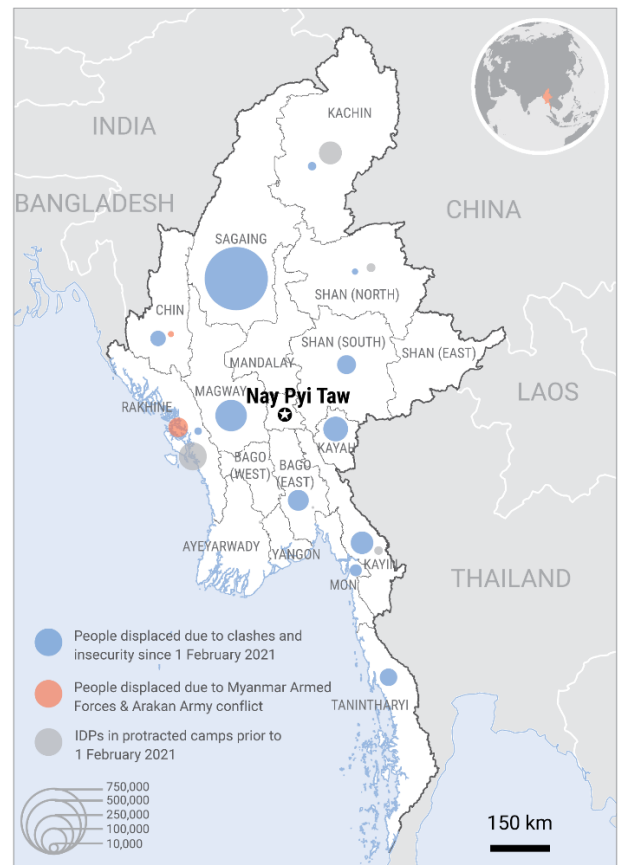


This regular update, covering humanitarian developments up to 27 March, is produced by OCHA Myanmar in collaboration with the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group and UN agencies. Response figures are based on self-reporting by organizations to clusters. The next humanitarian update will be issued at the end of April 2023.

### HIGHLIGHTS & KEY MESSAGES

- Heavy fighting continues in many parts of the country, generating new humanitarian needs and further restricting the movement of goods and people.
- Conflict and other threats to the safety of civilians have intensified, particularly in the country's Northwest which is now hosting the almost a million displaced people.
- As of 27 March, almost 1.8 million people remain displaced across the country. This includes more than 1.4 people who have been internally displaced by conflict and insecurity since February 2021.
- Concerns persist over moves to close displacement camps in many parts of the country while many IDPs remain worried about safety and livelihoods opportunities in their places of origin.
- Humanitarian operations continue to be hampered by a range of physical and administrative obstacles.
- The ceasefire between the Arakan Army (AA) and the Myanmar Armed Forces (MAF) in Rakhine is still holding although it remains fragile.
- In 2023, 17.6 million people - nearly one third of the population - are estimated to be in humanitarian need.
- In 2023, the humanitarian community has prioritized support for 4.5 million people with severe needs, predominantly in conflict affected rural areas.
- A quarter of the way into the year, the US\$764m [Humanitarian Response Plan](#) is only 8 per cent funded.



### KEY FIGURES\*

**1.8M**

Total people currently internally displaced across Myanmar

**1.4M**

People currently displaced by clashes and insecurity since February 2021

**328K**

People internally displaced due to conflict prior to February 2021, mainly in Rakhine, Kachin, Chin, and Shan

**60K**

Civilian properties estimated burnt or destroyed since February 2021.<sup>1</sup>

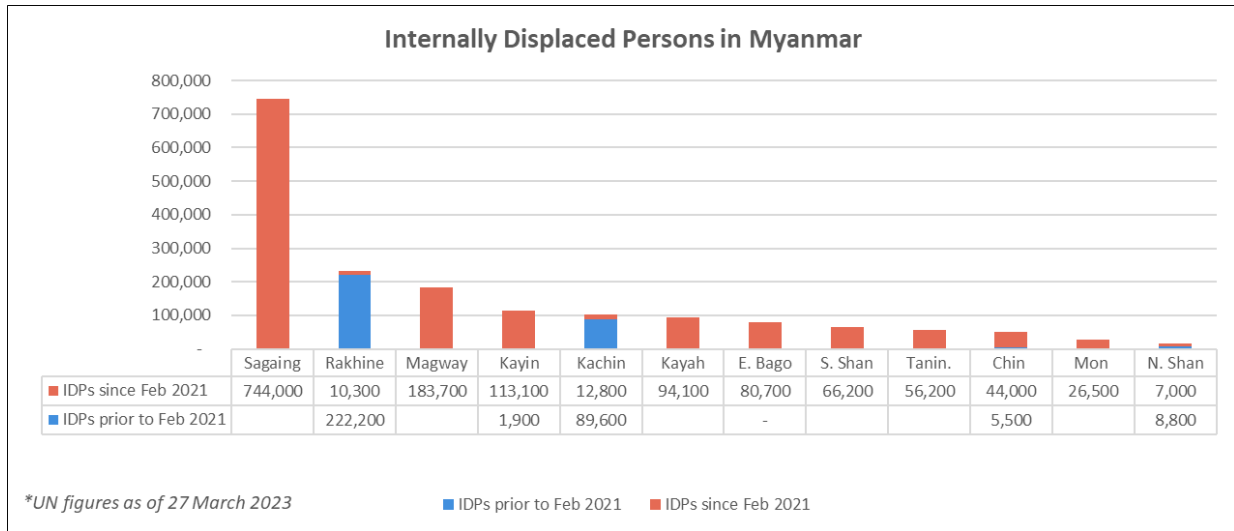
\*Displacement figures fluctuate during any given month. These figures represent the number of people currently verified as displaced. Cumulative numbers for returns and displacement are not always available.

<sup>1</sup> Data for Myanmar (up to 28 February 2023)

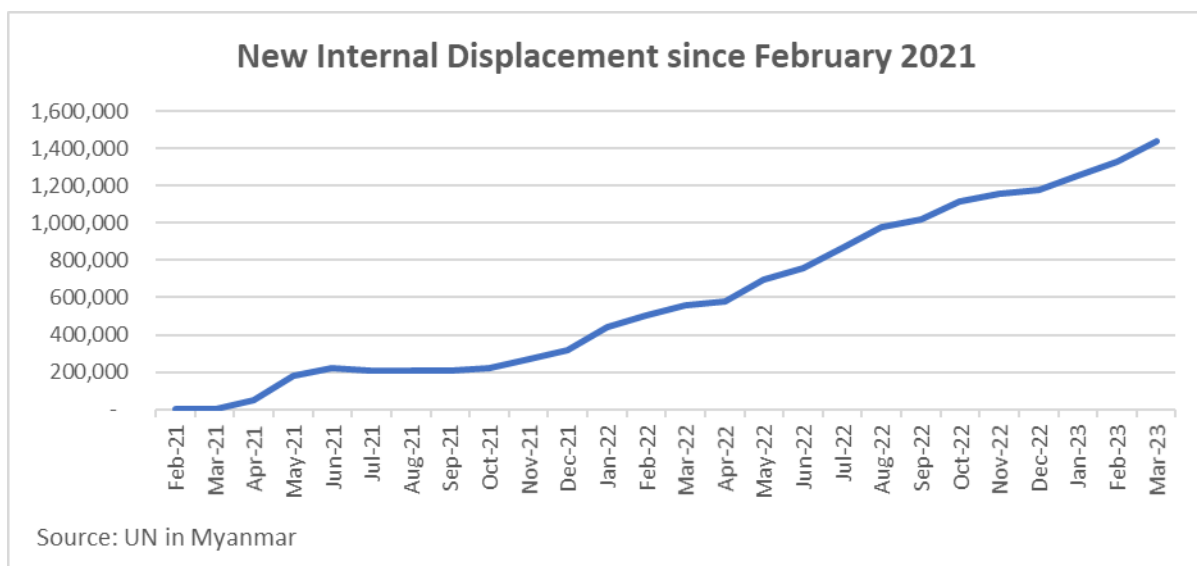
## SITUATION OVERVIEW

### Overview Section

An alarming humanitarian situation continues to unfold in Myanmar, with ongoing armed clashes in multiple states and regions, particularly in the Northwest and the Southeast, driving rising humanitarian needs.

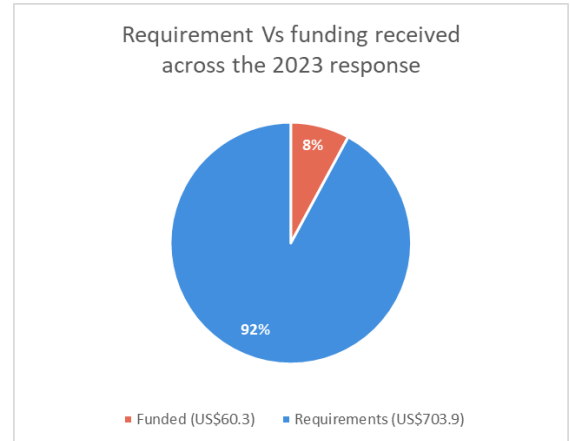


The overall number of IDPs continues to rise. According to the latest UN figures as of 27 March, the total number of IDPs in Myanmar stands at almost 1.8 million. This includes more than 1.4 million people who remain displaced by conflict and insecurity since the military takeover, and more than 328,000 people who were already displaced from previous conflicts. Of the total IDPs since the military takeover, the Northwest is hosting the highest number - now 971,700 IDPs - followed by the Southeast - 429,800 IDPs. IDPs are living in precarious conditions in camps and informal sites, often in jungles and forests. Moves continue by the de facto authorities to close displacement camps in various parts of the country, including Kachin, Shan, Chin and Rakhine. Humanitarians remain concerned that some IDPs might have to move prematurely, while clashes are ongoing or while conditions are not safe or suitable because of explosive ordnance contamination, destruction of housing, poor access to services and lack of livelihoods.



Humanitarian partners estimate that 17.6 million people are in need in 2023. The 2023 [Humanitarian Response Plan](#) targets 4.5 million of those in most severe need, predominantly in conflict-affected rural areas. A quarter of the way into 2023, just 8 per cent of the required funds have been received according to FTS. A dramatic increase in funding and an expansion of access will be critical for the humanitarian community to reach those prioritized for life-saving assistance this year.

In 2022, humanitarian organizations were able to reach at least 4.4 million people with assistance, but this support was not as deep or sustained as planned due to access constraints and severe underfunding.



## More than 9 million women and girls face humanitarian need in 2023



*Myaa Htun with her children in an IDP site*

Mother of three, Myaa Htun,<sup>2</sup> had to flee from her village in Mon state in early July 2021 to escape armed conflict between the MAF and the Karenni People's Defence Force. She and her family are staying in a camp not far away from their home. Like most IDPs, the family did not have a shelter to sleep in when they first arrived.

<sup>2</sup> Name changed

“At the beginning, we did not have a place to sleep in,” she shared. “There were no latrines in the area where I and my family were staying. So, we had to randomly use the open area when we needed to.”

People in the camp were helping newly arrived IDPs however they could, particularly sharing food and basic items. Once the situation calmed, humanitarian assistance was able to reach the site and Myaa Htun’s family received food, tarpaulins for shelter, raincoats, hygiene kits and mosquito nets from two aid organizations. In the space of less than a year, the family received food assistance four times.

“This was of a great help to me and my small kids. Since then, we have felt safer in our own shelter. I also got relaxed when I received food assistance and was able to feed my family,” she said.

In 2023, food insecurity is on the rise, up from 13.2 million people in 2022, the 15.2 million people this year according to analysis by the Food Security Cluster. The combined impacts of the escalating conflict, the sharp rise in inflation, the devaluation of the Myanmar Kyat, and the ongoing disruptions in international markets triggered by the war in Ukraine, have worsened the vulnerabilities of millions of people across Myanmar who are struggling with inadequate food consumption and malnutrition. This is taking a heavy toll on women who carry a disproportionate burden in meeting their family’s daily needs. The construction of temporary toilets and bathing spaces by two humanitarian organizations has improved the living conditions of Myaa Htun’s family and other new displaced families, ensuring safer access and greater privacy, especially for women, children and elderly people in the camp.

“Having toilets and bathroom available to us made a huge difference to me and my kids in particular. It is healthier as these prevent water-prone diseases like diarrhoea,” she shared with a sense of a relief.

Conflict since the military takeover has led to increased safety concerns and humanitarian needs for millions of women. Displacement only enhances these risks for women who face long journeys in unfamiliar environments often amid active fighting. Myaa Htun is among 2.3 million women and girls across Myanmar who received humanitarian assistance from aid organizations in 2022 despite tight access restrictions and a dramatic shortfall in funding (only 42 per cent of requirements received). This emergency support helped families survive in the face of severe risks. Humanitarian partners in Myanmar estimate that 9.2 million women and girls have humanitarian needs in 2023. Ongoing donor support is critical to ensure women like Myaa Htun continue to receive the help they need.

## Conflict continues to drive displacement and civilian casualties

### Northwest

Conflict between the MAF and various local People’s Defence Forces (PDFs), as well as related civilian safety threats have intensified during the reporting period. This involved airstrikes, mortar fire, raids, explosions, and landmine incidents, resulting in civilian casualties and widespread destruction of houses and other civilian properties. Consequently, the number of IDPs across the Northwest has significantly increased from 915,000 in the previous report to 971,700 as of 27 March 2023. Approximately 54,000 people were newly displaced across Myaing, Pakokku, Pauk, Saw and Yesagyio townships in Magway and Kanbalu, Khin-U, Shwebo, Yinmarbin townships in Sagaing, while displacement in Chin generally remained stable during March.

### Southeast

Conflict involving artillery fire and frequent airstrikes has continued in almost all states and regions. Armed clashes between the MAF and forces of ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) and various PDFs were reported in multiple townships in eastern Bago, Kayah, southern Shan, Kayin, Mon and Tanintharyi, causing civilian casualties, further displacement and destruction of civilian properties.

**In Kayah and southern Shan**, ongoing fighting and blockages of main roads across Kayah, as well as Pekon and Pinlaung townships in southern Shan, have impacted on the movement of people and the transportation of goods, including delivery of humanitarian assistance to affected and displaced people. The number of IDPs increased in Kayah and southern Shan with food, water and WASH needs being reported, particularly in Demoso, Hpruso and rural areas of Loikaw, Pekon and Pinlaung townships. In Kayah, the fighting has been intense in Demoso township since 9 March, resulting in the re-displacement of 20,000 IDPs from the eastern part, over to the western part of Demoso. In southern Shan, more than 5,000 people from 6 villages in Pinlaung township have been displaced to Pinlaung, Hsihseng and Pekon townships since 24 February. In addition, 27 civilians, including 2 children and 3 monks, were reportedly killed at a monastery in Namneit village in Pinlaung township on 11 March. The situation is very complex in Pinlaung township and humanitarian access is very limited.

**In Kayin**, intense fighting and heavy use of artillery shelling were reported in Kawkareik, Kyainseikgyi and Thandaunggyi townships in February and March. MAF troops and allied Border Guard Forces (BGF) have reportedly been present in villages around Kyondoe town in Kawkareik township since late February. An estimated 5,000 people from 30 villages around Kyondoe town fled their homes to safer locations during the last week of February. On 2 March, a child was reportedly killed by shelling in Bo Tae Kone village in Thandaunggyi township. Amid the fluid population movement, a small-scale IDP return was also reported in Lay Kay Kaw area in Myawaddy township in mid-March.

**In eastern Bago**, clashes and MAF operations were reported in several townships, mostly in Nyaunglebin. More than 600 people from Nyaung Pin Thar village in Taungoo township reportedly fled their homes due to artillery shelling on 24 February. A woman was reportedly injured by the shelling and several houses were damaged. In addition, three civilians were reportedly killed and five others, including a child, sustained injuries due to shelling and other explosions in three townships between 24 February and 20 March. On 20 March, 22 civilians, including 3 children and a number of IDPs, from Oh Chin Kone village in Nyaunglebin township were reportedly abducted to carry military equipment. Two elderly people have reportedly been released but others remain detained in Oh Pin Su village.

**In Mon and Tanintharyi**, the de facto authorities and the MAF arrested many young men on suspicion of connection with or supporting local PDFs and/or being part of Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM). In Mon, clashes were reported in Bilin, Thaton and Ye townships and drone attacks against MAF bases, including the regional military headquarters in Mawlamyine town, were reported in several townships. Artillery shelling reportedly killed four children and injured four other people, including a pregnant woman, in Bilin and Thaton townships between 8 and 20 March. In Tanintharyi, the MAF has imposed more checkpoints where they are conducting heavy investigation of those passing, while household checks have been carried out in Palaw township.

### **Northeast**

**In Kachin**, armed clashes continued in several townships, particularly in Shwegu, during February and March. Airstrikes and military operations including civilian arrests reportedly took place in many villages in Hpakant, Shwegu and Sumprabum townships in March. Consequently, approximately 3,000 people from several villages in Shwegu township have been displaced into forest areas since early March. At least 22 houses in Kyauk Ta Lone and Ya Lee villages in Shwegu township were reportedly burnt down. Similarly, more than 170 people from several villages in Myitkyina township were also temporarily displaced to a local church compound in the same township during the first week of March due to armed clashes. IDPs returned to their places of origin once the troops pulled out of their villages.

**In northern Shan**, armed clashes between the MAF and different EAOs as well as PDFs continued in Kutkai, Kyaukme, Lashio, Mongmit, Mongyai, Muse, Nawngghkio and Tangyan townships in February and March. Consequently, more than 400 people were temporarily displaced into two sites in Lashio township between 12 and 17 March. Two civilians, including a 9-year-old child from Nawng Hwei village in Kutkai township were reportedly injured by artillery shelling on 27 February. In addition, there were reports of extortion or “tax” collections from civilians by EAOs in Kutkai, Muse and Namhkan townships between 24 February and 8 March 2023. Forced recruitment by various armed groups remains a major protection concern for many families in northern Shan. On 20 March, 13 men from Nay Win Ni protracted IDP camp in Namhkan township were reportedly forcibly recruited by an EAO. Earlier on 8 March, at least 10 young men from the same camp reportedly fled to Muse town to escape forced recruitment by the same EAO.

### **Rakhine**

The informal ceasefire agreement between the MAF and the AA in late November 2022 is still holding, and the security situation remains relatively calm but fragile with troop reinforcements and military build-up seen on both sides. Landmines and explosive remnants of war continue to claim lives and pose risks to the safety and security of civilians and displaced people. Meanwhile, the de facto authorities in Rakhine and southern Chin continue to encourage IDPs to return to their villages of origin. Overall, the total number of IDPs from past and present AA-MAF conflict stands at around 80,000 in Rakhine and southern Chin, as of 3 March. In addition, 140,000 Kaman and Rohingya IDPs remain in formal camps established after inter-communal violence 2012.

## **HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE**

### **Humanitarian Access**

Humanitarian access in Myanmar continues to be heavily affected by escalating hostilities, administrative restrictions, and interference by parties to the conflict. Armed conflict impeded assistance in eastern Bago, Chin, Kachin, Kayin, Magway, northern Shan, Sagaing and Tanintharyi.

Administrative restrictions on humanitarian movements forced organizations to reschedule planned activities in several states and regions, including Chin, Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, northern Shan and Sagaing. Although the situation in Rakhine is stable, it remains fragile. Challenges in obtaining travel authorizations due to organizations not having valid MOUs have led to frequent denials of and delays to humanitarian access. Additionally, extended wait times at checkpoints are also hampering operations.

Armed clashes have forced three humanitarian organizations in Magway and Sagaing to relocate staff members who were providing vital services, such as healthcare, to affected communities. An implementing partner in Tanintharyi also had to postpone a cash distribution program aimed at vulnerable populations. Alongside prolonged wait times and increased inspections, partners have encountered refusals of passage at certain military checkpoints in Chin, Kachin and northern Shan.

Interference in humanitarian activities has been reported in Chin, Kayah, northern Shan, Rakhine, Sagaing and Tanintharyi. Violence and threats against humanitarian personnel, assets, and facilities continued to impact operations particularly in Kachin, Sagaing and Yangon. In Kachin, one humanitarian worker was injured during an attempted robbery by an unidentified group. In Kayah, there were two reports of humanitarian partners having to suspend activities due to the discovery of landmines near project sites.

## Needs, Response, Gaps and Challenges by Cluster

*The information below is provided by each of the seven operating clusters and their sub-working groups in Myanmar. Information is self-reported by aid organizations to the relevant clusters on a monthly basis for inclusion in this update. Accordingly, this section is not necessarily reflective of all humanitarian interventions undertaken on the ground but rather those voluntarily reported by partners. All partners are encouraged to report their work via the relevant clusters to ensure good visibility of gaps and response. The ICCG's Information Sharing Protocol allows for this information to be shared in a non-identifiable manner.*

### Education in Emergencies

#### Needs

- In Rakhine, partners have identified a critical need for educational support for 3,229 IDP students from 17 locations in Paletwa and Kyauktaw townships - 11 urban and 6 rural sites. Priority education needs include basic infrastructure for learning facilities in camps, teaching and learning materials, student kits and school uniforms.
- In Kachin, the following needs were identified in March:
  - In Myitkyina township, the community needs support to improve access to education. Currently, there is a lack of adequate resources and infrastructure to support more than 500 students who enrolled in a local school. The school needs additional classrooms.
  - In Waingmaw township, there is an immediate need to erect a new school building with six classrooms to accommodate an anticipated increase in students at the community-run middle school for the coming academic year.
- In the Southeast, the following needs were identified in March:
  - In Kayah, teachers in Demoso township are struggling as they haven't been paid, except for a transport allowance.
  - In Mon, there is a need for security and psychosocial support (PSS) training for local CSOs and CBOs to enhance capacity development and empower response efforts.

#### Response

- In Rakhine, the following responses were undertaken during this reporting period:
  - Provided catch-up and remedial classes, as well as educational awareness sessions for parents and caregivers in IDP camps in Sittwe township.
  - An Education in Emergency (EiE) partner organized music, psychosocial support, and sports events for children and adolescents in Thandwe township.
  - In IDP camps in Sittwe township, supported temporary learning spaces for examinations, organized Parent and Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, provided parenting education sessions and offered vocational training to selected students. Conducted WASH assessments in schools, provided capacity building training for teachers and gave salaries to volunteer teachers.
  - The Home-based Early Childhood Development learning program is being provided to people in villages in Maungdaw township.
  - Some partners organized life skills and Gender Based Violence (GBV) training for students at the temporary learning spaces (TLSs) in Sittwe township.

- Partners distributed Non-Formal Education (NFE) kits but faced access challenges specifically with checkpoints in Ann and Mrauk-U townships.
- In the Southeast, the following responses were undertaken during this reporting period:
  - In Kayin, Kayah and Tanintharyi, a cluster partner distributed learning and teaching materials for students in Hlaingbwe, Demoso and Palaw townships. Capacity building activities in wellbeing and psychosocial support for teachers have been implemented in the same locations.
  - Post distribution Monitoring for Teaching and Learning kits was conducted in Hlaingbwe and Kawkareik townships of Kayin, in eastern Bago, Kayah and Tanintharyi.
  - A partner selected enumerators to undertake small-scale studies on psychosocial challenges for students with disabilities in selected schools.

### Gaps & Constraints

- Transport challenges reduced the level of community participation, nationwide.
- In Rakhine, the following gaps and constraints were identified during the reporting period:
  - Local organizations faced access constraints due to new registration requirements.
  - In Maungdaw township, some parents are not permitting their adolescent girls to access education in some locations.
  - Rohingya parents are struggling to register their children in schools in Sittwe downtown area due to a lack of civil documents such as birth certificates and citizenship documentation.
  - The installation of two new checkpoints inside Basare camp in Sittwe township has negatively impacted on children's access to education, as school-aged children are afraid to pass the checkpoints to get to school.
  - In Thae Chaung IDP camp in Sittwe township, transport costs and the absence of teachers are negatively impacting on children's access to education.
  - The continued ethnic segregation of the education system in Sittwe poses a serious challenge to the promotion of peaceful coexistence and social cohesion, by denying children the opportunity to meet and understand one another. The decision to place Rakhine teachers in Rohingya schools is a further complication, with many IDP children unable to understand their lessons or properly communicate with their teachers.
- While humanitarian access in northern Shan is generally possible, ongoing armed clashes and security concerns in Konkyan township are presenting significant challenges. Despite these challenges, partners have endeavoured to maintain a presence and carry out regular humanitarian activities in both IDP sites and vulnerable host communities.

## Food Security

### Needs

- According to FAO's 'Agriculture Input Retailer Survey' conducted in January 2023 (Round 4) which seeks insights from 171 retailers across the country:
  - Prices have increased 165 per cent for sweet corn followed by 91 per cent and 85 per cent for Muriate of Potash (MOP) and Triple Super Phosphate (TSP) fertilizers respectively. Veterinary drug prices have also increased threefold since last year.
  - Survey respondents in Chin and Sagaing fear losing their stocks of agriculture inputs because of the ongoing civil unrest. The regions in which respondents felt the risk was lowest were Ayeyarwady and Bago.

### Response

- In the first quarter of 2023, Food Security Cluster partners reached more than 500,000 people with food, cash or rice assistance in Chin, Kachin, Kayah, Rakhine, Shan and southern Shan. More than half (56 per cent) were supported with cash. However, thousands of IDPs have not been reached since November 2022 due to the lack of approval and challenges around Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) since January 2023.
- The following responses took place in the first quarter of 2023:
  - In Hpruso and Demoso townships in Kayah, the Food Security Cluster managed cash distributions for approximately 1,000 households.
  - In Kayin, 1,000 households received cash distributions in Hlaingbwe and Kawkareik townships.
- In the first quarter of 2023, agricultural inputs (vegetable seeds, plastic sheets and fertilizers) were distributed to:
  - 2,500 households in Hlaingbwe and Kawkareik townships in Kayin State
  - 2,800 households in Bogale, Labutta and Mawlamyinekyun townships in Ayeyarwady region
  - 2,800 households in Dala, Kawhmu, Thanlyin, and Shwepyithar townships in Yangon
  - 3,000 households in Taunggyi, Kalaw, and Hopon townships in Shan
- A Food Security Cluster partner reached 14 villages in southern Kachin with livelihood activities.

## Gaps & Constraints

- The declaration of martial law in 47 townships and the new firearms policy introduced in February have exacerbated staff safety concerns for Cluster partners who are delivering critical food support to needy households.
- In a recent survey, 60 per cent of retailers mentioned a challenging business operating environment, especially in Chin, Kachin, Kayin, Magway, Mon, Sagaing and Tanintharyi (reflective of the current conflict patterns). Civil unrest, security conditions and a reduction in purchasing power remain top contributing factors to their operational constraints. Furthermore, in Chin, Sagaing and Kayah, 22 per cent of agribusinesses are at risk because of the economic downturn.

## Health

### Needs

- Nationwide, there is a lack of essential medicines and first aid kits for IDPs, returnees and conflict-affected people due to the escalation in armed conflict and transport blockages.
- Ambulance referral services for secondary and tertiary care for injured or emergency trauma patients remain a gap, nationwide.
- In Kachin, routine childhood and COVID-19 vaccination are needed in remote IDP camps.
- In Tanintharyi, primary health care and essential medicines are needed in IDP camps.

### Response

- In Kachin, the following responses were undertaken in February:
  - 2,681 people in 8 townships received essential primary health care (601 persons increase compared to the previous month) through 67 mobile clinics from 5 partners.
  - 373 dignity kits were distributed to women and girls in Mansi Township.
- In Kayin, the following response were undertaken in February:
  - 458 people and 250 people received essential health primary care through 17 mobile clinics in Hlaingbwe township and through 5 mobile clinics in Thandaunggyi township.
  - 78 pregnant women received Emergency Obstetric Care (EmOC) referral support and 57 children received Emergency Child Care (ECC) in Hlaingbwe township. At the same time, 15 pregnant women received EmOC referral support in Hpa An and Hlaing Bwe townships.
  - Cash assistance was provided to cover the cost of fuel for ambulance transport in three townships.
- In Mon, 200 dignity kits were distributed to 200 girls in one township.
- In southern Shan, awareness and clinical support were provided to people in one township where there has been an outbreak of Acute-Watery Diarrhoea among children and adults.
- In northern Shan, health partners undertook the following responses in February 2023:
  - 1,809 people in 30 IDP sites and crisis-affected people in 7 townships were provided with essential primary health care through 9 mobile clinics.
  - Fly-proof latrines were constructed in 30 villages in mountainous areas of Mongyai township.

## Gaps & Constraints

- Nationwide, mobile clinic activities were delayed, postponed or stopped due to armed incidents or restrictions on movement.
- Stocks of medicines and supplies for long-acting contraception and family planning are at risk of running out countrywide, but shortages are particularly acute in southern Shan.
- In Rakhine, advocacy on healthcare worker safety remains a priority.
- Staff to deliver sexual and reproductive health (SRH) and rights services (including clinical consultants), medicine and medical supplies, EMOC and ECC remain a gap.
- Teenage and unwanted pregnancy prevalence remain high and awareness of contraception low in remote crisis-affected areas.

## Nutrition

### Needs

- In the Northwest, there are inadequate treatment facilities for children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) which increases the chances of morbidity and mortality and has other life-long consequences for children. As the lean season approaches, there is also anecdotal evidence that malnutrition cases are increasing, amid escalating displacement and poor dietary diversity particularly in Pakokku, Yaesogyo Kantkaw, Htilin, Saw and Myaing townships in Magway and in Matupi and Mindat areas in Chin.

### Response

- In Rakhine, according to rapid nutrition assessments by partners, a total of 6,775 children aged 6-59 months were screened for acute malnutrition in the reporting period. In total, 105 children (44 boys, and 61 girls) were



identified as having SAM and 265 children (116 boys and 149 girls) were identified as having moderate acute malnutrition (MAM). The proxy global acute malnutrition level is above 6 per cent.

- In Rakhine, partners are also expanding early identification and support to Pregnant and Lactating Women (PLW). A total of 1,686 PLW were newly screened, 23 of whom were identified as being malnourished and received nutrition treatment during this reporting period.
- In Rakhine, the Nutrition Cluster has shared its list of emergency stocks and pre-positioning sites with the Rakhine Area Inter Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG).
- In Rakhine, preventative assistance for malnutrition was ramped up. A total of 41,700 children aged 6-59 months, and 10,739 PLW received Wheat Soya Blend+ (WSB+), and Wheat Soya Blend (WSB) respectively. Some 804 PLW received micronutrient supplementation, while 780 pregnant women and 785 lactating women joined Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) counselling and education sessions.
- In the Northwest, the Nutrition Cluster will conduct a face-to-face training on Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM) and IYCF for five partners with the objective of improving access to treatment and building capacity of the partners.

### Gaps & Constraints

- There is an anticipated shortage of Multiple Micronutrient Powders (MNP) and other micronutrient tablets (MNT) for children under five years and PLW across the country over the next two months and local procurement is being explored to ensure continuity of supply. Meanwhile, partners are re-positioning or sharing the existing available supplies in Rakhine as a stop-gap measure to manage the current pipeline challenges.
- In Rakhine, delayed travel authorisations continued to be an obstacle to providing timely responses.
- In the Northwest, increasing displacement contributed to poor inaccessibility to services. Problems with the transportation of supplies are also being seen in Chin and Sagaing.

## Protection

### Needs

- Landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) are posing an increasing threat to the life and safety of civilians in Myanmar. Landmines are being laid indiscriminately within communities by parties to the conflict. While the full picture of contamination remains unclear, data on explosive ordnance incidents indicates that contamination is having a devastating impact on people's lives, impacting on people in all conflict-affected parts of the country.
- Worsening shortages of water and food in IDP camps are having a direct impact on children and partners are seeing negative coping mechanisms being adopted by both caregivers and children themselves.
- Child Protection and recreational kits are needed to provide children with a sense of normalcy, particularly in southern Shan and Kayah.
- In the Southeast, the following concerns and needs were identified:
  - Death and injury due to indiscriminate shelling; arrest and detention; destruction of civilian property; and restrictions on humanitarian access remained major protection concerns in Kayah and southern Shan. Of particular concern was the situation in Bawlake, Demoso, Hpruso and Shadaw townships in Kayah and Pinlaung township in southern Shan. Blocked roads in Kayah, including the road between Loikaw and Moe Bye towns, continued and disruption of telecommunications occurred in the western part of Kayah.
  - Arbitrary arrest and detention; destruction of civilian properties; and death and injury due to indiscriminate shelling remained the main protection risks in eastern Bago, Kayin, Mon and Tanintharyi. The main areas of concern were locations with intense fighting in the townships of Kawkareik, Kyaukkyi, Palaw, Shwegyin, Tanintharyi, Thandaunggyi and Yebyu, and indiscriminate shelling in the townships of Bilin, Kyaukkyi, Hpapun, Myawaddy, Shwegyin and Thanbyuzayat during February.
- In the Northwest, humanitarian needs remained extremely high across Chin, Magway and Sagaing due to high displacement, regular airstrikes, use of landmines, ERW, destruction of civilian properties, movement restrictions, supply blockages and arbitrary arrests. There is a particular need to enhance protection for children, as well as survivors of GBV and explosive ordnance incidents. While the legal system is not properly functioning, GBV cases have been under-reported and allegations of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence perpetrated by armed actors remain alarming. Psychosocial distress was also identified as a growing issue for affected people.
- In Kachin, more than 1,700 people from over 20 camps in several townships voluntarily returned to their 2 villages of origin in Mansi and Waingmaw townships in February. They are in need of multi-sectoral support and ongoing gaps include shelters, livelihood, education facilities, basic and protection services. Displaced people and returnees in Momauk township also need cash assistance for persons with specific needs, awareness raising on GBV, child protection, and landmine risk education.

- In Rakhine, the following concerns and needs continued to prevail:
  - Cases of exploitation and use of forced labour in both Rohingya and Rakhine villages in central Rakhine.
  - Restrictions on the transportation of rice, medicines, diesel and cement into central Rakhine remained firmly in place.
  - The rising price of food and possible food shortages over the upcoming rainy season are a major concern among affected people.
  - Mine action activities, including clearance and explosive ordnance risk education (EORE), are urgently needed, especially in Kyauktaw, Minbya, Myebon and Ponnagyun townships, which have witnessed heavy fighting over recent months.

### Response

- EORE activities have continued across the country and new partners are joining mine action as EORE is mainstreamed across the broader humanitarian response. EORE remains the only available intervention to save lives and minimize casualties and maiming in Myanmar as humanitarian landmine clearance and explosive ordnance disposal activities have, so far, not been permitted.
- Child Protection partners continued to respond to needs despite the challenges using innovative methods, including coordination with WASH partners. Partners provided awareness raising activities on key child protection issues across the country. Case management activities have been ongoing with the highest number of cases nationally relating to physical violence, and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS).
- In the Southeast, partners undertook the following responses in February:
  - UNHCR and its implementing partners completed 44 Rapid Protection Assessments in eastern Bago, Kayin, southern Shan and Tanintharyi. They also provided essential core relief items to 1,000 displaced households in Taungoo township, 270 sets of student desks and benches in Htantabin township in eastern Bago, and cash assistance to 155 persons with specific needs (PSN) in Kawkaik and Myawaddy townships in Kayin, and in Palaw township in Tanintharyi.
  - UNHCR provided protection capacity building and information management training to implementing partners in the Southeast.
- In the Northwest, GBV, child protection, mine action and other protection interventions continued during February despite access constraints and funding limitations. More interventions are required, particularly in conflict affected areas. Training on trafficking of persons in conflict and humanitarian settings was provided by a specialized agency to 34 participants from 18 cluster partners in the Northwest.
- In Rakhine, the Protection Cluster and its members continued to undertake the following activities in February:
  - Close monitoring of the humanitarian situation and provision of protection services, including GBV, protection, child protection, MHPSS and mine action.
  - Advocacy continued with the relevant authorities around safe and voluntary return of IDPs in line with the National Resettlement and Camp Closure Plan.
  - Monitoring freedom of movement and its impact on access to services by IDPs living in the 2012 IDP camps.
- In Kachin, GVB partners distributed more than 500 dignity kits in Bhamo township in February. In Shwegu township, protection partners conducted an emergency assessment and response mission in March to support about 700 newly IDPs at 8 displacement sites with cash for food and other essential relief items.

### Gaps & Constraints

- Ongoing armed conflict and the expansion of martial law locations, combined with heavy restrictions and movement limitations, are resulting in shortages of essential supplies, especially medicine and food, and delays to program implementation in affected areas.
- In the Southeast, the following challenges were prominent in February:
  - Access remained a huge challenge due to unpredictable armed clashes, landmines, and checkpoints.
  - Explosions near project locations and general insecurity are a concern for field staff. Some areas were difficult to access due to the security situation and the new registration requirements.
  - Limited internet connection in Kayah is problematic. Access to IDP sites and problems directly reaching out to affected people in southern Shan and Kayah posed most significant challenges.
- In the Northwest, shortfalls in funding, humanitarian access constraints (movement and transportation restrictions), and safety and security concerns for staff continued to impact on the delivery of humanitarian assistance at a time when needs and displacement are increasing.
- In Rakhine, protection partners were still facing difficulties in reaching affected people despite the ongoing ceasefire agreement.
- In the Northeast, plans for IDP camp closure persist, despite concerns among IDPs around continuity of assistance and conditions in their villages of origin.
- In Kachin, the dusk-to-dawn curfew in Momauk township announced in late January is impacting on access to livelihoods and movement for IDPs and host communities.

- In northern Shan, a newly established MAF checkpoint near Monekoe in Muse township impacted on IDP access to livelihoods and movement to places of origin.

## Shelter, Non-Food Items (NFIs), Camp Coordination and Camp Management (CCCM)

### Needs

- In Kachin and northern Shan, more than 7,000 shelters need repair or new construction with a funding gap of more than \$8 million.
- In northern Shan, more than 200 displaced households in Monekoe in Muse townships needed NFI support. Of the IDPs, 123 displaced households residing in 4 collective centres and unplanned settlements were asked to relocate to a sugarcane plantation site that is 2 miles away from the previous displacement site. Urgent needs include shelters, toilets, water storage tanks, solar lamps and kitchen utensils.
- In central Rakhine, the shelter conditions in AA-MAF displacement sites remained sub-standard and unsafe in many locations. Approximately 4,000 displaced households from AA-MAF conflict are in need of shelter assistance.
- In the Northwest, affected and displaced people continued to need shelter and NFI assistance across Chin, Magway and Sagaing. IDPs reported their highest needs to be safety and protection, food, health and education, as well as NFIs, including clothing and underwear. Cash support is preferred to meet the multiple needs of displaced people in areas of high insecurity.
- Across the Southeast, new displacement occurred in all states and regions and humanitarian needs including shelter and NFIs were reported as below.
  - More than 2,000 newly displaced people, mainly from southern Shan and eastern Bago, require shelter and NFI assistance, despite the fluid movement of IDPs between displacement sites and areas of origin.
  - More than 250 displaced households in Hlaingbwe township of Kayin were unable to return due to ongoing conflict and are in need of food, shelter, NFIs and WASH assistance.
  - Rice, cooking oil and salt, temporary shelter kits, clothes and warm clothes, mosquito nets, blankets, solar lights and batteries are urgently required for IDPs in Bilin and Thaton townships in Mon and Hpapun township in Kayin. In addition, women and girls need underwear, menstrual hygiene materials and separate latrines.
  - Need for roofing sheets and shelter materials was reported in Hsihseng, Pekon and Taunggyi townships in southern Shan, and for shelter materials and other assistance, including water, food and medicines in Demoso, Hpruso and Loikaw townships in Kayah.

### Response

- In Kachin, cluster partners were preparing to deliver NFIs to about 60 IDPs in 3 camps in remote and hard to reach areas in Mohnyin township.
- In northern Shan, partners provided 461 blankets and mosquito nets and 3,000 boxes of surgical masks to 202 displaced households in Muse township in February. In addition, 123 displaced households received 277 tarpaulin sheets, 73 buckets, 157 mats, 165 water cups and towels.
- In central Rakhine, the Shelter Cluster provided support in Rohingya and Kaman camps in Sittwe township by reconstructing 180 longhouses since the beginning of 2023, delivering safe shelter for 7,900 IDPs.
- In Paletwa township in southern Chin, partners provided NFI assistance to 1,051 displaced families.
- In the Northwest, partners provided nearly 600 displaced households in 4 townships in Magway with NFI assistance, including mosquito nets, blankets, tarpaulins, jerrycans, buckets, kitchen sets, mats, solar lamps, as well as core sanitary NFI kits for women and girls. A similar distribution for 210 households in another township of Magway was still underway at the time of reporting.
- Across the Southeast, cluster partners provided NFIs, including NFI kits for 5,000 displaced people in Taungoo township in eastern Bago; 50 tarpaulin sheets for learning spaces in 10 IDP camps in Hsihseng, Nyaungshwe and Pinlaung townships in southern Shan; NFI kits, COVID-19 items (face masks, hand sanitizer and spirit alcohol), sleeping mats and solar lamps in Demoso township in Kayah; and NFI kits and shelter kits in 2 villages in Kawkareik township in Kayin. In addition, partners were trying to reach 13,406 IDPs in 16 villages in Bilin township in Mon but were facing road safety challenges.

### Gaps & Constraints

- Funding remained a challenge for shelter partners with a \$1 million shortfall for even the most modest level of assistance (standard shelter kits).
- The fluctuation in market prices was a major planning obstacle. The price for rice reportedly increased by about MMK 3,000 (US\$1) every three days in some areas. Most suppliers could not provide valid market prices even a week in advance and, as a consequence, project teams faced major constraints in planning the purchase of necessary commodities.

- Camps in northern Shan are planned for closure, while preparedness for prolonged settlements remained a gap in Mohnyin, Momauk and Waingmaw townships in Kachin. In Rakhine, the de facto authorities are moving forward with the camp closure of Kyauk Ta Lone IDP Camp, despite slow progress in completing the relocation site and problems with flooding.
- In Rakhine, land issues continued to problems in Rohingya and Kaman camps in Sittwe township, affecting the physical space available to essential service providers. Concentrated advocacy must continue to ensure that humanitarian space is protected.
- Access constraints, as well as safety and security risks, including for humanitarian workers, continue to pose serious impediments to the humanitarian response in the Northwest and the Southeast. Delivery of humanitarian aid to affected and displaced people was hindered at checkpoints, resulting in delays and gaps in the humanitarian response to people in need. Due to limited access and TA requirements, the delivery of NFIs and shelter materials to IDPs in Hpapun, Kawkareik and Kyainseikgyi townships in Kayin; Kyaukkyi township in eastern Bago; Demoso and Hpruso townships in Kayah; and Pekon township in southern Shan remained very limited. The planned delivery of shelter and NFI assistance to Hlaingbwe township in Kayin and Kyaikto township in Mon was delayed due to limited resources and insufficient budget, as well as safety and security concerns.

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

### Needs

- In the Northwest, 72 per cent of 701 displacement sites covered by WASH partners still lacked appropriate sanitation; and 99 per cent of them had hygiene gaps in February due to shortfalls in funding and access constraints (Cluster 3W analysis, January 2023).
- In Rakhine, 54 per cent of 192 AA-MAF displacement sites still lacked sufficient water; 36 per cent remain without appropriate sanitation; and 82 per cent still experienced hygiene gaps (Cluster 3W analysis, January 2023).
- In northern Shan, more than 1,000 displaced households from 14 protracted camps and 2 displacement sites that are slated for closure were in need of emergency latrines, water supply systems, water containers, water purification materials and hygiene items.
- In the Southeast, a diarrhoea outbreak was reported in Thandaunggyi township in Kayin in February. The total population of the affected village is 513 people and more than 120 of them, including 76 children under five, were affected.
- Water scarcity was reported in many parts of Pekon township in southern Shan and Demoso and Hpruso townships in Kayah.
- In Kachin, some 57,000 IDPs living in 25 sites in Waingmaw, 3 sites in Tanai, 2 sites in Sumprabum, 20 sites in Momauk and 1 site in Injangyang townships are lacking WASH facilities due to insufficient funding and this will lead to service interruptions if the funding shortfalls persist during the first quarter of 2023.

### Response

- In Rakhine, WASH partners organized 454 hygiene promotion sessions and provided critical WASH supplies to 110 of the 192 AA-MAF displacement sites across 10 townships, reaching 51,773 IDPs in February. These supplies included 2,224 hygiene kits, about 2,100 sanitary pads for women and girls, more than 2,300 bars of soap, 107 jerrycans/water buckets, and 210 water filters.
- In the Northwest, WASH partners distributed 241 hygiene kits, more than 241 bars of soap and 366 sanitary pads in February, reaching:
  - 40,263 IDPs in 231 of the 336 displacement sites across 6 townships in Chin.
  - 4,036 IDPs in 22 of the 53 displacement sites across 2 townships in Magway.
  - 89,091 IDPs in 128 of the 312 displacement sites across 12 townships in Sagaing.
- In the Southeast, the following WASH responses were undertaken in February:
  - Nearly 15,500 people gained access to a sufficient quality of safe drinking water, while about 15,300 people received critical WASH supplies and more than 6,800 people received handwashing and hygiene promotion sessions.
  - More than 2,300 households were provided with water purification sachets for drinking water.
  - More than 7,100 gender-segregated communal emergency latrines were installed.
  - Partners provided WASH supplies and water purification tablets to diarrhoea cases.
- In Kachin, partners reached more than 15,800 people with essential WASH services since the beginning of 2023. Currently, a local partner is providing WASH services to 6,375 people in Bhamo and Mansi townships, with fund secured from UNICEF.

## Gaps & Constraints

- Only 2.4 per cent of the total 2023 HRP WASH Cluster response requirements have been funded to date.
- Monthly hygiene consumable materials remained a key challenge, with lack of contingency stocks to respond to unforeseen emergencies.
- In Rakhine, access constraints and MoU requirements for WASH partners continued to impede the granting of TAs and the delivery of humanitarian items. Land issues continued to present a significant challenge for WASH infrastructure with people claiming land ownership requesting land compensation fees, selling land to others, and putting up fences near latrines, particularly in protracted IDP camps in Sittwe township.
- In the Northwest and the Southeast, access restrictions, blocking of transport and insecurity continued to hinder WASH responses to affected people.
- In northern Shan, there was a funding gap to support the operation and maintenance of WASH facilities in protracted IDP camps and new WASH facilities in relocation and resettlement sites.

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