



Appendix to Displacement Monitoring Update No. 35

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Appendix to Update No. 35: Interview Transcript

This report contains the full transcript of an interview conducted with Naw P---, a resident of Palu Poe village, Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District on December 10th 2010. In her interview with KHRG, Naw P--- described how the military situation in the Palu area is causing prolonged human rights concerns for, and displacement of, civilians during the busy harvest season. Many villagers from the Palu area have sought refuge in Thailand's Phop Phra and Mae Sot Districts. Naw P--- confirmed that, while some displaced villagers are trying to return to Palu, others continue to fear that they will be arrested and forced to porter military supplies, rations and equipment for the Tatmadaw if they return. This is preventing some villagers from returning to their plantations and fields to complete the harvest of bean, corn and paddy crops, the main agricultural products cultivated in eastern Dooplaya. Naw P--- expressed concerns that this will also prevent some villagers from being able to repay their debts next season, which will have long-term consequences for the villagers' livelihoods in the future.

Interview | Naw P---, (female, 51) Palu Poe village, Kawkareik Township, Dooplaya District (December 10th 2010)

What is your occupation?

I work on a bean plantation.

Which village do you live in?

Before 1986, I lived in Palu village and, at that time, that area [Palu village] was under the control of our Karen people. At that time, because there was a lot of fighting, we moved to the Thailand side [of the Moei river] and we didn't have [our own] place to work, so we had to do daily payment work in Thailand. I lived with my family in Moe Lee Cha village [Phop Pra District, Tak Province, Thailand] for more than ten years and came back to [Palu] village after [the year] 2000. Palu village has been divided into three villages, named Palu Pa Doh, Palu Poe and Min Lat Bpaing. I came back after the year 2000 to Palu Poe village.

Can you tell me why you can't live in [Palu Poe] village anymore and fled to Mae Kong Kay village [Mae Sot District, Tak Province, Thailand]?

We had to flee again at the end of November 2010, because our Karen people are fighting with the enemy [Tatmadaw] soldiers. Many villagers have fled to Thailand and we have been here more than ten days already.

We heard that some people who were staying on the Thailand side have gone back to [Palu] village. So can you tell us about the situation of those villagers and how they managed to get back to their village?

[They went back] because there were many [agricultural] work places where the villagers had to finish [the harvest]. The villagers have to hurry to finish their work, so they have to go back to

their village when there are no SPDC [State Peace and Development Council] soldiers in the village. Usually, the villagers go back to their village to look after their [agricultural] work places in the morning, and come back to the Thailand side [of the Moei river] at around 5:30 pm and sleep there.

You mention that you go back to your village where there are no soldiers in the village. Can you tell us more about how you communicate to know whether the soldiers are in your village or not?

Before we cross the river, we stay on the Thailand side [of the Moei river] and check with other people who go back to the village and ask them about the situation. If they say there are no soldiers, we take a boat and go back slowly to the village. Even after we arrive on the Burma side [of the Moei river], before we enter the village, we have to check first to see if there are soldiers before we enter the village.

We heard that some of the villagers on the Thailand side [of the Moei river] do not dare to go back to their village. Can you tell us more about what they worry about and what they are afraid of?

They are afraid of the enemy [Tatmadaw soldiers] because they [Tatmadaw soldiers] come to the village sometimes and their army camp is close to the village. If they go back to their village, they [the Palu villagers] are afraid that the [Tatmadaw] soldiers will arrest them, because they heard people were arrested by the soldiers' and used to porter [military supplies and equipment]. Also, if the fighting happens when they go back, they worry that the shells will hit them. They don't have money to go to the hospital if the shells hit them.

You mention that the villagers are afraid of SPDC [Tatmadaw] soldiers. What about [fear of] KNLA and DKBA [soldiers]?

For the KNLA and DKBA [soldiers], we don't need to be afraid of them, because they are our people.

So, the villagers that do not dare to go back, what about their work places like the bean plantations, corn plantations and other fields?

They will lose [their harvest] of [the beans, corn and paddy crops] and they will face the consequences, like they won't be able to pay back the money that they borrowed from their bosses, the Thai businessmen. Some of the villagers do not dare to go back to look after their work places [the bean plantations, corn plantations and paddy fields] because their work places are far away from the village. Also these people are afraid that the Burmese soldiers will do [the harvest] for themselves.

If the situation goes on like this, what will happen with the villagers' livelihoods in the future?

For the future, livelihoods are bad for us, because we will have to stay in Thailand and work as an employee [with daily payment], like our situation back in 1986. We don't have any [agricultural] work places in Thailand, and we have to look for employment day-to-day and survive like that. If we get a fever, we have to go to Mae Tao clinic [run by Dr. Cynthia Maung in Mae Sot, Thailand] because we can get free [medical treatment] and we don't need to pay the cost of the medicine.