



## Interview

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### Hpapun Interview: U Fm---, 2016

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*This Interview with U Fm--- describes his perspective events occurring in Dwe Lo Township, Hpapun District in November 2016, including education, healthcare, fighting, killing cases, land confiscation, a lack of justice, military activity, freedom of movement and the human rights situation. This interview was conducted for KHRG's thematic report, 'Foundation of Fear: 25 years of villagers' voices from southeast Myanmar'.*

- *U Fm--- describes killing cases committed by Tatmadaw soldiers occurring in Fn---village, in Dwe Lo Township, Hpapun District before the 2012 preliminary ceasefire. There was no justice for victims because the Burma/Myanmar police force did not take any action against the perpetrators.*
  - *U Fm--- states that he had to flee his village, Fn---village, due to fighting between the Karen National Liberation Army and the Tatmadaw which occurred in 1994. He returned to his village to work on his land, despite the unstable situation, because he was unable to support his livelihood while living in other villages.*
  - *U Fm--- states that villagers cannot have full access to justice for human rights abuses because perpetrators are powerful actors, villagers want the perpetrators to be put in jail.*
  - *Fn--- villagers have a lack of freedom of movement due to the presence of army camps based near the village. Therefore, villagers demand army camps to withdraw from their local area.*
  - *Fn--- villagers do not have access to their land as they do not have land grants from the Burma/Myanmar government and the Karen National Union, so they worry that their land will be confiscated. Therefore, villagers want the Karen National Union and the Burma/Myanmar government to provide land grants for them.*
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### **Interview | U Fm--- (male, 53), Fn--- village, Dwe Lo Township, Hpapun District (November 2016)**

*The following Interview was conducted by a community member trained by KHRG to monitor local human rights conditions. It was conducted in Hpapun District on November 7<sup>th</sup> 2016 and is presented below translated exactly as it was received, save for minor edits for clarity and security.<sup>1</sup> This interview was received along with other information from Hpapun District, including three other interviews and one situation update.<sup>2</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> KHRG trains community members in southeastern Burma/Myanmar to document individual human rights abuses using a standardised reporting format; conduct interviews with other villagers; and write general updates on the situation in areas with which they are familiar. When conducting interviews, community members are trained to use loose question guidelines, but also to encourage interviewees to speak freely about recent events, raise issues that they consider to be important and share their opinions or perspectives on abuse and other local dynamics.

<sup>2</sup> In order to increase the transparency of KHRG methodology and more directly communicate the experiences and perspectives of villagers in southeastern Burma/Myanmar, KHRG aims to make all field information received available on the KHRG website once it has been processed and translated, subject only to security considerations. For additional reports categorised by Type, Issue, Location and Year, please see the Related Readings component following each report on KHRG's website.

**Ethnicity:** Pa-o Karen  
**Religion:** Buddhist **Occupation:** Farmer  
**Position:** Villager

**May I know your name?**

My name is U Fm---

**How old are you?**

I am 53 years old.

**What is your religion?**

I am a Buddhist.

**What is your ethnicity?**

I am Pa-o<sup>3</sup>.

**What do you do to support your livelihood [earn a living]?**

I work on a [plain] farm and on hill farms.

**What is your position in the village?**

In the past, I was a chairperson in the village. Last year I was a village head, but this year I resigned from the village head position. I am now an elder who looks after the village [advisor to the community].

**Where do you live?**

I live in Fn--- village.

**Which Township?**

K'Taing Tee village tract, Hpapun Township.

**Is that a KNU [Karen National Union] controlled area? Which Township is Fn--- village located in?**

Fn--- village is located in K'Taing Tee village tract, Dwe Lo Township, Mu Traw [Hpapun] District.

**Have you ever lived in other villages?**

No, I have not lived in any other village. I have lived in Fn--- village [since I was young].

**So how long has this village [Fn---] existed?**

This village has existed since Japanese people came to colonise Burma<sup>4</sup> [1942].

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<sup>3</sup> The Pa-o are the seventh largest ethnic group in Burma/Myanmar predominately from southern Shan state.

**How many households are there in this village?**

There are more than [censored for security] households in the village.

**How many people are there in the village? Can you estimate?**

There are more than 300 people in the village.

**What religion do most of the villagers believe?**

Buddhism.

**What work do most villagers do to earn a living?**

Villagers mostly work on hill farms and farms on the plains.

**What is the situation of farmers and hill farmers regarding their livelihoods?**

The paddy plants are not growing very well; this is because we have limited access to water.

**So the paddy plants will grow better if you had enough water?**

Yes.

**OK. It will be better if you have enough water. We have to consider how to improve your access to water. How will you solve the livelihood problems you are facing?**

Some people just try to find work as daily labourers and others go to faraway places to find jobs.

**What do you mean by faraway places? How far do they go to find a job?**

People mostly go to Thailand to find jobs.

**So they work in Thailand and they send money [back to their families in the village]?**

Yes.

**The majority of the villagers are Buddhists. So are there any religious buildings in this village? For example, Buddhist temples?**

Yes. We have Buddhist temples and ordination halls in the village.

**What about pagodas?**

Yes. We also have pagodas.

**If villagers are sick, where do they go to get medical treatment? Are there any clinics in the village?**

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<sup>4</sup> Japan invaded Burma in 1942 during World War 2, as it was deemed geo-strategically important, and could provide a land route from which to attack the British in India. Japan had trained Aung San, and the thirty comrades, to help fight the British. When Japan declared the State of Burma as independent in 1943 it quickly became evident that it was a puppet state of the Japanese Empire. British rule of Burma was restored in 1945, and Burma became Independent on January 4<sup>th</sup>, 1948.

We do not have clinics in our village, but we have midwives and local health workers who know a bit about how treat sick people. We are only able to receive injections from them [no surgery or further medical treatment]. If we have serious sicknesses or diseases, we have to go to [clinics] in K'Taing Tee village to receive medical treatment.

**How far is it from Fn--- village to K'Taing Tee village?**

[Censored for security] miles.

**What kind of road is constructed between Fn--- village and K'Taing Tee village?**

A coal [tarmac] road.

**When villagers are sick and they have to go to hospital, do you have some people in this village who are responsible for sending sick villagers to the hospital? For example, like a funeral service team [ambulance team]?**

We do not have a funeral service team in our village, but villagers help each other. If some people are sick, other people who own cars will help and take them to the hospital.

**Are there any schools for children to study in your village?**

We have a school in our village, but it is small and there are a lot of students. We will construct more small buildings [schools] for our children.

**Do villagers construct these small buildings [for schools] by themselves?**

Yes.

**So is the school in your village a Myanmar government school or self-funded school?**

In the past, our school in the village was a self-funded school. Later on, the Myanmar government supported this school and it became a Myanmar government school.

**The Ministry of Education classifies this school as a Myanmar government school. So do villagers or students' parents have to support school teachers' [salary]?**

In the past, we supported school teachers who were our guests [not from the village] in this village with food, rice, and accommodation. Yet, now as most of the teachers are local residents, rather than guests [from other villages], we do not need to support them anymore. They [teachers who are from outside the village] support themselves with food, but we still build houses for them to live in.

**Are there any other business opportunities that villagers have in this village?**

We do not have any special business opportunities in this village. We used to cut trees and bamboo [to sell] and we also collect firewood. However, now we can no longer cut trees, because it is not allowed, so we just collect firewood.

**Are there any armed groups nearby Fn--- village?**

There are Tatmadaw, BGF [Border Guard], KNU/KNLA [Karen National Union] and police nearby Fn--- village.

**How far is it from Fn--- village to their [armed groups] army camps?**

[Censored for security] miles.

**As there are many different armed groups nearby the village, do they come often to the village?**

Mainly it is the Tatmadaw who enters our village.

**How and why do they [Tatmadaw] come to your village?**

They usually come to our village when their leaders make trips. So the soldiers provide security for their leaders when they travel around the area.

**Do they bring a lot of weapons when they come?**

Yes.

**How many [Tatmadaw] soldiers are there each time they come?**

15 or 20.

**What about other armed groups? Do they come to the village?**

I do not see other armed groups coming to our village with many soldiers. Sometimes KNU soldiers [KNLA] come to our village, but they do not wear soldiers' uniforms when they come. If they [the KNLA] come, they only come with two or three soldiers.

**What about BGF soldiers? Do they come to the village?**

They also come and visit this village, but they do not wear soldiers' uniforms and they do not bring any weapons.

**What about other armed groups? Do they come to village?**

The police also come to our village.

**What about KNLA-PC [Peace Council] and DKBA [Democratic Karen Benevolent Army]<sup>5</sup>? Do they come?**

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<sup>5</sup> The Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA Benevolent) was formed in 2010 as a breakaway group following the transformation of the majority of the original Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (1994 – 2010) into Border Guard Forces (BGF). This group was originally called the Democratic Karen *Buddhist* Army until it changed its name to the Democratic Karen *Benevolent* Army in April 2012 in order to reflect its secularity. This group is comprised of different divisions, including Kloh Htoo Baw Battalion and DKBA-5, and was led for many years by General Saw Lah Pwe aka Na Khan Mway who died in March 2016 and was replaced by General Saw Mo Shay in April 2016. The DKBA (Benevolent) signed a preliminary ceasefire with the Burma/Myanmar Government on November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2011 and then signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) on October 15<sup>th</sup> 2015. The group is based in Son Si Myaing area, Myawaddy/Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District, southern Kayin State. This DKBA (Benevolent) (2010 – present) should not be confused with, either the original DKBA (Buddhist) (1994-2010) which was transformed into the BGF in 2010, or with the DKBA (Buddhist) (2016 – present) which was formed in 2016 as a splinter group of the DKBA (Benevolent). Importantly, the DKBA (Benevolent) has signed both the preliminary and nationwide ceasefire agreements with the Burma/Myanmar government, whereas the DKBA (Buddhist) has not signed either agreement.

No, they do not come.

**There are many armed groups. Do they ever come to meet with each other in the village? For example, the BGF, Tatmadaw or the KNU.**

In the past they came to meet with each other in the village and they held a meeting in my house. The Tatmadaw, BGF and KNU were involved in the meeting.

**When they met with each other, did any problems or conflicts occur?**

No. When they met they just tried to build a good understanding amongst each other.

**Prior to 2015, was the activity of armed groups' different to what it is now? If so, how is their activity different?**

Now the situation is getting better and better and we can live without any trouble.

**Do you know if there are still landmines around the village?**

I think there are no more landmines around our village. In the past, landmines might have been planted around our village, but it has been a long time [since they were planted]. Perhaps those landmines do not work anymore. Cows and buffalo are always walking around the village and they have not stepped on any landmines, so I think there are no more landmines around our village.

**Now I know the situation of your village. What is your most important human right? For example, health, education, freedom of movement, security, land and livelihoods, language and culture?**

The most important human right is our right to healthcare. If I say honestly, there are many important things that we need, but the main thing is healthcare. If we are not healthy, we cannot do anything.

**What about the right to education?**

The right to education is needed [important], but, compared to the past; the education situation is now getting much better. It is easy to go to school in K'Taing Tee School. In the past, we had to cross through rough roads when we went to K'Taing Tee School. We could not use bicycles on the road because the road was so bad. The jungle is very big. Now we can go [to the school] easily because the road is better. We can now even use bicycles to go places.

**What about security?**

Regarding security, we sometimes worry about our children.

**What do you worry about?**

We worry that some young girls will get trouble [harassment] because in the past some young female students had to worry about that.

**What about rights to land and livelihood? What do you need regarding this right?**

Regarding land rights, we do not have land grants<sup>6</sup> in our village. If we do not have land grants, it creates difficulties for us because we clean our lands [of old vegetation] to work, but if we do not have any land documents, it becomes a problem if our lands are confiscated.

**Do you need Myanmar government land grants or KNU land grants?**

It is better if we get both of them, because our village is in a mixed controlled area.

**Oh, you do not have any land grants from either the Myanmar government or the KNU?**

We do not have any land grants, but we have KNU land receipts since we pay the land tax.

**What do you want to say about freedom of speech?**

We have freedom of speech here, but we do not dare to say whatever we want to say in our village.

**So this means you do not have full freedom of speech?**

Yes.

**What do you feel is your most important human right? For example, health, education, freedom of movement, security, land and livelihoods, language and culture?**

The most major thing is freedom of movement. We want to work freely. This is my view and this is what I need.

**What do you think about the rule of law and the justice system in your local area? Is it good or not? What do [people] need regarding the rule of law and the justice system? Do you think it is perfect?**

No. I do not think it is perfect. It is very bad in our area. When I was working as a village head, some elders informed me about that [the situation regarding the rule of law and justice system]. I cannot do what elders ask me [actions to take regarding justice] because there are many different [armed] groups [in our area].

**Do you mean you do have full access of rights, including access to the rule of law and the justice system in your area, due to many different [armed] groups?**

Yes. We cannot have all of our rights and we cannot access the rule of law and the justice system in our area.

**What kind of human rights abuses happened in your area in the past?**

There were a lot of human rights abuses in our area. Mainly, to my understanding, there were incidents of forced labour and killings.

**These kinds of [human rights abuses] happened?**

Yes.

**When did they happen?**

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<sup>6</sup> Land grants are required to lease and work on a particular area of land. In Burma/Myanmar, all land is ultimately owned by the government.

The killing cases happened five or six years ago.

**What about forced labour? When did it happen?**

It happened when I was young, but it [forced labour] decreased after the [2012] ceasefire<sup>7</sup> in our area.

**So it happened [before] five or six years ago?**

Yes.

**Did you or your family ever have to flee your village?**

Yes. All the people in our village had to flee our village.

**Why?**

It occurred because of the impact of the fighting. At that time the DKBA [Buddhist] issue happened [split from KNU/KNLA in 1994], so then we could not stay in our village.

**Why did you return to your village?**

We first came back to our village while most of the people [villagers] were away. When we stayed in other villages, it was not very easy for us to live. We could not work during that time. Our health was not good. We had no idea how to earn a living. Therefore, we took a risk and we came back to our village in order to work.

**Why could you not live in that village?**

We could not live because we did not have any work to support our livelihoods while living in other villages. We had to live by eating foods that other people had given us. If you eat other people's food, you have to listen to them [you lose your independence and freedom]. You cannot do anything you want because they might scold you. For me, I could not live like that. I want to do my own work and I want to work and live freely and peacefully. If you live in other people's houses, you have to do what they ask you to do. I do not want to live under those kinds of restrictions. I just want to live freely and peacefully.

**Have you experienced war and conflict?**

I have experienced a lot of conflict.

**What do you think about it? Do you think it is good, bad or fun?**

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<sup>7</sup> On January 12<sup>th</sup> 2012, a preliminary ceasefire agreement was signed between the KNU and Burma/Myanmar government in Hpa-an. Negotiations for a longer-term peace plan are still under way. For updates on the peace process, see the [KNU Stakeholder webpage](#) on the Myanmar Peace Monitor website. For KHRG's analysis of changes in human rights conditions since the ceasefire, see *Truce or Transition? Trends in human rights abuse and local response since the 2012 ceasefire*, KHRG, May 2014. In March 2015, the seventh round of the negotiations for a national ceasefire between the Burma/Myanmar government and various ethnic armed actors began in Yangon, see "[Seventh Round of Nationwide Ceasefire Negotiations](#)," *Karen National Union Headquarters*, March 18<sup>th</sup> 2015. Following the negotiations, the KNU held a central standing committee emergency, see "[KNU: Emergency Meeting Called To Discuss Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement And Ethnic Leaders' Summit](#)," *Karen News*, April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2015.

How can we have fun if fighting happens? When the fighting happened we were forced to leave [relocate] and work as porters. We were afraid to die, so we had to protect ourselves out of fear during the fighting. It was not a good thing. If the fighting happens, you and I will suffer.

**The image of war is [that it is] not a good thing. Is that right?**

Yes. It does not matter if the fighting happens only among armed groups; because it does not happen like that [it does not only affect armed groups]. It also affects civilians.

**Do you think there has been justice for human rights abuses that happened in the past?**

No. There is no justice for human rights abuses [that happened in the past]. How can we have justice if human rights abuses [continue to] happen? Actually, human rights abuses happen because there is no justice.

**Have any human rights abuses been resolved fairly?**

How can human rights abuses be resolved fairly? We cannot go to meet them [perpetrators]. Even if we can go to meet them, I do not think they [human rights abuses] will be resolved.

**With whom would you like to meet?**

I am referring to the Myanmar government's military [Tatmadaw] who committed human rights abuses. Although we have not gone to report these cases to them, they already know about it because Saw A-- was a village head at that time. They [the police] came to take pictures [after a killing case happened]. Higher leaders should look at [address] the situation. It is fine if they [leaders] do not know anything. However, now they know the situation, but they still do not do anything [to obtain justice].

**Do you think there are fair trials for people who were victims of human rights abuses in court?**

No.

**What do you think should be done for people who committed human rights abuses?**

As far as I know, nothing is being done in this area. I have not heard anything about it. People who have committed human rights abuses just commit abuses and people who were and are victims of human rights abuses just suffer. Nothing [related to justice or compensation] happens.

**Have the people who committed human rights abuses been punished? For example, have they gone to prison, paid compensation, or lost power?**

We have not heard anything about that.

**What do you think should be done to people who committed human rights abuses during the conflict?**

For a person who has committed human rights abuses, he or she should get a punishment. For example, he or she should be put in jail.

**Do you want them [people who committed abuses] to go to prison, pay compensation or lose their power?**

If they have money, those people can pay compensation after they kill people and will still not be afraid and may kill other people again. Therefore, they should put them in prison in accordance with the law. If they are put in prison, it will stop more killing cases from happening. If they pay compensation, they will probably still kill other people.

**What do you think should be done for people who were victims of human rights abuses during the conflict?**

People and their families who were victims of human rights abuses during the conflict should get support in order to earn their living.

**What is the root cause of human rights abuses in your area?**

The root cause of human rights abuses is the impact of fighting.

**You mean there was a lot of fighting in your area?**

Yes. There was a lot of fighting and there were a lot of landmines at that time.

**Why did it happen? Who fought?**

The fighting happened between the KNU/KNLA and the Myanmar government's military troops [Tatmadaw]. How do I explain? It is the civil war. Due to that, villagers became the victims of human rights abuses.

**What do you want in the future? For example, do you want improved education for children or do you just want your family's lives to improve?**

As we are living in the community, we want to improve the education for [our] children. This is for the future. If our children are able to read and write, they will be able to produce good ideas [about] how to improve their community. If they [children] are well-educated, they will be able to improve their lives and [their] communities. If they can improve their communities, they will become good and useful citizens. If we do not have knowledge or if we are not literate, we cannot go anywhere and we will be going around [and around] here [in] a circle [not making any progress]. Therefore, we will continuously be suffering from oppression.

**In order to have a safer community, is it better to have army camps in your local area? Or how should it be?**

If we look at the wishes of the majority, no one wants to have army camps near their villages. It is not easy to work and to move if army camps are located near our village. For example, when armed groups base their camps near our village it is an obstacle for us when we travel. Therefore, I want army camps to move away from us.

**What about Karen leaders in Karen State? Karen leaders should rule Karen State. What do you think of this?**

We are happy if Karen leaders can rule Karen State. For example, if we live in our village and someone from K'Taing Tee village comes to rule our village. How can we be happy? Now I will tell you something about the government. We did not dare to meet and talk with U Zaw Min, Karen State Chief Minister, because he just told us what was needed. That's it. However, when U Saw Win Htain became chief minister of Karen State, he met with us and talked to us as a brother and friend. It was good.

**What about now? When Nan Khin Htwe Myint became Karen State Chief Minister, how did the situation change?**

When Nan Khin Htwe Myint became Karen State Chief Minister, I had already resigned [from the village head position]. So I do not know how it is.

**What is the difference between U Zaw Min and Nan Khin Htwe Myint? Are they both similar?**

I cannot say because I have not seen the new Karen State Chief Minister, so I do not know what she is doing. When I worked as a village head, U Zaw Min was Karen State Chief Minister. So I only know about what he did.

**What about access to land? Do you want the Myanmar government to own land or do you want local villagers to own their lands?**

As we all know, local villagers have worked on their lands since they were young, how can local villagers work to support their livelihood if the Myanmar government own the land? The Myanmar government can do whatever they want if they own the lands. For us, we cannot do anything if we do not have our own land. I want local villagers to have access to land, so they can work on their land freely.

**What are the biggest challenges facing your community's future?**

The biggest challenge facing our community's future is [ownership of] land.

**Why?**

We do not have land grants in our area. If the Myanmar government comes to construct their office and their buildings in our area, we worry that they will confiscate our lands. We have heard that lands in the city have been confiscated since the people did not have land grants. Just look at K'Taing Tee village. Some of the lands in K'Taing Tee village do not have land grants [attached to them] and also there is no cultivation or building on those lands, so the Myanmar government marked those lands as vacant lands. Then they confiscated those lands.<sup>8</sup> Why did this land become vacant land? They became vacant land because there was a lot of fighting in the past and nobody used their land at that time and it became wild land, even though every year we pay land tax to the KNU. Therefore, if the Myanmar government and companies come to construct their buildings on our land, we worry that they will confiscate our land and mark our lands as vacant since we do not have land grants. So I think the biggest challenge for us is the issue of land.

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<sup>8</sup> The perpetrator of this abuse may have been claiming authority under one of the Burma/Myanmar government laws that allows rights to land to be transferred from villagers to private entities. The Wasteland Instructions Law (1991) enabled both domestic and foreign investment in large-scale commercial enterprises through transfer of use rights to designated "wasteland" (or "vacant, fallow and virgin land"). This practice was recently reaffirmed by the Vacant, Fallow, Virgin Land Law (2012). As development has increased in southeast Burma/Myanmar since the signing of the government-KNU ceasefire in January 2012, KHRG received an increasing number of complaints of confiscation of "uncultivated land" or "wasteland." For KHRG documentation of land confiscation arising from development projects, see ["With only our voices, what can we do?": Land confiscation and local response in southeast Myanmar,](#) KHRG, June 2015, as well as, ["Losing Ground: Land conflicts and collective action in eastern Myanmar,"](#) KHRG, March 2013. For summary and analysis of the legal and policy framework relating to land management in Burma/Myanmar, see: [Legal Review of Recently Enacted Farmland Law and Vacant Fallow and Virgin Lands Management Law,](#) Food Security Group - Land Core Group, November 2012.

**What should the government (KNU or Burma/Myanmar) do to make the situation better for people your age?**

As I am getting old, I want to speak for people who are my age. They are old and they cannot do any more work to secure their livelihood, so they should be supported in order to earn a living.

**Yes. This is what Myanmar government has to do for them. The Karen State departments or the central government should support elderly people. Is that right?**

Yes.

**Are young people in this area interested in leadership roles?**

Yes. There are some young people who are interested in leadership roles. It was very bad in the past and most of the young people were not interested in leadership roles as they could not read and write. Now it is better. Most of the young people can read and write; they have a lot of knowledge and are open-minded. Yet, it is not easy for young people to get a job here. They [young people] hear about job vacancies and they apply, but they do not get a job. Then they find another job and they apply but they do not get it. They try to apply to get a job two or three times but they do not get it. Therefore, they get depressed and their motivation goes down. If there are plenty of jobs, I want young people to have [access to] jobs to do.

**What do you hope to be doing in five years' time? What change do you hope for?**

I hope a lot of things will change, so that the situation will be better for people, such as better transportation and better access to electricity.

**For example, the road beside your village is now a stone road. Do you want this to change within five years?**

I want the road to be constructed as a tarmac road now, not in five years. Currently, we cannot ride a bicycle on that road. Last summer, we could ride a bicycle. This summer, we cannot ride a bicycle and we also have to push our bicycles in the rainy season [due to the mud].

**What do you worry about most for your future?**

I mostly worry that fighting will happen in the future.

**Do you think it is possible that fighting will happen?**

I cannot say for certain. I am not sure.

**Are you hopeful or worried about the future for your community and your people?**

Most of the young people in Karen State do not understand about their culture and traditional clothes. Our culture will disappear in the future, so I think something should be done about it. Old people or leaders from the KNU have a responsibility to teach and lead young people to maintain our culture and traditional clothes. Now it is not like that.

**What about young people's behaviours? What do you want to say about it?**

There are a lot of things I want to say regarding young people's behaviours such as the way they live and the way they eat and drink. They are misbehaving. When I was young, there were only one or two old people who drank alcohol in our village. Now not only women, but also

young girls drink alcohol and beer. I also want to talk about drugs. There are a lot of drugs. How much alcohol do you want? You can order it and have as much alcohol as you want. When I was young, only one or two men drank alcohol. Now it is not like that. More than half of the people, including girls and children, drink alcohol. Some children drink alcohol secretly when they study. I want our leaders to take action and reduce that kind of drinking and consumption [using drugs].

**I have asked you a lot of questions that I wanted to know. Do you want to add more and say something that I have not asked you about? Do you have something that you want to say about any of my questions? Is there something that you have kept in your mind that you would like to say? You can say it now if you have something to add.**

There are plenty of things to report or say, but I do not want to report all of them because I have too many things to say.

**OK. That is fine. Prepare and tell me what you want to say if we see each other again. Now I would like to request your permission. Will you allow us to use this information?**

As I told you before, I worked as an elder [village leader] for a long time. As an elder, we have to speak truthfully. If we do not speak truthfully, we are not elders. I do not speak with anyone who does not speak truthfully. I just want it to be as I say. As I saw things in the past, I reported it. So I do not speak untrue things. Now I am telling you about what I know and see. If you would like to use my information, I allow you use it. It does not matter where you report it. I allow you to use it because I speak the truth. If it is not true, I will not dare to allow anyone to use what I report.

**I have another request for you now that I have your permission to use your information. I also want to ask to use your picture. I would like to take three pictures of you. May I take these pictures and use them?**

Yes, you can. They hear my voice. If they want to see my pictures, send them my pictures if they need to use them. My voice and pictures can be used and shared nationally and internationally because I speak the truth.

**Thank you so much for sharing this information.**

Yes. It is fine.

Further background reading on the situation in Hpapun District can be found in the following KHRG reports:

- “Hpapun Interview: Saw A---, July 2015,” (April 2017)
- “Hpapun Interview: Saw B---, October 2016,” (March 2017)
- “Hpapun Interview: Saw A---, March 2016,” (January 2017)
- “Hpapun Field Report: January to December 2015,” (December 2016)
- “Hpapun Situation Update: Bu Tho Township, June to August 2016,” (November 2016)

# Mu Traw (Hpapun) District



Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG)

