



Karen Human Rights Group  
Documenting the voices of villagers in rural Burma

# *Karen Human Rights Group*

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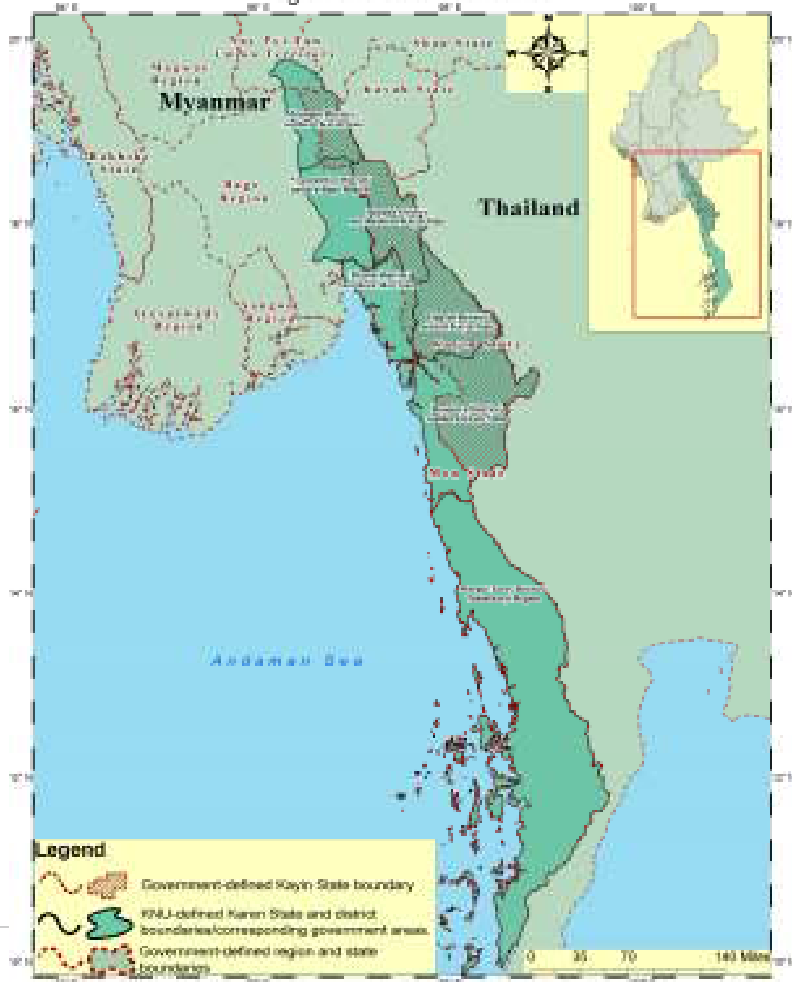
## About KHRG

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KHRG was founded in 1992, with the goal of improving the human rights situation in Myanmar, by:

- Documenting the villagers' voices to show the world the human rights abuses they faced.
- Training local people to document human rights abuses,
- Gathering evidence of human rights abuses,
- Working directly with communities to help them advocate for their rights.

KNU-defined Karen State and Myanmar government-defined region and state boundaries



## KHRG's Operational Areas

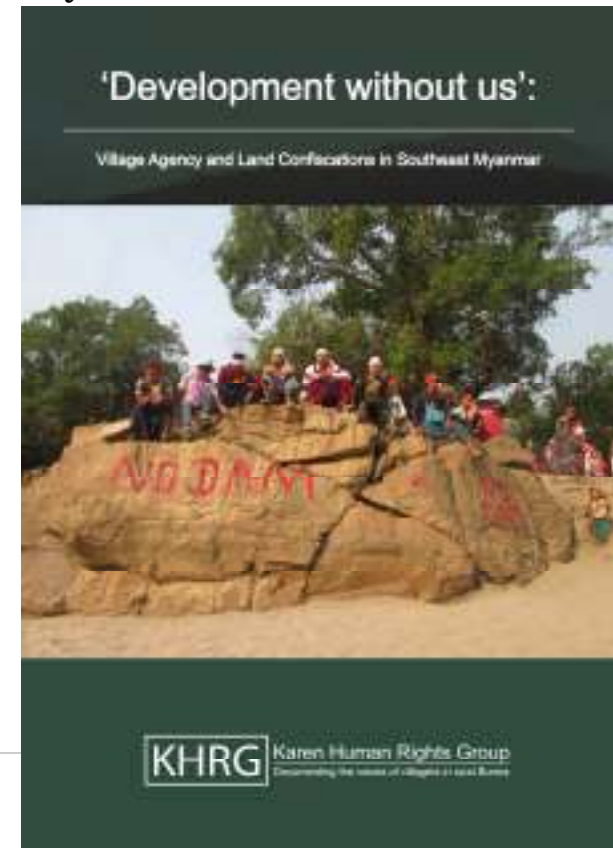
- Southeast Myanmar.
- Areas where heavy conflict was experienced in the past.
- In 2012, the preliminary ceasefire agreement was signed.
- In 2015, the civilian government emerged and the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) was signed.

## KHRG's work on land rights

### Village Agency workshops



## 'Development without us': Village Agency and Land Confiscations in Southeast Myanmar



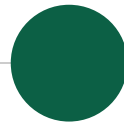


## **Land Disputes in Southeast Myanmar**

- Following the 2012 and the 2015 ceasefires, land confiscations are on the rise.
- Companies are disregarding the rights of local populations in order to develop business ventures.
- The Myanmar government and the KNU are not doing enough to protect the land rights of rural populations.

# 70%

of people in Myanmar depend on land for their livelihoods





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## **Tenure Safeguards are Limited**

- Farmland Law (2008) created a nationwide land registration system. However, Myanmar government issued land titles provide only limited protection from land confiscations because they grant land tenancy rights instead of land ownership rights.



# Corporate Development Projects in Southeast Myanmar

Hydropower Dam

Large-scale Plantation

Large-scale Mine

Major Road Construction

Coal Power Plant





## Village Agency Strategies

Applying for a  
land title

Writing  
complaint letters  
to government  
authorities

Negotiating with  
decision-makers  
for compensation

Holding protests  
and prayer  
ceremonies

Fencing land  
under threat,  
and planting  
new seedlings

Forming village-  
level committees  
to advocate for  
their rights



## Grievance Mechanisms

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- Myanmar National Human Rights Commission (MNHRC).
- Central Committee for Rescrutinizing Farmlands and Other Lands is the core Myanmar body for solving land disputes. However, it suffers from over-centralisation and limited capacity. Its case clearance rate is low – so far it has only addressed 5 percent submitted cases.



Villagers holding up signs during a consultation meeting



## **Call for Action**

The human rights and land rights of rural populations should be respected throughout Myanmar.

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# **Thank you!**

For further information, please refer to  
[www.khrg.org](http://www.khrg.org)

***Any questions?***