The mission of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is to coordinate the global emergency response to save lives and protect people in humanitarian crises.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Armed clashes between ethnic armed organizations (EAO) in Namtu Township in northern Shan temporarily displaced 810 people. Over 7,830 people have been temporarily displaced in northern Shan so far in 2020.
- The Shan State Government plans to pilot a resettlement project for around 110 internally displaced families from two camps in early 2021.
- The Kachin Baptist Convention conducted a survey among 144 households in Kachin who are willing to return to their places of origin by March 2021.
- Landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) have killed 57 people and injured 160 between the beginning of January and the end of October in conflict-affected areas of Myanmar, according to the latest UNICEF report.
- Over 104,000 people remain internally displaced across Rakhine and southern areas of Chin states due to the conflict between the Myanmar Armed Forces (MAF) and the Arakan Army (AA); fewer hostilities were reported in recent weeks compared to November.
- Conflict-affected people in Rakhine have been experiencing a high level of debt burden as an impact of unemployment, low income and the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a recent survey.
- US$276.5 million will be required in 2021 to address the needs of around 944,000 people in conflict-affected areas in Myanmar - the Global Humanitarian Overview.

KEY FIGURES

- **DISPLACEMENT**
  - 125,000 internally displaced people in camps since intercommunal violence in 2012 in Rakhine.
  - 104,000 people currently displaced in sites by ongoing conflict in Rakhine and southern Chin.
  - 7,830 people temporarily displaced in northern Shan so far in 2020.
  - 104,000 people in protracted displacement in Kachin and n. Shan.

- **CIVILIAN CASUALTIES**
  - 57 people killed and 160 injured due to landmines and explosive hazards in conflict-affected areas in 10 months – UNICEF.

- **HUMANITARIAN ACCESS**
  - 36 organizations obtained travel authorizations to carry out limited activities in Rakhine since September.

- **MYANMAR HUMANITARIAN FUND**
  - US$16.7m received in contributions from 12 donors.
  - Second Standard allocation of US$5m is underway.

- **2020 HRP FUNDING**
  - US$182.5 million received (66 per cent) against $275.3 million requested.
**SITUATION OVERVIEW**

**HUNDREDS DISPLACED BY CLASHES IN NORTHERN SHAN:** At least 810 people from five villages in Namtu Township have been temporarily displaced due to a series of clashes between the Restoration Council of Shan State/Shan State Army and the forces of the Ta’ang National Liberation Army and the Shan State Progress Party/Shan State Army throughout December. About 160 people were displaced more than once. Most families were displaced for a relatively short period, with people able to return to their places of origin within days, while about 180 people were only able to return on 23 December, after hostilities subsided. People temporarily displaced were hosted in monasteries and local communities, where they received food, cash and other basic assistance from humanitarian partners, the local authorities and the host community. There have also been public reports that four civilians, including a child, were injured due to crossfire on 10 December in Namtu Township and admitted to hospital for treatment.

The frequency of armed clashes in northern Shan has increased in recent months, causing a spike in internal displacement between late September and early October, when around 4,000 people were temporarily displaced in Kyauktme Township. About 7,830 people have been displaced in 2020 in northern Shan so far due to clashes between the MAF and ethnic armed organizations (EAO) or between EAOs.

**LANDMINES AND EXPLOSIVE HAZARD CASUALTIES ON THE RISE:** The November UNICEF report on landmines indicates that there have been at least 121 incidents involving landmines, ERW and other explosive hazards in the country between the beginning of January and the end of October 2020; these have killed at least 57 people and injured 160 more, indicating an upward trend in casualties in 2020 compared to 2019, when a total of 57 people were killed and 170 injured during the entire year. The highest number of casualties was reported in Rakhine State, with 37 people killed and 71 injured. Rakhine State also accounted for the highest rate of child casualties, with 13 children killed and 34 injured, representing over 44 per cent of the total number of people killed or injured across the State, compared to 2 children injured in Kachin and 2 killed and 18 injured in northern Shan. A total of 12 people were killed and 44 injured in northern Shan, while in Kachin landmines and ERW have killed 3 people and injured 17 during this period. In a statement in November, UNICEF urged all parties to the conflict to stop laying mines and to clear existing mines and unexploded ordinance to ensure the safety of civilians caught up in conflict, and to uphold their right to protection. UNICEF also urged the Government of Myanmar to facilitate access for the provision of emergency Mine Risk Education activities so that children and other community members receive psychosocial support and mine risk education in schools and communities in all conflict-affected areas of Myanmar.

**RELATIVE LULL IN HOSTILITIES IN RAKHINE AND CHIN STATES:** Fewer armed clashes between the MAF and the AA in Rakhine and southern areas of Chin states have been reported in recent weeks compared to November and a few small-scale population movements took place during this period. Over 1,000 displaced persons from Sittwe, Minbya, Buthidaung and Kyaukpyu townships have reportedly returned to their places of origin since 15 November.

As of 15 December, 104,018 displaced persons were hosted across 224 sites or host communities in Rakhine and southern areas of Chin states. In Rakhine, 86,521 persons were hosted in 157 sites, while an additional 6,487 displaced persons were sheltering in 30 host communities, according to the Rakhine State Government (RSG). In Paletwa Township, which has been the main area of hostilities in southern Chin, humanitarian partners reported that 11,010 displaced persons remained in 36 sites, as of 19 October. The displacement figures in Rakhine and southern Chin have more than doubled since the beginning of January 2020, when slightly over 49,700 IDPs were hosted in 137 sites in the two states.

**GOVERNMENT IDP RETURN LIST IN SELECTED TOWNSHIPS OF RAKHINE:** According to local sources, government officials visited sites where people are currently displaced due to the MAF/AA conflict in Ann, Kyauktaw, Minbya, Mrauk-U and Pauktaw townships on 30 November and consolidated a list of people who are willing to return to their areas of origin.
Some 50 per cent of the IDPs in Ann Town reportedly expressed their willingness to return to their villages in Dar Let Village Tract in Ann Township. The IDPs in Pauktaw, Kyauktaw, Mrauk-U and Minbya townships indicated the need to address issues such as landmines, compensation for burnt houses and for the MAF to vacate their areas before any possible returns. At the time of reporting, there is no information on whether similar lists will be consolidated for other displacement sites and townships in Rakhine and/or Chin states.

CONFLICT-AFFECTED PEOPLE IN RAKHINE HIGHLY INDEBTED: A partner presented their recent findings on the high level of indebtedness of conflict-affected people in Rakhine State due to lack of access to livelihood opportunities, challenges in accessing basic services and COVID-19-related movement restrictions. The findings are based on interviews with over 320 people in IDP camps and adjacent villages in Sittwe Township and several villages in Maungdaw Township in November and December. About 75 per cent of the respondents are indebted (average of US$414 per household) because they have taken loans within their communities to cover mainly health care related costs, including childbirth (about 30 per cent), basic needs (23 per cent) and food (about 21 per cent). Over half of the surveyed IDPs have pawned their WFP rations cards, followed by 22 per cent of the respondents using their houses, lands and properties as collateral.

DURABLE SOLUTIONS PLANS FOR IDPS IN NORTHERN SHAN AND KACHIN: The Shan State Government (SSG) is reportedly planning to resettle over 100 households from two IDP camps (KBC Church 1 and 2) in Kutkai Township in early 2021 as part of a pilot implementation of the National Strategy of Resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and Closure of IDP Camps in northern Shan. The SSG has budgeted approx. US$280,000 (Myanmar kyats 500 million) for the project, which prioritizes land, housing, basic infrastructure, as well as access to water, sanitation and hygiene facilities, education, health care services and sustainable livelihood opportunities. Government officials and humanitarian agencies visited the two resettlement sites on 17 December. The Department for Disaster Management will facilitate the implementation of the pilot project by providing approx. US$3,788 (Kyats 5 million) to each household.

In Kachin, the Kachin Baptist Convention (KBC) with support from the Durable Solutions Working Group, composed of UN agencies and local and international non-governmental organizations, conducted a survey among 144 families displaced since 2011 in camps in Myitkyina Township and in areas controlled by non-state armed actors who plan to return to Dabakyang village in Waingmaw Township. The survey looked at the current conditions of IDPs and their existing needs and collected information, through focus group discussions and key informant interviews, about their needs for return. About 270 households from these locations plan to return to Dabakyang village by March 2021, before the start of the rainy season. The MAF is reportedly conducting demining activities in the village.

The United Nations agencies, the International Rescue Committee and KBC conducted a site assessment in Yijaw village in Chipwi Township between 14 and 16 December to assess the needs and gaps for return of IDPs. Access to food, education, health, water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter and basic infrastructure were listed as the main concerns. The team could not access Jik Loi and Nabuk villages, as initially planned, due to poor road conditions.

As of 24 November, some 104,000 people remained in protracted displacement in northern Shan and Kachin states. The UN is closely coordinating with partners and local governments to support the return and resettlement processes in line with international standards.

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS

RAKHINE AND SOUTHERN CHIN: As of 21 December, 36 organizations received Travel Authorizations (TAs) for local staff members to carry out activities identified as lifesaving by the RSG in IDP camps, displacement sites and villages across Rakhine. The activities include, among others, mobile clinic services, emergency medical referrals, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), risk communication and community engagement (RCCE), nutrition, and food distribution (see section on humanitarian response for details). Organizations that have been granted TAs to carry out distribution activities continue to be instructed in the TA approval letter to hand-over supplies to the Township Management Committees and/or Camp Management Committees, but the RSG has been allowing one or two staff members to observe the distribution process.

Overall, access remains limited and sporadic, particularly in rural areas. Despite the gradual increase in the number of TA approvals, humanitarian access constraints continue to severely impact partners’ ability to resume and scale-up the humanitarian and COVID-19 response in camps, displacement sites and villages. A total of 67 out of 193 displacement sites, as well as 15 out of 30 host communities in Rakhine State and Paletwa Township of Chin State, remain inaccessible due to insecurity and other constraints.
KACHIN AND NORTHERN SHAN: Access by IDPs to assistance and livelihoods in Kachin State, especially in areas controlled by non-state armed actors, remains challenging due to movement restrictions aimed at controlling the spread of COVID-19 as well as pre-existing access constraints. In northern Shan, landmine contamination, poor road conditions, and TA restrictions continue to limit the ability of partners to deliver a full-scale humanitarian response. Nevertheless, local partners and international organizations are doing their best to reach as many people in need as possible with humanitarian and COVID-19 assistance (see below details for humanitarian response).

HUMANITARIAN AND COVID-19 RESPONSE

Despite the access challenges and security constraints, humanitarian organizations continue to provide life-saving humanitarian response and scale-up COVID-19 prevention and response measures for vulnerable communities, IDPs as well as returning migrants in coordination with the Government and state-level authorities. Ongoing and planned activities in IDP camps, displacement sites, and camp-like settings by cluster/sector are summarized below.

PROTECTION RESPONSE

- In Rakhine, partners resumed provision of gender-based violence (GBV) services, including case management and psychosocial support (PSS), and re-opened Women and Girls Centres in Sittwe, Pauktaw, and Meybon townships. COVID-19 messaging continues to be integrated in child protection, GBV, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) and general protection activities. GBV partners distributed 420 dignity kits to women and girls from IDP sites in Ponnagyun Township and over 120 more kits are planned to be distributed in Rathedaung and Buthidaung townships. Partners also provided remote GBV case management services in northern parts of Rakhine. Child protection partners reached 6,410 children through online COVID-19 prevention awareness messaging, child-friendly spaces, PSS and recreational activities in camps in Sittwe, Pauktaw and Maungdaw townships. Close to 1,420 children received facemasks, soaps, gloves and hand sanitizers and 823 children received Child Protection kits in 11 displacement sites in Sittwe Town. In addition, more than 130 child-survivors from Maungdaw, Buthidaung and Rathedaung townships received relevant protection support. Partners provided MHPSS sessions, disseminated educational messaging on Violence Against Children and conducted sensitization sessions on trafficking in person and unsafe migration on a weekly basis through megaphones, and through a door-to-door approach for vulnerable families.

- In Chin, 1,580 children in Paletwa Township benefited from child protection services. In northern Shan and Kachin, provision of GBV case management services and PSS are ongoing. Child protection partners distributed child-friendly materials to 100 families, COVID-19 prevention kits to 98 families and conducted child protection awareness sessions for over 310 children. Partners identified and supported eight child protection cases. Cluster partners also continue to provide safe house and GBV/MHPSS support in Kachin, where 260 dignity kits were also distributed to women and girls at quarantine centers and in IDP camps and displacement sites. Partners are also providing PSS activities, awareness raising on child protection and child rights in all targeted camps. Partners also provided MHPSS and monitoring reporting mechanism refresher trainings. In Kayin, provision of integrated services of sexual and reproductive health and rights, GBV and MHPSS activities are ongoing, and free legal services are being made available for GBV survivors.

GAPS

- In Rakhine and Chin, the scale of delivery of child protection and GBV interventions has been affected due to limited transportation for supplies, unavailability of personal protective equipment (PPE) in local markets, constraints in communication, COVID-19-related movement restrictions and ongoing insecurity. In northern Shan, movement restrictions and complex procedures at checkpoints deter GBV survivors to access services in a timely manner. In Kayin, activities in areas controlled by non-state armed actors were suspended due to COVID-19 related movement restrictions.
WATER, SANITATION, HYGIENE
RESPONSE
- In Rakhine, partners distributed over 155,180 pieces of soap bars, 60 bottles of hand sanitizers, 100 communal cleaning kits and provided more than 10 waste bins in community quarantine centres, protracted IDP camps, schools, villages and new displacement sites in eight townships, reaching a total of 178,760 people. In addition, 219 handwashing stations were constructed in 50 different locations, and over 1,670 hygiene kits distributed in 10 new displacement sites. Close to 49,180 people were reached with COVID-19 hygiene promotion messages.
- In Chin, partners installed 15 hand washing stations in 12 health care facilities in Paletwa Township. In northern Shan, nearly 9,700 people benefitted from installation of 35 handwashing stations and distribution of 19,490 soap bars. Partners provided handwashing stations and non-food items, such as liquid soaps, tents, waste bins and partitions in facility quarantine centres. In Kachin, partners plan to provide 10,000 soap bars and 2,700 hygiene kits to Kachin State Department of Public Health.

Gaps
- In Rakhine, implementation of life-saving activities and transportation of WASH supplies remains challenging and field visits remain suspended due to COVID-19-related movement restrictions. In Chin, access continues to be challenging due to security concerns. In northern Shan, regular monitoring is conducted remotely and/or through focal persons in the camps due to existing movement restrictions.

EDUCATION
RESPONSE
- In Rakhine, partners ensured home-based learning materials are ready to be distributed to more than 20,000 children in IDP camps, while support to 350 volunteer teachers is ongoing. Over 5,000 children in Kachin and 950 children in northern Shan received materials to re-engage in learning, and to support their mental and emotional wellbeing. Partners continue to coordinate with the Ministry of Education to ensure that displaced and conflict-affected children have access to the programs for home-based learning.

GAPS
- Distribution of learning materials is likely to be delayed due to access constraints and the Government’s complex protocols in this regard.

HEALTH
RESPONSE
- Across all conflict-affected areas, health partners supported MoHS and Ethnic Health Organizations in distributing PPE, gloves, infrared thermometers, surgical masks, N95 masks, goggles, gowns, hand sanitizers and soap, chlorine and bleaching powders, pamphlets and posters. In Kachin, Rakhine and northern Shan in particular, partners provided capacity building, psychosocial support, laboratory samples transportation, referral of suspected cases and facilitated the operational costs of quarantine centers. In Rakhine, partners also provided support to the Thet Kae Pyin hospital with medical supplies and equipment, capacity building and case management. In Kayin, partners provided financial support for disease surveillance at points of entry/quarantine facilities, and for clinics operation and patient referrals to Ethnic Community Based Health Organizations.

GAPS
- Non-essential health and capacity building activities remain suspended, while awareness-raising activities continue to be limited in scale. The procurement of COVID-19 supplies due to a shortage of global supplies and logistics challenges has experienced delays. In Rakhine, transportation of COVID-19 samples to National Health Laboratory in Yangon has been delayed due to limited flight operations. Transportation of supplies from Yangon are delayed as freight forwarders are suspending operations due to strict stay-at-home measures. In Kachin and Kayin, transportation of laboratory samples from Ethnic Health Organizations to government-controlled areas remains a challenge.

SHELTER, NON-FOOD ITEMS, CAMP COORDINATION AND CAMP MANAGEMENT
RESPONSE
- In Rakhine, partners continue to strengthen relations with government counterparts to enhance camp management, inclusiveness in decision-making, as well as conducted RCCE activities. Partners are planning to distribute dignity and child protection kits as well as Non-Food Items (NFIs) to 140 newly displaced families in Rathedaung Township. Partners have provided 4,300 shelter assistance and NFIs, including dignity kits, tents,
shelter kits, kitchen sets, blankets, mosquito nets, mats, buckets, tarpaulin sheets, NFI core kits and solar lamps to IDPs in Kachin and northern Shan.

GAPS
- A funding shortfall resulted in an increased gap in sustaining emergency shelter and NFI needs of the people in displacement sites.

NUTRITION RESPONSE
- In northern Shan, Kachin and Kayin, 25 cartons of therapeutic milk and eight cartons of rehydration solution to treat malnutrition were distributed to Lashio, Myitkyina, Hpa-an, Myawaddy and Kaukayek hospitals. In Kayin in particular, a total of 895 children under five with acute malnutrition were treated through national Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM) roll out programme.
- In northern Shan and Kachin, 2,800 COVID-19 integrated nutrition Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials, 4,890 packages of multiple micronutrient powder, 50 packages of multiple micronutrient tablet and 150 Mid Upper Arm Circumference (MUAC) tapes for nutrition screening were distributed. In northern Shan and Kachin, partners have reached 1,250 children under five and 365 pregnant and lactating women (PLW) with preventive nutrition services and provided Infant and Yong Child Feeding (IYCF) counselling services to 1,120 PLW.
- In Rakhine and Kachin, partners reached more than 2,020 children aged 6-59 months and 2,340 PLW with preventive nutrition services. In Rakhine, partners have been distributing close to 2,660 packages of micronutrient powder to children aged 6-59 months from IDP camps and villages in Pauktaw Township. Provision of essential nutrition services, such as online IYCF counselling, treatment of acute malnutrition and micronutrient supplementations have resumed in northern Rakhine.

GAPS
- In Rakhine, provision of nutrition activities in Sittwe and Pauktaw townships has been limited and direct field programme implementations reduced in scope in some areas. In northern Shan, community activities were suspended in Lashio due to travel and quarantine restrictions. In Kachin, close monitoring and supportive supervision to community and IDP camps could not be conducted due to COVID-19-related movement restrictions.

FOOD SECURITY RESPONSE
- In addition to 2,700 people undergoing facility quarantine in Rakhine, 169,400 returning migrants at border gates and government-managed quarantine sites in 11 states and regions have received food assistance. In Rakhine, partners distributed food for one month to 1,087 families and fishing kits for 50 families. Partners not only provided cash assistance to 155 people to recover from lost livelihood sources, but also conducted business planning and management trainings to benefit from small grants. Over 40 vulnerable people benefitted from the cash for work mask production project. More than 66,000 masks and 17,600 face shields yielded from the project were distributed to 20 camps and villages as well as hospitals and quarantine centers. Distribution of gardening tools and seeds targeting 700 families, livelihood recovery support to 350 families, cash grant distribution for 25 families and cash for work sludge treatment unit rehabilitation in IDP camps are planned in the near future.
- In northern Shan, partners have reached 310 families with cash grants amounting to US$121,580. Over 8,700 displaced people will receive US$47,390 worth of cash as a relief ration and 6,030 people in Kokang Self-Administrative Zone will be targeted for 99 metric tons of general food basket distribution. In Kachin, nearly 180 displaced people have received home-gardening training and gardening tools. Vocational training, cash grant distribution and commercial gardening support also benefited 80 families, including those returning to their places of origin.

GAPS
- Food distribution as well as Technical Vocational Education and Training trainings have been delayed due to COVID-19-related movement restrictions in the conflict-affected areas.

LOGISTICS RESPONSE
- WFP continues to sustain weekly aid flights connecting Yangon, Vientiane and Kuala Lumpur until regular international commercial flights resume. Humanitarian flights between Yangon and Sittwe were put on hold as commercial domestic flights resumed on 16 December. Five domestic flights operated by WFP have transported a total of 257 humanitarian workers and 1,803 kilograms of cargo between Yangon and Sittwe.
RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

ONE MILLION PEOPLE IN MYANMAR WILL NEED HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IN 2021: Over 944,000 people in need will be targeted under the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), which seeks to mobilize US$276.5 million. The 2021 HRP prioritizes the provision of life-saving assistance and protection for the most vulnerable crisis-affected people in Kachin, Shan, Rakhine, Chin, Kayin and Bago. It provides for targeted preventative and response activities relating to COVID-19 in humanitarian settings and seeks to contribute to durable solutions to internal displacement wherever feasible. The HRP also aims to strengthen the resilience of communities and contribute to efforts to address vulnerabilities and underlying structural issues, in partnership with development and peacebuilding partners. It includes activities to build national and local capacities to prepare for and respond to natural disasters and other emergencies. The Myanmar response planning figures were made available following the launch of the Global Humanitarian Overview on 1 December, which called for US$35 billion in 2021 to address the needs of 160 million people around the world.

ONLY TWO THIRDS OF 2020 HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PLAN FUNDED: The 2020 HRP is currently 66 per cent funded. As of 22 December, US$182.5 million have been received against the $275.3 million requested, according to FTS. The HRP includes a US$58.8 million COVID-19 Addendum, which has received $40 million (67 per cent). Continued and strengthened donor support is necessary to maintain and scale-up the humanitarian and COVID-19 response in IDP camps, displacement sites and conflict-affected areas.

MYANMAR HUMANITARIAN FUND SECOND STANDARD ALLOCATION: As of 21 December, the Myanmar Humanitarian Fund (MHF) has received US$16.7 million in contributions from 12 donors. A total of 24 projects, including COVID-19 related activities, under two allocations (Reserve and Standard) are being implemented by 20 direct partners and 33 sub-partners, targeting the most vulnerable people in conflict-affected areas. The second Standard Allocation of US$5 million is currently being finalized. The allocation will support humanitarian operations to address urgent and unmet needs in all conflict-affected areas and will mainstream COVID-19 preparedness and response interventions. The allocation is also expected to strengthen coordinated Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) efforts among humanitarian partners in Myanmar.

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