



# Report 1

## Socio- economic condition of Mon IDPs in southern Burma

### I. Root cause of Mon IDPs

Burma which is currently ruled by a military regime State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) has a population of 50 million people, as a recent estimate places 2 million of those people as internally displaced persons (IDPs), according to a report from "Burma Issue". Based on the assessment of indigenous humanitarian agencies, BBC (Burmese Border Consortium), it mentions that the internally displaced population in eastern Burma was 633,000 which including the population in 176 SPDC's relocation sites. And, in Mon areas there are over 50,000 IDPs in accordance with Mon Relief and Development Committee's coordinator, Nai Daung Htaw. In the IDPs population women are more than men, two third of IDPs are women and most of them are in young ages. There are 11.9 percents children are under five years old.

New Mon State Party (NMSP) reached a ceasefire agreement with the Burma's military government in mid 1995. This agreement delegated twelve separate areas through Mon State, Karen State and Tenasserim Division as administrative control of MNSP which is called as 'ceasefire zones'. Outside of these zones, Mon villagers live under SPDC rule except for contested areas of Ye township in southern Mon State and Yebyu Township in northern Tenasserim Division where are Mon splinter group continues its armed resistance against the military government and its Burmese Army. Similarly, Mon villagers from Kya-inn-seiky Township in southern Karen State remains in a contested area where the Karen Nation Union (KNU), an armed ethnic Karen group is active. Although KNU declared ceasefire with the regime, the Karen and Mon villagers in this township and the ceasefire has not been really taken place.

Even NMSP has ceasefire; there are serious human rights abuses: such as land confiscation, force labor, extortion are committed by the members of Burmese Army or SPDC authorities. Because of those violations and abuses in Mon area, the problem of IDPs have occurred and the local civilian families have displaced from one place to another.

IDPs live in precarious and transient lives in jungles of Burma's ethnic border areas. They are denied the stability of having the opportunity to maintain a home, their farms, access to education and medical facilities and peace of mind.

The population displacement has always connecting to five-decades long civil war in Burma. In 1962, after Gen. Ne Win seized the political power from the democratically elected government in Rangoon, then he planned for sham peace talk with all armed oppositions, including Burma Communist Party (BCP). Peace negotiation did not succeed and

### CONTENT

Socio – economic condition of Mon IDPs in southern Burma

I. Root cause of Mon IDPs

II. Economic and social conditions among the IDPs

III. The Health Situation of Internally Displaced Women

IV. IDPs Women and Children Education

V. IDP Women and Food Assistance

VI. Sheltering and Sanitation for IDPs

VII. Livelihood in the IDP communities

VIII. Security for IDPs

News

## Message From

Woman And Child Rights Project  
(Southern Part of Burma)

Woman and Child Right Project (WCRP) is an cooperative activity with Human Rights Foundation of Monland (HURFOM) and it has main activity in collecting the information related to the human rights violations of women and children in southern part of Burma (Myanmar). It also aims to get world community's awareness for the protection of the rights of women and children.

The Burma's military regime, State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), ratified the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1997 to guarantee the rights to women in Burma. Similarly the regime also ratified Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 1991 to guarantee the rights to children in Burma. However, the regime has failed in their implementation of the conventional rights and the human rights violations against women and children systematically.

WCRP is dedicated to inform the world community what happens to general women and children in Burma and plans to educate them to know about their rights as the following objectives.

1. To monitor and protect the woman and child rights, by collecting information about their real situation by referencing the CEDAW and CRC, and distribute information to world community.
2. To strengthen women and children community, by providing on their rights accordingly to CEDAW and CRC ratified by regime and encourage them to participate in the struggle in the protection of their own rights.

the arm fighting between Burmese Army and armed opposition has been intensified. Other ethnic armed groups, such as Shan and Kachin also joined in the "armed struggle" with previous Karen, Mon and Karenni armed resistance groups who revolved against the government since 1948, soon after Burma retained Independence from British colony.

To win the war against the ethnic armed groups or to weaken them, the Burmese Army has used "four cuts campaign" strategy for several years during 1970-80s in their attempt to cut all support from the civilians to the rebel army concerned. Rebel groups have used "water and fish policy" to rely on their own ethnic people to get all supports in their armed struggle and establish the political power. To weaken this policy, the Burma Army used a "four cut campaign" to cut supply, information, recruitment and sheltering that support from the ethnic opposition group.

The policy has mostly affected the villagers who live in these ethnic border areas. They are the recipients of Burmese military enacted human rights abuses, forced relocations, extrajudicial of killing, arbitrary detention, sexual violations, village destruction, forced labor and unpaid labour in porter service. All of which has created the ever increasing IDP population who are either forced to leave their homes, or hide in different places.

Burma's ceasefire agreement is not a political solution and protection of human rights. Although the NMSP has ceasefire with the ruling regime, SPDC, over 9 years, because of various types of human rights violations committed by SPDC and its army, thousands of villagers still leave from their homes and displaced inside the country. As a Mon splinter group, who dissatisfied to the ceasefire is waging fighting against the SPDC, there are thousands of Mon IDPs in southern part of Ye Township and in Yebyu Township still face serious and difficult situation to live at their home villages.

## II. Economic and social conditions among the IDPs

During their displacement, IDPs are denied access to education especially in their native languages and adequate medical treatment. Only 60% of children in Burma have the opportunity to attend the schools in which 25% of them actually finish primary schools. IDPs have at the time set up make shift schools in the jungles and try to continue their education but vast majority find this impossible. Fear, constant movement and the daily struggles just to survive make education a very low priority for most IDPs. Healthcare is mostly administered through backpack medical services that specifically enter the IDP areas which try to provide medical treatment to them. They have often faced with dangers but the number of service is insufficient among the IDP population.

"While we are living in village, we are rare of having possible jobs. We have to pay more taxes to government and we are often subject for porter service (*to the Burmese Army*). If we can't pay the taxes, we are beaten and threaten by the (*Burmese*) military troops. Thus, we have to leave from our village," said Ms. Mi Aye Myint, who is 29 years old.

Women are working in cultivation, paddy planting rice shopkeeper, selling groceries in their daily work for income. Some of them are working along with their husbands. They are working very hard, but they don't

have enough food for their family. If they are in worst health, they do not have enough money to go the hospitals. Even people have daily faced many problems for their survival, they still have been forced to pay taxes for their lands and properties, road construction, building bridges and other development projects. Furthermore villagers are forced to build military

battalion. Sometimes, local women are forced to help cooking and fetching water in military camps, and some of them were raped at night by the army officers or soldiers.

For example, on January 2004, a commander of Light Infantry Battalion LIB Col. Myo Win order 2 pretty Mon ladies of each village from total 16 villages and forced them to involve ceremonial "Fashion and Beauty Show" in Khaw-za village, Ye township in Mon State.

Another one who was raped from 299 IB, Mi Khin Hling 23, woman said, "Soldiers didn't want to recruit married women, if a woman said she was married, she would be beaten. In the day time we had to cook meals and carry water for their bath. After having dinner, they demanded to have message, and when night fell they raped us. We did not dare to resist them at all.

In rural areas, most villagers are the framers and they have survived from receiving the crops from their agriculture, such as paddy, corn, sesame, cane, peanut and other fruits, Most of their farms or plantation are locating outside of the villages and the framers have to walk and work on a daily basis or sometime they sleep on the farms or plantation.



**Displaced children**

Recently, in the southern part of Mon State the civilians were not allowed to go outside village to their gardens and other work places. Some villagers who found outside of the villages are also killed and seriously tortured. The civilians were forced to make a paper that allows going out of the village by paying 500 kyat per sheet. When they issued the travel allowing registration paper most have committed guarantee for one year travel, but in really it much depends on the military in charge changed positions. If some high-rank commanders change for position, villagers had to make a new paper again with new payment. Moreover, if someone do not have that paper outside of their villages, he/she is recognized as a rebel and will be tortured until die.

Many farmers were also killed by Burmese soldiers with the suspicion of rebel-supporters. Many farmers were tortured when the soldier were conducting interrogation them about the activities of the rebel soldiers. The framers must go to their farms with a permission of the soldiers. If they met the farmers without permission or traveling (registration) paper, they must be killed.

The military troops do not allow village to go out and villager are difficult to earn money from farming and gardening on a daily basis. Villager wanted to go out to work these jobs, but troops ordered if there is someone going of village without paper, they can be killed any time without questioning. Sometimes, the villagers were not allowed to work in farms for months and they have faced many difficulties to survive in their family.

Even though they are in poor conditions, they were forced to provide food to the military troops, sometimes, the troops forced the village head to go market and bought food what they want to and village head has to pay it back to the shop. In order to pay it back, the village head demanded taxes from villagers again.

Sometimes, the military troops gave permission the villagers to go farms with time limitation. Villagers are in rush trip during permission is taking place to go to farms and bring fruits and crops from gardens or plantations. When the troops stopped allowing, the villagers left the fruits and crops on the half way and just only come back to get in villages on time. But, when went to farms or plantations again, the fruits or crops they have left in there were stolen.

The fruits and crops were stolen by the military troops by the orders of the army officers, but the villagers could not complain for the loss. Similarly, when the villagers cut woods and put in their gardens or plantations and the woods were accused as illegal and they were also confiscated by the army officers.

Other types of unreason confiscation of properties is the Burmese Army's troops attempted to accuse some household supporting the rebel groups and then they also confiscated their properties and tortured those household heads.

A villager, who is from Khaw-za village, was tortured and got seriously injury as the army was misunderstanding and accusing him of supporting the rebels. The village heads of Khaw-za confessed that he was his villager, innocent and urged the troops to release him. The troops mainly based on the monastery in village and the soldiers also beat some Buddhist monks who they suspected supporting the rebel groups and disrobed some monks, accordingly to women who fled from from Khaw-za village.

A woman who is from Mi-htaw-hlar-kalay village, got married with a Mon rebel and have divorced wither husband for three years ago, was still accused as supporting the rebel and he was sent to detention. She has been arrested for two months according to some IDPs women, who was escaped from that village. There were many women who were similarly arrested and mistreated, according to the women who displaced in the border area.

The Burmese Army has frustrated for the support from the villagers to the rebel army and therefore, they tried to relocate some Mon villages southern part of Ye Township into villages which they have full control or to villages close to their bases. They have two main purposes in every forced relocation: to control the whole area; and cut all supports to the rebels.

Similarly to the Mon areas, forced relocation of the ethnic villagers in eastern part of Burma border is still on-going situation. Most ethnic villages in forestry areas have 10 to 500 households depending on the geographical conditions and those villages were ordered to move into the Burmese Army set resettlement camps. There are over 176 relocation camps arranged by the Burmese Army along Thailand-Burma border, but some villagers from small villages were just forced to move into medium or large villages where the SPDC and Burmese Army had firm control/

### III. The Health Situation of Internally Displaced Women

#### News

#### **A young Mon woman was raped**

On August 10, 2004, when a young Mon woman was on a travel near her village, in Yebyu Township, Tenasserim Division, southern part of Burma, she was repeatedly raped by a Sergeant from the Burmese Army's Light Infantry Battalion No. 406, according to the source close to woman.

Mi A— M—, 18 years old woman was from Kwethonyima village of Yebyu Township and she traveled with a group of 5 male villagers from her village to Mae-than-taung village by boats in the morning of August 12.

On the half way, lonely the army Sergeant stopped their boats and asked them to approach to the river bank. When the boat stopped, he robbed the passengers and took all their belongings. The passengers have to give their properties such as gold-wares, silver-wares, and other valuable belongings to the Sergeant.

After the robbery, the Sergeant also took the woman, Mi A— M—, along with him and let the boat and passengers travel continuously. Then, he raped the woman for one-day and one-night. On the next day's morning about 10:00 a.m., he brought the young woman to the village.

The young woman was suddenly brought to the clinic in village for treatment of injuries. She received for 3-days hospitalization and then became better.

On August 12, the Sergeant also came into village and as the villagers could recognize him, they tried to arrest him. He also tried to shoot some villagers and some of them also got injuries. However, the villagers could arrest him and tied him up. Then they sent him to LIB No. 406 base nearby.

Accordingly to the news from the villagers, the LIB No. 406 commanders also killed him after the villagers offered him to them.

The incident happened near Kanbauk area, where US's Unocal and France's Total oil and gas companies involve in 'Yatana' gas exploitation. LIB No. 406, LIB No. 273 battalions are mainly taking responsibility for the security of Yatana gas-pipeline's outer areas in order to protect the attacks from the rebels.

There were over 10 Mon women were raped during the Burmese Army is launching military offensives against a Mon splinter group in southern part of Ye Township, Mon State in recent early 2004. However, the punishments to the rapists have been never taken by the senior Burmese Army commanders.

**Article 11 of  
International  
Covenant on  
Civil and Political  
Rights**

The right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions.

There are many displaced families with large number of women and children who are still homeless, live with bad health condition in and near Halockani Mon refugees' resettlement site. The site is situated on the opposite side of Kanchanaburi Province of Thailand and is surrounded by mountains and displaced villages live in the valley at the edge of the forests. After NMSP agreed for cease-fire, about 10, 000 Mon refugees who took safe shelters in Thailand were again resettled in NMSP controlled border areas because the Thai government's pressure.

Though the weather is cold, there is still a lot of malaria in this forestry area. Many IDPs have infected with malaria when they arrived into the area because they are not familiar with the area. While they are working in the hilly farms, find bamboo shoots, where there are many mosquitoes, and bit them. The area in the forests does not have electricity and people do not even have batteries for lights. Due to a lack of mosquito nets or other protection materials and medicines, many displaced persons including many women and children, are infected with malaria. Although the resettlements site is provided with partial assistance by the Burmese Border Consortium (BBC) and other NGOs,

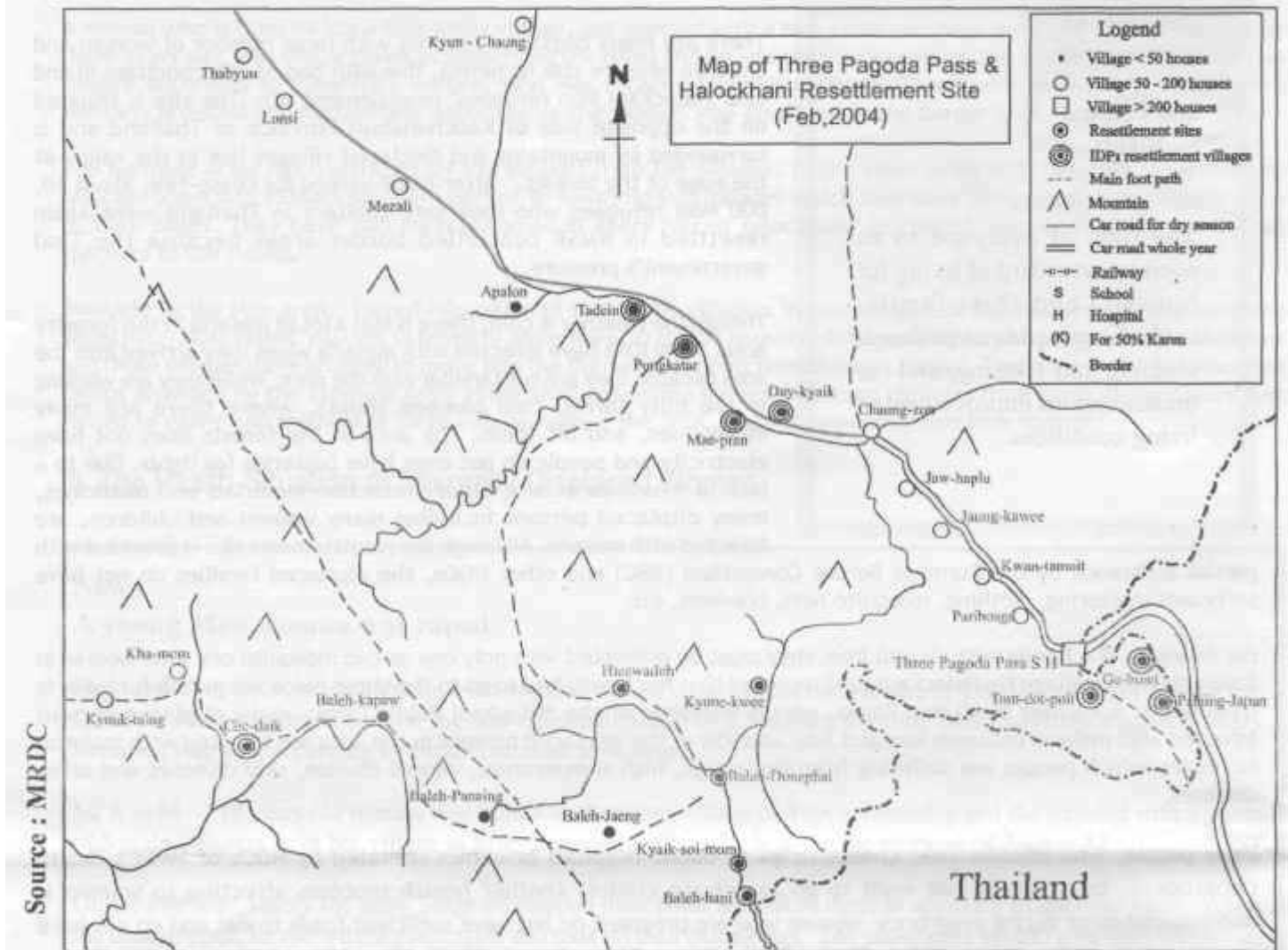
the displaced families do not have sufficient sheltering, clothing, mosquito nets, blankets, etc.

For example, if a family with six children, they must be protected with only one or two mosquito net. One woman in Baleh-donphai village (in Halockani site) reported that her family had to go to the clinic twice per month for malaria treatments. According to Mi Non Pakao, who is in-charge of the Halockani Public Clinic, many displaced persons infected with malaria between May and July, and 95% of the displaced persons in the area are infected with malaria. Moreover, which people are suffering from flu, cough, high temperature, cancer disease, skin diseases and other diseases.

Many people, who become sick, choose to go to public hospitals or clinics operated by NGOs or NMSP's health Department, but they do not want to go to private clinics. Another health problem affecting to women is undernourishment during pregnancy. Women who are pregnant do not have sufficient foods to eat and do not have any sort of vitamins or other medicine to help increase nutrition. Many babies have problems from a lack of nutrition when they are born. It is reported that if there are 100% pregnant women enrolled for the checking of their health at the beginning of their pregnancy, but only 75% of women came to the clinic. The other 25% did not come to the clinic and they do not get medicines from anywhere else, according to Mi Na Tha Oung.

Indeed, more surprisingly the pregnant women of 75 percent who come to clinic, only 25% of them deliver the babies in the clinics. Women who born in clinics believe that if they deliver their babies in clinic, they will get protection from medics to protect from malaria, blood flow and their new-born children will be taken care by the medics. Pregnant women who do not come to clinics are lack of knowledge on health education and they could have probably faced with difficult problems when they have their babies. A main reason is about custom of the Mon people that some women are ashamed to come to ask the medics to test their pregnancy and ask helps from trained medics to deliver the babies because the hospitals or clinics are public places and medics are male. Thus, they almost believe in tradition midwife during delivering the babies.

Many IDPs women who are not in the resettlement site used to deliver their babies by tradition midwife while they lived in their villages because people could not afford to pay if they born in hospital or their travels to the hospitals/clinics are too far. The medical treatment cost is also too expensive, and if people want to have an injection, they have to pay more than 1, 000 Kyat (over 1 US Dollar). Patients have to bribe the doctors and nurses in order to get good treatment when they stayed at hospital. In those circumstances, many poor pregnant women in the rural areas of Burma do not want to deliver the babies in hospitals or clinics. When they displaced, the still take the practices of not delivering the babies at hospital and clinics, even some clinics and hospitals provided sufficient treatment for them.



Location Map of Three Pagoda Pass Area : where majority Mon IDPs take refugee

There are many problems for pregnant women to reach to clinics or to get treatments in the remote areas because of distance. The pregnant women who come to clinics have many problems because they live in the mountains and the road is available all seasons. Some villagers have to swim across the flowing heavily river in the rainy season. Sometimes, they have a dangerous trip when they met the Burmese soldiers on the half way. This is another reason why some pregnant women are relying on midwife during the delivery of their babies. According to the In-charge of clinics in most IDPs village, no woman died while delivering the babies.

There is concrete health care system in Mon IDPs villages and resettlement sites in NMSP areas under the management of an international health NGO and NMSP's Health Department. However, the health education is still necessary to do more. "When patients come to the clinic, there is a little chance for us to explain about health. But we can provide full treatment. We can help the pregnant women to deliver their babies and if patients are so serious or difficult to deliver, we can send them to Thai hospital. Then, the clinic provided free treatment for IDPs," said Nai Oung Song who is in charge of Ta-dein clinic. Ta-dein village is a village for Mon and Karen internally displaced persons.

Many IDPs in the border area are mainly infected with malaria and some of them are suffered from diarrheas, respiratory diseases, tuberculosis, and undernourishment, confirmed by the NMSP's In-charge of Health Department, Nai Thein Win.

Back-Pack Health Worker Team has reported about IDPs health care condition in 2002 that there were 220,112 cases of diarrhea, 5841 cases of dysentery, 4093 cases of pneumonia and 68 cases of mine injuries in Shan, Karenni, Karen and Mon States, that situates along the Thailand-Burma border. Under the Back-Pack Health Care program, the Back-

Teams have traveled around the areas where IDPs are living but still they could not reach to all IDPs. Some IDPs have mentioned that they only got a little assistance from Back-Pack Health Worker Teams.

After having the ceasefire with the Burmese regime, NMSP (New Mon State Party) has opened many clinics in order to take care of the villagers in the post-conflict zones, in ceasefire zones and IDPs. These NMSP public hospitals and clinics could have taken care many patients including many women and children in IDPs communities.

An international medical NGO, has also provided medicines to IDPs villages which are far from the Mon refugee resettlement sites. In the remote area of the border, the NGO could provide sufficient equipment for surgery and other treatments. If there is an emergency for the patients, the medics have to transfer the patients to a missionary hospital called Kwai River Christian Hospital (KRCH). Some migrant workers to Thailand who infected with malaria were also treated in IDPs villages' clinics. There were about 200 patients who have been infected with malaria have taken treatment by themselves out off of the clinic in the recent months, May and June while hundreds of migrant workers moved to Thailand, but there were constantly about 20 patients on a daily basis came to the clinic according to In-charge of clinic, Nai Naing Soe, of Japan-yetwin village.

The increasing number of children rate are getting high. "I have six children. They are too young and can't do anything yet. I have to take care of them. Some children are crying to eat, but we don't have enough food. I feel sad. I don't want to have children any more. But, I don't know how to prevent it. If I use vaccine for the birth control in one-month protection, it harms my health. Thus, I don't dare to inject the vaccine again," explained by 36 years old Mi Yin Hla.

The people in the Mon refugees' resettlement sites are lack of health experience and education. They don't know about birth control. "I don't know how to use birth control medicines to prevent pregnancy. There are four children at least in a family. If we don't have enough food and have many children, it is not good situation for the family," said one woman in the camp.

Some IDP women stated that they do not have to be worried about medical treatment costs when they live in the resettlement sites. "If we are not feeling good, we can go to the clinic without paying money. It is not like in Burma where we have to spend whatever we do. If we don't have money, we can't go to the hospital. If people go to the hospital, they have to pay the entrance tax of 500 kyat. Even if there is Myanmar National Maternal and Health Care Association, it doesn't relief women's and children's health care as perfect as possible", explained a woman who recently arrived to the resettlement sites.

Many teenage women in IDPs villages get married early and they have pregnancy inappropriate age. Many of them are not aware of health care because they never read leaflet of health care, which is provided from NHEC (National Health Education Committee) and other health education NGO, AMI. Even though NHEC gives knowledge about health education in some areas, they are not able to attend. Many of them have to struggle for their survival in their family.



**A Mon school in the resettlement site**



**Displaced Mon students in the resettlement site**

## IV. IDPs Women and Children Education

It has free education for women and children in IDPs areas. Mon IDPs have more opportunity to study education than Karen, Kareni and Shan IDPs because NMSP (New Mon State Party) has a cease-fired with the military regime. The school stuff and the children's stationeries are also provided by an international NGOs for the children along the Thailand-Burma border area.

Some IDPs areas, the Burmese troops often have come into villages and students and teachers have to move other safe places and they could not stable situation to provide education. Sometimes, the Burmese Army's troops burn down the schools and threaten to arrest teachers in school.



### Development program by MRDC: encouragement for sufficient food production

are we going to build the school in this village? We don't have equipment to build the school. To build the school we need bamboo, wood and floor. Moreover, in school it need pens, pencils and books. We don't have these things. But the students are keen to attend the school" said a parent.

Many IDPs are uneducated. They have to struggle for their lives to survive. Some people encourage their children to study. But they have less income in the family. In order to get income, they find bamboo shoots and vegetables. Thus, they could not afford to send their children in school. Many children help their families instead of attending the school.

And also, women in IDP communities are lack of education. They do not have a chance to attend training or workshop in order to get some experiences such as health education program. In this hard condition for their future and present, they are losing their future and living with poverty.

## V. IDP Women and Food Assistance

The Mon Relief and Development Committee (MRDC) has provided rice as main food for the returned refugees in the resettlement sites and for IDPs in villages. According to Nai Doung Htaw, a coordinator of MRDC, it distributed rice for three months previously for IDPs in the emergency situation and the food supplies for the returned refugees is 50% (6 months available supplies) or 66% (9 months available supplies) of the total needs. Adults receive 15 kilograms and children 7 kilograms of rice for one-month food ration, but some IDP women say that it is not enough rice for them to survive. Because of insufficient foods for some IDPs families who have less income and works, they often moved to another places. Therefore, there is a cycle of displacement because of food shortage, lack of livelihood and security.

Additionally, the fighting often happens in the IDPs' areas and IDPs have to flee when the rebel groups and the Burmese Army's troops are fighting in or near the villages. In most fighting the Burmese Army's troops suddenly came

into the village and burnt down the villages, beat the villagers, rape the women and loot or burn paddy and other foods. This situation also create shortage of foods in the area.

The displaced villagers are also worrying about stepping on land mines when they go to their farms, plantations and forests in order to do in their livelihoods. Many land mines have been trapped in the IDPs' areas, where villagers need to look for vegetables, fishing and hunting. There are many disabled IDPs in Karen and Kareni areas who are suffering from the Burmese Army's troops and the ethnic armed groups' land mines. Even though there are dangerous land mines in the areas, IDPs are still looking for vegetables in order to earn income for their families or to feed their children. Some IDPs are hunting animals in the forest for their families' survival.

In Mon IDP areas, they are growing paddy, vegetables and other things to have enough food in their families. But, as mentioned above, their lives have many difficulties for security. "Our family has planted a basket of paddy seed on the high land farm and it is a little far from the village. It takes two or three hours to walk from home to farm. The rice produced from the farm is not enough to eat for our family. But if we combined getting rice from the resettlement site committee (MRDC) and the rice from the farm, it is enough for our family. Sometimes, when the Burmese troops come into the village, we have to run and leave our paddy plants behind" explained by Ms. Ma Chit Sein, from a Mon IDP villages.

Similarly, there are many IDPs who have faced difficult living conditions in the areas. There are uncounted numbers of IDPs who have starved and have had to eat rice soup, cassava, sweet potato, etc. In the raining season, it is hard for IDPs to go to the forest to find vegetables because the stormy water is flowing on the mountains and the people cannot swim across another side of the river.



**New displaced family**

According to an IDP woman, who did not want to be named, "we are in poor conditions living in the IDP area. This is why we would like to go to Thailand. Indeed, we don't want to go to Thailand. If we work in Thailand, we become like a slave. Sometimes, the boss insults us. If we were lured by brokers, our lives become hopeless. But, we don't have food to eat and this is why we have to work in Thailand".

According to a Back-Pack Health Worker Team report, overall dietary intake of children in the IDP population was poor. In the week prior to the survey (which did in 2003), among non-breast feeding children, 39% did not receive a single serving of fish, 40% did not eat meat, 78% did not eat eggs, and 85% did not eat any beans. 26% of children did not eat any of these protein-rich foods in the previous week.

Many IDPs always expect assistance from refugee resettlement sites because there is not enough food and also it is rare to find a job in the sites and in the surrounding areas.

## VI. Sheltering and Sanitation for IDPs

Many IDPs have lived in a temporary place, which is located on the ethnic areas. There are 50,000 IDPs in estimation and over 10 IDP villages are set up by MRDC and NMSP since 1997, there are from 50 to 1,000 household in each village. The houses are normally built with bamboo and thatches and mostly situate in mountain slopes. Some houses roofed with plastic and cannot protect the light and others. Most IDPs also use bamboo for walls of the houses.

IDPs who arrived in Halockani resettlement site have a chance to own a small piece of land for living after enrolling the list at the village head or MRDC Camp Committee. And also, IDPs from some IDP villages, like Tadein and Che-daik have an opportunity to own a small piece of land as vegetable gardens.



**A displaced woman creates a vegetable garden**

“To build a house, I have to try cutting wood by myself in the forest. But, to cut the wood, I have to ask permission from the village head. I have no husband and it is a hard work for me”, said 39 years old widow.

The IDPs normally get water from streams and some get from the mountains’ brooks by connecting with water pipes and they also shared the water each other. In some IDPs, the international health NGO and NMSP’s Health Department also arranged to provide water to the IDPs.

MRDC (Mon Relief and Development Committee) has tried to provide more food for IDPs said a coordinator of MRDC, Nai Doun Htaw. “Our members have supported to IDPs such as rice, net and blanket. IDPs have brought plate, dish, crockery and other stuffs from their own village when they run from it. IDPs collected vegetable in the forest.

Some families don’t have enough plates and they use leaf as a plate while they are eating”.

In cold season, it is cold and people do not have adequate bed and they have to sleep with Salong (*Burma traditional clothes for under part of the men*). Because of without having enough blankets to protect from the cold winding, people have a cold, flu and other diseases. Even it has bad condition for health; people have to live in those areas.

In IDPs areas, it does not have electric light and even battery light. People use candles at night and home-made light that use gasolines. It cannot protect the danger of mosquito because it does not have electric light and in the dark situation. Moreover, it does not have an adequate net in their families.

People are not despair even though it has bad condition. They are satisfied for living in safe areas without being tortured by the Burmese troops. When they lived in Burma, they have both problem of foods and mistreatment by the military government or Burmese Army.

## VII. Livelihood in the IDP communities

Many IDPs are relying on the hilly farms. In the raining season people find bamboo shoot, vegetables and plant paddy on the farm. In summer, people collect leaf in the forests to make roofed thatches and collect one type of grasses to make broom and sell them for income. Many IDPs are unemployed. They do not have much money to invest and trade clothes.

Some women work with their husbands of cutting broom grasses, cleaning gardens and rice-fields, finding bamboo-shoots. Some women are totally rely on their husbands. It is estimated that the displaced person only have an opportunity to work three months in the whole year. Their daily income is less than 50 Baht (~ 0. 5 US Dollar). 50 Baht does not provide sufficient expenses in a family.

According to women from IDPs communities she said, the bamboo shoot price for one kilogram is only one Bath. My income is 20 Baht a day. It is not enough to feed my family.

Many IDPs worked in farms, sowing, and trading while they were in their native villages. But they have to pay various kind of taxes: such as porter fees, security fees, donation to development projects and others. Moreover, they were restricted to go to farms. The restriction of movement and tax collection have made the people to face food-shortage problems even in their villages and therefore, many villagers fled to IDP areas.

“We have betel-nut garden. If we go to garden, we have to pay bribe to the army commanders. Sometimes, the troops only allow for two hours travel to garden and farm. When we work for cultivation, it is very difficult because people have to stay at farm and the Burmese Army’s troops do not allow to stay at farms. Sometimes, the troops steal kitchen at farm when there is no people. No one can accuse them of stealing kitchen. My farther has the same name with a rebel and he was beaten seriously by the military troops. No one can give guarantee for him to release. Therefore, I have to fled from my village said Mi Oung who is from Kapyta Kyit Village.

While people are working on farm, they have to run other places because the Burmese troops reach at farm. Sometimes the troops destroy the farms, and threaten and beat to people. Moreover, it has land mine in IDPs areas, and people have to avoid from the stepping it.

Invitation for Feedback to Our Publication  
"The Plight"  
of Women and Children in Southern Burma

Dear Readers,

With objectives to monitor the situation of women and children in southern part of Burma and to empower them with the rights described in CEDAW and CRC, which are both ratified by the current military regime in Burma, our "Woman an Child Rights Project (Southern Burma)" came into existence since 2000.

Under this project, "The Plight" Newsletter is produced quarterly and this newsletter especially describe the general situation of women and children in Burma and how their human rights are violated by the ruling regime and its army.

In a plan to evaluate our publication, we wish to get the FEEDBACK of our readers. Hence, you can kindly send your feedback. If you know anyone who would like to receive the newsletter or if you wish to send your feedback, please feel free to contact the following mailing and e-mail address.

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With regards,

Project Coordinator

Although in IDP areas, there are lack of works or income but the security is better than in their native villages. On the other hand, MRDC also arranges for development program and encourage the IDPs to produce more foods and other human used materials for their income.

## VIII. Security for IDPs

The NMSP has taken responsibility for the security of IDPs after having the cease-fire with the military regime in its 12 cease-fire zones. But IDPs who live outside of the NMSP cease-fire areas are still faced serious suffering oppressed by the Burmese Army's troops.

In Southern part of Mon State, in Ye Township, the people from those villages were forced to register to the military commanders to get permission in order to go their farms or other workplaces. Mostly the troops do not allow people to go to farm, plantations and garden. Sometimes, the troops use forced labor from the villagers such as building railway and road construction.

Some people who do not want to live under the oppression of the Burmese Army, fled to Mon refugees' resettlement sites and IDPs villages, which is under the control by the NMSP. Sometimes, the Burmese troops have come into IDPs villages. But they do not dare to threaten the people and use some IDPs in the porter service. But, some villages which are under the loose protection by the NMSP, when the Burmese troops come into villages, the people also have to run to escape from the arrest as porters.

**Article 7 of  
International  
Covenant on Civil  
and Political Rights**

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. In particular, no one shall be subjected without his free consent to medical or scientific experimentation.

## Acronyms

SPDC	State Peace and Development Council
WCRP	Women and Child Rights Project
IDPs	Internally Displaced Person
NMSP	New Mon State Party
KNU	Karen Nation Union
BBC	Burmese Border Consortium
BCP	Burma Communist Party
KRCH	Kwai River Christain Hospital
MRDC	Mon Relief and Development Committee
NGOs	Non Government Organization
ILO	International Labour Organization
NHEC	National Health Education Committee
BCP	Burma Communist Party

Ta-dein Mon IDPs village is near Three Pagoda Pass - Thanbyuzayat motor road and sometime the Burmese Army's troops have rotated their battalions in Three Pagoda Pass Town's base and people are afraid of being arrested as porters while they are arriving at their villages. The IDPs are also worried of fighting between the rebels and the Burmese Army's troops near the village.

When the Burmese Army's troops get near the village, they take a rest at villagers' houses. When the troops arrive in their houses, villagers avoid to other places because they are afraid of arresting for porters by the troops. Moreover, the troops took their kitchen, ducks and pig without paying back money to IDP villagers.

Sometimes, the troops reached in village darkly and people can not move and can not escape anywhere. When the Burmese Army's troops arrived at night, some commanders or low-rank commanders or even soldiers tried to rape women in the villages. Normally, they try to climb some widow's houses or houses with only women, and they tried to rape the women by pointing guns.

In this situation, the women in IDP villages where the troops arrived feel insecure. When women go to farm or forest to find for vegetables and bamboo shoe, the men or their husbands have to go with them to guard for their security.

However, they agreed the security is better than in their native villages. If they were lived in their villages, they could be forced to cook, fetch

water, entertain, and message for the military troops, and then were raped at night without any protection.

### Conclusion:

The civil war in Burma which broke out since over 50 years have produced over a million displaced persons along the border with the neighboring countries. When it is needed to solve the IDP problem, it needs to solve the political problem in the country.

However, currently whether the political problem is solved or not, the international humanitarian aid agencies should support the IDPs with various types of assistance: such as food, sheltering, health care, and education. In the political crisis in the Burma currently, the IDPs in Tenasserim Division, Mon State, Karen State, Karenni State, and Shan State are the most needy victims.

While the international humanitarian organizations are involving in assisting the IDPs and the returned refugees, on the other hand, the international communities including UN Agencies should help and solve the political problem in Burma that ceases the serious population displacement.

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