

Mental Health and Psychosocial Support

Reactivation of Child Friendly Spaces

Photo credit @KMSS

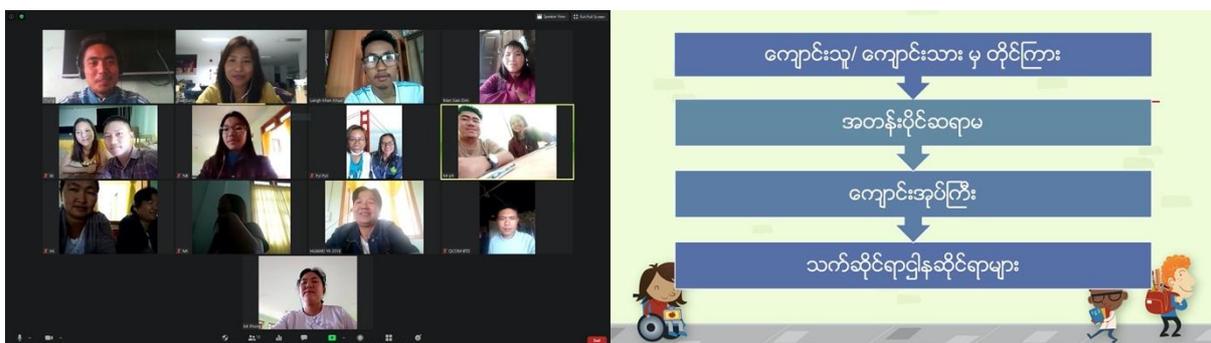


UNICEF and its implementing partners have reactivated Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) in camps for the internally displaced in Chin, Rakhine, Sagaing and Kachin states. Local implementing partners, Kachin Baptist Convention and Karuna Mission Social Solidarity have distributed 165 activity CFS kits to engage children physically, creatively and cognitively. One child said, “Some of the toys I’ve never seen before and they’re so interesting ... I love playing with the dolls and I can’t wait for the teacher to call me for the sessions.” A volunteer in Nawng Ing camp

commented, “The kits have made it easy to get the children involved in activities ... we’ve been able to create new programmes for psychosocial support and even when the sessions are finished, the children want to keep playing.”

‘Back to school’ campaign is underway!

The Ministry of Education, with support from UNICEF and the Global Partnership for Education, has begun a ‘Return to School’ campaign. UNICEF’s implementing partner and mental health and psychosocial expert, Metanoia, delivered a Training of Trainers (ToT) to 700 teachers who will train more than 75,000 teachers, including the Department of Alternative Education and Monastics school teachers from 65 COVID-19-affected areas. The training includes



identification of children at risk, case management and referrals, and how to address stigmatisation. There is also a 1:1 counselling helpline for teachers and COVID-19 frontline workers. So far, 80 teachers have participated in the training which will continue until late November. However, since mid-August, all schools have been closed again due to a rise in

COVID-19 cases in Rakhine State. Subsequently, Rakhine State Government issued stay at home and curfew orders across Rakhine State.

Comic books provide relief for returnees from Thailand

UNICEF Myanmar, with funding from the Government of Canada, has developed and distributed [comic books for children](#) with simple messages on COVID-19. In Kayin State, 1,800 books are being used by the Department of Social Welfare (DSW), Department of Rehabilitation (DoR) and NGOs for migrant returnees in quarantine. The returnees also receive other items, such as masks and sanitizer, on arrival in Myanmar. One child commented, “Before I read the books, I wanted to play outside with my friends, now I know why it’s important to stay in quarantine.” The child’s parent added, “They were bored at home without anything to play with. Now, they have the books to read which they enjoy and can learn important messages from.”



Photo credit @KMSS

Case Management

Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) rolls out 5Ws across Myanmar

Myanmar’s Child Protection Working Group (CPWG) supported by UNICEF, has developed and rolled out a ‘5Ws’ online child protection reporting platform. The 5Ws cover: What was done, Where it was done, Who did it, When it was done and Why. Since the launch, all child protection actors have been set up with user accounts, received training, and are now entering backdated data from January 2020. The software captures information on trends enabling CPWG members to collaborate on child protection cases and use data to inform child protection programming.

Support for Vulnerable Groups

UNICEF supports DSW and MoHS to train quarantine centre youth volunteers

With support from the Government of Canada, UNICEF is providing training to youth volunteers working with recent migrant returnees on child protection, child rights, stigma, case management systems, and referral mechanisms. The youth volunteers are assigned by the Department of Social Welfare (DSW) and the Ministry of Health and Sport (MoHS) to returnee quarantine centres where they provide support, for example, by preparing meals, doing laundry and contacting families. Other volunteers are assigned to meet returnees at ‘Points of Entry’ along the borders. So far, a total of 655 youth volunteers have been trained across the



country: 210 in Shan, 45 in Kayin, 40 in Mon, 60 in Taninthayi and 300 in Sagaing. UNICEF will support the youth to share these lessons with their peers to sustain this peer-to-peer learning beyond the pandemic.

Support for families in northern Rakhine State

UNICEF's implementing partner, Community and Family Services International (CFSI), supports vulnerable families in northern Rakhine State by setting up 60 CFS animators and community-based initiatives and groups, including 43 child protection groups, 43 adolescent focal points and 38 parenting groups. Fixed and mobile child-friendly spaces provide psychosocial support to villages across Buthidaung, Rathedaung and Maungdaw Townships, including to families from more than 13 villages who are sheltering from recent clashes. In the past 10 months, 22,093 children (45 per cent girls) from remote villages, internally displaced person (IDP) sites and economically disadvantaged areas have attended the sessions. Initially, some children were withdrawn, but now many are playing together, respecting cultural diversity. CFSI also conducts parenting sessions in the same three townships as not all parents are aware of child rights and child protection issues, for example, with regard to corporal punishment.



Strengthening support for children in the context of migration

With support from the European Union, UNICEF ran a number of three-day Zoom workshops on 'children affected by migration' covering legal frameworks and the programme response. 284 participants from Rakhine, Kachin, and Shan State's East, South and North included representatives from DSW, DOR, the Anti-trafficking Task Force (ATTF), UNICEF's implementing partners and UN agencies. Discussions varied for each region. In Kachin, for example, discussions centred around combating human trafficking, the limited services available for children and the potential for Myanmar to increase its cooperation with China. UNICEF will continue to advocate for the Government to foster bi-lateral cooperation with its neighbours for the protection of migrant children.

Risk communication and community education for migrant communities in Thailand

Three million Myanmar migrants live in Thailand¹. Many are unregistered and need COVID-19 safety and prevention messaging in their own language.

UNICEF’s partners, Plan International and Suwanitmate Foundation (SNF) along with its networks, including local NGOs, have provided 4,815 communication materials written in Karen and Myanmar languages to an estimated 47,512 Myanmar people across 29 remote locations in Thailand’s Tak District (Mae Sot).



Photo credit @SNF

VAC, GBV, PSEA

Awareness and reporting

The Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) network in Myanmar, with support from UNICEF, has created resources for humanitarian and development workers and communities, including a culturally specific PSEA video in [Myanmar](#) and [English](#) along with culturally [specific posters](#) on appropriate and inappropriate behaviours of aid workers. In April 2020 the PSEA network, with UNICEF support, launched a UN inter-agency helpline.



Child Justice

Children in conflict with the law during COVID-19

UNICEF Myanmar recently released a Technical Note on [Pre-Trial Release of Children in Conflict with the Law During COVID-19](#) in partnership with the International Legal Foundation. The

Note outlines the framework and procedures for actions that defence lawyers, police, law officers and judges in Myanmar should take, in line with the 2019 Myanmar Child Rights Law, to address the COVID-19 pandemic and limit its impact on children.

Myanmar releases Child Rights Law cartoon

In partnership with Legal Clinic Myanmar, UNICEF Myanmar has released a [Child Rights Law cartoon production \(comic book\)](#) in Myanmar language for children. The comic, written in collaboration with children and in child-friendly language, is being distributed electronically and in hard copy by Myanmar’s Department of Social Welfare and UNICEF implementing partners.



¹World Health Organization 2017, *Myanmar Overview*, IOM UN Migration, viewed 10 September 2020 <<https://www.iom.int/countries/myanmar>>.

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