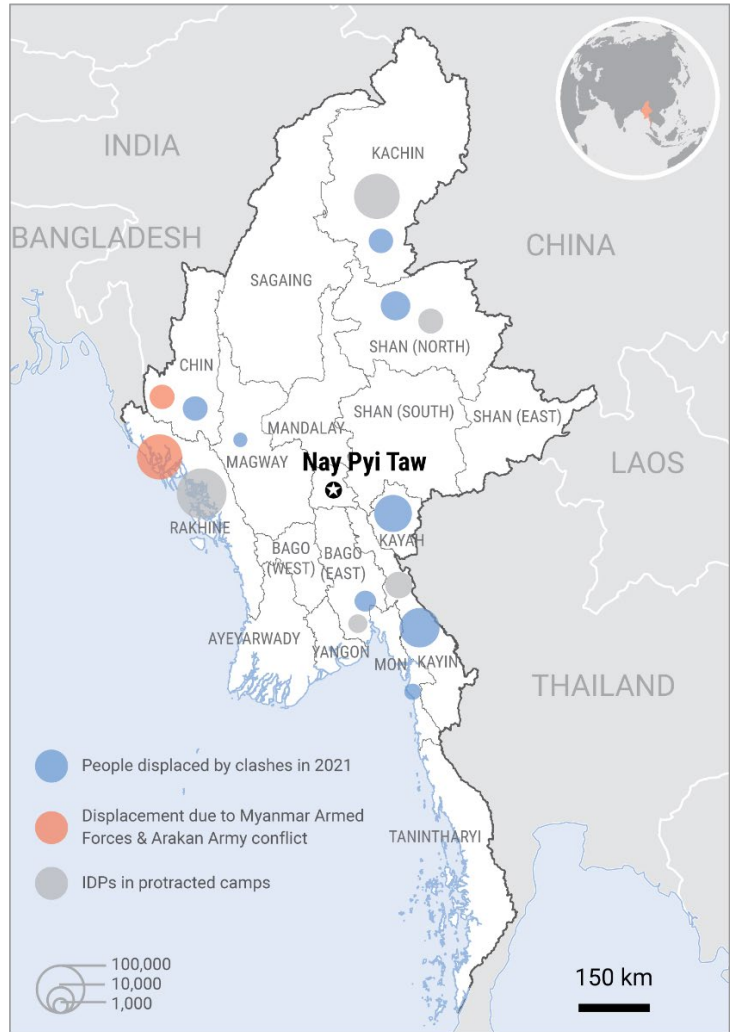


This regular update, covering humanitarian developments in conflict-affected areas from 24 April to 24 May, is produced by OCHA Myanmar in collaboration with the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group and UNHCR. The next update will be issued towards the end of June 2021.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Around 46,000 people were displaced in the south-eastern part of Myanmar between April and May due to the conflict and insecurity, about 37,000 of them displaced in late May following the clashes in Kayah State.
- In Chin State, thousands have been internally displaced following an escalation of hostilities in the town of Mindat since 12 May.
- In northern Shan, clashes between the Myanmar Armed Forces (MAF) and Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs) and among EAOs continue and around 2,800 people were displaced in May. A total of 8,400 people who have fled since January 2021 remain displaced.
- In Kachin State, there has been no new displacement during the reporting period, despite the active armed conflict between the MAF and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA); about 8,500 people who fled insecurity since mid-March remain displaced.
- No new population displacement has been reported in Rakhine State. Cases of acute watery diarrhea (AWD) are reported in IDP camps in Mrauk-U, Paukaw and Sittwe townships.
- Humanitarian response remains severely constrained in all conflict-affected areas due to insecurity, banking disruptions, road blockages and pre-existing access challenges.
- Myanmar Humanitarian Fund First Standard Allocation of US\$10 million launched on 13 May has been amended with an additional \$0.35 million to scale up response in Chin State.
- A total of US\$40.2 million has been mobilized under the 2021 Humanitarian Response Plan, which seeks \$276.5 million to address the needs of around 1 million people in conflict-affected areas. This represents less than 15 per cent of the funds required.



KEY FIGURES

85.9K

people internally displaced in the South-east due to clashes and insecurity in 2021

15K

people internally displaced in northern Shan due to armed clashes in 2021

10K

people internally displaced in Kachin State due to armed clashes in 2021

10K

people hosted in sites in Chin State and Magway Region due to hostilities in Mindat in May

SITUATION OVERVIEW

UPSURGE IN DISPLACEMENT IN THE SOUTH-EAST: Around 46,000 people were displaced in the south-eastern part of the country between April and May, according to data obtained by UNHCR from various sources. This includes the displacement of an estimated 37,000 persons across 57 locations in Kayah State where violence had erupted in late May between the MAF and the Karenni Army, the armed wing of the Karenni National Progressive Party, as well as the Karenni People's Defense Force, an armed group formed by civilian resistance fighters.

 **46,000**

people displaced in the south-east between April and May

There have been additional displacements, mainly in Kayah State due to insecurity and the clashes between the Karen National Liberation Army and the MAF. Around 45,000 people are currently internally displaced in Kayah State. The majority of them are hiding in jungles with some 8,000 sheltering in caves along Salween River at the border with Thailand. A further 3,900 people remain displaced in Mon State and Bago Region

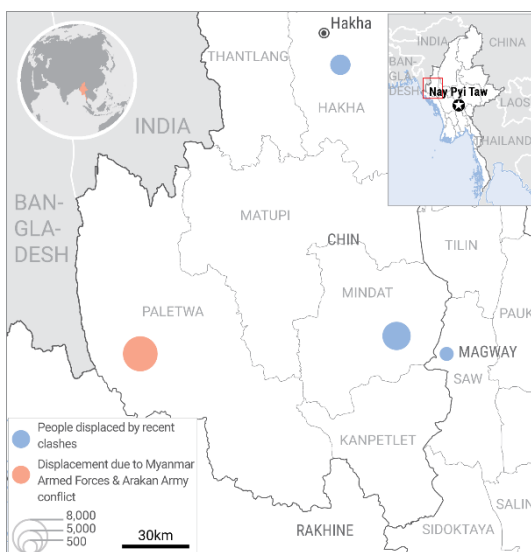
since February. This makes 85,900 the total number of people who have been internally displaced in the region due to armed clashes as well as insecurity as of 24 May.

The internal displacement comes in addition to cross-border movement that remains fluid. Around 7,000 people from Kayah State have crossed the border to seek safety in Thailand since late March and some 1,000 remain in temporary areas in Mae Hong Son Province in Thailand as of 23 May, according to UNHCR.

Humanitarian needs include food, shelter and access to hygiene and sanitation facilities. Additionally, there have been reports of cases of water-borne diseases among the displaced population in the jungle as result of extended lack of access to hygiene and sanitation facilities compounded by the early arrival of the rainy season. Local sources warn of a looming food security crisis if people are unable to return to their villages of origin to tend to their crops and livestock.

Humanitarian partners are doing their best to respond to these needs, both within Myanmar and across the border. For example, in Kayah State, partners provided food and basic household items, child protection and health interventions to a small number of IDPs. However, access restrictions due to insecurity, road blockages, remote terrain, landmine contamination and other bureaucratic impediments continue to impede programme delivery across Kayah and elsewhere.

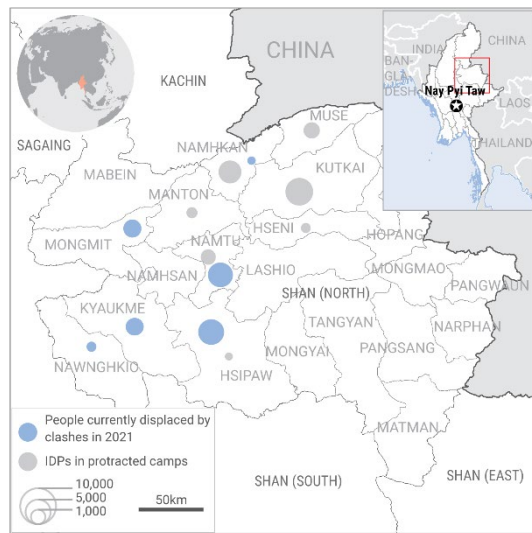
INCREASING HUMANITARIAN NEEDS IN CHIN STATE: Thousands of people have been displaced following an escalation of violence between the MAF and the Chinland Defense Forces (CDF) in and around the town of Mindat in Chin State on 12 May. The MAF deployed heavy artillery, military helicopters and snipers to the area, and despite the reported retreat of the CDF the following day, the MAF reportedly continued its attacks, including against civilian areas and infrastructure in the town of Mindat, which is home to about 25,000 people (2014 data).



Over 9,000 IDPs are currently hosted in 16 sites, mainly in churches and monasteries, in and around Mindat and 7 sites in Saw in Magway Region. Thousands more had reportedly fled to nearby forests and mountains in search of safety and protection. There are also reports of civilian casualties, damage to and occupation of civilian infrastructure, incidents of the MAF using civilians as human shields and alleged cases of sexual assault against women and girls. Clashes also occurred between the MAF and the CDF in Loklung Village near the capital city of Hakkha on 18 May. This has led to the displacement of around 1,000 people to neighboring villages, according to local partners.

The displaced population and those who remain in town are in urgent need of food, water, medicine, shelter and protection services, such as gender-based violence and psychological support. Local communities and religious institutions are making efforts to provide humanitarian assistance; however, this is not reaching everyone in need. Access restrictions, including due to road blockages and insecurity, are complicating the efforts to verify the reports of displacement, casualties and other incidents, as well as assess needs and respond. The Myanmar Humanitarian Fund (MHF) is supporting an operational partner in Chin State to scale up response, by topping up with an additional funding an existing humanitarian programme.

MORE PEOPLE DISPLACED IN NORTHERN SHAN: Population movement remains fluid in northern areas of Shan State with new displacements and small-scale returns reported on a regular basis. In Hsipaw Township, around 2,510 people fled from their homes to safe areas due to hostilities between the Restoration Council of Shan State/Shan State Army and the allied forces of the Ta'ang National Liberation



Army and the Shan State Progress Party/Shan State Army on 18 May. Small-scale population movements were also reported in Nawnghkio and Namtu townships and over the course of May, 2,800 people were internally displaced due to various clashes. A total of 15,151 people have been internally displaced in northern Shan since the start of 2021. While almost half of them returned to their places of origin within weeks, some 8,400 people remain displaced in 34 sites in Hsipaw, Kyaukme, Momeik, Namtu, Namhkan and Nawnghkio townships. The IDPs are unable to return due to damage to their property and livelihoods as well as insecurity and risks from landmine contamination.

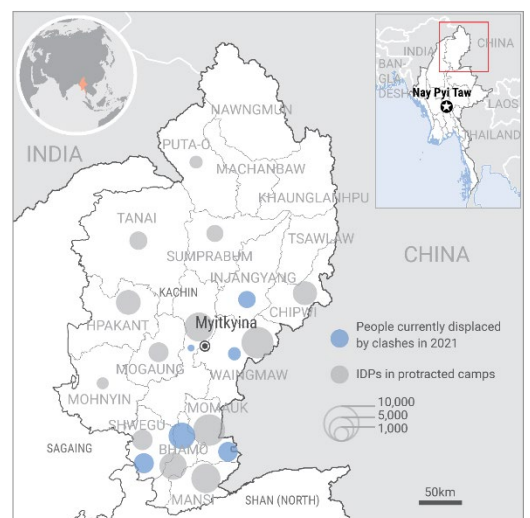
Humanitarian partners organized three missions to the displacement sites and protracted IDP camps over the course of May to assess people's needs and strengthen response coordination. Despite some assistance provided by host communities and local partners, the needs of families newly

displaced remain largely unmet. The IDPs currently require temporary shelter, food, basic household materials, including mosquito nets, blankets, and mats, as well as access to water and sanitation facilities.

NO NEW DISPLACEMENT IN KACHIN DESPITE INSECURITY: There has been no new population displacement in Kachin during the reporting period. Close to 10,000 people have been displaced across Kachin State following the resumption of clashes in mid-March.

While many have returned to their places of origin since then, over 8,500 people remain displaced in Bhamo, Hpakan, Injanyang, Momauk, Myitkyina, Sadung, Shwegu and Waingmaw townships. Local communities and operational partners are responding to the needs of newly displaced people; however, access challenges and insecurity are complicating these efforts.

The security situation remains volatile in Kachin State, with regular armed clashes between the MAF and the KIA in several townships and general insecurity across the state. Hostilities were reported across as many as 13 townships; however, clashes were intense in Momauk Township in particular, where fighting around the Ah Law Bum mountain area, currently controlled by the KIA continues unabated, with reports of aerial strikes by the MAF and artillery shelling by both sides. Since March, over 100 armed engagements were reported across Kachin. According to public sources, 11 civilians were killed and 22 others injured between 11 March and 12 May. The details of these incidents could not be verified at the time of reporting due to access challenges.



ACUTE WATERY DIARRHEA IN CENTRAL RAKHINE: AWD cases were reported in IDP camps in Mrauk-U, Pauktaw and Sittwe townships with majority of cases affecting children under five. Based on available information, the cases were reported to be highest during the week of 3 May, with 1,200 cases, and majority reported from six IDP camps. Over 2,000 cases of AWD have so far been reported as of 25 May. The situation has started to stabilize as the number of cases started to go down since 16 May, following robust response by operational partners who are coordination with relevant entities to scale up awareness raising efforts of good hygiene, testing of water quality, chlorination of the boreholes, and cleaning of solid waste and disinfection of latrines. Disease surveillance is ongoing and operational hours of mobile clinics have been extended in certain camps with larger caseloads. Case investigation and laboratory sample collection were also conducted with relevant entities and findings were directly shared to frontline health partners for appropriate clinical management.

NO NEW DIPLACEMENT IN RAKHINE: There has not been any new clashes between the MAF and the AA since November 2020 and no new displacement has been reported. Some small-scale returns among IDPs continue to take place in a number of townships. Close to 82,000 people remain displaced at 147 sites and 27 host communities in 10 townships across Rakhine State. This is in addition to 126,000 IDPs hosted in protracted camps established in 2012.

HUMANITARIAN ACCESS AND OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES

Insecurity due to active conflict in certain areas of Chin, Kachin, northern areas of Shan states and parts of south-east as well as landmine contamination across all conflict-affected areas continue to severely impede humanitarian operations. Blockage of roads connecting communities and serving as the main transportation routes for humanitarian organizations, mostly in active conflict-areas, are complicating delivery, while restrictive processes to obtain Travel Authorizations (TA) continue to interrupt or delay operations across all conflict-affected areas. Blanket restrictions on access to populations in areas controlled by non-state armed actors remain in place.

In Rakhine, 50 displacement sites (out of 147 hosting people displaced by the AA-MAF conflict) with an estimated 20,000 displaced persons remain on an official list of restricted sites for security reason, despite the calm situation that has prevailed since November 2020. An additional nine sites hosting some 1,100 persons are not recognized as displacement sites, preventing the delivery of humanitarian assistance there. Blanket access restrictions imposed gradually since January 2019 in eight townships across Rakhine remain in place. Approved TAs continued to include specific restrictions and conditions, such as the requirement to hand over humanitarian supplies to village tract administrators or camp management committees or limiting activities to COVID-19 prevention only.

IMPACT OF LIMITED CASH AND BANKING SECTOR DISRUPTIONS: Deteriorating cash liquidity is creating difficulties for Cash and Voucher Assistance (CVA) and programme operations more generally. Strict withdrawal limits are enforced by the banks for individuals and organizations and while ATMs are the easiest way to withdraw cash, long lines and lack of cash are becoming more frequent. It is now commonplace to pay service fees in order to secure Myanmar kyats in larger quantities above the withdrawal limits. Electronic transfers to bank accounts or e-wallets, even interbank, are feasible and encouraged. However, most suppliers are requesting physical cash due to the fear of not being able to withdraw from the banks.

Mobile money programmes are becoming more difficult as agents are facing challenges securing enough physical cash liquidity. Agents that can secure enough liquidity are now forced to charge service fees. Voucher programmes continue to face significant constraints, as vendors, for the most part, are unwilling to accept bank transfers as reimbursement. Some vendors have expressed a willingness to accept bank transfer with service fees. Nevertheless, many CVA activities continue albeit at a higher cost of implementation.

In addition to limitations on withdrawals, humanitarian partners are reporting increasing scrutiny on foreign currency transfers, particularly transfers over US\$10,000, resulting in significant delays receiving funds and further constraining liquidity for programme implementation.

CLUSTER/SECTORAL HIGHLIGHTS

Protection

- In areas where there is an active conflict, the sector partners indicate a noticeably sharp increase in reports of rights violations by parties to the conflict, especially by the security forces. These include the use of civilian or entire community as human shield, forced labor, forced recruitments of adults and children, alleged physical assaults, instances of arbitrary arrest, detention, ill-treatment and torture due to imputed political opinions, as well as theft and destruction of properties and other possessions.
- In Kachin, northern Shan, Rakhine and Kayin, partners continued to provide critical Gender-Based Violence (GBV) services, including case management and psychosocial support remotely and in person, where the situation permitted. In Rakhine, Kachin and northern Shan, Women and Girls Centers continue to function. In northern Shan, mobile activities remain suspended due to frequent armed clashes. In Buthidaung and Rathedaung townships in Rakhine, the GBV partners distributed 700 dignity kits to women and girls between April and May. In Kachin, the GBV partners distributed 160 dignity kits and 130 solar lanterns in IDP sites, targeting recently displaced women and girls. The distribution of 350 dignity kits in Momauk Township is ongoing, despite challenging security and operational environment in the area. Countrywide, basic GBV, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Services (MHPSS) and health response training sessions were conducted for more than 360 non-GBV specialized partners to better facilitate the referrals and timely provision of care for the survivors. An online MHPSS [portal](#) was established that offer services by professionals.
- In northern Shan, most Child Protection partners have resumed activities following suspension in February and March due to insecurity and travel restrictions, while in Kachin activities remain suspended and/or conducted through camp-based volunteers. In Rakhine, 13 new child protection cases were registered and are being responded to. In Sittwe and Pauktaw camps, close to 450 IDPs have received COVID-19 prevention messages while 190 persons benefitted from home visits to discuss COVID-19-related risk mitigation measures. Child Protection teams conducted case management trainings, including for families affected by AWD, and provided hygiene awareness sessions in response to growing AWD cases. In Kayin State, the Child Protection actors are planning to distribute gender-appropriate kits for children and adolescents, and conduct awareness raising activities, including identification of separated and unaccompanied children, family tracing and reunification. In northern Shan, 200 dignity kits and 27 clean delivery kits were distributed to women and girls who were newly displaced in Kyaukme and Hsipaw townships. In Yangon and Bago regions, Child Protection partners responded to about 220 cases, including psychosocial stress, detention and physical injuries.

Health

- Countrywide, there have been 179 attacks on health care that caused 13 deaths and 51 injuries according to the data recorded between 1 February and 18 May by WHO Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care. Of these, 92 attacks impacted personnel, 76 attacks impacted patients, 89 facilities, 24 transport and 7 supplies. In Rakhine, there have been 12 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Sittwe Township as of 23 May, with history of commercial travel to Bangladesh. At the moment, all cases have been referred to the Sittwe General Hospital.
- Travel restrictions, partly due to the public health measures related to COVID-19 response and partly security concerns arising from the political crisis across the country, continue to impact operations. Service delivery by outreach mobile clinic teams vary in terms of functionality across the different areas, with some activities partially resuming while others suspended. Referrals to higher level of care are

likewise affected due to varying functionality and specialized service availability from facilities. In hard to reach areas, including in areas controlled by non-state armed actors, the availability of reliable transport as well as continuity of essential health supplies remain a critical concern. Customs clearance process for importation of essential health supplies are currently interrupted.

- In Rakhine, health partners are continuing their response and monitoring cases of the AWD. In Chin State, partners continued primary healthcare service provision in five IDP sites, while reducing coverage and operation hours of mobile clinics due to safety and security concerns. In northern Shan, partners reached about 5,000 conflict-affected people in Kutkai, Mansi and Namtu townships with health services, and provided teleconsultations to 1,500 IDPs. In Kachin State, the partners mapped health service coverage in new displacement sites, while continuing collaborations with donors for the expansion of health response. In Bhamo Township, the partners are currently providing primary health care to more than 8,450 IDPs.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

- In Rakhine, the WASH partners, in collaboration with Health partners and Camp Management Agencies, responded to the AWD cases in Sittwe and Pauktaw camps (see section above). Additionally, the partners distributed drinking water to IDPs in new displacement sites in Kyauktaw, Sittwe, Ponnagyun, Mrauk U and Minbya townships. The partners also distributed water tanks and 370 units of LifeStraw water filters in new displacement sites and provided technical support to one village and two camps in Pauktaw Township. Partners are also supporting remote pumping for water distribution in two IDP camps in the same township. In Ponnagyun, Myebon, Rathedaung and Mrauk U townships, the WASH partners delivered water trucking in new displacement sites to address people's emerging water needs.
- In northern Shan, the partners continued COVID-19 awareness raising and provided Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) materials in 32 protracted IDP camps, reaching a total of 12,000 people. Partners continued the installation of 800 portable hand washing stations at temporary learning centres and schools in 16 townships, however, at a slower pace due to the current political situation. In Kachin, the partners constructed 16 emergency latrines in two IDP sites in Momauk Township and provided drinking water trucking in three sites in Bhamo and Momauk townships. The partners also provided 252 50-gallon buckets in one IDP site in the same township. In Bhamo and Momauk townships, the partners provided 500 hygiene kits in 12 sites to the people recently displaced by conflict.

Education in Emergencies

- The basic education schools are expected to re-open on 1 June according to the announcement, despite explosions regularly reported at or near education facilities across the country. Universities were re-opened on 5 May, but at most universities less than 10 per cent of students are attending. It is estimated that at least 30 per cent of teachers, and 60 per cent in some areas, nationwide continue participating in the Civil Disobedience Movement. Basic education teachers in many locations are now being suspended and are potentially facing dismissals.
- The sector partners are conducting harmonized consultations with communities regarding the support they require for children to continue learning. Initial findings indicate that requests for support to learn within education spaces or at home largely vary by location. From June 2020 through May 2021, the sector partners have reached over 31,000 children with home-based learning materials, as complementary support to learning continuity. This includes all children attending the Temporary Learning Centres in IDP camps in Rakhine State.

Shelter/Non-Food Items/Camp Coordination and Camp Management

- In Rakhine, the partners are conducting a rapid needs assessment of all shelters in protracted IDP camps. More than 700 longhouses are targeted for MegaTarp distributions to ensure weatherproofing for some 28,000 people. The reconstruction of shelters in protracted IDP camps is ongoing; however,

funding gaps will not allow for coverage of some 350 shelters in 2021. In new displacement sites, the partners are currently providing weatherproofing support to some 3,000 displaced. The delivery of shelter materials such as bamboo and tarpaulins is already completed for most townships.

- In Kachin, the majority of transitional shelters for durable solutions which started in 2020, have been completed by the end of April 2021. Close to 100 shelters are being handed over to about 490 IDPs in Myitkyina, Waingmaw and Hpakant townships. In Kachin, most of the camps have received the camp running cost up to April and some up to May; however, camp management agencies are still facing challenges to withdraw cash from banks and because of this, payments to focal persons are not yet made. The limited amount of cash withdrawn are prioritized for camp running costs and other urgent needs. Shelter costs in Kachin State, especially timber costs, have drastically increased in bordering areas which led to reduced coverage. Alternative options (providing metal shelter or barrack type shelters) were discussed, however, this was not feasible in some areas, including in areas controlled by non-state armed actors due to unavailability of metal in the market as well as sloppy/rocky land structure.

Nutrition

- In Kachin State, service delivery interruptions have been reported due to travel, safety and security concerns of staff and volunteers. This is compounded by increasing fuel prices, which is affecting supplies transportation in some townships, especially in Hpakant. In northern Shan, some nutrition partners have suspended their activities, such as mobile clinics, due to security concerns and COVID-19-related restrictions.
- The sector established two Technical Working Groups to enhance and scale-up the delivery of life-saving nutrition activities to address the evolving humanitarian situation in Myanmar. In Rakhine State, nutrition partners screened about 11,570 children and 3,200 pregnant and lactating women for acute malnutrition and close to 640 children and 60 women were admitted for malnutrition treatment. In northern Shan, despite the challenges stated above, the nutrition partners conducted field visits in Muse, Kutkai and Namhkan townships to assess the needs and gaps in IDP camps and sites. In Kachin, nutrition partners participated in a Multi-Sector Initial Rapid Assessment, to identify the needs of the newly displaced population. Countrywide, 14,300 children and 3,000 women have received preventive nutrition services during the reporting period.

Food Security

- In Rakhine, the partners are continuing Cash-for-Work (CFW) activities for the rehabilitation and improvement of irrigation facilities and reached some 660 individuals in Rathedaung, Maungdaw, Kyauktaw and Buthidaung townships with CFW. Community mobilization and orientation of CFW laborers has been conducted in another five villages in Kyauktaw, Rathedaung, Maungdaw and Buthidaung townships. In Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships, about 100 beneficiaries will receive construction and rehabilitation support for backyard fishponds. The programme will be implemented through a CFW scheme, which is expected to benefit more than 1,000 workers. The beneficiaries are also receiving small-scale aquaculture production training. The partners will also provide some 500 farmers and 700 landless seasonal workers in 12 villages in Maungdaw and Buthidaung Townships with multi-purpose cash assistance in June. Farmers will also be provided with monsoon season farming inputs. In Chin State, over 5,000 IDPs in Paletwa Township have received their monthly food distribution for May.

Logistics

- Bi-weekly WFP-facilitated international relief flights connecting Kuala Lumpur – Vientiane – Yangon continued, with upcoming flights scheduled for 6 and 20 June. Domestic airlines continue to operate from Yangon to most destinations. Partners reported that cargo can be moved between Yangon and Sittwe without restrictions, while permits are required for rice transportations between Kyauktaw and Paletwa. Roads to and within southern Chin have been blocked due to ongoing hostilities, while checkpoints are present on northern Chin roads. In Kachin, partners faced difficulties in transporting humanitarian goods

to several townships. Across the country, fuel prices have increased by some 30 per cent since 1 February; rising prices have impacted trading and freight costs.

Maungdaw Inter-Agency Group

- The Maungdaw Interagency Group (MIAG) partners continue to monitor the unfolding political developments, while activities have largely remained with minimal further interruption since 1 February. In April, the MIAG partners were able to reach 255,295 beneficiaries with assistance and life-saving support. Activities include food distributions, support to mobile clinics, health referrals, nutrition activities, COVID-19 prevention and response activities, non-food items distribution, cash-based interventions, infrastructure support, including construction of water points and school construction. The activities also included protection services, including case management, child protection, psycho-social support and information dissemination. Throughout the COVID-19 outbreak, the MIAG partners have continuously adapted and readjusted programming in line with COVID-19- related instructions and have integrated COVID-19 risk reduction measures into ongoing operations.

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

MYANMAR HUMANITARIAN FUND FIRST STANDARD ALLOCATION: The Myanmar Humanitarian Fund (MHF) first Standard Allocation in 2021, which was launched on 13 May with an initial funding of US\$10 million has been amended, with an additional \$0.35 million to respond to the emerging needs in Chin State. The MHF is also supporting an operational partner to top up the ongoing project with an additional funding to scale-up response in Mindat. Beyond Mindat, the allocation is expected to support coordinated response to address urgent needs of people displaced and otherwise affected in Chin, Rakhine, Kachin, Shan and Kayin states. The MHF allocation is in line with the 2021 [Humanitarian Response Plan](#) (HRP), which remains severely underfunded. As of 27 May, only US\$40.2 million has been received against the \$276.5 million requested – which represents less than 15 per cent coverage – according to the [Financial Tracking Service](#).

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