Over 130,000 people are currently displaced in Kachin and Northern Shan states, a number that has been increasing since violence erupted again in 2011. In Kachin, conflict between the Myanmar Armed Forces and the Kachin Independence Army continues. An estimated 3,900 armed clashes between them have taken place in the last seven years. Also in Northern Shan fighting with and amongst Ethnic Armed Groups is displacing thousands of people.

Even with the ongoing peace process, internally displaced persons (IDPs) still cannot return to their homes as armed conflicts continue. Peace and support for conflict-affected communities remains critical. The Durable Peace Programme (DPP) has been implementing activities since 2015. The programme will continue to work in dozens of townships in Kachin, and now also expand to Northern Shan.

The change we want

The long-term goal of DPP is to contribute to lasting peace, security, stability and 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 authorities to be more responsive to community needs.
‘The challenge we are facing

The situation in both Kachin and Northern Shan is deeply troubling. A DPP survey shows that fear, resilience, and trust in the peace process and authorities have all deteriorated severely since 2015, especially with the reescalation of conflict. The results also show that 50% of IDPs in Kachin have on average only enough savings to cover three days of expenses. This figure declines to less than half a day for all IDPs in KIA-controlled areas. Extreme vulnerability and fear is compounding anxiety. While the majority of IDPs want to return, armed conflict, the presence of armed forces and land mines are reported as the three major barriers. Increasing incidents of IDPs losing their land of origin are compounding the problems. These are systemic issues that require comprehensive political solutions and reconciliation beyond any efforts of ceasefire.

The people we want to reach

DPP reached over an estimated 200,000 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 will be expanded to townships in Northern Shan and activities will continue to be implemented in Kachin.

How we plan to bring change

We support women and men so that they will have greater awareness of their rights and responsibilities, 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 officials of the Myanmar Government and other ethnic authorities, so that they will have better understanding of the needs and priorities of people living in Kachin, especially the IDPs.

We will support conflict-affected communities and IDPs to develop improved resilience to the effects of living with protracted conflict. This means will supporting IDPs in potential return and resettlements. The DPP will also increase and improve the incomes of IDPs and conflict affected communities, contribute to improved social cohesion and more effective peacebuilding, take action to empower women and reduce the impacts of increasingly reported Gender Based Violence. We will also continue to deepen the expertise of Civil Society in Kachin and Northern Shan.

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 20 local CSOs. Each has its own unique expertise, helping us achieve our goals on peace, reconciliation, rehabilitation, and development in these states. The project is funded by the European Union.