

# BORDER BASED KAREN COMMUNITY GROUPS LEAD AID RESPONSE TO POST-COUP HUMANITARIAN CRISIS IN KAWTHOOLEI

## Decades of experience

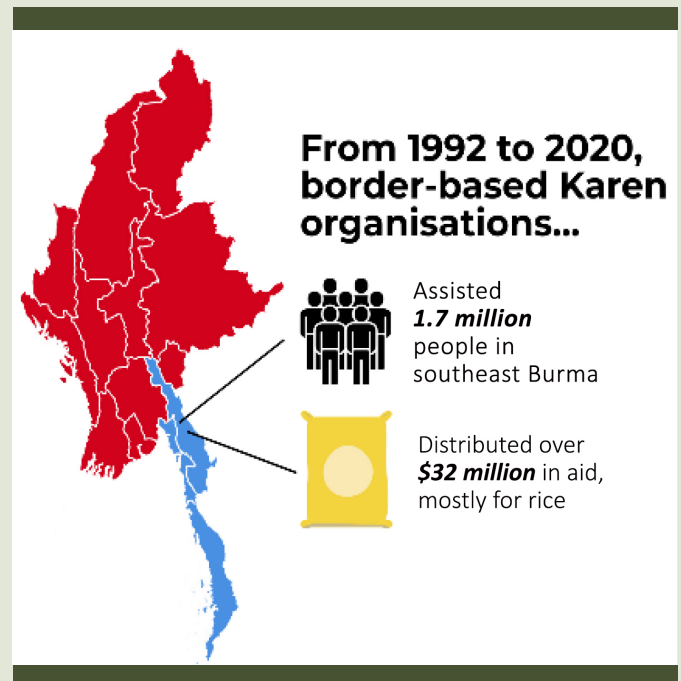
For over three decades, Karen community based organisations (CBOs), together with departments of the Karen National Union (KNU), have been providing humanitarian aid to villagers in southeast Burma suffering displacement and food insecurity due to Burma Army offensives, persecution and destruction of farms and rice stocks.

The aid has been delivered through our own long-established mechanisms, systematically developed to maximize effectiveness while ensuring accountability to donors. Based at the border for security and logistical reasons, these systems have been able to deliver significant amounts of assistance, allowing hundreds of thousands of people to remain living inside Burma instead of becoming refugees.

From 1992 to 2020, border-based Karen organisations assisted over 1.7 million vulnerable persons living in Burma with over US\$ 32 million of aid, mainly for rice.

This aid has been delivered directly to the beneficiaries without any financial, military or political benefits going to Burma's military governments since these programs began.

Instead of fueling centralization, this border based assistance has helped develop locally governed aid structures as building blocks for a new federal democratic Burma.



Update by the Karen Peace Support Network



### About KPSN

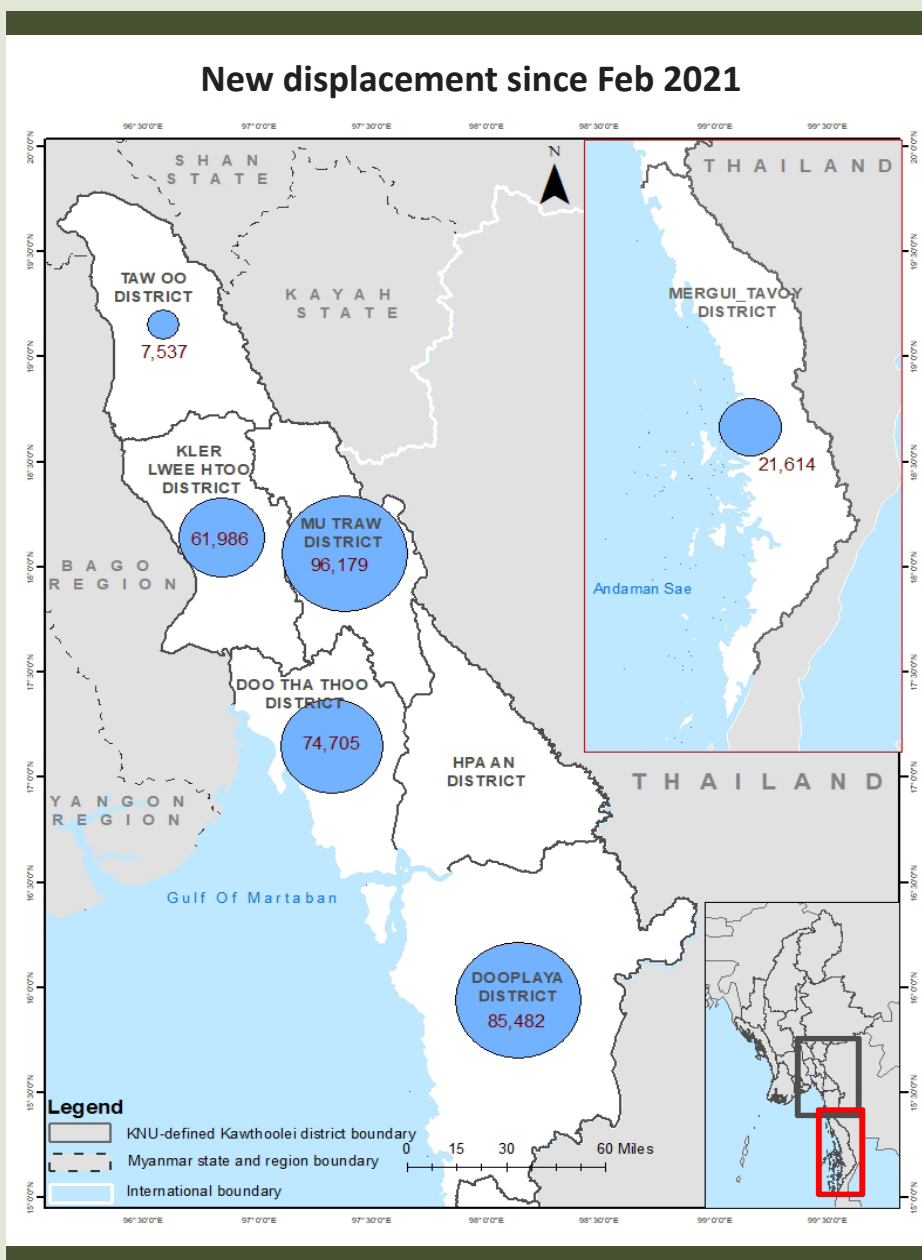
Karen Peace Support Network (KPSN) is the largest network of Karen civil society organizations in Burma/Myanmar. KPSN member organizations have facilitated humanitarian support for vulnerable conflict-affected Karen communities, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and refugees for decades. KPSN works to empower local Karen communities, raise awareness of the peace process, document human rights issues, and facilitate advocacy for a sustainable and equitable peace in Karen areas of Burma.

October 27, 2022

# Large-scale displacement and humanitarian needs since February 2021 military coup

Intensification of conflict and Burma Army persecution since the coup has caused fresh, large-scale displacement of over 340,000 villagers and a new humanitarian emergency in southeast Burma.

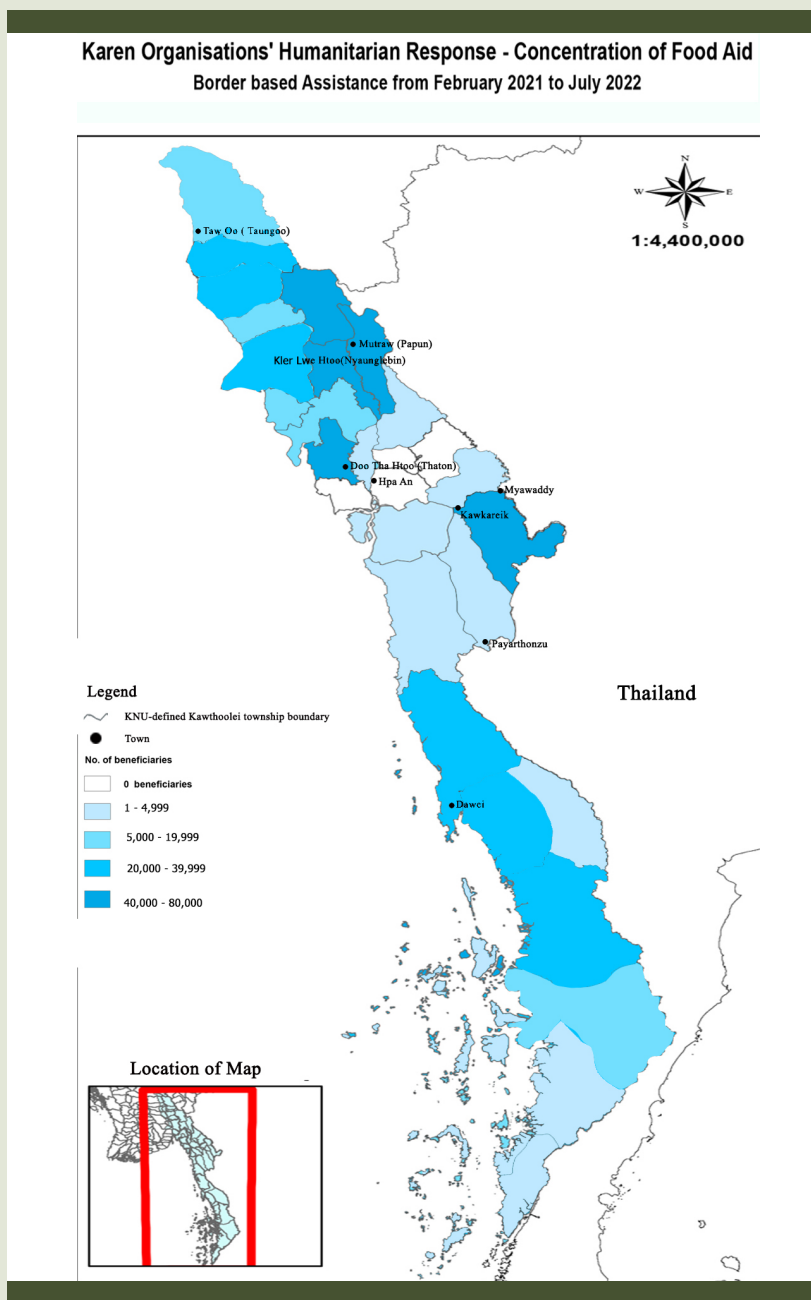
New displacement (Feb 2021-Aug 2022)	
District	No. of IDPs
Taw Oo (Toungoo)	7,537
Kler Lwe Htoo (Nyaunglebin)	61,986
Mutraw (Papun)	96,179
Doo Tha Thoo (Thaton)	74,705
Dooطلا	85,482
Mergui-Tavoy (Tanintharyi)	21,614
<b>Total</b>	<b>347,503</b>



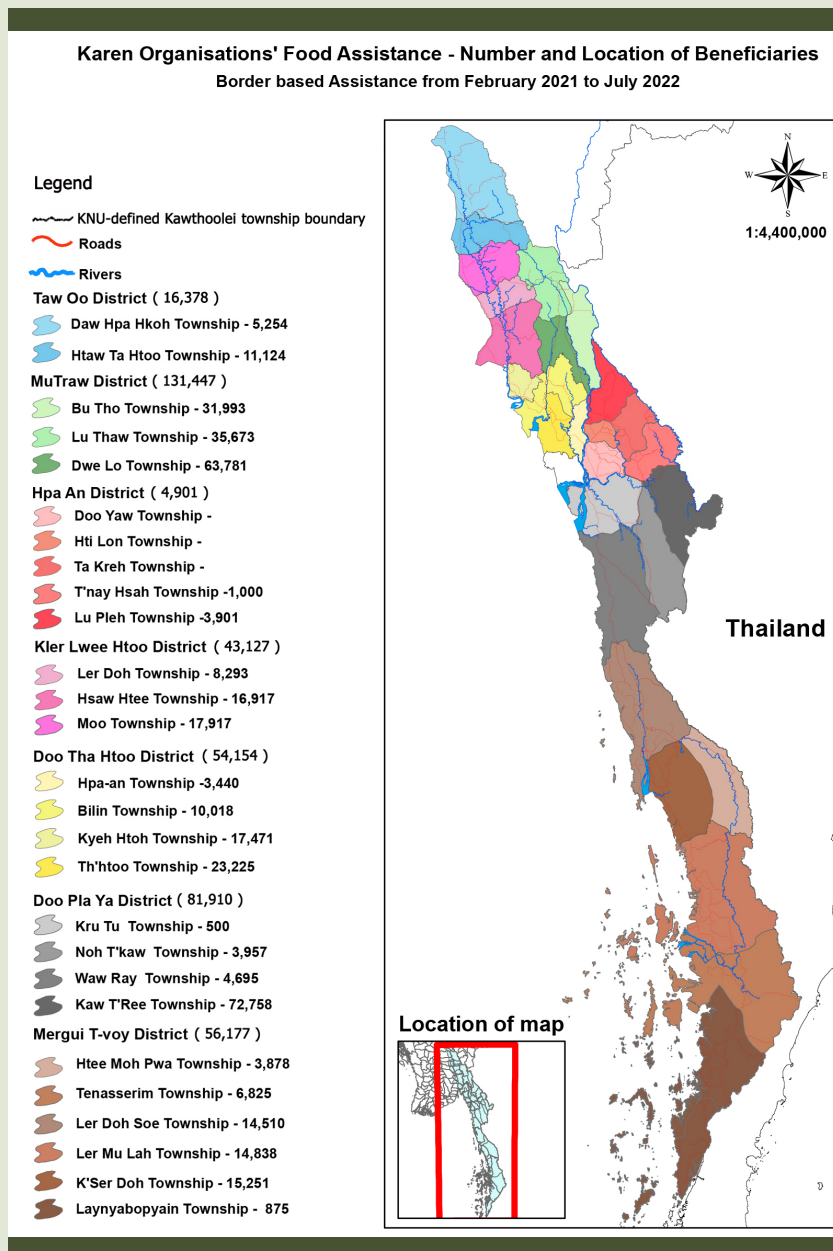
## Widespread reach of border-based aid since the coup

To address the urgent needs after the coup attempt, border-based Karen CBOs raised funds from diaspora and international donors, and from February 2021 to July 2022, provided US\$8.7 million dollars of food aid to over 388,000 beneficiaries. The existing mechanisms ensured that aid was delivered quickly and effectively.

This border-based aid was of vital importance, as aid from inside Burma had trickled to a halt, due to the State Administrative Council (SAC) regime's weaponization of humanitarian assistance, including blockage, diversion and destruction of aid deliveries.



Majority of aid provided is 1–3 months of rice per person



*Beneficiaries = those needing food due to displacement, destruction of food stocks, or being prevented from planting/harvesting by SAC forces*

## Donors urged to scale up aid to address actual needs and match capacities

Unfortunately, despite the deepening crisis, the level of international donor assistance has not kept pace with the growing humanitarian needs or even the pre-existing aid-delivery capacity of the border-based Karen groups. Until now, approx. 50% of the funding provided to the Karen groups has come from private donations, mainly diaspora, and this is not sustainable.

Furthermore, international funding is predominantly on an ad hoc basis, with only 1-3 months of food assistance provided to communities in response to attacks. There is a clear need now for longer term support to address food shortages caused by farmers' inability to plant rice crops due to the conflict.

Based on current estimates, Karen CBOs are facing a food aid funding shortfall of at least US\$ 17 million dollars for the next 12 months alone.

We therefore call for new dialogue with international donors to review our history, acknowledge our decades of experience in delivering aid, and increase levels of assistance to help meet our people's urgent humanitarian needs and allow them to remain living in Burma.