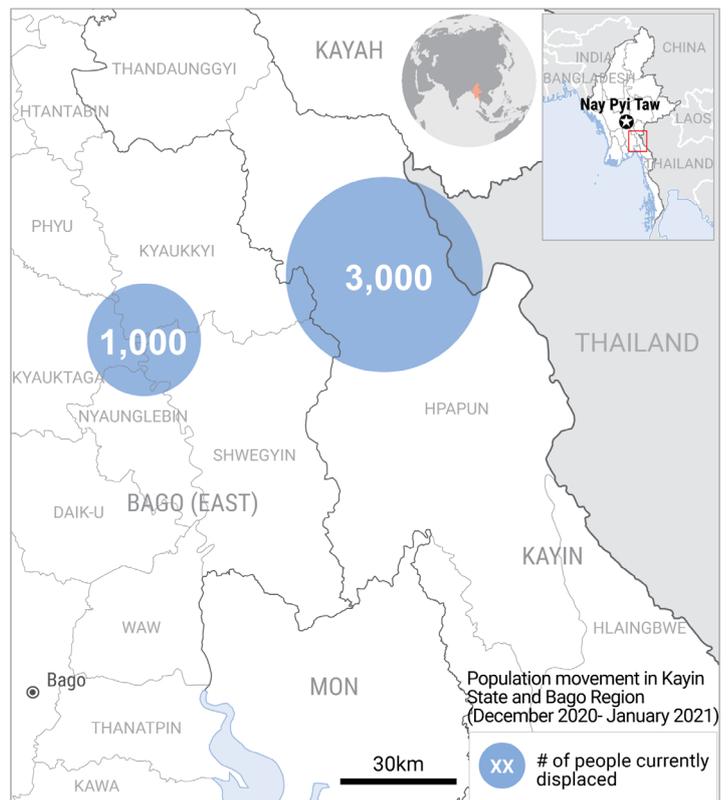


This humanitarian update, covering the period from 24 December 2020 to 25 January 2021, is produced by OCHA Myanmar in collaboration with the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group, UNHCR and humanitarian partners. The next update will be issued towards the end of February 2021.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Clashes between ethnic armed organizations caused the displacement of about 3,900 people in Kyaukme and Namtu townships in northern Shan. Just over 1,000 people remain displaced in Kyaukme Township; around 2,800 people returned to their places of origin within days.
- One civilian was killed and nine others, including five children, were reportedly injured after an unexploded ordnance detonated in Minbya Township in Rakhine State on 10 January.
- Clashes between the Myanmar Armed Forces and the Karen National Union in south-eastern Myanmar have reportedly displaced about 4,000 people in Kayin State and Bago Region since early December; there are unconfirmed reports of civilian casualties.
- Over 4,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) in protracted camps in Kachin and northern Shan are planning to return to their villages of origin by March 2021, according to civil society organizations.
- In Rakhine, returns of displaced persons to their places of origin remain sporadic despite the lull in hostilities.
- The humanitarian and COVID-19 response continues in camps, displacement sites<sup>1</sup> and villages in conflict-affected areas.



### KEY FIGURES

**126,000**

IDPs in camps since 2012 violence in Rakhine

**101,800**

people displaced by conflict in sites and host communities in Rakhine and Chin

**104,000**

people in protracted displacement in Kachin and northern Shan

**8,600**

people temporarily displaced in northern Shan over the course of 2020

**4,000**

people displaced by recent clashes in Kayin State and Bago Region

**10**

reported civilian casualties in Rakhine - one killed and nine, including five children, injured

**56**

inaccessible sites out of 158 displacement sites and host communities in Rakhine and Chin

**US\$5.2**

million Myanmar Humanitarian Fund Standard allocation completed

**US\$185**

million received against US\$275 required under 2020 HRP (67 per cent)

**US\$276**

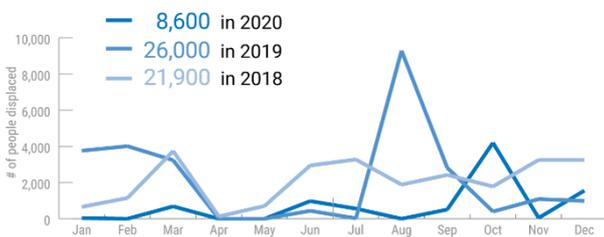
million required to reach 945,000 people under 2021 HRP

<sup>1</sup> While the terms "IDP camp" and "IDP site" are sometimes used interchangeably, in this report, "camp" refers to protracted displacement settings, typically involving more established camp management arrangements, while "site" refers to more informal displacement settings.

## SITUATION OVERVIEW

**INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN NORTHERN SHAN:** The security situation remained fluid during the reporting period, with armed clashes between the Restoration Council of Shan State/Shan State Army (RCSS/SSA) and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) causing the displacement of over 3,900 people in Namtu and Kyaukme townships between 27 December and 15 January. About 2,800 people, mostly in Kyaukme Township, returned to their places of origin within days, but slightly over 1,000 people remain displaced in four sites. Local authorities, host communities and humanitarian partners supported the displaced families with essential humanitarian assistance, including cash, food, blankets, mosquito nets, sleeping mats and COVID-19-related support. The clashes damaged about 65 houses in Kyaukme Township. The houses were repaired a few weeks later with the support of the local authorities and partners. At least two civilians were killed by hostilities in Namtu and Kyaukme townships on 29 December and 5 January, respectively, according to public sources. Earlier in December, clashes between the RCSS/SSA and the TNLA or allied forces of the TNLA and the Shan State Progress Party/Shan State Army in Namtu Township caused the temporary displacement of over 800 people.

TEMPORARY DISPLACEMENT (Jan 2018 - Dec 2020)



Over the course of 2020, clashes between the Myanmar Armed Forces (MAF) and ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) or between EAOs in northern Shan caused the temporary displacement of 8,575 people. Most of the displacement occurred during the last quarter of the year. This is significantly lower than the two previous years. In 2019, around 26,000 people were temporarily displaced due to armed clashes, while in 2018, 21,900 people were. Close to 9,800 people remain in protracted displacement camps in northern Shan since 2011. See OCHA's recent publication on [Temporary displacement in northern Shan \(2019-2020\)](#).

**INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT IN THE SOUTHEAST:** Armed conflict between the MAF and the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), the armed wing of the Karen National Union (KNU), escalated in early December 2020. Sporadic hostilities were reported in Kayin State and eastern Bago Region, in addition to small-scale skirmishes in Mon State. According to local sources, around 3,000 people from an unknown number of villages in Hpapun Township, Kayin State, have fled into the surrounding jungle, while others are staying with local communities in Kayin and neighboring Mon states. Around 1,000 people have been displaced in Nyaunglebin and Kyaukkyi townships in eastern Bago Region, according to public sources, which have also reported four deaths, including that of a village chief, by shelling in Mae Cho Village, Hpapun Township, Kayin State, on 12 January. On 15 January, a boy in Mae Wai Village in the same township reportedly suffered serious head injuries from heavy weapons fire. Humanitarian partners are currently discussing a joint response. UNHCR and WFP have indicated plans to dispatch non-food items and food rations for 1,000 people displaced in five villages in Kyaukkyi Township.

 **4,000** people displaced, mostly in Kayin State due to clashes between MAF and KNU which escalated in early December

**CIVILIAN CASUALTIES IN RAKHINE AND CHIN:** UNICEF issued a [statement](#) on the death of one woman and injury to five children after an unexploded ordnance detonated in Sa Pa Htar Village in Minbya Township, Rakhine State, on 10 January. Four more adults were injured during the same incident, according to public sources. Three of the survivors sustained serious injuries and were admitted to Mrauk-U General Hospital, while others received treatment in Myaung Bway Hospital. On 12 January, a civilian was reportedly injured by a landmine explosion in Paletwa Township in Chin State. UNICEF expressed concern about the alarming increase in child deaths and injuries due to landmines and unexploded ordnance and urged all parties to the conflict to stop laying mines and to clear existing ones. UNICEF also called on the Government to facilitate access for the provision of emergency Mine Risk Education activities.

An estimated 101,800 people are currently displaced by the conflict between the MAF and the Arakan Army in 226 displacement sites and host communities in Rakhine and southern areas of Chin states. As of 16 January, 85,203 people were displaced in 158 sites and 6,754 were sheltering in 32 host communities across Rakhine, according to the Rakhine State Government (RSG). Humanitarian partners indicated that 9,841 displaced persons were hosted in 27 sites in Paletwa Township in Chin State as of 21 January. This is in addition to about 126,000 people who remain in protracted displacement camps in Rakhine since 2012.

**PLANNED RETURNS IN NORTH-EASTERN MYANMAR:** A total of 44 families in six displacement camps in areas controlled by non-state armed actors in Kachin State returned to Gawt Nan Village in Waingmaw Township. The returnees are currently hosted at the temporary relocation site in the village, where they are waiting for the construction of houses in the areas of origin to be completed. Another 10 displaced families from the same camps are expected to relocate to the temporary site in Gawt Nan Village before the monsoon season starts in May. During an assessment in the temporary site on 28 December 2020, humanitarian partners found that the IDPs need shelter, non-food items and access to water, sanitation and hygiene. The IDPs have reportedly decided to relocate due to a lack of access to livelihoods, education and markets, which was exacerbated by the COVID-19-related restrictions. The IDPs expressed concerns over the risks posed by landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in their places of origin. The Gawt Nan temporary relocation site has been used to host IDPs before they return to their places of origin in various villages in Lar Hpai Village Tract in Waingmaw Township.

More than 730 displaced families, or over 4,000 people, in protracted camps in Kachin and northern Shan are planning to return to their villages of origin by March 2021, according to civil society organizations. The Government has included 29 villages in Kachin in the list of its pilot return and resettlement programme, as part of the National Strategy on Resettlement of IDPs and Closure of IDP camps. The villages of return are located in Chipwi, Hpakant, Mansi, Momauk, Myitkyina and Waingmaw townships in Kachin State and Namhkan Township in northern Shan. The Kachin Baptist Convention (KBC) has commenced the construction of houses in some of the villages, with funding from the Nippon Foundation, the European Union Durable Peace Program (through Oxfam) and UNHCR.

## HUMANITARIAN ACCESS



56 out of 158

displacement sites and half of 32 host communities in Rakhine and Chin remain inaccessible

**RAKHINE AND SOUTHERN CHIN:** In general, access to IDP sites remains limited and sporadic, particularly in rural areas. Despite a trend of gradual increase of approvals in Travel Authorizations (TAs), unconditional humanitarian access should be put in place to ensure that partners resume and continue to scale up full-scale humanitarian and COVID-19 response in camps, displacement sites and villages. As of 16 January, 55 out of 158 displacement sites, as well as half of 32 host communities in Rakhine State and one

displacement site in Paletwa Township of Chin State, are inaccessible due to insecurity and other constraints. Since September 2020, when the RSG resumed the processing of TAs following a suspension due to the surge in locally transmitted cases of COVID-19 in Rakhine, 37 organizations received over 230 TAs to carry out life-saving activities, as defined by the RSG, in IDP camps, displacement sites and villages. The activities ranged from mobile clinic services to COVID-19 risk communication and community engagement (see section on humanitarian response for details). Between 29 December and 18 January, 23 organizations received TAs.

**KACHIN AND NORTHERN SHAN:** In Kachin State, access by IDPs to assistance and livelihoods, especially in areas controlled by non-state armed actors, remains challenging due to movement restrictions aimed at controlling the spread of COVID-19, in addition to pre-existing access constraints, as well as cross-border movement restrictions between Myanmar and China. In northern Shan, COVID-19-related movement restrictions and sporadic armed clashes in the area have continued to limit the ability of local actors and international organizations to deliver a full-scale humanitarian response.

**COVID-19 COUNTRYWIDE:** An average of 500 daily cases was reported during the reporting period, in comparison to an average of 1,200 daily cases between late September and December 2020. The average death rate is 17 persons per day. As of 26 January, there have been 138,368 confirmed cases countrywide, including 3,082 fatalities and 122,781 recoveries, with a total of 2,306,538 specimens tested.

**COVID-19 IN HUMANITARIAN SETTINGS:** In Rakhine State, 4,247 cases, including 35 fatalities, have been reported in all 17 townships since 23 March 2020. Sittwe Township accounts for most cases (1,546) followed by Kyaukpyu (447) and Maungdaw (400). There have been 346 cases in Chin State, 869 in Kachin State, 1,282 in Kayin State and 1,050 cases in Shan State, according to MoHS.

## HUMANITARIAN AND COVID-19 RESPONSE

Despite the access challenges, national and international partners continue providing humanitarian assistance and COVID-19 prevention and response measures for vulnerable communities, IDPs and returning migrants in coordination

with the Government and state-level authorities. Below is a summary of ongoing and planned activities in IDP camps, displacement sites, and camp-like settings by cluster/sector.

## Protection

### Response

- In Rakhine, partners continued remote and community-based protection monitoring to identify issues that require a tailored response. Partners also resumed Gender-Based Violence (GBV) case management services in the protracted displacement camps to ensure that survivors have access to individual support and regular follow-up. Partners are providing remote GBV case management in northern Rakhine and continue to mainstream COVID-19 in child protection (CP) and GBV services, as well as mental health and psychological support (MHPSS), and general protection (GP) activities. GBV partners have distributed 420 dignity kits to women and girls in IDP sites in Ponnagyun Township and plan to distribute over 120 dignity kits in IDP camps in Buthidaung and Rathedaung townships.
- Partners also supported the distribution of core sanitation kits to displaced women and girls in Sittwe, Pauktaw and Mrauk-U townships, reached 160 people in Sittwe Township with COVID-19 prevention awareness activities, and distributed 160 bottles of liquid soap and 230 cloth masks to IDPs, including children in camps and villages in Sittwe Township. Sensitization on trafficking in persons and unsafe migration has been conducted on a weekly basis through megaphone and a door-to-door approach in vulnerable and at-risk households, including MHPSS sessions in Taung Paw site in Myebon. Partners have also disseminated information on violence against children, while CP case management services are available at displacement sites in Myebon, Sittwe and Pauktaw.
- In Chin, remote protection monitoring continues to the extent possible through focal points in Paletwa and Samee. In northern Shan, partners continued GBV case management services and individual psychosocial support. A total of 100 dignity kits were distributed to women and girls at quarantine centers in Lashio and over 3,410 people, including 2,730 children, had access to CP services. In Kachin, partners provided cash assistance to more than 30 IDPs with specific needs. Community based protection monitoring continued to identify protection incidents and concerns. GBV case management, small-scale psychosocial support, safe house, MHPSS support groups continued. CP partners continued to provide individual psychosocial support, awareness raising activities on CP and child rights, case management and monitoring in targeted camps. In Kayin, the provision of integrated sexual and reproductive health and rights, GBV/MHPSS services, clinical care and legal services for GBV survivors continued.

### Gaps & Constraints

- The delivery of humanitarian interventions in Rakhine continues to be hampered by access constraints, the quality of internet connection and COVID-19-related movement restrictions, while sporadic armed clashes continued to hinder the scale of GBV support in northern Shan.

## Health

### Response

- A total of 317,790 people received essential health services and 2.3 million people had access to COVID-19 health support over the course of 2020. The MoHS and Ethnic Health Organizations (EHOs) received COVID-19 prevention items, including personal protective equipment (PPE), gloves, infrared thermometers, surgical masks, N95 masks, goggles, gowns, hand sanitizers and soap, chlorine and bleaching powders, pamphlets and posters. In Rakhine, partners contributed to preparedness for COVID-19 in Thet Kae Pyin hospital and distributed medical supplies and equipment. Partners continued the provision of psychosocial support and support to cover the operational costs of quarantine centers as well as COVID-19 surveillance at points of entry, and MoHS health emergency operations centers. In northern Shan, Kachin and Kayin states, partners also supported capacity development activities, transportation of laboratory samples, as well as referral services of suspected cases.

### Gaps & Constraints

- Procurement of COVID-19 supplies remains a challenge due to global shortage of supplies and logistics. Transportations of COVID-19 samples were delayed from Rakhine to Yangon, as well as from the EHOs to government-controlled areas in Kachin and northern Shan. Overall, in all conflict-affected areas, non-critical health activities remain suspended, while small scale awareness-raising activities continued.

## Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

### Response

- In Rakhine, partners delivered hygiene kits, ensured safe drinking water and improved access to sanitation facilities targeting around 306,200 people in December. Additionally, partners have reached over 93,600 people with hygiene promotion messaging and awareness sessions through mobile audio/text message campaigns during this period. Partners targeted 39 new displacement sites in two townships in Chin (Paletwa and Samee town) reaching 13,587 individuals with 1,108 hygiene kits.

### Gaps & Constraints

- Access from Rakhine to Paletwa Township in Chin remains challenging due to insecurity; implementation of life-saving activities in Rakhine continues to be hampered by COVID-19-related movement restrictions.

## Education

### Response

- Over 28,000 vulnerable children in central Rakhine, northern Shan and Kachin received home-based learning materials. A total of 350 teachers in Rakhine continued to undertake capacity development programmes to support children's learning at home. Close to 1,000 displaced children and adolescents in Kyaukme and Namtu townships in northern Shan had access to PSS and received WASH kits. Partners continued to coordinate with relevant government officials to ensure vulnerable children have access to the learning materials.

### Gaps & Constraints

- Delivery of teaching-learning materials and education activities in some IDP camps in Kachin have been suspended due to the COVID-19-related restrictions and access to towns and IDP camps near the border areas remains difficult.

## Shelter, NFIs, Camp Coordination and Camp Management

### Response

- Partners have sustained the delivery of essential activities in Rakhine through the support of camp-based staff members. A total of 9,970 people from two IDP camps benefitted from the distribution of essential household items. Partners have also stocked shelter materials and non-food items (NFIs) for emergency needs. In response to temporary displacement in northern Shan, partners reached IDPs in Kyaukme and Namtu townships with NFIs, including 25 blankets, 16 mosquito nets and 25 plastic mats.
- In Kachin and northern Shan, remote monitoring calls were undertaken to follow up on ongoing shelter and quick impact projects, in addition to solar streetlight activities. Partners distributed essential household items, including 30 tarpaulins, 30 kitchen sets as well as 90 mosquito nets and plastic mats to 480 people, who were relocated to a temporary site in Waingmaw Township in Kachin, in preparation for the return to their original villages. Partners continue to engage in inter-agency solution assessments that support durable solutions, while providing shelter assistance in some areas.

### Gaps & Constraints

- The sporadic clashes in northern Shan hindered the delivery of assistance, while broader access issues in Rakhine continued to hamper provision of full-scale humanitarian assistance.

## Nutrition

### Response

- In Rakhine, partners distributed micronutrient powder supplements to nearly 5,500 children under five from IDP camps in Pauktaw Township. About 6,100 children aged 6-59 months and 2,350 pregnant and lactating women (PLW) received preventive nutrition services. In addition, 980 children aged 6-59 months and 280 PLW with acute malnutrition were treated. As part of the COVID-19 nutrition response, partners distributed 1,500 masks to IDPs in Kyauktaw, Mrauk-U and Sittwe townships. In Chin, partners have been coordinating with the State Health Department (SHD) to install hand washing stations and provide COVID-19 preventive materials to health staff.

- In northern Shan, partners are coordinating with the SHD to provide technical support on Infant and Young Child Feeding Counselling (IYCF) to community volunteers in Wa special region and Kokang Self-Administered Zone (SAZ). A total of 120 children aged 6-59 months and 180 PLW were provided with nutrition services. In Kachin, partners sustained provision of essential nutrition services, through in-kind support, to nearly 900 people in the IDP camps which are under lock-down. Partners have also trained camp-based volunteers in line with Nutrition in Emergency (NiE) COVID-19 adopted guidance and provided them virtual technical support to continue the service delivery. A State school feeding committee was established to strengthen school feeding activities in the COVID-19 context and a total of 50 children aged 6-59 months and 1,100 PLW received nutrition services.

### Gaps & Constraints

- COVID-19-related movement restrictions hindered recruitment of health and nutrition staff for mobile teams in Rakhine while they also resulted in operational challenges in all conflict-affected areas.

## Food Security

### Response

- As part of the COVID-19 response, food assistance was provided for 5,950 people in quarantine centres in Yangon and to 510 people under quarantine in government-managed sites in townships in central Rakhine. Another 250 families received 75,000 Myanmar kyats (appx. US\$56) each through multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA). Nearly 80 people from 19 villages benefitted from small business grants worth 23,283,000 Myanmar kyats (appx. US\$17,500) as well as from business planning and management trainings. The ongoing mask making project benefitted 290 people from Mrauk-U, Sittwe and Maungdaw townships. Over 40 Village Savings and Loans Association (VSLA) groups in Kyauktaw and Sittwe received remote support. Partners also provided cash grants to 25 families from IDP camps in Pauktaw. The cash for work Sludge Treatment Unit (STU) rehabilitation and the fishing kit distribution for 100 families in Pauktaw improved people's livelihood opportunities.
- In northern Shan, US\$114,500 cash-for-relief rations reached over 8,650 displaced families. Close to 97 metric tons of general food baskets were distributed to 5,940 vulnerable people in Kokang SAZ. A further US\$11,790 cash-for-relief rations are being provided to 8,650 displaced people and 15 metric tons of commodities to 1,570 people in Kokang SAZ. Multi-purpose cash grants worth US\$5,500 reached 120 people. Partners will conduct a baseline assessment and a rapid market/trader assessment in addition to apprenticeship programme and skill trainings for 110 people and a further 550 people will be supported with vouchers.
- In Kachin, 16 families who have returned to their places of origin in Momauk Township received cash grants; another three families received agricultural support for commercial gardening. To strengthen people's resilience, 15 families from Bhamo have received training on commercial gardening, compost making and bookkeeping. Partners are planning to distribute cash grants and agricultural inputs to a total of 38 families in resettlement villages. In Kayin, 2,090 vulnerable farmers were supported with agricultural inputs, in addition to 2,080 boxes of soap bars and 200 boxes of masks.

### Gaps & Constraints

- In Rakhine, Technical Vocational Education and Trainings and formation of new VSLA groups have been suspended due to COVID-19-related movement restrictions. In northern Shan, monitoring and implementation of some programmes have been delayed due to the COVID-19 prevention measures.

## Logistics

### Response

- World Food Programme (WFP) Global Passenger Air Service flights continue to operate throughout January 2021 – the suspension of international passenger flights has been extended until 31 January, while domestic flights have resumed since 16 December 2020.

## Maungdaw Inter-Agency Group

- In close coordination with relevant agencies, the Maungdaw Interagency Group (MIAG) partners undertake COVID-19 prevention and response activities in support of the Government of Myanmar, MoHS and WHO health response, in addition to integrating COVID-19 risk reduction measures into ongoing operations. Throughout the COVID-19 crisis,

MIAG partners have continuously adapted and readjusted programming in line with instructions issued by the RSG and district and township authorities.

- While activities in northern Rakhine are beginning to resume after many had been suspended due to the COVID-19 situation, they are not at the level they were prior to the spike in cases which started from mid-August 2020, and COVID-19 related measures continue to impact programme delivery.
- During the month of January, MIAG partners have been able to successfully deliver across a number of sectors, including with respect to food security, health and nutrition, livelihoods, protection, and WASH. Some activities include nutrition support to malnourished children; health referrals and mobile clinics; awareness raising on issues such as nutrition, COVID-19 prevention and response, child rights; in-kind support such as provision of water filters and water delivery, food distribution, distribution of home garden kits and fishing equipment to support livelihoods, and the provision of warm clothing and other urgent items; infrastructure improvement, including renovation of household and school latrines.

## PLANNING AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

**TWO THIRDS OF 2020 HRP FUNDED:** The 2020 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) has been 67 per cent funded. As of 27 January, US\$184.6 million was received against the \$275.3 million requested, with Health, Education, and Coordination and Common Services receiving less than 20 per cent of the funding required, according to [FTS](#). In 2021, humanitarian partners plan to reach about 944,000 people in need under the [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.

**MYANMAR HUMANITARIAN FUND:** As of 26 January, three donors have committed US\$4.1 million to the Myanmar Humanitarian Fund (MHF) for 2021. In terms of 2020 response, a total of US\$16.2 million were allocated through three allocations, including the \$5.2 million Standard allocation launched recently, over the course of the year. A total of 26 partners and 34 sub-partners are implementing 41 projects, including 10 projects focused on COVID-19 response. The MHF funded interventions targeted about 950,000 people in need of humanitarian assistance in Chin, Rakhine, Kachin, Shan and south-eastern Myanmar, with special attention to addressing the humanitarian needs of women and girls (56 per cent of the total target) as well as persons with disabilities (6 per cent).

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