Increased land grabbing is compounding the problem; when land is deemed to be ‘vacant,’ it can be reallocated, making return to land of origin near impossible. These factors result in widespread uncertainty about the future; nearly 90% of all IDPs interviewed stated that they do not know when they can expect to return home. These are systemic issues that require comprehensive political solutions and reconciliation beyond any efforts of ceasefire.

THE CHALLENGES WE ARE FACING

The situation in both Kachin and northern Shan is deeply troubling. A 2018 DPP survey shows that fear has increased, and resilience and trust in the peace process and authorities have deteriorated severely since 2015, especially with the reescalation of conflict. The results also show that 50% of IDPs in Kachin have an average of three days’ expenses worth of savings. Extreme vulnerability is worsening, both in terms of physical security and loss of livelihoods, with the bottom 25% of IDPs reporting no income at all over the last year of DPP phase one (2017-2018). There has been increased reporting of Gender Based Violence and of both women and men’s acceptance of domestic violence - and IDPs are more likely than non-IDPs to believe that a husband is justified in beating his wife. The vast majority of IDPs want to return to their original homes – 92% in non-government controlled areas and 83% in government controlled areas - but armed conflict, the presence of armed forces, and land mines are reported as three major barriers.

THE CHANGE WE WANT

The long-term goal of the DPP is to contribute to lasting peace, reconciliation, sustainable development in Myanmar, with a particular focus on Kachin and northern Shan. This will be achieved through a multi-faceted approach, supporting communities and civil society to lead this change, while engaging with authorities to be more responsive to community needs.
DPP reached an estimated 85,000 conflict-affected people in Kachin over the first three and a half years of the programme, with a particular focus on IDPs, especially women and youth. For the second phase, the programme has been expanded to northern Shan and activities will continue to be implemented in Kachin, and expects to reach an additional 105,000 people directly.

**HOW WE PLAN TO BRING CHANGE**

We support women and men to have greater awareness of their rights and responsibilities, and increased capacity and motivation to participate in key peace and development processes. We support civil society in their crucial role in peace-building, and raise the voices of women and men of all ethnicities in Kachin and northern Shan. We engage with Myanmar government officials and ethnic authorities, so that they will have a better understanding of the needs of people living in Kachin and northern Shan, especially the IDPs.

We support conflict-affected communities to strengthen their resilience to the effects of living with protracted conflict. This means supporting IDPs to voluntarily return to their communities of origin or resettle in a place of their choosing when conditions are conducive. It also means bolstering the incomes of conflict-affected households and contributing to improved social cohesion between diverse communities. We are also committed to reducing gender based violence while supporting women’s leadership and empowerment, ensuring they have more opportunity to participate in important decision-making processes, and have their specific concerns addressed.

During the first phase of the programme, women reported they were often too busy taking care of children to participate in community activities and decision-making processes; in response, the DPP set-up early childhood centres, thus enabling women to attend trainings, post-trauma counselling sessions and community discussions. Furthermore, some of our activities had unexpected positive outcomes; activities aimed at increasing and improving livelihoods for instance also brought people from disparate groups together in a neutral way and contributed to transforming relationships between communities. In phase two, we will continue to deepen the expertise of civil society in Kachin and northern Shan, as well as respond to what we learnt from these communities and adapt accordingly, enabling us to provide meaningful, context-specific support.

**PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION**

To reach some of the most remote and challenging areas in Kachin and northern Shan, we implement our work through a consortium of 7 national and international organizations (Kachin Baptist Convention, Karuna Mission Social Solidarity, Metta Development Foundation, Nyein Foundation, Oxfam, SwissAid and Trocaire), and over 25 local Civil Society Organizations. Each has its own unique expertise, helping us achieve our integrated goals of peace, reconciliation, and equitable development in Kachin and northern Shan.

“...I was able to relax my mind and fall into a deep sleep. I was able to imagine positive things, like my favourite garden. I feel that our minds have become so much more resistant since learning these healing exercises. This has helped make me more stable. I also hope this activity will reach other people in other camps, this is good for many others too.” – ‘JMT’, Trauma Healing Recipient

**OUR DONOR**

The project is funded by the European Union. The total budget of the Programme, which will run from 2015 to 2022, is 19.5 Million EUR.