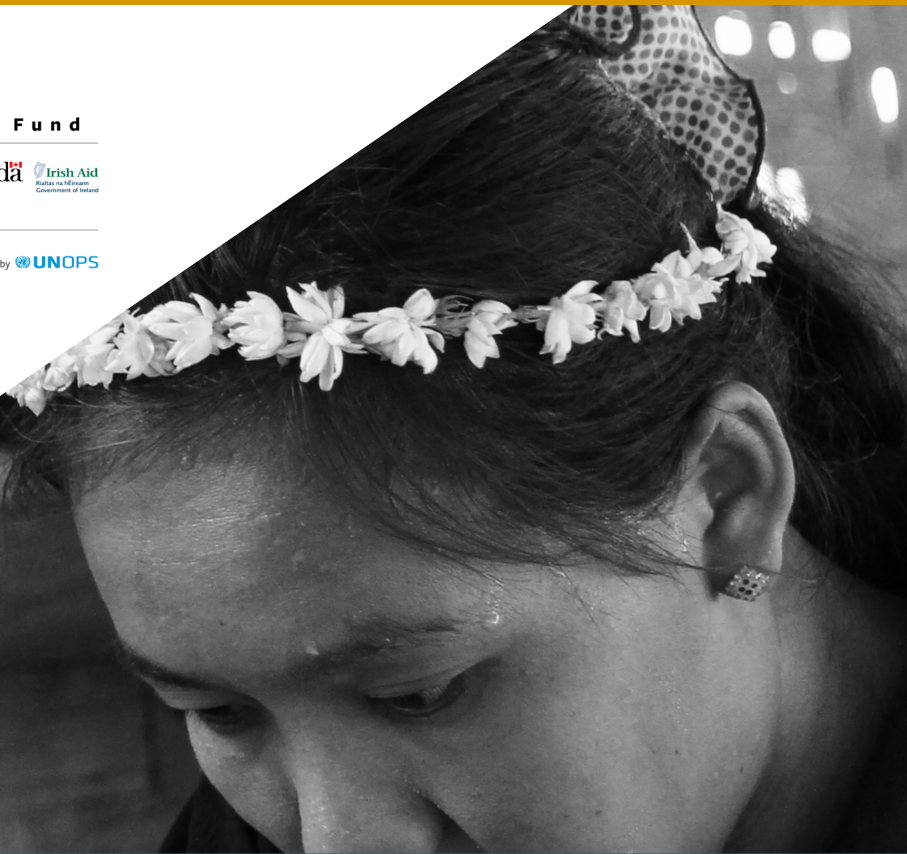




Livelihoods and Food Security Fund



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LABOUR MARKET SURVEY FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION TO SUPPORT IDPS AND HOST COMMUNITIES (VESI) IN KACHIN AND NORTHERN SHAN STATE

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People for development



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DISCLAIMER

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Executive Summary

The following Labour Market Survey was commissioned by AVSI in September 2019, to guide the Vocational Education to Support IDPs and Host Communities (VESI) project to develop demand-based and market-oriented vocational training and employment opportunities for IDPs in Kachin and Northern Shan State. A prior feasibility study was completed in August 2018, which assessed the target groups' existing vocational education training to better understand the needs of IDPs in terms of accessing employment/income generation activities, and the role of TVET in helping them to achieve this. Several key gaps were identified in the design of the current TVET system, which is to be used to guide informed decision making in the development of the VESI project. The aim of the project is to empower youth from target IDP and host communities by giving them access to non-farm livelihood opportunities improved through participation to market-oriented VET courses and provision of support and mentoring services. To reach this objective VESI project will coordinate with GTHSs/Polytechnic Centres in Myitkyina, Bhamo and Lashio, building their capacity to provide quality competence based practical short-course VET matching labour market needs.

To further support these program developments, a labour market survey was conducted to map out labour market demands and opportunities towards employment and self-employment through targeted vocational training. Furthermore, the study provides a basis for engagement with key private sector and industries, in terms of employment linkages and internship opportunities.

The study provides an overview of the labour market situation for the areas of Myitkyina, Bhamo, NGCA, and Lashio, including top sectors in demand and program recommendations. The study concludes with overall recommendations, addressing key gaps identified, including poor linkages to the market (employment and self-employment), insufficient support post training, outdated training skills, methodology and tools (not market-oriented), lack of internship opportunities/ on the job training, and a poor/non-existent student selection process.

To support VESI to be most impactful in achieving its objectives in developing market oriented and demand driven vocational training [targeting youth from IDPs camps and host communities], the study recommends the following:

- 1) Develop a modular-based short course learning system;
- 2) Ensure only demand-driven course topics based on current occupational standards (by industry) and labour market needs;
- 3) Update curriculums and upgrade teacher's competencies in consultation with the private sector;
- 4) Set up a community tool box program to better support for practical learning;
- 5) Integrate soft skills trainings across all subjects;
- 6) Support establishment of student selection process;
- 7) Develop a flexible and accessible training structure;
- 8) Support GTHS to develop a long-term strategy to become an effective and efficient polytechnic centre that better serves job market needs;
- 9) Develop meaningful partnerships with the private sector in terms of training structure and curriculum development, teacher capacity building, and job/internship linkages;
- 10) Support people with disabilities and women throughout the process of addressing all abovementioned points, and based on the research laid out in the study;
- 11) Address social inclusion as not simply combining people of different backgrounds in training, rather by developing creative learning activities (tied into the soft skills training).

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Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADRA	Adventist Development and Relief Agency - Myanmar
AVSI	Associazione Volontari Servizio Internazionale
BRI	Belt and Road Initiative
CMEC	China-Myanmar Economic Corridor
CSO	Civil Society Organization
EAO	Ethnic Armed Organizations
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FRC	Finnish Refugee Council
GCA	Government Controlled Area
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GTHS	Government Technical High Schools
GTI	Government Technical Institutes
HGDF	HTOI Gender and Development Foundation
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
INGO	International Nongovernmental Organization
KBC	Kachin Baptist Convention
KHCC	Kachin Humanitarian Concern Committee
KII	Key Informant Interview
KIO	Kachin Independence Organization
KMSS	Karuna Myanmar Social Services
LIFT	Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund
MEDZ	Myitkyina Economic Development Zone
MHA	Myanmar Hotelier Association
MoBA	Ministry of Border Affairs
MoE-DVET	Ministry of Education Department for Technical Vocational Education and Training
MOLIP	Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population
NGCA	Non-governmental controlled area
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NSSA	National Skilled Standard Associations
NSS	Northern Shan State
PWD	People with Disabilities
SENS	Skills for Employment in Northern Shan State
TVET	Technical Vocational Education Training
UNOCHA	United National Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
VESI	Vocational Education to Support IDPs and Host Communities in Kachin and NSS
VET	Vocational Education Training
YTHIC	Yunnan Tengchong Heng Yong Investment Company

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

A new program called Vocational Education to Support IDPs and Host Communities (VESI) in Kachin and Northern Shan State, will run from July 2019 to June 2022, with the goal of sustainably enhancing decent work opportunities and bridging the gap between youth from IDP camps and vulnerable host communities. The program funded by the Livelihood and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT), is led by Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Myanmar, in consortium with Associazione Volontari Servizio Internazionale (AVSI) and Finnish Refugee Council (FRC). Partners of the program include HTOI Gender and Development Foundation (HGDF), GRIP Hands Organization, Government Technological High Schools of Lashio, Myitkyina, and Bhamo, and the Ministry of Education Department for Technical Vocational Education and Training (MoE-DVET).

The project is aimed to empower youth from target IDP and host communities by giving them access to non-farm livelihood opportunities improved through participation in market-oriented Vocational Education Training (VET) courses and provision of support and mentoring services. To reach this objective ADRA/AVSI/FRC consortium will coordinate with Government Technical High Schools (GTHS)/Polytechnic Centres in Myitkyina, Bhamo and Lashio building their capacity to provide quality competence based practical short-course VET matching labour market needs.

The goal of the project is to develop life-long skills, both technical and soft skills, based on labour market demands, that will contribute to the improvement of livelihoods for IDPs. Through competence based vocational training, IDPs may achieve greater self-confidence, self-reliance and resilience, thereby lifting themselves from a life of dependency and reliance on others.

1.2 Scope of work

In September 2019, AVSI commissioned the current labour market survey on behalf of the VESI consortium to support evidence-based decision making and in formulation of programme design. The study covers the GTHS catchment areas of Myitkyina, Waingmaw, Bhamo, and Lashio, and is designed to explore labour market demands to support the project to develop demand-based and market-oriented VET and livelihoods opportunities. The study explores the viability of existing and potential markets, employment and self-employment opportunities for the target group. Specific emphasis is placed on employment opportunities for women, IDP youth and host communities, in areas of displacement and resettlement.

The study provides a comprehensive assessment of top labour demands and opportunities for VET, through mixed-methodology, including meta-analysis (desk review) and primary qualitative field research through focus group discussions and key informant interviews with relevant stakeholders, including (but not limited to) youth (female, IDP/host, vulnerable), communities (IDP/host GCA/NGCA), private sector and employer representatives (UMFCCI, companies), government representatives, and non-governmental stakeholders (CSO, NGO, INGO). Furthermore, the study seeks to describe the market structure in terms of actors and institutions of relevant supply chains, analyse the market conduct, i.e. price setting behaviours and competition, identify key market outcomes such as seasonality and volatility patterns of prices, identify potential for women's employment and economic leadership, and barriers that prevent youth/women/IDPs from accessing economic resources and employment opportunities.

The following is a list of tasks conducted by the study, as outlined in the Terms of Reference:

- Explore status and viability of existing and potential markets, assess their conditions and need;
- Identify what type of jobs are available in the market that can be filled by TVET graduates, with specific emphasis on employment opportunities for women, IDP youth and host communities, in areas of displacement and return areas;
- Identify employment & self-employment opportunities for TVET graduates to improve their current livelihood options;
- Identify diverse needs considering the varied context and support social cohesion;
- Consult with stakeholders: youth (female, IDP/host, vulnerable), communities (IDP/host GCA/NGCA), private sector and employer representatives (UMFCCI, companies), government representatives, non-governmental stakeholders (CSO, NGO, INGO);
- Describe the market structure in terms of actors and institutions of relevant supply chains;
- Analyse the market conduct, i.e. price setting behaviours and competition;
- Identify key market patterns such as seasonality and volatility patterns of prices;
- Identify potential for women's employment and economic leadership;
- Identify barriers that prevent youth/women/IDPs from accessing and controlling economic resources and employment;
- Identify relevant business and employer representatives to be engaged in further stages of the project;
- Identify job-matching platforms, if any.

1.3 Geographic Context

Kachin State and Northern Shan State make up the northern most part of the country, with rich natural resources, including minerals, hydropower, and timber in addition to vast agricultural and agro-forestry land¹. Both states share a border with China, with frequent cross border movement from both sides for economic purposes. Despite the economic potential of the region, long-standing conflict between the Government of Myanmar and Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs), as well as among EAOs and a multitude of militias, in addition to large scale illegal production of opium and heroin and other illicit activities (gambling, smuggling, etc.), have stifled socio-economic development.² Both Kachin and Northern Shan State have higher than average poverty levels, with 28.6% and 37.4% living below the poverty line, respectively, as compared to the national average of 25.6% (as of October 2018).³

Since the collapse of the 17-year ceasefire between the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) and the Myanmar Government in 2011, ongoing conflict and tension and forced recruitment from Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs) of civilians, has left hundreds of thousands of people displaced from their homes, in camps and host communities. As of June 2019, there were 106,647 internally displaced people, 97,600 in Kachin and 9,047 in Shan State, located across 169 IDP sites, and across host communities.⁴

1 The Mimu. October 2018.

2 LIFT Nutrition and Decent Work Kachin and Northern Shan Cfp. 2018.

3 The Mimu. October 2018.

4 UNOCHA. July 18, 2019. www.reliefweb.int

Such frequent movement and instability prevents families from being able to engage in meaningful livelihood or employment opportunities. The conflict has also slowed the growth of the local economy in a multitude of ways, further restricting local communities from finding decent work, resulting in youth migrating across the border to China for greater opportunities. According to a similar study conducted for GIZ in Northern Shan in August 2019, it was found that due to fears of recruitment by EAO, most young males feel they have little choice but to flee their communities and the IDP camps. An estimated 70% of youth (both male and female) in the study (from Northern Shan) have experienced working in China ranging from one to five years. From the camps visited in the study, 80% percent of the households claim to have at least one family member currently working in China. Based on the research conducted, it was discovered that the majority of migration occurs within the Kachin and Shan communities. While youth may be escaping fears of recruitment and lack of job opportunities at home, they are oftentimes met with equally devastating dangers across the border, including smuggling, trafficking, extortion, forced labour, sexual exploitation, slavery like practices, sometimes resulting in even death.⁵ Furthermore, females face great risk of being trafficked and sold as Chinese brides. According to research from a recent GIZ labour market study in Northern Shan, local brokers or job recruiters pretend to marry adolescent Myanmar females, and give presents or money amounting to 2,000 to 3,000 USD. There are stories of females being trafficked several times sold off to a new owner, being forced to birth children and helping with housework.

It is clear that conflict-related trauma, loss of assets and livelihoods, displacement and exposure to violence and discrimination have created a situation of poor living standards for communities across Kachin and Northern Shan. Many families, being forced off their land and into camps, have lost their primary sources of livelihood. Education levels amongst youth have also diminished with unpredictable displacement, leaving youth unskilled and unprepared for the future.⁶ While agriculture is a key sector in the local economy, labour market surveys and other studies have indicated that there is need for skilled trades-people in a number of sectors such as construction, tourism and hospitality, personal services, food and food processing, transport, electronics, manufacturing, wholesale, retail and transport.⁷ Similar studies have also found that the potential labour supply amongst youth across Kachin and Northern Shan are largely unprepared to meet the growing labour demands, which require skilled and semi-skilled labourers. To meet these gaps, investments are being made in TVET and other livelihoods training initiatives to provide targeted demand based and specific training to youth IDPs, to be able to meet market demands and connect youth to viable employment opportunities.

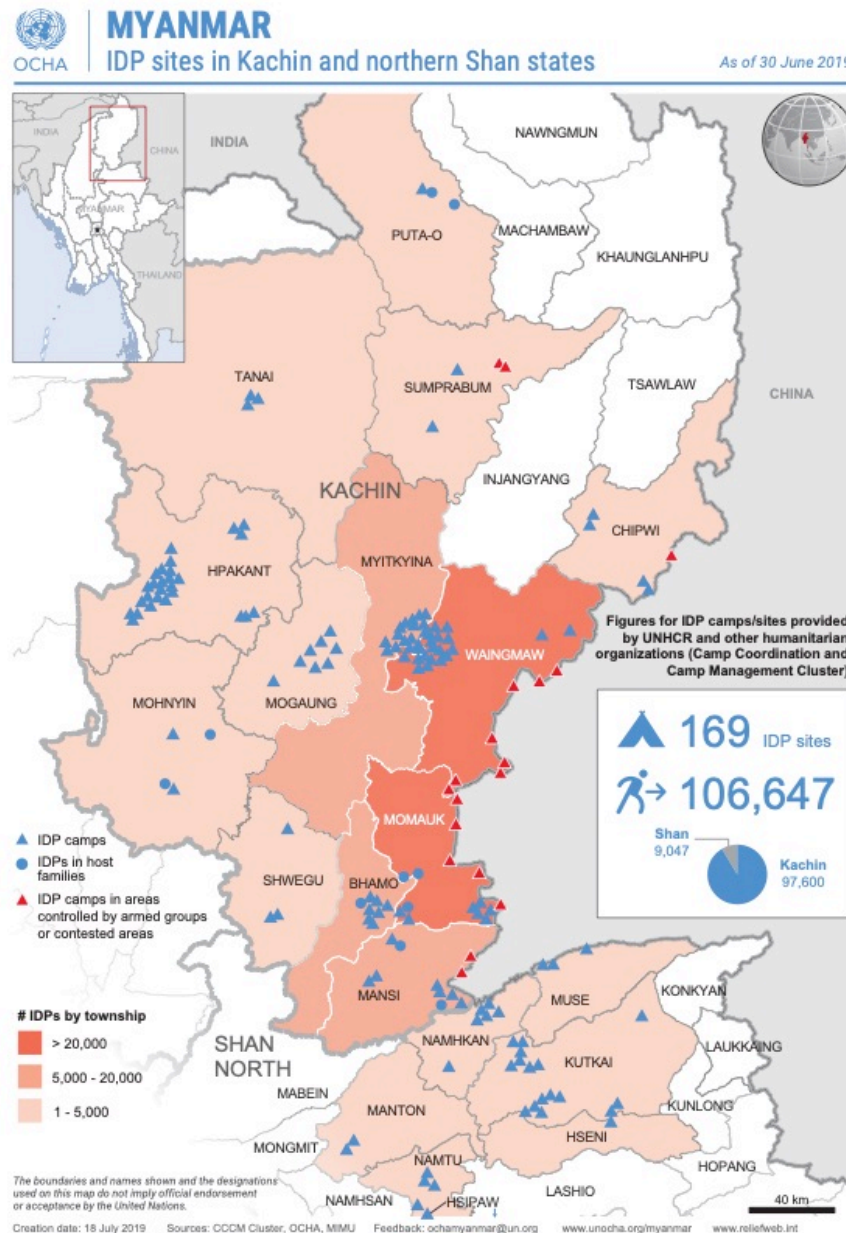
Despite ongoing conflict in the region, Kachin and Northern Shan State are planned to be of strategic importance within China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which is expected to bring significant economic developments to the region. Kachin State is set to be a major site for the initiative, with plans for construction of the massive Myitkyina Economic Development Zone (MEDZ) covering approximately 4,700 acres of land along the historic Ledo Road. Chinese commitments to the project were further confirmed with the visit of Chinese Ambassador to Myanmar, Hong Liang's recent visit

⁵ Labour Market Study of Northern Shan State, GIZ. August 2019.

⁶ Kachin and Northern Shan State Context and Vulnerability Review. HARP Facility. October 2018

⁷ Cfp_LIFT_2018_5_Kachin_VESI Project Technical Proposal

in December 2018, as highlighted by a recent report in The Irrawaddy on April 9, 2019. The Chinese ambassador said the economic zone will be a crucial part of China's ambitious Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) which is being implemented under the China-Myanmar Economic Corridor agreement.⁸ According to the recent report, it is expected that the project will include investments of up to US\$400 million, which will include nearly 500 factories and 5,000 buildings, from the Yunnan Tengchong Heng Yong Investment Company (YTHIC) and the Myitkyina Economic Development Zone Committee (MEDZC), formed by Kachin State government.



Source: UNOCHA. July 18, 2019. www. reliefweb.int

⁸ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/kachin-locals-dark-china-backed-industrial-zone-plan.html>

2 Methodology

2.1 Overall Study Methodology

The labour market study was conducted from October to November 2019, in two main phases, as detailed below. The research team consisted on two lead consultants (National and International) with vast experience in international development and research, specifically pertaining to livelihoods and vocational training in Myanmar.

Phase I

The initial phase of research included a comprehensive review of existing literature and recent studies (meta-analysis) on the labour market and economy relating to Kachin and Northern Shan State, with a focus on youth IDPs and vulnerable communities. The research team recently completed a very similar Labour Market Study for GIZ in Northern Shan as part of the SENS program (Skills for Employment in Northern Shan), which was used as a basis for developing the current study. The Lashio component of the study is a combination of data from the previous study as well as additional information and follow up.

Research tools were developed including Focus Group Discussion questionnaires and semi structured Key Informant Interview guides, to ensure in depth coverage of all key stakeholders pertaining to the study (see Annex 1 – Key Informant Interview Guides and Annex 2 – Focus Group Discussion Guides for all survey instruments used in the study).

Phase II

Following analysis of secondary data, a qualitative field study was conducted in target regions and main industries through Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews and observations with the relevant stakeholder institutions and key actors. The research team visited a total of 12 camps across Myitkyina, Bhamo and Lashio, and met with over 50 representative stakeholders related to the labour market in the target area.

The study selected three camps per target location, covering at least 10% of the total camp population in each region, to ensure an equally representative coverage of stakeholders from each area. The camps selected have populations ranging from 500 to 1,000 IDPs and represent a range of target backgrounds, including IDPs, host communities, and returned communities. Priority was given to camps in the GTHS catchment areas, most of which are in urban and semi-urban settings. Due to high mobility in the camps during the daytime, the research team attempted to meet with as many beneficiaries as possible within each camp, based on availability. Furthermore, the study attempted to include equal representation of gender, and coverage of PWD. The sampling of IDPs included in the study was provided by partner organizations.

Stakeholder meetings (KIIs) were selected based on their relevant relationship in the labour market, in terms of both supply and demand. To better understand the skills, experience and needs of the labour supply, a group of stakeholders were selected to interview including parents of youth IDPs, camp committee members, community representatives, NGOs working with IDPs, PWD associations and more (full list in Annex). Key informant stakeholders representing labour demands were selected from UMFCCI, policy makers, GTHS, training institutions, business associations and the private sector.

The following is a breakdown of the camp visits and key informant interviews as part of the study.

A *Camp visits: focus group discussions with youth IDPs*

TABLE 1 - IDP CAMP FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Township	Area Type	Camp/Comm. Name	Male IDP	Female IDP	Total IDP	Male PWD	Female PWD	Total PWD
Myitkyina	GCA - IDP Camp	Jan Mai Kawng	8	5	13	10	8	18
	GCA - IDP Camp	Man Hkring	2	6	8	1		1
	GCA - IDP Camp	YuZaNu Myaing	-	-	-	8	11	19
	GCA-Relocation Community	Palana	-	-	-	-	-	-
Waingmaw	GCA - IDP Camp	Waingmaw	1	-	1	-	-	-
	NGCA	Woi Chyai	5	1	6	-	-	-
	NGCA	Je Young Hka	3	1	4	-	-	-
Totals					32			38
Bhamo	GCA - IDP Camp	Phan Khar Kone	6	5	11	-	-	-
Momauk	GCA - IDP Camp	Mine Khaung	6	2	8	2	1	3
	GCA - Relocated Community	Gwe Ga Htaung	3	2	5	-	-	-
	GCA - Relocated Community	Kyat Khan Det	4	1	5	-	-	-
	GCA - Relocated Community	Kyauk Sa khan	3	4	7	-	-	-
Totals					36			3
Lashio	GCA - IDP Camp	Man Ping	1	4	5	-	-	-
Thenni	GCA - IDP Camp	Nang Zalat	4	8	12	-	-	-
Totals					17			-
Total Respondents					85			41
					IDP			PWD

B *Key Informant Interviews with industry representatives*

Key Informant Interviews (KII) were held with selected groups related to the study, covering a diverse representation of the scope of the project, including the following:

TABLE 2 - KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEWS (BY INDUSTRY)

Representative type	Myitkyina	Laiza	Bhamo	Lashio	Yangon	Mandalay	Total
---------------------	-----------	-------	-------	--------	--------	----------	-------

EAOs		2					2
UMFCCI	1			1			2
Faith-based group	3						3
GOVT / VET	2		3			2	7
INGO				4	1		5
NGO	4		1				5
Nurse Aid, Pharmacy School	1						1
Political Party	1		1				2
Private Sector	20		9	3		3	35
PWD org	2		1		1		4
Training School	2		3				5
	36	2	18	8	2	5	71

A full table of the Key Informant Interview meeting list is included in Annex.

2.2 Selection of High Demand Sectors

Further methodology was developed for the analysis and selection of labour skills and sectors in demand in Myitkyina, Waingmaw, Bhamo and Lashio. From initial desk research and prior labour market studies in the region, the research team developed a long list of sectors and skills of sectors in high demand. Additionally, information was gathered from the relevant Government Technical High Schools in the target areas, to begin to map out current gaps in developing demand based short course training.

The second stage selection process includes primary research collected through interviews with key stakeholder representatives from a range of private sector and industries (from the long list), chambers of commerce, VET/TVET institutions both government and private and trade schools (i.e. sewing, nurse aid/pharmacy), local and international NGOs, faith-based church groups and camp leaders, as well as some local political representatives. A series of questions were developed to understand the views of each stakeholder group pertaining to the following:

- 1) Barriers to employment for youth IDPs
- 2) Causes for failure among VET/TVET initiatives
- 3) Highest skills in demand in the market available to youth IDPS (stratified by gender)

In terms of the third question, greatest skills in demand based on the market (demand side), the study narrowed the long list of sectors through the following two steps:

Step 1: Preliminary recommendations from stakeholders on highest skills and sectors in demand in the market.

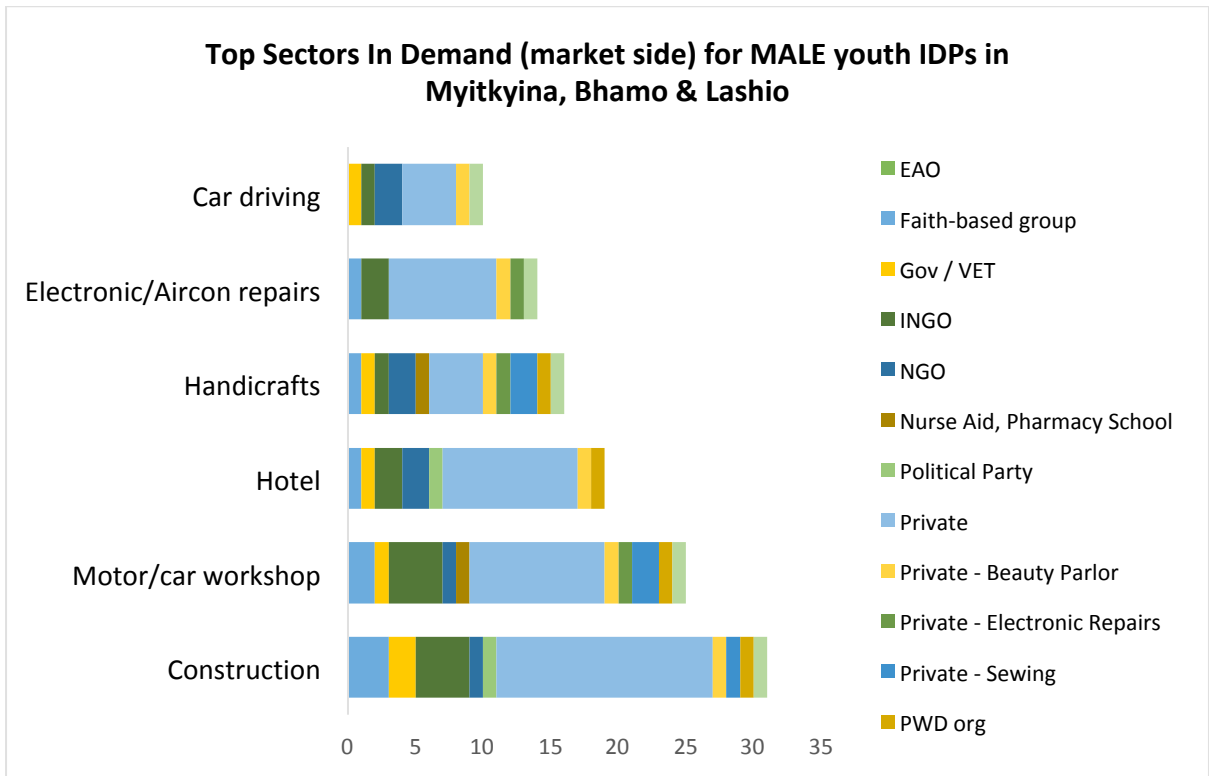


FIGURE 1 - TOP SECTORS IN DEMAND FOR MALE IDPS

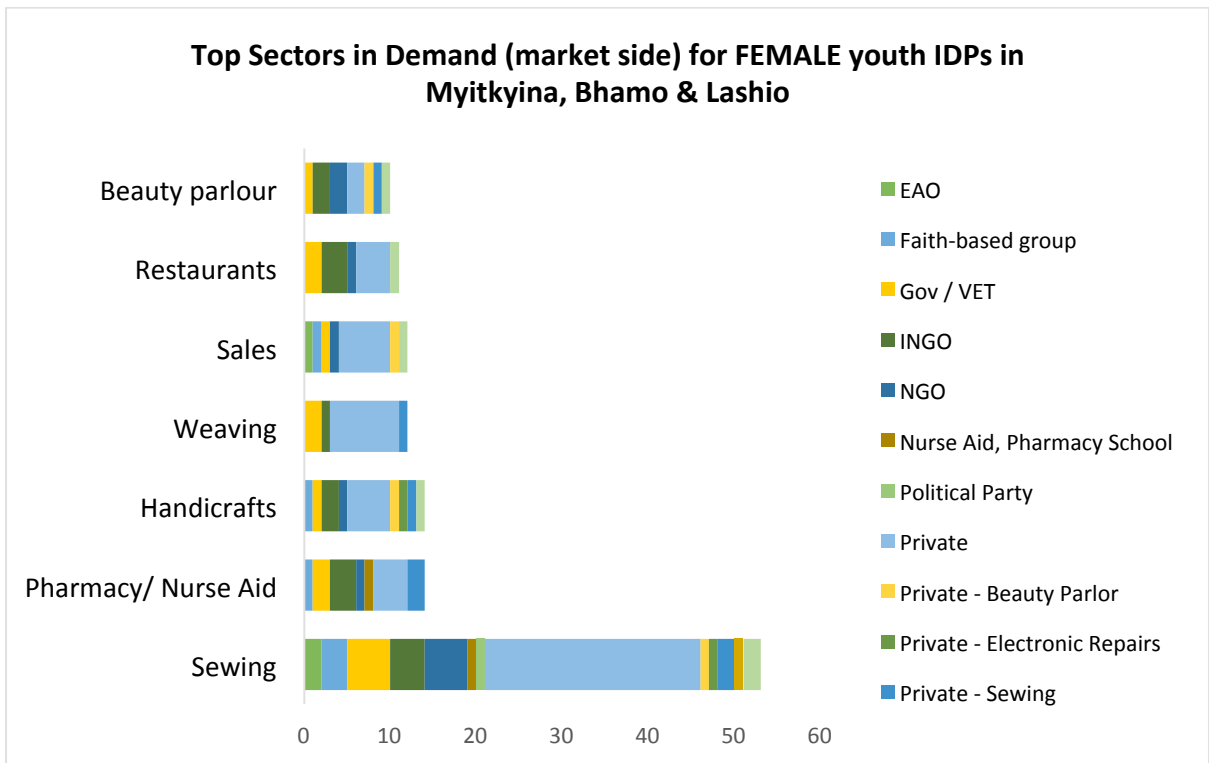


FIGURE 2 - TOP SECTORS IN DEMAND FOR FEMALE IDPS

Step 2: Meetings with private sector representatives along the value chain for each sector, to develop a matrix to narrow to a short list of the top sectors, based on the following criteria. The analysis included the following factors, which were used to general an overall demand score of low (L), medium (M), or high (H):

- Market demand (degree)
- Potential for market growth
- Access to market
- Potential value-added activities
- Regular seasonal income
- Profitability (income)
- Opportunities for female engagement
- Startup capital required
- Barriers to entry
- Technical knowledge required
- Likelihood of adoption

Based on the overall criteria score, the top listed sectors were included in a short list and further analyzed according to the following points:

- Market demand level
- Prior education and skills required (if any)
- Process to become professional in the field
- Actors and institutions in the supply chain
- Price setting behavior and competition
- Business linkages (existing and potential)
- Challenges for IDPs and PWD to enter the sector
- Overall demand calculation
- Recommendations

TABLE 3 - SHORT LISTING DEMAND CRITERIA

	Target Location	Market Demand	Potential for market growth	Access to Market	Potential to Value added Activities	Regular seasonabl income	Profit-ability (income)	Opportunities for female engagement	Startup capital required	Barriers to entry	Technical knowledge required	Likelihood of adoption	Overall rating
Agriculture (own farming)	All	L	L	M	H	M	L	H	H	L	L	H	L
Agriculture (wage-labor)	All	H	M	M	N/A	M	L	H	L	L	L	H	L
Migration to China	All	H	L	M	H	M	L	H	H	L	L	H	M
General Trading	All	L	M	L	N/A	M	L	H	L	L	L	L	L
Hair dressing/ Beauty parlour	All	M	M	L	N/A	M	M	H	H	H	H	H	M
Phone retail	All	M	M	L	L	H	M	H	L	H	L	L	L
Fuel/gas station	All	M	M	L	N/A	H	M	H	L	H	L	M	L
Local food production	All	M	M	M	M	L	M	H	M	M	L	H	L
Welding/steel manufacturing	All	H	H	M	H	H	H	L	M	M	L	H	H
Electronics/ Air con repairs	Lashio, Myitkyina	H	H	M	N/A	M	M	L	M	L	L	M	M
Handicraft	All	M	L	L	H	L	M	H	L	M	M	H	M
Garment/sewing	All	H	M	H	M	M	M	H	L	M	L	H	H
Construction	All	H	H	H	H	M	H	L	L	M	L	M	H
Hotels	Myitkyina, Lashio	M	H	H	N/A	H	M	H	M	M	M	M	M
Health care services	Myitkyina, Lashio	M	H	H	N/A	H	M	H	M	M	M	M	M
Livestock raising	All	M	L	M	L	L	M	H	M	L	L	H	M
Mining/ Illegal extraction	All	L	L	L	N/A	L	H	L	L	L	L	H	L

2.3 Target beneficiaries

The VESI project is targeting IDP and host community youth in Kachin and Northern Shan State through providing market relevant skills training. The following is a breakdown of the target groups according to the project, as outlined in the proposal:

TABLE 4 - VESI TARGET BENEFICIARIES

Target Group (VESI)	Persons	Female	Male	%IDP	%PWD
Youth aged 16-35 accessing skills training	1,650	850	800	60%	5%
Teachers receiving training	36	20	16	10%	3%
Youth outside of trainings accessing employment through Job placements/ skills matching	180	90	90	50%	5%
Business owners employing trainees	120	30	90	10%	5%
Total Direct Beneficiaries	1,986	990	990		

Direct beneficiaries of the project are youth and young adults ages 16 to 35, including the most vulnerable: School dropouts, youth from both government and non-government-controlled areas (GCA and NGCAs) and ethnic minorities, women and persons with disabilities.

To guide the project in targeting and supporting these specific target groups, the study collected information first hand from each distinct target group in the target areas, to determine the current most significant barriers to youth accessing VET and employment and self-employment opportunities.

People with disabilities

The project aims to support PWD through targeted interventions, as current opportunities to access income generating activities and TVET are limited for PWD and there are few adaption mechanisms to support their participation in trainings, according to the project’s feasibility study. In developing specific programming to meet the needs of PWD, it is important to note the differences and unique needs of people with physical disabilities and those with cognitive impairments. The study met with people with physical impairments, whom have the ability to move by themselves, or with some assistance from their family. It was observed that these individuals have the ability to be integrated within the job market, with some additional assistance (such as adapted machinery and support from teachers). Individuals with cognitive impairments can be trained by third party organizations such as Humanity Inclusion, to provide training, awareness within communities, training of trainers, and improving access to be able to develop a supportive learning environment that meets the unique needs of these people, which may require a more holistic approach. People with both physical and cognitive disability require a physically and socially supportive environment to encourage learning. Teachers are a very important component of this support, and can learn ways to adapt teaching methods and to provide a supportive classroom learning environment.

At the time of data collection for the feasibility study, only nine PWD were interviewed across six camps. Whilst this is a relatively small sample, the results found that they have little interest in generating income for themselves. According to a 2014 census, PWD tend to be of older age, which was further confirmed by the current study (see impact group profile). However, the feasibility study determined that vocational training and rehabilitation services are very important for PWD ‘to support their development of capabilities to contribute positively to their community’, furthermore, ‘accessing TVET encourages confidence for PWD to find suitable and accessible work’, and therefore, ‘equitable access to TVET for PWD should be provided’. The current study was able to capture information from a relatively large sample of PWD to support VESI to develop appropriate and target initiatives for all target groups.

2.4 Study Limitations

While the study was very successful in achieving its objectives as outlined above, there were some limitations in carrying it out. Overall, there were low numbers of youth attendees in interviews due to movements outside of the camps, especially amongst young men (potentially due to forced recruitment from EAOs, and working outside of the camps). Most youth that were available to meet (those in the camps) are still in schools or have never worked before and thus struggled to answer the questions. It is important to remark the movements of the target group, and the existence of sub groups in targeting interventions. Most camps and host communities host families and young females (married and unmarried). This demographic is unable or struggles to leave the camp and may have difficulty participating in training outside. There are reports of many young men fleeing the camps due to fears of forced recruitment and migrating to China for economic purposes. Meeting the needs of this sub group will need to take their migratory patterns into consideration. Additionally, the research team was unable to meet with the community in Myitkyina and Bhamo. Meeting with the community in Myitkyina were cancelled due to community related commitments, however, the study was able to meet with a few community leaders to better understand the unique social issues and needs from the community to guide the program in its commitments to promote social cohesion. There were limitations to visit NGCAs in Bhamo due to security reasons. The team was only able to meet with a few PWD in Bhamo, but was able to meet with a large group in Myitkyina. Lastly, the study was limited by challenges in translations of local ethnic languages to Myanmar, particularly with more in depth qualitative questions in focus group. However, extra time was spent to verify translations to ensure the information was properly understood and translated across languages.

3 Findings

3.1 Myitkyina & Waingmaw Findings

3.1.1 Impact Group Profile

Background information

To obtain information directly from the target groups, the study conducted research in focus group style interviews with male and female youth IDPs as well as PWDs. The research team met with 22 youth IDPs (11 male and 11 female) from three camps in Myitkyina and 10 youth (8 male and 2 female) from two camps located in nearby Laiza. Additionally, the team interviewed 38 PWD (19 male and 19 female) from three of the Myitkyina camps (Table 5 - Youth IDP Camp Interviews & Length of Stay – Myitkyina). A total of 70 respondents were interviewed from Myitkyina Township. The youth in the Myitkyina based camps (Jar Mai Koung, Man Hkring and Waingmaw camps) have been staying in the camp for an average of six years. The youth in Laiza have been living in the camps for ten years. Some IDPs do move in and out of the camps for work and are considered as short- term stay. All of the families interviewed in the camps visited are of Kachin ethnicity. Nearly all of the youth claim to be staying with family members, however few do report staying with an uncle.

TABLE 5 - YOUTH IDP CAMP INTERVIEWS & LENGTH OF STAY – MYITKYINA

Township: <i>Camp Location</i>	Youth IDPs	Male IDPs	Female IDPs	Average stay in camp (years)	PWD	Male PWD	Female PWD	Total Respondents
Myitkyina	22	11	11	5.9	38	19	19	60
<i>Jar Mai Koun</i>	13	8	5	7.1	18	10	8	
<i>Man Hkring</i>	8	2	6	5.4	1	1	-	
<i>Waingmaw</i>	1	1	-	1.5	-	-	-	
<i>Yuzana Myaing</i>	-	-	-		19	8	11	
Laiza	10	8	2	10.0	-	-	-	10
<i>Laiza Camp-1</i>	6	5	1	10.0	-	-	-	
<i>Laiza Camp-2</i>	4	3	1	10.0	-	-	-	
<i>Total</i>	32	19	13	-	38	19	19	70

Amongst the IDPs interviewed in focus group, the average age in the Myitkyina and Laiza-based camps is 19, ranging from age 14 to 25. The split between male and females in the households is equal at three members of each gender per household, with two to three children per household on average living in the camp.

People with Disabilities

To develop interventions targeted to PWD, a key target group, the study collected the same data amongst the sample of 19 PWD, eight of which were female. In line with the feasibility study, the study found that the majority of PWD inside the camps and host communities are of older age. Among the sample, the average age is 42 years old, ranging from 23 to 60. Nearly all PWD are married, apart from two females ages 23 and 36.

Education, skills and employment

In designing vocational trainings for the target group, it is important to develop targeted interventions based on the current education and skill levels of youth. The majority of youth IDPs have been living inside the camps for the majority of their education allowing them to complete high school offered in the camp. While over half of respondent youth have completed high school and additional 27% have gone on to university nearby. There is a significant percentage of youth IDPs that have not completed any formal education.

While a majority of youth IDPs have completed high school and even attended university, there are major gaps in employment status and practical skill levels. Nearly 90% of youth IDPs are currently unemployed, while those employed are engaged in wage labour. In terms of skill levels, 62% of youth have prior experience in agriculture-based work. Migration to China for work and construction are the second most common previous work-related experience. In terms of language skills, most IDPs from GCAs are able to write and read well in Myanmar, while some Chinese language skills and low-level English abilities. The situation in NGCAs is much different where most youth are not taught Myanmar in school and have very little to no speaking abilities. Training materials must be developed and taught in Kachin language for these groups.

Overall, the current education levels amongst most youth IDPs restrict them from gaining decent labour, and most end up in labour intensive jobs requiring very low skill sets. Most youth IDPs from

Myitkyina report working as an assistant to the skilled person, such as carrying bricks or mixing concrete.

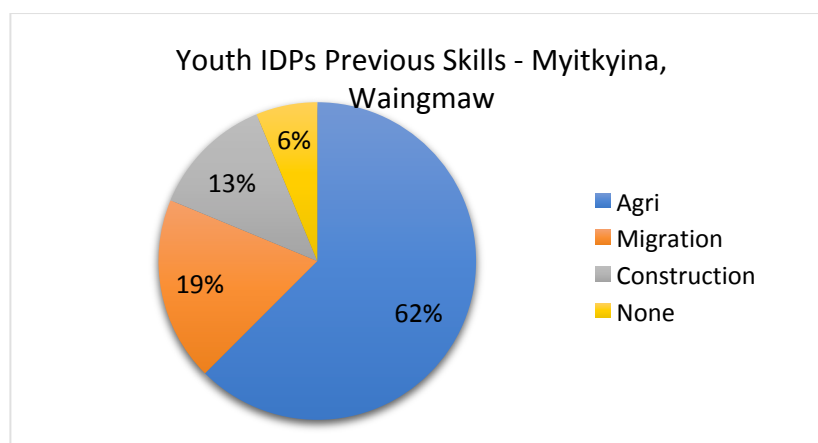


FIGURE 3 - YOUTH IDP SKILLS (MYITKYINA, WAINGMAW)

Amongst the sample of PWD, education levels were mostly middle school, with a few people reaching high school level, however a few have reached only primary level. There appears to be a wide range in terms of employment with some PWD attending good education and others having achieved none. In terms of employment, the majority of PWD do not have a job, however some do have experience working on the farm. Of those that are able to work, similar to youth IDPs without disability they are primarily engaged in daily labour including masonry, security, sewing, weaving and handicrafts.

Barriers of entry to employment and self-employment

Despite low employment rates and the availability of TVET offered in Myitkyina, over 80% of youth in IDP camps are unaware of such opportunities. Of those that are aware, there is further speculation of the training's ability to lead to better employment outcomes. Typically, youth and families alike are not interested to invest time and money lost from not working in advancing their skills through vocational training, without greater assurance that they will be able to find jobs.



Youth FGD at Jar Main Kawng Camp, Myitkyina

Beyond education and a lack of practical work experience, the study found some additional barriers restricting youth IDPs from successfully gaining employment. Overall, there seems to be a lack of self-motivation amongst youth IDPs in camps and communities in Myitkyina. This lack of motivation may be the result of an inability to reach the resources to be able to lift themselves up to achieve greater opportunities. The role of conflict is also significant in these people’s daily lives and likely a main source of feelings of despair leading to poor motivation. Addressing the root causes of youth IDP’s lack of motivation is key to improving employment outcomes. It is essential to ensure youth have additional training and support to build their confidence and additional soft skills to be successful in the workplace. The research team asked youth IDPs directly what they felt were the greatest challenges they face in seeking employment, and greater opportunities, as displayed in the image below. Youth believe the greatest barrier they face to entering the job market is that they do not have proper skills.

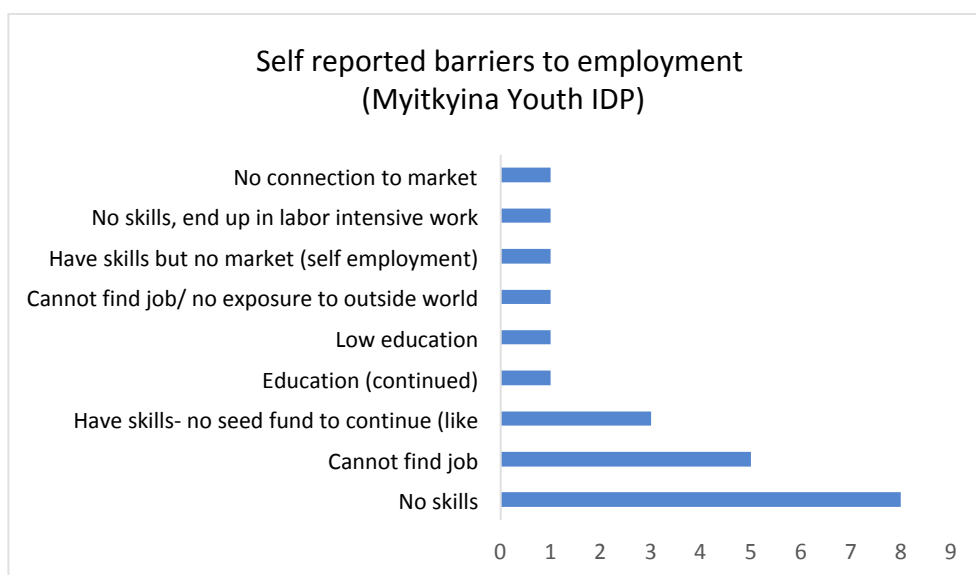


FIGURE 4 - BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

Similarly, PWD found their greatest barriers to employment as a general lack of skills and no market opportunities, however nearly half of PWD respondents also remarked an inability to mobilize alone, meaning they are unable to find or get to work without help. While PWD typically face the same challenges as youth IDPs, they are further restricted from accessing greater skills and opportunities as most training centres are not set up to accommodate people with special needs and assistance. Additionally, they face difficulty in accessibility and transportation to training facilities, without added costs (e.g. needing to be accommodated by a helper requires extra costs).



Specially design operator's chair for PWD to use during hair cutting

Several parents of youth IDPs in Myitkyina based camps were interviewed regarding their impressions of youth education and skills to enter the job market. Overall, parents agree with youth in that they lack sufficient skills to get better jobs beyond the basic labour-intensive support roles they currently can get. First, they lack proper access to education, but they fear that even if they can get vocational training it might not be enough to get a better job. They still do not feel their children are prepared to get the jobs that are available in the market. As a result, most end up taking wage labour in difficult fields such as plantation farming. Additional barriers suggested by parents and camp committees include the following:

- Lack of transportation to attend training (both fuel costs and motorbike)
- Pervasive drug issues
- Distance to training location (most possible to commute from camp)
- Lack of understanding of opportunities and how to move forward
- Lack of soft skills to continue in the job market (some drop out after 2 weeks)

Youth IDP aspirations towards employment

The study interviewed youth as well as PWD on three aspects relating to their aspirations towards employment:

- Whether they interested in self-employment or being employed
- What skills are they most interested in (demand from supply side)
- What they consider most important in seeking employment

In Myitkyina, the split amongst youth IDPs was 50/50 regarding how many youths are interested in employment or self-employment. Most youth interested in self-employment are currently engaged in other wage labour and are not looking for full time work, rather a part time additional source of income, which they could do from their community or nearby. However, all of the PWD respondents prefer self-employment over employment, mainly due to fears of and prior experience with discrimination in the workplace.

Youth were asked to list the top skills of interest to them in seeking employment opportunities. The following images include a breakdown of the top four choices of skills requested by both female and male IDPs in Myitkyina. As a percentage of the total respondents (stratified by gender), the following

images display a breakdown of the skills in demand listed in order of the top four choices. Amongst the surveyed group of females, 100% would like to receive skills in sewing as a top choice, followed by handicrafts, weaving and hairdressing. One hundred percent of the male IDPs interviewed request motorbike skills as a first choice, led by masonry, car driving, and workshop skills, as well as how to set up or work at a tea shop.

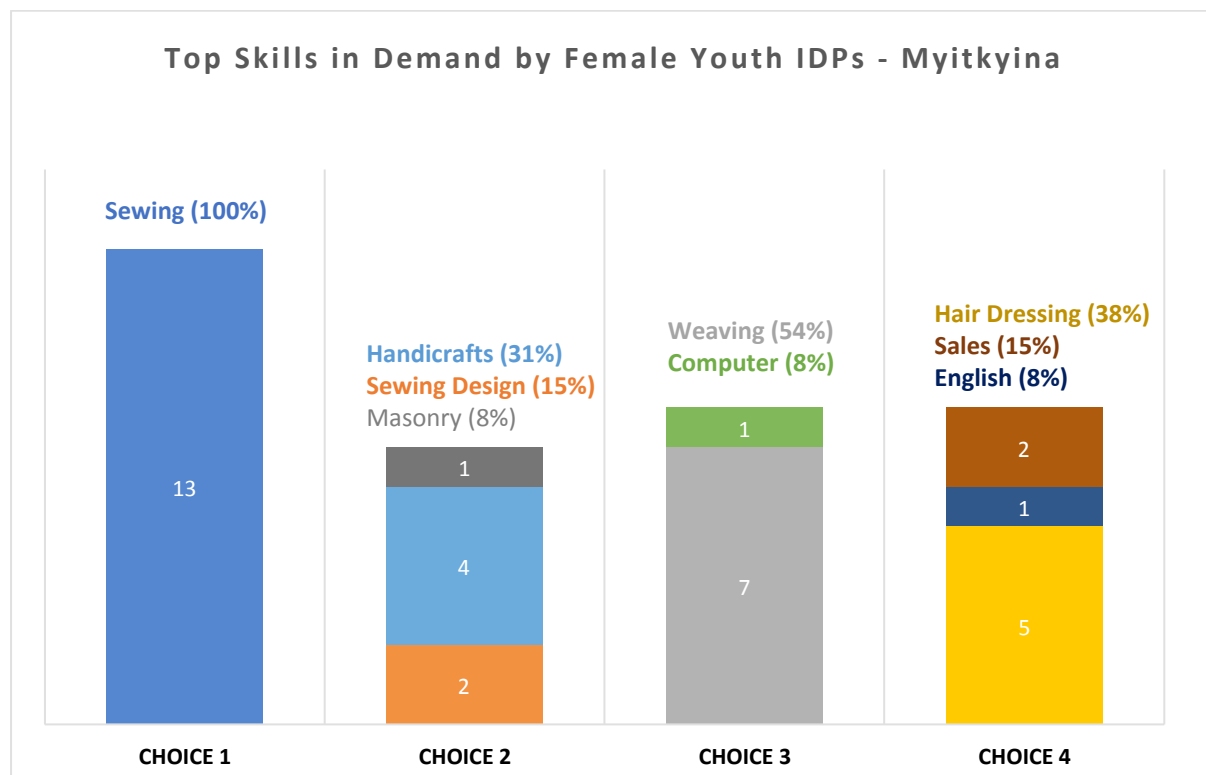


FIGURE 5 - SKILLS IN DEMAND BY LABOUR SUPPLY – FEMALE

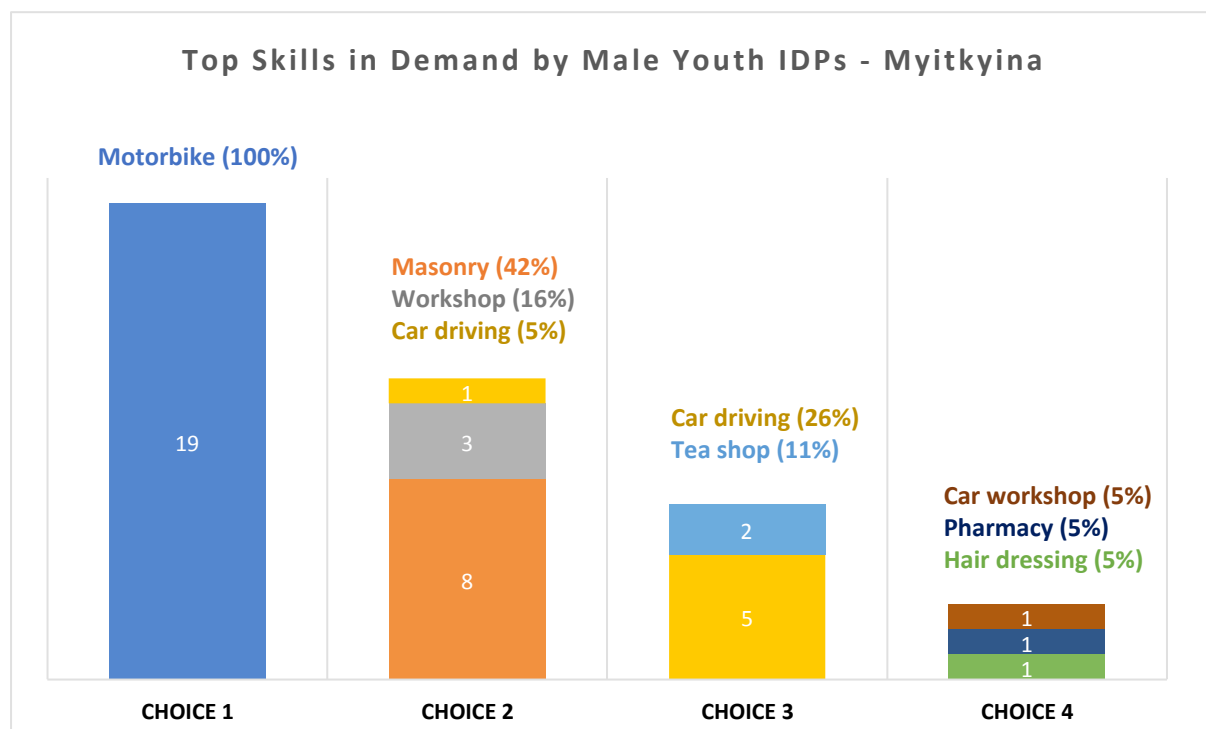


FIGURE 6 - SKILLS IN DEMAND BY LABOUR SUPPLY – MALE

Amongst PWD, skills that are of most interest include sewing, weaving, carpentry, handicrafts production and beauty parlour. Most PWD are looking for work where they can be stationed in one place which does not require much physical movement.

Beyond the more formalized and traditional labour sectors, there are additional livelihoods activities that were identified as potential sources of income primarily through self-employment for youth IDPs. The activities identified are of potential significance due to existing markets or potential for market growth.

From FGD and KIIs, respondents were asked what they believed to be the most suitable jobs in demand for youth IDPs and PWD, for both males and females. Specifically relating to PWD, camp committees and PWD themselves provided further input regarding their assumptions of the most appropriate highest demand jobs for PWD. The responses of IDPs and PWDs is used to align interests of the target group with the opportunities available based on market demands, as outlined in the following section.

Female IDPs predominantly wish to pursue sewing and hairdressing livelihoods, whereas female PWD prefer livestock raising, sewing and handicrafts production which are activities that can be done from home.

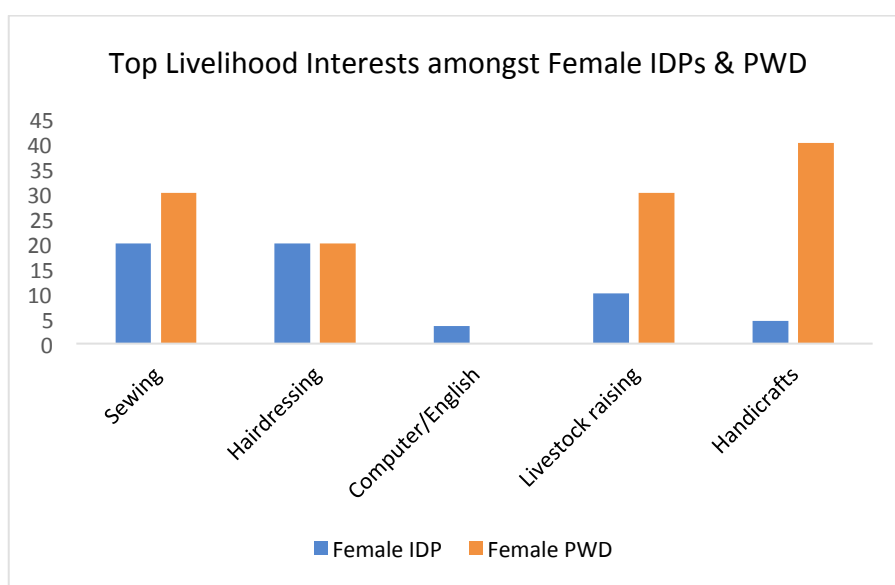


FIGURE 7 - LIVELIHOOD INTERESTS – FEMALE

Amongst male youth IDPs, the top interests fall under motor repair, car workshop and driving skills, followed by welding. Similar to female PWD, male PWD prefer livestock raising, hairdressing and handicrafts production and masonry.

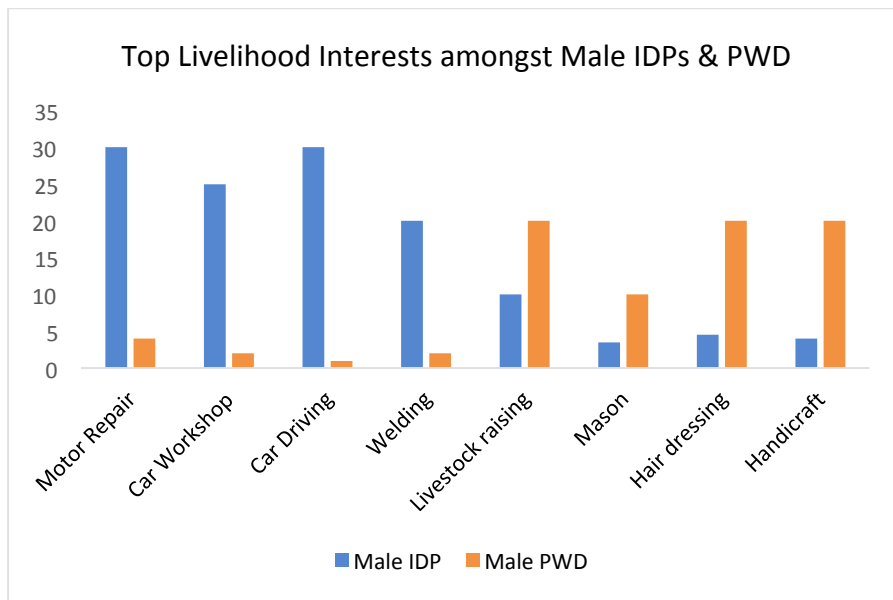


FIGURE 8 - LIVELIHOOD INTERESTS – MALE

Regarding what is most important to youth IDPs in searching for employment, many were unsure having never sought out formal employment before, however the most common responses were job security and stability, salary, and ease of work. Amongst PWD, they are most interested in having the chance to live a productive life, be integrated within the community and earn income to support their families. Integration within society seemed to be of greatest importance.

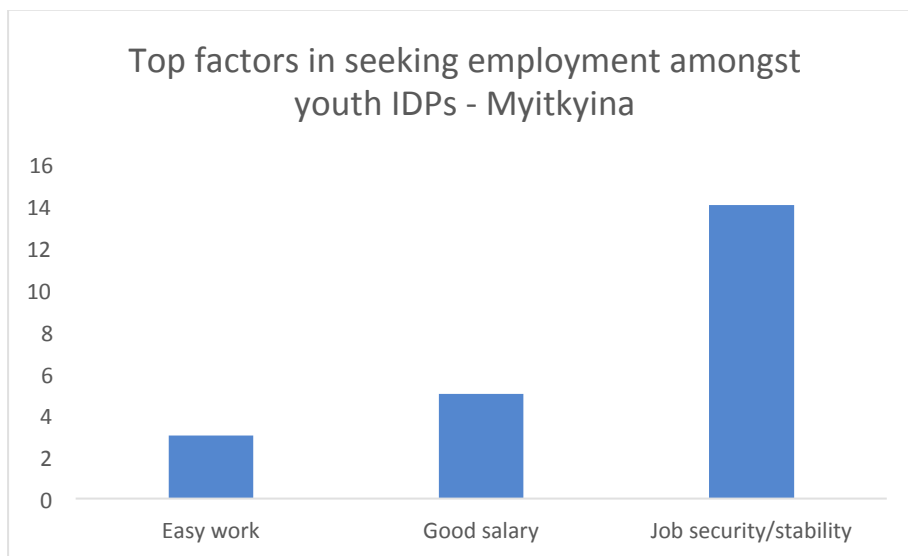


FIGURE 9- IMPORTANT FACTORS IN SEEKING WORK – MYITKYINA

3.1.2 Government Technical High School of Myitkyina

Background

A feasibility study commissioned by FRC in August 2018 for future program design, found the GTHS in Myitkyina to be well established and its Principle, Mr. Myo Min Oo, encouraged to help provide

opportunities to youth in nearby IDP camps in Kachin.⁹ The Myitkyina GHTS was established in 2009, and currently provides training across four main subjects in Building Technology (BT), Electronic Technology (ELT), Electrical Technology (ET), and Automobile Technology (AMT). At present there are a total of 180 students at the GHTS in Myitkyina, with approximately 40 students per class. While most students have completed 8th standard before entering the school, the School does provide a two-year bridging program for students to join engineering school.

As discovered in the feasibility study and further confirmed in the current labour market study, the GHTS currently lacks in its capacity to develop practical and demand oriented vocational training to youth and IDPs. The feasibility study found that “students do not receive any business skills training, or specific ‘life-skills’ training that might supplement their knowledge and support their transition from learning into income generation. It was noted in observations that the teaching methodology at the school is not student-centred or modern, although the teachers were keen to demonstrate how practical their lessons were.” According to the Principle, current teaching methods (as of September 2019) include 40% lecture-based theory and 60% practical training.

The current study recommends that VESI support the GHTS to incorporate competency based vocational training through short course offerings in specific subjects linked to high demand sectors (e.g. brick making for masonry). However, it is noted that the GHTS does not have the ability to expand its current course offerings without additional financial and capacity support. Additionally, the High School’s courses could be redesigned to include soft skills and hands on practical training, through additional short courses. Currently, 30% of students at the GHTS in Myitkyina join the labour force upon completion, with 20% continuing to the GTI to pursue a degree in engineering, and the remaining 50% will go back to school or work in daily labour (unrelated to studies). Therefore, there is a need to help increase the number of students at the GHTS that are able to secure decent employment after completion of vocational training.



At the entrance of GHTS Myitkyina

The GHTS currently does provide some short course trainings during school breaks (in the summer term), including subjects in sewing, computer skills, electrical wiring and welding. Course offerings

⁹ TVET Feasibility Study in Kachin. FRC. August 2018.

depend on the availability of teachers outside of their normal teaching hours, covering two weeks to three months in length. The GTHS is not able to provide sufficient compensation to teachers to incorporate additional short course trainings without approval from the Ministry, which would need to come about through advocating such changes to be made most likely after trialling through a pilot. However, the GTHS is in agreement that offering more short courses to local youth and IDPs in high demand subjects is a good solution to improve employment prospects. The current study does outline the specific subjects identified as high demand, to be built into short course trainings. Additionally, the Principle of the GTHS states that he is looking to provide new short courses in the future based on demands identified by the school, and suggests the following subjects: Farm machine repairs course, bakery, coffee brewing, and hotel training. Beyond additional compensation, the GTHS teachers will likely need additional capacity building to ensure new short course offerings are taught using suggested effective student-centred teaching methods, cover only relevant high demand subjects (with ongoing review of the labour market demands), and incorporate essential soft skills required to secure employment.

Feedback from Students

The study met with recent students of the GTHS in Myitkyina, to gain an alternative view of the capacity of the school to provide relevant and practical vocational training. Students remarked that there is currently a poor student to teacher ratio to be able to provide hands on support, with one teacher to every 30 to 40 students. There are also not enough assistant teachers during the practical sessions, leaving students feeling like they are not gaining sufficient practical training in skills needed to master the subjects. Additionally, students report a lack of tools used in the practical sessions, for each student to be able to practice skills hands on. In some classes, it was reported that there is only one tool available for every 40 students in a class, meaning that most students are unable to practice the techniques.

Lastly, students state that there should be more involvement of the private sector in the vocational trainings in order to keep up with current techniques, methods and machinery used in the field. This will help to ensure students are prepared to enter the field and start working.

Private Sector Review

In consultation with representatives of the private sector in high demand fields, the skills being trained at the GTHS (and other vocational training centres locally) are not up to date with current trends and machinery being used in the field. This presents a major problem for employers whom have to spend additional resources providing on the job training. Currently, most students that graduate from the GTHS will have to go through additional training and orientation of tools used on the job, leaving both sides – employer and employee – feeling frustrated and unprepared.

Additionally, the private sector feels the GTHS would be much better suited to meet labour demands if the curriculum were less top down and developed alongside industry representatives to include more relevant information and up to date methodology and tools. Overall, the private sector is currently not impressed with the skills and preparedness of students graduating from the school and hope that future adaptations can be made alongside the private sector to ensure current up to date market demands are incorporated into trainings.

3.1.3 Labour Market Review in Myitkyina

Labour market situation in terms of labour supply and demand

Currently, the primary livelihood sources in and around the camps includes agriculture activities, livestock raising, weaving, sewing, management in the camp committees, among other smaller activities. Casual unskilled labour is a main source of income amongst IDPs in both the GCA and NGCAs, however livelihood opportunities do vary for IDPs in the NGCA, where IDPs do have more access to agriculture land as they are situated further from urban or village areas in comparison to GCAs. The study found that the most common labour for male IDPs in Myitkyina is agriculture work on local banana plantations or migration to China. Based on interviews in the NGCA camps, Camp Management Committees estimate that two thirds of the HHs in the camp have at least one family member working in China, including both men and women as well as school drop-out youth. In terms of agricultural labour, the most common work is characterised by seasonal casual daily wage labour. The majority of male youth and adult men earn around 5,000Ks per day working in agriculture or construction industries. The majority of young men have dropped out of school early and either migrated to China or are working locally on plantations, in mines (jade and amber). The working conditions in these industries is oftentimes hazardous and physically demanding. It was reported that the majority of agriculture workers are exposed to unsafe environments and chemicals such as fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides which are heavily sprayed with little safety protection on maize, mushroom and banana plantations in which the IDPs commonly work. The mining industry is characterized as highly exploitative, with high safety risks and drug abuse.

Female IDPs are further limited in their earning opportunities, as they typically stay at home inside the camps. Sewing, weaving and small animal husbandry are seen as the most common income generating activities amongst the young and adult females based in the camps and host communities. Female youth oftentimes drop out of school early to take over management of the household, and wherever possible take on additional daily labour in agriculture and road repairs nearby the camp or village. Some additional livelihoods activities such as snack making, soap and handicrafts production and mushroom cultivation has been observed, however the income generating potential and sustainability is limited.

Currently, the labour supply in Myitkyina is unharnessed in terms of meeting skills demands that match the labour demand and market opportunities locally. The following sections detail the sectors that are already or are expected to be in high demand in terms of labour needs, as well as additional livelihood activities that could be cultivated based on the market to ensure greater profitability and impact.

Top sectors in high labour demand in Myitkyina

A Construction

The study identified three top employment opportunities in Kachin State from the demand side, including

- 1) Migration to China
- 2) Construction in Myitkyina
- 3) Mining in Hpakant

Among these three top employment opportunities, construction was found to have the greatest growth potential in labour demand, with the expanding industrial zone in Myitkyina. The area is expected to see a rise in construction related project in the coming year, with an estimated 100+ buildings constructed annually, which will require significant skilled workers.

Additionally, the Myanmar Government is reconstructing railway stations and building four to five story buildings along the railway to serve as integrated stations with hotels, entertainment and restaurants. The government is also tendering 2 to 3 large buildings per year.

Overall, the development of the Myitkyina Economic Development Zone (MEDZ) as part of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) could have tremendous economic impact on the employment sector locally, however the growth in opportunities for locals is still uncertain and will be dependent on hiring trends of Chinese companies, according to a recent report in The Irrawaddy (April 2019).¹⁰ While it is clear the project could develop thousands of new jobs in the local area, it is still uncertain if companies will hire Myanmar or Chinese workers, or both, depending on availability and skills. Chief Minister U Khet Aung reported to The Irrawaddy that he hopes for over 5,000 jobs to be created for locals through the project.

Despite uncertainties in hiring trends and concerns that projects will be given to mostly Chinese companies over Myanmar, the President of The Myanmar Construction Association of Kachin claims that there will be opportunities for local construction company to benefit from this project. The President estimates that in Kachin State 100,000 workers are currently working in the construction sector, from building to rock extraction, suppliers and production. Of the current Kachin construction labour force, an estimated 90% are unskilled. The remaining 10% skilled labourers do not have high skills levels, rather are described as semi-professional skills with on the job experience and no formal training. The President of the MCA of Kachin states that the industry requires a labour force of at least 50% skilled labourers to meet current labour demands, meaning there is a current gap of 40% skilled labour needed to meet current needs.

The top skills in high demand within the construction sector in Kachin State include:

- Masonry
- Carpentry
- Bar bending
- Electrical wiring
- Plumbing
- Welding and steel manufacturing
- Painting

There are additional skills to be considered that are more female inclusive than the predominantly male dominated sectors listed above. These skills are in less demand in terms of numbers in comparison to the standard construction jobs listed, but are nonetheless still favourable options within a growing sector and accessible to females.

- Interior decoration: For both male and females, interior decoration is highly demanded within the construction sector. Skills in demand for newly built projects include design, lighting, cabinet and ceiling installation. The field requires people with relatively higher skills, which currently does not exist in Myitkyina. Companies are left to recruit qualified persons from Yangon and Mandalay, which is costlier and less reliable than sourcing labourers locally. The solution would be to train suitable numbers of people from Kachin State to meet these demands.

¹⁰ <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/kachin-locals-dark-china-backed-industrial-zone-plan.html>

- **Masonry:** While masonry is a top field listed in high demand these skills are mostly pursued by males. However, one third of these current labourers are female with the chance to create greater opportunities for females in the sector. Currently, most females working in masonry are doing things such as mixing concrete, carry bricks, running errands, as well as brick laying and marble installing. It has been found that the women working in this industry are highly skilled, passionate and produce high quality work, according to construction companies in Myitkyina.
- **Administration and store keeper:** There are skills within administration and store front management that are of interest to females (perhaps more so than males, whom are found more often working in the abovementioned skills). Skills in the admin related field include inventory control, quality control, inventory management and ordering and restocking of products, price monitoring, and reporting to chief engineers and site managers relating to human resource matters.
- **Safety officers:** It was found that some government sites require safety officer to monitor the workforce to comply with safety rules and regulations, including personal safety, machine safety, and others. Safety officers typically report irregularities to site management which may pose a danger for workers. It is reported that over 90% of workers are currently working in high risks areas with no protection and little to no regulations. ILO and MCA are now working together to provide safety training on local construction sites, but require more resources to implement such initiatives. This would require training labourers to conduct such measures.

The study found some additional challenges that exist for IDPs and host communities to join the construction labour force. Competition is high in terms of skills and wages, with most workers currently coming from other parts of Myanmar with higher skills sets working for competitive wages. Employers claim they find these external workers (non IDPs) have better work attitudes and have less dropout rates than their local counterparts. For example, workers from Mandalay or Rakhine propose 5,000Ks daily wages, which local Kachin workers expect 6,000Ks for entry level work. According to private businesses interviewed, Kachin workers must change their mind set when looking for a job. They can no longer only look for the easy jobs with better pay but rather offer more commitment to what is available in the market. Additionally, it was found that youth that have previously migrated to China are also less interested in committing to local work at the market rate since they are accustomed to earning higher wages across the border, earning around 10,000Ks per day in comparison to 5,000Ks for non-skilled work and 8000Ks-10,000Ks for skilled work (of which is harder to acquire).



Un-finished construction site in Lashio

CONSTRUCTION RECOMMENDATIONS

Currently, there is a lack of training for construction-based work in Kachin State at the levels required to support local workers to successfully enter the job market. While the labour force may also need to adjust, as mentioned above, training centres should also consider adapting trainings to provide more relevant training for entry into specific basic level fields. There are currently some training offerings in construction, provided by NGOs and TVET centres, however the courses cover several subjects over longer period of time. As a result, students get a general introduction but are not skilled enough in any one area to be able to secure an entry level job. Alternatively, the study suggests providing more basic level-1 training in a specific skill in current high demand in the field. This approach would better prepare students in a shorter period of time to secure employment and be able to develop more skills on the job, whilst receiving an income. At present, many youth and parents are reluctant to invest in TVET due to the risk of wasting time ([not making income for the family doing daily labour] and end up struggling to find employment after months and even years of training. They fear the training will not guarantee better employment opportunities. Some National Skilled Standard Associations (NSSA) skill level trainings currently exist in Yangon and Mandalay offering short course trainings, which could be developed similarly in Kachin.

Additionally, in order to meet and stay on top of current labour demands, training curriculums must be reviewed and adapted regularly alongside industry representatives (construction companies and contractors) to improve the design, productivity and efficiency of workers and include topics that are needed in real time. Worker productivity in is an important function to be integrated within construction training, since most workers locally are paid based on work completed rather than time worked. The President of the Myanmar Construction Association of Kachin State claims that the productivity of three Chinese workers is equivalent to fifteen Myanmar workers (in masonry). This efficiency amongst Chinese workers is largely the result of more advanced tools and training on such equipment. Therefore, short courses must include more advanced tools and technology and ensure trainees are taught how to work more efficiently.

While the construction industry is a fast-growing sector with great employment potential, the industry is highly profit driven with little regard for safety and protection of workers' rights.

Additional support to trainees could be provided to better equip them for safer employment within the industry, such as soft skills training in workers' rights and dealing with employers.



Carpentry school which has been running over 20 years, supported by the Moemaik Baptist Church

B Sewing/Garment

Sewing and the production of garments is an additional sector in high demand, both in the market and amongst youth IDPs. According to interview sources, 90% of industry respondents report the sewing and garment sector in Kachin is in high labour demand. Specifically, in Myitkyina there is a high demand in the production of ethnic Kachin dresses.

Based on the municipal registration, there are a total of 117 sewing shops and three sewing training schools in Myitkyina, with an additional eight sewing shops in Waingmaw township. These figures do not include the additional workers producing garments at home and supplying to larger shops. There number of unregistered sewing shops is estimated to be two to three times greater than the official numbers. The sector itself has a variety of products and diverse opportunities for training depending on interest, market demand based on location and season and occasion-specific needs.

Currently, major product demands in sewing shops are women's casual dress and dress for special events, such as Myanmar and western wedding dresses and Kachin traditional dress, among many others. The estimated weekly production for each sewing shop in Myitkyina is around 8 to 10 casual women's dresses. It was reported that demand is so high that additional orders are not currently accepted. Kachin cultural dress (mostly for women) are typically in stable high demand as wearing traditional dress is mandatory in many cultural occasions. The majority of garments are made specially for females, with one sewing expert estimating that each person (female) will normally have five to 10 dresses made in a year.

Ninety-eight percent of respondents from sewing and other business sectors agree that regardless of the supply of cheaper Chinese-made dress, traditional dress-making will always be in high demand. Therefore, there appears to be a stable demand in the market and a lack of labour supply to meet such needs. New producers can be trained in skills to work for a sewing shop or to set up their own small shop. Establishing a small shop is low risk in terms of start-up costs since most customers provide the raw materials and commission the shop to create the design. The current

market price for one women's dress is around 10,000-15,000Ks, depending on the design and complexity. Tailors with strong skills can typically complete at least three dresses in one day. Dress for special occasions may take up to two days to complete but cost around 30,000Ks. All fabric and materials are provided by the customer. While there is high demand for skills tailors, the competition is also high in terms of creativity and design. Tailors must work to promote themselves and their designs to get new customers. New business owners must also be able to adapt to fluctuations in demand throughout the year, with surges in times of holiday and be able to sustain the business in slower periods. To encourage successful self-employment, additional business skills should be integrated within training.

Self-employment in the sewing and tailor industry is an excellent opportunity for IDPs, since the work can be done from anywhere, requires little machinery and start-up capital. There is potential for VET to link with local businesses, which express interest in providing trainers as well as hiring or sub-contracting students in the final stages of training (with greater skills). There are success stories of students opening their own shops after working in the shop, so there is both encouragement and new demand for trainees. All six sewing shops interviewed in the study are ready to welcome new students. Some shops even provide training at various locations off side including camps, with larger numbers of students.

SEWING/GARMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

In terms of vocational training, the process to becoming a sewing professional requires a minimum of six to 12 months of training up to at least level 2 (sewing training level), according to experts in the industry. Achieving a basic level (level 1) takes four months of training, however upon completion, trainees are able to start working in local shops to continue advancing their skills on the job. After a couple of months working on the job, it is then advised that trainees attend a level 2 course which is focused more on design, to advance their skills to compete in the market. Developing individualized designs is very important in setting up a tailor shop, as most orders come based on word of mouth and the experience of the tailor's portfolio. Design training is considered essential to running a successful tailor shop. Nonetheless, providing youth IDPs level 1 training to be able to enter the market is an excellent starting ground to get experience on the job, while being paid (less risky).

In terms of training, the study found that the existing model of level 1 training covers several types of garments (dresses, coats, children's wear, etc.), which are not essential to get the basics to enter the job market. Therefore, it is recommended that training focus on two to three of the highest demand designs (such as women's dress, women's blouse and fancy dress), which would take approximately two months to complete. At this stage, the trainee would be prepared to start working as an intern or apprentice while earning money to further advance their skills on the job. Most sewing shops interviewed for the study agree to this concept.

The average cost to provide sewing training based on the 6th month level 1 training is around 400,000Ks per person. It is highly advised that trainings are held at the sewing shop, which allows trainees to take part in practical work and learn the environment in which they will be working, including customer service and demands. The study found that whilst the traditional sewing trainings provide a good level of skills training, trainees are often left unprepared to enter the job market upon completion.

The study did identify some additional challenges and considerations for IDPs and PWD upon entering the garment sector. While most shops and training centres do strongly encourage youth with low education levels and strong interest to join training, students with secondary education are preferred. In comparison to other industries, a basic level 1 training does require lengthier time to complete up to four months, with additional time required to learn design, meaning most students are unable to make income after four months. Encouraging youth to start their own businesses is feasible, however connecting them to existing businesses as an entry point is recommended. PWD may face additional difficulty in finding a training environment that can accommodate their special needs.

C Health Sector

The healthcare sector in Kachin also presents significant opportunities for employment, especially for females. Jobs such as nursing aid and pharmacy assistant are currently in high demand in Kachin, specifically in Putao, Mhamo, Hphkant, and Myitkyina, as well as in Yangon and Mandalay.

Nurse aids can be trained in basic skills to support nurses in three various settings: 1) private clinics and hospitals, 2) elderly homes, and 3) home visit care. The average salary ranges from 10,000Ks to 15,000Ks per eight-hour shift. In Myitkyina there are four private clinics each requiring 10 to 15 nurse aids, and over 30 small clinics. While a Bachelor of nursing requires four years of study and high-level marks, nurse aid training requires much less.

There are several opportunities that were identified within the healthcare sector that could be tapped into through providing targeted vocational training. Such opportunities exist in the region of Kachin, as well as in Yangon, Mandalay and internationally. Most students currently training to become nursing aids or pharmacy assistants are actually looking to work in international markets for greater economic opportunities, such as Japan and Singapore. Some nurse aids end up working for NGOs in the local health and development sector. There is also high potential for females to engage in this sector. Additionally, there is little competition with workers from other locations such as Yangon or Mandalay, if they are to look for work locally, since workers from other parts of Myanmar will make more money working in Yangon or Mandalay. There are also diverse opportunities available across the three settings for nursing aids. According to sources, 90% of students in Myitkyina nurse aid trainings are planning to seek work overseas, but are first getting experience in local clinics and hospitals. With the right training and commitment, there are greater opportunities for growth in the sector. There is potential to secure higher paid work in Singapore or Japan for some, however this will require additional language skills and broker fees to secure a job (approximately 30 to 40laks).

Despite the relatively high opportunities, there are some challenges to entering the health care sector. Most courses require 8th grade level to enter and some basic English skills as most medical terms are taught in English. Current training schools to provide crash courses in English, mostly to memorize relevant English medical terminology. Nurse aid training requires at least six months to one year to become semi-professional, however students are able to join the workforce upon three months of training at the centre and continue to work and study simultaneously. The training centre in Myitkyina also provides job matching and internship opportunities for students after three months of training. The research team met with two female youth IDPs from Bhamo IDP camp at the Myitkyina training centre, whom were supported by Metta to study and work at a local clinic.

Currently, the females are earning 80,000Ks per month with additional benefits. The basic earning for entry level positions in the field is around 120,000Ks per month.

Additional challenges for IDPs to join the health care workforce beyond education prerequisites and length of training commitment, are the costs associated with training and potential relocation to larger cities for employment. Training fees are currently set at around 8laks for two months, excluding food and accommodation. There also are some negative impressions towards the service industry (serving others), which is regarded as a lower level position, despite the opportunities for greater pay and comfortability in workplace as compared to harsher environments (such as construction).

HEALTH SECTOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the study has identified high demand and potential for IDPs, especially women, in the health care sector in Myitkyina and across Kachin State, despite the potential barriers. Additionally, the large amount of private institutions and trainings in this sector further implies the growing demand in the sector for locals to work both in the local market or internationally. It is recommended that VESI work alongside existing private training centres and institutions which already have linkages to the sector and are aware of the changes in demand. Some training centres were identified as being run by health care professionals and therefore well connected to the sector and adept to provide demand oriented and expert led training. One of the best training centres identified is Aung Sitkyar, which has an agreement with the government to provide official certification to graduates, with the resources, experience and linkages to connect them to the job market.

D Hospitality

Hotel and tourism sectors in Kachin and Northern Shan have experienced a gradual increase including both domestic tourism and international tourism from Chinese business persons. With the onset of the BRI project in the region, the sector is expected to grow substantially in the coming years. The hospitality industry in Myitkyina also presents great opportunity for labour demand with nine new hotels planning to open in the next year to meet growing demands of the new Myitkyina Economic Development Zone. Based on estimates of the current 23 hotels in operation in the area, each new hotel will require 20 to 30 workers, amounting to a potential labour demand of 180 to 270 workers in Myitkyina alone. In addition to future prospects, the study found there to be an existing demand within both front office and housekeeping positions within hotels. Vocational skills training or on the job training for front office would require a minimum of 8th standard education, while housekeeping requires a primary level of education and an ability to read and write. With additional education and skills training, youth IDPs (both male and female) would be able to achieve higher paying positions in the hotel industry in the coming years.¹¹ Over the past few years, the tourism industry across the country has suffered a loss in the number of international visitors, owing to the crisis in Rakhine State.¹² However according to a similar study in Northern Shan through interviews with hotel and hospitality industry representatives, tourism in the region has remained steady since most tourists are from Myanmar or China. While permits for large Chinese based tour groups crossing the border have been temporarily suspended since 2016, it is expected that this will change

¹¹ GIZ Labour Market Study in Northern Shan

¹² <https://frontiermyanmar.net/en/rakhine-crisis-hurting-travel-industry-says-myanmar-tourism-federation>

in the near future (according to the Myanmar Hotelier Association). Previously, Chinese tour groups with upwards of 200 people per group were permitted to enter through the Muse border gate, thus spurring the local economy. If this happens, there may be a surge in demand for trained youth to enter the hotel sector. Overall, industry representatives were positive regarding the chances of Chinese tour operators gaining easy access once again¹³.

An estimated over 300 demand for new skilled workers in the hospitality sector will present both opportunity and challenge for local employers and training programs in terms of meeting demands. According to Hotelier Associations- Kachin State, there is an estimated demand for 30% high skilled workers (front office, chef) and 70% minimum skilled workers (housekeeping). In terms of labour skills required, hotels typically require at least 70% of staff to have certificates however in reality this is not possible to achieve resulting in the majority of staff working without certificates and receiving training from the hotel on the job. According to the Manager of Madira Hotel, hotels prefer hiring locally trained staff as it is difficult and expensive to recruit and train workers from other parts of the country. However, if the local labour supply is not sufficiently trained they may be left with no other choice. Front office positions typically require a graduate level with some English and computer competency with communication skills, which is very difficult to find locally. Most hotels currently have to fill these positions by recruiting staff trained from other parts of the country. Each hotel will require two to four front office staff. Additional demands include wait staff (room service and restaurant service), with an estimate 10 to 12 people per hotel. Food and beverage staff (bar tender, coffee brewer) require proper skills and training with only one to two people required per hotel but in high demand in Myitkyina. Housekeeping staff make up 60% of the total hotel workforce, and require only primary education to enter the profession. Most hotels fill these positions with females, however there are some positions available to men (so that they can be available to interchange with security in need). Chefs may also be in high demand with the development of the new projects that combine hotels with KTV, bars, and restaurants, which attract local and international tourists with local Kachin cuisines. It is anticipated that in the hotel and also the food and beverage industries there will be an increase in demand for locally trained chefs in the near future. Opportunities to train and prepare the local labour supply, specifically youth IDPs in Kachin and Northern Shan would be an excellent way to meet this rapidly growing demand with major investments in new projects from local and Chinese developers.

Overall, there is great potential to earn a decent living within the hospitality sector, with wages ranging from 100,000Ks for entry level positions and 250,000Ks with three to six months experience with added benefits of food and accommodation. Despite these benefits, perceptions of working in the service industry are poor among ethnic Kachin youth. Most local youth prefer not to work in the industry as they feel it represents a lower social status to be serving others. Economically, most youth prefer to make larger amounts of money at once, even if the task is harder or risky. For example, youth interviewed prefer to migrate to China, do illegal extraction of resources from the forest, or work in mining over regular paid jobs such as the hotel sector. Some youth consider working in a hotel as a temporary solution before going to China, and will work one or two months and then quit. This is a major frustration amongst employers and a main reason for perceptions of unreliability amongst youth IDPs. Youth would need to adjust their perceptions of the industry before serious measures can be taken to encourage them to complete training and enter the

¹³ GIZ Labour Market Study in Northern Shan

growing sector. Hotels do offer on the job training, however will be reluctant to continue to do so if staff retention is poor. As a result, hotels typically prefer migrants from Sagaing or Mandalay whom have relocated and commit to long term work.

HOSPITALITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Currently there are no training centres providing hospitality training, and most hotels train their own staff. However, there are gaps in what hotels can train on site. The most important skills that youth IDPs lack, which hotels are also unable to train on the job, include soft skills. Vocational training may be able to supplement on the job training by preparing youth with key soft skills before entering the field. Further efforts would need to emphasize long term job commitment and hopefully be rewarded with stable work and decent wages and benefits.

It is therefore recommended to support GTHS to develop new short courses under similar model as other industries, with a hybrid of classroom learning and on the job training. Basic skills would require three months of training, however since most hotels have their own processes and requirements, the majority of learning can be done on the job. A short course could be designed to cover the basics, in addition to key soft skills, which employers are most interested in. It is advised to coordinate with the Myanmar Hotelier Association, which is willing to support training as well as employment connections.

E Production of accessories for women's blouses/dresses

With the growing demand in the garment sector, especially for women's blouses and dresses, the demand for accessories has been also became important. Most traditional dresses in Myanmar are adorned with specialty Shan-buttons, flower-buttons, and flower designs, are typically made separately from the dress. According to industry source, there is no education requirements to be trained to learn the skills, and the learning process is fast taking approximately two weeks to learn 10 to 15 different designs. Followed with additional practice time to improve quality and productivity, trainees can master the skill in around one month.

In Myitkyina current there are around four to five shops that produce dress buttons, and the rest are purchased from Namkham or Mandalay. Some tailor shops make their own buttons depending on the requirements of customers. Therefore, there is a demand to be able to produce buttons either working in a shop or as an independent producer selling to shops locally.

The greatest demand for such accessories is within the months of September to December and March. The retail cost for one package ordered from Mandalay of moderate quality and design (including five buttons) is 1,500 to 1,800Ks. The same package produced by an individual producer will cost around 2,500 to 3,000Ks currently in the Myitkyina market. Beyond the local market there is potential to link with retailers in Mandalay to extend sales beyond Myitkyina, however the design and quality must be high.



Local flower buttons for sale in the market

ACCESSORIES PRODUCTION RECOMMENDATIONS

The activity of producing garment accessories is well suited to people living in camps or with disabilities since they would be able to remain stationed in one place to work. Overall, the activity is highly recommended to the target group as it is relatively easy to learn and can be done to generate additional income alongside other work. Women could also produce accessories in groups to be able to garner higher prices selling to larger tailor shops in Myitkyina and retail markets in Mandalay.

Short course training could include a combination of in class training through the sewing school with complementary courses in basic business skills for students interested in working independently.

F Production of traditional longyi

The Kachin longyi is one of the famous traditional longyis in Myanmar. Kachin women's longyis are well known for their unique design, patterns and colour and are hand woven, while the men's longyis are machine woven. There are major distribution markets for Kachin longyis across Yangon, Mandalay, Pharkant, Myitkyina, other townships in Kachin State, and across the border with China as there are a number of Kachin people living along the border. U Win Naing, owner of Ma Khin Sein Textile distributor, believes that the Kachin traditional longyi market will survive due to the high demand from the Kachin from along the border and in China. According to local sources, Chinese business is significant to the local weaving and textile industries in Kachin State. Local market demand is still strong for hand-made traditional products, however Naing claims he has seen a reduction in quality. Additional products in demand include Kachin bags, women's slippers with design and phone bags.

The owner of Daw Sai Num, a Kachin traditional weaving business and producer of traditional Kachin longyis, says she is able to find premium markets to sell her products which are in demand internationally. She is currently selling products in Singapore and other Asian countries, and also starting the online sale of her products through another distributor.

Currently, most workers in Myitkyina come from She Bo Seik Kon village in Mandalay division. These migrant workers are not stable and consistently drop out every few months, which is difficult for businesses to manage. As a result, there is a high demand for skilled labour available locally. Based on interviews with four large traders for weaving factories, there is a demand for at least 10 to 20 new skilled workers to replace previous workers, and an estimated total of 400 to 500 hand loom weavers per year. It would be advantageous for local youth and IDPs to take advantage of these opportunities by gaining the relevant skills. In terms of training costs, the time is longer than production of accessories since the hand loom is more advanced, with an additional investment of 200,000Ks to 500,000Ks for the loom. From interviews in the camps, most married females ages 25 to 30 are interested in this type of work, which requires more time, consistency and patience to complete tasks (less suitable to younger people). The earning potential for one women's longyi is around 30,000Ks to 50,000Ks, depending on the complexity of the design and patterns. Each longyi takes from one day (for a basic design) to two to three days to complete for more complex designs. Competition in the market is largely based on quality, skill to develop complex designs and flexibility to switch from producing simple and hard design. According to sources, the market is very open to new workers with little direct competition with others, however investing in skills to develop higher quality designs will result in better work opportunities.



Traditional Kachin Longyi

LONGYI PRODUCTION RECOMMENDATIONS

In terms of training, according to the Principal of the Weaving School in Myitkyina, new students require three to six months to learn basic to complex designs. Currently, KBC is supporting female IDPs from various camps to be trained at the Weaving School, which is something that could also be supported through the GTHS. There are a few success stories from the Majaron camp where two women are now generating regular income from hand weaving. Similar to accessories production, trainees should receive basic business skills alongside the training to be able to find customers and cater to market demands.

G *Motorbike repairs*

Motorbike repair skills were among the highest demanded skills from youth IDPs in the focus groups. The study did find a potentially high demand for such skills in the region, with opportunities to develop skills for youth IDPs linking them to the market. Based on the Ministry of Information, in 2016 the number of registered motor cycles reached 118,840 in Myitkyna and Putao Districts, nearly 40% of the total population. This figure does not include number of unregistered motor bike, which is estimated to be much higher. Most motorbikes are cheaply made thus requiring regular maintenance. There is a high demand for repair shops in most major cities and main villages in the region. In Myitkyna, there are currently 105 registered motor bike repair shops, five of which are large shops, while the rest are small roadside shops. A typical small shop can attend to 10 to 15 motorbikes per day. Based on an interview with the owner of one of the largest motorbike repairs shops, the demand is still quite high and most shops are more crowded in city areas, creating a demand to open motorbike shops in the outskirt of city areas to meet demands.



Roadside motorbike repair shop

MOTORBIKE RECOMMENDATIONS

While little prior education is required, students would need three months training to acquire basic skills and six months to become semi-professional. Committed students looking to start their own shop could do so within one and a half years, according to business owners. The costs to fix a motorbike depend on the type of services and can range from 2,000Ks to 20,000Ks, with added margin for the shop. Other profits can come from selling spare parts. Based on interviews with shop owners, there is a profit margin of 10 to 20% of each spare part sold. A technician with one year of experience can earn a daily wage of 20,000Ks to 30,000Ks, on average.

Most motorbike shops interviewed are willing to accept students in apprenticeship, willing to exchange on the job training for labour. Each shop could host around four students in total. The apprenticeship model is an effective method to learn practical skills, however may be difficult for the target group as they will not be receiving income during the training. Additional barriers could be in transportation to training and internship locations. The most feasible solution would be to provide training in one central location to interested youth with input from experienced motor repair technicians and shop owners, and then link youth directly to on the job training.

Similar to motorbike repairs, there is a growing need for car repairs with an influx in car ownership in the region, in particular amongst unregistered cars. The amount of unregistered cars purchased in 2017 was the highest in history, since the travel restrictions on unregistered vehicles was lifted. Based on a recent report, an estimated 96% of private cars are unregistered, with only 4% legally registered.¹⁴ A registered car costs five times more than an unregistered one, and at least four unregistered cars are driven to Myitkyina every day. Based on interviews with private sector representatives in the car industry, as long as the government allows unregistered cars to be driven in Myitkyina, there will be a demand for repair shops in various areas such as engine and fuel system repairs, electrical wiring, chassis repairs, air condition system repair, body and painting details, etc. The most common repairs are engine, fuel, and air conditioning.

CAR WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

While a basic level of education may be required to enter the basic level of car repairs, according to sources, it may take up to three years to become a professional with an ability to repair all parts of the car. However, there is the option to learn one specialty over three to six months, which would allow entry into the field. Additional skills can then be learned on the job, while earning an income. Currently, there is no existing training school for car repairs, as most people learn on the job.

Competition may be high since most workers are recruited from lower Myanmar and are paid 1,000Ks per day (alongside food and accommodation). Shops would be willing to trade labour in exchange for training to new students, similar to motor bike repair shops. The earning potential after three months of on the job training is around 5,000 to 6,000Ks per day. The entry level salary after three years of training is 200,000Ks.

Workshops interviewed would be interested to take new trainees, however they prefer them to learn at the shop from the beginning and to stay for longer periods of time, which could be a challenge for IDPs if not provided the resources to be able to stay. Furthermore, the workshop environment can be harsh, and require working closely with people from other parts of the country, which could be initially difficult for some youth IDPs to assimilate.

3.2 Bhamo Findings

3.2.1 Impact Group Profile

Background information

The research team met with a total of 36 youth IDPs from two IDP camps and three relocated communities in Bhamo Township, all of which are in GCA. IDPs living in 'relocated communities' means they were unable to return to their home villages due to conflict and were relocated to another village. While the majority of the sample of PWD were met in Myitkyina, the study was able to meet with three PWD from Bhamo, located in Mine Khaung Camp. The youth IDPs from Bhamo have been in the camps for an average of six and a half years. All of the families interviewed in the camps visited are of Kachin ethnicity.

¹⁴ Naushawng Development Institute. *The Boom in Unregistered Private Cars in Kachin State*. EAI. January 2019

TABLE 6 - YOUTH IDP CAMP INTERVIEWS & LENGTH OF STAY – BHAMO

Township: <i>Camp Location</i>	Total Youth IDPs	Male IDPs	Female IDPs	Average stay in camp (years)	Total PWD	Male PWD	Female PWD	Total Respondents
Bhamo	19	12	7	6.6	3	2	1	22
<i>Mine Khaung</i>	8	6	2	6.7	3	2	1	
<i>PhanKharKone</i>	11	6	5	6.5	-	-	-	
Relocated Communities	17	10	7	-	-	-	-	17
<i>Gwe Ga Htaung</i>	5	3	2	-	-	-	-	
<i>Kyat Khan Det</i>	5	4	1	-	-	-	-	
<i>Kyauk Sa khan</i>	7	3	4	-	-	-	-	
<i>Total</i>	36	22	14	-	3	2	1	39

Amongst the IDPs interviewed in Bhamo, the average age in the IDP camps was 21 and 19 amongst those living in the relocated communities. Similar to findings in Myitkyina, the split between male and females in the households is equal at three members of each gender per household, with two to three children per household on average living in the camp.

Education, skills and employment

The youth in Bhamo IDP camps and relocated communities, on average, have slightly higher levels of high school completion than those interviewed in Myitkyina, with 79% completion. The remaining respondents have completed either middle school (16%) or gone on to university (5%). Despite the education levels inside the camps, the employment status remains very low with nearly all youth reporting no current work, with a couple youth engaged in wage labour and sales related work.

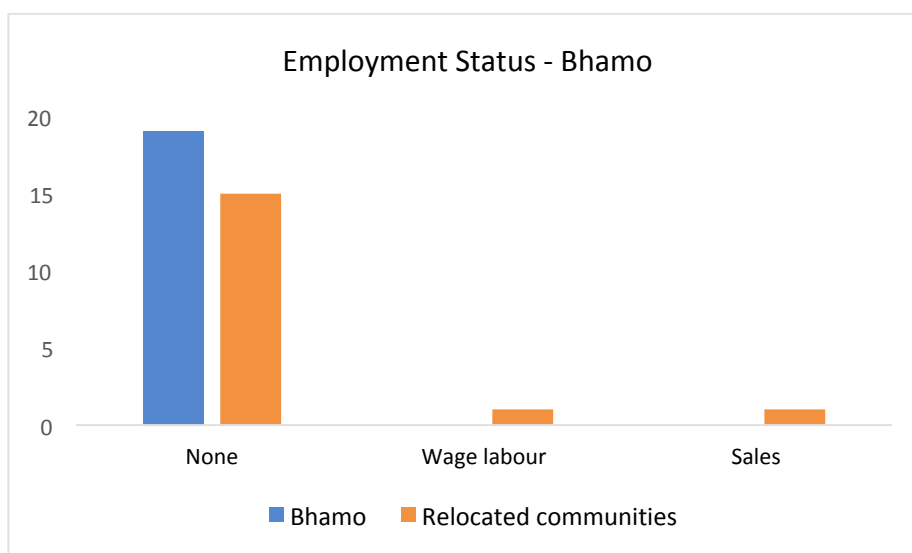


FIGURE 10 - EMPLOYMENT STATUS – BHAMO

Previous skills and employment in Bhamo mirrors that of Myitkyina, with the majority of youth having some prior experience in agriculture related work or having migrated to China (73% and 15% respectively), with slightly over 10% of respondents with skills in construction.

Barriers of entry to employment and self-employment

Similar to Myitkyina, high unemployment levels coupled with a lack of awareness of and access to demand driven VET, has left the majority of youth IDPs from Bhamo with little opportunity to seek gainful employment. Nearly 70% of respondents in Bhamo and relocated communities are unaware of any TVET initiatives, and of those with some awareness it is very limited. In general, there is an attitude of despair amongst the youth and parents alike, feeling as if they have no choice but to work in harsh daily labour conditions and/or migrate to China for greater opportunities. When asked what they feel are their greatest challenges in seeking employment, most youth IDPs report having no skills or having skills but no market to sell their products. The remainder feel that they do not have the resources to be able to find a job, in that they do not know what jobs are currently available and what skills they would need. There is a clear demand for providing awareness of which sectors are in demand, and what employers are looking for in hiring, coupled with vocational training that fills these gaps.

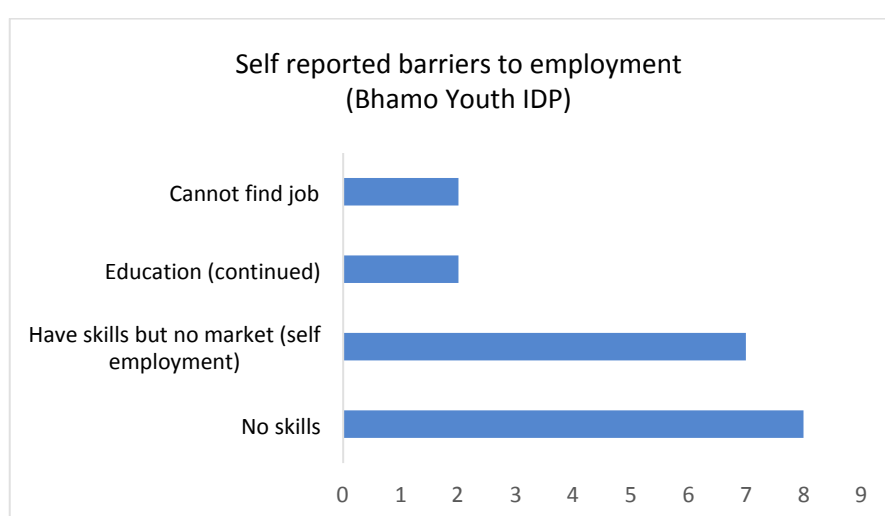


FIGURE 11 - BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT (ACCORDING TO IDPs)

Youth IDP aspirations towards employment

The following questions were asked to youth IDPs and PWD from Bhamo IDP camps and relocated communities:

- Whether they interested in self-employment or being employed
- What skills are they most interested in (demand from supply side)
- What they consider most important in seeking employment

Youth responses were similar to those in Myitkyina, in terms of employment interests. Sixty percent of youth in Bhamo are interested in self-employment, while the rest are looking to find a job in either the formal or informal sector. The skills that youth find most interesting are also quite similar. Female IDPs are most interested in sewing skills, handicrafts, workshop skills, design and hairdressing. All male respondents listed motorbike [repair] as their first choice, followed by workshop, Chinese language, masonry, computer and English language skills.

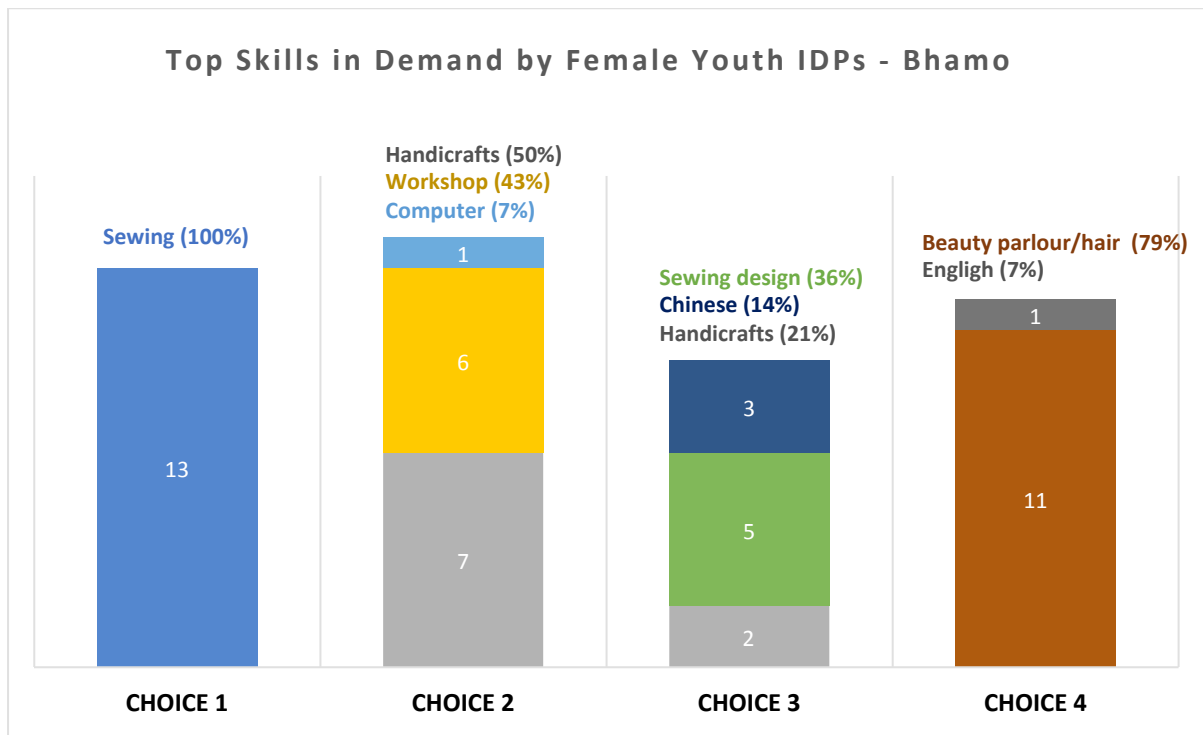


FIGURE 12 - SKILLS IN DEMAND BY LABOUR SUPPLY (FEMALE)

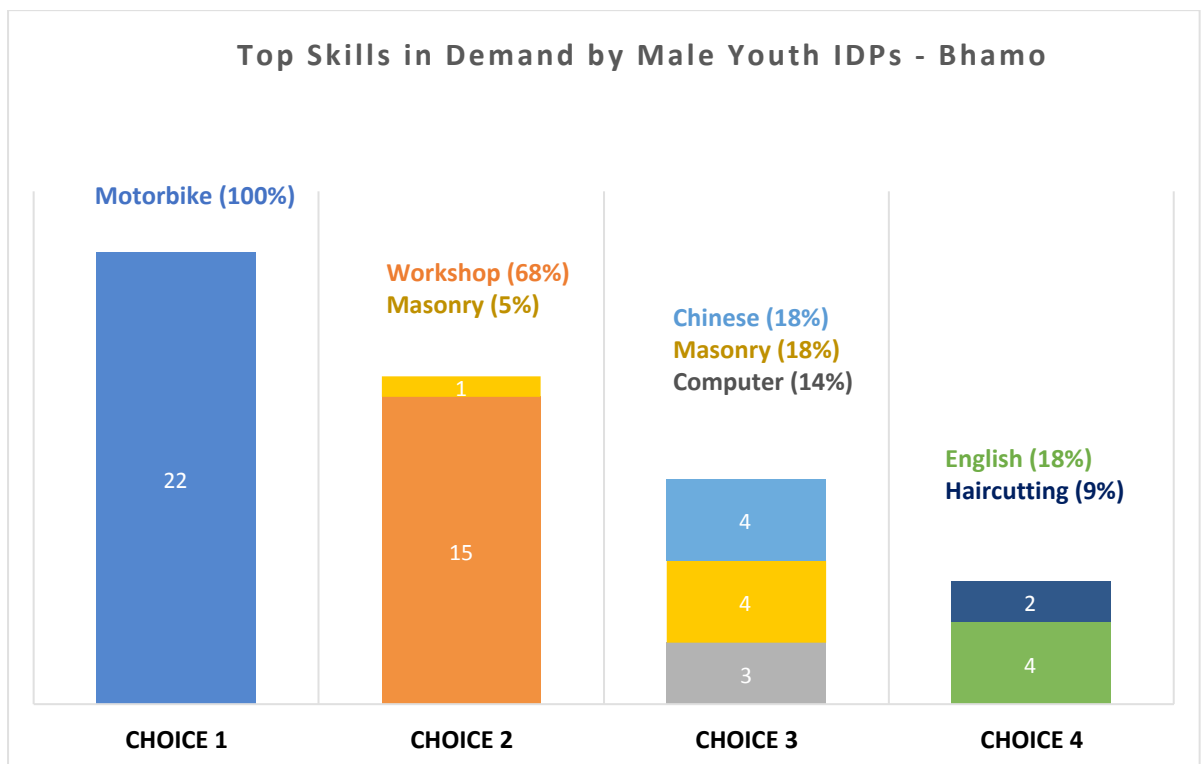


FIGURE 13 - SKILLS IN DEMAND BY LABOUR SUPPLY (MALE)

PWD in Bhamo Camps typically have very little to no work experience or skills, however two of the three people interviewed have worked in agriculture. With no awareness of TVET and significant barriers of entry to employment, there is a high need for specialized training to support this group. Since most PWD are interested in self-employment and can work close to home, skills that would allow them to develop an alternative or additional income generating source would be best. Handicrafts was the top mentioned skill of interest to PWD in Bhamo. Youth IDPs interests in

livelihood related activities is combined in Myitkyina findings (section **Error! Reference source not found.**).



FIGURE 14 – IMPORTANT FACTORS IN SEEKING WORK – BHAMO

3.2.2 Government Technical High School of Bhamo

Background

The GTHS in Bhamo was established in 2009, located near the Computer University of Bhamo. The school offers two-year diploma programs, and is known as a bridging program from 8th standard to a technical school or university after graduation. The main subjects offered at the school include Building Technology (BT), Automotive Technology (Maintenance), Electronic Technology (ELT), and Surveying. The school also provides short courses (2-week course) during the school breaks, including computer and motorbike training. According to the school, the majority of students are interested in computer training, with a current group of 30 students enrolled in the training for mid-term break.

At present, the school has 40 teachers covering both academic and technical courses, and a total of 154 students enrolling in both year one and two. For regular class, the school does not provide career counselling or job matching after graduation. However, there is an on the job training program (specifically for car workshop), where students are placed with local businesses for on the job training every Friday of the week. However, from the focus group interviews with the students, they feel the on the job training is not effective since they are asked to do very simple tasks such as taking out nuts and bolts, instead of receiving practical training at the workshop. While the concept is good, the program may need to help the businesses understand how they may create a better learning environment for students.

Similar to Myitkyina and Lashio, the Bhamo GTHS currently does not have enough teaching space to offer short courses alongside existing courses. There is one building that could be available for use but requires additional repairs to be suitable for training. In terms of teaching capacity, the teachers in Bhamo are only trained to teach in the five subjects according to the existing curriculum and are already teaching at full time. Adding extra courses in a new format would require training and added incentives to the teaching staff. Additionally, it was remarked that the teachers may have a strong

technical background but lack practical knowledge, such as operating new and advanced machines, understanding current industry practices and how to adapt the curriculum to meet current demands.

Feedback from Students

The study interviewed ten students (four female) from the GTHS in Bhamo to gain a deeper understanding of the limitations of the program. The youth agree that short courses are essential for youth to enter the job market, but want to make sure they receive enough skills including soft skills to be successful. Additionally, youth believe that modular based training can be an effective teaching method for entry level work, which should include three to four skills sets in each sector. Most youth feel their greatest challenge is in knowing where to look for jobs. Job matching is essential to supporting new students to find work, which should begin in school through integrating job searching skills and preparation within the curriculum, as well as on the job matching programs and linking with the private sector for future employment opportunities. This can be done both through the school and in cooperation with external sources. Until there is a more established job-matching platform, the school with support of the project, can make direct linkages with prospective employers through intern and apprenticeship programs as well as job placement. Students further emphasize the need for them to learn how to give a good impression to future employers and what steps to take to secure a job.

Furthermore, the students believe that females should be more encouraged to learn technical skills. They see computer skills being widely used and feel that basic typing and computer skills would give them an advantage to get jobs in the market. While Bhamo is a small township with few office-based jobs (aside from government offices), most sectors require administrative staff that use computer skills.



FGD with students from Bhamo GTHS

3.2.3 Labour Market Review in Bhamo

Labour market situation in terms of labour supply and demand

Overall, the labour market demands and opportunities for employment and self-employment in Bhamo is similar to that of Myitkyina. However, there appear to be more diverse opportunities across sectors in Myitkyina and Lashio in comparison to Bhamo. The greatest opportunities for

employment currently fall under construction and the sewing/garment industry (tailoring). The Myitkyina Economic Development Zone and expanding commerce and trade with China will certainly impact the region beyond Myitkyina, including Bhamo. While it is expected that local labour demands will not be met leaving employers to recruit from other parts of Myanmar, unless there is substantial investment in building the skills and employability of local labourers. It can be assumed that the scope of the growing demand (i.e. opportunity) will extend beyond Myitkyina, to Bhamo, Lashio and other neighbouring areas. It is therefore imperative that the specific labour demands relevant to youth and IDPs in Bhamo are mapped out in Bhamo as well as Myitkyina and other economically significant areas in close proximity. Furthermore, the study analysed potential opportunities towards self-employment for Bhamo residents, including viable markets outside of the township.

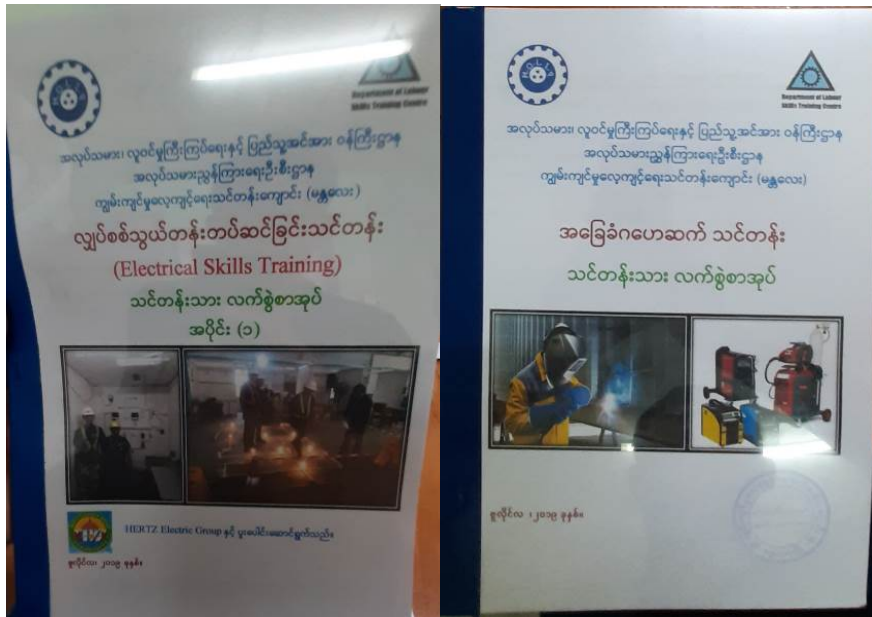
Top sectors in high labour demand

A Construction

The top skills in high demand within the construction sector in Bhamo include (listed in order of significant in terms of demand):

- Carpentry
- Welding
- Masonry
- Interior Design
- Concrete Shuttering

While there are opportunities available to females (as previously explained under Section 3.1.3 A), the skills in the construction sector are male dominated. Currently, construction work inside Bhamo is moderate in comparison to Myitkyina and is mostly for individual homes, walling, and other smaller projects. There are only ten construction companies registered in Bhamo and an estimated three to five smaller sub-contractors, each with teams in Masonry, household electrical wiring, welding/steel installation, interior decoration, and more. According to the Sut Family Construction Company, workers in Bhamo construction are mostly recruited from lower Myanmar, with an estimated 80% migrant labour force. Typically, migrant construction workers come to work for periods of four to five months, and then return to their home location or move to another city. According to local employers, recruiting skilled workers locally is difficult due to the influx of migration to China amongst labourers with greater skills. In addition, Bhamo struggles to retain and acquire skilled labour due to competing demands from companies in Myitkyina, Northern Shan, and on the Chinese border, which are all looking for greater skilled labour. There are opportunities for new labourers to be trained to meet such demands in Bhamo as well as in other high demand areas. Bhamo is in a good location for migration to other areas including Myitkyina, Mandalay, Loi-Chinese Border, and Muse, through Mansi and Namkhan road. The strategic location provides workers with accessibility to move around the region for work.



Book cover of modular course provides by the Skills development training centre of MOLIP in Mandalay

Road construction projects will be one of the most significant employment opportunities for skilled labourers, including skills in masonry, carpentry, bar bending, building drainage systems and culverts. There are five road construction companies currently building roads from Myitkyina to Bhamo, providing opportunities to both areas. Each company is sub contracted to build 1.5 to 4-mile sections of the road, depending on capacity and investment. According to the President of the Myanmar Construction Association (Kachin), the regional government is now in the tendering process to commission new road construction projects between Mandalay and Bhamo, which will require local companies and contractors to build teams with strong masonry and carpentry skills as listed above. Higher skilled tasks such as machine operation are not in demand since companies use their own staff to operate machinery.

As mentioned for Myitkyina, there are no formal training institutes available locally that provide construction skills in specific areas. While the Catholic and Baptist church are providing some skills training in masonry, welding and carpentry, they only recruit a few students each year, in a combined religious and skills training program.

The most common method for people to enter the construction sector is to do an apprenticeship (called “follower”) in each specific area, while working alongside a supervisor/mentor. According to an industry expert, most supervisors will not teach all of their skills to the apprentice for fear of future competition. Therefore, most construction companies would prefer new recruits to have completed formal training, which includes current practices and trends in the market, whilst also covering productivity, safety standards and wellness (soft skills) on the job, to increase quality of work and environment for both employer and employee.

Currently competition in the construction industry is high with most positions filled with migrants. Until the local labour force is improved in terms of skills and attitudes, entrance into the field will be tough. The majority of staff are currently recruited through personal networks, and establishing personal connections through family and friends will help in recruitment. Additionally, new prospective labourers should be made aware of the familial team dynamics which may require tasks

outside of the typical, including cooking for the team and running errands as requested by the Supervisor.

Currently, the earning potential in Bhamo construction works ranges from 8,000 to 10,000Ks per day based on skill level, with supervisors earning from 12,000 to 15,000Ks. Daily wages along the Chinese border are much greater at around 30,000Ks per day.



Male & female students - learning pipe installation and trucking in the Electrical Wiring Course

CONSTRUCTION RECOMMENDATIONS

Businesses met with through the study encourage training to locals to build the local labour force to be able to compete in the job market. Business are looking for workers with skills, attitudes, and high productivity whom are also willing to work for longer periods of time. As previously mentioned, employers would like training to incorporate health and safety knowledge and awareness, which currently is lacking from construction companies and sub-contractors providing training through apprenticeship.

Construction specific recommendations and additional barriers for IDPs and PWD in entering the construction sector in Bhamo is similar to Myitkyina; please refer to Section 3.1.3A. In summary, construction training should provide specific training for students to enter into a basic level and then receive further training on the job. Offering training covering several subjects over longer periods of time is not of interest to youth IDPs, and has not resulted in high employment outcomes thus far. In providing a targeted training in a shorter period of time, students will be specialized enough to get a job in, for example, brickmaking. This is a specific task that is currently in high demand amongst contactors and companies. Once on a team, is it possible to develop greater skills, and even go back for short term trainings to advance to a higher level. The key is that students are out of work for only a short time for training, and can make an income while employed and working to advance their skill set.

B Sewing/Garment

The second most significant labour sector currently in high demand is tailoring of women's dresses, both casual and fancy, ethnic dresses (Shan and Kachin), and accessories (ornate buttons for

dresses/blouses), and other accessories, as well as bedding and school uniforms. Bhamo has around 36 registered sewing shops, which make mostly female dresses for festivals and events. Shops provide services to their own customers, with around 200 to 300 customers on average per shop. There are many more unregistered sewing shops, estimated at three times greater than registered companies in Bhamo. Unregistered shops are typically smaller, tending to 50 to 100 customers per year.

The process to become a tailor/seamstress in Bhamo is similar to that of Myitkyina. However, the market in Bhamo is smaller, with greater opportunities in markets in Mandalay. Pricing and competition for sales is also similar to Myitkyina. The greatest opportunities arise during festival seasons where customers are looking for new shops to make outfits for special occasions. Establishing business linkages with larger shops could be a strategy to help enter the market and service growing needs during the high demand seasons. Larger shops do sub contract projects to smaller shops and independent workers to fill these gaps.



Kachin women's blouse made by a PWD in Myitkyina (sold for 50,000ks)

SEWING/GARMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

The training recommendations to help IDPs and PWD tap into employment and self-employment opportunities in Bhamo is aligned with the recommendations presented for Myitkyina (refer to Section 3.1.3 B. In summary, it is recommended that training focus on two to three of the highest demand designs (such as women's dress, women's blouse and fancy dress), over a two-month long training. At this stage, the trainee would be prepared to start working as an intern or apprentice while earning money to further advance their skills on the job. As previously stated, most sewing shops interviewed for the study agree to this concept.

C Making accessories for women's dress & blouses

With the growing demand in the sewing sector especially for women's dresses and blouses, there is additional demand for accessories, such as Shan-button, flower-button and designs. Based on interviews with industry experts, most accessories currently come from Mandalay and Namkham. Only a few shops in Bhamo are manufacturing flower buttons. There is a relatively smaller market in Bhamo but high demand to sell products to Myitkyina and Mandalay. For producers in Bhamo,

similar to Myitkyina, there is potential to link with retailers in Mandalay Market. The only requirements are to have high quality and nice designs (according to changing market interests).

ACCESSORIES PRODUCTION RECOMMENDATIONS

The training requirements and pricing structure is similar to Myitkyina (Section **Error! Reference source not found.**). Sewing is highly recommended for women with children and PWD since they are able to work from home and generate additional income for the household. Women can also work in groups and supply products to the major tailor shops in Myitkyina and retail markets in Mandalay.

Overall, this activity is highly recommended since it is very suitable to engage women with children and PWD to work at home and make additional income. Short course training could include a combination of in class training through the sewing school with complementary courses in basic business skills for students interested in working independently.

D Sewing household items

Additionally, there is demand for producing household items to sell in local markets, such as bed sheets, pillow covers, aprons, and bags. These are some of the most sold items in the main market of Bhamo. While the majority of tailor shops provide services for dress making, there are a limited number of people working in the manufacturing of household items. While consumer demand is not as high as dresses and blouses, household items could be a great option for PWD to produce high quality bed sheets, pillow cases, etc., to sell in the local markets as well as through NGO networks. It is easy to enter the sewing sector and even easier to produce household items. According to sources, the most important skill is knowledge of how to make nice designs. There is already a high number of retailers importing readymade products to Mandalay [to sell in the market]. However, the mass production of ready-made designs is less attractive to consumers, whom prefer more specialized, unique and custom-made designs

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS RECOMMENDATIONS

Training could be geared to link IDPs and PWD either with larger shops or directly with customers to produce smaller batches of custom made designs, which could be sold at a higher price. Based on assessment of the current market, the made-for-order market should be sufficient for producers to produce enough to make sufficient income, given the quality is acceptable. It is advised that the program work with sewing trainees and local businesses to develop the value chain to find retail markets for household items in Yangon and Mandalay, as opposed to working with retailers that will take a commission. The activity could be integrated within the existing sewing trainings, and combined with blouse and dress making. Only a few products should be included at first (with the greatest market), such as pillow cases and bed sheets. The products should be tested first in the market, and then larger production pushed.

E Motorbike repairs & car workshop

The demand for motorbike and car repairs in Bhamo is one of the highest demand opportunities towards self-employment that is available locally, with findings similar to Myitkyina. The workshops that were interviewed in Myitkyina would also be willing to take new trainees from Bhamo, under the same apprenticeship model thus encouraging workers to stay longer periods of time.

MOTORBIKE REPAIR/CAR WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended to provide modular courses based on specific fields such as air conditioner repair, and to link with local workshops to provide (paid) internships through on the job training. A full review of the training needs and opportunities in these sectors can be found in section **Error! Reference source not found.**

Furthermore, it is important that the GTHS is closely coordinated with the sector to ensure training meets industry standards and is delivering short course topics according to current demands, in both topic and methodology (using updated tools and technique).

3.3 Non-Government Control Area

Findings and Opportunities in NGCA (Myitkyina and Laiza)

Due to the restrictive and isolated nature of NGCAs and unique needs, the study mapped out specific areas of opportunity for IDPs living in these camps and nearby communities. Three promising income generating opportunities were identified, with significant markets available locally, including manufacturing of school uniforms, weaving, and agriculture and farm machinery repair.

A Manufacturing of school uniform

The majority of children in NGCA controlled areas attend school, both in Government and NGCA schools. There is an estimated 4,000 to 6,000 children currently studying in NGCA areas both in Laiza and Majayan. The schools require children to wear uniform made of a white shirt and Kachin longyi bottom (for both male and female). In terms of demand, each child will have at least two pairs of school uniforms in one school year, with a total estimate of 8,000 to 12,000 uniform sets per year. Most uniforms are currently ordered from Myitkyina, and sold to parents through retailers. The price is high, and the quality is not the best. In meetings with the Camp Coordinator, it was suggested that the uniforms could be made locally and sold directly to families. Fabrics could be sourced from the nearby Chinese border, and produced at a better quality than the current options.



Children on the way to school in NGCA

SCHOOL UNIFORM RECOMMENDATIONS – NGCA

School uniform production is not only a potentially high and stable demand opportunity, the camp coordinator is also very interested in developing the activity and has stated their commitment in doing so. In terms of training, IDPs would need to be trained to manufacture shirts for males and females, in three sizes (small, medium and large), and a standard unisex longyi bottom. The fabrics can be cut into pieces using a machine, and then sewed together according to the pattern size. Overall, the process is quite simple. For manufacturing of longyi, two to three weaving machines could be used to produce 10 to 12 longyis per day. Depending on demand, up to 3 to 5 machines may be needed (approximately 1,500,000Ks per unit).

B Weaving

The study found that some adult women inside the NGCA already have weaving skills, some of which have taken weaving classes supported by NGOs. However, they lack knowledge of designs and market linkages to sell their products. Previous research has found major demands for traditional woven products in China (amongst ethnic Kachin staying in China). Approximately 20% of weaving products from Myitkyina are sent to the Chinese border.

WEAVING RECOMMENDATIONS – NGCA

The study identified resource people in Rumpu and Shwenyaing Pin in Myitkyina, which could support weaving training in the NGCA. While most youth in the area are not as interested in weaving, adult females and mothers are very interested. Another option is to support bringing IDPs from NGCAs to other training schools, namely GTHS, to be trained in basic weaving and return home to work alongside more experienced weavers. Additional training may be provided; however, emphasis must be placed on developing designs to meet market interests, and linkages with the Chinese border market.

C Agriculture and farm machine repairs

Agriculture is the main livelihood source for IDPs in NGCA areas, with most households cultivating rice for consumption (monsoon season) and maize as a cash crop (dry season). Farmers with greater resources rent farm land near the Chinese border, and grows crop in both locations (NGCA and border area).

It was found that the majority of IDPs in NGCAs are working on Banana plantations, and face severe risks of exposure to unregulated chemical usage (pesticides and herbicides). According to the Camp Coordinator, the Camp Committee barred its residents from working on such plantations due to the high risks. Many families in the NGCA struggle to make decent income, with limited viable opportunities.

Most food items consumed inside the camps are purchased from Mandalay, including high daily consumption crops such as onion and garlic. It was suggested that further study explore the feasibility of growing these crops locally in Laiza, with onion as a priority crop and garlic secondary.



Handheld tractor used in NGCA

Furthermore, the majority of farmers have used manual handheld tools, but started to use single engine tractors in recent years. There is a lack of labours trained to use the new machinery, and with most youth migrating to China there is typically one adults and older aged people working on the farms. Farm productivity is very low; however, the machines were intended to assist in reducing costs and time. Currently, the NGCA has two which have since broken and there is no one in the area with the skills to repair. Apparently, the camp is reluctant to send the machines to China or Myitkyina to be fixed due to high transport costs. The Camp coordinator suggests the area could benefit from training on farm machinery repairs, in order to overcome similar problems in the future and support the development of the local agriculture sector.

FARM MACHINERY REPAIR RECOMMENDATIONS – NGCA

Farm machinery repair training in NGCAs could be approached in two ways. First, interested people could be sent to mechanic trainings at the GTHS and if interest is high enough a module could be introduced to cover farm machinery. Otherwise, training would need to be conducted locally on site, and facilitated through government supported trainers. Added small business skills would be beneficial to add for people looking to set up a trade in and around the camps.

3.4 Lashio Findings

3.4.1 Impact Group Profile

Background information

A Labour Market Study for GIZ, conducted from August to September 2019, captured the current market situation in IDP camps and host communities near Lashio, including both labour supply and demands. The study collected information from youth IDPs, parents and camp committee representatives within two camps, Man Paing camp in Lashio Township and Nant Zalat camp in Thenni Township. The following section provides secondary data from this study, as well as additional follow up information from meetings and interviews as part of the current study, with the goal to obtain a more targeted review of vocational training needs based on demand and capacity of the GTHS to deliver.

Skills and employment

Amongst the target group included in the GIZ Labour Market Study, the majority of youth from Lashio have little to no prior experience in the formal employment sector, and no exposure to such working environment. The following table describes the current work experience and employment status of the youth surveyed.

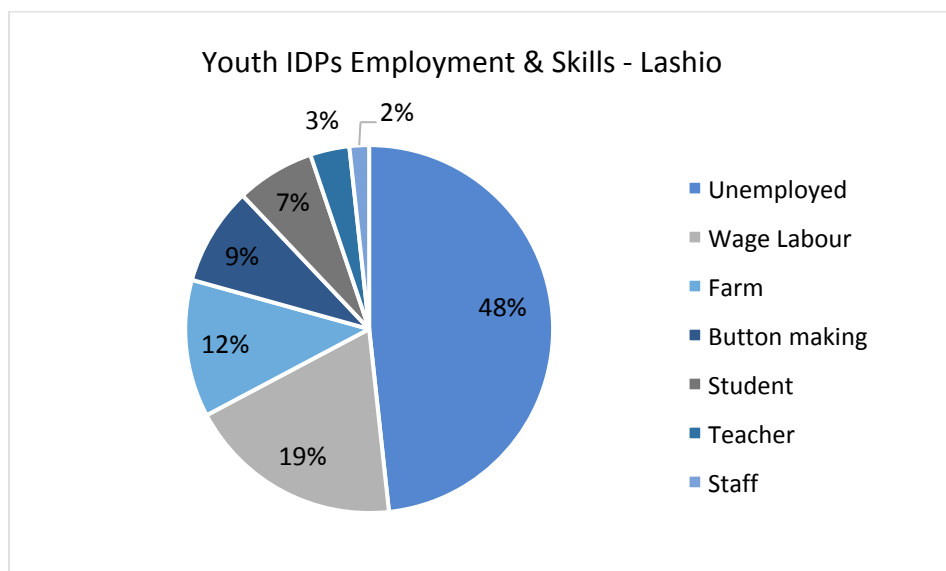


FIGURE 15 - YOUTH IDP SKILLS – LASHIO

Barriers of entry to employment and self-employment

The GIZ Labour Market Survey assessed youth IDPs awareness of vocational training, as a means to understand their interests and attitudes towards participation in a such program. Some youth located in camps near Lashio or Muse had prior knowledge of vocational training including the training location and types of training available to them, however they lack an understanding of where to find jobs after completion of such training programs. Most youth living in the camps far from the main road or city have no knowledge of vocational trainings, aside from those provided within the camp by NGOs.

The study discovered an overall lack of opportunities for youth to enter in formal employment, closer to their camps or communities. As a result, many youths are forced to migrate for economic purposes, exposing them to greater risks of exploitation and abuse. Additionally, youth in Northern Shan (similar to Kachin) tend to have a greater deficit in experience and skills for the workforce, in comparison to youth from other parts of the country. The job market is limited, and amongst the jobs that do exist (requiring some skills) employers look to recruit from outside. From an interview with a hotel representative in Lashio, 90% of the staff come from outside of NSS, such as the Dry Zone.¹⁵ Many Northern Shan youth lack both skills and experience to enter the job market, however in the event that they are skilled, the lack of experience working and inability to identify opportunities further bars them from gaining employment. Youth IDPs face difficulty transitioning into a professional environment, having a lack of exposure to social and behavioural norms for the work place. It was remarked that before the youth moved to the camps, they oftentimes lived in a

¹⁵ GIZ Labour Market Study

community with no access to electricity, road access or even mobile connectivity. With little connection to the outside, they are unfamiliar with how to engage with a boss, respecting workplace culture, following rules, and assimilation with other people from different backgrounds.

Most youth in Northern Shan and Kachin alike are generally unaware of how to find opportunities towards employment or self-employment, and oftentimes feel they have no choice but to migrate to other places to make an income. Whilst the economic situation in and around the camps is bleak, youth often face even greater challenges across the border, working in exploitative industries and risks to their health and safety. Tackling these gaps is essential to be able to improve youth's skills and confidence to participate meaningfully in the job market. It is important to note that providing training is not sufficient without strong connections to the job market and private sector.

Youth IDP aspirations towards employment

Similar questions were asked regarding youth's top employment interests for the GIZ Study. The sectors listed by were very similar to that of Myitkyina and Bhamo, including motorbike repair amongst males and sewing amongst females. Nearly all respondents in Lashio have had no formal employment, and are mostly working on the farm. Furthermore, they have no understanding of how to find better opportunities. There were some females with higher education (from being educated inside the camps) that are interested in more professional position such as teaching, company staff, and phone retail sales.¹⁶

3.4.2 Government Technical High School of Lashio

Background

In addition to Myitkyina and Bhamo, the study met with the GTHS in Lashio, including the Principle U Myat Soe Htun, and three teachers. The school has been in operation since 2009, offering technical courses to local communities, focusing on promoting technical skills required in the industry. However, the school did not recruit many students from 2009 to 2014 (only 10-12 students per-year). From 2015 to 2016, the structure of the school was transformed to start offering courses that were in demand from the local communities. Currently, the school offers two-year degree programs within five subjects: Automobile Tech (AT), Building Technology (BT), Electrical Technology, 4) Electronics Technology, and 5) Information Technology. The school takes in around 90 students per year, free of charge with an additional offering of 30,000Ks monthly stipend to help cover living costs.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) is currently supporting the GTHS of Lashio to develop competency based modular courses to being by 2020. The courses will be offered in the following subjects: Bar bending, motorcycle, welding, concrete shuttering, and electrical house wiring (offered by 2021). According to the GTHS, these subjects were in demand. ADB will support the school by providing teacher capacity building, providing buildings and tools, and in developing the curriculum.

The GTHS in Lashio does offer short courses in short courses in masonry, motor repairs, bar bending, and computer skills, which are offered during school breaks. The most popular course is the

¹⁶ GIZ Labour Market Study.

computer class. Future short course offerings include air-conditioner repair, electrical wiring, and hotel courses (bakery).

Through interviews with the staff, the key challenges faced by the school include work overload for teachers, insufficient space to host students, and lack of interest from the community. Similar to other GTHS's, the teachers have regular class to teach (approximately 25 to 30 hours per week) and are planning to open additional short modular courses with the support by ADB in 2020. Some instructors are teaching more than one subject and are already exceed a comfortable workload. Adding additional courses without sufficient support could put further strain on the system. The project would need to work with the GHTS to formulate an incentive program (travel allowance, hon fees) to teachers willing to take on the extra courses. Another option proposed by the Principle would be to bring teachers from outside the school to lead the new courses, such as skilled people in the private sector (with teaching skills). A second issue could emerge from adding additional courses without sufficient space to host new students. Currently the school can share 1 room near a prime location nearby the school, however in order to be able to offer additional classes to be offered at once, the school will require 2 to 3 additional rooms for teaching. This is not available at the moment. Similar issues may emerge with a lack of tools and equipment to cover all incoming students. One option offered by the Principle would be for the project to use the additional training location nearby the school, and host GTHS teachers to use the centre for additional short course trainings. Additionally, the GTHS is currently struggling to recruit enough students to fill the existing courses offered at the school, and worries there is not enough interest and awareness within the community. A recent bar bending course was shut down early after the majority of students left the class after returning back to their place of work mid- course. However, a key lesson could be learned from poor course completion. Most prospective students are not looking for long term courses since they need to be able to support their family and cannot afford to not work for three months at a time. However, respondents of the study claim they would be willing to participate in shorter courses and then work and learn on the job if they are paid. Lastly, low education levels amongst ethnic youth and IDPs could be another barrier to participating in GTHS courses, which are taught Myanmar language.

Teachers feedback on the target groups

GTHS teachers were asked about their impressions and any prior experiences in teaching youth IDPs. Most report that local ethnic youth have poor Myanmar language skills, struggling to read and write even with having completed 8th standard. This presents a challenge for instructors who must move forward with the class and cannot accommodate varying levels of language skills. Language barriers could further deter IDPs from successfully completing courses. The teachers also felt there are significant cultural barrier the youth IDPs face, since they have little exposure to environments outside of the camp. Some solutions that were presented include a crash course offering to help new students understand the basic vocabulary related to the course, including the most commonly used words. Additional teaching aids could be used such as video recordings of step by step learning processes, to support youth that may struggle with language and the pace of the course.

Additional advice provided by GTHS teachers includes ensuring that class sizes are capped at 15 students, to be able to provide more guided support. Competency based training should cover a minimum of three months, however if the project would like to offer short modular courses (covering 1.5 months), it cannot be defined as competency based but can link to internship opportunities for continued learning.

3.4.3 Labour Market Review in Lashio

Overall labour market situation

Overall, the labour market demands in Lashio are similar to that of Myitkyina and Bhamo, with most opportunities falling under construction, garment/tailoring, mechanic, food production and handicrafts. Additionally, hotel and hospitality are a significant sector in Lashio due to the growth of tourism along the border. The following sections summarize the sectors in highest demand, as mapped out by the GIZ Labour Market Study.

Top sectors in high labour demand

A *Construction*

Construction work was identified as the highest demand sector in Northern Shan, particularly Lashio, with several ongoing and upcoming projects that will require skilled and semi-skilled labour. From interviews with companies, employers prefer to hire locally available workers if they have the right skills and attitude (similar to Myitkyina and Bhamo). The specific skills in demand at the moment include masonry, welding, bar bending electrician, and interior design. Other unskilled work such as earth digging are also in high demand. Daily wages depend on skill level, including 6,000ks (lowest level), 8,000 to 10,000ks (second level), and 12,000 to 15,000ks (supervisor level). Similar to Kachin, companies in Northern Shan, particularly Lashio are left to recruit staff from other parts of Myanmar due to a lack of appropriately skills labour available locally. Seventy to 80% of workers are migrants, coming mostly from the Dry Zone, Taunggoo, and Mandalay. However, due to recent intensification of conflict some workers are reluctant to come to Northern Shan due to safety reasons. This has created further shortages of labour.

The earning potential for skilled masonry workers is high in both Myanmar and across the border in China, where workers can earn from 150,000Ks to 400,000Ks per month (depending on skill level), exceeding average daily wages by up to 40%. While the sector is mostly males, females are also recruited, typically for support in carrying bricks and equipment and cleaning. While higher education levels may be preferred, each skill does not require beyond primary education to be able to enter training. masonry and welding skills are in highest demand during the dry season from October to April.

The study dove deeper into the current construction demands in Lashio, to gauge the scope of demand and map out potential linkages to the market. There are an estimated 1,000 to 1,200 buildings being constructed each year inside and in close proximity to Lashio, Thenni, Kyt kai, and Hsipaw. The majority of which are two to four story residential buildings. The average building project requires 30 to 40 workers, and among this workforce, 30 to 40% are construction workers while the rest act as assistants (non-skilled). There are an estimated 40 to 50 construction companies currently operating in Lashio, completing five to 10 buildings per year each (six to 12-month long projects).

CONSTRUCTION RECOMMENDATIONS

Similar to Myitkyina and Bhamo, the GTHS of Lashio could be supported to deliver short course trainings in the abovementioned skills (masonry, welding, electrician, and machine operation), but courses must be designed to meet the needs and schedules of the target group. Courses could be offered through three-month training with an in-house trainer, on site full time, with practical skills

learning, followed by one month of internship. After four months of training, youth should be prepared for job placement. After six months of working in the trade, the youth may be prepared to jump to the next level of training for more advanced skills and possible certification.

Furthermore, training must address some key gaps that were found, including:

- Provide more practical hands on training, with accommodation for IDPs and additional support needed to allow them to succeed.
- Training should include additional skills required to successfully seek employment and meet employers demands, which will also help to reduce risks of exploitation from employers (in Myanmar and across the border).
- Facilitate linkages to employers and internship or apprenticeship opportunities, resulting in greater employment outcomes.

B *Hotel and Hospitality*

The hotel and tourism industry has been gradually increasing in Lashio with the development of new projects from China, including the CMEC and BRI. Growth is also expected to continue to grow. Currently, the greatest demand is to staff hotels with both front office and housekeeping. Currently, there are 27 hotels in Lashio, and 15 nearby in Muse, as well as the Mingalar Muse, a major project that will house restaurants and shops, and is in the process of developing a large hotel. According to the Myanmar Hotelier Association, hotels must have at least one staff per room, and at least 70% of the workforce to be certified. Similar to the construction industry, the majority of staff are recruited from Mandalay and other parts of the country due to their higher skill levels. There is certainly a growing demand for local workers, and for youth IDPs to be able to fill these positions locally.

HOTEL/HOSPITALITY RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended to link with the Myanmar Hotelier Association to support hotel/hospitality-based training. According to the Association, current training options do not prepare staff enough in terms of soft skills required to interact with guests. Hotel industry representatives interviewed remarked that most new staff lack these essential skills. Hotels are usually willing to provide on the job training, since they have unique processes that need to be trained, however they prefer to hire individuals with some relevant skills. Chinese and Myanmar language skills would be very useful, especially for front of office positions that are engaging with customers. However, the most important criteria in hiring are characteristics such as honesty, dedication, and discipline, according to research done through GIZ's Labour Market Study. While these qualities are difficult to develop through short term training, supplementary soft skills training and support groups could be developed to meet these gaps.

C *Garment/tailor and accessories making (flower button)*

The garment sector is in very high demand in Lashio, with several opportunities for IDPs, in particular female IDPs, to become employed with a local shop, larger company, or self-employed. The demand is currently in production of women's dresses, blouses and accessories (such as flower buttons), similar to that of Kachin. Shan State is well known for its traditional fabrics and clothing (both male and female), which is popular across the country. There are large markets in Mandalay, selling both locally and distributing across the country. Producers in Lashio have the opportunity to sell directly to the market or through retail distributors. Ready-made dresses are very popular, and simple to make as suppliers provide all needed materials pre-cut and outsource the final stage

(sewing) to local producers. On average, a seamstress can earn 20,000 to 30,000Ks per day (approximately 3,500Ks per dress). If IDPs are interested in starting their own small business, they could earn more by sourcing their own materials and selling directly to customers, since there is a large demand locally.

GARMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Training in the production of dresses and accessories such as flower buttons can be incorporated into the existing sewing training, similar to what is recommended in Myitkyina and Bhamo. However, it is likely that accommodation will need to be provided to support women to participate, whom otherwise would not be willing to leave the camp or community. Further business skills should be incorporated to support women to sell directly to the market. The Myanmar Garment Manufacturing Association could be helpful in developing links to the market, and in guiding producers in how to develop products to meet customer demands.

D Mechanic/ motor bike repairs

Similar to Myitkyina and Bhamo, Lashio has a steady demand in motorbike repairs, especially in the outskirts of the city. The sector is of greatest interest to male youth, including both working for a mechanic or starting a small shop. According to sources working in the sector in Lashio, there should be improved training to prepare labourers to work in a shop. It can take six to 12 months to reach a semi-professional skill level, however there are no proper training schools available at present. Most workers learn through apprenticeship; however, it can take a long time for new workers to reach an adequate skill level. Additionally, skills in repairing modern cars (computerized and electronic parts) would be very useful as the rate of car ownership increases.

MECHANIC RECOMMENDATIONS

Training recommendations in mechanics and motorbike repairs in Lashio should follow a similar model to Myitkyina and Bhamo, as detailed in sections 3.1.3 and 3.2.3. Overall, the project could support the GTHS to focus on youth with existing basic skills, to provide more advanced skills in specific areas. Since most youth will need to be earning income whilst advancing their skills, the apprenticeship model combined with short term module-based learning could be most effective. The topics should be developed and renewed on a regular basis, based on consultation with the Association and industry representatives whom are knowledgeable about the current demands.

E Food production (dried quince, dried soya bean cake)

Beyond more traditional sectors, there are great opportunities available to IDPs looking to develop livelihoods that can be done from inside the camp or communities. Dried processed foods/fruits are in very high demand across the region, and can be made easily by small scale producers. Dried quince in particular was recommended by local producers, due to its low costs and ease of production, and availability of raw materials. No prior experience or education is required, and the process is easy to learn. In terms of opportunities in Northern Shan, quince and soya bean are readily available locally in Kutkai, Lashio, and Nantphatka. Kutkai is a major production area of quince and Lashio is well known for its high-quality soya beans. While there are options to sell in the local market, there are additional opportunities to tap into markets in Pyin Oo Lin and Taunggyi, which are already ordering these products from the region.

FOOD PRODUCTION RECOMMENDATIONS

Food production could be trained in short term trainings, including technical training on how to source materials, the drying and packaging process, and food safety. The process is relatively simple, however if students are interested in selling custom branded products, this will require further training in branding and marketing. Developing linkages with existing producers could be a good option for trainees to get started.

F Handicraft manufacturing

Additional livelihoods opportunities in demand include local handicrafts, including bamboo and woven bags. Bamboo production is a potentially high opportunity sector for rural populations in and near Lashio. There are over 90 varieties of bamboo, which serve a multitude of purposes ranging from construction to handicrafts. Developing value added products with locally sourced materials is an efficient way to local communities to generate additional income, which can be a great opportunity for IPDs based in camps and host communities.

In terms of market potential, the BRI and related developments is expected to increase Chinese tourism and participation in the local economy. According to industry representatives, the sector is suitable for both male and females, however it could be more favourable to females and women with children whom are interested in staying in or nearby the camp.

HANDICRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

Handicraft training could be delivered over short courses, containing the necessary steps to develop high quality products as well as how to run a small business. The basic business skills can be run in coordination with other skills trainings.

3.5 Key TVET findings across all townships

Lessons learned: Why TVET fails?

The study collected additional valuable information from key stakeholders to better support VESI and other similar programs looking to develop demand-oriented TVET that results in improved employment outcomes for youth. Youth IDPs and key informants surveyed were asked to list the top reason why existing TVET have failed. The question was included in the survey in response to feedback from the GIZ SENS Labour Market Study in Northern Shan, which assessed existing TVET initiatives and found gaps in their ability to prepare and link students to the job market, including a lack of practical skills training (with course offerings based on what sectors are in demand and skills and tools that match this), and little to no focus on soft skills, which were deemed essential by students and employers. Across Myitkyina and Bhamo townships, youth feel the greatest gap in current vocational training is that there is no link to the job market and employers, no support upon completion of studies to continue developing a livelihood, and no follow up training.

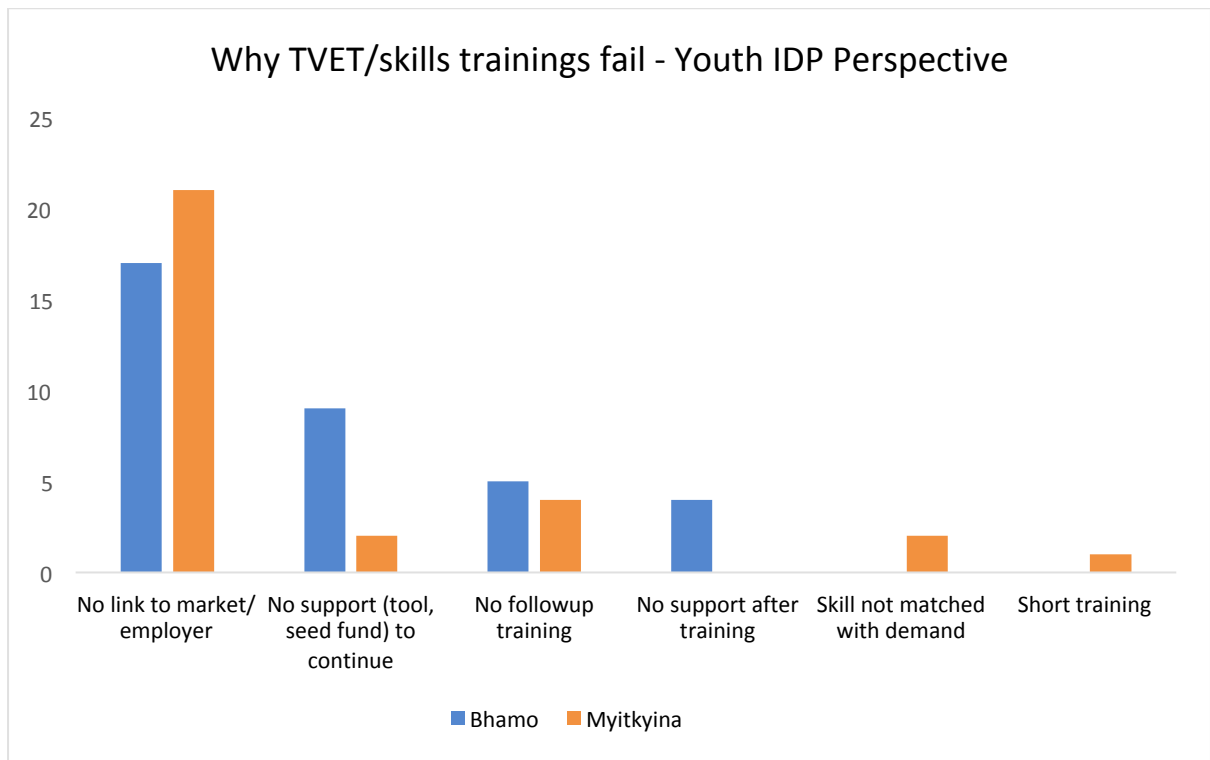


FIGURE 16 - WHY TVET FAILS (ACCORDING TO YOUTH IDP)

In key informant interviews with over 50 representatives of the private sector, TVET centres (both government and private), INGOs and NGOs (including an organization working with PWD, EAOs, Faith based groups, and political party representatives, respondents were asked the same question regarding the impact of TVET (in terms of employment outcomes). Poor market linkages and insufficient support to training centres were amongst the top reasons why TVET fails, followed by a lack of student motivation, courses not matching market demands, insufficient training and internships, poor training styles and curriculum design, and student selection process (image below).

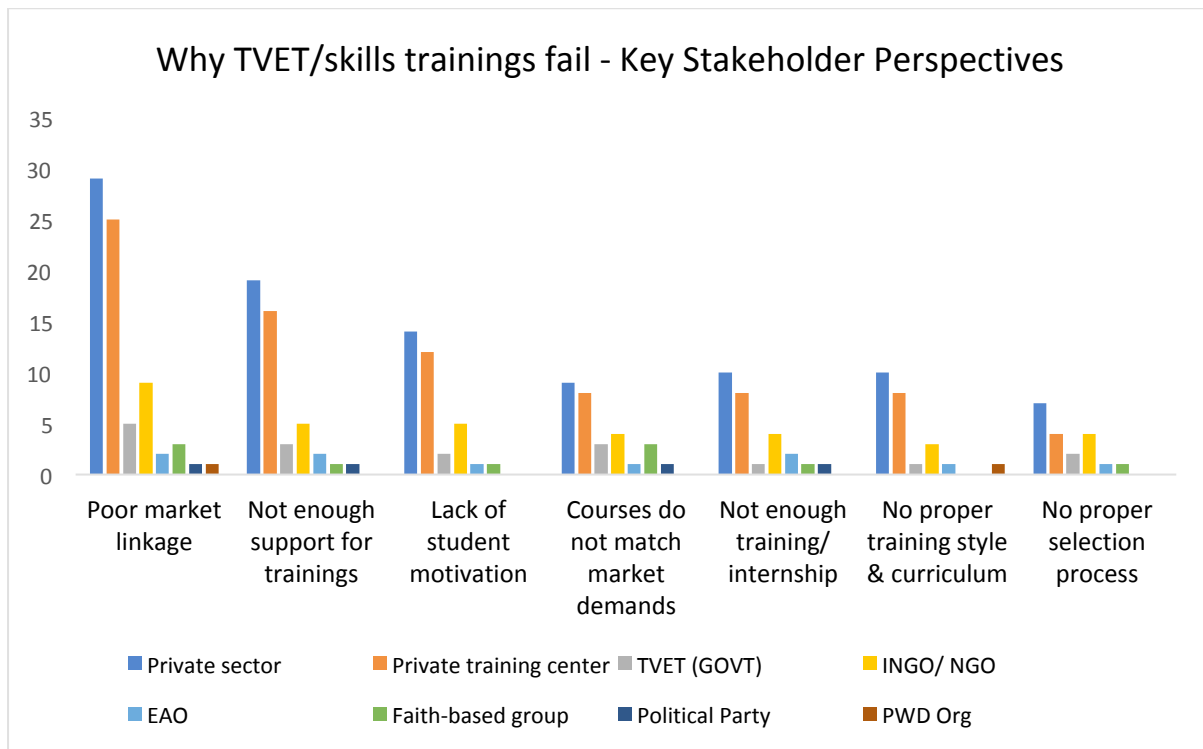


FIGURE 17 - WHY TVET FAILS (ACCORDING TO OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)

Poor linkages the market (employment and self-employment)

The study found the most significant barrier to be a lack of market linkages, according to all respondents. There is a need to incorporate market demands from the curriculum and training design, to the training itself (practical and on the job experience), to post training. Upon completion of training, youth would like to already have an idea of where they will be employed, or if they seek self-employment, information regarding markets to set up shops and sell goods. A total of 90% of the respondents mentioned that training without any market linkages established through the training institute will continue to leave students without opportunities and a general sense of discouragement. This has in turn led to poor perceptions of the TVET system amongst youth and parents.

Insufficient support post training

As nearly half of youth IDPs interviewed are interested in self-employment, there must be additional support mechanisms in place to help them to be able to develop mini businesses. This support should begin in training with supplementary training in soft skills and basic business skills that are directly relevant to the industry of interest. Part of the business skills curriculum could be how to identify markets and adapt to changes in demand. From the interviews, there are some women that have received sewing machines in the camp to support them in developing their own livelihood, however this is not the case of the majority of people. It is recommended to support the target groups that are interested or have no choice but to stay in or near the camps (i.e. women, PWD) to develop small businesses through access to resources. Seed grants could be considered as an option to provide support to small groups, however the management of such grants or loans should be done so carefully and in partnership with an institution well trained to do so.

Outdated training skills, methodology and tools (not market-oriented)

All respondents, including teachers, students and the private sector, believe that the current training curriculums need to be upgraded to meet current demands (in skills) and trends (in technique). Some respondents mentioned that trainings that are taking place in the camps are not properly structured and do not provide students with sufficient skills to enter the market. Rather than providing ad hoc trainings on technical methods (without any connection to the job market/private sector), it is recommended to design specific modules in partnership with the private sector in a structured way. Including the private sector in the development of the trainings could also help ensure they are more interested and committed to accepting new students in internship or jobs. Furthermore, there must be a regular review of training content with experts from each industry to ensure the methods and tools being trained on are up to date. Teachers should be a very active part of this process to ensure they are advancing their methodology in line with industry standards, as experts themselves and as teachers.

Lack of internship opportunities/ on the job training

A general lack of connection to the private sector was observed across all TVET centres and school in the region. In some sectors the GTHS does help students acquire internships and on the job training, based on connection with local businesses, however students remarked that what is available is not enough. Students would like to receive more practical training at the school as well as paid internship opportunities.

Student selection process

The selection of students into TVET courses at the GTHS should be done carefully to ensure mutual success. Since resources at the school are limited, it is recommended that first the training be redesigned to better meet market and student needs and demands, and then selection criteria are developed to draw in committed students. It may take some time to convince students of the new approach, since their perceptions have been sceptical of existing vocational training. However, by selecting only students that are most likely to benefit from the training it can help promote the success during the first try, which will further encourage youth to participate in the long term. Such factors should be considered including education levels, previous experience, and time commitments. These factors should be reviewed only after the TVET system is improved and adapted to meet the needs of vulnerable youth. For example, whereas previously a student that could not travel from camp to the school and could therefore not participate regularly, may be considered if the school is able to provide accommodation. Youth interest and motivation, while difficult to measure, is another factor that should be considered in selection. However, before progress can be made it is important that the system be redesigned to support the encouragement of youth. Most youth have little to no idea how to find jobs, and which sectors are hiring. The program could work with GTHS and/or other partners to develop a useful job-searching platform alongside career building skills. Simple access to information regarding what employers are looking for would be very helpful to guide youth towards a goal. Without a clear mission, training can become abstract and lack purpose, which could be a factor in the poor motivations found amongst students and new employees. The school could help youth define what their short, medium and long-term goals are and help map out how to get there. According to youth IDPs and parents, the majority of youth currently join TVET because they are 1) asked by their parents, 2) seeking to get extra income from stipends, or 3) looking to get out to meet new friends. Whatever the ultimate goal, having a plan can make a significant different in the motivation and progress of youth.

4 Recommendations

According to a TVET Feasibility Study in Kachin commissioned by FRC as part of VESI, “TVET is a complicated programming area, in that it involves (or should involve) far more than the simple delivery of skills training. When carried out effectively with the needs of the local market and the individual needs of the beneficiaries taken into consideration, TVET can provide an invaluable opportunity to facilitate access to income generating activities for vulnerable and disenfranchised people. However, TVET is often poorly planned and implemented without consideration to all the variables that can have an effect on its success.” It was also found that there is a huge need for well-implemented TVET in the IDP camps in Kachin. However, there are a number of lessons that can be learned from existing and previous TVET activities in the IDP camps in Kachin. Therefore, it was suggested that VESI develop an innovative and wide reaching TVET approach, that does not only consider skills training but ensures inclusivity for the most vulnerable, includes support for the psychosocial and mental wellbeing of trainees, and should work to promote social cohesion within and between communities in IDP camps and host communities. Furthermore, programming should be developed to ensure proper selection of trainees and matching with demand-based training that is also linked directly to the market for employment and internship opportunities. Additionally, it was remarked that trainings should be targeted to meet the existing skills and needs to youth, while filling gaps to ensure successful employment or self-employment.

The current study set out to provide practical and detailed solutions to the points listed above, as highlighted by the feasibility study for the project. The following is a list of overall recommendations:

Develop modular-based short course learning system

The study found the most feasible solution, based on the sector and employer demands, could be to develop short courses with only the essential skills that would grant students access to entry level jobs. The proposed training system would allow vulnerable youth and IDPs to earn an income whilst learning new methods on the job. However, employers will need to be willing to support the advancement of entry level employees on the job. A key challenge faced by employers in the region is an inability to find skilled labour locally and to retain staff for longer periods of time. If training centres and local businesses are willing to coordinate on which skills to cover in short courses and make proper linkages, the school [GTHS] could source businesses with new workers, with the required entry level skills. Given trainees are able to match skill requirements, they should be a favourable option to migrant workers as they would be committed to stay longer given they are close to home and have the opportunity to learn more on the job, while making a decent income. Overall, such coordination could potentially solve the key issues for unemployed youth, employers and the GTHS.

Based in research and interviews with key representatives of each sector, the following structure is advised as part of the recommended modular training system, through the GTHS:

- 1) Short theoretical training led in partnership with private sector trainers, ensuring more practical hands on training that is in line with current industry standards;
- 2) Identify only key topics required for mastery of a basic level, and break content into smaller modules to be delivered in phases. The goal is to achieve a minimum level to enter the work force (and continue developing skills on the job);

- 3) 70/20/10 blended learning approach: 70% practical, 20% mentoring & 10% theory training. For example, in garment training the teacher would be from a local company and would teach three days and invite the students to work on site for two days per week.

The abovementioned approach would need to be developed to meet the custom demands of each sector. Some industries may require more training to reach a basic level to enter the job market, which could be offered either through additional modules (if students are willing to commit the time) or in a combined approach of classroom and internship-based training. For example, some students that have finished level 1 sewing training claim they do not have sufficient training to earn an income, and believe that they need additional training (to level 2) and/or on the job training to become semi-professional. In the case where an industry's basic level requires longer and more in-depth training, a hybrid approach could be suggested to prospective employers to offer part time internship or on the job training while the student is completing level 2, thereby providing them some income and incentive to develop their skills to become a full time and committed employee.

It is necessary to develop courses based on the market demands but taking into account of inspiration and needs of the target communities. For example: the intentions for IDPs and beneficiaries are to equip with skills (as fast as possible) and then join the labour market to earn income.

Demand-driven course topics

The quality and relevance of course topics is most essential for technical and practical skills to lead to improved employment outcomes. Training programs and curricula should be developed based on the occupational standards by industry and labour market needs, while also considering the interests and employment aspirations of the youth, IDPs and target communities. The primary intention of IDPs and beneficiaries is to become equipped with skills (as fast as possible) and then join the labour market to earn an income. The learning system should be developed to result in real employment outcomes. It is best if VET is designed to be flexible in structure and duration to respond to changing market demands and learner's needs. Three factors were identified as key to support vulnerable youth/IDPs: allocating *short* term courses based on market demand, extending course duration to align with IDP movements (most youth are available during the monsoon season when there is less work), and offering longer internships in preparatory classes to ease the transition from training to employment. Additionally, VET courses should allow flexibility in participation and advancement. The basic course should be designed to equip learners with entry level skills, while offering additional levels to be taken whilst working in the field for further advancement.

While the study was able to map out the current top sectors and required skills in demand, regular reviews should be conducted to remain up to date and closely related to the employment sector. Further soft skills and basic business skills should be offered, recognizing that these skills are also essential to success in the work place and geared towards self-employment.

The following is an outline of the proposed course topics according to current industry demands:

TABLE 7 - SHORT COURSE RECOMMENDATIONS (BASED ON DEMAND)

Sector	VET Short Course (Level 1)	Skills/topics	Location
Construction	Electrical wiring	Household wiring, installation of electrical socket/light/bulb, installation of power unit for house appliance such as air-condition, refrigerator, water heater, washing machine, etc.	Myitkyina Bhamo Lashio
	Brick laying	Understand concrete mixing ratio, brick laying, finishing, quality control of construction materials such as brick, cement, sand, etc.	Myitkyina Bhamo Lashio
	Marble installation	Understanding concrete mixing ratio, installation techniques such as floor, wall, toilet, etc.	Myitkyina Bhamo Lashio
	Welding, steel decoration	Installation of door, windows, main gate, decoration with steel for stair handle, etc.	Myitkyina Bhamo Lashio
	Interior decoration	Installation of lighting, design of ceiling, installation of shelves, etc.	Myitkyina Bhamo Lashio
	Bar bending	Bend shapes and cut length of bar as per structure drawings,	Myitkyina Bhamo Lashio
	Plumbing	Pipe installation, toilet/sink installation	Myitkyina Bhamo Lashio
Garment	Women's dress/blouse, Longyi & accessories	Tailoring of women's dresses, both casual and fancy, ethnic dresses (Shan and Kachin), and accessories (ornate buttons for dresses/blouses)	Myitkyina Bhamo Lashio
	Household products	Producing household items to sell in local markets, such as bed sheets, pillow covers, aprons, and bags	Myitkyina Bhamo Lashio
	School uniforms	Manufacturing shirts for M/F, in three sizes (small, medium and large), and a standard unisex longyi bottom	NGCA
	Weaving	Traditional woven designs – clothing, bags and accessories	Myitkyina Bhamo Lashio NGCA

Mechanic	Motorbike/Car Repair	Car: Engine and fuel system repairs, electrical wiring, chassis repairs, air condition system repair, body and painting details, etc.	Myitkyina Bhamo Lashio
	Farm Machinery Repair	Manual handheld tools (single engine tractor) use and repair	NGCA
Hotel/ Hospitality	Housekeeping	Housekeeping (based on basic industry standards developed with MHA), Language skills (Chinese/Myanmar/English), customer service	Myitkyina Lashio
	Front Office	Basic computer, language (above), customer service, security, etc.	Myitkyina Lashio
Health	Nurse aid/pharmacy	Basic nurse aid/support skills (based on nurse sector)	Myitkyina Lashio
Local Food Production	Dried quince/soybean	Sourcing raw materials, drying and packaging processes, food safety, branding, marketing, market identification & sales	Lashio
Handicrafts	Handicrafts	Bamboo, traditional & hand weaving, ethnic specialities	Myitkyina Bhamo Lashio NGCA

Updated curriculum & course structure

Competency based short course training is not a new concept and existing models should be referenced in the design of new and adapted course offerings at the GTHS, so as to not reinvent the wheel and learn from previous experience. The Ministry of Industry currently runs competency-based training in Mandalay, which can be used as a framework, with improvements based on market demands. The study consulted the private sector, specifically employers in relevant sectors listed above, on how to develop a training structure that would better meet labour market demands. The following list includes the most significant suggestions from the private sector:

- Develop a 70/20/10 training approach: 70% practical, 20% mentoring & 10% theory;
- Adjust curriculum to focus on skills *and* productivity (for example, most jobs in construction sectors are paid by work completed, whereby greater productivity correlated with higher wages) Construction companies suggest productivity should cover both technique and tools;
- Suitable teacher to learner (student) ratio with small class sizes and support staff to ensure more practical hands on training;
- Review of existing curriculums and regular evaluation based on changing industry demands;
- Inclusion of private sector in consultations.

Community Tool Box Program

Access to tools is essential to support students to gain practical skills for employment. One key failure of existing programs, as defined by youth and employers alike, is a lack of updated tools and training methods to meet industry needs. While it may not be possible to provide tools to all students, a sharing system may be set up so that students have ample time to practice both during lessons and on their own. It is recommended to introduce a community tool box program, where students can access tools when needed based on a sign out system. The set of tools (ex. pressure

wrenches, socket wrenches, bike stand, oil, grease, pliers, socket wrench set, mechanical gloves, hex bit sockets) would be placed in a central location, which may also serve as the training location (depending on the community's needs and nature of the training) are placed in one location. Small rental fees can be charged, to be used for maintaining the tool box, replacing tools, and other needs that may arise.

Soft skills training

All stakeholders recognize the lack of and importance of incorporating soft skills into any vocational training, especially for vulnerable youth and IDPs with little experience and exposure outside of the camps. From interviews with employers, 50% of a prospective employee's chances of being hired are depended on their additional skills that go beyond technical training, such as following supervisor directions, working with team members, and dealing with customers. Soft skills include people skills, social skills, character traits and personal skills. Some example of soft skills important for any workplace include self-motivation, teamwork, creativity, time management, organizing, flexibility, productivity, problem-solving, and communications.

Job fairs and basic career services can also help inform youth about the opportunities available to them, what employers are looking for and how to prepare for the job market.

Additional basic business skills could be developed for areas to develop self-employment, including market facilitation, access to finance and financial literacy, and small business management.

Student selection

An important component of developing an improved learning system is ensuring the right students are selected to benefit from the program, as the training model might not be suitable for all. Selection criteria can be developed, according to the suggested sample below. It is expected the short course trainings will be developed to suit the needs of IDPs and vulnerable youth, however there are additional factors to consider in selecting students.

A pre-selection processes could take place prior to the training, serving as an awareness raising to the community regarding the program and support the appropriate matching of youth and IDPs to various sectors based on the student's profile (background, skills, movements, interests, etc.).

Sample selection criteria: Garment (button making course)

- Female age between 20 and above- who are interested in learning and running button making business
- Who must be able to work as a group to run a group business as a long-term income generation activity
- Strong commitment towards completion of the program- which will last for at least 3 months.
- Those female with previous experiences in making button, or sewing will be given priority in the first batch.
- The beneficiaries will be selected through consultation with the camp committee and community leader in order to make sure the most needs are served in this selection.

An orientation program could be held amongst selected beneficiaries, consisting of a day or half day long training including overview of the program, commitments, clarifications and details to further ensure prospective students are committed. Depending on the sector, the orientation could also be

an opportunity to begin matching students to internship/apprenticeships, by gathering further information and perhaps inviting employers to be involved in the selection process. The program should not deter participants, but rather encourage a more tailored approach to meet the needs of both youth and employers. There is still little awareness among the general public, youth as well as their parents and communities, and the private sector, companies and entrepreneurs, about the potential of TVET to bridge the gap between the demand and supply of labour. Awareness raising and orientation programs can support reaching those who might benefit the most from vocational education, such as poor and unskilled rural youth and drop outs.

Accessibility for vulnerable youth

It is imperative that the advanced learning system be developed to suit the unique needs of the vulnerable target group(s). Additional support mechanisms and tailored courses and flexibility in scheduling are key concerns for youth IDPs, women and people with disabilities in camps and host communities. The short-term course model would be highly suitable to the target group, since it allows limited time commitment and irregular movements. Typically, basic courses could be covered within two weeks, allowing students to return to work or home, and then come back at a later date for further training, based on their skills interests. While the total course could take up to three months (depending on the sector), spreading coursework across separate modules broken up over two-week periods allows vulnerable youth to continue supporting their families, while gaining the basic skills needed to enter their field of choice. Further tailored support can be provided to each student to help connect them with a work study that would get them into the job market as quickly as possible, with options to continue learning both in the classroom (a couple of days per week) and on the job.

Female led courses should also be designed to meet the unique needs of female IDPs, whom oftentimes are unable to leave the camp. Residential based training or supported accommodation may be necessary.

GTHS development

A key outcome of the VESI program is to support the GTHS to design a long-term strategy to convert GTHS into effective and efficient polytechnic centres and to introduce a flexible approach to adequately serve job market needs. Based on the study, most GTHS teachers have academic qualifications and varying degrees of experience in their field of study. In order to be able to teach more practical skill based on current industry standards, the teachers themselves must be experienced. Existing teachers with little practical knowledge could undergo practical training within companies (through private sector partnership) to be able to work with the latest technology and skills that meet emerging industry needs. These companies could also send trainers to complement GTHS teaching staff in the delivery of practical skills training. Facilitating strong connections between companies and the school would also benefit students in accessing internship and employment opportunities. Furthermore, it is advised to develop the teaching staff's ability to conduct routine market assessments, and adapt curriculum with the support of the private sector, to keep training up to date.

Private sector/industry cooperation

According to the VESI project proposal, links and exchanges between TVET providers (such as GTHSs) and private companies are very weak, and in any case, not systematic. There is certainly a need for

strong cooperation between training centres and local businesses throughout the learning system, from curriculum development/design, teacher training and student workshops, internships and employment links, and evaluation of the training program. Based on interviews with industry representatives from the highest demand sectors, there is an interest and commitment to get involved with the GTHS to be able to better meet industry demands. The process could be as simple as starting with one key representative from each sector, as a starting point. Once the model is demonstrated successfully, it is likely other companies will be interested to participate as well, in return for a more productive and reliable labour force, available locally. Additionally, the project's commitment to joint 'GTHS-Private company-local stakeholder initiatives' could serve as a platform to raise community awareness of the new learning program and job matching services co-led with the private sector (interested in recruiting locally semi-skilled personnel).

Supporting people with disabilities

As part of the Gender and Inclusion approach, the project will strengthen access for women, girls and minorities to training and to economic opportunities. This will be achieved through promotion of rights of women and girls and gender equality through awareness raising activities, inclusion in the life skills curriculum, extra support to girls choosing non-traditional TVET courses and support to internship placements and through cooperation and engagement with local stakeholders and businesses. Partnerships should involve all stakeholders including TVET institutions, PWD organizations, parents, students and the private sector. Stakeholders interviewed through the study are committed to quality assurance and improvement strategies that are mutually beneficial for both employers and employees.

Vocational training for Persons with Disabilities can be supported through a referral system to existing training centres such as AAR Japan, which provide PWD training in tailoring, hairstyling, and computer skills. After completing the course, the VTC continues to support graduates so they can gain employment, open their own shops, or become teachers at the centre themselves, enabling them to achieve social and economic independence. A few graduates of AAR have been successful in running their own shops such in sewing and haircutting in Myitkyina.

Additionally, PWDs may be supported to attend existing training at the GTHS, however this will require changes to be made at the facility to ensure an enabling environment for them to participate, both physically (such as wheel chair ramps, access to toilets, adapted machinery, etc.) and psychosocially through a social and learning environment that supports their wellness and ability to learn. A key aspect of this is building teachers understanding of potential limitations for PWD and how the learning environment can be adapted to support their needs.

Social inclusion

As stated in the project proposal 'the psychosocial and mental wellbeing of the potential trainees must not be underestimated; considering IDPs as a homogenous group that can be addressed with a one-size-fits-all approach to TVET can have a very negative impact not only on the success of proposed skills trainings but also on the IDPs themselves'. Social inclusion cannot be addressed by simply combining people from different backgrounds in training and work opportunities; serious efforts must be made to ensure social and gender integration across programming. It is advised that the project go beyond the scope of vocational training to promote social inclusion, through engaging and educationally relevant training and activities. Social inclusion can be primarily promoted through

soft skills training, as youth may be more engaged if the link is made to the importance of working with people from different backgrounds as an essential skill for employment. Additional skills that are key to employment include health and safety, which can be taught through a social inclusivity lens. Beyond soft skills trainings, the program could further social inclusivity through organizing extracurricular activities that could bring students together across backgrounds and from different classes, by participating in social clubs, sports and games, music and field trips. Activities must consider the availability of target groups to participate, to ensure inclusivity.

Most IDPs have not left their respective camp in over 10 years, and some have not even had the chance to visit nearby local places. A diversity study/tour could be set up to help education youth in opportunities as well as see their surroundings, as a group in a fun environment.

5 Conclusion

The following labour market study has identified the most essential recommendations to support VESI to make evidence-based decisions regarding the selection of course topics and targeted areas of capacity support for the GTHS, to optimize program objectives to meet market demands. The study conducted a thorough analysis within each target area through mapping both labour supply (potential and interests of IDPs (male and female) and PWD, and labour demand (based on highest demand) available locally. While there are similarities across target areas, in which the overall recommendations address, specific recommendations are provided for each sector opportunity tailored to each group (within each of the above sections, by area).

Overall, the study identified key gaps in existing Vocational Education Training initiatives including:

- Poor linkages the market (employment and self-employment)
- Insufficient support post training
- Outdated training skills, methodology and tools (not market-oriented)
- Lack of internship opportunities/ on the job training
- Student selection process

To support VESI to be most impactful in achieving its objectives in developing market oriented and demand driven vocational training [targeting youth from IDPs camps and host communities], the study recommends the following, which are relevant across all target geographic areas and sectors:

- 12) **Develop a modular-based short course *learning system*** with only the essential skills that would grant students access to entry level jobs, thus allowing IDPs to earn an income while upgrading skills on the job.
- 13) **Ensure only demand-driven course topics** that are developed based on current occupational standards (by industry) and labour market needs, while also considering the interests and employment aspirations of the target group.
- 14) **Update curriculums and upgrade teacher's competencies in consultation with the private sector** to ensure course content is practical, hands on and in line with current industry techniques and tools.
- 15) **Set up a community tool box program** to better support student's and community access to upgraded tools for practical learning purposes (based on a rental system that would support maintenance of the tools).
- 16) **Integrate soft skills trainings across all subjects**, especially for vulnerable youth, with key skills needed to adapt in the workplace, understanding of basic business tools (for self-

employment), career services support, and additional soft skills to improve confidence, productivity and overall success in the job market.

- 17) **Set up a student selection process** that includes community awareness initiatives (of opportunities in VET) and orientation program to ensure the program is able to select beneficiaries that will benefit most, after first adapting the trainings to be accessible to the most vulnerable (IDPs, PWD, females, etc.).
- 18) **Develop a flexible and accessible training structure** that meets the unique needs of the vulnerable target groups (youth IDPs, women, women with children, PWD).
- 19) **Support GTHS to develop a long-term strategy to become an effective and efficient polytechnic centre that better serves job market needs.**
- 20) **Develop meaningful partnerships with the private sector** in terms of training structure and curriculum development, teacher capacity building, and job/internship linkages. The strategy should ensure VET is aligned with private sector interests and demands, and be regularly reviewed.
- 21) **Support people with disabilities and women** throughout the process of addressing all abovementioned points, and based on the research laid out in the study.
- 22) **Address social inclusion** within soft skills training, thereby teaching youth the importance of integrating with people from different backgrounds within the workplace. By making social inclusivity directly relevant to skills needed for employability, youth may be more engaged and better prepared for a culturally diverse workplace.

The VESI project is certainly addressing a very relevant need and has the information and resources to be able to design a highly impactful in empowering IDPS and host communities to access non-farm livelihood opportunities (towards employment and self-employment) through participation in market-oriented Vocational Training courses, mentoring and support through the GTHS and in direct partnership with key private sector partners.

6 Annex

6.1 Annex 1 – Key Informant Interview Guides

6.2 Annex 2 – Focus Group Discussion Guides

