

AN ASSESSMENT ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDP) CAMPS IN BANMAW DISTRICT

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Abstract

Banmaw District is located in Kachin State. It is composed of Banmaw, Momauk, Mansi, and Shwegu townships and Dawphoneyan, Lweje and Myohla sub-townships. Soon after Myanmar attained independence, Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) and Kachin Independence Army (KIA) were founded for the weakness of 1947 Constitution. The fightings between Tatmadaw (Myanmar Army) and KIA are still continuing in Kachin State due to the political conflicts. The Internally Displaced People (IDP) Camps were established in the towns of Banmaw, Momauk, and Mansi because of the weakness for the security of the rural regions. In order to examine about the socio-economic status of IDP Camps, questionnaires were distributed to IDPs and the indices of social, education, economic and security status were calculated by using the formula of Islam et-al, 2009. It was found that social, education, health and security status of the IDPs staying in the IDP Camps of Banmaw were the highest and economic status of the IDPs staying in the IDP Camps of Momauk was the highest among the IDPs at the three towns. If the wars and the fightings came to an end and peace is maintained, the IDPs who took shelter at the IDP Camps can return to their own villages. As a result they can carry out their livelihood peacefully and the development of the rural regions in Banmaw District can be attained.

Keywords: IDP, IDP Camp, Social Status, Education Status, Health Status, Economic Status

Introduction

Banmaw District is located in Kachin State of Northern Myanmar. It is bordered on the east by the People's Republic of China. It is included in Kachin Special Region No.2, one of the Border Areas of Myanmar. The majority of people living here include Kachin Ethnic group. In Kachin State, the armed struggle groups emerged soon after Myanmar attained independence. Kachin Independence Organization (K.I.O) was founded in 25th October 1959 and Kachin Independence Army (K.I.A) was founded in 5th February, 1961 for the weakness of 1947 constitution. Kachin Independence Organization (K.I.O) has returned into the legal fold on 24th February 1994 and co-operated with the government in the regional and national development in almost all fields. However the fighting between Tatmadaw (Myanmar Army) and KIA are still continuing in Kachin State due to the political conflicts. That is why there was no security in the rural areas of Banmaw District. As a result the rural to urban migration occurred in Banmaw District. People have been moved from the villages to the towns for fulfillment of required and better facilities for safety. In order to help these people, the IDP Camps were opened in Banmaw, Momauk and Mansi towns. As these IDPs had lost their houses and ownerships of their properties, NGO (Non-Government Organization) and the INGO (International Non-Government Organization) had helped them by giving aids, clothing and other household goods. By staying in the IDP Camps their lives are safe and secure. Moreover aids and tasks required for education and health of the IDPs are also given. This research attempts to assess the socio-economic status of IDP Camps in Banmaw District.

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Aim and Objectives

The main aim of this research is to assess the socio-economic status of IDP Camps. The Objectives are

- to study the physical background of Banmaw District.
- to evaluate the pull and push factors of intra-district migration in Banmaw District.
- to examine the spatial distribution of IDP Camps.
- to assess the social education and health status of IDPs.
- to analyze the economic and security status of IDPs in Banmaw District.

Materials and Methods

As a first phase, secondary data were collected from the departments and offices. As a second phase, primary data were collected. The interesting information that relates somewhat to the problem would be obtained from internet downloading. Questionnaires were distributed to IDPs in order to know about their socio-economic conditions. Social Status Index, Education Status Index, Health Status Index, Economic Status Index, and Security Status Index were calculated according to the following formula,

$$\text{Social Status Index (SSI)} = \sum \frac{Wifi}{m} \times 100 \text{ (Islam et. al.2009)}$$

$$\text{Education Status Index (ESI)} = \sum \frac{Wifi}{m} \times 100 \text{ (Islam et. al.2009)}$$

$$\text{Health Status Index (HSI)} = \sum \frac{Wifi}{m} \times 100 \text{ (Islam et. al.2009)}$$

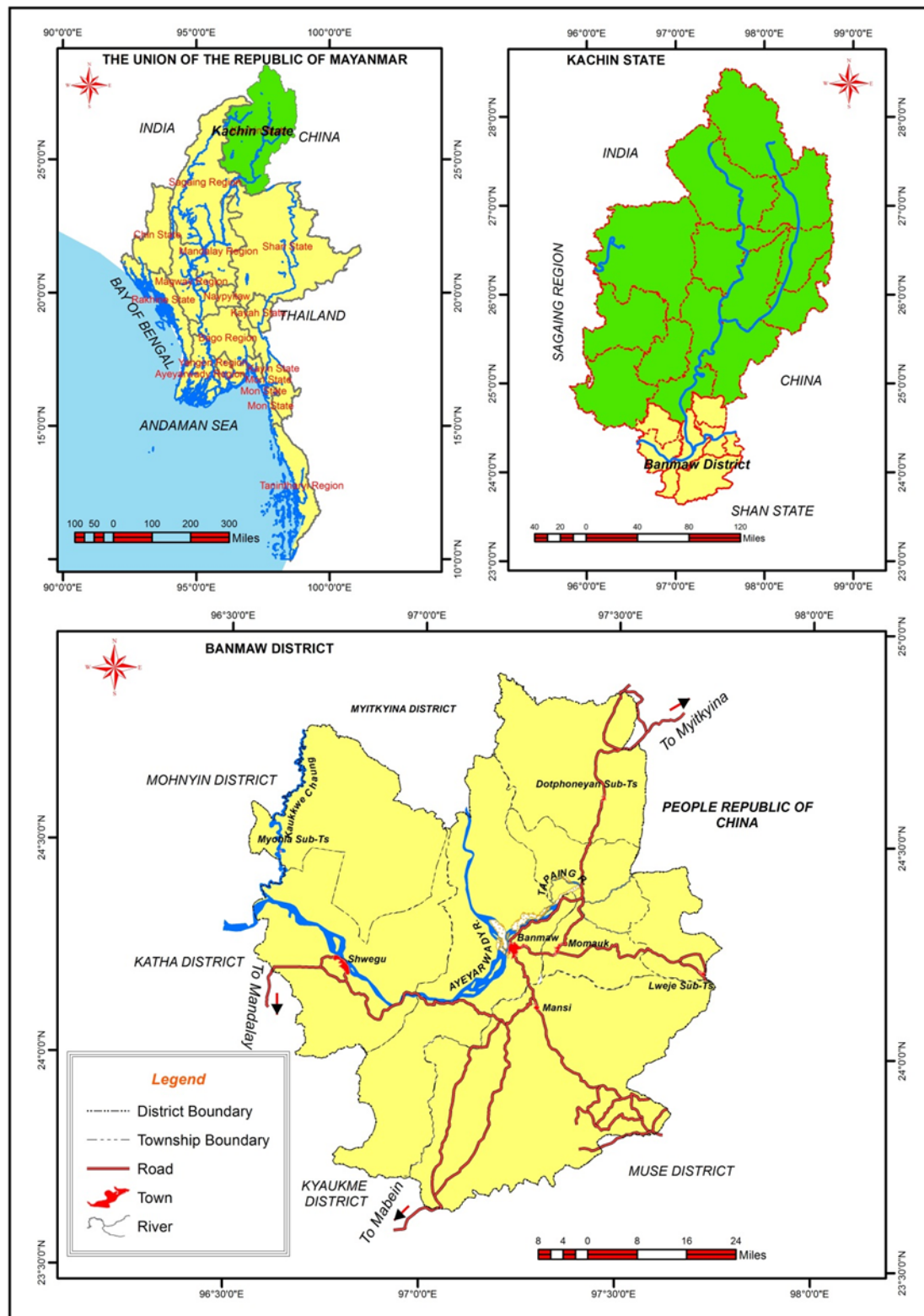
$$\text{Security Status Index (SSI)} = \sum \frac{Wifi}{m} \times 100 \text{ (Islam et. al.2009)}$$

Physical Background of Banmaw District

Banmaw District is located in Kachin State of Northern Myanmar and lies between the latitudes of 23° 38' 01" North and 24° 54' 54" North and the longitudes of 96° 33' 58" East and 97° 46' 21" East. Banmaw District is composed of four townships, three sub-townships and 174 village tracts. The area of Banmaw District is 10,742.93 sq. km (4,147.85 sq. miles). In general, the relief features of Banmaw District can be divided into two regions: (i) Mountain Ranges and (ii) Lowlands. The mountain ranges occupy about 55 percent of the total area of Banmaw District. They are found especially along the Myanmar-China Border, the eastern part of Momauk Township, eastern and southern part of Mansi Township, extreme northern and south-eastern portion of Shwegu Township and northern part of Banmaw Township.

Generally, the altitude of the ranges varied from 1,400 m to 2,440 m (1,000-8,000 ft) above sea level. River valleys and alluvial plains are found in the central and western portions of the district. The average height of the western lowlands is about 350 m (500 ft) above sea level. Banmaw District is a region with numerous rivers and streams.

The major rivers are the Ayeyarwady River and Taping River. The major drainage pattern is dendritic. According to the Koppen's Climatic Classification, Banmaw receives "Cwa" types of climate (Humid Subtropical Climate).

Map (1) Location of Banmaw District

Source: UTM Topographic Map No. 2396, 2397, 2496 and 2497

Spatial Distribution of IDP Camps

Soon after Myanmar attained independence, the armed struggle groups emerged. Kachin Independence Organization (K.I.O) was founded in 25th October 1959 and Kachin Independence Army (K.I.A) was founded in 5th February, 1961 for the weakness of 1947 constitution. Kachin

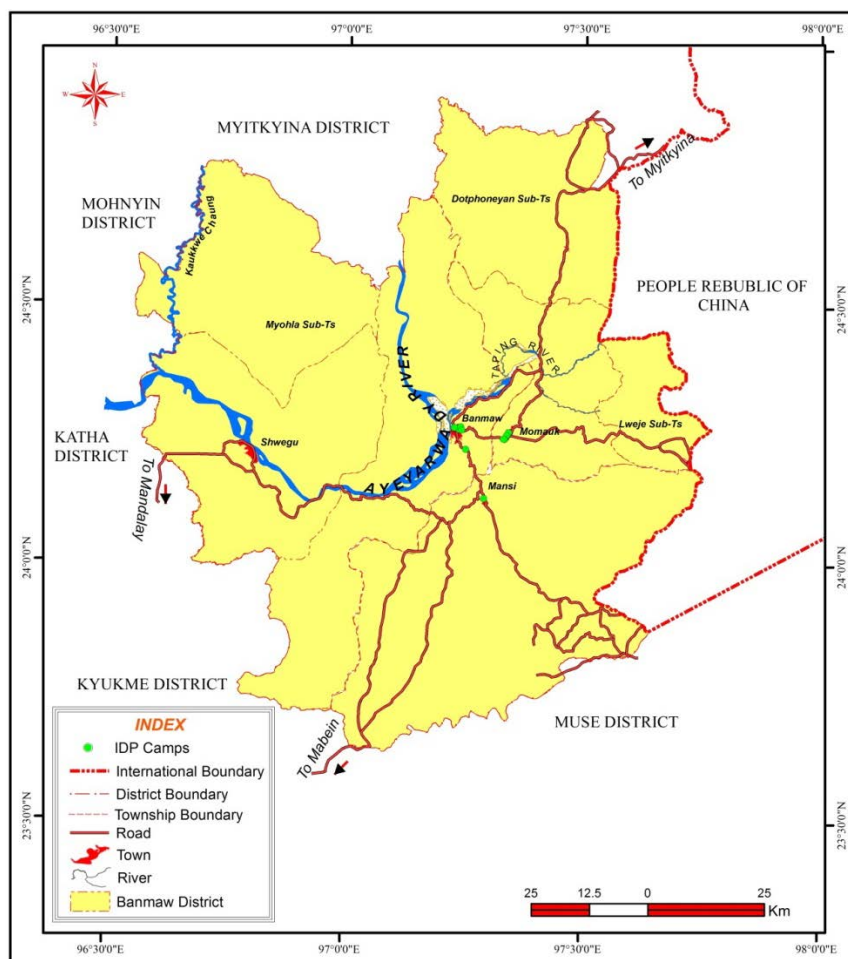
Independence Organization (KIO) has returned into the legal fold on 24th February 1994 and co-operated with the Government in the regional and national development in almost all fields. However the fightings between Tatmadaw (Myanmar army) and KIA are still continuing in Kachin State due to the political conflicts. As a result Internally Displaced People (IDP) migrated into Internally Displaced Person's Camps (IDPCamp) located in Banmaw, Momauk and Mansi towns.

In Banmaw Township, there are six IDP camps. The first IDP camp, Roberts IDP camp was opened on 11th August 2011. The total numbers of Internally Displaced People in IDP Camps within Banmaw Town are 6,714 persons in 2018 and among them 53 percent are females and 47 percent are male. Most of these IDPs migrated from the eastern and southeastern parts of Banmaw Township for their security.

There are 2,137 persons living in three IDP camps within Momauk. Among these IDP, 58 percent are females and 42 percent are males. These IDP camps are opened since 2011. Most of the IDP moved from the northern, eastern and northeastern parts of Momauk Township due to their security.

In Mansi there are two IDP Camps in the year 2018. The total number of IDP in these camps is 1,505 persons. Among these IDP, 50.6 percent are male and 49.4 percent are female. Most of these IDP moved from the northeastern, eastern and southeastern parts of Mansi Township due to the fighting between Tatmadaw and KIA.

Map (2) Location of IDP Camps in Banmaw District

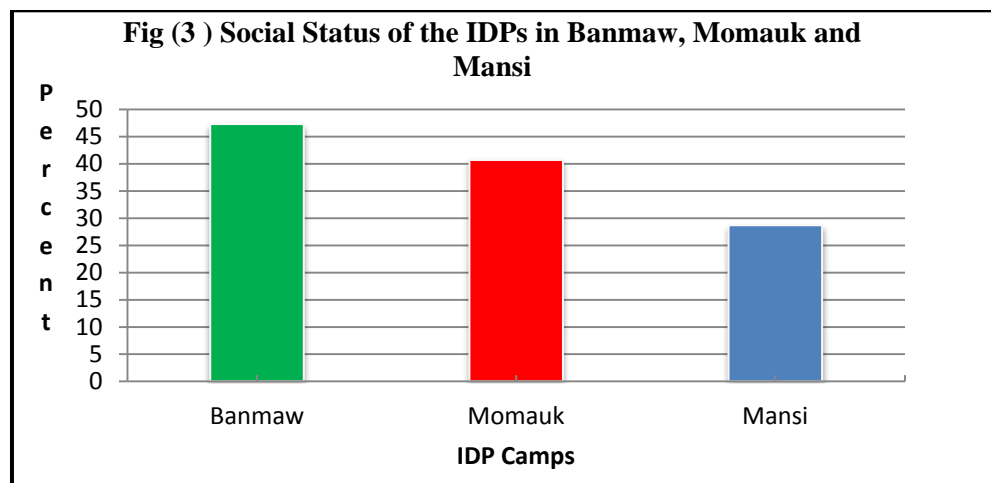


Source: UTM Topographic Map No. 2396, 2397, 2496 and 2497

Socio-economic Status of IDP Camps in Banmaw District

In Banmaw District, the fighting between Tatmadaw and KIA mostly occurred in the northern, eastern and northeastern parts of Momauk Township and in the northeastern, eastern and southeastern parts of Mansi Township. As a result the people from these areas moved from their villages to the IDP Camps located in Momauk, Mansi and Banmaw for their security. About 50 percent migrants have been living IDP Camps since six or more years. Majority of the migrant's duration of living in IDP Camps is four to seven years. In order to assess the socio-economic status of IDPs, Social Status Index, Education Status Index, Health Status Index, Economic Status Index and Security Status Index were separately calculated by the formula adopted by Islam et.al. (2009).

The social status index was calculated by the total change of five social indicators such as building status, water supply system, sanitation facilities, attending religious ceremonies and attending other social activities. Extent of changes are assigned through like, no change score 0, little change score was 1, medium, high and very high change score value were 2, 3 and 4 respectively. Change of only one indicator was considered as no change. Change of two indicators was considered as little change. If three, four and all indicators were changed it was considered as medium, high and very high change respectively.

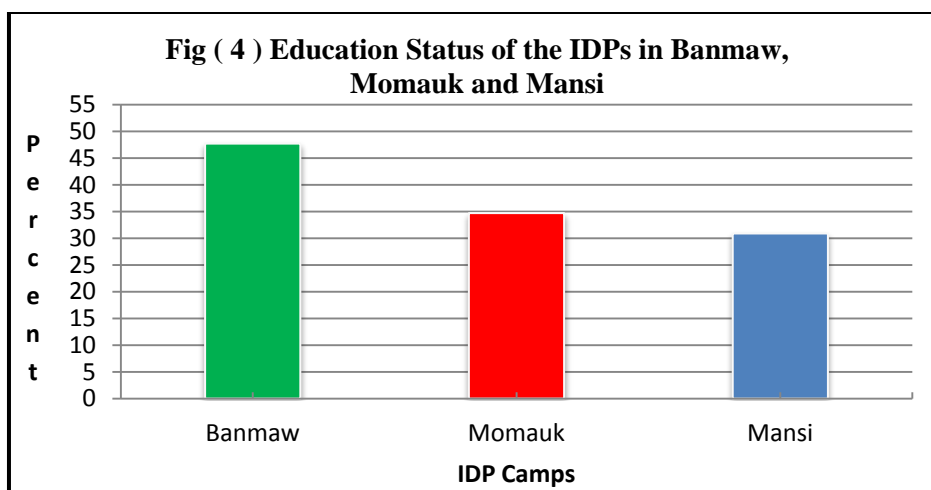


Source: Compiled by the Researcher

By calculating the social status index of each IDP camp, it is found that the social status indices of the IDP Camps of Banmaw, Momauk and Mansi were 47.3 percent, 40.7 percent and 28.7 percent respectively. Thirty percent of the migrants from IDP camps of Banmaw who responded the questionnaires stated that the social status of their camp was having medium change only. Again 43.5 percent of the respondents of the questionnaires from Momauk IDP camps stated that their social status was having little change only. Whereas 64.7 percent of the respondents of the questionnaires from Mansi IDP camps stated that their social status at their camp was having little change only. That is why, it is found that the social status of the IDPs staying in the IDP Camps of Banmaw had much more changes than the other IDPs. When the IDPs were staying at the IDP camps, they had understood about the social status and life style there. As the temperament, attitude, character and life style had been changed and as people are becoming friendly and intimately with one another, it is found that the social status had changed. Moreover, after setting permission to attend severed trainings regarding the social organizations

it is found that such trainees become knowledgeable and are having many experiences and are also becoming broad minded.

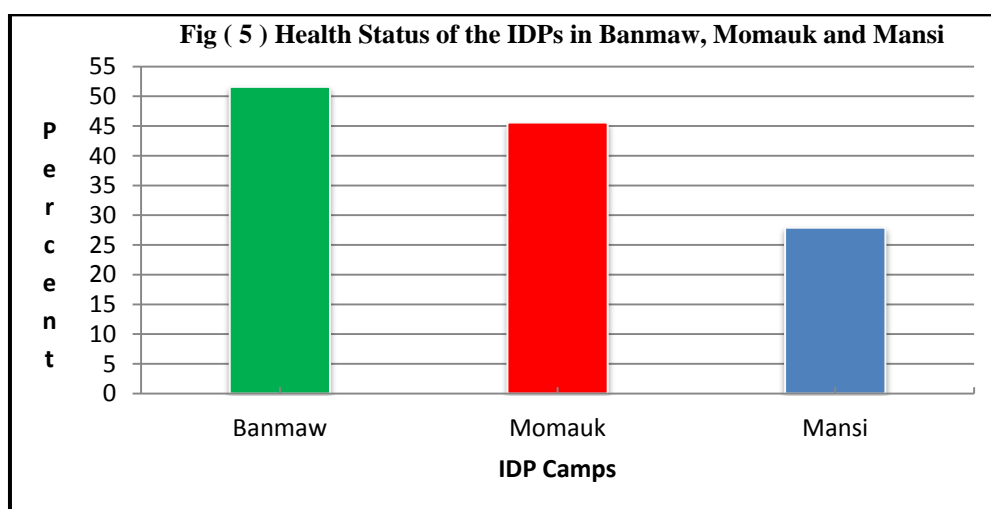
Education status index was calculated by the total change of five education indicators such as the middle school level, the high school, higher education level and literacy movement.



Source: Compiled by Researcher

According to the calculations made, the education status index of each IDP camp in the township of Banmaw, Momauk and Monsi were 47.7 percent, 34.7 percent and 30.9 percent respectively. Twenty-nine percent of the IDPs of Banmaw IDP Camps who had responded to the questionnaires stated that the education status there had medium change. Again 38.4 percent of the respondents of Momauk IDP camps regarding the questionnaires stated that the education status there had little change only. Moreover 45.3 percent of the respondents of their education status of the IDPs at the IDP Camps of Banmaw Town had the highest change. Mansi IDP Camps stated that their education status had little change only. It is also found that by staying at the IDP Camps, the IDPs are now trying hard in order to get education.

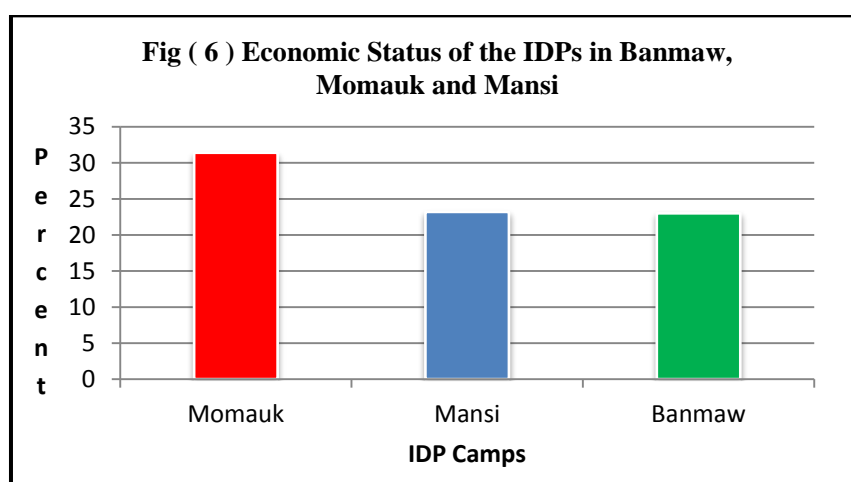
Health status index was calculated by the total change of five health indicators such as Government Hospital, Private Clinic, the doctors of indigenous medicine, Maternal and Child Welfare Association and Non-government Organization.



Source: Compiled by the Researcher

According to calculation made, the Health Status Indices of IDP camps in the towns of Banmaw, Momauk and Mansi were 51.6 percent, 45.6 percent and 27.9 percent respectively. Among the IDPs 31.8 percent of the IDPs from Banmaw IDP Camps who responded to the questionnaires stated that their health status there had medium change. Again 52.9 percent of the respondents of the questionnaires from Momauk IDP camps stated that their health status had medium change. And then, 2.9 percent of respondents of the questionnaire from Mansi IDP Camps stated that their health status was of little change. That is why; the health status of IDPs from Momauk had the greatest change. By staying at the IDP camps the IDPs can get pure drinking water. They can also get electricity all the time from morn till night. Moreover, as they know how to live in clean neat houses and hygienic environment, it is found that their health has become better than before.

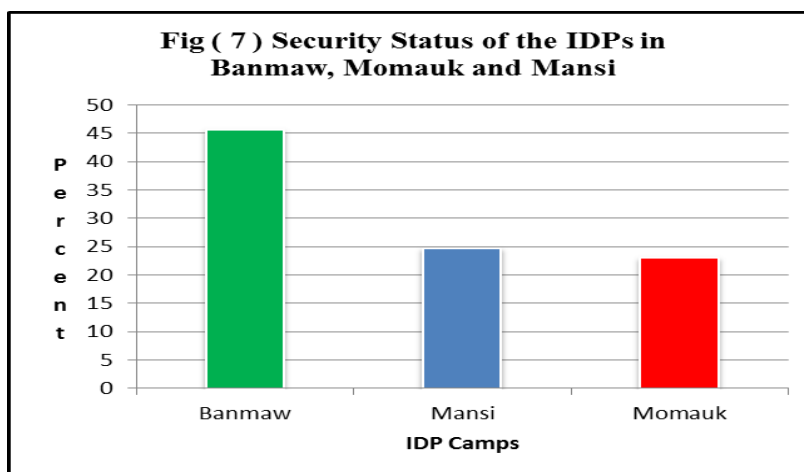
Economic Status Index was calculated by the total change of five economic indicators such as household income, expenditure, saving possession of T.V and mobile phone.



Source: Compiled by Researcher

The economic status indices of the IDP camps at Banmaw, Momauk, and Mansi were 23 percent, 31.4 percent and 23.2 percent respectively. Among the IDPs 48.8 percent of the respondents of the questionnaires at IDP camps of Banmaw stated that their economic status had little change. And then, 44.3 percent of the IDPs who responded to the questionnaires at Momauk IDP camps stated that their economic status had little change. Moreover, 57.6 percent of the respondents of questionnaires at the IDP camps of Mansi stated that the economic status had little change only. That is why; it is found that the economic status change of the migrants of the IDP camps in all the three towns had little change only. As most of the migrants who took shelter at the IDP camps did not have work and were jobless, they had to depend on the aid of the organizations such as INGO and NGO only. As each IDP gets kyats 4,000 per month only, it is not sufficient for their welfare and living and the IDPs are met with difficulties. When the numbers of the migrants who take shelter at the IDP camps are increasing and when the IDPs stay at the camp for a long time and also when the social philanthropic organizations are becoming fewer, the IDPs are met with difficulties for their livelihood and their welfare as well as their maintenance.

Security Status Index was calculated by the total change of five security indicators such as construction of fence, gates at the entrances, occurrences of fighting, security conditions and peace.



Source: Compiled by Researcher

According to the calculations, the security indices of the IDP camps in the towns of Banmaw, Momauk and Mansi were 45.6 percent, 23.1 percent and 24.7 percent respectively. At Banmaw IDP Camps 23.8 percent of all the respondents of the questionnaires stated that there was medium change only in the security status. Fifty-four percent of the respondents of the questionnaires at Momauk IDP camps stated that there had no change in the security status at their camps and 65.9 percent of respondents of questionnaires at Mansi IDP camps stated that there was only little change in the security status at their camps. It is found that out of the three towns, the security status of Banmaw is the highest. The security status of the IDP camps of Banmaw was high because gates were kept and constructed at the entrances of the IDP camps at Banmaw to prevent enemies from coming into the IDP camps. It is found that the security status of the IDP camps at the two towns of Momauk and Mansi were weak because fighting occurred in some villages which lie in the two townships of Momauk and Mansi. Moreover, sometimes when the IDP camps did not keep the gates at the entrance of their camps the security status at their camps was not high.

Findings and Discussion

Most of the migrants within Banmaw District are living and are taking shelter in the IDP camps. As many ethnic races are living in the IDP Camps, there are many people with many traits of conduct, character, ways of life and nature. As people with bad conduct and character are included, people who use drugs and are addicted with bad habits are also included. That is why, it is necessary to let the IDPs of the IDP Camps listen, follow and abide by the rules and regulations laid down by the authorities at the IDP Camps by educating, teaching or by training the IDPs living there. With regard to the education sector, as the students at the IDP Camps who are attending classes at the University and at the Matriculation classes are having difficulties, it is necessary for the authorities to help the students by giving aid and donation to them.

As trainings are given at the IDP camps, the trainers should learn and know about how to use the vocational training, practically and skillfully the trainees received for their living. For example, handicrafts, it is necessary for the authorities to give vocational trainings such as making of handicrafts at the IDP camps. Although the IDP Camps are well looked after, yet as there are many types and classes of people with different temperaments, there should not be discrimination or discard among the dwellers in the IDP camps regarding the status and classes

of people. The IDPs should be friendly with each other. Only when they are friendly with each other, the stress and discontentment within the IDP camps can become less and be reduced.

Since the year 2011, the IDP camps were established and opened and the authorities of the government and the social organizations had taken the responsibilities in giving aid and help to the IDPs at the IDP camps for five years. But after five years, the aids and helps from the social organizations are becoming less. That is why, the IDPs living in the IDP camps should try hard in making their living by livestock breeding, or by working as odd job impromptu workers in order to be able to take care of the welfare of their families. In order that IDPs of the IDP camps may be able to return to their own homes at the villages and to be able to work for their living, the main requirement for them is peace. That is why, it is necessary that the wars and fighting should come to an end by settling peace between the insurgents and the army.

Conclusion

It is found that as people who had come to the IDP camps received aids from every aspect, the education of their children had developed. Due to the trainings given at the IDP camps and as the INGO, NGO had given work, the work opportunities for the youths were good. By obeying and abiding the rules and regulations while staying at IDP camps, IDPs know how to live decently, tidily, neatly and hygienically. They also know how to deal nicely with people. They also get wisdom and general knowledge regarding how to be friendly with each other. They get more experiences and knowledge regarding how to deal with people around them. That is why, when there is peace and when they return to their own villages, they can be able to carry out more developments in the area or region where they stay. When wars and fightings come to an end and as there will be peace and security within the district, the return to the villages by the IDPs will make them happy in future, as they will forget the troubles they had met and experienced when they left their homes and took shelters at the IDP Camps.

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