



DRUG ISSUE REPORT

FACT-FINDING COMMISSION
IN KACHIN AND NORTHERN SHAN STATES

2018 - 2019

Drug Eradication Committee, KIO

26th June, 2019

DRUG ISSUE

Fact-Finding Commission In Kachin and Northern Shan State (2018 – 2019)

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ACRONYMS

BGF	= Border Guard Force
CSWs	= Commercial Sex Worker
CSOs	= Civil Society Organizations
DIFC	= Drug Issue Fact-Finding Commission
EAO	= Ethnic Armed Organization
IDPs	= Internally Displaced Persons
KII	= Key Informant Interview
KIA	= Kachin Independence Army
KIO	= Kachin Independence Organization
KTV	= Karaoke Television
PTTs	= Pyi-Tu-Tsit (Burma militia)
UNODC	= United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the findings of a survey carried out by the KIO's Drug Issue Fact-finding Commission in Kachin and Northern Shan States. 19 research teams interviewed 9,953 key informants of different ethnicities, professions, and age groups in 19 townships between July 2018 and March 2019.

Key findings of the survey are:

- During the 2018-2019 opium growing season, a total of 10,110.63 hectares of opium poppy were being grown: 6,918.23 hectares in Kachin State and 3,192.4 hectares in five townships surveyed in Northern Shan State
- Our estimate of opium cultivation in Kachin State (6,918.23 hectares) is double the area estimated for Kachin State by the UNODC in their Myanmar Opium Survey 2018, which was 3,400 hectares. This throws into doubt the UNODC's assertion that opium cultivation is steadily decreasing in Kachin State and Burma as a whole.
- In Kachin State, opium was being grown not only in Danai, Shingbiyang, Sadung and Kanpaiti, but also in Putao and Sumprabum, which were not included by the UNODC in their 2018 opium survey.
- All opium growing was taking place in areas controlled by the Burma Army, their Border Guard Forces and pro-government militia (who are all under the Burma Army Commander in Chief), contradicting the UNODC's allegation that the highest density of poppy cultivation is in areas under the control of KIA and other ethnic armed organizations.
- In Kachin State, the largest acreage was in Kanpaiti (4,651.67 hectares) and Sadung, in eastern Waimaw township, in areas of the Burma Army's Border Guard Force Battalions 1002 and 1003 and allied militia groups, under the Burma Army's Sadung and Pangwa Strategic Commands. In Northern Shan State, opium cultivating areas in Namhkam, Kutkai, Kunlong, Tangyan and Lashio townships were all controlled by local pro-government militias – the Panse Militia, Kongkha Militia, Lungtang Militia, Shauhaw Militia, Kunlong Militia, Mungsi Militia, and Tangyan Militia -- overseen by one of the Burma Army's Light Infantry Divisions.
- Most of the heroin and methamphetamine refineries were located in militia controlled areas under the Burma Army in Northern Shan State.

Most of the narcotic drugs trafficked into Kachin State came via Muse or Namkham along the Sino-Burma borderline or via Mandalay.

- All stages of the drug trade, including opium growing, heroin and methamphetamine production and distribution, are protected and supported by local pro-government militia groups, Burma Army and police officers, who make money from taxation and bribes. Most of the heroin and methamphetamine refinery owners are from China, and rely on protection from the Burma Army, their militia allies and Border Guard Forces. Only users and retail drug sellers are arrested by security forces, while the main Chinese drug kingpins go free.
- During 2014-2016, the Kachin public launched Patjasan campaigns, causing opium growing, drug production and distribution to drop. However, after Burmese government authorities obstructed Patjasan activities, drug production, distribution and abuse have increased. It can clearly be seen that the failure of government law enforcement and corruption have caused the drug problem to worsen.

The KIO urges the Burma Army to stop its illegal protection of the drug trade activities of its allied militia groups and Border Guard Forces, and calls on the Burmese government to start taking responsibility for comprehensive law enforcement against narcotic drugs, including cracking down on corruption at every level.

The KIO also urges the UNODC and other international agencies to carry out more effective, in-depth research into the drug problems in Burma, and put more pressure on the Burmese government to tackle these problems effectively, instead of blaming ethnic armed organizations.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this report is to highlight the main factors causing increased narcotic drug production and drug abuse in Kachin State and Northern Shan State (Kachin Sub-State) of Myanmar, and to find ways to solve the drug problems.

In order to assess the ground situation of the drug issue in Kachin State and Northern Shan State (Kachin Sub-State) of Myanmar, the Drug Issue Fact-finding Commission (DIFC) was formed in 2018 by the KIO's Drug Eradication Committee.

Between July 2018 and March 2019, the DIFC's research teams carried out surveys on opium cultivation, drug production, trafficking, distribution, and drug use. The survey areas were in Kachin State and Northern Shan State where most of the drug related problems were occurring. From April to May 2019 the information was collated, analyzed and compiled into report form.

It is hoped that this report will be useful in identifying the most suitable methods to confront obstacles faced during drug eradication activities, and to find out the most effective approach for drug eradication campaigns.

BACKGROUND

The KIO have laid down an anti-narcotic drug policy since 1964. However, opium growing, trafficking and abuse have increased since the early 70s. Around 1980, heroin abuse became more widespread, particularly in urban areas, jade mines and gold mines.

Because of drug abuse, there have been increasing problems. Youth have dropped out of school and found it difficult to find a job, families have become impoverished, and communicable diseases have spread. In urban areas, the number of people dying young has increased and population growth has also fallen. Many people have been imprisoned, straining the capacity of social services. This led to many people calling urgently for a national drug eradication campaign. Thus, in 1988, an intensive campaign against heroin was launched. Especially in the Hpakant jade-mining area, in the Sabaw Mine, heroin users were severely punished.

KIO, promoting the slogan “Opium Free State”, issued an order banning opium cultivation on 15 April 1991, and on 15 October the same year, issued another order banning drug trafficking. However, drugs continued to be widely available. Therefore, the Drug Eradication Committee was formed on 9 October 1993, for more effective implementation of the anti-narcotic drug campaign. Pamphlets were widely distributed. Drug eradication committees were formed at every level of administration. Awareness-raising programs for KIO personnel were launched. Users were arrested, imprisoned, or punished with hard labor. Rehabilitation centers were established in every district.

On 25 October 1993, the KIO issued an order which served as a statutory law on drug abuse, distribution, opium growing, drug trafficking, and drug production. This law has been amended three times so far. As a result, opium growing, drug distribution, and drug abuse were almost eliminated within KIO controlled areas.

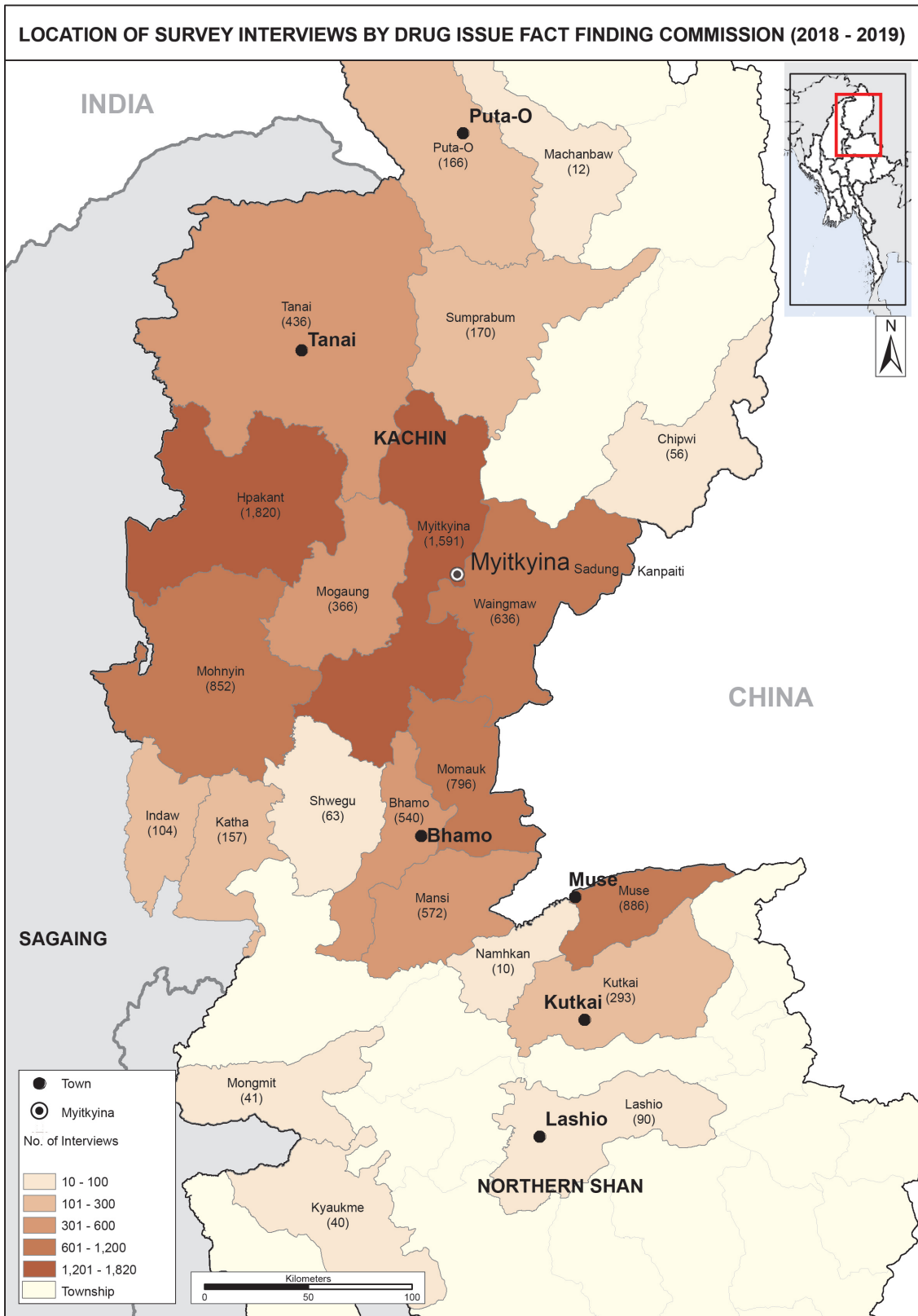
The KIO and the Myanmar military regime made a ceasefire agreement on 24 February 1994. As part of the agreement, rural development projects were implemented, and business opportunities opened. Along with trade activities, there was a lot more movement of people in and out of Kachin areas. Thus, law enforcement became more difficult and narcotic drugs such as opium, heroin, and methamphetamines poured into Kachinland again. Drug problems worsened in both government-controlled cities and KIO-controlled areas. Therefore, on 1 October 2010, a Special Drug Elimination Committee led by Gen. Gunhtang Gam Shawng, the Chief of Staff of

KIA, was founded. The committee was known as “Patjasan” for short. Later all the drug elimination campaigns were called “Patjasan”, including the civilian “Patjasan”. The committee has been carrying out intensive campaigns until the time of writing this report, as KIO considers narcotic drugs as one of the chief enemies of the Kachin people.

Due to the implementation of the new campaign, by February 2014 there was no drug abuse or drug production among KIO personnel and civilians living in KIO controlled areas. However, the drug problem was still widespread among communities in Myanmar government-controlled areas. Therefore, the Kachin National Drug Elimination Plan Steering Committee, consisting of civilians, including religious leaders, was founded on 16 April 2014. They started drug education and awareness programs, rehabilitation programs, and opium farm clearing campaigns, with public participation. They are collaborating with other CSOs working on drugs.

The KIO Drug Eradication Committee has set a goal of carrying on their task until the Kachin people can totally overcome the narcotic drug problem.

MAP OF SURVEY AREAS



METHODOLOGY

1.1 SURVEY STRUCTURE

In order to develop the survey structure, the research team first conducted a Drug Advocacy Consultation Workshop on 4-5 May 2018, including the steering committee, local Patjasan committees, and consultants. It was followed by a Data Format Questionnaire Development Workshop held on June 13-15 2018, with 15 participants from eight different regions.

1.2 QUESTIONNAIRE DESIGN

Questionnaires were designed to survey locations of opium farms, production rates, locations of drug refineries, transportation routes, local prices, drug distribution and market destinations, class and ethnic background of drug users, numbers of users, persons encouraging, protecting and supporting the production, trafficking and distribution of drugs, and the effects of narcotic drugs on communities.

1.3 APPLICATION METHODS AND TOOLS

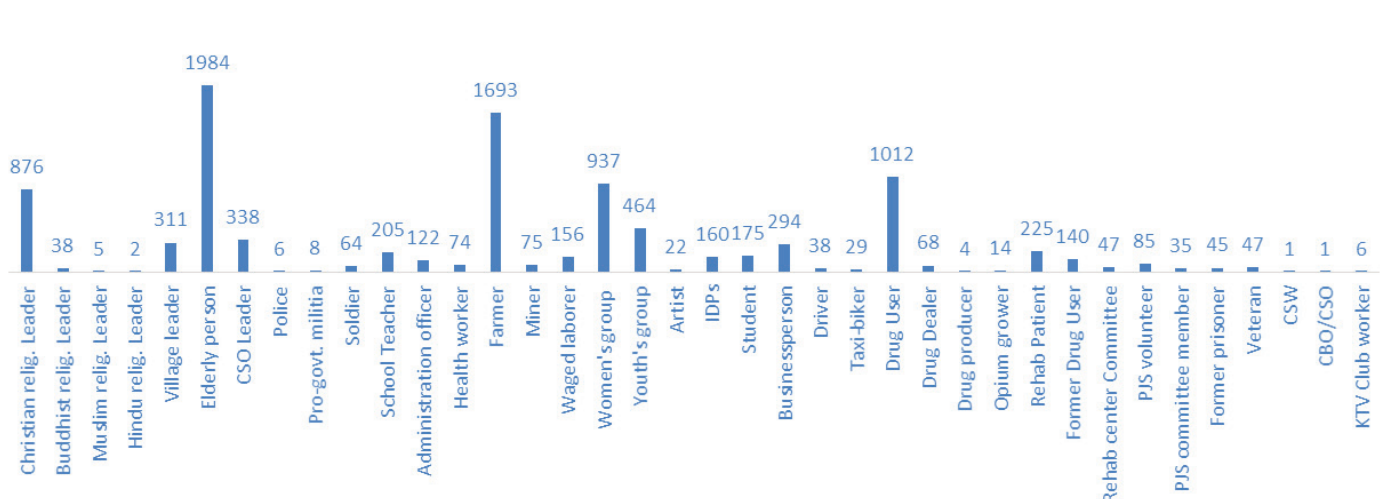
This survey is based on quantitative and qualitative data, collected through Key Informant Interviews (KII), and then analyzed and formatted. Direct testimonies are provided as « case studies ».

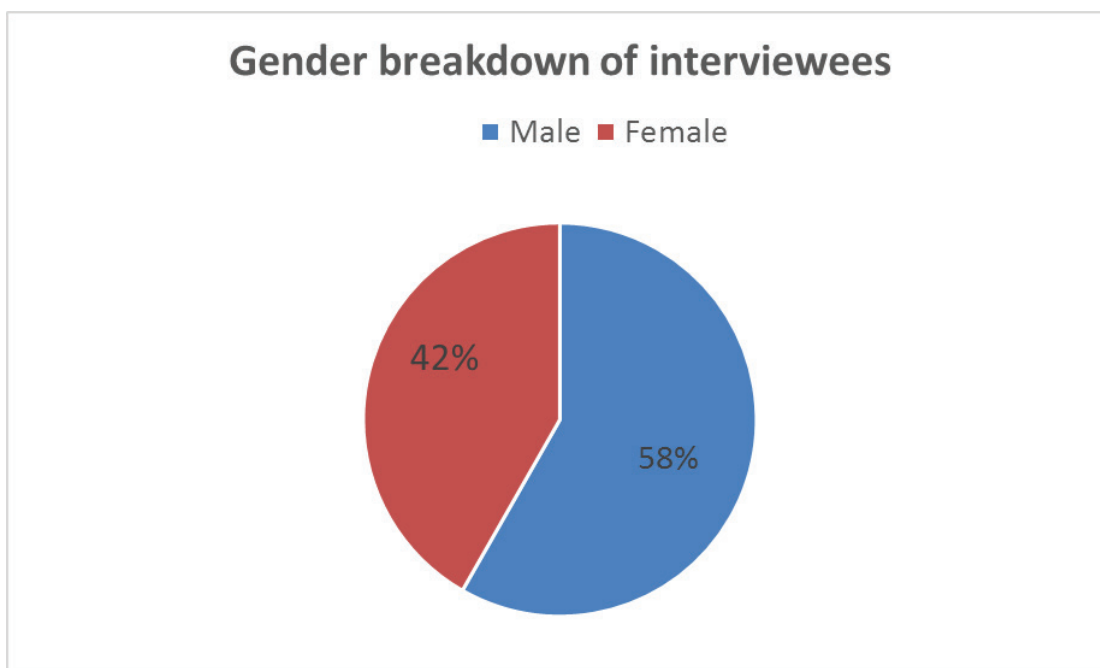
We took 90 days for data entry. Data was screened in Microsoft Excel. We used offline map apps to pinpoint the locations. The location marks were checked on Google Earth Pro, and projected on maps using ArcGIS 10.5.

1.4 SELECTION OF INTERVIEWEES

In order to obtain reliable information, we chose candidates for interview from people of different ethnicities, professions, and age groups. The selected candidates included religious leaders, school teachers, village and

Number and breakdown of interviewees





community leaders, elderly persons, leaders of CSOs (such as women’s associations, cultural organizations etc.) security personnel (police, pro-govt. militia, BGFs, soldiers), civil administration officials, health workers, farmers, miners, waged laborers, women’s group, youth’s group, artists, IDPs, drivers, taxi-bikers, businesspersons, drug users in rehabilitation centres, former drug users, rehabilitation centre committee members, PJS volunteers, former prisoners, veterans, CSWs, and KTV club workers.

The largest category of interviewees was elderly persons, 1,984 in number, the second largest was farmers (1,693), and the third largest was drug users (1,012). 68 drug dealers, 14 opium growers, and 4 drug refinery workers were interviewed. 78 security personnel, including, police, pro-government militia and soldiers were interviewed.

In total, 9,953 people (4,154 women, 5,799 men) from 19 regions were interviewed.

1.5. DATA COLLECTION

Data collection took place from July 2018 to March 2019. Depending on the security and geographical situation, the survey time varied from place to place. Surveys were carried out in 19 regions in Kachin State and Northern Shan State (Kachin Sub-State). Survey teams were allocated to the respective regions. The survey areas were Sumprabum, Putao, Myitkyina, Waimaw, Hugawng, Hpakant, Mogaung, Hopin, Nawnglut, Mungnyang, Manmaw, Dawhpumyang, Sama, Manwing Gyi, Muse, Kutkai, Lashio, Chi-

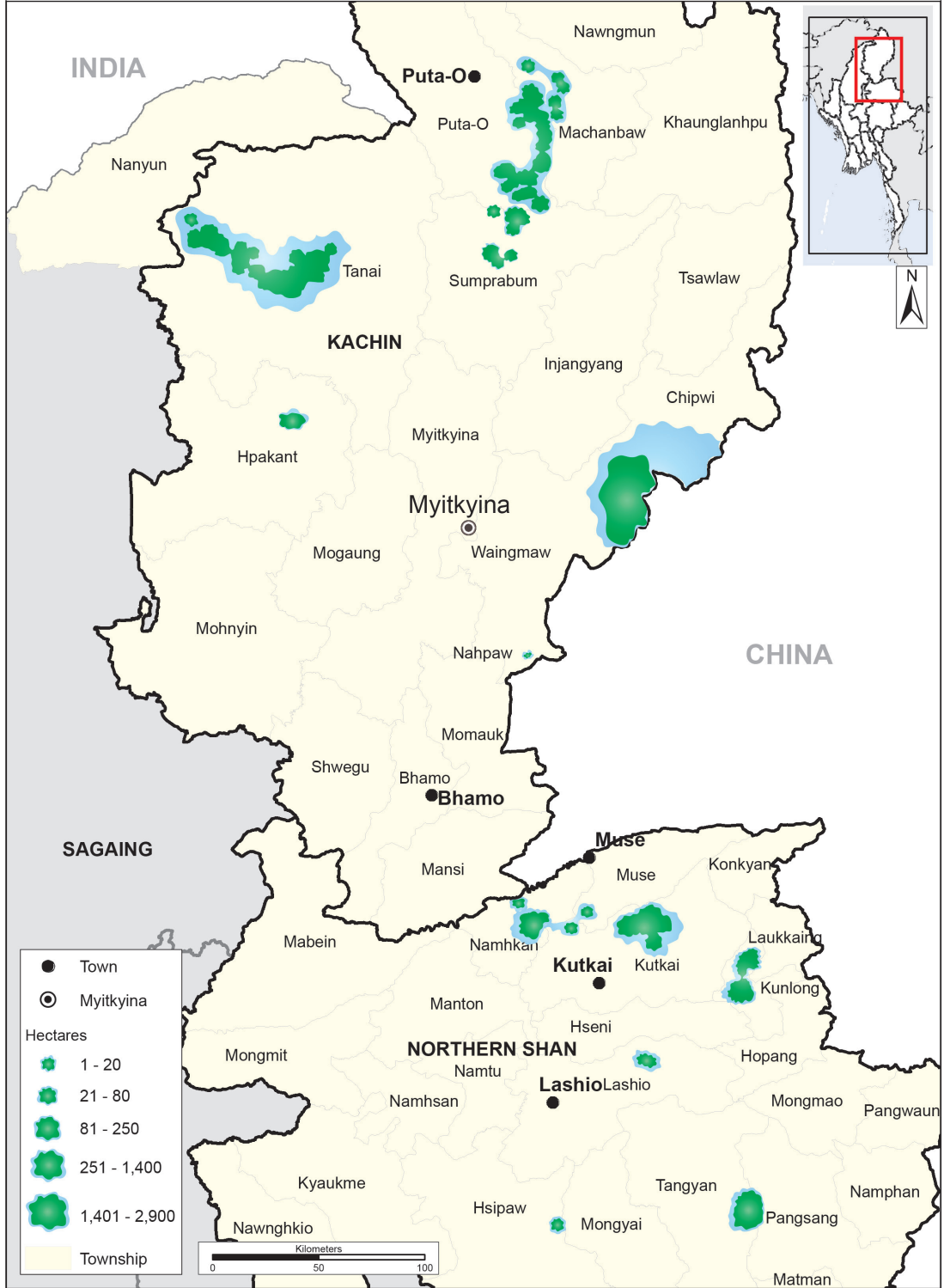
Group	No. of data Collectors	Area
Group (1)	5	Putao
Group (2)	7	Sumprabum
Group (3)	22	Myitkyina
Group (4)	3	Waimaw
Group (5)	8	Chihpwi
Group (6)	22	Hpakant
Group (7)	20	Hugawng
Group (8)	16	Mogaung
Group (9)	15	Hopin
Group (10)	12	Nawng Lut
Group (11)	20	Mungnyang
Group (12)	23	Sama
Group (13)	5	Daw Hpum Yang
Group (14)	18	Manmaw
Group (15)	19	Man Win Gyi
Group (16)	12	Lashio
Group (17)	13	Kut Hkai
Group (18)	16	Muse
Group (19)	7	Nga Dawng

hpwi, and Ngadawng. To ensure effective data collection, one supervisor was assigned to each region.

In some areas, due to military activity and security risks, data collection was quite difficult. Especially in areas controlled by the Burma Army, its Border Guard Forces and allied militia groups, it was extremely risky to acquire the necessary data on opium farming, drug production and trafficking. In such cases, special agents were assigned for data collecting missions.

When extra information was needed, some research teams had to make a second trip into the field. For data collection regarding opium cultivation, the Danai, Sumprabum, Putao, Sadung and Kanpaiti areas in Kachin State, and Muse, Kutkai, and Lashio areas in Northern Shan State were selected.

OPIUM GROWING AREAS IDENTIFIED BY SURVEY TEAMS (2018 - 2019)



SURVEY FINDINGS

1. OPIUM CULTIVATION

Our data shows that most of the opium farms in Kachin State and regions surveyed in Northern Shan State are located in areas controlled by the Burma Army, their Border Guard Forces (BGFs) and allied militia groups. According to our 2018-2019 data on opium growing, it is evident that opium cultivation has increased in the areas occupied by the Burma Army since the conflict between KIO and the Burma Army resumed, such as Danai, Sumprabum and Putao. During 2015-2016, civilian Patjasan groups destroyed numerous opium fields in the Danai area. Between 11 January and 1 February 2016, 655.47 hectares of opium fields were destroyed, despite local obstruction.

“When the PJS were destroying an opium field between Jagun Lake and Byantang Lake, a little downstream from the Tarung confluence, the farm owner attacked the PJS with his musket, on 15 January 2016. Mr. Lahtaw Tu Tsai of Mogaung PJS was killed by a gunshot.” (Interview with Civilian Patjasan volunteer in Danai)



Seven Patjasan groups, with 614 volunteers, destroying opium fields in Danai area, between 11 January and 1 February 2016.

However, when conflict between the KIO and Burma Army reached the Danai area in 2017, Patjasan opium field destruction missions into the Danai area became impossible.

The conflict between the KIO and the Burma Army reached the Sumprabum region in April 2012. The Burma Army intruded into the area formerly controlled by the KIO and took over KIA positions. Gradually new opium farms were set up in the region, where there had been none before. Although KIO carried out opium field destruction campaigns every year, the KIO Patjasan was unable to work in the Sumprabum area, as Burma Army troops had already seized control. Civilian Patjasan groups were also unable to carry out their mission openly as they had in 2015-2016. The Burma Army troops never destroyed the opium farms. Instead, they made money by taxing the farms.

“Each of the opium growers had to pay 30,000 kyats to the Burmese troops (from Infantry Battalion 138) stationed in the village. If retailing opium or heroin, they need to pay 50,000 kyats per month.”(Interview with opium grower in Sumprabum)

Most of the opium farmers in Sumprabum and Putao are local farmers, and local business persons and drug dealers give financial support to the growers.

Kanpaiti and Sadung are the regions where most opium is grown in Kachin State. These areas are controlled by the Burma Army’s BGF Battalion 1003, and local pro-government militia groups. Due to security reasons, our researchers couldn’t reach the area controlled by the BGF Battalion 1002, consisting of Tamuhkung, Hkyamju, Jitloi and Lungza villages. However, according to information provided by local villagers working as waged laborers in the opium farms, there are about 1,215 hectares of opium fields. In the BGF Battalion 1002 territory, the civilian Patjasan teams destroyed 324 hectares of opium fields in 2016.

“During 23 January to 8 February 2016, combined PJS teams of 1,200 volunteers marched along the Chihpwi road, and diverged at Hkyamju village. There they destroyed over 324 hectares of opium fields in Hkyamju, Jitloi, and Umabum.” (Interview with civilian Patjasan Volunteer in Waimaw)



PJS teams destroying opium fields between Lungza and Umabum, between 23 January and 8 February 2016.

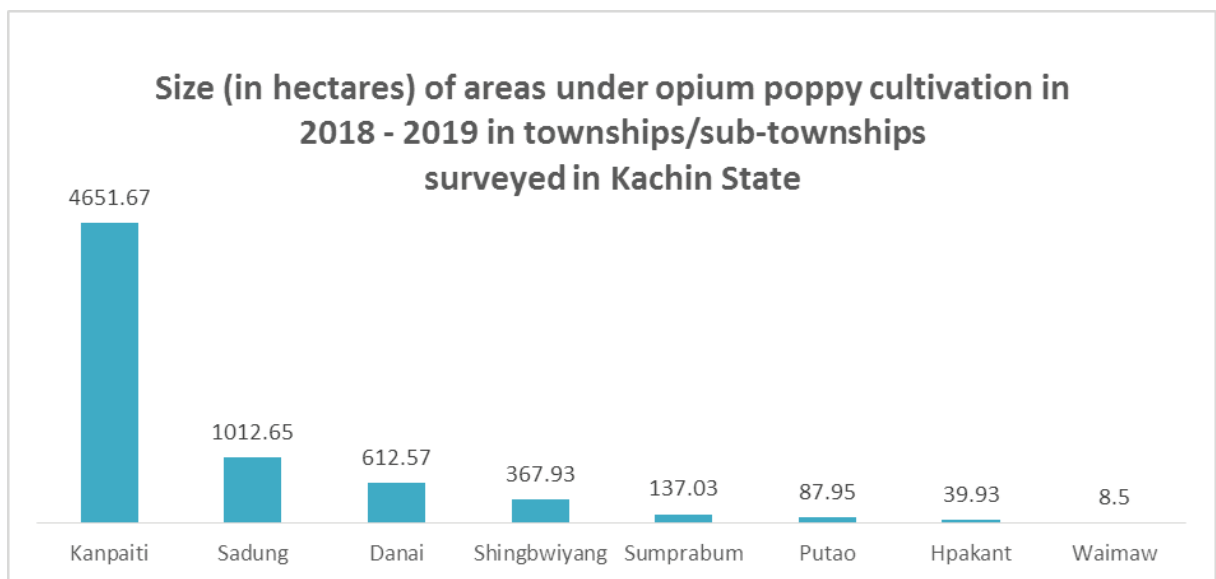
These regions already have Burmese government administration mechanisms, but opium fields can clearly be seen in and around the villages where BGF Battalions 1002 and 1003, pro-government militia groups, police and the Burma Army's Sadung and Kanpaiti Strategic Commands are stationed.

During the 2018-2019 growing season, opium fields were found in eight townships or sub-townships in Kachin State, covering a total area of 6,918.23 hectares. The largest opium-growing area is Kanpaiti (67%), followed by Sadung (15%), Danai (9%), Shingbuiyang (5%), Sumprabum (2%), Putao (1%), and Hpakant (1%). In Waimaw township, about 8.5 hectares of opium fields were spotted next to the Burma Army Light Infantry Battalion 521 outpost at Nahpaw. This military outpost has been occupied by the Burma Army since May 1987. There are currently 16 Chinese families from Aungmyay 1 Village and from the China side of the border staying in the small village next to the camp. These Chinese families, under the protection of the Burmese troops, grow opium every year.

In the five townships surveyed in Northern Shan State about 3,192.4 hectares of opium fields were found. Of this total, the highest percentage was grown in Kutkai (37%), followed by Kunlong (26%), Namkham (22%), Tangyan (14%), and Lashio (1%). As the survey was focused on the Kachin



Opium fields shown next to the Burma Army BGF (1003) barracks and Headquarters in the Sadung area at 25°25'8.56"N 98° 1'0.67"E on 11 March 2019.

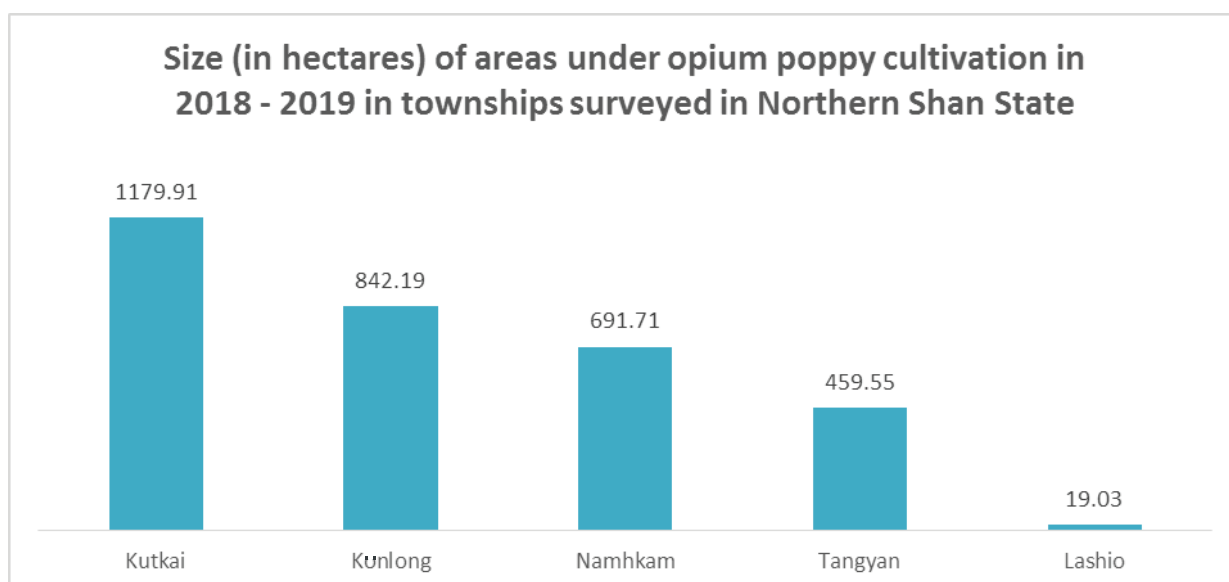


Sub-State, some parts of Lashio and Tangyan were not included in the data collection.

With 6,918.23 hectares of opium fields found in Kachin State and 3,192.4 hectares in the Kachin Sub-State of Northern Shan State, a total of 10,102.14 hectares of opium fields were found in the 2018-2019 growing season.

Back in 2016, civilian PJS groups had launched a mission to destroy opium fields in the area controlled by BGF Battalions 1002 and 1003, but while

Size (in hectares) of areas under opium poppy cultivation in 2018 - 2019 in townships surveyed in Northern Shan State

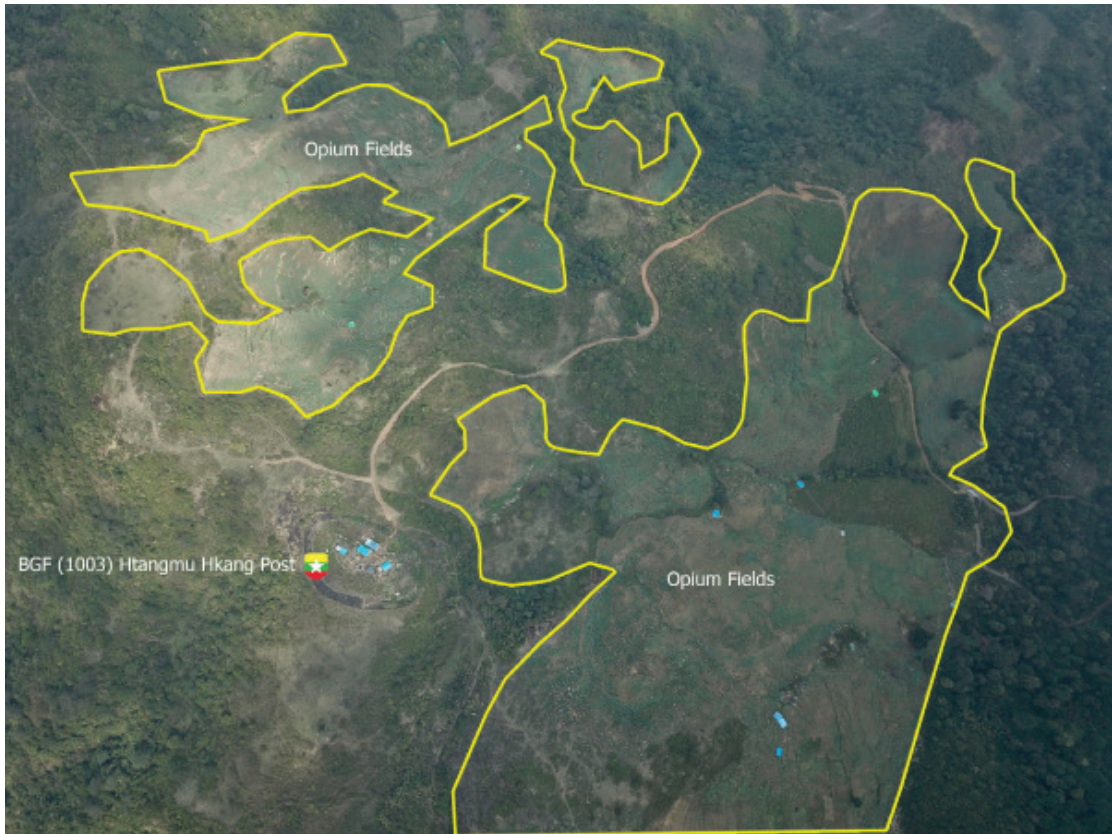


they were on the way back after destroying 6.08 hectares, the farm owners and local Mawsitung villagers attacked them.

“In the morning of 3 February 2016, while we were returning from destroying opium fields, the farm owners and villagers from Mawsitung threw stones and wood, and shot at us, the PJS group. They also smashed the windshield of our truck, and crushed our kitchenware.” (Interview with Civilian Patjasan member from Waimaw)

In Northern Shan State (Kachin Sub-State), opium cultivation is a highly profitable business. It is openly grown in the outskirts of towns, and along knolls and ridges in areas under the control of militias aligned with the Burma Army. Opium fields can be found in the Panse militia area in Namhkam township; Lunghtang militia area, Shauhaw militia area, Tamunye militia area, Mungji militia area, Kutkai militia area and Konghka militia area in Kutkai township; Kunlong Special Police area and Namjawn militia area in Kunlong township; and Konghka militia area and Tangyan militia area in Lashio township.

“ (I)Have been growing (opium) for more than ten years. In 2017-2018 I grew 1.62 hectares at Bang Mawn, and I sold the product to Chinese traders. Waged labourers were hired from Mogok. They were paid 100,000 kyats per month. Permission to grow opium was granted by the Konghka militia.” (Interview with opium farmer in Lashio)



Aerial picture of BGF 1003 Battalion's Htangmuhkang outpost and adjacent opium fields, taken on 11 March 2019. 25°22'49.91"N 98° 0'29.99"E



Picture of opium fields near the BGF 1003 Battalion barracks and helipad, taken on 11 March 2019. 25°25'8.56"N 98° 1'0.67"E



Picture of an opium field inside the BGF 1003 Battalion-controlled area, taken on 9 March 2019. 25°24'56.38"N 98° 0'31.97"E



Opium field in the vicinity of the Burma Army's LIB 521 Nahpaw outpost, Waimaw township, taken on 28th February 2019. 24°50'25.83"N 97°38'46.75"E

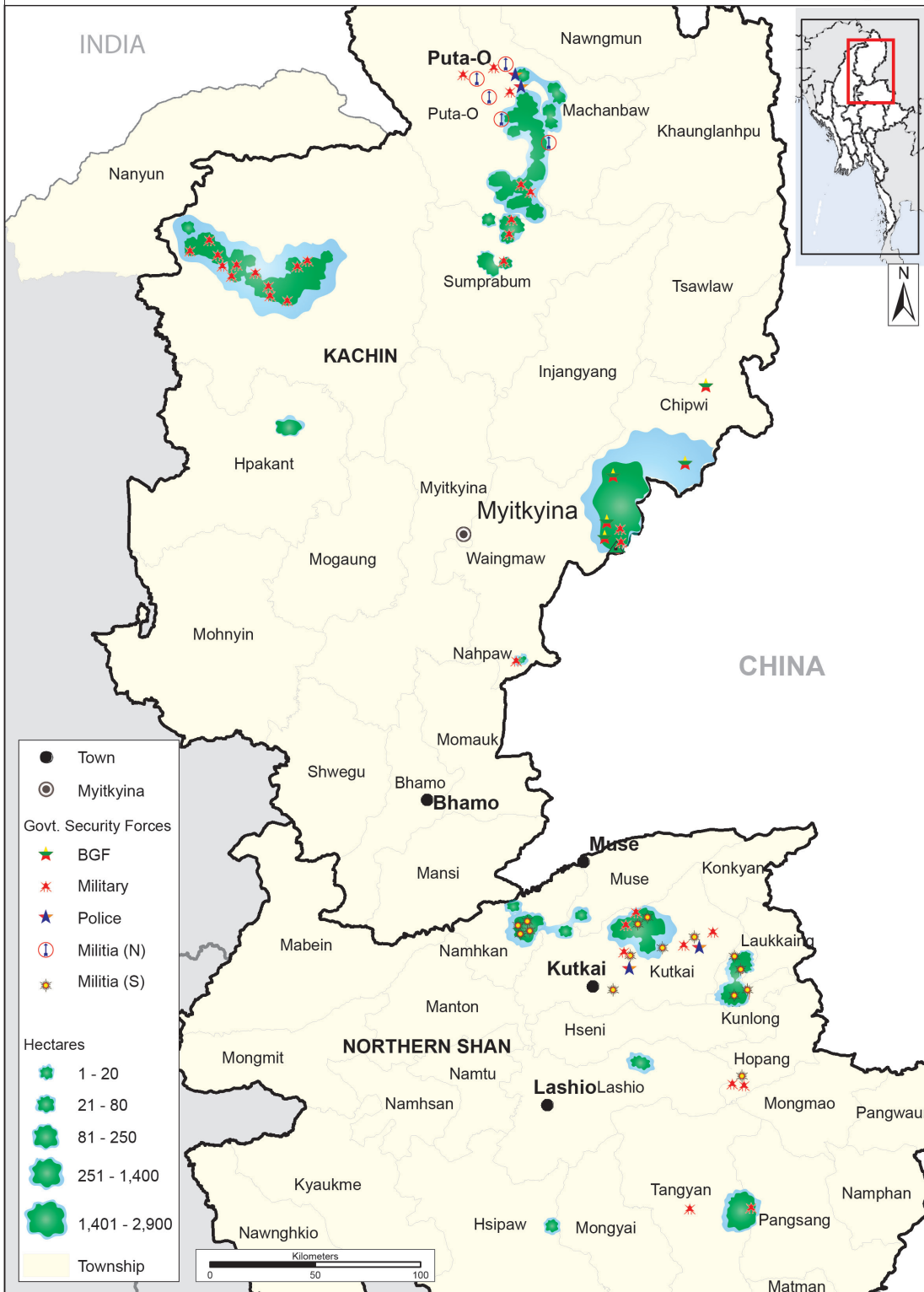


Picture of an opium field in the vicinity of the Burma Army's LIB 521 Nahpaw outpost, Waimaw township, taken on 28 February 2019. 24°50'25.83"N 97°38'46.75"E



Photo of opium field inside the BGF 1003 Battalion-controlled area, taken on 10th March 2019. 25°24'50.24"N 98° 1'21.16"E

GOVERNMENT SECURITY BASES NEAR OPIUM FIELDS (2018 - 2019)



The Burma Army-aligned militia groups and BGFs just prioritize the strengthening of their organizations and well-being of their families. Thus they are eager to promote opium growing to gain profit. The map on page 24 clearly shows that Burma Army troops, BGFs, police and pro-government militia groups are providing security for the opium growers.

In Danai, Putao, Hpakant, and Sumprabum townships, opium growers are local villagers, but businesspersons from urban areas such as Myitkyina, Mogaung, Waimaw and even some from lower Burma provide financial support to the growers. Those who grow opium near the Nahpaw Burma Army camp in Waimaw Township are Chinese from Aungmyay 1 village of Waimaw and some are from China.

“(I am) from Sadung. Last year we couldn’t grow opium. But this year, in the 2018-2019 growing season, I am growing about 0.61 hectare at Maga village. I had to pay BGFs, local (pro-government) militia, and special anti-narcotic police for my opium farm. This year, the BGF have announced we must not grow over 2.03 hectares. Those who exceed the limit will be fined. And not to grow in the areas very close to the road. Those who grow close to the road also will be fined. They usually fine those coming from China double or triple.” (Interview with opium farmer in Sadung)

Opium growing areas in the Sadung and Kanpaiti regions are: Lisu Maga village at the watershed of Dumbang Stream, Lachid Maga, Chinese Maga, Gyitgwidum, Guhkan, around Htanmawhkang village, Shinjai, Wutmaw, Gunawbum, around Badawn village, Wawhkyung, Masa, Kungmai, Salukh-kawng (Mawsitung), Nawgu, Masa-Yindam, around Langan village, Luhtawng, Bumling, Aju-Yindam, Hkindu, Tachyahaw, around Danzaw; and BGF Battalion 1002 territory consisting of Hkyamju, Jitloi (Zahkung), Hk-yawngmaw, around Wumabum, near Lungza, and along the Waimaw-Chihpwi township boundary line.



Photo of opium field in Kunlong Special Police area, taken in March 2019.



*Opium field in Shauhaw militia area, Kutkai township.
Photo taken in March 2019.*

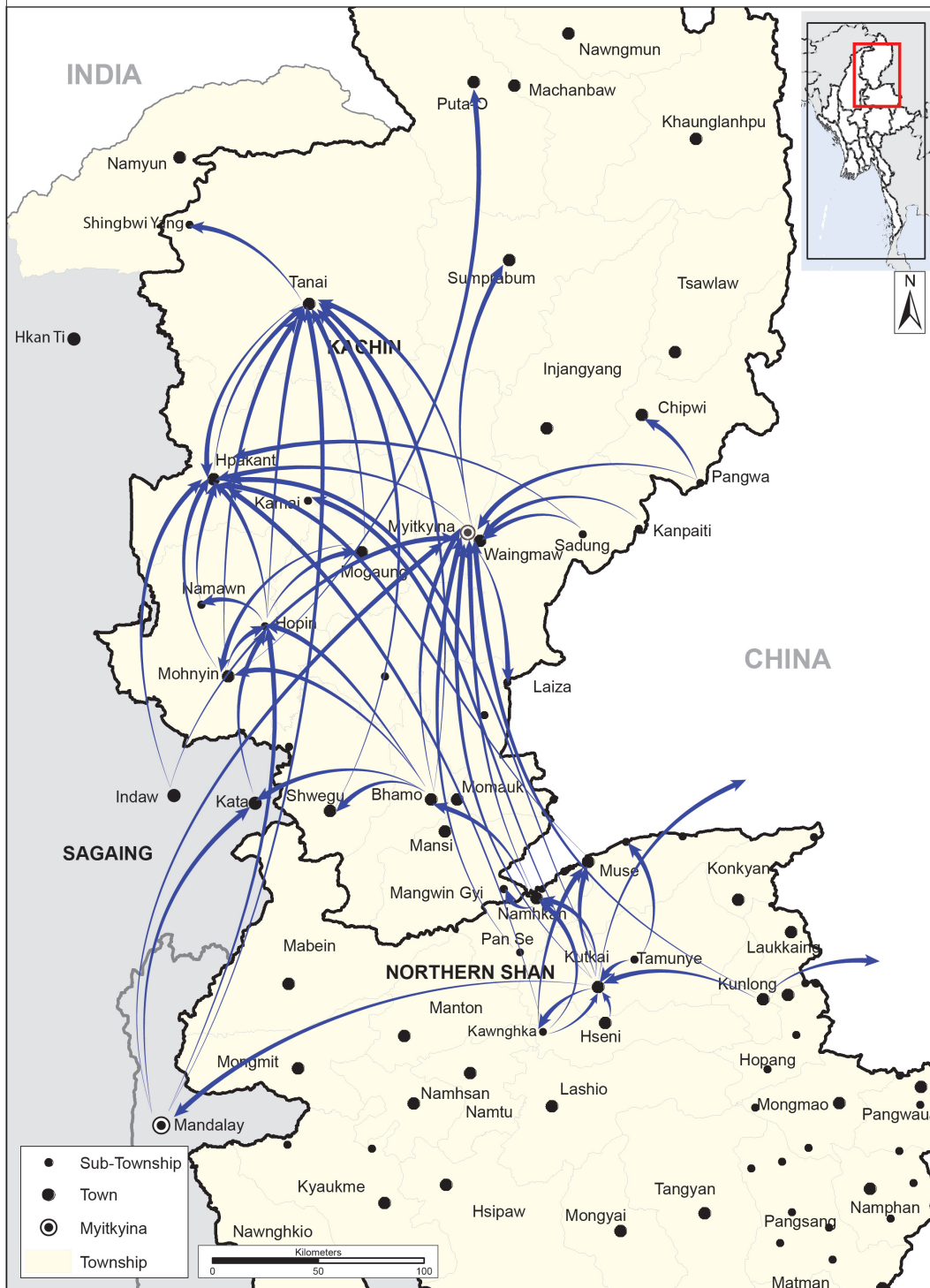


Photo of an opium field at Takun village in Panse militia area, Namkham township, taken on 12 March 2019.



A photo of opium field at Takun village in Panse militia area, Kutkai township, taken on 17 March 2019.

HEROIN TRAFFICKING ROUTES (2018 - 2019)



2. HEROIN PRODUCTION

Due to security reasons, it is difficult to find out the exact location of drug refineries. However, by comparing market prices and analyzing trafficking routes and maps, it can be seen that the areas controlled by Burma Army-controlled militia groups in Northern Shan State are the most likely places where heroin is refined. This is confirmed in the following interview:

“(I am) 24, Kachin. I work in a refinery. I have been working there since 2017. Heroin is made at Muningwa Gorge, Loihkang area. They (Militia) provide security. The refinery owner is an ethnic Kokang Chinese. I was paid 200,000 kyats per month. There were about 50 workers. It can produce more than 150 kg a day. The technician is a Chinese. The heroin is transported by cars or by human carriers. They transported it into the Wa State and Kokang region.”
(Interview with refinery worker in Kutkai)

In Kachin State, heroin prices are cheaper in Danai, Hopin, Monhyin, and Mogaung compared to other places. But in Northern Shan State, market prices of heroin in Lashio, Kutkai, and Namhkam are far cheaper than those in Kachin State. Comparing market prices from different regions, we can estimate that heroin is produced in the areas controlled by local Burma Army-aligned militia groups in Northern Shan State, and then trafficked into Kachin State. When asked about sources of heroin, most of the interviewees answered that it was produced in Northern Shan State.

“I am 36 years old, from Daknai. I have been using heroin for 7 years. I usually take 1 penicillin bottle a day. For a single dose, it costs 4,000 kyats. Daw Oo Pan sells it. That heroin came from Shauhaw and Lungtang in Kutkai. Chinese businesspeople from those villages produce the heroin. I was arrested by PJS once, and I was in a rehab centre at Daknai for one month.” *(Interview with drug user in Kutkai)*

The main heroin market destinations are Hopin, Hpakant, Myitkyina and Danai in Kachin State. In Hopin, the price is cheaper than in any other places in Kachin State. Analysing the trafficking routes, it can clearly be seen that the heroin originates in Northern Shan State, and reaches Hopin via Katha, Bhamo, and Mandalay.

“I have been using heroin for three years. I have taken all sorts of narcotic drugs. For yama (methamphetamine), I usually took three tablets a day. Depending on availability I also took opium or

heroin. It costs 5,000 kyats for one dose. I bought it from Namhkyi Mine, Lower Mine, and Namma. U Win Po at Namhkyi mine, Daw Su at Kahtet Mine, and Kala-ma at Tawngsin Kalay, I got it from these retailers. These drugs came from Shan State. Local (pro-government) militia groups and the Tatmadaw, in collaboration, trafficked the drugs.” (Interview with drug user in Mohnyin)

It is evident that the heroin is distributed to Mohnyin, Hpakant, Mogaung, Nammawn, and Myitkyina through Hopin. All the heroin reaching Bhamo came from Shan State.

Within Kachin State, we can also trace a trafficking route from the areas controlled by BGF 1001, 1002, and 1003 battalions and local Burma Army-aligned militia groups in Pangwa, Kanpaiti, and Sadung sub-townships to Waimaw and Myitkyina.

From studying the trafficking routes, we can trace that heroin from opium growing areas such as Kunlong, Tamonye, Konghka, and Panse was transported through Kutkai, Muse, Namhkam, and Mandalay to Kachin State and China. This shows that heroin production mainly took place in the areas controlled by local militia groups in Northern Shan State.

“ (I am) 27 years old, from Manmak village. The refinery owner is a Chinese, about 45 years old. I worked in the refinery for 5 months during 2016-2017, and was paid 200,000 kyat per month. There were 30 workers in the refinery. All the ten technicians working in the refinery were Chinese. It was located inside the Konghka militia territory. The heroin was transported by truck during the night time. I have no idea about the destination.” (Interview with former refinery worker in Lashio)

YAMA TRAFFICKING ROUTES (2018 - 2019)



3. METHAMPHETAMINE PRODUCTION

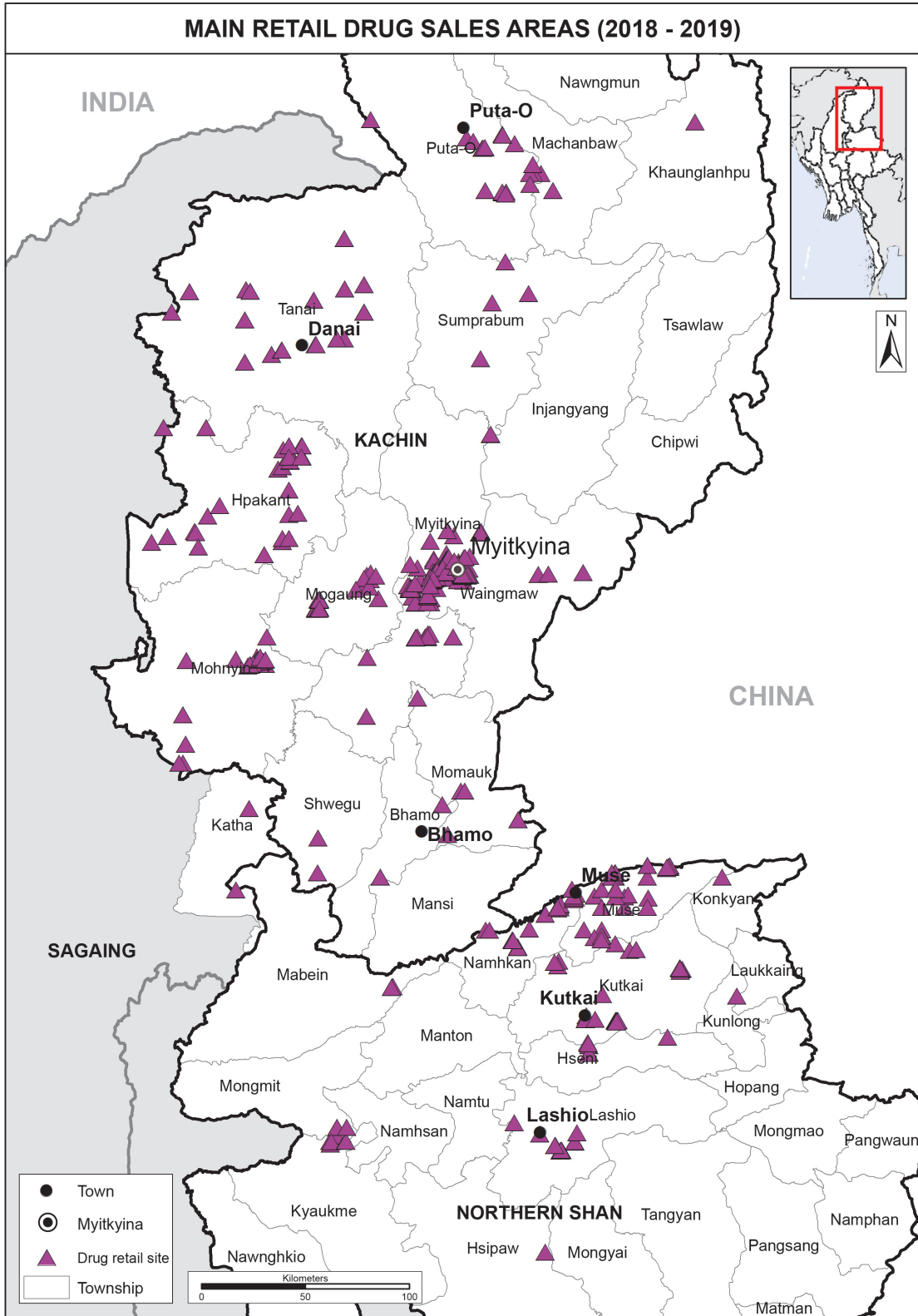
Because of security reasons and the geographical situation, it is difficult to find out exact locations of factories producing methamphetamine, or “yama” as it is called locally by Kachin. Yama-producing machines are also very compact and easily moved, making them difficult to find. We can therefore only estimate factory locations based on an analysis of trafficking routes and comparison of market prices. We also acquired information from workers who had worked in yama refineries.

“I am 20 years old, single, unemployed, from Loihkam. I worked in a yama factory in 2016. It was in deep jungle near Banglaw. I worked as a security guard. I am a member of the Konghka militia. The factory owner was a Chinese from China. I got paid 200,000 kyats per month. The factory could produce tens of thousands of yama tablets every day. They paid tax to the Konghka militia for the factory. Yama tablets were transported by car. I don’t know the destination.” (Interview with militia member from Loihkam in Kutkai)

From studying the trafficking routes, we can see that the yama is transported from Kutkai to Muse and Namkham, and then on to Kachin State and China, or from Kutkai to Mandalay (similar to the trafficking routes for heroin). This suggests that major production took place in the areas controlled by local militia groups in Kunlong, Tamunye, Konghka, Panse, Lungtang, and Shauhaw.

“ (I am) 50 years old. I have six household members. My business is yama distribution. I am a Chinese, from Shauhaw village. I worked in a yama factory from 2010, for five years. The owner was a Chinese from China. I got paid 200,000 kyats per month. There were about 50 workers, with one technician, a Chinese. Every day, 100 packages of yama were produced. The yaba was transported by cars, horses, and human carriers. It was trafficked through the Muse-Manwing route.” (Interview with drug distributor from Shauhaw in Kutkai)

Most of the answers given by interviewees who worked in yama factories say that these factories exist in the areas controlled by local Burma Army-aligned militia groups. Most of the owners are Chinese from China.



4. DRUG DISTRIBUTION

From surveying drug distribution, all the data shows that the distributors were under the influence, authority or protection of the Burma Army, police force, BGFs, pro-government militia groups and village authorities. There are different types or levels of people among the drug dealers: wholesale dealers, brokers, distributors and retailers. Wholesale dealers carry out their business by bribing government officials, Burma Army commanders, police officers, BGFs and local militias. Drug dealers at other levels also have to make pay-offs to local authorities.

“(I am) 38 years old, married and have four children. I am Burmese. Now I am living in Nbalahka. I was from Meikhtila, Mandalay Region. I started using and retailing since 2012. I myself distribute in Nbalahka. I go to Nammaw on a motor-scooter to buy heroin. All the shacks along the ‘EVER’ dump site from Nammaw are drug distributors. They have a sort of gang leader there. I don’t know their name. They have connections with police officers and authorities. Because on some occasions they inform us about a bad situation (a raid) so that we may clear up the mess. Every utensil related to drug use, including plastic straws, needs to be cleared, shops closed, even the houses shut.”
(Interview with drug user in Hpakant)

This example shows that drug dealers have connections with police. Whenever the Special Anti-Narcotic Police are sent from Naypyidaw, the drug dealers are warned in advance by the local police, so that they can avoid the raid. Therefore not many drug dealers are ever captured.

In the drug dealing process, some act as brokers or sales agents, and some are user-dealers, who may do business wherever they feel it is safe and convenient. Most of the drug dealers have to pay the authorities, including police, army, and government officers on demand. These officials are well aware about the ongoing drug business in their area.

“(I am) 33, single. I came here to search for jade, and am still a jade-picker. I am Burmese, living in Mawwan Kaba. I came from Kalaw, Southern Shan State. I started dealing in drugs since 2011. I myself distribute drugs on the way from Hpakant to Mawwan Kaji, by the stream, and Mawwan Kaba also. I bought drugs from a wholesaler named Mommy Aung. I pay 30,000 kyats for one penicillin bottle of heroin, and retail it at the price of 35,000 kyats. Mommy Aung sells to regular customers only. I buy from her and

then retail whenever I feel like it. There are other guys from Longh-kang, Hpakant, and Sengtawng, just like me, who went there to buy drugs. I retail the drugs to my fellow jade-pickers. Mommy Aung has paid the police, Special Narcotics Police, and Tatmadaw in order to be able to trade freely. Her place is very close to the police station. They can see. The Tatmadaw post is also very close. Just up there.” (Interview with drug user in Hpakant)

The map on page 33 shows, Myitkyina, Waimaw, Washawng, Hpakant, Hopin, Mogaung, Mohnyin, Bahmo, Danai, Sumprabum, and Putao towns of Kachin State are the areas with the densest drug sales distribution. Drugs are being sold openly and freely in government-controlled business zones such as jade mines, gold mines, and timber camps, as well as in urban centres.

In the Kachin Sub-State, drugs are easily available in Muse, Namhkam, Kutkai and the areas controlled by local pro-government militia groups. In those areas drugs are produced and marketed under the authority of the militia groups. Most of the producers are Chinese from China. They are operating massive drug businesses yet are seldom arrested.

Those who suffer most from drug related problems are poor, indigenous youth who are would-be future leaders of their communities, family breadwinners and mothers. This is a threat to the future of the people.

5. DRUG USE

Most of the drug users are those seeking their fortune in jade and gold mines, unemployed young persons, those with family problems, university students, CSWs, artists, and workers at KTV shops.

The main reasons why people said they became involved in drug use, production, and distribution were given as: wanting to try a new experience; wanting to have fun; drugs were easily available; it was a way to make money easily; unemployment; and difficulty finding money and supporting their family.

“ (I am) 24, married, have one child. I’m a jade broker, Kachin from Ayemya Thayar Block (7), Hpakant. I have been using drugs for two years. I use both heroin and yama. It is difficult to say how much or how many I take. Usually one taik-nga-lone is enough for a single dose. I take it two or three times a day. One taik-nga-lone costs 3,000 kyats. I myself go to Nammaw on a motor-scooter to buy heroin. There are plastic tents along the ‘EVER’ dump site, and they all are drug distributors. Ask any tents, it is available. There is a military camp nearby. A police station too. I usually buy from Yaw Thuma. I don’t know where the drugs came from. We just get it from Nammaw.” (Interview with drug user in Hpakant)

[Translator’s remark: Taik-nga-lone is a retail unit for measuring drugs, especially heroin. A small metal capsule is about 1cc capacity, originally containing Five Pagodas brand painkiller powder. Another popular retail unit is a penicillin bottle, originally containing injectable medicines such as penicilin. It has about 5cc capacity]

All users said it was almost impossible to give up the drug. No matter how hard they tried, they were unable to escape from the drug cycle. When someone took up drugs again after giving up for a time, the regular dose would be doubled.

“(I am) 26 years old, single. We have six family members. I am from Wetkone Block, Hopin. I use drugs such as yama and heroin. I took 1.5 taikngahlone a day. It cost 10,000 to 20,000 kyats per day. I bought those from Namyin River-Thaehpyuchaung (White Dunes Creek). The dealers are Aung Thuhka and Thaa Ngae. The Patjasan took me from home and sent to Namti Rehab center. When I was in rehab, I could quit the habit, but after I returned from there, I met

with old friends and just did it again.” (Interview with drug user in Hopin)

Within Kachin State, the majority of heroin users are ethnic Kachins, followed by Shan and Burmese. Most of the Kachin heroin users are youth. During 2005 and 2006 the number of drug users among Myitkyina University students gradually increased. And now there is retailing in the university campus.

The impacts of drug abuse on users were given as: low self-esteem; isolation from family and community; erosion of moral values; arrest and imprisonment; educational failure; financial losses; exposure to transmittable diseases; poor health and possible death.

6. LAW ENFORCEMENT

In Burma, none of the government bodies, including the judiciary, law enforcement agencies or the military have been able to handle the drug problems effectively. Yet when civilians suffering the effects of drugs have stood up to fight against drugs – such as by forming Patjasan (PJS)-- the authorities have been reluctant to support their work, and have even obstructed it. During the PJS campaigns, they have been attacked numerous times by local groups. They have faced attacks with makeshift weapons (such as knives, machetes, batons etc.) 51 times, mob attacks 42 times, car attacks ten times, and firearm attacks six times.

One of the most serious incidents happened in 2016, when PJS volunteers went to cut down opium poppies in Waimaw. They were marching in a large group to Sadung and Kanpaiti, when they were attacked at Shinjai village. According to interviews with insiders, a local pro-government militia group supplied firearms to the farm owners and a mob gang. The attackers ambushed the civilian PJS at Shinjai and Wemaw villages on the way to Kanpaiti. 30 PJS volunteers were injured in the attack. Fortunately no one was killed.

Large scale drug producers and wholesalers are seldom arrested. Even if arrested, the law enforcement agencies just confiscate the products, but the criminals are usually freed. Most of the drug-related criminals imprisoned are users and small scale retailers. During the one-year period between 1 January and 31 December 2018, there were 2,370 drug related criminals imprisoned in Kachin State, far more than any other cases.

“On 1 July 2015, the Longhkang town PJS in Hpakant township raided the house of Mrs. Kai, one of the wholesale drug distributors, and seized a massive quantity of drugs and drug-use accessories. Some drugs were still in a truck, and some were in a store room. Seized drugs included 415 soap cases containing heroin blocks, 600 penicillin bottles of heroin powder, 1,800 pieces of heroin packaged in small plastic straws, 500 pieces in bigger straws, and 298,600 yama tablets.

PJS surrounded the house, which is in Awnggra Block of Longhkang town, and when they entered the house, a police officer in plain clothes came to the spot. This suggests that Mrs. Kai had close connections with government officers and the police force. The family had a walkie-talkie, and there was the police force frequency in the device. She was handed to the police force, but there was no action taken. Now she has moved to Sezin Village in Tamahkan town and restarted her drug network again.” (Interview with Civilian Pat-jasan member in Hpakant)

The case of Mrs. Kai shows clearly the extent of corruption in the Burmese law enforcement and judicial system. It shows the power of money is above the law.

7. DRUG PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

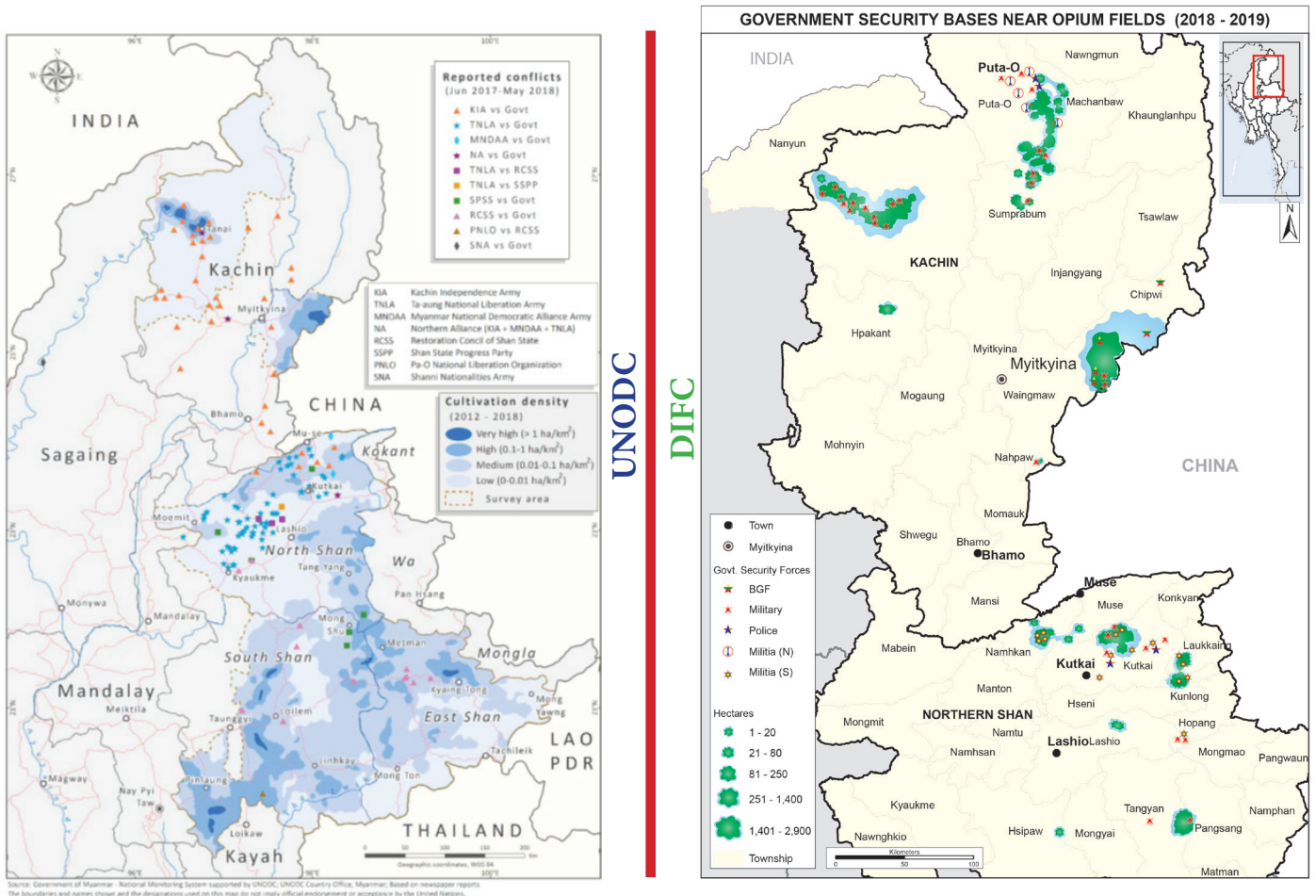
Civilian Patjasan campaigns were carried out in Kachin State and Northern Shan State, with active participation of the public, during 2014-2016. These campaigns included activities such as drug education and awareness raising, warnings to people involved in drugs, rehabilitation programs for drug addicts, arrest and capture actions, opium field destruction, and public gatherings. Over 10,000 drug users, opium growers, and drug dealers were targeted for awareness raising. Public events and trainings included public addresses and speeches on PJS policy, drugs and laws, health issues, and biblical trainings, involving over 50,000 participants. Tens of thousands acres of opium fields were destroyed.

However, since 2017, the Burmese authorities, Burma army, and police force have restricted Patjasan activities. Thus Patjasan has been unable to effectively carry out tasks of opium field destruction, arrests of drug dealers, and rehabilitation programs.

During 2018-2019, Patjasan has therefore focused on carrying out awareness raising campaigns in the form of one-to-one conversations, drug education for children and youth, and outreach awareness sessions for drug users and growers. The awareness raising programs have reached 43,969 persons.

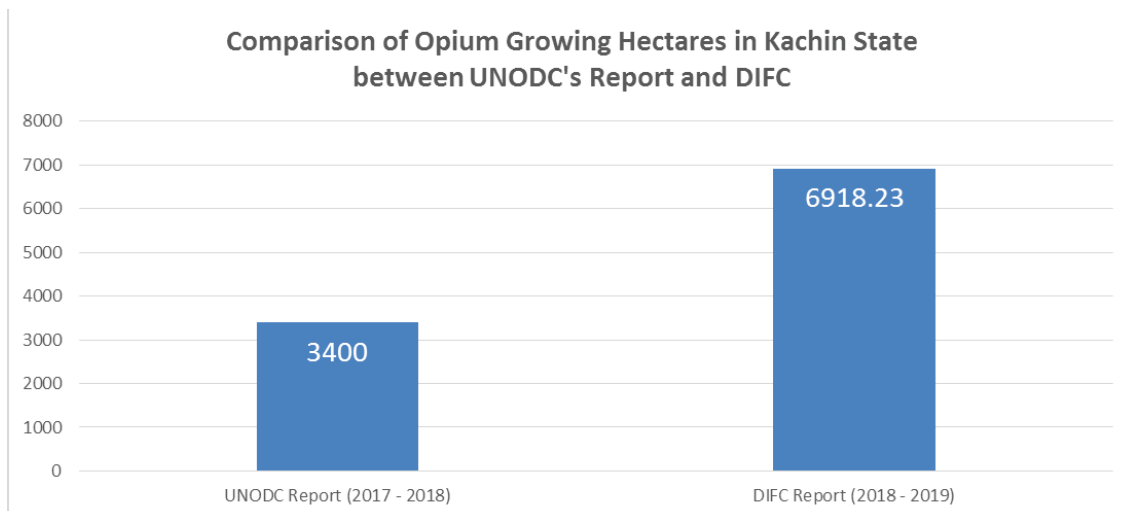
8. COMPARISON WITH UNODC MYANMAR OPIUM SURVEY DATA

Our survey findings differ from those of UNODC’s Myanmar Opium Survey 2018. The UNODC report only mentions the Danai and Kanpaiti areas as opium growing regions in Kachin State. The UNODC report does not show or mention any opium cultivation in Sumprabum and Putao townships, as identified in our survey. The maps below shows the comparison between UNODC’s map of opium cultivation and our findings.



This throws into doubt the UNODC opium cultivation figures for Kachin State, which it claims were 3,400 hectares, a 13% decrease from the previous year. But according to the findings of our survey, opium cultivation in Kachin State during the 2018-2019 season was 6,918.23 hectares, double that of the UNODC report. The chart below shows the comparison between UNODC 2018 survey and our findings on opium cultivation in Kachin State.

The other major difference between our survey findings and the UNODC report is that we have clearly identified all the opium growing areas in



Kachin State and Kachin Sub-State of Northern Shan State as being under the Burma Army or their BGF and allied militia forces – in direct contradiction to the UNODC’s claim that “in Kachin State the highest density of poppy cultivation took place in areas under the control or influence of the Kachin Independence Army (KIA).”

Our report shows that in Kachin State, opium growing areas of Danai, Shingbuiyang, Sumprabum and Putao are directly under the control of the Burma Army, close to their military camps and outposts. Before the Burma Army came, there were no opium fields in those areas. Furthermore, the largest opium growing areas in Sadung and Kanpaiti sub-townships of Kachin State are under government administration with Burma Army, police forces, BGFs, and pro-government militia groups controlling the region.

In Northern Shan State (Kachin Sub-State), the Burma Army has occupied most of the EAO territories. All the opium growing areas are controlled by local pro-government militia groups, which are under Burma Army command.

BGFs are funded by the government, but the local militia groups do not have direct financial assistance from the government. They have been given special concessions to raise funds for themselves, leading them to rely on the lucrative drug trade.

The omissions and errors in the UNODC report point to an urgent need to review their methodology and information sources for their Myanmar opium survey.

CONCLUSION

We can clearly see that drugs of all forms originate mainly from areas controlled by pro-government militia groups and the Burma Army's Border Guard Forces in Northern Shan State and Kachin State. It is also evident that opium can be grown in the vicinity of Burma Army positions in Kachin State.

The drug trade is a main source of income for the militia groups and BGFs, which they can carry out freely with the permission of the Burma Army.

The militia groups and BGFs included in DIFC's survey are, from Kachin State: Dangu Dang militia, Shan Ni (Mohnyin) militia, Talawgyi (Shan Ni) militia, and BGF Battalions 1002 and 1003. And from Northern Shan State: Panse militia, Lungtang militia, Shauhaw militia, Tamungnye militia, Namjawn militia, Mungsi (Mungji) militia, Tagon militia, Tangyan militia, Kawngghka militia, Kutkai militia and Kunlong Special Police Force. The groups controlling opium growing areas which DIFC was unable to access are the Lawayang militia, Munggu militia, Hpawngseng militia and BGF Battalion 1001.

Drug kingpins from China are the key sponsors of opium cultivation and narcotic drug production. Drug enforcement agencies on both sides of the Sino-Burma border have been ineffective in curbing their influence.

It can be seen that the drug kingpins are able to produce and distribute narcotic drugs without any obstacle, because of corruption within the Burma Army and government authorities, who are profiting from the drug business.

It also appears that the Burma Army is intentionally allowing the spread of narcotic drugs as a weapon against the ethnic armed organizations, letting the drug scourge weaken the ethnic populations supporting them.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The illegal chain of command practiced by the Burma Army that allows and protects the narcotic drug production and distribution business of the militia groups and Border Guard Forces must be stopped.
2. The Burmese government should take responsibility for full law enforcement against narcotic drugs, and take action against government authorities and security forces taking bribes from the narcotic drug trade.
3. International agencies such as the UNODC should carry out more effective, in-depth research into drug-related problems in Burma, and push the Burmese government to put more effort into seriously tackling these problems.
4. Anti-narcotic campaigns carried out by local groups seeking to protect their communities shouldn't be threatened or obstructed in the name of the law, but instead should be supported, including with technical assistance.
5. Instead of blaming the EAOs for narcotic drug problems, the government should find a way to resolve political problems in negotiation with the EAOs, and collaborate in a nationwide anti-narcotic drug program.

APPENDIX

1. Map of armed groups from the UNODC's Myanmar Opium Survey 2018 link: https://www.unodc.org/documents/crop-monitoring/Myanmar/Myanmar_Opium_Survey_2018-web.pdf

Map 2: Armed groups in Myanmar, 2017-2018 opium poppy growing season



Source: National Forest Crop Monitoring System supported by UNODC. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

2. KIO's open letter regarding the UNODC Myanmar Opium Survey 2018\



**CENTRAL COMMITTEE
KACHIN INDEPENDENCE ORGANIZATION**

Letter No. 33 / M-2 / CC / 2019

Date : 2019,

February (၂၅).
Open letter to,

Jeremy Douglas
Regional Representative
Southeast Asia and the Pacific

Telephone : (+ 66-2) 288 2100
Fax : + 66 2281 2129
Email : jeremy.douglas@un.org

Subject : Statement of objection to unfounded aspersion against KIA in UNODC's Myanmar Opium Survey 2018

Dear Mr. Jeremy Douglas,

On January 11, 2019, the UNODC published their "Myanmar Opium Survey 2018." The report stated that there was an overall drop in opium cultivation in Myanmar, including a 13% reduction in Kachin State. It linked ongoing opium production with conflict, and alleged that: "in Kachin State, the highest density of poppy cultivation took place in areas under the control or influence of the Kachin Independence Army (KIA):"

We categorically reject this aspersion, and wish to point out that even UNODC's own maps in the report do not support this claim.

Map 1 on page 6 of the report "*Cultivation density map (2013-2018) with reported conflicts in Myanmar, June 2017-May 2018*" shows the highest opium density areas in Kachin State as being in Tanai and Sadung, east of Myitkyina.

However, Map 2 on page 7 of the report, "*Armed groups in Myanmar, 2017-2018 opium growing season*," shows the areas of operation of the KIA and the Myanmar government's

Border Guard Force (BGF) in Kachin State. It can be clearly seen that the very high opium density area in Sadung (identified in Map 1), lies in the government-controlled BGF area, and not in the KIA area.

We also wish to point out that the very high opium density are as marked in Tanai in Map 1 are actually located close to the Myanmar military and government militia camps in and around the town of Tanai, where the Myanmar Army Regional Operations Command is located. By failing to mark the Myanmar military presence in the “armed groups” map (Map 2), a distorted picture of the link between conflict and opium is being conveyed.

The Kachin Independence Organization is well aware of the danger of narcotic drugs to our people, and Our Drug Eradication Committee, formed in 1993, has been actively involved in carrying out opium eradication, punishing dealers, and conducting rehabilitation programs for users in areas under our control.

We therefore take great exception to UNODC’s unsubstantiated aspersions against us, and wonder at the motives of the UNODC in doing this. We can only assume that it was at the behest of the co-authors of the report, the Myanmar government’s Central Committee for Drug Abuse Control.

Miwa Kato, the UNODC Director of Operations, stated in the press release to the Myanmar Opium Survey 2018 that “...we will be scaling up our participation in UN efforts that support a sustainable peace.” Frankly, siding with the Myanmar government to cast unsubstantiated aspersions against the KIA will only hinder, not support, peace-seeking efforts.

We therefore urge UNODC to correct the misinformation regarding KIA in the Myanmar Opium Survey 2018, and to publicly acknowledge their error.

Your Sincerely,



15/2/2019

Kumhtat Htingnan
General Secretary
Kachin Independence Organization

Annex:-
Myanmar Opium Survey 2018, Page 6 - Map I, Page 7 - Map II.

DRUG ISSUES FACT-FINDING COMMISSION

KACHIN AND NORTHERN SHAN STATES **REPORT** 2018 -2019

DRUG ERADICATION COMMITTEE, KIO

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Date : 26th June, 2019