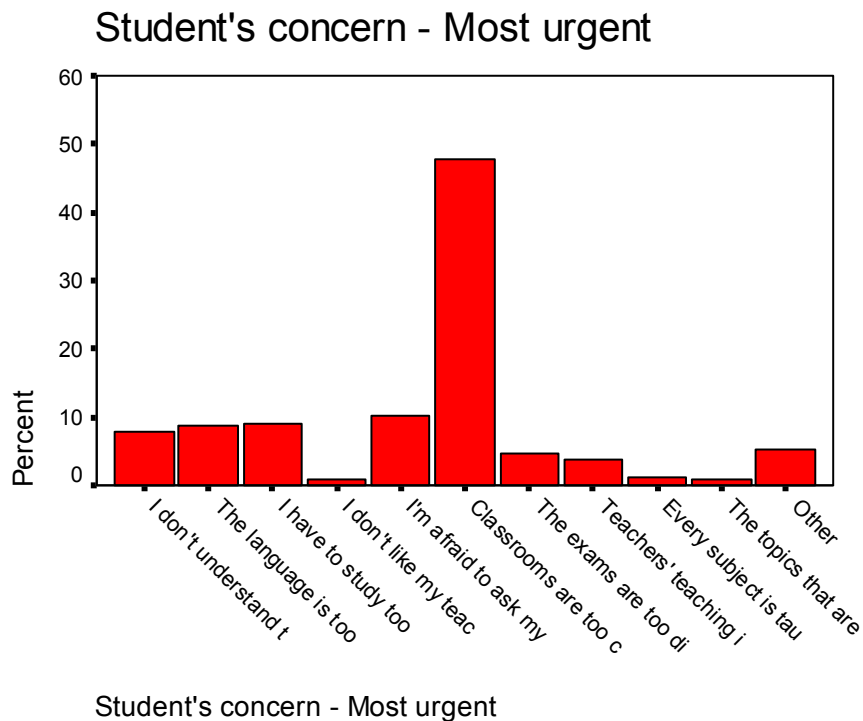
All of the principals said that their students enjoyed the Primary Arts programmes. This was confirmed by the primary students we interviewed: 99.1% liked the programmes and 0.9% did not.

Of those who responded, 64.6% of the principals reported that there were enough materials.

Students' concerns

We asked students to select what their most urgent concern was. Overwhelmingly, primary students chose 'Classrooms are too crowded and noisy' as their most urgent concern - 47.7% thought it was the most urgent concern. The second contender was 'I'm afraid to ask for my teacher's help' (10.1%). The other significant most urgent concerns were 'I don't understand the textbook', 'The language is too difficult' and 'I have to study too many languages'. These are presented in Figure 31.

Figure 31 | Primary students' most urgent concern



The labels on the x-axis are:

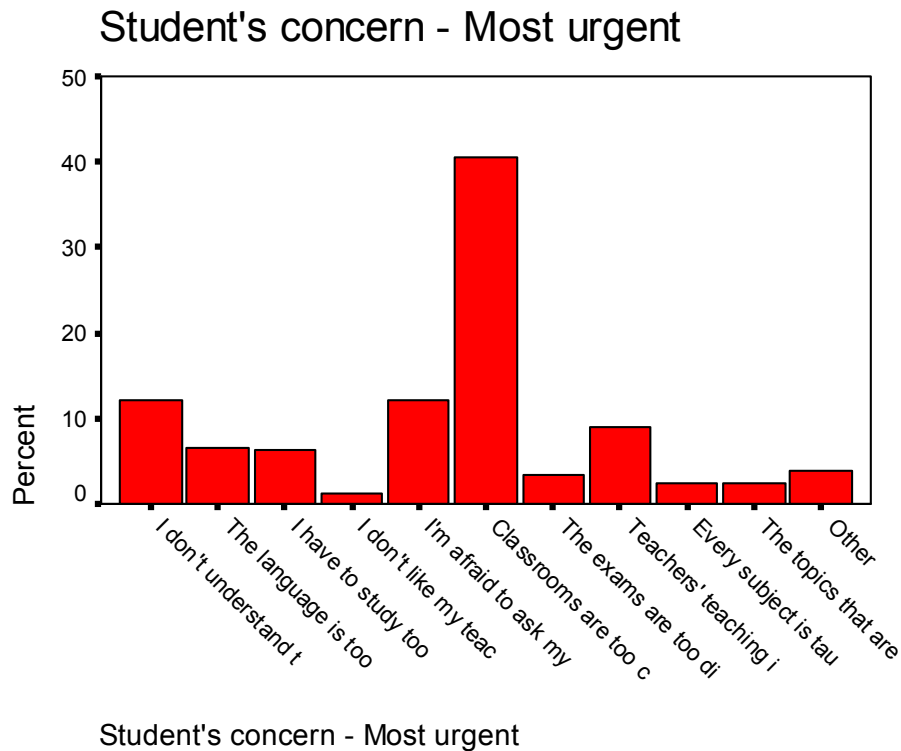
- I don't understand the textbook
- The language is too difficult
- I have to study too many languages
- I don't like my teacher
- I'm afraid to ask for my teacher's help
- Classrooms are too crowded and noisy

- The exams are too difficult
- Teachers' teaching is not clear
- Every subject is taught in English
- The topics that are taught in school are not interesting
- Other

Secondary students had similar concerns to primary students: 'The classrooms are too crowded and noisy' was consistently the largest number picked for most, second most and third most urgent concerns.

For the most urgent concern, the second contenders were 'I'm afraid to ask for my teacher's help' and 'I don't understand the textbook' at 12.1%, and 'The teaching is not clear' made up 8.9% of all responses. The language is too difficult (6.7%) and I have to study too many languages (6.3%) were the other significant concerns.

Figure 32| Secondary students' most urgent concern



The labels on the x-axis are:
 I don't understand the textbook
 The language is too difficult
 I have to study too many languages
 I don't like my teacher
 I'm afraid to ask for my teacher's help
 Classrooms are too crowded and noisy

The exams are too difficult
 Teachers' teaching is not clear
 Every subject is taught in English
 The topics that are not interesting
 Other

Support for learning

In general, students receive academic and personal welfare support from two different sources. The students in the survey reported that their parents provided support in the form of encouragement and personal welfare, while their teachers and principals offered extra help in studies and advice on further education opportunities.

Materially, principals played their part as well. When students were not able to pay school fees, many allowed them to continue with their studies. Other material support is also provided by the NGOs and CBOs in the form of school stationery and supplies.

School students also receive extra academic help from CBOs. KWO and KYO/KSNG offer courses to students who require extra help in languages and subjects taught at school.

Discussion

Looking at the concerns that students have regarding school, we see some consistently significant features.

First, the level of noise and density in the classrooms are a major concern for both primary and secondary students. Although there may be other reasons, the most obvious one is the infrastructure of school buildings.

The second feature concerns languages in the curriculum. Teachers and principals agree that students and staff have difficulty using English as the language of instruction. This concern is coupled with the number of languages that are taught in the school. Students reported this as one of their main concerns.

Third, students seem to have difficulty understanding the textbook. Why is this the case? We need more information about the difficulties they encounter with the textbook. Fourth, student academic support is provided by both the school and some CBOs. However, both primary and secondary students reported being afraid to ask their teachers for help.

Finally, students reported receiving personal support from their parents. Few said that their parents provided academic support.

Conclusion

In most countries, the selection of the language of instruction and which languages to teach in the school curriculum is usually a decision based on political, practical and cultural considerations. In a refugee situation, the practical concerns are even more ambiguous and unpredictable. It is unsurprising, therefore, that the students in the camps learn three languages from kindergarten onwards, to cover all eventualities – remaining in Thailand, resettlement and repatriation. There is currently some discussion about introducing Thai into the curriculum. As the situation stands, students may already be overloaded with learning too many languages from a young age and having to use a foreign language in the higher grades.

Besides the issue of language, the learning experience is affected by the learning environment. This is a function of the restrictions imposed by the RTG on the construction of buildings within the camps. The buildings can only be made out of 'temporary' materials; this means that classroom partitions are not sufficiently thick to block out the noise from other classrooms. Although the situation is not ideal, students and teachers deal remarkably well. While this is an external constraint, there may be ways to address this in terms of alternative teaching methods and school-building design.

The other issue students reported as affecting the quality of their learning was their perception of the approachability of teachers. Many of them were afraid to ask their teachers about school work. This may be due to students' perception or teachers' busy schedule, or a combination of both. Whatever the case, unlike school infrastructure, this is an issue which can be addressed more easily, either through a lower teacher-student ratio, teacher-student counseling and/or other relationship-building activities.

Chapter 6 | Educational staff

A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell, where his influence stops.

Henry B. Adams

In this chapter, we present the data we collected from 337 teachers, 57 principals and 49 Resident Teacher Trainers (RTTs) in the seven camps. First, we look at their profile, then we explore the issues surrounding teacher turnover, training and support. This is followed by sections on the training received by RTTs and principals. Finally, we discuss the findings and offer some conclusions about the data presented.

Staff profile

The number of principals, teachers and RTTs interviewed by camp is set out in Table 23.

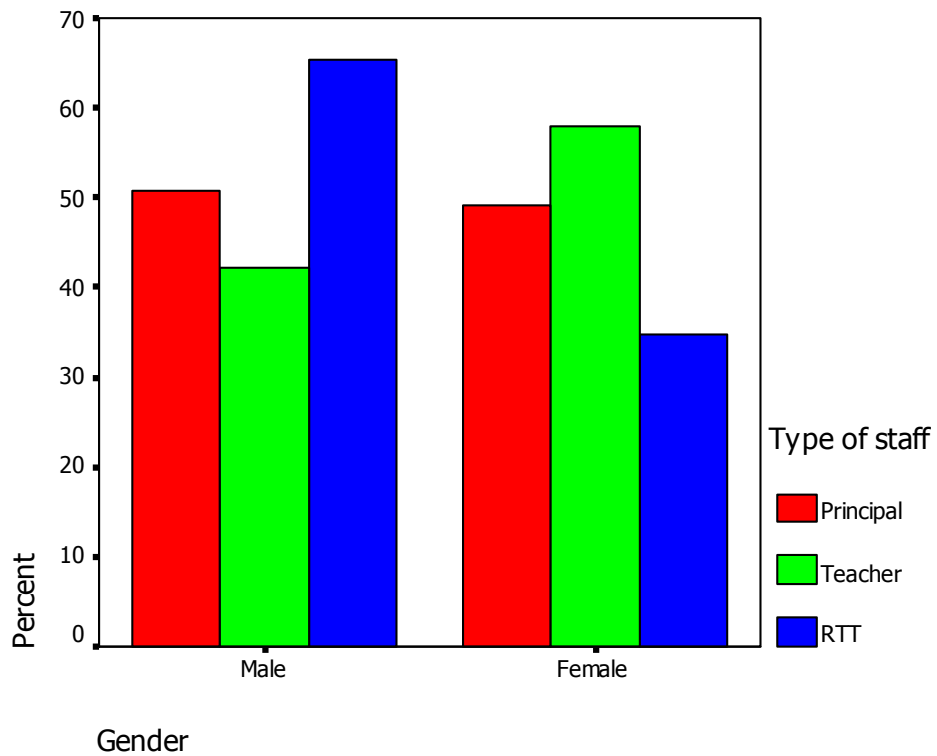
Table 23 | Number of staff members interviewed by camp

Camp	Type of staff			Total
	Principal	Teacher	RTT	
Mae La	21	133	14	168
Umpiem-Mai	7	40	8	55
Nu Po	7	50	3	60
Mae La Oon	8	42	9	59
Mae Ra Ma Luang	9	30	10	49
Tham Hin	2	28	1	31
Don Yang	1	12	4	17
Total	55	335	49	439

Gender

In the principal and RTT groups, the percentage of male respondents is higher than teachers. For the RTTs, the percentage of male respondents (65.3%) is significantly higher than for principals. (We interviewed 87.7% of all principals and 67.1% of all RTTs.) For teachers, 57.9% of the respondents were female and 42.1% were male. Figure 33 shows the numbers by gender and group.

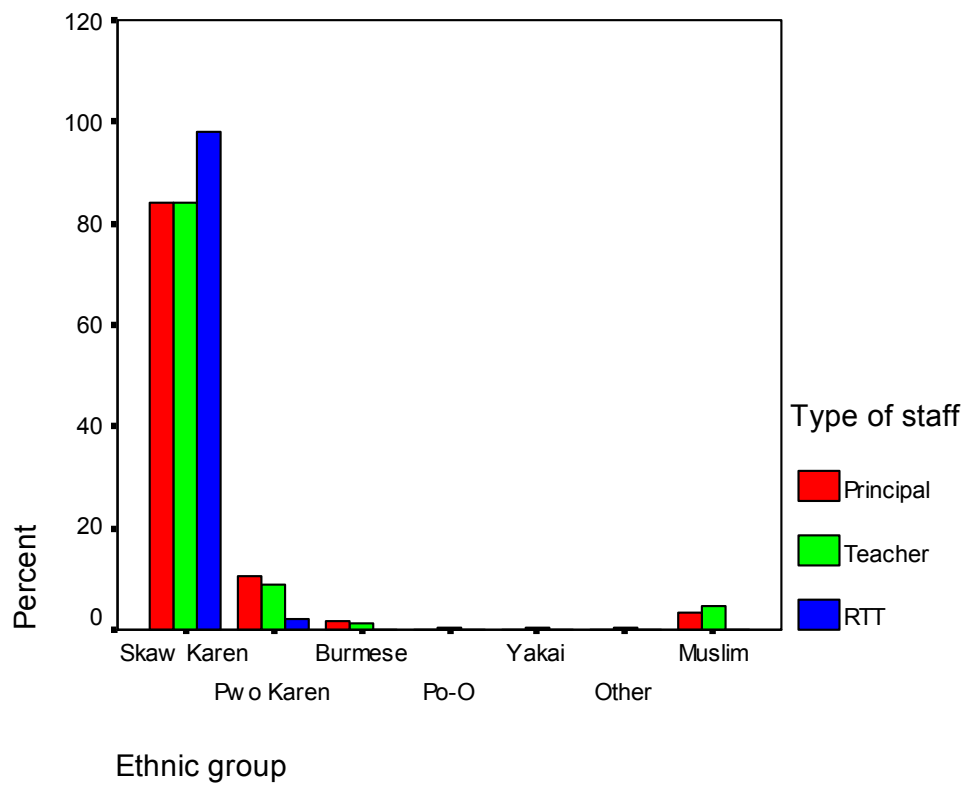
Figure 33 | Gender



Ethnic groups

For all three groups, the majority of the respondents was Skaw Karen, about 10% were Pwo Karen, and slightly less than that reported that they were Muslim.

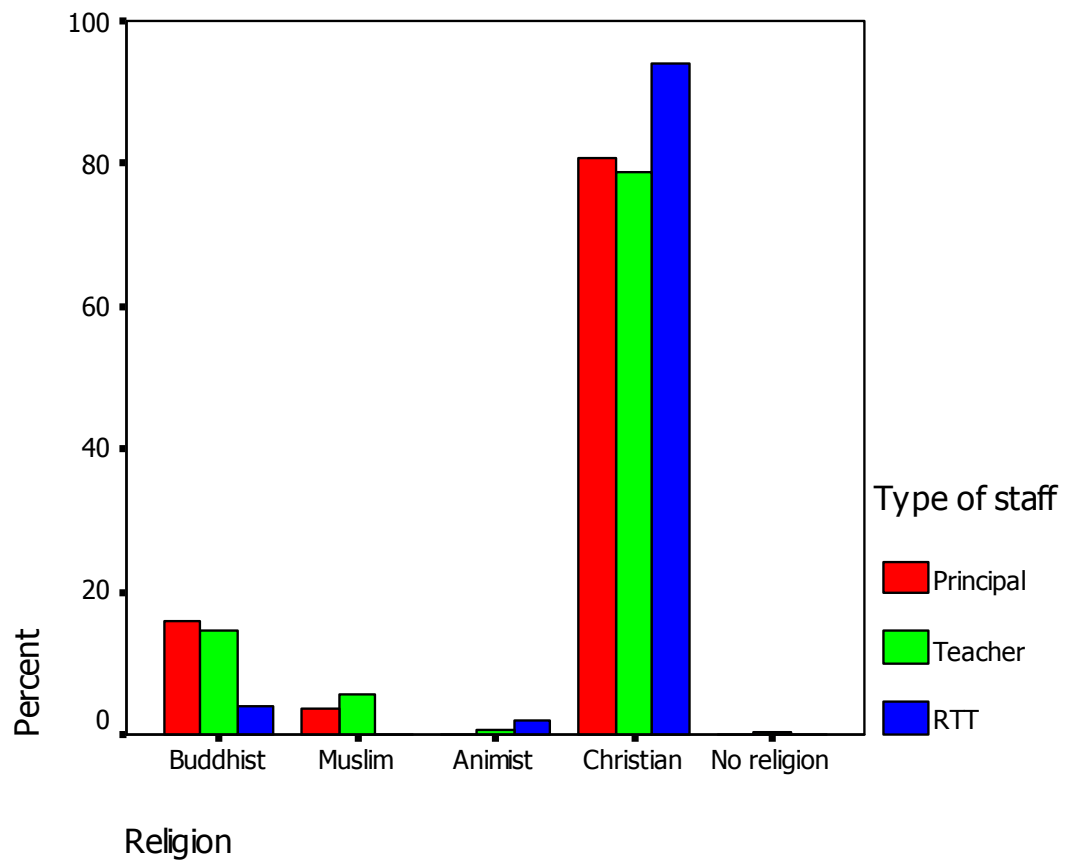
Figure 34| Ethnic groups



Religion

The majority of respondents in all three groups was Christian (80.8%), the rest were mostly Buddhist (13.6%) and Muslim (4.8%). In our sample, none of the RTTs is Muslim.

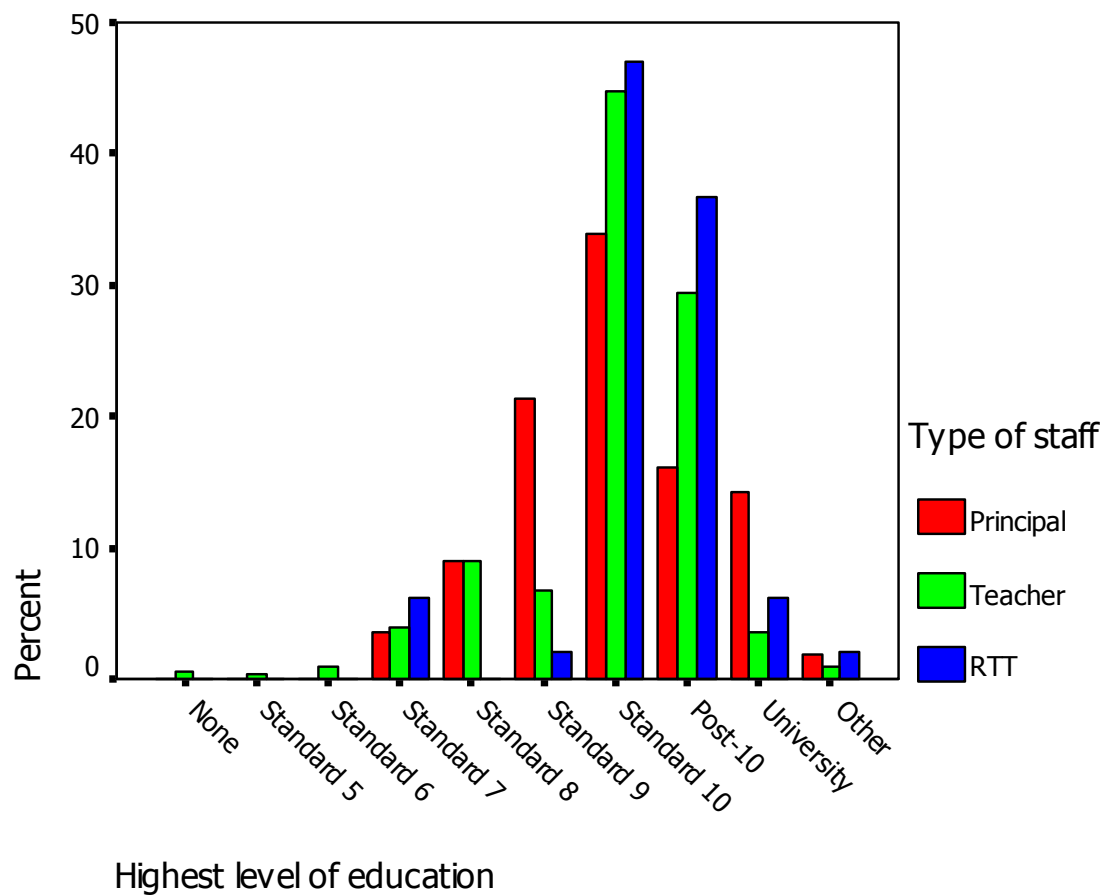
Figure 35| Religion



Level of education

The majority (72.2%) of the respondents have completed either Standard 10 or post-10 education. RTTs, on the whole, are more highly educated than teachers and principals. Interestingly, there are two teachers who have no formal education.

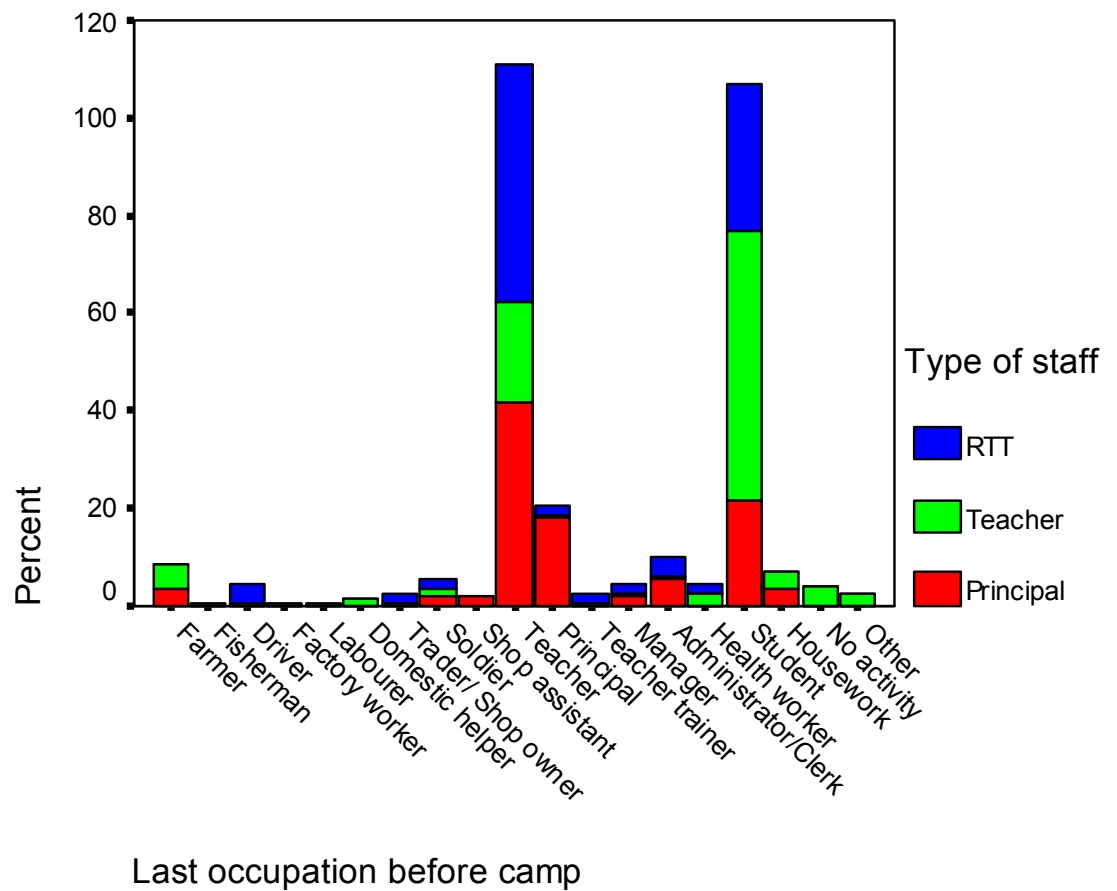
Figure 36 | Highest level of education by group



Occupation before camp

Most respondents in all three groups were teachers (26.1%) and students (48%) before coming to the camp; 41.8% of principals and 49% of RTTs were teachers, whereas only 20.2% of teachers were teachers.

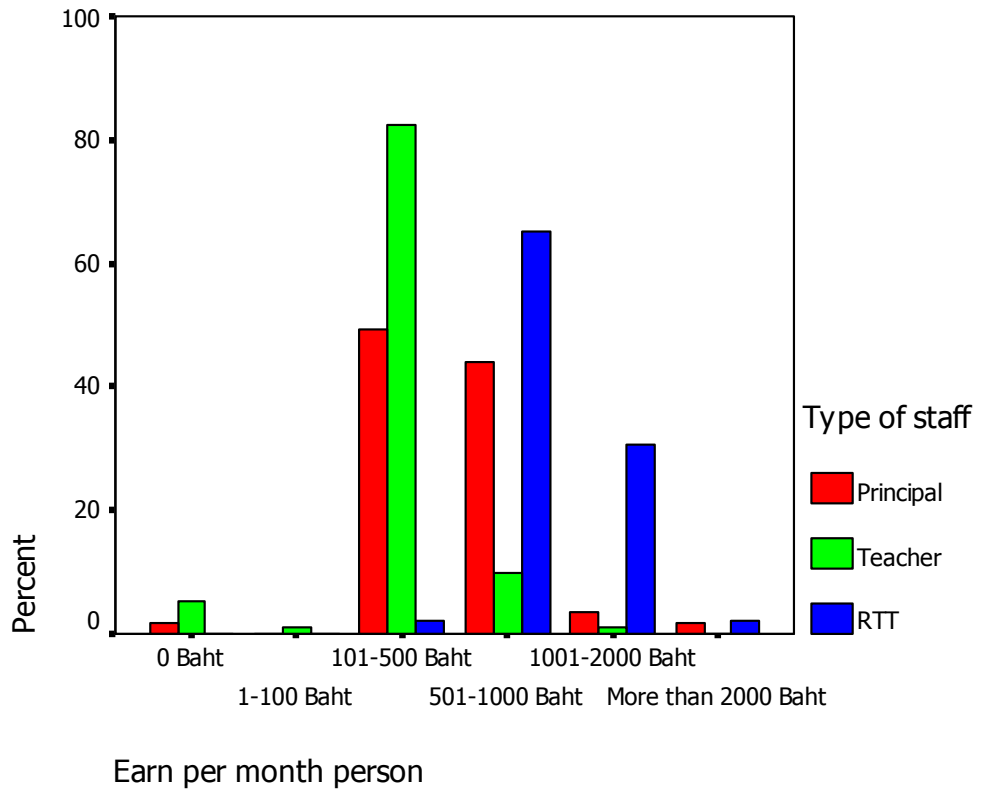
Figure 37 | Occupation before camp



Personal income

The majority of teachers (approximately 70%) earn 101-500B per month. For principals, the main income categories were 101-500B and 500-1000B. Most RTTs earn 1001-2000B per month and about a third earn 1001-2000B per month.

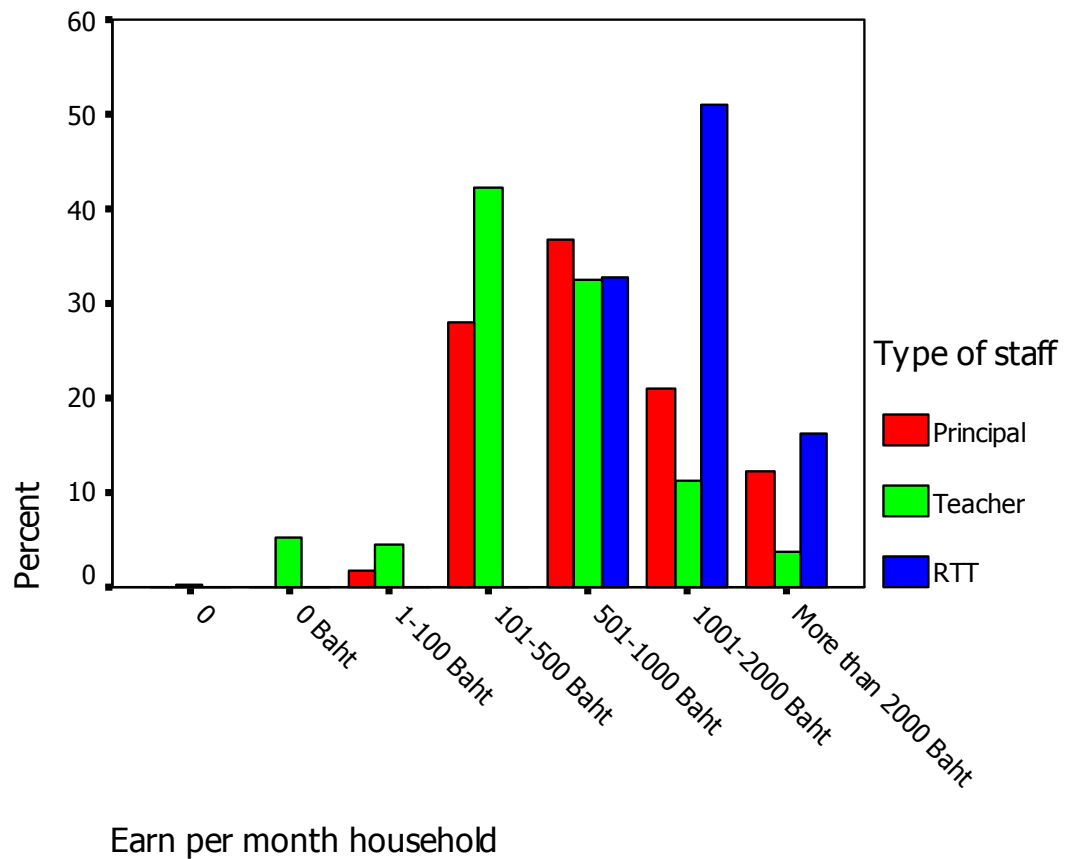
Figure 38 | Monthly personal income



Household income

The lowest household income for RTTs is 501B and the highest is more than 2000B, with the majority earning between 1001-2000B. For teachers, the majority of respondents have a monthly household income of 101-1000B. Like teachers, most principals have a monthly household income lying between 101-1000B. However, there were more principals with higher household incomes than teachers.

Figure 39| Monthly household income

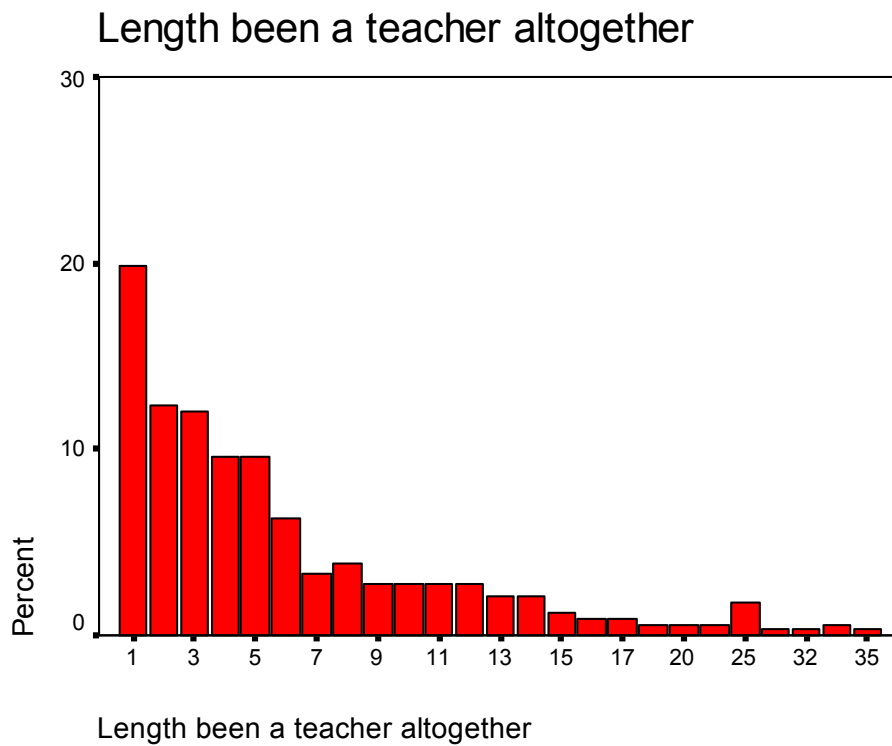


Experience in education

Of the 57 principals interviewed, 89.5% had been a teacher before becoming a principal. For RTTs, 95.9% had been teachers before.

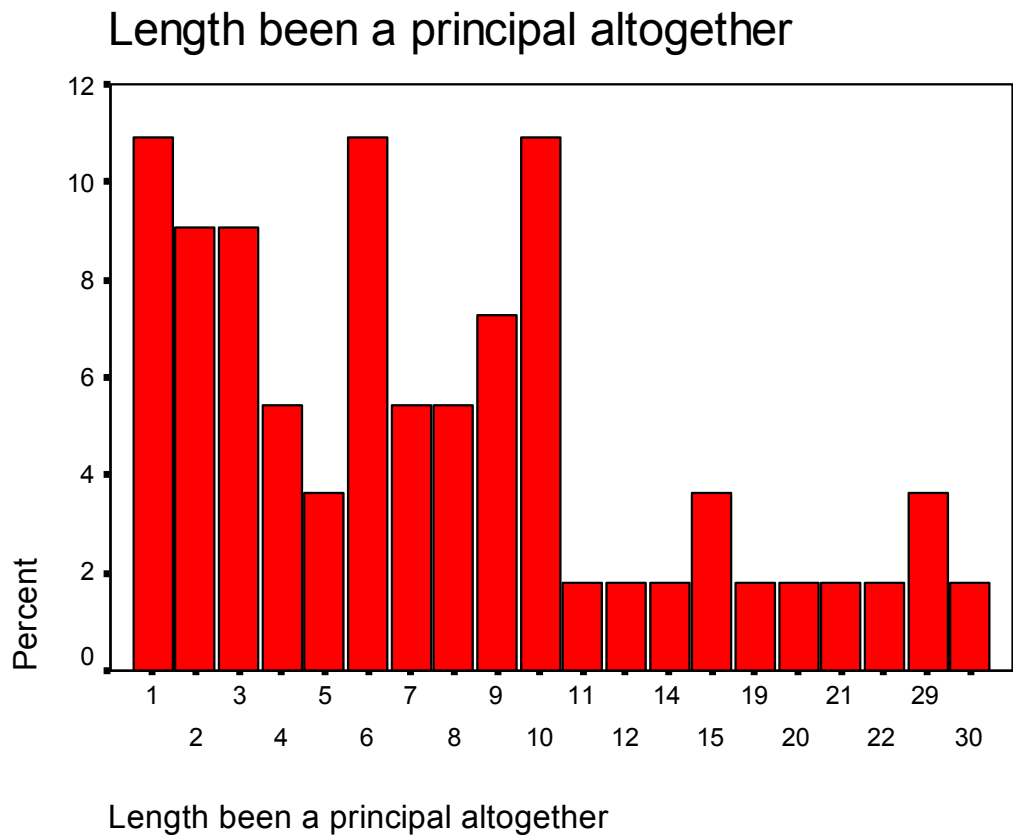
The mean number of years teachers had been teaching altogether was 6.07. About a fifth of the teachers interviewed had been working as a teacher for one year, which is the highest percentage for all the years of service. For all teachers, the range of years they had been teaching was one to 35. Slightly more than half had been teaching between one and four years.

Figure 40 | Length of teaching experience



The mean number of years that principals had been working as a principal was 8.49. The range was between one and 30 years. Of those who responded, 49.1% had worked between one and six years as a principal, and the rest between seven and 30 years, out of which slightly more than a fifth had been a principal for 10 years.

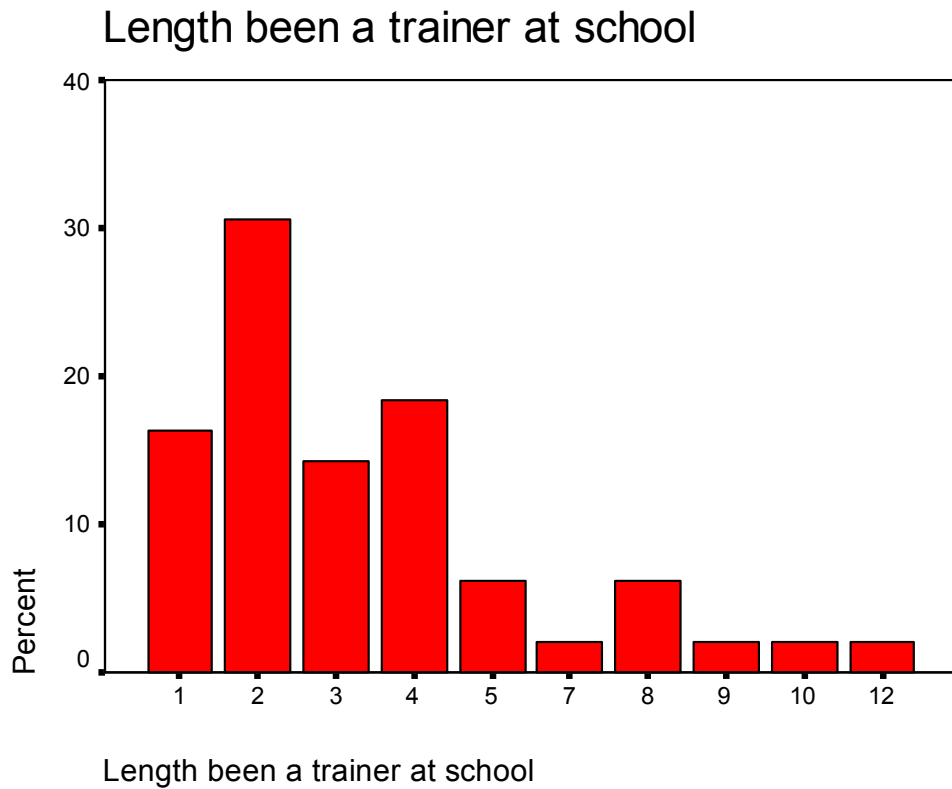
Figure 41| Length of experience as a principal



Trainers

The range of experience for trainers was between one and 12 years. The highest percentage of trainers had two years of experience as a trainer (30.6%), followed by four years (18.4%), one year (16.3%) and the rest were spread out over different time periods. The majority of respondents (79.6%) had been working as a trainer for one to four years.

Figure 42 | Length of experience as a trainer



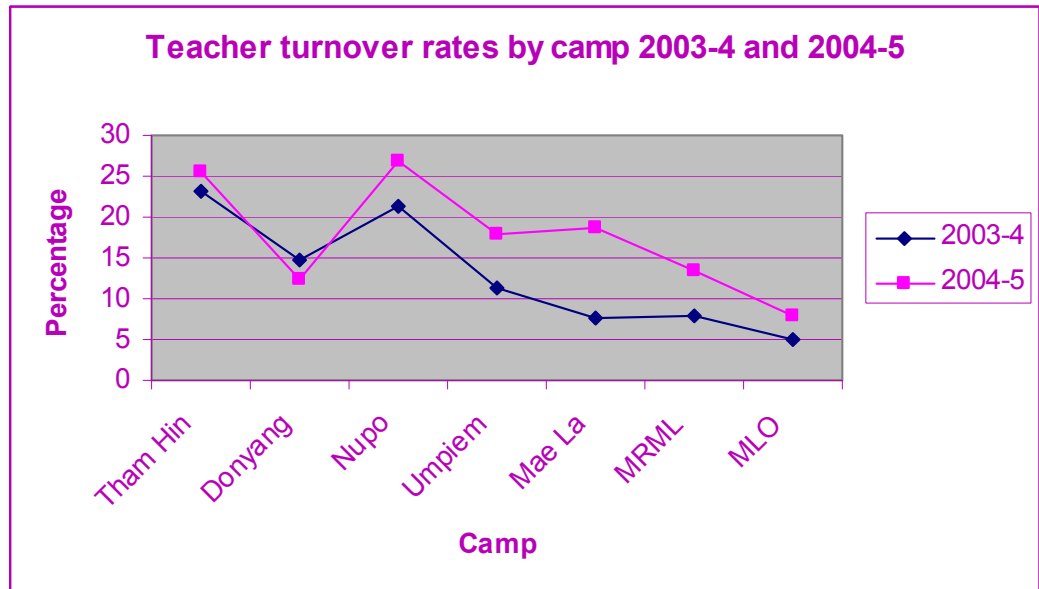
Teacher turnover and wastage

We have calculated teacher turnover rates for 2003-4 and 2004-5. However, some care needs to be taken in using these figures. First, the rate of teacher turnover is the number of teachers who have left the school expressed as a percentage of the teaching force. It includes teachers who have left teaching altogether, those who have left to go to teach in another school and those who were asked to leave. Hence, it is not an accurate measure of 'wastage' – the extent to which teachers have left the teaching force altogether.

Second, we only have records for teachers leaving in 52 out of the 65 schools, so our rates may actually be lower than the actual rates. Due to the limited availability of data, we are using teacher turnover rate as a proxy for teacher wastage rate.

At what rate does the staff turnover rate indicate that teacher turnover is a problem? The most common method is to compare across time, across communities and across professions. In this case, we only have information for 2003-4 and 2004-5. In addition, we are not able to find teacher turnover statistics for similar refugee populations. Finally, we do not have turnover statistics for similar professions in the refugee camps.

In the US, the rate of teacher turnover is seen to become a problem when it increases from 10% to 15%. In the UK, the teacher turnover rate is about 17% and this is seen as a problem. Looking at the teacher turnover rate for the seven refugee camps between 2003 and 2005, we find that the rate is 11.1% for 2003-4 and 15.9% for 2004-5. With the teacher turnover rates of the US and the UK as benchmarks, it is reasonable to say that the teacher turnover rate is something to be concerned about.

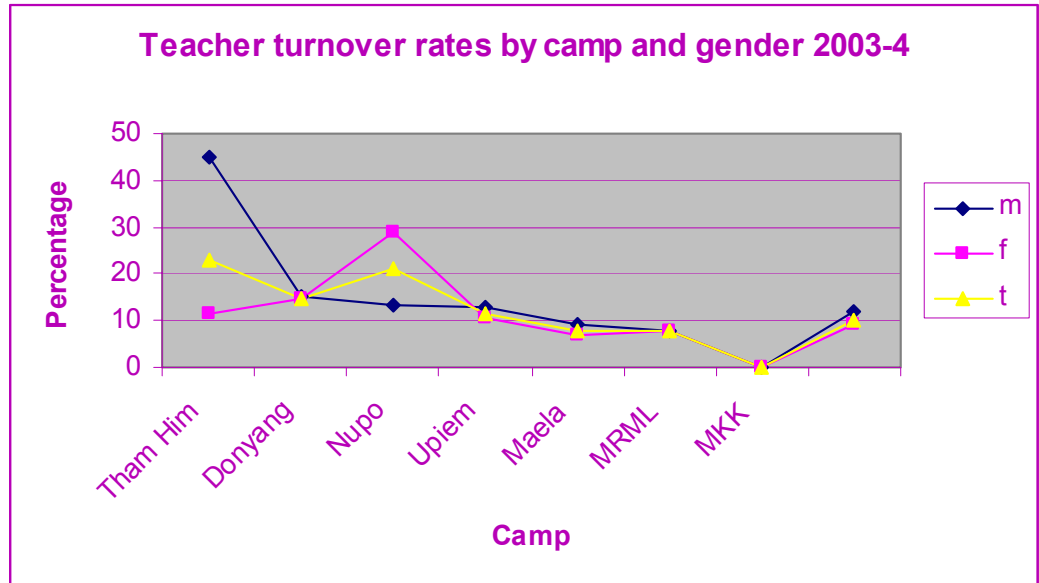
Figure 43 | Teacher turnover rates by camp 2003-4 and 2004-5

For all camps except Don Yang, the teacher turnover rate rose between 2003-4 and 2004-5. The rate decreased in Don Yang camp.

In both years, Tham Hin camp had the highest teacher turnover rate. In 2004-5, one quarter of the teachers left. For Nu Po camp, almost one fifth of the teachers left. These rates are higher than the average for all camps. The most obvious reason for the high teacher turnover rate in Tham Hin is that many teachers are being offered resettlement opportunities. Is this the main reason for leaving? We look at this in more detail in the next section.

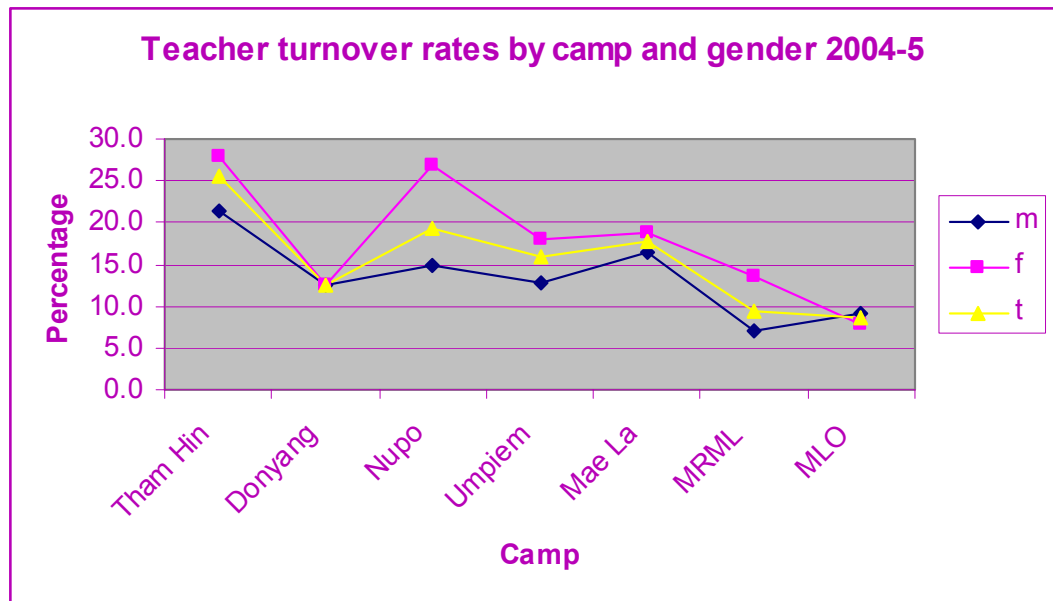
Looking at the teacher turnover rates by gender, we find that the percentage of female teachers leaving was higher than their male counterparts in 2004-5. There was no significant difference by gender for 2003-4.

Figure 44 | Teacher turnover rates by camp and gender 2003-4



In 2004-5, the rate of teacher turnover for female teachers was lower than males in Tham Hin, but higher in Nu Po. The rates were about the same for both genders in the rest of the camps.

Figure 45 | Teacher turnover rates by camp and gender 2004-5



For 2004-5, for all camps except Don Yang, the rate of teacher turnover was higher for women than men. In 2003-4, the total rate of teacher turnover for males was higher than for women, whereas in 2004-5 it was the other way around.

Table 24 | Teacher turnover rate by gender for 2003-4 and 2004-5 (percentage)

	2003-4	2004-5
M	13.4	13.2
F	9.7	18.2
T	11.1	15.9

In summary, the rate of teacher turnover over the past two years has risen and it seems that in Nu Po, more female than male teachers left. The rate of female teachers leaving also rose significantly in 2004-5 - almost twice the rate.

In our survey, we asked teachers if they were thinking of leaving teaching. Out of 333 people who responded to this question, almost a third (32.1%) reported that they were thinking of leaving.

Reasons for leaving

From interview data and focus group interviews with former teachers, we have found that there is a variety of reasons why teachers are leaving the 'workforce'. Their reasons for leaving are multi-faceted, but they can be categorized into push and pull factors. Push factors are reasons within the school or the teaching profession which cause teachers to leave. Examples would include difficult working conditions and problems dealing with students and colleagues.

Pull factors are those which are external to the school environment. Starting another type of work, looking after the family and resettlement are some such examples. Pull factors may also be separated into structural and random factors. Structural factors are those which have to do with the economy or society-wide events which affect all individuals or those of a particular group. In a nation-state setting, examples would be war and economic depression. In the case of the refugee camps, these would include resettlement and MOI restrictions. Random factors are those which are associated with personal tendencies or inclinations and which are not dependent on community-wide factors.

Of course, push and pull factors may influence one another, and it may not always be easy to distinguish between them. Often, teachers' reasons for leaving will be a combination of the two.

We gave teachers a list of reasons why they were considering leaving and asked them to select all the relevant ones. We combined the total number of responses from all respondents. So, for example, in a sample of only two teachers, if teacher A chose options 1 and 2, and teacher B chose options 2 and 3, these amounted to four responses altogether. We then calculated the number of times (in percentage form) each option was chosen. So, in our example, option 2 was chosen twice out of four times, making it 50% of all responses.

Of those who were thinking of leaving teaching, the following options were chosen in descending order: to further their studies (27.1% of all responses, 44.9% of the respondents), to live in another country (20.9% of all responses, 34.6% of respondents), to retire (10.7% of all responses, 17.8% of respondents), to look after their children (10.2% of all responses, 16.8% of respondents), followed by to stay at home (9.6% of all responses, 15.9% of all respondents) and problems with working conditions (9.6% of all responses, 15.9% of all who responded). The rest of the reasons are listed in Table 25.

In the survey, we did not offer 'inadequate remuneration' as an option, so as not to bias the replies. However, we did give teachers an 'other' option in case they wanted to add to our options. Having looked at the survey as a whole, it would have been better to include 'inadequate remuneration' as an option.

The options that teachers chose in descending order of number of responses are shown in Table 25. The first column of numbers indicates the percentage of responses received for each option. The second column shows the percentage of respondents who chose that option.

Table 25 | Teachers' reasons for leaving

Reasons	% of Responses	% of Respondents
To further their studies	27.1	44.9
To live in another country	20.9	34.6
Retire	10.7	17.8
To look after children	10.2	16.8
To stay at home	9.6	15.9
Problems with working conditions	4.5	7.5
To go back to Burma	2.8	4.7
To work with NGOs or CBOs	2.8	4.7
To look after sick relatives	2.3	3.7
Other reason for teachers leaving	2.3	3.7
Sick or disabled	1.7	2.8
To move to another place in Thailand – not camp	1.1	1.9
Problems with colleagues/headteacher	1.1	1.9
To become soldiers	1.1	1.9
To move to another camp	.6	.9
To work outside the camp	.6	.9
To become camp leaders	.6	.9
Total	100.0	165.4

0 missing respondents; 107 valid respondents

Retirement and resettlement

Taking away the number who will be retiring, 86 teachers out of the total interviewed said that they were thinking of leaving. This is about a quarter of the sample.

Of the teachers who are thinking of leaving for reasons other than retirement, almost half (43%) are considering resettlement.

Furthering their studies

For respondents who are not thinking of moving to another country and/or retiring, the reason that was chosen the most was to further

their studies (41.5% of all responses, 55.1% of the 49 people selected this).

When we look at the reasons for leaving by age categories, almost all of the adults between 17 and 29 wanted to further their studies, as compared to 6.4% of those between 30 and 65, and none from 66 years onwards.

To look after their children and to stay at home

Looking at the responses by gender, we see that significantly more women (88.2%) than men (11.8%) are thinking of leaving to stay at home and to look after their children, and all the respondents who were thinking of leaving to look after their children were women.

Factors which would persuade teachers to stay

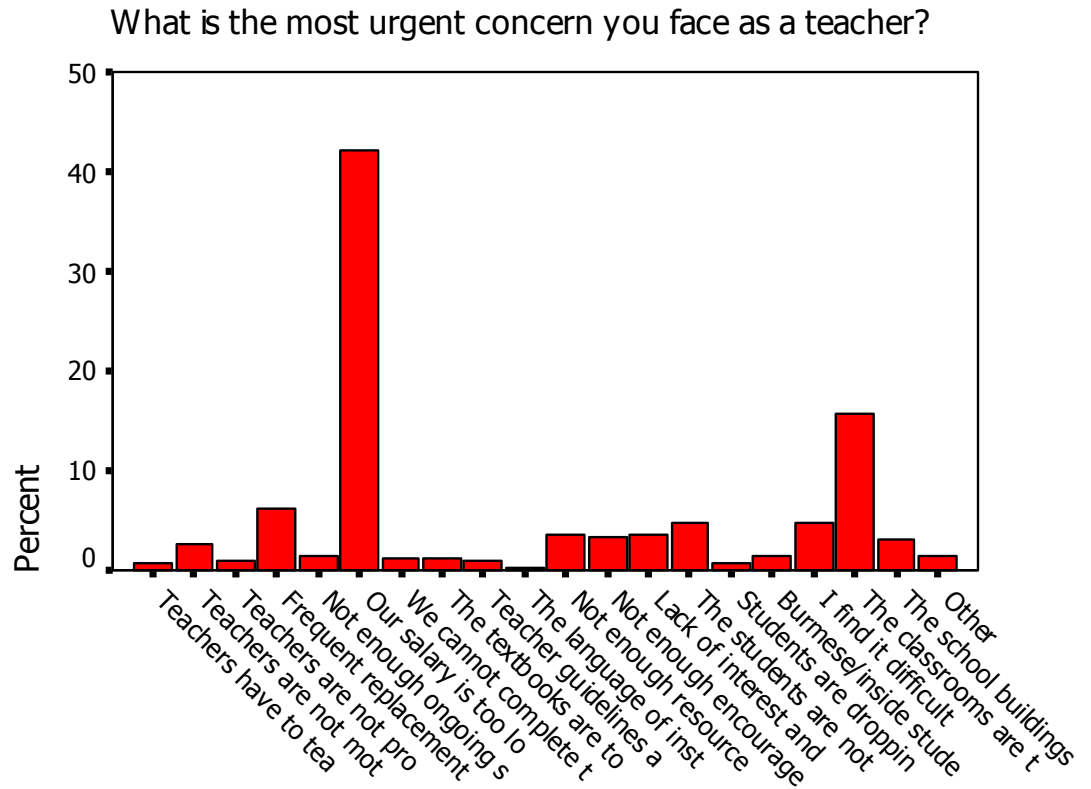
We gave teachers a list of factors that would make them stay in teaching, and they could choose multiple factors. We combined the total number of responses from all respondents. So, for example, in a sample of only two teachers, if teacher A chose options 1 and 2, and teacher B chose options 2 and 3, these amounted to four responses altogether. We then calculated the number of times (in percentage form) each option was chosen. So, in our example, option 2 was chosen twice out of four responses, making it 50% of all responses.

The options the teachers selected were:

- 1) obtaining a higher subsidy (30% of all responses, 74.8% of respondents)
- 2) the provision of self-development courses (15.7% of all responses, 39.3% of respondents)
- 3) perks (10.9% of all responses, 27.1% of respondents)
- 4) more recognition from KED (8.6% of all responses, 21.5% of respondents).

In a different part of the survey, we asked teachers about their most urgent concerns. Out of 12 different options, low income was reported as the most urgent concern that they faced. Of those who were thinking of leaving, 42.9% chose low subsidy as their most urgent concern. The percentage was about the same when we look at all teachers - 42.1%. This is supported by data gathered from focus group interviews with former teachers.

Figure 46| Teachers’ most urgent concerns



What is the most urgent concern you face as a teacher?

The labels on the x-axis are:

Teachers have to teach too many periods
Teachers are not motivated to do their work

Teachers are not properly trained for the job
Frequent replacement of teachers
Not enough ongoing support from trainers
Our salary is too low

We cannot complete the textbooks within the school year
The textbooks are too difficult for the students
Teacher guidelines and textbooks are not appropriate to Karen culture
The language of instruction is not suitable for our students

Not enough resource materials (library) available
Not enough encouragement from the leadership (KED)
Lack of interest and cooperation from the parents
The students are not interested
Students are dropping out
Burmese/inside students need more support than I can give
I find it difficult to get students to listen when I am teaching
The classrooms are too noisy and crowded
The school buildings and facilities need maintenance
Other

Discussion

Besides retirement and resettlement, the reasons for teachers leaving and the factors that would persuade them to stay indicate that income and further study opportunities are major issues. These findings have to be understood within the context of the camp and the decision-making taken in families.

Looking at personal income, we found that, 82.5% of the teachers who responded earned between 101 and 500B per month and 10% earned 501 to 1000B. The teacher subsidy is 500B. At the household level, 42.3% reported an income of 101-500B per month and 32.4% 501-1000B per month.

Compared with the income of people in the families sample group, this is much higher than the average personal income: 44% of individuals interviewed have no monthly income. However, we have to take into account the time teachers need to look after the household, children, and to supplement the household income. In focus group interviews, we found that it made more economic sense for teachers to stop teaching than to hire someone to look after their children. Also, the opportunity cost of stopping work is much less, as with their free time, respondents would be able to grow vegetables, further their studies and look after their families.

Are there other reasons for high teacher turnover besides economic necessity? Teachers who had said that they were thinking of leaving and who had not chosen resettlement or retirement as reasons were asked the extent to which they agreed or disagreed to a battery of statements on job satisfaction.

Of those who responded, 36.7% agreed or strongly agreed that if they could get another job that paid, they would stop teaching, 30.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed and 32.7% didn't know.

The majority (87.7%) disagreed or strongly disagreed to the statement 'I teach because I don't know what else to do'.

Everyone agreed or strongly agreed that 'Teaching is hard work but it is worthwhile'. In fact, 57.1% strongly agreed.

Job satisfaction is relatively high: 80.9% agreed or strongly agreed to the statement 'I enjoy teaching', whereas 12.7% disagreed or strongly disagreed, and 6.4% did not know. Almost everyone (98%) agreed or strongly agreed to the statement 'I look forward to going to school everyday', and everyone agreed or strongly

agreed to the statement 'I like working with children'. Only 10.2% agreed to the statement 'I don't like working with my colleagues'.

However, for the majority, teaching was not their calling. Only 14.6% agreed or strongly agreed that they always wanted to be a teacher, whereas 48% did not, and 37.5% did not know.

It seems, therefore, that we can rule out the lack of teacher motivation and job satisfaction as a reason for the generally high turnover and wastage levels. The fact that most teachers do not see teaching as their calling means that economic concerns and the drive for further education easily override their desire to stay in teaching.

Training and support

This section looks at the different types of training attended by the teachers, RTTs and principals, as well as the in-service support provided by RTTs to teachers.

Teacher in-service training

Teachers receive pre-service training from World Education/Consortium; most attend the Teacher Preparation Course (TPC). When they enter the teaching profession, they are offered regular in-service training programmes provided by different NGOs and CBOs, and a plethora of one-off courses conducted by various individuals and organizations.

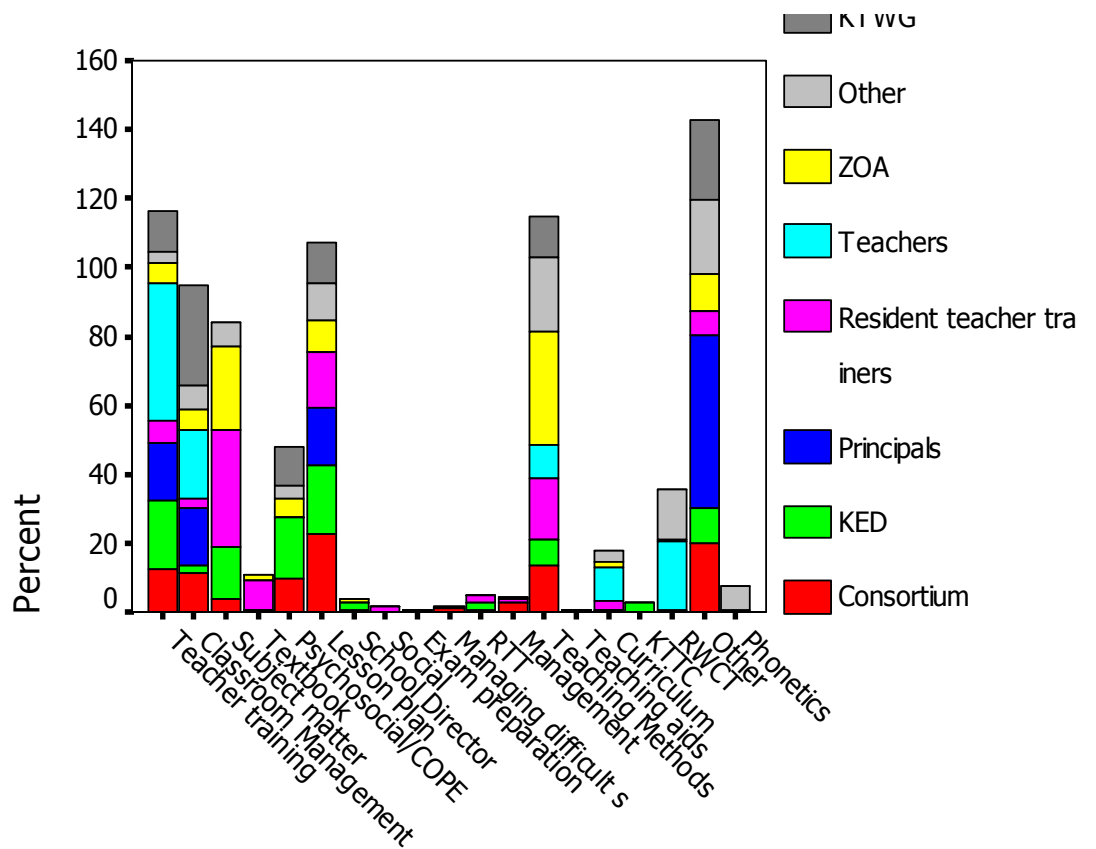
The two main types of in-service training ZOA provides to teachers are: sessions conducted by ZOA trainers during the holidays and on-the-job training and support provided by resident teacher trainers (RTTs).

In general, the majority of teachers (81.6%) interviewed had not received teacher training before coming to the camp. However, the majority (91.3%) of them did receive teacher training after coming to the camp.

What type of teacher training did teachers receive? Teachers reported attending many different types of training programmes. However, we are not sure how they defined types. As Figure 47 shows, they reported having attended many different types, and some of them overlap.

Subject matter training is mostly delivered by RTTs and the ZOA trainers, whereas teaching methods are predominantly delivered by ZOA trainers. The Karen Teachers Working Group (KTWG) delivers a substantial amount of training on classroom management, while principals deliver a significant percentage of 'other' types of training, and teachers deliver a large proportion of teacher training.

Figure 47 | Types of training received by organization



Training1 - prog coded

Teachers acquired a variety of procedural and content knowledge for each different type of training provided. This is usually the case, as in order to plan a lesson for example, one must consider other types of skills that are needed.

The three main types of training centred around teaching skills, teaching content and interaction with students. For those listed below, teachers reported acquiring a wide range of skills. We present the main skills and content that they reported acquiring.

Teaching skills

The programmes were called a variety of names – teaching skills, teaching methods, teacher training, lesson planning. The types of skills that teachers reported learning were similar in these different programmes - lesson planning, teaching methods, classroom management.

Teaching content

We noticed some confusion about the names of the training programmes attended. This partially reflects the conflation between textbooks and curriculum – these programmes were variously called subject matter training, textbook, the curriculum. Teachers reported learning about subject content, lesson planning, the curriculum and how the textbooks work.

Interaction with students

In classroom management and psychosocial training, teachers reported learning how to motivate students and to manage classrooms.

When asked if they were able to apply what they learnt from these different training programmes, almost all teachers said 'yes'. With regards to training provided by RTTs, 96.2% of the teachers reported that they were able to apply the training.

Training needed

Teachers were asked to circle all the types of training they needed from a list and they could choose multiple types. We combined the total number of responses from all respondents. So, for example, in a sample of only two teachers, if teacher A chose options 1 and 2, and teacher B chose options 2 and 3, these amounted to four responses altogether. We then calculated the number of times (in percentage form) each option was chosen. So, in our example, option 2 was chosen twice out of four responses, making it 50% of all responses.

'Teaching methods' was chosen the most (20.9% of all responses, 52.3% of all respondents). This was followed by 'assessing students' progress' (15.9% of all responses, 39.8% of all respondents) and 'subject matter' (15.6% of all responses, 38.9% of all respondents). The types of training required were relatively spread out across the options, as shown in Table 26. The first column of numbers indicates the percentage of responses received for each option. The second column shows the percentage of respondents who chose that option. The other types of training needed were computer skills and physical training.

Table 26 | Training needed by teachers

Training needed	% of Responses	% of Respondents
Teaching methods	20.9	52.3
Assessing students' progress	15.9	39.8
Subject matter	15.6	38.9
Lesson planning	14.7	36.8
How to use textbooks	11.1	27.7
Classroom management	10.8	27.1
General knowledge	10.7	26.7
Other	.4	.9
Total	100.0	250.2

8 missing respondents; 329 valid respondents

Training times

Teachers were asked when the best time for ZOA trainers to provide training would be. The times seen as favourable were during the school holidays and during school term weekends.

The best time for RTTs to provide training was during the weekends of the school term, followed by during the school holidays.

Support that teachers receive**Principals**

The support that principals reported providing to their teachers regularly is mostly in the sphere of administration, student motivation and classroom management:

- motivate students to learn (75.4% of respondents)
- help prepare tests and examinations (63.2% of respondents)
- writing student achievement reports (60% of respondents)
- classroom management (50.9% of respondents)

In the realm of pedagogy, of those who responded, 47.4% give teachers feedback on their teaching sometimes and 43.9% do so regularly. Principals viewed their role in training and supporting teachers in pedagogy as more akin to background support. Most principals reported supporting teachers sometimes in the following:

- providing demonstration lessons (75.4% of respondents)
- how to get parents more involved (74.9% of respondents)
- how to develop and use teaching materials (70.2% of respondents)
- help with lesson planning (68.4% of respondents)
- help with the curriculum (68.4% of respondents)
- how to use a variety of teaching techniques (66.7% of respondents).

We found that 12.3% of respondents reported that they never show teachers 'how to use a variety of teaching techniques'. This was the highest percentage out of all types of support that were never provided.

Parents

Parents see their role in the schooling of their children as registering them and attending graduation ceremonies. This attitude is reflected in how teachers and principals see parents'

roles. The view is that parents are involved in the beginning and the end of the child's schooling but is not involved in the process.

One of the issues which emerged from our focus groups with former teachers is that parents were seen to be uncooperative with teachers with regards to discipline issues. This could be due to a lack of communication, which is understandable as teachers teach large classes.

Training for RTTs

The majority of RTTs had not received teacher training before coming to the camp (61.2%) while 38.8% had. In contrast, 98% had received training in the camp.

The number of types of training received ranged between two and 21, with the majority (62.5%) having received two or three types. The mode was three types of training at 43.8%.

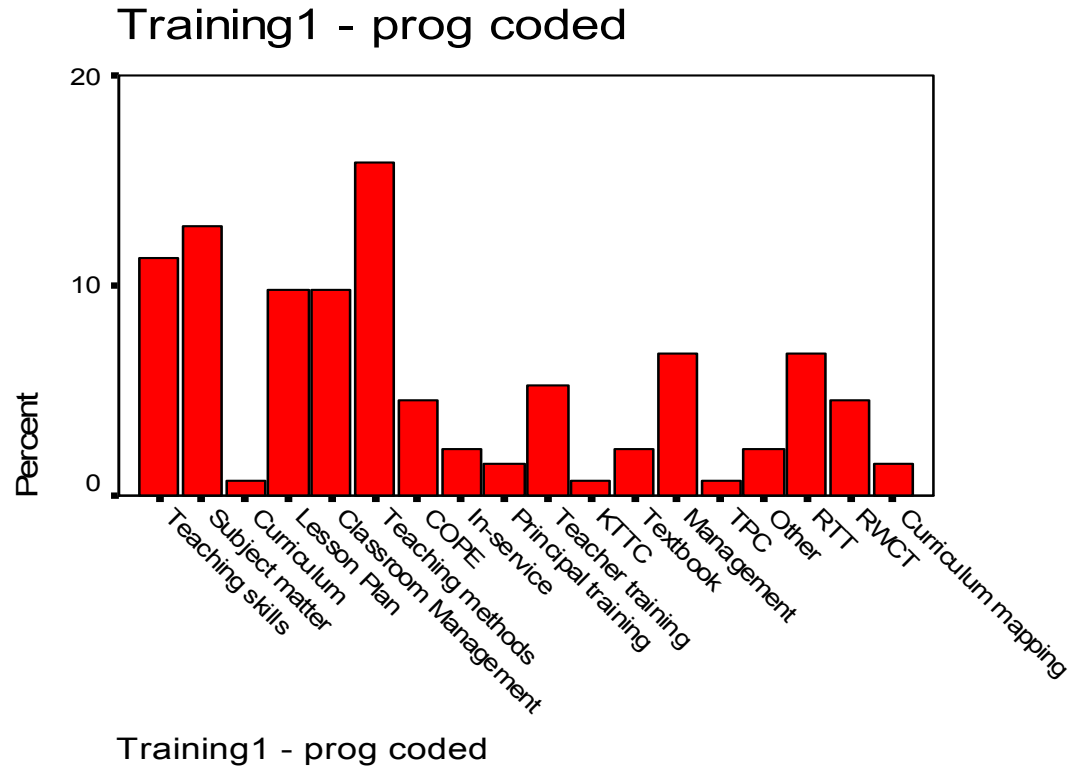
Almost all of them (98%) said that they were able to apply the training provided by ZOA.

When asked if RTT training during school disrupts school, 71.4% agreed and 28.6% disagreed. We asked RTTs when the best time for ZOA training would be, and the majority (95.6%) thought that it would be best to have it during the school holidays.

Training programmes attended

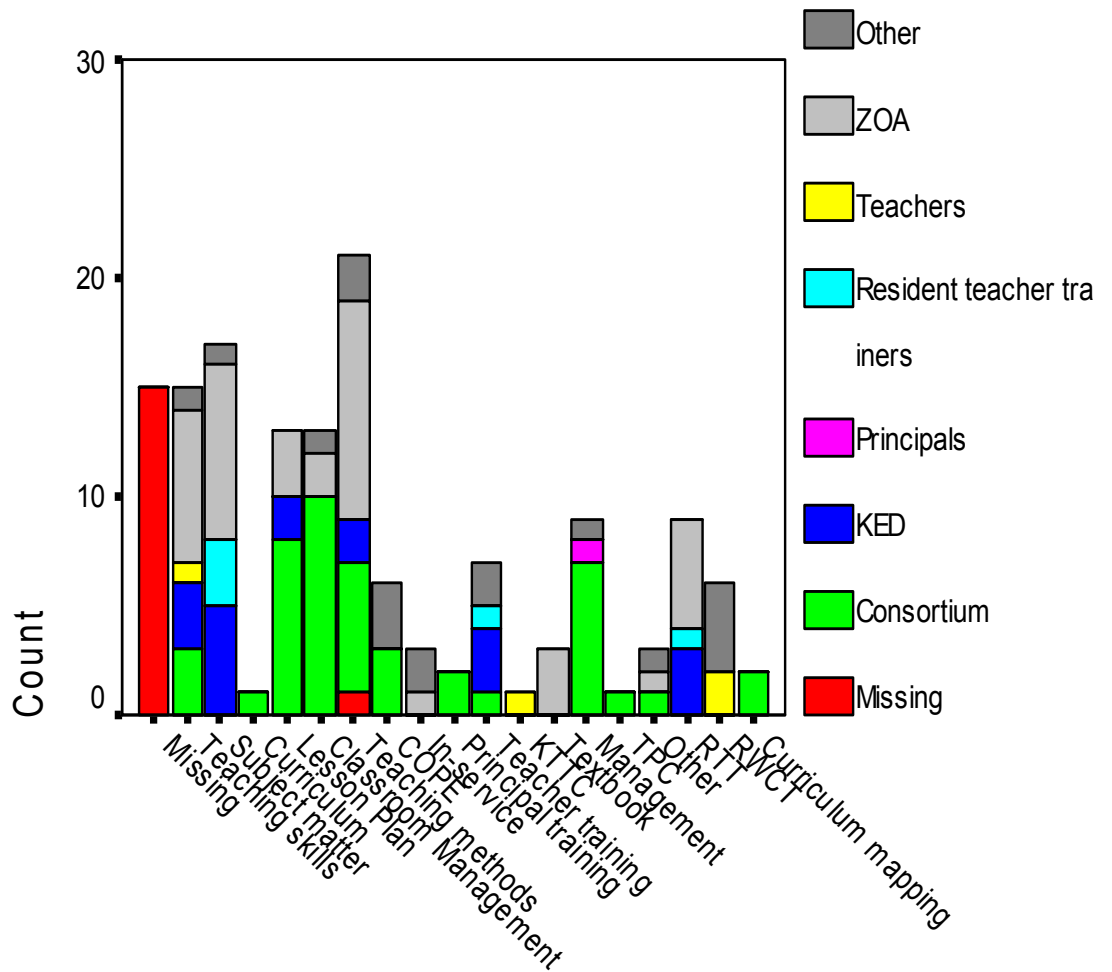
The training programmes that RTTs have attended in the camps are set out below. RTTs have attended a variety of training sessions on teaching; teaching methods, subject matter and teaching skills were the programmes most often mentioned.

Figure 48 | Teacher training programmes attended



The programmes were delivered by a variety of organizations. As the figure below shows, Consortium and ZOA provide training across a broad range of programmes and content. ZOA seems to have provided more training for teaching skills and subject matter, whereas Consortium seems to have provided more training in management, classroom management and lesson planning. What would be useful to know is how much coordination there is amongst the different NGOs providing training.

Figure 49 | Training programmes provided by different organizations



Training1 - prog coded

Teaching techniques

RTTs reported that they learnt teaching techniques mostly in training programmes on teaching skills and teaching methods.

New teaching methods

For new teaching methods, all RTTs answered that they learnt this in teaching skills and RTT training, and most in teaching methods training.

Subject content

Unsurprisingly, all RTTs reported learning about subject content in subject matter training and textbook training. What is surprising is that they reported learning about subject content in classroom management training.

How the textbooks work

The majority of RTTs reported that they learnt how the textbooks work in teaching skills, subject matter, teaching methods and RTT training, but not in textbook training. It is possible that they may be using the term 'textbook' to mean 'subject matter'.

Lesson Planning

RTTs reported learning about lesson planning in almost all training sessions.

Curriculum

It is surprising that RTTs reported learning about classroom management in training sessions on the curriculum.

Classroom Management

This seems to be something that they learnt in just about all training sessions.

Motivate students to learn

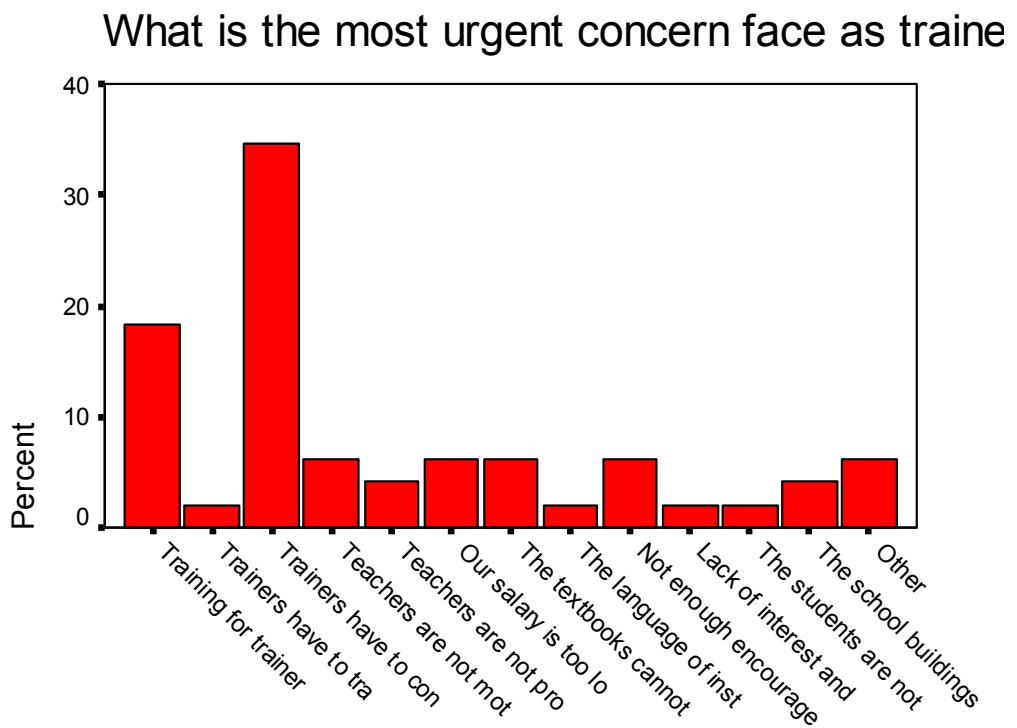
RTTs are learning how to motivate students in courses on teaching skills, in-service training and teaching methods.

In general, RTTs are learning a variety of skills and content in different types of training provided by ZOA. However, it may be the case that the terms used to describe the training sessions and what is taught in them are not completely clear.

RTTs' most urgent concern

Over a third of RTTs chose 'Trainers have to constantly train new teachers' as the most urgent concern, and almost a fifth chose 'The training for trainers is inadequate'.

Figure 50 | Most urgent concern faced by trainers



What is the most urgent concern face as trainer?

The labels on the x-axis are:

The training for trainers is inadequate

Trainers have to train too many teachers

Trainers have to constantly train new teachers

Teachers are not motivated to do their work

Teachers are not properly trained for the job

Our salary is too low

The textbooks cannot be completed within the school year

The language of instruction is not suitable for our students

Not enough encouragement from the leadership (KED)

Lack of interest and cooperation from the parents

The students are not interested

The school buildings and facilities need maintenance

Other

RTT views on ZOA Training

We asked the RTTs how ZOA training for RTTs could be improved. The most common answer was to provide more training and to increase the duration of training.

Types of training asked for

- Refresher courses for RTTs
- Training to use materials and equipment appropriately
- More training on the curriculum

Participants

- They wanted to have RTTs from Karen State invited to all training given so that the education between camps and the Karen State would be standardized.

Organizational aspects

- They wanted ZOA to let the teachers know in advance when they were going to provide training.
- They wanted ZOA to organize the training arrangements before training began.
- They wanted clear and set training dates and times.
- They believed that training for RTTs and teachers should be conducted separately.

New training and upgrading

- They wanted new training and training to be upgraded year by year.

Support that RTTs wanted

The RTTs wanted the following type of support from KED and ZOA to help them to do their work more effectively:

Feedback

- They wanted feedback so that they would be aware of their weak and strong points.
- They believed that it was necessary to evaluate RTTs' teaching once a year.

Regular meetings

- They wanted more face-to-face meetings with ZOA.
- They wanted ZOA and KED to visit their schools at least twice a year.
- They felt that all of the RTTs should meet once a year.
- They wanted the ZOA trainers to work closely with the RTTs.

Encouragement

- They reported needing encouragement and guidance from ZOA, KED and leaders.

Teaching materials

- They wanted adequate teaching materials and stationery to be provided on time.
- They requested maps.

Financial support

- They wanted bigger lunch allowances during training.
- They wanted to have their salary on time.

Support to teachers

- They wanted ZOA to give more training to teachers.
- They wanted teachers to be provided with more moral support and motivation.
- They wanted teachers' subsidies to be increased.
- They believed that it was necessary to keep teachers in the teaching force.

Others

- They believed that there should be more work done on the parent-school relationship.
- They wanted training in using computers.

Training for Principals¹³

The School Directors' training programme is provided by World Education/Consortium on a monthly basis and covers topics such as basic planning, preparing for and facilitating meetings, programme evaluation, filing systems, keeping accounts, leadership skills and staff motivation, observing and providing teachers with feedback, communication skills and problem-solving.

Of those who replied, 83.3% had attended a school management training course in the camp. The organizations that they reported as having delivered these training courses were Consortium, KED, ZOA, Burma Issues, a foreign teacher and NHEC, with Consortium having the highest percentage of all responses (68.9%).

¹³ We would like to thank Chai of World Education/Consortium for providing us with information about the School Director's training programme.

When we asked them what they had learnt from the school management training, planning, conflict resolution, decision-making, and observing and giving teachers feedback had the highest proportion of positive responses.

Principals were asked to circle as many options as they thought relevant. We combined the total number of responses from all respondents. So, for example, in a sample of only two principals, if principal A chose options 1 and 2, and principal B chose options 2 and 3, these amounted to four responses altogether. We then calculated the number of times (in percentage form) each option was chosen. So, in our example, option 2 was chosen twice out of four responses, making it 50% of all responses.

Table 27 lists what principals learnt in descending order of percentage of responses and number of respondents. The first column of numbers indicates the percentage of responses received for each option. The second column shows the percentage of respondents who chose that option.

Table 27 | Skills learnt from school management training

Skills learnt	% of Responses	% of Respondents
Planning	16.0	57.8
Conflict resolution	11.0	40.0
Decision making	10.4	37.8
Observing and giving teachers feedback	10.4	37.8
Time management	9.8	35.6
Communication	9.2	33.3
Sharing information with staff	8.6	31.1
Planning and conducting meetings	8.6	31.1
Keeping records-accounts	8.0	28.9
Keeping records-filing	6.7	24.4
Other	1.2	4.4
Total	100.0	362.2

0 missing respondents; 45 valid respondents

When asked if they had the support needed to apply what they had learnt, 90.9% said 'yes'.

Conclusion

Teacher turnover and wastage

Teacher turnover and wastage gravely affect schooling in the short and long term. This is a serious issue as the strength of any education system depends on the dedication of teachers and the quality of their work.

In a prolonged refugee situation, this will always be a problem. Refugee camps are transitional places: people are repatriated, resettled and moved; people enter and leave regularly. This is a structural issue which is inbuilt into the nature of refugee camps. Take for example the case of Bhutanese refugees in Nepal, Brown (2002) reported that the teacher turnover rate is high and a concern to the refugee community.

In the case of teachers in the seven refugee camps, resettlement opportunities are being offered to educated individuals, particularly in Tham Hin camp. In the coming year, many of the educational staff members will be leaving the camp to resettle in another country. In order to address this, there should be inbuilt mechanisms that ensure that 1) the knowledge and expertise of those who leave are handed over to other staff members through continual and regular staff training by staff, 2) there is systematic recruitment and training of new staff members, and 3) existing staff members are adequately remunerated and recognized for their efforts.

There are certain arrangements which may help to keep teaching staff. Teachers can be compensated for their efforts in a variety of ways besides monetary subsidies: food, household goods, clothing and other basic necessities, and opportunities for further education.

It may be possible also to arrange for teachers to work part-time so that they have more time to supplement their income, look after the household and/or further their studies. There is currently some interest on the part of the Thai Ministry of Education and NGOs to implement distance education in the camps. This would greatly alleviate the demand for further education and learning among teachers and the general population.

Another possibility is to utilize the experience and knowledge of teachers who have already retired. Often, retired teachers find difficulty in travelling to school everyday. It may be possible to arrange for students to go to them instead.

In our focus group interviews, former teachers reported that the quarterly provision of subsidies is a concern. We are aware of the practical problems related to the administration of teacher subsidies. This currently under review.

Finally, in focus group interviews, we found also that for certain schools, management problems were causing teachers to be laid off or to leave. In this area, conflict resolution techniques might be usefully employed.

Training and support

In the area of training and support, the findings show that there are several different organizations and individuals who offer training to teachers in the camps. Teachers reported learning different things from different programmes and the training programmes address different needs. However, the training programmes have slightly different names and purposes - it is not always clear what the different training programmes are about, and it seems also that teachers are not always clear about what the content of the training programmes is.

We need more nuanced information on the training needs of teachers. For example, what types of teaching methods? In what context, for what purposes, for which subject, and which teachers (new or senior)?

Finally, the variety of training programmes offered cover similar areas of content and skills. We do not know to what extent they are related or overlap. It would be useful, perhaps, for teachers to have review sessions about the different training programmes and what they have learnt from the different types of training in order to consolidate their learning and to come up with ways of applying their knowledge and sharing it with other teachers.

Chapter 7 | Adult education

Why should society feel responsible only for the education of children, and not for the education of all adults of every age?

Erich Fromm

In this chapter, we look at the formal educational activities which do not fall into the general education route. Most of the courses described below fall under the term 'adult education'¹⁴, but there are courses which are attended by students as well.

The different types of non-school education we asked respondents about are set out in Table 28.

Table 28 | Educational activities

Vocational courses	Medical courses, law, computer training, agriculture, training on managing the camp, automechanic training, radio repair, animal raising, sewing
Awareness-raising programmes	mine risk education, first aid training, HIV awareness, domestic violence
Language courses	Burmese, English, Karen (including literacy courses) and Thai

Teachers, representatives of families, and people who had dropped out of school were asked if they had previously participated and whether they would be interested in attending such activities. They were also asked about the obstacles that they encountered in attending these educational activities.

¹⁴ We have decided to use this term so as to sidestep the debate on formal, nonformal and informal education. For more on this, see www.infoed.org.

Courses attended

Respondents were asked separate questions on whether they had previously attended language courses, vocational courses and awareness-raising courses. Looking at all three groups, in descending order, 44.7% (1369 out of 3062) had attended an awareness-raising course, 30.6% (915 out of 2990) had attended a language course, and 27.3% (832 out of 3048) had attended a vocational course.

Table 29 | Percentage of people who have attended courses by group

Have you attended a/an	3 groups (%)	Teachers (%)	Dropout (%)	Families (%)
Awareness-raising course	44.7	56.5	53.2	42.7
Language course	30.6	52.4	56.2	26.3
Vocational course	27.3	43.6	32.4	24.9

Comparing the percentages within each group, the majority of teachers and dropout students had attended awareness-raising and language courses. The percentages for the families group were much lower.

Desire to attend courses

The desire to attend courses is high. Combining all positive responses to whether they would like to attend a language, vocational and awareness-raising course, the option which had the most number of responses was vocational courses at 38.5% of all responses; 86.4% of the people who answered wanted to attend. Language courses were the second most popular with 33.7% of all responses; 75.7% of respondents wanted to attend. Awareness-raising courses were the least popular at 27.8% of all responses.

Looking at the figures by group, language courses were the most popular for teachers (92.2% wanted to attend one).

Table 30 | Desire to attend courses

Would you like to attend a/an	3 groups (%)	Teachers (%)	Dropout (%)	Families (%)
Vocational course	64.8	89.9	90.6	60.2
Language course	58.2	92.2	83.2	52.4
Awareness-raising course	47.2	70.1	72.3	42.9

Vocational courses were the most popular choice for respondents who had previously dropped out of school (90.6%) and representatives of families (60.2%). Awareness-raising courses were the least popular for these two groups.

Vocational courses

Courses attended

The total number of respondents who attended vocational courses was 832, which is 27.3% of those who answered the question. Some care has to be taken in interpreting the numbers, as the numbers may be due to the availability of courses.

Respondents were asked to circle all the types of courses they had previously attended and they could choose multiple types. We combined the total number of responses from all respondents. So, for example, in a sample of only two respondents, if respondent A chose options 1 and 2, and respondent B chose options 2 and 3, these amounted to four responses altogether. We then calculated the number of times (in percentage form) each option was chosen. So, in our example, option 2 was chosen twice out of four responses, making it 50% of all responses.

For all groups, the courses which had the highest attendance were sewing (23.2% of all responses), agriculture (22.5% of all responses) and medical courses (12.3% of all responses). The courses attended are shown in descending order. The first column of numbers indicates the percentage of responses received for each option. The second column shows the percentage of respondents who chose that option.

Table 31 | Vocational courses attended

Vocational courses attended	% of Responses	% of Respondents
Agriculture	22.5	31.3
Sewing	23.2	32.4
Medical course	12.3	17.1
Computer	6.4	8.9
Law	6.2	8.7
Managing camp	5.7	8.0
Automechanic	4.4	6.1
Animal raising	4.1	5.8
Radio repair	1.4	2.0
Other	13.8	19.2
Total	100.0	139.6

2,241 missing respondents; 852 valid respondents

If we break the figures down by group, we can see that, for teachers, 'sewing' had the highest number of responses, followed by computers and medical courses.

On the other hand, for both families and people who had dropped out of school, the choices with the most number of responses were sewing and agriculture.

Respondents had also attended a myriad of other courses which were not listed in our questionnaire. They are listed in Table 32.

Table 32 | Vocational courses that respondents attended

Arts	drawing, painting, photography
Beauty courses	make-up, hairdressing
Food preparation	baking, cooking, making bread
Textile crafts	knitting, sewing, weaving, smocking
Handicraft	flower making, shampoo making, candle making, soap making
Business/office skills	accounting, typing
Music	keyboard
Technical craft	carpentry, prosthetics, blacksmithing, charcoal stove making, umbrella repair
Health	natural medicine, medical lotion, eye checking, sanitation, balm-making
Agriculture	fish farming, mushroom-growing
Professional	security, mid-wifery, nursery, teaching training, principal

While we do not have the numbers of attendance for all the different types of vocational and craft learning activities in the camps, we have data for the students who attended the vocational programmes supported by ZOA for January to June 2005. The total number of learners in the seven Karen camps for this time period was 1541, 712 (46.2%) of whom are male, and 829 (53.8%) of whom are female.

Gender

The pattern of participation for most vocational courses seems to be split by gender. Courses such as sewing, weaving, knitting and cooking are dominated by female students, whereas programmes such as tinsmith, blacksmith, auto mechanics and radio mechanics attract more men than women. There are, however, courses which attract somewhat equal numbers of male and female students - music and typing.

ZOA has a policy of encouraging women to participate in what are considered traditionally 'male' courses.

Educational Levels

The educational levels of participants seem to follow a marked pattern. The majority of participants in sewing, weaving and agriculture have primary and sometimes middle school levels of education. In contrast, the majority of participants in auto mechanics, and in certain camps, radio mechanics have post-10 qualifications. The automechanic and radio mechanic courses require a higher level of literacy and numeracy than the other courses.

It is difficult to draw firm conclusions about the patterns of participation by gender and education level because we only have data for one time period (January to June 2005). Furthermore, we do not have information which links the gender and educational levels of individual participants.

Courses respondents would like to attend

Respondents were asked to circle all the types of courses they would like to attend and they could choose multiple options. We combined the total number of responses from all respondents. So, for example, in a sample of only two respondents, if respondent A chose options 1 and 2, and respondent B chose options 2 and 3, these amounted to four responses altogether. We then calculated the number of times (in percentage form) each option was chosen. So, in our example, option 2 was chosen twice out of four responses, making it 50% of all responses.

The most popular vocational courses were: sewing (20.5% of all positive responses), animal raising (15.1%), agriculture and medical courses (13.5% each), computers (12.7%). The popularity of the other courses is presented in Table 33 in descending order. The first column of numbers indicates the percentage of responses received for each option. The second column shows the percentage of respondents who chose that option.

Table 33 | Vocational course respondents would like to attend

Vocational courses	% of Responses	% of Respondents
Sewing	20.5	36.0
Animal raising	15.1	26.6
Medical	13.5	23.8
Agriculture	13.5	23.8
Computer	12.7	22.3
Automechanic	8.5	15.0
Law	5.2	9.1
Radio repair	4.5	7.9
Managing the camp	4.3	7.6
Other	2.1	3.8
Total	100.0	175.8

1,081 missing respondents; 2,012 valid respondents

Looking at the numbers by group, the courses which had the highest number of responses were the same for both teachers and people who had dropped out of school – computers and medical courses. However, the percentage of respondents who would like to attend was higher for teachers for all three courses.

Table 34 | Most popular vocational courses by group

	Teachers		People who had dropped out of school	
	% of responses	% of respondents	% of responses	% of respondents
Computers	27.1	58.6	29.9	48.9
Medical course	21.4	46.4	23.4	38.2
Sewing	15.9	34.4	20.6	33.6

For respondents from the families group, the most popular courses were sewing (21.6% of all responses) followed by animal raising (18.2% of all responses), agriculture (16.7% of all responses), and medical courses (10.3% of all responses).

The other vocational courses that respondents wanted to attend are set out in Table 35.

Table 35 | Other vocational courses that respondents wanted to attend

Food preparation	baking, cooking, making bread
Textile crafts	knitting, sewing, weaving
Arts	drawing, painting
Handicraft	flower making, shampoo making, jewellery making
Beauty courses	make-up, hair-dressing, music, handicraft,
Business/office skills	typing, accounting
Professional skills	mid-wifery, teaching
Technical craft	carpentry, prosthetics, blacksmithing, charcoal stove making, umbrella repair, brick-making, tin box making, gold smithing

Awareness-raising courses

Courses attended

Respondents were asked to circle all the types of courses they had attended and they could choose multiple options. We combined the total number of responses from all respondents. So, for example, in a sample of only two respondents, if respondent A chose options 1 and 2, and respondent B chose options 2 and 3, these amounted to four responses altogether. We then calculated the number of times (in percentage form) each option was chosen. So, in our example, option 2 was chosen twice out of four responses, making it 50% of all responses.

Of those who answered this question, 44.7% have attended and 55.3% have not attended an awareness-raising course. HIV awareness had the highest number of responses for attendance (37.5% of all responses). The attendance of courses is shown in descending order in Table 36. The first column of numbers indicates the percentage of responses received for each option. The second column shows the percentage of respondents who chose that option.

Table 36 | Awareness-raising courses attended

Courses	% of Responses	% of Respondents
HIV	37.5	63.8
Mine risk	27.1	46.0
Domestic violence	18.4	31.2
First aid	12.8	21.7
Other	4.2	7.2
Total	100.0	169.9

1,704 missing respondents; 1,389 valid respondents

There are few differences across the three groups, except that the percentage of teachers who have attended first aid courses is much higher than those who left school and respondents from the families group.

Table 37 | Percentage of respondents who answered positively

Have you attended a courses on	3 groups	Teachers	Dropout	Families
HIV	63.2	66.2	61.8	62.7
Mine risk	45.6	40.5	44.7	46.5
Domestic violence	30.9	26.2	28.9	31.9
1st aid	21.5	35.4	23.7	18.9
Other	7.1	9.2	5.3	6.9

Other courses attended were family planning, health and sanitation, anti-drugs, democracy, environment, peace, politics, human rights and youth training.

Courses respondents would like to attend

Respondents were asked to circle all the types of courses they would like to attend. We combined the total number of responses from all respondents. So, for example, in a sample of only two respondents, if respondent A chose options 1 and 2, and respondent B chose options 2 and 3, these amounted to four responses altogether. We then calculated the number of times (in percentage form) each option was chosen. So, in our example, option 2 was chosen twice out of four responses, making it 50% of all responses.

The most popular option was first aid with 33% of all responses. The options are listed in descending order of preference in Table 38. The first column of numbers indicates the percentage of responses received for each option. The second column shows the percentage of respondents who chose that option.

Table 38 | Awareness-raising courses respondents would like to attend

Courses	% of Responses	% of Respondents
First aid	33.0	56.6
Domestic violence	25.8	44.3
HIV	20.9	36.0
Mine risk	18.6	31.9
Other	1.8	3.0
Total	100.0	171.9

1,640 missing respondents; 1,453 valid respondents

The other courses that respondents would like to attend are

- 1) socio-political awareness courses on the environment, politics, constitution, globalization, leadership skills, peace, psychology, advocacy, psychosocial, social affairs, women's rights, children's rights and human rights
- 2) health-related courses about anti-drugs, baby care, bird flu, health education, mental health, nursing.

Language courses

Courses attended

Respondents were asked to circle all the types of courses they had attended. We combined the total number of responses from all respondents. So, for example, in a sample of only two respondents, if respondent A chose options 1 and 2, and respondent B chose options 2 and 3, these amounted to four responses altogether. We then calculated the number of times (in percentage form) each option was chosen. So, in our example, option 2 was chosen twice out of four responses, making it 50% of all responses.

Karen was the language course that the most number of participants had attended, followed by Burmese, English and Thai. The first column of numbers in Table 39 indicates the percentage of responses received for each option. The second column shows the percentage of respondents who chose that option.

Table 39 | Language courses attended

Courses	% of Responses	% of Respondents
Karen	34.8	73.2
Burmese	30.0	63.0
English	28.0	58.9
Thai	6.4	13.5
Other	.9	1.9
Total	100.0	210.4

2,135 missing responses; 958 valid responses

Looking at the figures by group, the percentage of respondents who had attended an English course was the highest, followed by Burmese and Karen for teachers and people who had dropped out of school. On the other hand, for respondents from the families group, the highest percentage of attendance was Karen, followed by Burmese and then English.

Table 40 | Percentge of people who attended a language course

Have you attended a course on	3 groups (%)	Teachers (%)	Dropout (%)	Families (%)
Karen	72.5	68.2	66.2	74.2
Burmese	62.4	68.8	66.7	60.4
Thai	13.3	30.7	33.3	6.9
English	58.2	90.3	82.1	47.7
Other	1.9	2.3	2.6	1.7

The other language courses attended were Pwo Karen and Swedish.

Courses respondents would like to attend

Respondents were asked to circle all the types of courses they would like to attend. We combined the total number of responses from all respondents. So, for example, in a sample of only two respondents, if respondent A chose options 1 and 2, and respondent B chose options 2 and 3, these amounted to four responses altogether. We then calculated the number of times (in percentage form) each option was chosen. So, in our example, option 2 was chosen twice out of four responses, making it 50% of all responses.

When asked which language courses they would like to attend, the choices with the highest percentage of responses were English at 50% and Thai at 24.2%. The least popular was Burmese at 12.1%.

The options are listed in descending order of preference in Table 41. The first column of numbers indicates the percentage of responses received for each option. The second column shows the percentage of respondents who chose that option.

Table 41 | Language courses that respondents would like to attend

Courses	% of Responses	% of Cases
English	50.0	83.9
Thai	24.2	40.7
Karen	12.3	20.7
Burmese	12.1	20.3
Other	1.3	2.2
Total	100.0	167.9

1,332 missing cases; 1,761 valid cases

Across all groups, the most popular language course was English. Again the pattern was similar for teachers and people who had dropped out of school: the most popular was English, followed by Thai and then Burmese.

For respondents from the families group, English was the most popular, followed by Thai and then Karen.

Table 42 | Percentage of people who wanted to attend Karen, Burmese, Thai, English and other language courses

Would you like to attend a language course in	3 groups (%)	Teachers (%)	Dropout (%)	Families (%)
Karen	20.6	8.4	24.1	12.8
Burmese	20.2	18.7	17.9	20.7
Thai	40.4	54.8	54.3	35.9
English	83.3	91.9	93.2	80.5
Other	2.2	2.6	1.7	2.2

The other language courses they would like to attend are Chinese, French, Hindi, Pwo Karen and Swedish.

Obstacles to access

We asked respondents to select all options which were obstacles to their attending courses. We combined the total number of responses from all respondents. So, for example, in a sample of only two respondents, if respondent A chose options 1 and 2, and respondent B chose options 2 and 3, these amounted to four responses altogether. We then calculated the number of times (in percentage form) each option was chosen. So, in our example, option 2 was chosen twice out of four responses, making it 50% of all responses.

For the 2823 people who answered, the obstacle with the highest number of responses was the lack of time (25.2%), which 46.7% of respondents chose. This was followed by lack of money (17.6% of all responses, 32.7% of respondents chose this), and having to look after children (15.3% of all responses, 28.3% of respondents chose this).

The other significant obstacles were 'I don't have any education' and 'Too old'. Table 43 lists the obstacles in descending order. The first column of numbers indicates the percentage of responses received for each option. The second column shows the percentage of respondents who chose that option.

Table 43 | Obstacles to attending a course

Obstacle	% of Responses	% of Respondents
No time	25.2	46.7
Lack of money	17.6	32.7
Look after children	15.3	28.3
I don't have any education	12.2	22.7
Too old	11.7	21.7
Courses not held at a convenient time	6.7	12.3
No interest	3.1	5.8
Haven't thought about it	2.2	4.1
Courses not held at a convenient place	2.2	4.1
Other	1.9	3.5
Look after relatives	1.4	2.6
Family doesn't want	.4	.7
Total	100.0	185.1

270 missing responses; 2,823 valid responses

Breaking down the numbers, we found that the four obstacles selected by teachers which had the highest number of responses were lack of money (29% of all responses), no time (22.3%), courses are not held at a convenient time (17.1% responses) and courses are not held at a convenient place (10.6%).

Table 44 | Percentage of all positive responses by group

Teachers	People who dropped out of school	Family members
lack of money (29%)	lack of money (36.8%)	no time (26.0%)
no time (22.3%)	no time (14.7%)	look after children (16.3%)
courses are not held at a convenient time (17.1%)	courses not held at convenient time (11.6%)	lack of money (36.8%)
courses are not held at a place (10.6%)	look after children (10%)	don't have any education (14.1%)

People who had dropped out of school chose similar obstacles to teachers, but they also indicated that having to look after their children was an obstacle.

For representatives of families, the concerns were about not having enough time, having to look after their children, lack of money and not having any education.

Gender

Looking at the obstacles which had the highest percentage of responses by gender, we find that the majority (79.8%) of those who chose this as an obstacle were women.

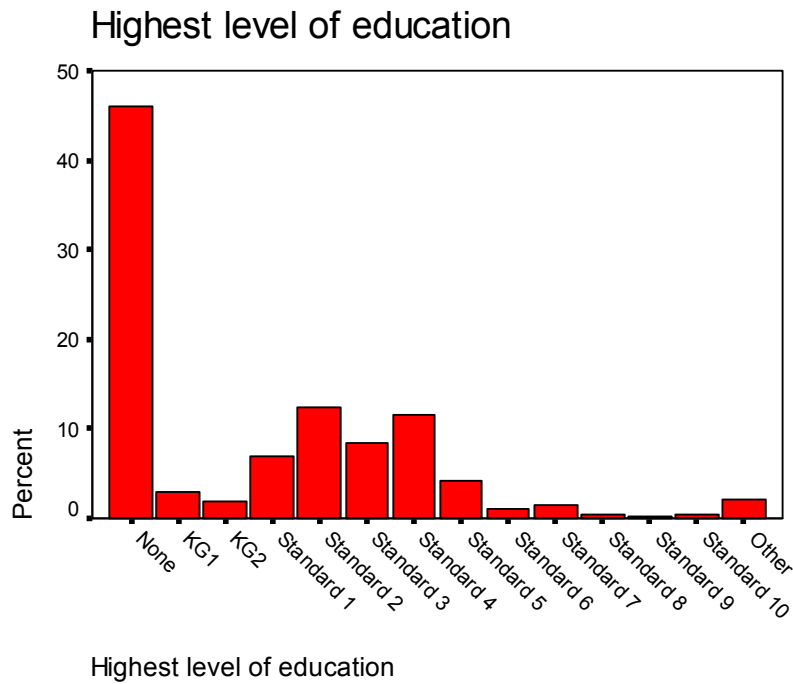
Table 45 | Obstacles chosen by gender (percentages)

	M	F	Total
Have to look after children	20.2	79.8	100
Haven't thought about it	47.8	52.2	100
Courses not held at convenient place	47.0	53.0	100

The obstacles 'courses not held at a convenient place' and 'hadn't thought about it' were significant for men. This is because, although less than half who chose these as obstacles were men, our sample was made out of 40% male and 60% female. For males, any percentage over 40% would be considered over-representation.

For those who chose 'I don't have any education' as an obstacle, 46.1% had no school-based education and 78.7% have not completed primary level education. Figure 51 shows the spread of educational attainment.

Figure 51 | Highest level of education



The other obstacles mentioned were health-related problems, disabilities, lack of information, work and old age.

Discussion

Courses attended

As compared to what was reported in the 1996 Education Survey, the situation has improved vastly. In 1996, there were few courses for camp residents and those that were available were accessible only to those who had some level of education or who were in camp leadership positions. It was recommended that more courses of a vocational and craft nature be offered. As we have seen from the above, at least 27.3% of all the respondents have attended a course. Moreover, the data shows that respondents have attended a plethora of courses.

The types of courses attended are circumscribed by what is available in the camps. However, looking at respondents' choices, the courses that the majority of people attended are those that would be of practical use: agriculture, sewing, English and Thai.

Desire to attend courses

The desire to attend learning programmes is great. Teachers and respondents who had dropped out of school were very interested to attend courses: 92.2% of the former wanted to attend a language course and 90.6% of the latter wanted to attend a vocational course. The percentage of representatives of families who wanted to attend courses was much lower than that of the first two groups.

Types of courses that they would like to attend

The most popular vocational courses were sewing, animal raising, agriculture, medical courses and computing. For awareness-raising programmes, the most popular options were first aid and domestic violence. Respondents were also interested in a variety of socio-political and health-related courses.

The most popular language courses were English and Thai.

Access

Access to a learning course is determined by three factors: the availability of information, the requirements of the course and the personal circumstances of the learner.

Availability of information

On the whole, the majority of respondents were aware of educational and learning activities within the camps: 77.7% of the people who had dropped out of school knew that they could continue their studies in the camp and 86.4% of respondents from the families group knew that there are adult courses in the camp.

Course requirements

The ability to attend a particular course depends on one's level of education. For example, teachers were more likely to attend computer courses because they have the basic skills needed to learn to use computers. This means that those who are more educated have access to a wider range of educational activities. It is also the case that teachers have closer links to the community management power structures and therefore have greater opportunities to gain entry into these highly sought after courses.

In the families group, we found that a significant obstacle to attending courses is respondents' low level of education. In order to widen access to this group, there are several measures that can be taken.

First, literacy and basic-skills courses are useful in supplementing the educational levels of adults. There are courses being run by CBOs such as the KWO.

Second, we can also raise the standard of basic education by incorporating basic Maths, Science, literacy and numeracy skills into learning activities and programmes. For example, the vocational courses incorporate basic Maths in their sewing courses and Science in the agriculture training programme. This 'stealth' learning must be made visible to the learners and to the community so that learners know that they can progress to other types of courses which require basic skills.

Third, there are nonformal ways of promoting literacy and basic skills through literacy campaigns, parent-child reading sessions, and other innovative methods.

Personal circumstances

We have to look at the needs of the different groups according to their socio-economic circumstances. There are restrictions on access due to economic pressures, the lack of time and the need to care for the family. Added to that, courses are not always held at locations and times which are convenient to learners.

These obstacles can be addressed in innovative ways: for example, the KWO has teachers who go to women's houses to conduct classes. This addresses half of the major obstacles mentioned above.

When asked why they did not teach men, the KWO said that the men were not in the houses, they were at work. It may be possible to take learning to the men (just as it is taken to women in their homes) either 1) by sending teachers to their place of work when and where convenient or 2) by introducing nonformal ways of learning on-the-job. For example, NGOs, CBOs, committees and other organizations and bodies within the camps could, as part of their organizational policy, provide recognized, structured and relevant on-the-job-training for their staff in both basic and higher level skills.

Conclusion

Adult education is an important component of the education system of any community. It addresses the lack of basic skills and promotes self development through the acquisition of knowledge and higher level procedural and cognitive skills.

The needs and purposes of learners

As discussed above, economic circumstances, education level and gender affect people's access to adult education in marked and distinct ways. In the provision of existing and new courses, it would be useful to examine the needs and purposes of learners and to target the courses accordingly. Also, the needs of students who have dropped out should be considered separately from those of families.

Other groups of learners

Besides teachers, people who dropped out and family members in general, we found that there are other groups of learners who would like to attend educational activities which build on their level of educational attainment. These would include students who failed to enter post-secondary education and adults who did not have the chance to attend further and higher education.

Innovative ways of learning and teaching

There is a need to introduce innovative ways of learning and teaching which are recognized by the community and which guide learners to understand what they have learnt, as well as mapping out what they learn in accordance with school-based knowledge.

Moreover, it is necessary to build on the content and procedural skills that adults already possess. This leads us to the next recommendation.

Integrated learning system

An integrated learning system which maps out what is learnt across courses and in conjunction with general education in schools would help in providing educational opportunities which suit the needs of different learners as well as promote learning progression. This would require a more integrated approach across courses so that there is progression between courses; this might be in the form of a modular, credit system which provides people with an awareness of their progression.

Of course, not everyone wants to participate in courses to progress to higher levels of learning– there are a variety of craft and other courses which serve this purpose.

Chapter 8 | Conclusion and recommendations

If you are planning for a year, sow rice; if you are planning for a decade, plant trees; if you are planning for a lifetime, educate people.

Chinese Proverb

Conclusion

The ambiguities, constraints and unpredictability of working in a refugee context mean that the formation of education policy and practice is constantly in flux and highly dependent on external, and often politically-motivated, factors and actors.

What the Education Survey has sought to do is to set out statistical data relating to student participation and learning, teacher turnover, training for educational staff and non-school based learning, as viewed by learners and education staff. This will help to locate areas of strength and quality, and pinpoint gaps in service provision, so that policy and practice may be based on evidence.

The education in the camps is framed by a system that strives to provide education for all children and young people despite crowded conditions, inadequate materials, low teacher subsidies and limited technical expertise. Furthermore, the importance of lifelong education is echoed in the views of adults and their desire to attend formal courses.

This Education Survey has investigated the ways in which ZOA and other NGOs, in collaboration with camp bodies and central level organizations are providing these services, and strategies to improve them. It is very clear that the foundations of a strong education system exist and that efforts are being made to fortify the scale, scope and quality of education in the refugee camps, despite the outflow of experienced personnel as a result of resettlement. In light of this, we shall turn to some recommendations generated and developed through a consultative process which involved a workshop with ZOA KEP staff and KED staff, and a photo exhibition feedback process in all seven camps.

Recommendations

Systematic data collection

Currently, ZOA collects data on student enrolment and the number of teachers by gender and religion. In order to use the data for evidence-based decision-making at the school, camp, NGO and KED level, it is necessary to have a system so that the data is collated and standardized across all schools and camps.

More accurate data from all seven camps is needed on

- The number of children and young people of school-going age
- Students leaving and their reasons for doing so
- Student assessment
- Teachers leaving and reasons for doing so
- Teachers' training records
- Adult and non-school going learners' course attendance

The collection of this data should be incorporated into the work routine of schools and programmes, and it should be made available to all so that they have an accurate picture of the current situation and can then use it to plan.

Gender

Gender affects educational attainment, literacy rates, student dropout and teachers leaving in different ways. Societal expectations and the gendered division of labour within the household affect the genders differently, and this has an impact on their schooling and learning experience.

Women's educational levels and literacy rates are typically lower than that of men. There are currently efforts to address women's needs for educational attainment which take into account the logistical difficulties of housework and looking after the family. More efforts along this vein would help in providing learning opportunities which fit into both men and women's familial and work responsibilities.

It is recommended that more nuanced information on the learning difficulties that male students face in schools vis-à-vis their familial and economic situation be collected so that we have an accurate picture of how school is failing them.

Changes to schooling rules regarding attendance of young people who marry young and sex education would help to reduce school dropout due to early marriage.

An integrated learning system

The general education system is separate from the set of vocational and adult learning programmes available in the camps. While it is not feasible to combine them, a system that integrates them would create clear progression routes, build on general, vocational, craft and professional learning, and reduce the duplication of courses and resources. This is particularly important as there are few progression routes beyond Standard 10. At the moment, it seems that progression is horizontal across the different learning systems. It could be designed so that it is both horizontal and vertical, so that learners build on what they have learnt. This might be done in the form of a modular, credit system which provides people with an awareness of their progression.

Student participation and the learning experience

To improve the learning experience and to ensure that students are benefitting from good quality education, a holistic approach is needed in schools and in the communities.

The quality of the school infrastructure for certain camps is having a negative impact on students' ability to concentrate and teachers' ability to teach. There are three main ways of alleviating the situation: innovative classroom design within physical limitations, increased financial support, and lobbying the RTG.

Detailed and context-specific information on the learning experience of students in and out of school needs to be collected: e.g., how students engage with the teaching and the teaching materials, the relationship between students and teachers, students' experience of the school structure, students' learning activities outside the school. What has already been identified in this study is that students have difficulties approaching their teachers for help. This is a cause for concern and is related to the problems teachers have with classroom management and overcrowded classrooms. Research shows that the quality of the relationship between a student and his/her teacher is crucial in the learning process and in students' motivation to engage in socially constructive behaviour. Training, mentoring, group support and so on are different ways of supporting teachers in learning how to establish good relationships with their students.

The number of languages in the curriculum has to be examined carefully, especially in light of the recent policy set out by the Thai Ministry of Education. Thai language courses are to be introduced into the curriculum at all levels. Students are already overloaded with three languages from the time they begin school. It may be possible to lessen the load by reducing formal teaching in Burmese and English, and introducing after-school language clubs which use games, puzzles and different forms of media to immerse students in these languages.

Teachers need to be better equipped to assess students' progress in formal and informal ways. Besides examinations and keeping records, teachers may use student-led assessment, where students assess their own work with the support of their teacher, and/or assess their classmates' work.

It is recommended that the needs of vulnerable student populations be considered. For example, students with special education needs, orphans, those in non-mainstream schools, unaccompanied minors and new arrivals have different educational and practical needs.

More research needs to be done on the school experience of the other minority groups, such as the Muslims. This would help to inform ZOA work on inclusive education and incorporating Education for All into its work.

The issue of student dropout needs to be discussed with community leaders (KED, KRC, camp community), parents, school management, teachers and headteachers. In particular, more needs to be done to address school policy relating to early marriage or unexpected pregnancy. Greater parental involvement in the process of schooling and learning would also help to reduce student dropout. This involvement should include formal and informal school- and learning-related activities, not just relationship-building ones, so that parents become engaged in the learning experience of their children.

Clear alternative options beyond high school should be introduced. Current attempts at establishing distant learning and non-formal programmes will help to alleviate the problem. This could be supplemented by more medical courses and occupational/professional courses which NGOs may be able to provide. It would be advisable to consider work-based learning programmes which would equip young people with work skills and some sort of income.

Teachers leaving

Due to resettlement and economic pressures, large numbers of teachers are leaving the profession. This puts a strain on the education system. The key to maintaining the status quo is to keep as many teachers (who are not being resettled) as possible from leaving.

The economic issues underlying the reasons for teachers leaving have to be addressed.

- More effort needs to be made to find funding for teacher subsidies.
- Besides monetary contributions, care or household packages made up of essentials for the household might help to alleviate economic pressures. This package might consist of vegetables, fruit, soap, and other regular household items.
- There is currently a move to pay teachers monthly instead of quarterly. This is a step in the right direction.
- Coordination between NGOs about wage scales would help to reduce competition between NGO sectors.

Flexible teaching arrangements would enable teachers to work part-time so that they have more time to supplement their income, look after the household and/or further their studies.

Another possibility is to utilize the experience and knowledge of teachers who have already retired. Often, retired teachers find difficulty in travelling to school everyday. It may be possible to arrange for students to go to them instead.

The causes of teachers leaving have to be looked at in detail as well. For certain schools, management problems were causing teachers to be laid off or to leave. In this area, conflict resolution techniques might be usefully employed.

Greater recognition of the valuable work that teachers do should be given. This can be done in a variety of ways: encouragement from leaders, fostering a school culture which recognizes teachers' work, community recognition and so on.

Teacher wastage is inevitable. Therefore, there should be inbuilt mechanisms to ensure that

- the knowledge and expertise of those who leave are handed over to other staff members through continual and regular staff training and mentoring by staff
- there is systematic recruitment and training of new staff members.

Teacher training

There needs to be a systematic assessment of teachers' training needs. More nuanced information on the training needs of teachers is needed. For example, what types of teaching methods? In what context, for what purposes, for which subject, and which teachers (new or senior)?

At present, secondary teachers need more training in the content of the subject matter, whereas primary teachers need help with teaching skills and managing big classes.

There should be greater coordination between NGOs about what is covered in the different training programmes. The variety of training programmes offered cover similar areas of content and skills. We do not know to what extent they are related or overlap. It would be useful for teachers to have review sessions about the different training programmes and what they have learnt from them, in order to consolidate their learning and to come up with ways of applying their knowledge and sharing it with other teachers.

The training programmes have slightly different names and purposes - it is not always clear what the different training programmes are about, and it seems also that teachers are not always clear about the content of training programmes. There needs to be an identification of common concepts and vocabulary of the training courses and content.

Teachers need regular follow-up support to apply what they have learnt.

Training for RTTs

The organizational aspects of training for RTTs have to be addressed. RTTs should know in advance when training takes place, what type of training it is and what they need to arrange.

As in teacher training, it is necessary to examine the content provided to RTTs and to work out if and how different organizations overlap in their provision of training.

More differentiated training for RTTs, based on their current knowledge, experience and skills would help towards finetuning their skills.

More opportunities for RTTs to meet up to exchange and share ideas would be very useful, and would help to increase the sustainability of expertise within the camps.

A systematic monitoring, evaluation and feedback process should be established to support RTTs in their work.

Non-school learner groups and their needs

The provision of courses and their delivery should take into account the interests of different groups of learners.

Learner needs

Those with higher levels of education have different learning needs and aspirations.

- Young teachers are interested in computer and medical courses whereas older teachers are more interested in sewing and agriculture.
- Those who left school without completing Standard 10 are interested in language courses and
- Those from the families target group have interests in sewing and agriculture.

Basic skills training

- There is a need to promote literacy for those who are not functionally literate, through camp-wide campaigns, and through literacy-rich teaching and everyday settings (e.g., parent-child reading sessions).
- Campaigns to raise awareness about the purpose and advantages of learning and education would help to increase participation among those in the family target group.
- It is possible to raise the standard of basic education by incorporating basic Maths, Science, literacy and numeracy skills into learning activities and programmes. For example, the vocational courses incorporate basic Maths in their sewing courses and Science in the agriculture training

programme. This 'stealth' learning must be made visible to the learners and to the community so that learners know that they can progress to other types of courses which require basic skills.

Access to courses depends on educational level and social networks – more effort needs to be made to reach those learners who do not have as an extensive network as others.

The needs of other learner groups should also be taken into consideration: e.g., students who failed to enter post-secondary education and adults who did not have the chance to attend further and higher education.

Health-related courses are in high demand. Medic courses and first aid courses should be made available to those who are interested, not just those with higher level schooling.

Delivery of learning: innovative ways of and settings for learning and teaching

There is a need to introduce innovative ways of learning and teaching which are recognized by the community and which guide learners to understand what they have learnt, as well as mapping out what they learn in accordance with school-based knowledge. Moreover, it is necessary to build on the content and procedural skills that adults already possess. This could be done by

- sending teachers to learners' place of work when and where convenient
- introducing nonformal ways of learning on-the-job. For example, NGOs, CBOs, committees and other organizations and bodies within the camps could, as part of their organizational policy, provide recognized, structured and relevant on-the-job-training for their staff in both basic and higher level skills.

It is recommended that further investigation be conducted into alternative forms of provision which take into account the content and practical needs of learners. This would identify gaps and overlaps, and help to integrate new activities with what is already available in the camps.

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