

**YANGON UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS  
DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS  
MASTER OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES PROGRAMME**

**ASSESSING THE SUFFICIENCY OF BASIC FOOD AND  
SUPPLIES AMONG INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS  
(Case Study: Selected IDP sites, Kayin State)**

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**JUNE, 2025**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of  
Development Studies (MDevS) Degree

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**YANGON UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMICS**  
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This is to certify that the thesis entitled “**Assessing the Sufficiency of Basic Food and Supplies Among Internally Displaced Persons (Case Study: Selected IDP Sites, Kayin State)**” submitted as a partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Development Studies has been accepted by the Board of Examiners.

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study explores the sufficiency of basic food and supplies among Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Kayin State, Myanmar, focusing on Hpa-An, Hlaingbwe, and Kawkareik Townships. Amid ongoing conflict and displacement, IDPs face chronic food insecurity, limited livelihoods, and inadequate access to essential resources. The study aims to assess current food security conditions and evaluate the effectiveness of humanitarian aid in meeting basic needs. A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining quantitative data from 143 IDP respondents with qualitative insights from key informant interviews. Findings reveal that while all respondents received food support from the World Food Programme, 70% reported the rations were insufficient. Most households relied on casual labor, had low educational attainment, and faced health issues such as hypertension. The study highlights the urgent need for improved food diversity, sustainable livelihoods, and targeted health interventions to enhance the well-being and resilience of displaced communities in conflict-affected regions.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HH	Households
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
FD	Forest Department
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LCFC	Local Community Forest Concessions
NCFWG	National Community Forestry Working Group
NTFP	Non-Timber-Forest Product
MRRP	Myanmar Reforestation and Rehabilitation Programme
PFM	Participatory Forest Management
REDD +	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation plus
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
PSNP	Productive Safety Net Programme
HFIAS	Household Food Insecurity Access Scale
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
VAM	Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping
WFP	World Food Program
WFS	World Food Summit
WHO	World Health Organization

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Rationale of the Study

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) often face extreme vulnerabilities due to political instability, natural disasters, or other emergencies that force them to flee their homes. In displacement settings, access to necessities such as food, clean water, sanitation, and essential supplies becomes a critical concern. Despite humanitarian efforts, disparities in resource allocation and distribution worsen health, nutritional, and social consequences. The breaking of a 17-year truce in Myanmar in June 2011 displaced nearly 100,000 civilians, causing political turmoil. About 100 IDP households live in government and non-government regions. Northern Myanmar internally displaced people receive less help and protection despite rising basic needs. This study examines food security for Hpa-An Township IDPs.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in conflict-affected regions such as Kayin State, Myanmar, face persistent challenges in accessing adequate food and essential supplies. Displacement disrupts livelihoods, limits access to agricultural land and often results in dependency on humanitarian aid. In the townships of Hpa-An, Hlaingbwe, and Kawkareik, where displacement is frequently caused by political instability, food insecurity remains a critical concern. Despite ongoing humanitarian efforts, there is limited empirical data assessing whether the food and basic supplies provided to IDPs are sufficient to meet their nutritional and daily living needs. Without such data, it is difficult for policymakers, NGOs, and local authorities to design effective interventions that ensure the well-being and dignity of displaced populations.

This study plays a crucial role in promoting evidence-based planning by generating reliable, data-driven insights into the adequacy of food distribution systems for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Kayin State. By systematically evaluating the sufficiency of basic food and supplies, it helps identify critical gaps in the supply chain that may otherwise go unnoticed. Furthermore, the study enhances

humanitarian accountability by assessing whether assistance interventions meet established minimum standards for food security and basic needs, ensuring that support is both effective and equitable.

This study focuses on evaluating the food security conditions of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Hpa-An Township, Kayin State, Myanmar. It aims to determine whether the current systems for distributing food and essential supplies are adequate to meet the daily needs of displaced communities. The research addresses critical issues such as the disruption of livelihoods, restricted access to agricultural land, and the growing reliance on humanitarian aid amid declining support. By examining these challenges, the study seeks to provide a clearer understanding of the gaps in aid provision and contribute to more effective and targeted humanitarian responses.

## **1.2 Objective of the Study**

The objective of this study are: to assess the current food security and supply status of internally displaced persons (IDPs), and to examine the humanitarian aid in addressing and providing basic needs to internally displaced persons (IDPs) residing in Hpa-An, Hlaingbwe, and Kawkareik Townships.

## **1.3 Method of Study**

This study applied a mixed-methods approach, using both quantitative and qualitative methods to assess food security among internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Kayin State. A structured questionnaire consisting of 43 items was administered to 143 respondents across Hpa-An, Hlaingbwe, and Kawkareik Townships. Respondents were selected using a simple random sampling method, and the questionnaire translated into the Myanmar language covered demographics, food access, expenses, income, and health. Responses were recorded using a five-point Likert scale.

To enrich the quantitative data, key informant interviews were conducted with local stakeholders, including community leaders and aid providers. Secondary data were gathered from published reports, academic texts, and online resources to support and contextualize findings (FAO, 2021; WFP, 2022). This approach provided both measurable outcomes and qualitative insights necessary for understanding the food security conditions of IDPs in the region.

#### **1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study**

This study assesses food security among IDPs in three IDP locations in Hpa-An, Hlaingbwe, and Kawkareik townships, Kayin State. The sample site collection was carried out using a purposive sampling method, targeting IDP sites that varied in size, duration of displacement, and access to food assistance. The field survey was conducted over a period of three weeks in May 2025, and the entire study was carried out between March and June 2025. First, the sample size is limited to 143 respondents across three locations, which may not fully represent the broader IDP population from Hpa-An, Kawkareik, and Hlaingbwe townships in Kayin State. Second, coordination with local authorities, humanitarian organizations, and community leaders was necessary to ensure a representative range of displacement experiences. Third, participant selection was based on voluntary consent, which may introduce self-selection bias.

#### **1.5 Organization of the Study**

There are five chapters in this work. The justification for the study, its goal, its methodology, its scope and constraints, and its structure are all covered in Chapter 1. The notion of food security, its significance, food security at the household and national levels, its sources and effects, coping mechanisms, and its relationship to civil strife are all covered in Chapter (2). The overview of IDPs and food security in Myanmar, the profile of Kayin State, the state's agricultural sector and economic circumstances, internal displacement, and food and financial aid are all highlighted in Chapter 3. The survey profile, design, and findings regarding the food security status of internally displaced people in Hpa-An Township, Kayin State, are presented in Chapter 4. Additionally, Chapter 5 presents the study's conclusions and suggestions.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Concept of Food Security**

Food security is difficult since there are so many different definitions and metrics. According to the most widely recognized definition, which was adopted at the World Food Summit in 1996, food security is achieved when everyone has access to enough safe, nourishing food that satisfies their dietary choices and needs for an active and healthy life. In 2002, the word "social" was added, which improved the concept even further. A more straightforward definition is offered by the World Food Program, which claims that there is food security when there is never any hunger. Over time, this idea has changed, and there are now several definitions and metrics to assist comprehend and deal with food security.

Food security is achieved when everyone, everywhere, has physical and financial access to enough safe, nourishing food to satisfy their dietary needs and food choices for an active and healthy life, according to the 1996 World Food Summit (FAO, 1996). Accessibility (economic and physical means to obtain food), utilization (nutritional use of food for health and well-being), availability (adequate food supply through production or imports), and stability (consistent access to food over time, even in the face of shocks) are the four main dimensions of the concept. Economic, social, and environmental issues all have an impact on these aspects. This multifaceted approach has been embraced by organizations like the World Bank and the FAO to direct programs and policy (World Bank, 1986; FAO, 1996).

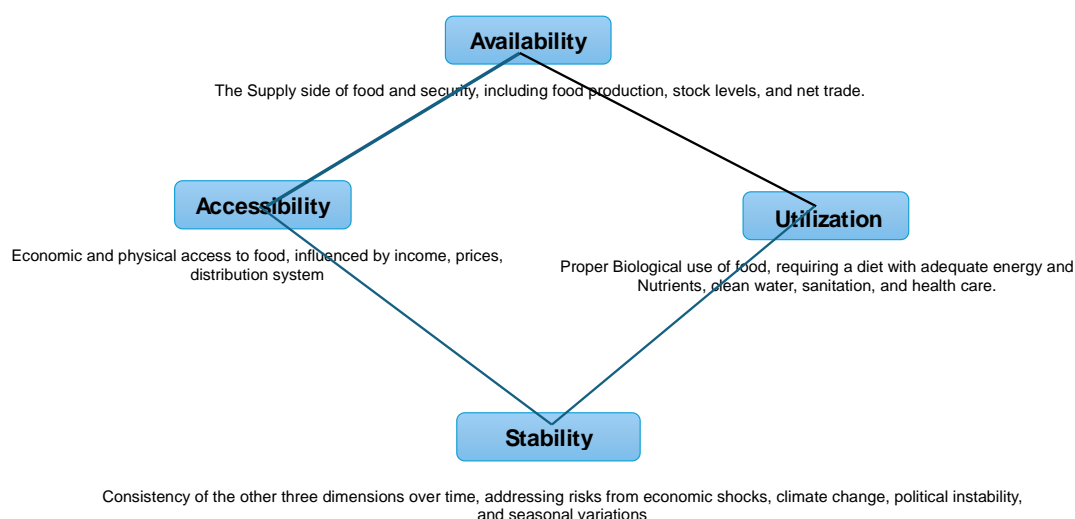
The four main components of food security—availability, accessibility, usage, and stability—ensure that everyone has steady access to enough wholesome food for a healthy life (FAO, 1996). The idea now includes access, nutritional quality, and resistance to disturbances instead of only concentrating on food production. This shift began with the 1974 World Food Conference and was further developed by organizations such as the FAO, World Bank, and WFP, emphasizing a multidimensional framework (FAO, 2008; World Bank, 2022). Current challenges to

food security include conflict, climate change, displacement, economic instability, rising food prices, disrupted supply chains, and gender inequality (FAO, 2023; WFP, 2022). Addressing these issues requires integrated approaches, including humanitarian aid, sustainable agriculture, social protection systems, and inclusive policymaking (FAO, 2021; HLPE, 2020).

## 2.2 Four Dimensions of Food Security

Food security is built on four key dimensions: availability, accessibility, utilization, and stability. Availability refers to having enough food produced or supplied through farming, imports, or aid. Accessibility means people must have the resources like money or transportation—to obtain nutritious food. Utilization involves the proper use of food, including knowledge of nutrition, clean water, and sanitation to ensure a healthy diet. Finally, stability means that all these factors must be consistently reliable over time, without sudden disruptions due to conflict, climate change, or economic crises. Together, these dimensions ensure that people can lead healthy, active lives.

**Figure (2.1): The Four Dimensions of Food Security**



Source: (FAO, 2012)

### **2.2.1 Food Availability**

Food availability, a key pillar of food security, refers to the consistent physical presence of food through production, storage, distribution, and trade (FAO, 1996; FAO, 2023). It is shaped by factors such as agricultural productivity, infrastructure, climate, and trade policies. Regions like Sub-Saharan Africa often experience food shortages due to climate variability, land degradation, and conflict-related disruptions to agriculture and supply chains (Devereux & Maxwell, 2001).

Agricultural productivity is vital for food availability. Countries with robust agricultural sectors like the United States and Brazil enhance global food supply through large-scale crop production and exports (FAO, 2013). Conversely, food-import-dependent nations such as Yemen and Afghanistan face food availability risks due to conflict and trade disruptions (WFP, 2022). Additionally, rising food prices reduce access, particularly in low-income countries where households spend a large share of income on food (Smith et al., 2020).

Food losses and waste also undermine food availability. According to the FAO (2019), approximately one-third of all food produced globally is wasted, either at the production stage due to post-harvest losses or at the consumer level. In developing countries, inadequate storage facilities and poor transportation infrastructure contribute to significant food losses, particularly for perishable goods like fruits, vegetables, and dairy products. Addressing these inefficiencies through improved technology, better logistics, and policies that reduce food waste can enhance food availability and security (FAO, 2020).

The World Food Programme and humanitarian aid are essential for crisis situations, but long-term solutions like local agricultural support and community integration are crucial for sustainable food security. Global trade and geopolitical tensions can disrupt food availability, and strengthening supply chains, diversifying sources, and investing in climate-resilient agriculture can prevent future crises and enhance food availability.

### **2.2.2 Food Access**

Food access is a fundamental component of food security, emphasizing individuals' ability to acquire adequate, safe, and nutritious food for a healthy life (FAO, 1996). It is shaped by factors such as income levels, food prices, infrastructure, and social safety nets. In low-income settings, poverty and joblessness hinder access

to food, contributing to undernutrition (FAO, 2013). Additionally, displacement and conflict further restrict access, especially for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees, who often face limited economic means and restricted access to land or markets (ACAPS, 2021; UNHCR, 2023).

In conflict zones, disrupted food supply chains and inflation can significantly reduce food access. For example, in Yemen, the ongoing war has led to price surges in staple foods, making them unaffordable for vulnerable populations (WFP, 2022). The impact of food price inflation on food access is also evident in sub-Saharan Africa, where economic shocks and market failures have worsened food insecurity (Smith et al., 2020). To address such challenges, humanitarian organizations, including the World Food Programme (WFP), implement emergency food assistance programs to ensure displaced populations can access adequate food (WFP, 2022). However, these interventions often provide only short-term relief, highlighting the need for long-term resilience-building strategies such as agricultural investment and livelihood support (World Bank, 2020).

Gender disparities significantly impact food access, with women and children disproportionately affected by social norms and economic dependency. Women-headed households are more likely to experience food shortages, especially in crisis settings. Programs promoting women's empowerment, financial inclusion, and targeted food assistance have improved household food access. Initiatives like cash transfers and school feeding programs also help mitigate food insecurity. Measuring food access requires reliable indicators like the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS), which are effective in rural and conflict-affected areas. However, challenges remain in incorporating localized factors like cultural dietary preferences and informal food networks.

Overall, ensuring equitable food access requires a combination of short-term emergency interventions and long-term strategies that enhance economic opportunities, infrastructure, and social protection systems. By addressing structural barriers and incorporating resilience-building measures, governments and international organizations can work toward a more inclusive and sustainable food system (UN, 2015; World Bank, 2020).

### **2.2.3 Food Utilization**

Food utilization refers to how effectively individuals consume and metabolize food to achieve proper nutritional outcomes. It includes factors such as food preparation, dietary diversity, hygiene, sanitation, and access to clean water (FAO, 2013). Even when food is available and accessible, inadequate utilization can still result in malnutrition. For instance, internally displaced persons (IDPs) often face poor cooking conditions, lack of dietary variety, and unhygienic environments that hinder proper food use (ACAPS, 2021). Additionally, rising food prices limit access to nutritious foods, particularly for low-income populations, increasing the risk of malnutrition (Smith et al., 2020).

Nutritional knowledge and education are crucial for proper food utilization. Without awareness of balanced diets, households may depend on nutrient-poor staples, leading to vitamin and mineral deficiencies (FAO, 2020). Tools like the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS) measure food utilization through dietary diversity and meal frequency (Coates, Swindale, & Bilinsky, 2007). Evidence from Ethiopia shows that households with greater food security had more diverse diets and better nutritional outcomes (Maxwell, Coates, & Vaitla, 2013). Gender dynamics also impact utilization, as women in food-insecure households often eat less and last, increasing their vulnerability to malnutrition (Kumar & Quisumbing, 2015).

The availability of clean water and proper sanitation also plays a crucial role in food utilization. Poor sanitation and unsafe drinking water increase the risk of foodborne diseases, which can lead to nutrient loss and weaken immune systems, particularly among children (FAO, 2019). In humanitarian crises, organizations like the World Food Programme (WFP) address food utilization challenges by integrating nutrition programs with water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) initiatives (WFP, 2022). For instance, in refugee sites, WFP provides fortified foods to combat micronutrient deficiencies and educates communities on food safety and nutrition. Strengthening food utilization strategies is essential to achieving food security and reducing malnutrition, especially in vulnerable populations (FAO, 2021).

### **2.2.4 Food Stability**

Stability is a crucial pillar of food security, ensuring the continuous availability, access, and utilization of food despite economic, social, or environmental shocks (FAO, 2023). This dimension is particularly vital in fragile and conflict-

affected regions where displacement, climate change, and economic disruptions severely undermine food systems (FAO, 2021).

One of the major threats to stability is armed conflict, which disrupts agricultural production, supply chains, and market access. In Sub-Saharan Africa, for example, protracted conflicts in South Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo have led to mass displacement and widespread food insecurity (Devereux & Maxwell, 2001; ACAPS, 2021). Economic instability also compromises food security by reducing household incomes and making food less affordable. Volatile food prices, driven by inflation and global market fluctuations, especially affect low-income groups. The 2007–2008 global food crisis exemplified how soaring food prices triggered malnutrition and food insecurity in many developing countries (FAO, 2013; Smith et al., 2020). In response, governments and international bodies have promoted price stabilization policies and social protection measures (World Bank, 2020).

Environmental factors like climate change and extreme weather events such as droughts, floods, and erratic rainfall further threaten food system stability. Regions like the Sahel and the Horn of Africa have experienced chronic food insecurity due to recurrent droughts (FAO, 2019; WFP, 2022). Adaptation measures, including climate-smart agriculture and advanced irrigation techniques, are critical for strengthening resilience (FAO, 2020). To protect vulnerable populations, social safety nets and resilience-building interventions are vital. Tools such as cash transfers, school feeding programs, and targeted food assistance help buffer the effects of crises. For example, the World Food Programme has provided emergency food aid in displacement settings, supporting internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees (WFP, 2021; Maxwell et al., 2013).

In conclusion, stability is fundamental to achieving sustainable food security. Addressing the root causes of instability requires integrated strategies involving conflict resolution, economic support, climate adaptation, and social protection. Building resilient food systems through coordinated efforts is essential for safeguarding the food security of vulnerable populations (FAO, 2021; UN, 2015).

### **2.3 Importance of Food Security**

Food security is fundamental to human well-being, ensuring that all individuals have consistent access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food necessary for healthy and active lives. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2023) defines

food security as the condition in which “all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences.” Achieving food security is vital for economic stability, social cohesion, and sustainable development, particularly in conflict-prone and displaced populations (ACAPS, 2021).

One of the primary reasons food security is crucial is its direct impact on public health. Malnutrition, a consequence of food insecurity, is a leading cause of mortality, especially among children under five, weakening immune systems and impairing physical and cognitive development (FAO, 2020; Devereux & Maxwell, 2001). Effective food security measures, such as targeted assistance and nutrition programs, can significantly improve health outcomes.

Food systems face challenges due to increased reliance on distant suppliers, which entails environmental costs and risks linked to transportation and loss of local food knowledge. The shift away from agrarian societies has diminished the transfer of farming skills necessary for sustainable practices. Furthermore, concerns about food quality, including pesticide residues and diet-related diseases, emphasize the need for food security that also promotes health (FAO, 2023). In Canada, for instance, food insecurity affects many, with 833,000 individuals relying on food banks monthly, highlighting the social and economic inequalities involved.

Economically, food security is integral to development. Lack of access to adequate food reduces productivity and increases healthcare costs, thereby undermining economic growth (Barrett, 2010). In low-income countries, agricultural productivity is closely tied to food security and poverty reduction (World Bank, 2020). Investments in sustainable food production and distribution systems are essential for enhancing economic resilience.

Conflict and displacement severely exacerbate food insecurity by disrupting agricultural production and access to food. Internally displaced persons and refugees are among the most vulnerable, relying heavily on humanitarian aid (UNHCR, 2023; WFP, 2022). Integrating food security strategies with conflict resolution and aid is necessary to tackle food crises effectively.

Climate change presents a growing threat by causing unpredictable weather, droughts, and floods that impair agricultural yields and food supply chains, especially in developing countries dependent on rain-fed agriculture (FAO, 2019; 2021).

Adopting climate-resilient agricultural practices is critical to safeguarding long-term food security.

In conclusion, food security underpins sustainable development by influencing health, economic stability, and social cohesion. Addressing it requires coordinated policy efforts, international cooperation, and sustainable agricultural innovations. By prioritizing food security, societies can foster resilience, support economic growth, and improve the well-being of future generations.

#### **2.4 Food Security at the National and Household Levels**

Food security is a multifaceted issue that operates across different scales, including national, regional, household, and individual levels. At the national level, food security concerns the availability of sufficient food supplies through domestic production, imports, exports, and storage, ensuring that a country can meet the nutritional needs of its population. Conversely, food insecurity occurs when access to nutritionally adequate and safe food is limited or uncertain, either due to insufficient supply or economic and social barriers (FAO, 2019).

Several complex factors drive food insecurity globally and locally, such as political instability, economic challenges, conflict, trade imbalances, natural disasters, poor governance, gender inequality, limited education, and health issues. At the household level, poverty, limited livelihood options, and poor health are primary contributors to food insecurity (WFP, 2022). It is important to note that food security does not automatically equate to good nutrition; true nutrition security depends on consistent access to essential nutrients, which also requires healthcare, sanitation, and other social services.

A country's food availability depends on multiple factors, including food production, import-export dynamics, food losses, and usage such as animal feed. Ensuring a stable, affordable, and nutritious food supply is critical for supporting both food and nutrition security globally. Major global challenges such as climate change, rising food prices, armed conflicts, and environmental health threats pose significant risks to this supply, making international efforts aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals essential (UN SDGs) for ending hunger, improving nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture.

Food insecurity has severe consequences on individuals' mental, emotional, and physical health, potentially leading to poor nutrition, anxiety, stress, and social

strain. At the national level, food security requires strong policies in agriculture, trade, and food storage to maintain reliable access to safe and nutritious food (FAO, 2019). Programs like Ethiopia’s Productive Safety Net Program exemplify targeted national efforts to support vulnerable populations, although global issues such as conflict and economic instability remain persistent threats to food security.

At the household level, factors such as income, social support networks, and subsistence food production influence food security status. Tools like the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS) are used to assess vulnerability. Coping with shocks—including price spikes, natural disasters, and displacement—is crucial to protect nutritional outcomes, especially among low-income and displaced populations (ACAPS, 2021).

Improving food security requires coordinated interventions across multiple levels. National strategies must focus on agricultural development, climate resilience, and trade facilitation, while local and international programs such as cash transfers and food aid address immediate needs during crises. For instance, the World Food Programme’s emergency food assistance supports internally displaced persons in conflict-affected areas (WFP, 2022). Ultimately, comprehensive approaches that combine macroeconomic policies with targeted micro-level actions are necessary to ensure access to nutritious food for all.

## **2.5 Food Insecurity and Civil Conflict**

Food insecurity and civil conflict are interconnected, with conflict zones often using food insecurity as a weapon of war. In Yemen, 80% of the population needs humanitarian aid. Forced displacement due to violence exacerbates food insecurity, with millions facing compounded challenges. Food insecurity in conflict settings is not just about the availability of food but also access to it. According to FAO (2021), the inability of displaced populations to secure stable livelihoods during conflict leads to dependency on external food aid, which can be inconsistent and insufficient. A study by Maxwell et al. (2013) emphasizes how indicators such as the Coping Strategies Index can be used to measure household food insecurity, highlighting the varying responses of displaced households to food crises. Displaced individuals often employ negative coping strategies, including reducing food intake and selling assets, which further undermine their long-term food security.

Gender significantly impacts food insecurity in conflict settings, with women, particularly those displaced, being disproportionately affected. Gendered vulnerabilities can exacerbate food insecurity, as women often have limited access to resources and decision-making power. Conflict also disrupts agricultural production, leading to food price inflation, malnutrition, and poor health outcomes. Countries like South Sudan have experienced mass displacement and food system disruptions, increased food prices and reducing access to essential nutrients. Addressing food insecurity requires comprehensive strategies that combine immediate food aid with long-term solutions. The World Bank emphasizes resilience-building measures to help communities recover from food insecurity, while the FAO emphasizes integrated interventions that address both immediate food needs and underlying factors contributing to vulnerability. Effective responses must be multi-dimensional, addressing both food availability and broader socio-economic challenges.

## **2.6 Coping Strategies for IDPs**

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) face profound disruptions to their livelihoods, social structures, and access to essential resources. In the context of food insecurity, their survival often depends on coping strategies deliberate or spontaneous responses to manage stress, resource scarcity, and emotional strain. These coping mechanisms can be broadly categorized into two key types: problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping, as conceptualized in psychological and humanitarian literature (Folkman & Lazarus, 1984; Maxwell et al., 2013). Understanding these strategies provides insight into the resilience and vulnerability of displaced populations and informs the design of more effective humanitarian interventions.

Problem-focused coping involves direct actions to address the root causes of stress or hardship. Among IDPs, this often includes measures to enhance access to food and resources despite displacement-related constraints. Examples include modifying food preparation methods to maximize limited supplies, engaging in informal labor or small-scale trade, cultivating temporary crops if land access is available, or seeking out aid from humanitarian organizations. These strategies are goal-oriented and reflect agency, even in constrained environments.

In food-insecure settings, initial problem-focused strategies typically begin with adjusting household consumption patterns reducing portion sizes, substituting preferred foods with cheaper alternatives, and prioritizing meals for the most

vulnerable household members, such as children. When conditions deteriorate, IDPs may sell productive assets, migrate temporarily in search of work, or engage in community-based exchange systems. Although these strategies offer short-term relief, they can undermine long-term resilience by depleting livelihood assets and increasing dependency on external support.

Emotion-focused coping, by contrast, addresses the psychological and emotional dimensions of displacement and deprivation. IDPs often endure high levels of stress, anxiety, and trauma due to uncertainty, loss, and exposure to violence. Emotion-focused strategies include seeking solace in religion or spiritual practices, engaging in social networks for emotional support, practicing acceptance or mental detachment, and expressing distress through storytelling or art. While these strategies do not resolve the root problems of food insecurity, they help individuals manage their emotional responses and maintain psychological stability.

Emotion-focused coping is especially prevalent in protracted displacement contexts where material conditions remain unchanged for extended periods. For instance, displaced women may rely on community prayer groups or mutual support networks to cope with daily struggles, while children might engage in play or cultural rituals that offer temporary distraction. These strategies are crucial for preserving mental health, building social cohesion, and maintaining hope amid chronic adversity.

In practice, problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies are not mutually exclusive; most IDPs engage in both simultaneously depending on context, severity of need, and availability of support. The coping behaviors adopted often evolve over time from relatively adaptive to increasingly harmful as displacement prolongs and resources dwindle. In the most acute phases of food insecurity, households may turn to extreme measures such as child labor, early marriage, or transactional sex, which have severe long-term consequences for well-being and protection.

From a humanitarian perspective, coping strategies are not merely survival mechanisms but also indicators of systemic gaps in assistance and protection. The use of severe or irreversible coping strategies signals a breakdown in aid effectiveness and a failure to meet basic needs. Therefore, humanitarian actors must analyze the nature and progression of coping strategies to assess the adequacy of food assistance and design interventions that strengthen household resilience without fostering dependency or harm.

In conclusion, understanding both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping strategies among IDPs is essential for building targeted, context-sensitive, and dignified responses to food insecurity. These strategies reveal not only how displaced individuals manage crises but also where interventions must evolve from short-term relief toward long-term resilience, recovery, and self-reliance.

## **2.7 Review on Previous Studies**

Findings across multiple studies reveal, consistently highlights that internally displaced persons (IDPs) face significantly greater food insecurity than non-displaced populations. Displacement often disrupts livelihoods, limits access to productive resources, and erodes social support systems, making IDPs more vulnerable to hunger, malnutrition, and dependence on humanitarian aid (ACAPS, 2021; FAO, 2021; WFP, 2022).

In regions like Sub-Saharan Africa, displacement caused by conflict or environmental shocks has severely impacted household food production and market access, increasing reliance on external assistance (Devereux & Maxwell, 2001). Similarly, the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (2023) presents global evidence linking displacement whether conflict- or disaster-induced with rising food insecurity. These patterns are echoed in Myanmar, where years of displacement have undermined livelihoods and intensified vulnerability. Several studies have explored how IDPs experience more severe and frequent food shortages than host communities. Coates et al. (2007) developed the Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS) to assess food access severity, while Maxwell and Caldwell (2008) introduced the Coping Strategies Index (CSI), both widely used in humanitarian contexts. Research using the CSI reveals that IDPs often begin with less severe coping mechanisms, such as reducing meal frequency or dietary diversity, and may eventually resort to high-risk behaviors like selling assets or skipping meals entirely.

Food aid remains a critical support mechanism for displaced populations. However, as Maxwell et al. (2013) point out, targeting such aid effectively in crisis settings is complex. Context-specific approaches that foster long-term self-reliance, respect local markets, and consider gender dynamics are increasingly emphasized (FAO, 2020, 2021; World Bank, 2020; Kumar & Quisumbing, 2015). In many IDP settings, women are primary managers of household food but often face barriers in accessing aid and resources.

In Myanmar, several key studies have addressed food insecurity among displaced and vulnerable populations. Wilson and Naw Eh Mwee Aye Wai (2013) identified structural constraints in agriculture, health, and education that hinder food security and rural development. Thant Zin Soe (2016) provided a detailed account of economic hardships among IDPs, noting high dependency on humanitarian cash transfers primarily used for food. Despite favorable market access, many households face reduced food consumption and lack the resources to return home.

Thandar Kyi (2016) emphasized the potential of agriculture in improving nutrition and food security through integrated farming systems. She highlighted chronic food insecurity as a result of poverty, low productivity, and market barriers, calling for policy interventions to strengthen resilience and food availability.

Collectively, these studies underscore that IDPs face a complex web of challenges from disrupted food systems and poverty to dependency and limited access to aid. They also point to the importance of designing food security interventions that are not only context-specific and sustainable but also gender-sensitive and inclusive. This literature forms a critical foundation for developing more effective responses to food insecurity among displaced populations.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **OVERVIEW OF IDPS AND FOOD SECURITY IN MYANMAR**

#### **3.1 Overview of Internally Displaced Persons**

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) are individuals forced to flee their homes due to conflict, violence, natural disasters, or human rights violations, yet remain within their country's borders. This humanitarian concern affects millions and demands complex protection and assistance measures, driven by factors like climate change, environmental degradation, and industrial accidents.

Displacement places individuals in extreme vulnerability, disrupting social networks, cultural ties, and emotional support. It increases risk of violence, exploitation, and abuse, limits access to services and leads to livelihood loss. Displacement also disrupts access to food, healthcare, clean water, and education, worsening malnutrition and long-term vulnerability. Overcrowding and poor sanitation further increase health risks. Economic insecurity, particularly among internally displaced persons (IDPs), is a persistent issue due to legal and social barriers, limited income opportunities, and negative coping strategies. Food insecurity is particularly severe, particularly among women and girls, requiring investment in livelihoods, markets, and long-term resilience strategies.

IDPs face limited access to essential services, particularly water, sanitation, healthcare, and education, especially for vulnerable groups. Sustainable reintegration requires addressing structural displacement drivers and supporting livelihood recovery. Addressing their needs requires long-term, coordinated efforts from governments, humanitarian actors, and the international community. Solutions must prioritize protection, food security, economic empowerment, and service access while restoring dignity and resilience.

#### **3.2 Food Security in Myanmar**

Myanmar is currently facing one of the most complex humanitarian crises in Southeast Asia, driven by ongoing political instability, and natural disasters. As of

2025, more than 3.5 million people are internally displaced across the country, with the highest concentrations in areas experiencing instability states such as Kayin, Kachin, Shan, Chin, and Sagaing.

Food security in Myanmar is under severe threat due to intertwined economic, political, and environmental challenges. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) defines food security as access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food for a healthy life. Although Myanmar has a strong rice production sector, the country faces significant food insecurity driven by the impacts of the 2021 military coup, ongoing ethnic conflicts, economic decline, inflation, and climate-related shocks. Political instability has intensified poverty, disrupted supply chains, and increased food prices, while conflict and displacement have led to widespread hunger and malnutrition. As a result, food poverty escalated in 2024, with an estimated 15.2 million people projected to be food insecure by 2025 despite ongoing humanitarian interventions.

By early 2025, Myanmar's hunger crisis has deepened, driven by ongoing conflict and the displacement of 3.5 million people. Displaced families, especially in northern Rakhine, face extreme food deprivation, with some surviving on rice bran. Child poverty has worsened, affecting over half the child population, while inflation has severely impacted diets and health, contributing to rising child mortality. Long-standing issues like rural poverty, underinvestment in agriculture, and climate risks, exacerbated by the 2021 event have turned chronic undernourishment into a national emergency. Addressing this crisis requires urgent humanitarian aid, sustainable agricultural investment, and political stability.

### **3.3 Internally Displaced Persons in Myanmar**

Food security in Myanmar has significantly worsened due to political instability, armed conflict, inflation, and transportation disruptions (WFP, 2022). Vulnerable populations face limited food access, exacerbated by a more than 50% increase in rice prices since 2021 and inadequate rural infrastructure (World Bank, 2024). Malnutrition remains a critical issue, with 29% of children under five stunted and 7% wasted, alongside widespread micronutrient deficiencies despite ongoing efforts by FAO and WFP (UNICEF, 2025).

Climate change, through rising temperatures and extreme weather, further threatens food production, prompting climate-smart agriculture initiatives (Asian Development Bank, 2024). Food poverty worsened in 2024, with WFP projecting

15.2 million food-insecure people by 2025 (WFP, 2025) and particularly high vulnerability in Kayah, Chin, and Shan states (Myanmar Household Welfare Survey, 2024). Staple food prices soared, with an 89% rise in Rakhine (IFPRI, 2024).

Conflict and displacement in Myanmar have led to 3.5 million internally displaced persons (IDP) by early 2025, causing hunger and child poverty. The 2021 coup and escalating conflicts have created a national emergency, exacerbated by agricultural setbacks, rural poverty, climate risks, and COVID-19 impacts. Addressing this crisis requires urgent humanitarian aid, investment in resilient agriculture, and political solutions, with strong international support.

From 2010 to 2025, Myanmar's internally displaced person (IDP) crisis has worsened dramatically, with numbers rising from around 450,000 to a projected 4 million. This escalation is attributed to prolonged ethnic conflicts, political instability, and humanitarian crises. Early displacement was driven by clashes in Kachin and Shan States, while the 2017 Rohingya crisis marked a sharp increase in displacement.

The situation worsened dramatically after the 2021 military coup, with widespread violence and offensives in regions like Sagaing and Kayah. Each year brought new waves of displacement, compounded by limited returns and inadequate humanitarian access. The projected figures for 2025 underscore the urgent need for sustained peace efforts, protection mechanisms, and comprehensive humanitarian responses to address the growing crisis.

**Table (3.1): Number of IDP and Key Events of IDP by Year in Myanmar (2010-2024)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Estimated Number of IDPs</b>	<b>Key Events</b>
2010	450,000	Ongoing ethnic conflicts in Kachin and Shan States
2011	500,000	Ceasefire breakdown in Kachin State
2012	520,000	Continued clashes in Kachin and northern Shan
2013	530,000	Sporadic violence in Rakhine and Kachin
2014	540,000	Limited returns, new displacements
2015	550,000	Peace talks, but no major returns
2016	560,000	Low-level conflict persists
2017	660,000	Rohingya crisis escalates in Rakhine State
2018	700,000	Continued displacement in Rakhine and Shan
2019	750,000	Clashes with Arakan Army intensify
2020	800,000	COVID-19 and conflict worsen conditions
2021	1,200,000	Heightened conflict dynamics, severely impacting civilian populations
2022	1,800,000	Escalation of political instability nationwide
2023	2,800,000	Major offensives in Sagaing, Magway, Kayah
2024	3,500,000	Ongoing political instability and humanitarian emergency
2025	4,000,000 (projected)	Projection based on previous trends

Source: UN (2025)

### **3.4 An Overview of Economic Situation of Kayin State**

While Kayin State’s GRDP data is unavailable, its estimated GNI per capita of \$8,331 (PPP, 2011 USD) in 2022 indicates a moderate-income level. Economic trends reflect national volatility, with contraction during crises and modest recovery by 2021–22. Kayin’s economy is expected to follow this trajectory, supported by tourism and cross-border trade revival.

Kayin State lacks state-specific inflation metrics; nonetheless, national inflation has remained persistently high since 2021. This is largely attributed to

exchange rate depreciation, political unrest, and supply-side constraints. Employment data is similarly sparse, but qualitative assessments suggest widespread underemployment, especially in rural areas where subsistence agriculture and informal labor dominate the economic landscape. The prevalence of insecure and seasonal employment underlines structural vulnerabilities in the labor market.

Agriculture remains central to Kayin State's economy, employing most of the rural population. Major crops include paddy, rubber, maize, mung beans, and coffee, with production patterns shaped by seasonal cycles. While maize, rubber, and coffee are becoming key cash crops through growing market linkages especially with Thailand productivity is constrained by flooding, weak infrastructure, low-quality inputs, and limited extension support.

Industrial activity in Kayin is mostly small-scale, including cement plants, sawmills, rice mills, and local coffee and tea processing. Traditional cottage industries like weaving and basketry support both culture and rural livelihoods. Industrial investment is growing, highlighted by the Hpa-An industrial zone despite ongoing power shortages. Significant foreign investment, such as Chinese-backed Fulltex Co. employing over 2,100 workers in garment manufacturing, reflects this trend. By mid-2022, approved investments totaling \$261 million covered tourism, agriculture, livestock, and Agri-processing sectors.

The services sector, led by tourism, has shown strong growth in Kayin State. Visitor arrivals soared from about 40,000 in 2013 to over 450,000 by late 2024, generating around K 4.76 billion in hotel revenues. The state now has approximately 60 hotels and guesthouses with 2,159 rooms. Key attractions include Mount Zwegabin, waterfalls, caves, and developing agritourism sites like Kawmayan Resort. Alongside tourism, small-scale retail, local transport, and hospitality services are also expanding with the region's development.

Kayin State's Myawaddy-Mae Sot border crossing ranks as Myanmar's second-largest trade post, with monthly trade valued around USD 90 million (2015). Key exports include maize, rubber, seafood, and coffee, while imports mainly consist of Thai consumer goods, electronics, and machinery. Positioned on the East-West Economic Corridor, Kayin is well-placed for deeper regional value chain integration. Upcoming Special Economic Zones and industrial projects near the border highlight trade growth potential, though challenges remain from weak governance and illicit cross-border activities.

The labor force in Kayin is primarily composed of smallholder farmers, seasonal laborers, cottage industry workers, hospitality staff, and informal cross-border traders. A significant factor influencing labor dynamics is the presence of internally displaced persons (IDPs), estimated at 68,400 as of early 2022, many of whom rely on agriculture and humanitarian assistance for subsistence. Labor shortages in some sectors contrast with underemployment in others, reflecting uneven economic absorption capacity.

Kayin State has achieved notable infrastructure improvements, including major road and electrification projects, enhanced cross-border connectivity, and strengthened disaster resilience. Support from ADB, JICA, and other partners has contributed to rural development and investment promotion through incentives and a stable legal framework. Although there have been promising developments, Kayin State still faces significant macro-structural challenges. Limited GRDP data restricts effective planning, and ongoing inflation and currency instability undermine economic confidence. Industrial growth is hindered by power shortages, and rural infrastructure remains underdeveloped. The region is prone to floods and landslides, and conflict-induced displacement persists. Additionally, weak institutional capacity, erratic policy implementation, and illicit cross-border trade further obstruct progress.

Despite various challenges, Kayin State holds strong potential for inclusive growth. Key opportunities include expanding agricultural value chains (maize, rubber, coffee) supported by Thai market access, and the growth of tourism particularly agritourism. Employment diversification is encouraged through industrial parks and SME development in garments and Agri-processing. Energy investments enhance industrial viability, while public-private partnerships backed by international agencies like JICA and the World Bank further support sustainable development.

As summary, Kayin State's economy remains agriculture-dominated, but is rapidly diversifying through tourism, border trade, and small manufacturing. Booming visitor numbers, increased investments (particularly in Agro-processing and SME development), and infrastructure upgrades are promising signs. However, power shortages, conflict-related displacement, and service delivery gaps continue to hold back potential. Future prosperity hinges on: Ensuring reliable electricity, transport, and market access, addressing inflation and informal labor underemployment, enhancing agricultural productivity, resilience, and value-chain integration, Strengthening oversight of cross-border trade and reinvestment in local communities.

### 3.5 Internal Displacement in Kayin State

Kayin State has endured prolonged internal displacement due to decades of conflict between the Myanmar military and Karen armed groups. Military offensives since the 1980s, notably the “Four Cuts” policy, have displaced large populations. By 2024, a significant share of Myanmar’s 3.5 million IDPs are from or reside in Kayin. The post-2021 conflict escalation led to renewed displacement, especially in Myawaddy and Kyainseikgyi. Many IDPs live in informal settlements with limited services, while others seek refuge in urban areas or attempt to cross into Thailand. Major conflict-affected areas include Hpapun, Thandaunggyi, Hlaingbwe, and Myawaddy.

Conflict in areas like Hpapun and Myawaddy continues to displace people and disrupt lives in Kayin State. IDPs, including those in camps like Myaing Gyi Ngu, face severe food insecurity, child malnutrition, and limited access to basic services. By late 2024, over 3.5 million people were displaced nationwide, with many in Kayin. Agricultural disruption, landmine risks, and exploitation worsen their vulnerability. The deepening crisis highlights the urgent need for humanitarian aid and lasting peace.

Based on the World Bank’s 2024 report - Kayin State remains one of the most affected regions by internal displacement due to ongoing armed conflict and instability. The report highlights that displacement is particularly concentrated in the following townships.

**Table (3.2): Estimated Number of Displacement by Location in Kayin State (2024)**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Estimated IDPs</b>	<b>Key Notes</b>
Kawkareik	~30,000	Affected by cross-border tensions and military operations along key transport routes.
Haingbwe	~45,000	Displacement driven by Security incidents involving armed actors and state forces in rural communities.
Hpa-An	~50,000	Hosts both displaced populations and returnees; limited access to services in peri-urban areas.

Source: UN (2025)

These table (3.4) reflect the localized nature of displacement in Kayin, where political intensity and humanitarian access vary significantly by township. Many IDPs in these areas live in informal settlements or forested zones, with limited access to food, healthcare, and education.

### **3.6 Food and Cash Assistance in Kayin State for Food Security**

Food and cash assistance in Kayin State is crucial in addressing the urgent needs of communities impacted by prolonged conflict and displacement. By 2024, humanitarian efforts have focused on conflict-affected areas such as Hlaingbwe, Kawkaeik, and Hpa-An, delivering emergency food aid to over 45,000 households and providing nutrition support to 17,000 women, girls, and children to combat malnutrition.

Organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and World Food Programme (WFP) are actively involved in delivering emergency food assistance. This includes direct distributions of essential staples like rice, oil, pulses, and salt, especially to newly displaced families or those in remote areas with limited market access. In October 2023, the ICRC provided emergency food to over 1,500 displaced families in Kayin State.

Food and cash assistance in Kayin State plays a critical role in supporting communities affected by conflict and displacement. By 2024, emergency aid reached tens of thousands, including food distributions to over 45,000 households and nutrition support for 17,000 women and children. Cash assistance, benefiting over 217,000 individuals, allowed families greater flexibility while stimulating local markets. Programs like cash-for-assets and livelihood support helped rebuild income sources and resilience, with efforts led by WFP, FAO, and ICRC, and funded by the World Bank and Japan Social Development Fund. Despite ongoing assistance, food insecurity in Kayin State remains severe, with over 60% of households facing moderate to severe hunger as of 2024. High child malnutrition rates and ongoing conflict, landmines, and access challenges continue to obstruct aid delivery, though humanitarian efforts persist.

In conclusion, while food and cash assistance are critical lifelines in Kayin State, the scale of the Difficult circumstances demands sustained, flexible, and coordinated support to address both immediate needs and the root causes of displacement.

## CHAPTER IV

### SURVEY ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 Survey Profile

This study gathered insights from 143 respondents living in internally displaced persons (IDP) sites across three locations in Kayin State specifically in the townships of Kawkareik, Hlaingbwe, and Hpa-An, as detailed in Table 4.1.

**Table (4.1): Number of Survey Respondents**

Sr. No.	IDP Sites	Total Population	Survey Respondents Frequency	Respondents' Percentage
1.	Shwe Naung Pin site from Kawkareik	160	48	30%
2.	Tar Yar Kone site from Hlaingbwe	149	52	35%
3.	Hpa-An	132	43	35%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>432</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Survey Data 2025

Table (4.1) shows a survey conducted across three Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) sites: Hpa-An, Hlaingbwe, and Kawkareik. The total population was 432 individuals, with 143 respondents. The response rate was 33.1%, accounting for 100% of the respondents. Hpa-An had a significant proportion of respondents, with 43 out of 132 participants. Hlaingbwe had the highest number of respondents, with 52. A survey gathered 143 responses from 432 IDP sites, with Hpa-An and Hlaingbwe contributing 35% and 52, respectively. Kawkareik, despite having the largest population, accounted for 30% of the respondents, with 48 individuals. Kawkareik had the largest population but had a slightly lower number of respondents and percentage contribution (30%) compared to Hpa-An and Hlaingbwe.

## **4.2 Survey Design**

Using a sample random research method approach based on primary and secondary data, the study sought to investigate the involvement 143 respondents of three IDP Sites in Kayin State's. The study's research design calls for gathering data through a survey that uses a straightforward random sampling method. Six sections make up the survey questionnaire, the first focuses on demographic information about the respondents, such as age, education, and education: the second focuses Food Security status, the third focuses on Family Expenses, the fourth focuses on Family Income, the fifth focuses on Intention for Return, and the last focuses on Access to Water and Health of Open Questions.

There was total 43 questions on questionnaire form, and the answers were evaluated using a 5 - point Likert scale, which is essentially a multiple indicator. The scale ranged from "strongly disagree, disagree, undecided or neutral (neutrality), agree, and strongly agree." When distributed at the study location, the questionnaire items were translated into the local language of Myanmar. Additionally, key informant interviews were conducted using the qualitative research method to encourage participants to voice their opinions in open question section.

## **4.3 Survey Results**

This survey is involving 143 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), provides a comprehensive overview of their demographic characteristics, educational backgrounds, family structures, and displacement histories.

### **4.3.1 Demographic profile Summary of Respondents**

The survey consisted of 143 internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Hpa-An, Hlaingbwe, and Kawkareik townships in Kayin State. The majority of respondents were female (77%), and the largest age group was 31–60 years old (64%), followed by those over 60 (30%). Educational attainment was low, with 35% being illiterate and only 10% completing high school.

Most respondents were married (90%), and households were typically large, with 50% having 6–10 members. Many families had young children, with 44% reporting 3–5 children under age five. Notably, 89% had experienced displacement more than once, indicating chronic instability.

Children's school attendance skewed female, and the majority of IDPs had recently relocated between 2023 and 2025, often staying close to their original homes. The data underscores the vulnerability of older adults, women, and large families in protracted displacement situations.

The survey sample is predominantly female (77%), with male respondents accounting for (23%). This significant gender imbalance suggests that women may be more accessible for surveys in IDP sites, or they constitute a larger proportion of the adult IDP population in these specific locations. Further investigation into the reasons for this imbalance could be beneficial.

The majority of respondents (64%) are aged 31-60, indicating a significant presence of adults in their prime working or caregiving years. (30%) are over 60, highlighting the vulnerability of the elderly in the displaced population. Only (6%) are under 30 years old, suggesting a younger population may be less present or underrepresented in the survey sample.

Most respondents have only primary education (40%), with (35%) being "No Literate." Middle (15%) and high (10%) education levels are less common, indicating limited access to higher education, possibly due to displacement.

A large portion of respondents are married, with a small percentage being single, widowed, or divorced, indicating that most IDPs are part of family units, impacting humanitarian assistance.

The greater part of respondents has families with 6-10 members (50%), indicating larger households. Nearly half have families with 3-5 members (43%), and only a small fraction has 2 or fewer members (2%) or above 10 members (5%). This suggests increased dependency ratios and resource needs.

The data shows that (56%) of respondents have 2 or fewer children under five years, while (44%) have 3-5 children, indicating the high number of young children in internally displaced persons (IDP) households, who are particularly vulnerable to health and nutritional risks.

The gender disparity in school attendance is evident, with 78 of children being female and 22 being male. This could be due to barriers like child labor or security concerns, or a greater emphasis on girls' education by families.

A very high percentage of respondents, (89%), have been displaced more than once. This signifies the chronic and cyclical nature of displacement in the region, indicating ongoing insecurity and instability. Only (11%) have experienced a single

displacement. This repeated displacement compounds vulnerabilities and makes it harder for communities to rebuild their lives.

The survey surveyed IDPs in three sites: Hpa-An (35%), Hlaingbwe (35%), and Kawkareik (30%). Hpa-An, the capital of Karen State, has the highest representation, indicating its importance as an IDP concentration area. Kawkareik's inclusion is crucial for understanding the broader displacement context.

The recent influx of displaced populations into these sites, with (39%) arriving in 2023, (31%) in 2024, and (30%) in 2025, indicates ongoing condition and insecurity in the region. The current arrivals suggest recent displacement, potentially indicating escalating changes or new waves.

The original permanent residence locations of IDPs, such as Hpa-An (42%), Hlaingbwe (34%), and Kawkareik (24%), largely mirror current IDP site locations, suggesting many IDPs remain within their home townships or nearby areas.

The survey data reveals a predominantly female sample of 143 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Karen State, with a significant gender imbalance. The majority of respondents are aged 31-60 years, with (30%) over 60 years old. The majority have a low level of education, with the largest group having only primary education. The majority are married, with most respondents being married. The most common family size is 6-10 members, with a high prevalence of larger families. A large portion of respondents have been displaced more than once, indicating ongoing insecurity and instability.

The survey data also shows a high rate of repeated displacement, highlighting the need for targeted support, literacy programs, and psychosocial support. The data provides crucial context for understanding the challenges faced by IDPs in Karen State and informs the planning of effective humanitarian programs.

**Table 4.2 Respondents' Demographic Profile**

No.	Item	Frequency	Percent (%)
<b>1.</b>	<b>Gender</b>		
	Male	33	23
	Female	110	77
<b>2.</b>	<b>Age</b>		
	Less than 30	9	6
	31 Year - 60 Year	92	64
	Over 60 Year	42	30
<b>3.</b>	<b>Education Level</b>		
	No Literate	50	35
	Primary	57	40
	Middle	22	15
	High	14	10
<b>4.</b>	<b>Marital Status</b>		
	Single	3	2
	Married	128	90
	Widow	8	5
	Divorce	4	3
<b>5.</b>	<b>Family Member</b>		
	> 2 - 2	3	2
	3 - 5	61	43
	6 - 10	72	50
	Above 10	7	5
<b>6.</b>	<b>Children Under Five Year</b>		
	>2 - 2	80	56
	3 - 5	63	44
<b>7.</b>	<b>Children Attending School</b>		
	Male	22	15.4
	Female	78	54.5
<b>8.</b>	<b>Displaced more than once</b>		
	Yes	127	89
	No	16	11
<b>9.</b>	<b>The number of IDP sites</b>		
	Hpa-An	43	35
	Hlaingbwe (Tharyar Gone)	52	35
	Kawkareik (Shwe Nyaubin)	48	30
<b>10.</b>	<b>Arrived Sites Year</b>		
	2023	75	39
	2024	44	31
	2025	24	30
<b>11.</b>	<b>Original Permanently Place</b>		
	Hpa-An	60	42
	Hlaingbwe	48	34
	Kawkareik	24	24

Source : Survey Data 2025

#### 4.3.2 Accessing the Current Food Security Status in Selected Area of IDPs

In Table (4.3), there consist of fifteen questions to survey respondents. The survey data shows a high reliance on external food support, with 100% of respondents receiving some form of aid.

**Table (4.3) Food Security Status in Survey Area**

No.	Item	Frequency	Percent (%)
<b>1.</b>	<b>Receive any food support</b>		
	Yes	143	100
	No	0	0
<b>2.</b>	<b>Donner Name</b>		
	WFP	143	100
	Other	0	0
<b>3.</b>	<b>Other way you received the food for your family</b>		
	Family own money	22	15
	Selling family' owns	53	37
	Borrow from other	22	15
	Other	46	33
<b>4.</b>	<b>Receive Ration</b>		
	Daily	0	0
	Weekly	0	0
	Twice a week	0	0
	Once a month	143	100
	Other	0	0
<b>5.</b>	<b>Food Ration for One Person.</b>		
	Rice	135 Kg	-
	Oil	1 Liter	-
	Salt	0.15 Kg	-
	Bean	1.8 Kg	-
	Meat	0	-
	Cash (MMK)	40000 MMK	-
	Other Family stuffs	Sanitary Kits, Blanket and Bucket	-
<b>6.</b>	<b>Non-staple food (light food/ snacks) in a day</b>		
	Can eat whenever I want to eat	30	21
	Sometime	46	32
	Rarely to eat	56	39
	Cannot afford	11	8
<b>7.</b>	<b>Convenience Store Near Around Site</b>		
	Yes	80	56
	No	63	44

**Table (4.3) Continued**

<b>8.</b>	<b>Shop far from Site</b>		
	5 mins walk by	79	55
	10 mins walk by	58	41
	15 mins walk by	0	0
	20 mins walk by	0	0
	More than 20 mins walk by	6	4
<b>9.</b>	<b>Meal in Day</b>		
	One time	0	0
	Two Time	2	1
	Three time	127	89
	Other	14	10
<b>10.</b>	<b>Meat in a Week</b>		
	Cannot effort	6	4
	Once in a week	16	11
	Three to five time in a week	47	33
	Over six time in a week	51	36
	In every meal	23	16
<b>11</b>	<b>Rations are enough for your family</b>		
	Yes		30
	No		70
<b>12.</b>	<b>Ration is not enough for your family, what way to enough food</b>		
	Received support from relative	10	7
	Borrow from other family	67	47
	Reduce food portion	19	13
	Skip one meal	23	15
	Sell own property	17	12
	Other	7	6
<b>13.</b>	<b>In last 30 days, cut the size of your meals or skip meals</b>		
	No	77	54
	Yes	20	14
	Refused to answer	29	20
	Don't know	17	12
<b>14.</b>	<b>If yes, how often did this happen</b>		
	Daily	0	0
	Three time in a week (at least)	3	2
	Five time in a week (at least)	23	16
	Refused to answer	0	0
	Don't remember	0	0
<b>15</b>	<b>In last 12 months, the most difficulty month for your family food security</b>		
	Jan - April	41	29
	May - August	84	59
	Sept - December	18	12

Source: Survey Data 2025

The study focuses that food support provided by the WFP, with every respondent reporting receiving assistance from this single donor. This indicates a comprehensive reach of the program within the surveyed community but also highlights a complete reliance on this single donor, which could present vulnerabilities if funding or logistical changes occur.

The study also reveals a significant number of respondents resorting to other means to feed their families, such as selling family possessions, borrowing, and using their own money. This indicates a depletion of assets and a descent into more severe poverty. The high percentage resorting to "selling families owns" is particularly concerning, as it suggests a depletion of assets and a descent into more severe poverty.

Monthly ration distribution and content are consistent, with rations consisting of 135kg Rice, 1 Liter Oil, 0.15kg Salt, 1.8kg Bean, 40,000 MMK cash, and non-food items (Sanitary Kits, Blanket, Bucket), but no meat. This provides a predictable schedule, but the absence of meat from the standard ration is a major nutritional gap. The inclusion of non-food items is crucial for overall well-being but does not address food security directly.

Limited access to non-staple foods is another issue, with only 21% able to eat non-staple foods whenever they want. A combined 71% (39% rarely + 32% sometimes) have limited access, and 8% cannot afford them at all. This highlights a lack of dietary diversity, which is crucial for nutrient intake.

Proximity to markets is mixed, with 56% having a convenience store nearby, but 44% do not. For those who travel, 55% walk 5 minutes, 41% walk 10 minutes, and 4% walk more than 20 minutes. This means a substantial portion of the population must travel, adding time, effort, and potentially transportation costs to their daily routine. Access to fresh produce or perishable items could be particularly difficult for the 4% walking over 20 minutes.

Meal frequency is generally consistent, but quality is key. 89% report eating three times a day, with only 1% eating twice and none eating once. This suggests that most households manage to maintain basic meal frequency, but this statistic alone doesn't reflect the nutritional quality or portion size of these meals.

Variable meat consumption is not universal, with 36% consuming meat over six times a week, 33% three to five times, 16% in every meal, and 11% once a week.

However, 4% still "cannot afford" meat. These highlights continued hardship for the most vulnerable.

Pervasive ration insufficiency is evident, with 70% of respondents feeling the aid is insufficient, indicating the need for additional food sourcing and various coping mechanisms. When rations are insufficient, 47% borrow from other families, 15% skip one meal, 13% reduce food portions, 12% sell property, 7% receive relative support, and 6% use "other" methods.

Recent experiences with food scarcity are also highlighted, with 59% experiencing food insecurity during the monsoon season in Myanmar. This information is crucial for targeted aid interventions and resource pre-positioning.

The survey data shows a population heavily reliant on UNHCR humanitarian food aid, but often perceives it as insufficient for household needs. This leads to coping mechanisms like asset depletion, borrowing, and food deprivation. Dietary diversity is a challenge, particularly with meat and non-staple foods, and financial constraints are a primary barrier. The peak food insecurity during May-August requires additional aid or support.

The data suggests a need for a comprehensive review of ration adequacy, focusing on the caloric and nutritional value against the minimum standards for the average family size in the community. To reduce reliance on negative coping mechanisms, programs should provide sustainable income-generating opportunities. Addressing protein and micronutrient gaps, such as incorporating pulses, fortified foods, or additional cash for protein, should be explored. Seasonal support should be tailored to the May-August period, considering weather, access, and lean season effects. Monitoring negative coping strategies, such as asset sales and meal skipping, can inform program adjustments. Improving market access, particularly for those without nearby stores or those facing long walks, is also recommended.

#### **4.3.3 Accessing Income and Expense on Food, Education, Health and Clothes of IDPs**

It aims to evaluate how internally displaced persons (IDPs) allocate their limited income across essential needs. This assessment highlights the financial challenges IDPs face in maintaining basic well-being focusing on food security, access to education, health services, and adequate clothing. By understanding their

spending patterns and constraints, this analysis supports better-targeted humanitarian aid and policy interventions.

### **(i) Family Income**

Table (4.4) presented the survey provides insights into the family income and employment situation in the surveyed area. The majority of families in the survey area rely on 1-2 working members for their income, with only 10% having 3-4 working members and 6% having more than 4 working members. This suggests limited human resources contributing to family income, making them vulnerable to economic shocks. Income-generating activities include housemaid (46%), general/casual/daily casual worker (31%), shop helper (13%), and agriculture (11%). There are no reported cases of employment as "Self-employed," "Civil servant," "Private Staff," "Working away from current location," or "Livestock," or "Others."

Finding jobs for their family is a significant challenge in the local labor market, with 100% reporting difficulty in finding jobs. Reasons for difficulty in finding work include less job opportunity for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) (37%), lack of contact/information on searching jobs (15%), and lack of skill (11%). Language barriers and other reasons are not reported as significant issues (0% and 2% respectively).

General/casual/daily casual worker (45%) is the most common source of income, while IDP allowance (23%) accounts for 23% of income sources. Agriculture products contribute 20% to family income, and assistance from relatives/friends (12%) points to reliance on social networks for financial support. Self-employed, salary, livestock products, and others are reported as 0%, further highlighting the limited and precarious income streams available.

Monthly income distribution suggests that most families in the surveyed area are living on very low incomes, especially considering the general cost of living in Myanmar. A monthly minimum wage can be around 96,000 MMK, and a median income for a family in Myanmar can be around 500,000 MMK (approximately \$130 USD).

The survey reveals a challenging economic landscape for families in the surveyed area, with limited income contributors, precarious employment, severe job scarcity, and the impact of displacement and education on employment. Most families rely on casual labor and housemaid positions, resulting in a lack of formal, stable, and

well-paying job opportunities. The absence of self-employment or private staff roles is a significant concern for long-term economic development. The majority of family income comes from casual labor and IDP allowances, indicating a strong reliance on short-term solutions rather than sustainable economic activities.

A great number of families operate on very low monthly incomes, barely above or around the minimum wage, indicating a significant struggle to meet basic needs and a high risk of poverty. The survey paints a picture of widespread economic vulnerability in the area, largely driven by limited and unstable employment opportunities, low education levels, and the specific challenges faced by IDP populations.

**Table (4.4): Family Income in Selected Survey Area**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Working Family Members for Family Income</b>		
	1-2	120	84
	3 – 4	14	10
	Above 4	10	6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Income employment opportunities</b>		
	General/casual/ Daily casual worker	44	31
	Housemaid	65	46
	Shop helper	18	13
	Self-employed	0	0
	Civil servant	0	0
	Private Staff	0	0
	Working a way from current location	0	0
	Agriculture	16	11
	Livestock	0	0
	Others	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 4.4 Continued**

<b>3.</b>	<b>Finding Jobs for family is easy or hard</b>		
	Easy	0	0
	Hard	143	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Why it is not easy to find work</b>		
	Uneducated	50	35
	Less Job opportunity for IDPs	53	37
	Lack of contact/information on searching job	22	15
	Lack of Skill	15	11
	Language barriers	0	0
	Other	3	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Please indicate</b>		
	General/casual/ Daily casual worker	64	45
	IDP allowance	33	23
	Assistance from relatives/friends	17	12
	Self-employed	0	0
	Salary	0	0
	Agriculture products	29	20
	Livestock products	0	0
	Others	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 4.4 Continued**

<b>6.</b>	<b>Monthly Income (Without IDP allowance)</b>		
	<50000	0	0
	50001-100000	0	0
	100001-200000	105	74
	200001 - 300000	35	25
	300001 - 400000	3	1
	400001 - 500000	0	0
	>500001	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Survey Data 2025

### **(ii) Family Consumption and Expenses**

The data in Table (4.5) provides survey data on monthly family consumption and expenses in four main categories: Food, Education, Health, and Cloths & Other Family Expenses. The data is expressed as percentages, showing the distribution of families within each spending bracket. The spending ranges are consistently defined as >5000, 5001 to 10000, 10001 to 15000, 15001 to 20000, 20001 to 35000, and >35001.

The study reveals that families spend a significant amount on essential food items and utilities related to food preparation. Rice is the most expensive category, with 43% spending over 35001, while oil is the most common, with 68% falling into the 20001 to 35000 brackets.

Meat/fish is the most expensive category, with 65% spending over 35001 and 31% spending 20001 to 35000. Vegetables are also high cost, with 47% spending over 35001 and 13% spending 20001 to 35000. Water is highly concentrated, with 80% spending 15001 to 20000. Wood/electric bill/charcoal is the most concentrated, with 70% falling into the 15001 to 20000 brackets. Energy/fuel costs are highly concentrated within the 15001 to 20000 range for most families, showing predictability in this utility expense. Overall, these expenses highlight the importance of food items and utilities in a family's budget.

The study reveals that children's education expenses are primarily moderate, with 81% falling between 5001 and 20000. Stationary expenses are predominantly low-cost, with 66% spending between 5001 and 10000. Daily school-related expenses

show more variability, with 49% spending between 10001 and 15000, and 33% spending between 20001 and 35000. Miscellaneous educational expenses are highly concentrated, with 70% falling between 15001 and 20000. No families recorded spending above 35001. Miscellaneous expenses show a high concentration within a specific moderate range, implying predictable 'other' costs for most families. Overall, children's education expenses are primarily moderate and varied, with a significant portion falling within the 15001 to 20000 brackets.

**Table (4.5): Monthly Family Consumption and Expenses for Food and Education in Survey Area**

No	Category	Item	>5000	5001 to 10000	10001 to 15000	15001 to 20000	20001 to 35000	< 35001	Total %
1	Food	Rice	0	4	23	12	18	43	100
		Oil	0	11	10	11	68	0	100
		Meat/ Fish	0	1	1	2	31	65	100
		Vegetable	0	0	7	33	13	47	100
		Water	0	9	11	80	0	0	100
		Wood/Electric Bill/ Charcoal	0	9	11	70	10	0	100
2	Education	Uniform	0	37	11	33	17	2	100
		Stationary	0	66	10	15	9	0	100
		Daily	0	2	49	10	33	0	100
		Others	0	9	11	70	10	0	100

Source: Survey Data 2025

The question number 3 discusses medical-related costs, with 60% of families spending between 20001 and 35000 on medicine. The middle-range spends are 20% between 10001 and 15000, and 3% between 15001 and 20000. The low spending range is only 6%. Medical costs are primarily high for most families.

The study reveals that no families reported spending less than 5000 on basic monthly consumption and expenses. High expense categories include meat/fish,

medicine, rice, and vegetables, with 96% and 61% of families incurring significant monthly costs. Highly concentrated/predictable expenses include water, wood/electric bill/charcoal, oil, clothes, and others (education). Stationary expenses represent lower, predictable monthly outlays. Daily education costs vary, with daily expenses showing more spread, suggesting individual family needs or school requirements play a larger role. The highest spending bracket is notably significant for meat/fish, rice, and vegetables, while Oil, Water, Wood/electric bill/charcoal, stationary, daily, and others (education) have no families in this bracket, reinforcing their more contained cost profiles.

The survey reveals predictable monthly family consumption and expenses, with essential food items and medical expenses being the most variable. Utilities and general family expenses are more consistent, revealing economic patterns, financial strain areas, and influencing support policies.

**Table (4.6): Monthly Family Consumption and Expenses on miscellaneous in Survey Area**

Sr. No	Category	> 10000	10001 to 30000	30001 to 50000	50001 to 70000	70001 to 90000	< 90001
1	Health	0	0	0	0	0	66
2	Clothing & Family	0	0	0	143	0	0
3	Transportation	0	0	0	0	143	0
4	Social Expenses	0	143	0	0	0	0
5	Phone Bill	0	0	143	0	0	0

Source: Survey Data 2025

The study reveals that total spending across different income brackets is highly concentrated within a single monetary range, suggesting specific expenditure patterns for different goods or services. The total spending is divided into different categories, such as social expenses (10001-30000), phone bill (30001-50000), clothing & family (50001-70000), transportation (70001-90000), and health (> 90000). The '< 10000' range shows no recorded spending, indicating no low-end expenditures

in the surveyed categories. The dual nature of transportation costs suggests varied budget categories.

#### **4.3.4 Assessing the Availability of Water and Health Conditions of IDPs**

Table (4.6) shows the accesses to water and health in survey area. The survey revealed that 100% of the respondents (143 out of 143) reported receiving clean water, drinking water, and shelter. This indicates that access to clean water and drinking water is not a problem for the surveyed population. Additionally, all respondents confirmed that they receive shelter for their family.

Over the past six months, the survey revealed several health challenges faced by the respondents. Hypertension was the most prevalent health issue, affecting 59% of the respondents, indicating a high incidence of high blood pressure in the community. Dizziness affected 21% of the respondents, while coughing affected 10%. Heart disease affected 7% of the respondents, indicating potential cardiovascular health concerns. Fever affected 2% of the respondents, while weight loss affected only 1%. These findings highlight the need for improved access to clean water, drinking water, and shelter for the surveyed population.

The survey results highlight a positive situation regarding access to necessities like clean water, drinking water, and shelter, with all respondents indicating access to these services. However, the health data presents a different picture, with a substantial portion of the population experiencing health issues. Hypertension stands out as a major concern, affecting nearly 60% of the respondents, followed by dizziness, coughing, and heart disease. These findings suggest that while basic needs are met, there may be underlying health challenges, particularly related to non-communicable diseases, that warrant further investigation or intervention in the surveyed area.

**Table (4.7): Access to Water and Health in Survey Area**

No.	Item	Frequency	Percent (%)
<b>1.</b>	<b>Do you receive clean water?</b>		
	Yes	143	0
	No	0	0
<b>2.</b>	<b>Do you receive drinking water?</b>		
	Yes	143	0
	No	0	0
<b>5</b>	<b>Do you receive shelter for your family?</b>		
	Yes	143	0
	No	0	0
<b>5.</b>	<b>What health problem are you facing last six month</b>		
	Hypertension	85	59
	Dizzy	30	21
	Fever	3	2
	Heart Disease	10	7
	Weight Loss	2	1
	Coughing	13	10

Source: Survey Data 2025

#### **4.4 Survey Results Summary**

The survey of 143 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in Karen State provides valuable insights into their demographic structure, socio-economic conditions, food security, and health status. The sample is predominantly female, with women making up 77% of respondents. This significant gender imbalance may indicate greater accessibility of women in IDP communities or their larger presence in the sites, which could have implications for the design and delivery of aid programs. Most respondents are between the ages of 31 and 60 (64%), highlighting a concentration of working-age adults, while 30% are over 60 years old, reflecting a substantial elderly population within the displacement context. Only 6% of respondents are under 30, suggesting potential underrepresentation of younger adults or youth, which may be

due to migration, labor-related movement, or survey design. Educationally, the majority of respondents had only primary-level education (40%), while a significant 35% reported being illiterate. This demonstrates limited educational attainment among IDPs, possibly as a result of disrupted schooling due to conflict and displacement. Only 15% had completed middle school and just 10% had received high school education, pointing to significant educational gaps in the displaced population. Most respondents reported being married and living within family units, with large household sizes common. Half of the surveyed families consisted of six to ten members, and 43% had three to five members, suggesting heavy household dependency ratios and increased resource needs. The number of children under five years per family was also notable, with 56% having up to two children and 44% having three to five children, underscoring a vulnerable demographic requiring continuous health, nutrition, and early childhood support.

Displacement patterns were characterized by high levels of instability, with 89% of respondents having been displaced more than once, illustrating the chronic and cyclical nature of displacement in the region. Only 11% experienced a single displacement, reinforcing the complexity of returning to normalcy in conflict-affected zones. IDPs were surveyed from three key townships, Hpa-An (35%), Hlaingbwe (35%), and Kawkareik (30%) which also mirror their places of origin, indicating that many IDPs remain close to their hometowns. A large portion of the respondents (39%) arrived in 2023, with 31% in 2024 and 30% in 2025, confirming recent and ongoing displacement trends. Notably, the children's school attendance data showed a gender imbalance, with 78% being female and only 22% male, suggesting possible barriers to boys' education such as child labor, insecurity, or household responsibilities. Regarding humanitarian assistance, 100% of IDPs reported receiving food and support from the World Food Programme (WFP), showing a strong reach of aid but also revealing a full dependency on a single source. Many families had to resort to negative coping strategies, such as selling personal belongings, borrowing, or using their limited savings, to meet food needs, with the widespread selling of household items signaling severe poverty and asset depletion. Monthly rations were consistent and predictable, comprising 135kg of rice, 1 liter of oil, 0.15kg of salt, 1.8kg of beans, 40,000 MMK in cash, and basic non-food items like sanitary kits, blankets, and buckets. However, the absence of meat in the ration indicates a serious nutritional gap, especially for growing children and elderly members.

Access to non-staple food items is a serious concern, with only 21% reporting they could consume such foods regularly. A combined 71% reported limited access (32% sometimes, 39% rarely), and 8% could not afford them at all. These figures reflect insufficient dietary diversity and raise concerns about long-term nutritional health. Proximity to local markets was varied, with 56% of respondents reporting nearby convenience stores and 44% lacking access. Travel time to markets also posed challenges, with 41% walking 10 minutes and 4% walking more than 20 minutes, suggesting additional burdens, particularly for the elderly and caregivers. While 89% reported eating three meals per day, the data does not clarify the nutritional quality or adequacy of those meals. Meat consumption also varied widely; 36% consumed meat more than six times a week, while 11% did so only once, and 4% could not afford it at all. These findings point to financial strain and nutritional deficiencies among the most vulnerable. Importantly, 70% of respondents reported that monthly rations were insufficient, leading to various coping mechanisms: 47% borrowed food, 15% skipped meals, 13% reduced portion sizes, and 12% sold property. During the monsoon season, 59% experienced food shortages, suggesting a need for seasonal targeting and pre-positioned aid during periods of heightened vulnerability.

Spending patterns further illustrate the economic hardship faced by IDPs. Families allocated large portions of their income to food, with 43% spending over 35,001 MMK on rice and 65% doing the same for meat and fish. Medical expenses were also significant, with 60% of families spending between 20,001 and 35,000 MMK per month. Utility costs, such as water and charcoal, showed high concentration in the mid-range, indicating predictable but persistent burdens. Educational expenses were generally moderate, with the majority spending between 5,001 and 20,000 MMK on items such as stationery, school supplies, and miscellaneous costs. The data show that no families reported spending below 5,000 MMK in any category, confirming universally high consumption levels despite limited income. Sources of income are precarious, with most families depending on 1–2 working members. The most common forms of livelihood were housemaid (46%), casual labor (31%), and shop helpers or agriculture (13% and 11% respectively), with no reports of stable employment such as private jobs, civil service, or self-employment. Every respondent (100%) reported difficulty finding jobs, citing a lack of opportunities (37%), poor access to job information (15%), and limited skills

(11%). Language barriers and other structural issues were not seen as major constraints in this context. Monthly income remains extremely low, with most families surviving around or below the minimum wage level. The absence of diversified income streams and formal employment points to severe economic fragility. Additionally, while all respondents reported access to clean water, drinking water, and shelter, the prevalence of non-communicable diseases such as hypertension (59%) and dizziness (21%) highlights significant healthcare needs within the community. The consistent access to basic shelter and water is a positive finding, but the health burden, particularly the high incidence of cardiovascular concerns, calls for more targeted health interventions.

In conclusion, the survey paints a picture of systemic vulnerability among IDPs in Karen State, marked by large family sizes, low education, chronic displacement, economic instability, and limited dietary diversity. Food support is consistent but inadequate, and reliance on a single donor increases future risk. Health challenges, poor employment opportunities, and coping mechanisms such as borrowing, or asset sales reveal a population living under sustained stress. There is an urgent need for multi-sectoral responses, including nutrition-sensitive aid, income generation programs, job training, healthcare services, and improved market access. Sustainable solutions must be tailored to the displacement context, focusing not only on survival but also on rebuilding resilience and dignity among displaced communities.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **5.1 Findings**

This study presents a comprehensive analysis of a survey conducted among 143 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) across three sites in Kayin State: Hpa-An, Hlaingbwe, and Kawkareik Townships. A simple random sampling method was used, and data were collected using a 47-question questionnaire translated into the Myanmar language. Key informant interviews supplemented the quantitative findings to provide deeper contextual insights.

The survey respondents were predominantly female (77%), with males accounting for 23%. Most participants were aged between 31 and 60 years, while 30% were over 60. Educational attainment was generally low; 40% had only primary education, and 35% were illiterate. The majority (90%) were married, with smaller proportions single, widowed, or divorced. Household sizes were relatively large: 50% had 6–10 members, while 43% had 3–5.

A significant 89% of respondents had experienced displacement more than once, underscoring the chronic and cyclical nature of displacement in the region. The majority had arrived at IDP sites recently: 39% in 2023, 31% in 2024, and 30% in 2025. Their original permanent residences closely aligned with their current IDP locations.

All respondents received food support from the World Food Programme (WFP), indicating a high dependence on a single donor. Monthly rations included rice, oil, salt, beans, cash, and non-food items but no meat. Access to non-staple foods was limited; only 21% could consume them. While 56% had a convenience store nearby, 44% did not. Despite having three meals per day, 70% of respondents reported the rations were insufficient, leading to coping strategies such as borrowing, skipping meals, reducing portions, and selling property. The period between May and August was reported as the most challenging for food security.

No family spent less than 5,000 MMK monthly on basic needs. Major expense areas included meat/fish, medicine, rice, and vegetables. Predictable costs were noted for water, fuel (wood, charcoal, electricity), and stationery. Educational expenses for children were moderate. Daily expenses varied, but social activities, clothing, and transportation were among the most frequent spending categories. Notably, 66% of respondents reported monthly health expenses exceeding 90,000 MMK.

The majority of households relied on just 1–2 working members, highlighting their economic vulnerability. Main income-generating activities were casual labor and domestic work, with no representation in self-employment, civil service, private sector, or livestock-related occupations. Job scarcity was linked to limited opportunities and low education (35%). Income sources included casual labor (45%), IDP allowances (23%), and agricultural production (20%).

While all respondents had access to clean water, drinking water, and shelter, health concerns were widespread. Over the past six months, hypertension emerged as the most prevalent issue, followed by dizziness, coughing, and heart disease.

The findings reveal a displaced population facing acute economic and food insecurity, compounded by limited employment opportunities and low educational attainment. Health problems, particularly hypertension, are common, and while humanitarian aid sustains basic needs, it also leads to dependence and asset depletion. There is an urgent need for integrated humanitarian programs that promote sustainable livelihoods, dietary diversity, accessible healthcare, and long-term solutions for durable resettlement.

## **5.2 Suggestions**

The text outlines several strategies to address food security and nutritional gaps in the community of internally displaced persons (IDPs). These include reviewing ration adequacy, enhancing dietary diversity, implementing seasonal support, improving market access, fostering sustainable livelihoods and economic stability, prioritizing health interventions, facilitating durable solutions and intentional return, and improving survey methodology for future studies.

The review of ration content is crucial, as 70% of respondents found aid insufficient. Strategies to address protein and micronutrient gaps include incorporating pulses, fortified foods, or additional cash for protein. Seasonal support should be tailored for the May-August period, as 59% experienced food insecurity

during this monsoon season. Improving market access is also essential, especially for those without a nearby convenience store or those who walk over 20 minutes.

To foster sustainable livelihoods and economic stability, programs should be developed to provide income-generating opportunities, address job scarcity barriers, improve access to job information and skills training, and support vulnerable households. Health interventions should focus on screening, management, and prevention of non-communicable diseases, as well as investigating other health issues like dizziness and coughing.

Furthermore, the text emphasizes the importance of addressing loss of property and assets as a major impediment to return for many IDPs. Key conditions for return should include the return of houses/apartments, adequate jobs or livelihoods, financial compensation for lost property, and access to quality medical and educational services. Supporting community cohesion is also crucial for individuals considering returning.

In conclusion, the text emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach to address food security, nutrition, and economic stability in the community.

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## APPENDICES

### Questionnaire

#### “Assessing the Sufficiency of Basic Food and Supplies Among Internally Displaced Persons”

#### (Case Study from Hpa-An, Hlaingbwe, Kawkareik Townships in Kayin State) Questionnaire for House-Hold Baseline Survey for IDPs

Hello, my name is Ma Bawk Aung. I am a Master of Development Studies program candidate from Yangon University of Economics. For this purpose, I am conducting a study on rural energy access and use and would like to include your opinion. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may end the interview at any point. The interview will take around 20 minutes. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential, and all results will be presented as aggregates, rather than individual responses. Your opinion is of great value to us and we thank you in advance for your cooperation.

1. Interview Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_(dd/mm/yy)
2. Interviewer .....
3. Name of the Township.....
4. Name of site: .....

#### Section A: General Information

1. Name of despondence.....
2. Age.....
3. Gender
  1. Male .....
  2. Female.....
4. Education
  1. No illiterate.....
  2. Basic Education.....
  3. Middle.....
  4. High.....
  5. Bachelor.....

**5. Marital Status**

- 1. Single.....
- 2. Married.....
- 3. Widow.....
- 4. Divorce.....
- 5. Separate.....

**6. Family Member (inclusive you)**

- 1. Male.....
- 2. Female.....

**7. Children under Five year**

- 1. Male.....
- 2. Female.....

**8. Children (attending school)**

- 1. Male.....
- 2. Female.....

**9. Over 60 years old age (including you)**

- 1. Male.....
- 2. Female.....

**10. Have you been displaced more than once?**

- 1. Yes.....
- 2. No.....

**11. If yes, please indicate the number of sites.....**

**12. When did you arrive to this site.....**

**13. Original permanently.....**

**Section B: Food Security status**

**1. Do you receive any food support?**

- 1. Yes.....
- 2. No.....

**2. If you answer no (1) in Q1, please indicate donor name**

- 1. ....
- 2. ....
- 3. ....

**3. If you answer no. (2) in Q1, please indicate the way you received the food for your family**

1. Family own money.....
2. Selling family' .....
3. Borrow from other/.....
4. Working as daily wage labor
5. Rely on remittance
6. Rely on assistance from humanitarian agency
7. Rely on assistance from private donation/religious organization
8. Other .....

**4. How do you receive your ration?**

1. Daily.....
2. Weekly.....
3. Twice a week.....
4. Once a month .....
5. Other.....

**5. If you received food ration for family, please indicate the ration for one person.**

1. Rice ..... (Kg / Bag)
2. Oil .....
3. Salt .....
4. Bean .....
5. Meat .....
6. Cash .....MMK
7. Other Family stuffs .....

**6. Do you and family member have non-staple food (light food/ snacks) in a day. If yes, please select the answer.**

1. Can eat whenever I want to eat .....
2. Sometime .....
3. Rarely to eat .....
4. Cannot afford.....

**7. Has there any convenience store near around your site/location**

1. Yes.....
2. No.....

**8. If there have, how far the shop from your site/location?**

1. 5 mins walk by .....
2. 10 mins walk by.....
3. 15 mins walk by.....
4. 20 mins walk by.....
5. More than 30 mins walk by.....

**9. How many times do you and family members have meal in a day?**

1. One time.....
2. Two Time.....
3. Three time.....
4. Other.....

**10. How many times do your family have meat in a week?**

1. Cannot effort.....
2. Once in a week.....
3. Three to five time in a week.....
4. Over six time in a week.....
5. In every meal.....

**11. The ration you received are enough for your family?**

1. Yes.....
2. No.....

**12. If the ration is not enough for your family, what is the way to enough food for your family, (can select more than one answer)**

1. Received support from relative.....
2. Borrow from other family.....
3. Reduce food portion.....
4. Skip one meal.....
5. Sell own property.....
6. Begging .....
7. Working as daily wage labor
8. Other.....

**13. In last 30 days, did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?**

- 1. No.....
- 2. Yes.....
- 3. Refused to answer.....
- 4. Don't know.....

**14. If yes, how often did this happen**

- 1. Daily
- 2. Three time in a week (at least)
- 3. Five time in a week (at least)
- 4. Refused to answer
- 5. Don't remember

**15. In last 12 months, please indicate the most difficulty month for your family food security?**

- 1. ....
- 2. ....
- 3.....

**Section C: Family Expenses**

**1. Please indicate family's expenses**

- 1. Education
- 2. Family food
- 3. Family health
- 4. Cloths and other family expenses
- 5. Social expenses (for weeding, funeral donation such as ...)

**Write the top three expenses of family**

- 1.....
- 2. ....
- 3.....

**If others.....**  
.....  
.....

**2. Monthly family consumption and expenses on food**

Category	1. >5000	2. 5001 to 10000	3. 10001 to 15000	4. 15001 to 20000	5. 20001 to 35000	6. < 35001
Rice						
Oil						
Meat/ Fish						
Vegetable						
Water						
Wood/Electric Bill/ Charcoal						

**3. Indicate your monthly Expenses**

Category	1. > 10000	2. 10001 to 30000	3. 30001 to 50000	4. 50001 to 70000	5. 70001 to 90000	6. < 90001
Education						
Phone Bill						
Health						
Clothing & Family						
Beauty						
Social Expenses						
Transportation						

**Section D: Family Income**

**1. How many family members are working for family income?**

.....

**2. Income employment opportunities for family (can select more than one)**

1. General/casual/ Daily casual worker .....

2. Housemaid .....

3. Shop helper .....

- 4. Self-employed .....
- 5. Civil servant .....
- 6. Private Staff .....
- 7. Working a way from current location .....
- 8. Agriculture .....
- 9. Livestock .....
- 10. Daily wage labor
- 11. Family member work as migrant worker in Thailand
- 12. Others.....

**3. Finding Jobs for family is easy or hard**

- 1. Easy.....
- 2. Hard.....

**4. Why it is not easy to find work**

- 1. Uneducated .....
- 2. Less Job opportunity for IDPs .....
- 3. Lack of contact/information on searching job .....
- 4. Lack of Skill .....
- 5. Language barriers.....
- 6. Due to displacement
- 7. Others.....

**5. Please indicate**

- 1. General/casual/ Daily casual worker .....
- 2. IDP allowance .....
- 3. Assistance from relatives/friends .....
- 4. Self-employed .....
- 5. Salary .....
- 6. Agriculture products.....
- 7. Livestock products .....
- 8. Others.....

**6. Monthly Income (Without IDP allowance)**

- 1. <50000 .....
- 2. 50001-100000 .....
- 3. 100001-200000 .....
- 4. 200001 - 300000 .....

- 5. 300001 - 400000 .....
- 6. 400001 - 500000 .....
- 7. >500001.....

**Section E: Access to Water and Health**

**1. Do you receive clean water?**

- 1. Yes.....
- 2. No.....

**2. If not, how did you do to get clean water?**

- 1. Purchase .....
- 2. Go to water source .....
- 3. Others .....

**3. Do you receive drinking water?**

- 1. Yes.....
- 2. No.....

**4. If not, how did you do to get clean water?**

- 1. Purchase .....
- 2. Go to water source .....
- 3. Others .....

**5. Do you receive shelter for your family?**

- 1. Yes.....
- 2. No.....

**6. What health problem are you facing last six month**

- 1.....
- 2.....
- 3.....

“Thank You”