MYANMAR

Figure Analysis – Displacement Related to Conflict and Violence

CONTEXT

About 42,000 people were newly displaced in Myanmar in 2018, a decrease from about 57,000 new displacements reported in 2017. This change can be attributed mainly to the greater stability in Rakhine, where more than 35,000 people were displaced in 2017. However, the rate of new displacements increased in Kachin and northern Shan in 2018, where as many as 36,000 people were newly displaced. This number exceeds by about 15,000 the 21,000 displacements recorded in these regions in 2017.

Some of these displacements were due to fighting between ethnic armed groups in northern Shan, where nearly 22,000 people were displaced amid competition for territorial control.[1] Many locations such as Namtu township experienced high levels of repeated displacements.[2] In Kachin, fighting between the Kachin Independence Organisation/Kachin Independence Army (KIO/KIA) and the Myanmar army, which was most intense in April and May, triggered the displacement of more than 14,000 people.[3] Between October and December, clashes between the Arakan Army (AA) and the Myanmar army intensified in Chin and Rakhine.

Many displacements were temporary, with people returning home as soon as fighting ceased. More than 234,000 people were still in protracted displacement in camps and informal sites across Kachin, Shan North and Rakhine in December 2018.

New displacements	Total number of IDPs	Partial or unverified solutions	
		Number of IDPs who have made partial progress towards a durable solution	Number of IDPs whose progress towards durable solutions cannot be verified
42,000	401,000 (Year figure was last updated: 2018)	No data available	No data available
This corresponds to new instances of internal displacement having occurred in 2018.	This corresponds to the total number of individuals living in internal displacement as of 31 December 2018.	This corresponds to the number of IDPs whom our data providers have identified as having returned, resettled or locally integrated in 2018 and for whom the evidence obtained by IDMC suggests that progress toward durable solutions is only partial given their living conditions. In a few instances this number may refer to movements rather than people.	This corresponds to the number of IDPs whom our data providers have identified as having returned, resettled or locally integrated in 2018 but for whom there is no available evidence to corroborate progress toward durable solutions. In a few instances this number may refer to movements rather than people.

NEW DISPLACEMENTS

This corresponds to new instances of internal displacement having occurred in 2018.

Sources and methodologies

No unique source provides comprehensive population movement data in Myanmar across all regions. However, OCHA published new displacement estimates for 2018 for Kachin and Shan North. Its figures were based on data obtained through information exchanges with operational partners, clusters, agencies and government departments. For other regions of Myanmar, new displacement is mainly captured in reports by civil society organisations such as the Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG), the Karen Peace Network and Free Burma Rangers, as well as NGOs such as the Border Consortium (TBC). We complemented this data through our monitoring of media reports.

Main caveats and monitoring challenges

Data reliability is negatively affected by access constraints and a lack of data collection in some regions. IDMC was not provided with a complete breakdown of the OCHA figures for Kachin and Shan North, which makes it difficult to triangulate and verify them.

IDMC figure and rationale

The new displacements estimate is based on reports by OCHA, TBC, and civil society organisations, including the KHRG, Free Burma Rangers, and media sources. We triangulated and compiled data from these providers to identify the most reliable estimate possible, by comparing reports on displacement events, to avoid double counting.

Significant changes from last year

As mentioned above, there were fewer displacements identified in 2018 than in 2017, mainly due to the relative stability in Rakhine state, where more than 35,000 people were displaced in 2017. OCHA started reporting on aggregate new displacement figures for Kachin and Shan states in 2018, which contributes to the increase in our new displacement estimates for these regions compared to last year.

TOTAL NUMBER OF IDPS

This corresponds to the total number of individuals living in internal displacement as of 31 December 2018.

Sources and methodologies

Different data providers operate in different regions of Myanmar. The Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM) and the Shelter Clusters provide monthly figures on the IDP sites in Kachin, Shan North and Rakhine states, based on data collected by camp management agencies. TBC's data about south-eastern Myanmar is based on key informant consultations. In Chin state and locations in Rakhine outside the mandate of the CCCM and Shelter Clusters, no source provides comprehensive displacement data, but figures endorsed by local and national authorities are occasionally cited in the media.

Main caveats and monitoring challenges

Geographic coverage is incomplete because of access constraints. The lack of a reliable data source about Chin state means the figure is likely an underestimate. TBC was unable to access Shan South outside informal camp locations, meaning its data about the region issued in 2018 may also be an underestimate. The general lack of humanitarian presence in south-eastern Myanmar negatively impacts data reliability, as data collection in this region is sporadic and limited to key informant consultations. TBC's figure for this region may include some IDPs whose displacement was triggered by disaster.

IDMC figure and rationale

The total number of IDPs was produced using data published by all above-mentioned sources, as well as estimates cited in the media for Chin state and Rakhine state locations not covered by the CCCM and Shelter Clusters. For Chin state, only displacement that took place in 2018 is part of the estimate, since including flows recorded in 2017 would lead to double-counting.

Significant changes from last year

TBC released a comprehensive report on internal displacement in south-eastern Myanmar in 2018, its first since 2012. The updated figure for this region indicates that there are fewer IDPs in the region than there were in 2012. This lower estimate for south-eatern Myanmar is the main factor in IDMC's 2018 estimate being nearly 234,000 lower than in 2017. It is unclear, however, if TBC's figure decreased mainly due to its reduced coverage of Shan South or because of new resettlements and returns.

NUMBER OF IDPS WHO HAVE MADE PARTIAL PROGRESS TOWARDS A DURABLE SOLUTION

This corresponds to the number of IDPs whom our data providers have identified as having returned, resettled or locally integrated in 2018 and for whom the evidence obtained by IDMC suggests that progress toward durable solutions is only partial given their living conditions. In a few instances this number may refer to movements rather than people.

Sources and methodologies

No organisation provides comprehensive public flow data on attempted returns, integration or resettlements in Myanmar, although OCHA reported that most displacements in Kachin and Shan North in 2018 were 'temporary', meaning that a hidden number of IDPs found partial solutions as they returned during the year. Data on returnees settled in parts of south-eastern Myanmar in 2018 was made public by TBC, yet this data included no estimate specific to 2018. Similarly, the CCCM and Shelter Clusters report on relocated IDPs but neither includes figures on attempted returns. The same limitation applies to the data produced for the OCHA Humanitarian Needs Overview. Media and OCHA bulletins sporadically report on attempted returns. Data on access to durable solutions among IDP returnees and resettled IDPs is practically non-existent.

Main caveats and monitoring challenges

An unknown number of IDPs made partial progress towards durable solutions through returns and resettlements in 2018. Insufficient data on IDPs who were temporarily displaced in 2018 in Kachin and Shan North but who since returned, as well as on returns and resettlements more generally, make it impossible to calculate a comprehensive estimate of the number of IDPs who reached partial solutions in 2018.

IDMC figure and rationale

No IDMC-endorsed estimate of partial solutions is available for 2018.

Significant changes from last year

No country-specific figures of partial solutions were published for 2017.

CONFIDENCE ASSESSMENT

The Confidence Assessment provides an at-a-glance overview of the comprehensiveness of the data available regarding displacement associated with conflict for each country. It describes the methodologies used, frequency of reporting, data disaggregation and geographical coverage. Here two key metrics are analysed: the new displacements and the total number of IDPs.

Displacement metric	New displacements	Total number of IDPs
Reporting units	People	People
Methodology	Media monitoring, other, unknown, key informants	Key informants, media monitoring, registration, unknown
Geographical disaggregation	Admin 2 or more	Admin 2 or more
Geographical coverage	All relevant areas covered	Partial coverage
Frequency of reporting	Other	Other
Disaggregation on sex	No	Partial
Disaggregation on age	No	Partial
Data triangulation	Some local triangulation	Some local triangulation
Data on settlement elsewhere	Partial	Partial
Data on returns	Partial	Partial
Data on local integration	No	Partial
Data on cross border movements	Partial	Partial
Data on deaths	No	Partial
Data on births	No	Partial

For any additional questions please email: data@idmc.ch

For the full country profile on Myanmar please visit:
http://www.internal-displacement.org/countries/myanmar

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[1] ACLED, Understanding Inter-ethnic conflict in Myanmar
[2] OCHA, Myanmar: Displacement to/from Namtu Township, northern Shan state, 24 September 2018
[3] ACLED, Myanmar's Changing Conflict Landscape, 17 January 2019