



MYANMAR

COVID-19 and Civil Unrest Emergency Responses

COUNTRY LEVEL OVERVIEW

Since 1 February 2021, Myanmar has been undergoing a political crisis. The detention of political leaders, suspension of the newly elected parliament and the declaration of a state of emergency by military leaders precipitated nationwide civil unrest with significant humanitarian implications. The nationwide security situation continues to deteriorate with a marked increase in security force engagement with opposition groups. A Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) in response to the events of 1 February is ongoing, impacting basic services including transport, health and banking.

Humanitarian implications are increasing in scale across the country. Injured people have required first aid support and ambulance services. Banking disruptions limit access to cash and a reduced supply chain has increased prices for food and other basic commodities. Levels of food insecurity are increasing and public health system disruptions reduce health access for the most vulnerable. Population displacement is increasing both in areas of protracted crisis and in other regions and states. Regulatory measures such as curfews impact humanitarian needs and create additional operational challenges.

In this context, the prevention of COVID-19 is a critical area of concern. There has been a reduction in the daily number of COVID-19 tests administered nationally. Multiple incidences of mass gatherings as well as population displacement increase risks for COVID-19 transmission. Reduced public health services across all regions and states has limited testing and treatment for all diseases including for COVID-19. The planned COVID-19 vaccination roll-out was suspended and vaccination to date has reached only a limited number of health and frontline workers in some locations across the country. There are indications of resistance to receive vaccination amongst parts of the population, including healthcare workers due to its association with the de facto authorities and the ongoing civil unrest.

Since Mid June 2021, an increase in cases in confirmed clusters around the country – including cases of new variants which have had a devastating toll elsewhere in the region – may indicate a new wave of COVID-19 in Myanmar. The presence of these new variants, along with a more vulnerable population and a weakened health system, could impact significantly on the scale, speed and severity of this new outbreak as compared to the previous waves of COVID-19 in Myanmar. IFRC is supporting MRCS in order to enhance prevention of, preparedness for and response to this new wave, including for example the mobilisation of oxygen therapy supplies (cylinders, concentrators, etc), which will be critical to support people suffering from acute COVID-19 symptoms and in support of already weakened local clinical health services.

STATISTICS

330

MRCs branches in 17 states and regions

7,000

MRCs volunteers mobilized for COVID-19 response

2,002

MRCs volunteers active for civil unrest

4,460

People received to date with ambulance and first aid services

236.4k

People targeted for Civil Unrest Response



Operational Priorities

Civil Unrest Response

- Emergency ambulance and first aid services.
- Access to basic health and referral services.
- Socio-economic support through immediate relief and support for livelihoods restoration.
- Capacity enhancement of Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCs) for emergency response to natural disasters during the monsoon season.
- Psycho-social support services and protection.
- National Society strengthening and communications emphasizing the 7 Fundamental Principles with neutral and impartial humanitarian assistance.

COVID-19 Response

- Continuity of Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) and other COVID-19 risk-reducing actions to reduce risk of a future wave, which is now very high due to lack of testing, tracing and treatment capacities.
- Increased efforts to enhance MRCs and local health service readiness for a potential new wave, including mobilization of MRCs volunteers, additional PPE and oxygen supplies.
- Continued engagement with relevant stakeholders to support vaccination roll-out as and when possible, to reduce risk of a future wave.
- Increased food insecurity and other basic needs likely to become more acute as a result of socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 and related restrictions combined with impact of civil unrest.
- Continued support to MRCs to enable COVID-safe services programming, through provision of material, funding and technical support.



AREAS OF FOCUS

Civil Unrest Response



Health (First Aid & Ambulatory)

People targeted: 66,400

Funds required: 1,542,000 CHF



Socio-economic Interventions

People targeted: 50,000

Funds required: 1,073,000 CHF



DRR & National Society Strengthening

People Targeted: 120,000

Funds required: 1,456,000 CHF

COVID-19 Response



Health & WASH

People targeted: 4.6 million

Funds required: 3.95 million CHF



Socio-economic Interventions

People targeted: 135,200

Funds required: 2.8 million CHF



National Society Strengthening

Funds required: 458,000 CHF

Key Achievements

Civil Unrest Response (February - May 2021)

- **First aid and ambulance** services (143 ambulances) provided to 4,460 people.
- Referral support to 863 people to **access emergency medical services**. RCVs are transporting patients from one hospital to another, until treatment can be confirmed.
- **Basic health services** including basic medical assistance and referral support to most vulnerable populations.
- Emergency response **distributions of food and non-food items** to internally displaced persons and those suffering from severe socio-economic distress.
- **Coordination and partnership** with partner National Societies and UN agencies.

COVID-19 Response (February to May 2021)

- **Fever screening across Myanmar:** Red Cross volunteers (RCVs) conducted a total of 625 sessions of fever screening at various checkpoints, covering 126,626 people.
- **Assisting in fever clinics:** 296 patient visits to fever clinics were assisted by the RCVs, and among them, swab testing of 113 cases were supported.
- **Ambulance service for COVID-19 cases:** 222 persons under investigation were transported to the respective quarantine and medical centres following the guided infection prevention and control practices.
- **Isolation in community-based facility quarantine (CBFQ) centres:** RCVs volunteered in a total of 206 CBFQs in which 12,224 quarantined persons were placed.
- **Assisting in COVID-19 vaccination:** Support and assistance in COVID-19 vaccination in various states and regions organized by local health authorities covering 77,299 people.
- **RCCE** reached 74,518 people.
- **Psychosocial support:** Easing the emotional, social, physical and psychological effects of COVID-19.
- Provision of **protective and supportive items** to the community.



Required Resources

Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) has developed separate National Response Plans for the COVID-19 and Civil Unrest Responses.

COVID-19 Response

| Funding requirement | Needs in CHF |
|--|------------------|
| Health and WASH | 3,952,500 |
| Socio-economic Interventions | 2,775,000 |
| National Society Strengthening | 457,500 |
| Other operational costs | 741,750 |
| Total funding requirement | 7,900,000 |
| Funds received (IFRC COVID-19 EA) | 3,412,000 |
| Funds received (reported bilateral donations as of June 2021) | 1,100,000 |
| Funding gap | ~43% |

Civil Unrest Response

The IFRC Emergency Appeal for the Civil Unrest Response was launched on 10 May 2021, aligned to the MRCS' National Response Plan for delivery of assistance and support to 236,400 people until 31 March 2022, requiring funding of 4.5 million CHF.

| Funding requirement | Needs in CHF |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Livelihoods and Basic Needs | 1,073,000 |
| Health | 1,542,000 |
| National Society Strengthening | 1,456,000 |
| Influencing Others | 8,000 |
| Ensuring Accountability | 421,000 |
| Total funding requirement | 4,500,000 |
| Funding gap | 79% |

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