MYANMAR

Displacement associated with Conflict and Violence

Figure Analysis – GRID 2020

CONTEXT

There were as many as 80,000 new displacements associated with conflict and violence in Myanmar in 2019, an increase from about 42,000 new displacements in 2018 and 57,000 new displacements in 2017. Escalating armed conflict between the Arakan Army (AA) and Myanmar's armed forces triggered about 53,000 new displacements in Rakhine and Chin states in 2019, and Rakhine became the epicentre of conflict displacement in Myanmar. The majority of newly displaced people are ethnic Rakhine, but at least 4,000 Rohingya were also displaced.

A unilateral government ceasefire reduced fighting in Kachin and Shan states in the first half of 2019. Periodic violence and an escalation from August onwards, however, resulted in as many as 26,000 new displacements, an increase of more than 4,000 compared with 2018, when as many as 22,000 displacements were recorded in Shan. The latest round of fighting erupted after coordinated attacks by an alliance of non-state armed groups, including AA, that had been largely excluded from the peace process of the past five years. Intense military confrontation generated about 10,000 displacements in these areas in August and September alone. Shan then experienced a relative lull after the alliance declared a unilateral ceasefire in late September. A territorial dispute between ethnic armed groups also led to the displacement of about 300 people in otherwise peaceful Karen state in October, illustrating the continued instability across Myanmar's ethnic minority regions.

As in previous years, reports of human rights abuses in areas affected by conflict were frequent in 2019. The government and some civil society organizations took measures to close camps and resettle those in protracted displacement in Kachin and Shan North, but no significant decrease in the number of IDPs in these areas was recorded, indicating that the implementation of camp closures is proceeding slowly.

New displacements that occurred in 2019	Total number of IDPs as of 31 December 2019 (Year figure was last updated: 2019)	Partial Solutions and Unverified Conditions		
		Number of IDPs who have made partial progress towards a durable solution*		Number of IDPs whose progress towards durable solutions cannot be verified**
		Flows (1 January – 31 December 2019)	Stocks (Year figure was last updated: 2019)	Flows (1 January – 31 December 2019)
80,000	457,000	-	21,000	26,000

*This corresponds to the number of IDPs whom our data providers have identified as having returned, resettled or locally integrated in 2019 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 having taken place in 2019 (flows) rather than a total number of people (stock).

**This corresponds to the number of IDPs whom our data providers have identified as having returned, resettled or locally integrated in 2019 but for whom there is no available evidence to corroborate progress toward durable solutions. In a few instances, this number may refer to movements having taken place in 2019 (flows) rather than a total number of people (stock).

NEW DISPLACEMENTS THAT OCCURRED IN 2019

This corresponds to new instances of internal displacement that occurred in 2019.

IDMC figure and rationale

IDMC's estimate includes new displacements in 2019 resulting from armed conflict and violence in Shan, Rakhine, Chin, Karen and Mon states, as well as Magway, and Bago regions. More than 53,000 displacements, out of as many as 80,000 during the year, occurred in Rakhine and Chin states as a result of armed conflict between AA and Myanmar's armed forces. More than 26,000 new displacements took place in Shan state, as a result of fighting between ethnic armed groups and Myanmar's armed forces, and about 800 people were displaced as a result of skirmishes between non-state armed groups and Myanmar's armed forces in Karen and Mon states, as well as in Bago region.

Sources and methodologies

IDMC's estimate for new displacements is based on data published by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), events-based monitoring of media coverage of new displacement, and reports by civil society organisations. In the case of Rakhine, OCHA's reports are based on data provided by the Rakhine state government.

Main caveats and monitoring challenges

Media reports have a lower level of reliability than OCHA's data and are only used to cover time periods and geographic areas for which no other data could be obtained. For areas outside Kachin, Shan, Rakhine, and Chin, IDMC's estimates are based exclusively on media monitoring and civil society reports. No source, however, provides comprehensive new displacement data on these regions. A lack of independent access to IDPs and IDP data, especially for Rakhine state, makes it difficult for the international community to verify new displacement movements.

Significant changes from last year

IDMC's estimate for 2019 represents an increase of more than 37,000 new displacements compared with 2018, when 42,000 displacements were recorded. This increase is the result of a heightened intensity of conflict and violence between the AA and the Myanmar military in Rakhine state in 2019.

TOTAL NUMBER OF IDPS

This corresponds to the total number of individuals living in internal displacement as of 31 December 2019.

IDMC figure and rationale

IDMC's estimate of the total number of IDPs in Myanmar as of 31 December 2019 includes more than 238,000 people living in protracted displacement in Kachin, northern Shan, and central Rakhine according to the Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM)/Shelter Cluster. It also includes more than 56,000 people who were newly displaced in northern Rakhine and northern Shan in 2019 according to UN agencies. It covers more than 162,000 people displaced in south-eastern Myanmar (southern Shan, Karen, Mon, Karenni states, as well as Bago and Tanintharyi regions) according to a 2018 survey by the Border Consortium. Finally, it includes smaller caseloads displaced in central Rakhine that were not covered by the CCCM Cluster but reported in the media.

Sources and methodologies

IDMC's estimate is based on a review of available data published and/or collected by the CCCM/Shelter Cluster, the Border Consortium, OCHA, other UN agencies and the media. The CCCM/Shelter Cluster data is based on data collected by camp management agencies and updated on

a regular basis. The data provided by the Border Consortium is based on key informant interviews conducted in collaboration with local NGOs.

Main caveats and monitoring challenges
The complexity of the displacement situation in Myanmar as well as the lack of humanitarian access to many displacement-affected areas implies various challenges related to the verification of the number of IDPs. The data for south-eastern Myanmar has been decaying since 2018. Reliable data on the number of people displaced as a result of fighting in northern Rakhine is also hard to come by as UN agencies are unable to independently verify government figures in these areas.

Significant changes from last year
An increase of more than 56,000 is a result of increased displacement in northern Rakhine following intensified armed conflict between AA and the Myanmar military.

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 2019 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 that occurred in 2019 rather than a total number of people.

IDMC figure and rationale
IDMC's estimate of more than 21,000 individuals who had made partial progress towards durable solutions as of 31 December 2019 includes less than 10,000 IDPs who are resettled, returned or locally integrated in Kachin or Shan state and more than 11,000 IDPs who were identified as returned but in need of reintegration support in south-eastern Myanmar (Tanintharyi, Bago, Mon, Karen, and Karenni regions) as of December 2018. In the case of Kachin state, the relocated IDPs continue to be listed as people of concern within the CCCM/Shelter Cluster's data owing to needs related to protection, mine-risk education, durable-solution awareness and right-to-land guarantees.

Sources and methodologies
IDMC's estimate of the number of IDPs who had made partial progress towards durable solutions as of 31 December 2019 is based on reports by OCHA within the Humanitarian Needs Overview and data compiled by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR). It was calculated by adding the total number of IDPs confirmed to have made partial progress towards durable solutions as of the end of 2019 and, for south-eastern Myanmar, as of the end of 2018.

Main caveats and monitoring challenges
IDMC's estimate of the number of IDPs who had made partial progress towards durable solutions in Myanmar as of 31 December 2019 likely represents an underestimate as a result of the lack of data on IDPs' progress towards durable solutions. The figures for south-eastern Myanmar are considered underestimations because of incomplete geographic coverage.

Significant changes from last year
IDMC did not publish an estimate of the number of IDPs who had made partial progress towards durable solutions as of 2018.

NUMBER OF IDPS WHOSE PROGRESS TOWARDS DURABLE SOLUTIONS CANNOT BE VERIFIED

This corresponds to the number of IDPs whom our data providers have identified as having returned, resettled or locally integrated in 2019 but for whom there is no available evidence to corroborate progress toward durable solutions. In a few instances this number may refer to movements that occurred in 2019 rather than people

IDMC figure and rationale

IDMC's estimate of as many as 26,000 IDPs whose progress towards durable solutions cannot be verified represents people who were temporarily displaced or returned in northern Shan, Kachin, Rakhine and Chin states in 2019 but for whom there is a lack of evidence that return has taken place. IDMC classifies these movements as unverified progress towards durable solutions.

Sources and methodologies

IDMC's estimate for unverified progress towards durable solutions is based on OCHA's estimate of "temporary displacements" in Shan state and returns reported in the media.

Main caveats and monitoring challenges

The great majority of new displacements in northern Shan are temporary. Owing to the fluidity of these movements, it is challenging for humanitarian organisations to provide comprehensive data that verifies that returns have taken place. Similarly, for northern Shan as well as Rakhine state, lack of independent access to IDPs and IDP data implies difficulties for the international community in verifying return movements in areas affected by conflict. The total number of movements is likely underestimated because of these challenges.

Significant changes from last year

IDMC did not obtain sufficient data to estimate the number of IDPs who made unverified progress towards durable solutions in 2018.

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, Households	People, Households
Methodology	Media monitoring, Registration, Other	Registration, Key informants, Media monitoring, Other
Geographical disaggregation	Subnational - admin 1	Admin 2 or more
Frequency of reporting	Other	More than once a month
Disaggregation by sex	No	Partial
Disaggregation by age	No	Partial
Data triangulation	Contradictory data	Contradictory data
Data on settlement elsewhere	No	Partial
Data on returns	Partial	Partial
Data on local integration	No	Partial
Data on cross border movements	Partial	Partial
Data on deaths	No	No
Data on births	No	No

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