

Understanding Burmese Community

- ▶ Who are Burmese Community living in Eastern Suburbs of Melbourne?
- ▶ Where are they coming from?
 - They are refugees fled from Myanmar for safety and protection, and resettled to Australia from Thai-border, Malaysia and India.
- ▶ Burmese people living in the Eastern suburbs are ethnicities (not the real Burmese) and categorized as the following;
 - ◆ Chin ethnicity (Majority)
 - ◆ Karen ethnicity (Second largest group)
 - ◆ Burmese (little: 0.5%)

Chin in brief

- Chin are one of seven ethnic nationalities in the Country
- Around 95 % are Christian
- Population are around 1.5 millions including diasporas people - spreading all neighboring states within the country and neighboring countries; India and Bangladesh.
- Nearly around 50,000 - 60,000 are registered refugees still remained in Malaysia and India and having no where to go (no future).
- 53 dialects spoken in the very tiny state

Who are Chins in Eastern Suburbs?

- Diversity in Chin is extremely strong and very difficult to engage each other due to the intense competition over who is who and what is what.
- People of Chin community are best described as the following;
 - ✧ Hakha (Chin)
 - ✧ Falam (Chin)
 - ✧ Matu (Chin)
 - ✧ Tedim Zo (Chin)
 - ✧ Tedim Zomi (Chin)
 - ✧ Mizo (Chin)

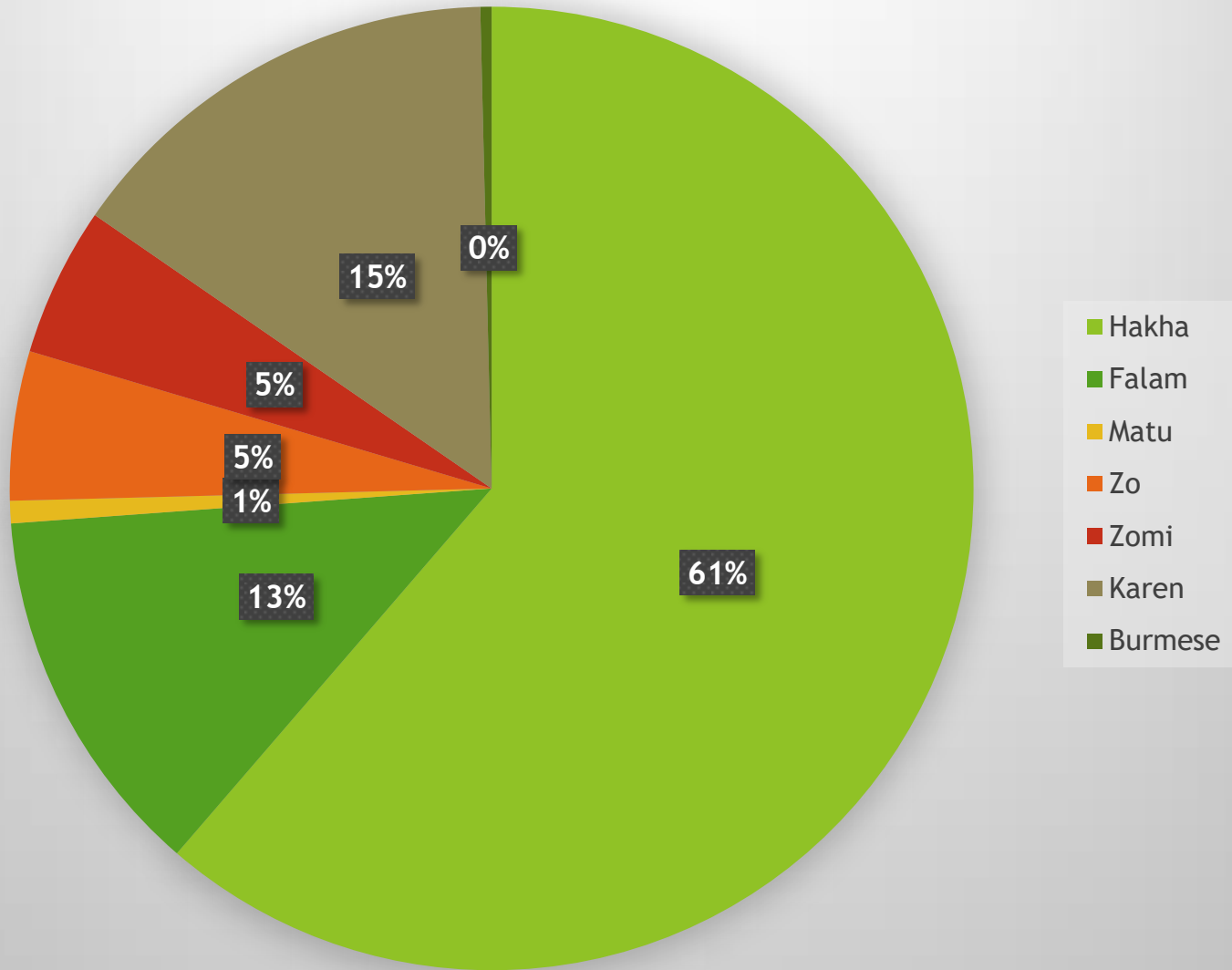
Other Burmese Community

- ◆ Karen community
- ◆ Burmese (very little – 10 -15)

Demographics in scope

Name of Ethnicity	Population	Areas of Residency	Numbers of Churches
Chin (Hakha)	2,450	Ringwood, Ringwood East, Croydon, Mooroolbark, Kilsyth	6
Falam (Chin)	500	Ringwood, Ringwood East, Micham, Mooroolbark, Kilsyth	3
Matu	20 - 30	Croydon, Mooroolbark, Kilsyth	1
Mizo (Chin)	150	Ringwood, Ringwood East, Croydon	1
Teddim Zo (Chin)	150 - 200	Ringwood, Ringwood East, Croydon, Mooroolbark, Kilsyth	2
Teddim Zomi (Chin)	150 - 200	Ringwood Ringwood East, Croydon, Mooroolbark, Kilsyth	3
Karen	600	Ringwood, Ringwood East, Mooroolbark, Kilsyth	1 Note: some are Buddhist and going to different denomination

Demographics in %



Challenges and Issues

1. Lack of education
2. Alcohol consumption [the result of hopelessness, depression, anxiety and family issues]
3. Domestic Family Violence (due to lack of legal knowledge and information)
4. No consultative engagement with youth for youth issues (e.g: community meeting organized MIC)
3. The result of language barriers
 - ❖ Extremely vulnerable in access to employment opportunity
 - ❖ Little access to education opportunity
 - ❖ Access to rehabilitation for drug/alcohol addict
 - ❖ Access to psychological counselling
 - ❖ Facing discrimination in housing application
 - ❖ Having no information in relation to general health and family planning
4. Little support networks and funding for youth and community in Maroondah Council and Yarra Range Council
5. Lack of understanding by local authority and local communities (background history and the diversity within the Burmese community)
6. Lack of engagement from local authority (Local Councils, police)

Key Recommendations

1. Encourage Councils and local agency or employers to open doors for qualified Burmese nationals (e.g => *Health employment service providers employ many of African and Middle Communities in Dandenong areas*)
2. Conduct a critical assessment of cultural diversity within the Burmese community to provide a better understanding for local community
3. To reinforce a new strategy of community engagement – a more inclusive approach and equally communicated by local authority (e.g; Local Councils)
4. To initiate a robust training for non-English speaking communities for community leaders and elders by local Councils or authority
5. Provide effective funding for programs relating youth, empowering women, family, health and elders
6. To engage with youth for youth issues in community meetings or information sessions
7. To engage with Church-based organizations (Churches)
8. To establish community liaison from local authority in providing critical information about health, legal and all family related information – a direct approach