

MRCSC Experiences on Responding to COVID-19 Pandemic in Complex Humanitarian Crises

Presented by
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Presentation outline

- I. COVID-19 situation and brief background in Myanmar
- II. MRCS supports to community
- III. MRCS supports to RCV and staff
- IV. International supports to MRCS
- V. Challenges encountered and MRCS responses
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I. COVID-19 situation and brief background in Myanmar

As of 15 September 2021 (8:00 PM)

Confirmed cases: 438,951

Recovered cases: 388,596

Confirmed deaths: 16,784

CFR: 3.8 %

Stay-at-home townships: 119 townships

Three waves of COVID-19

First wave started on 23 March 2020 (detected first in Chin State)

Second wave on 25 Aug 2020 as a local transmission from travelers returning from Rakhine State

New (Third) wave on 27 May 2021 (with new variant – delta virus) (from Sagaing Region - north-western part of Myanmar)

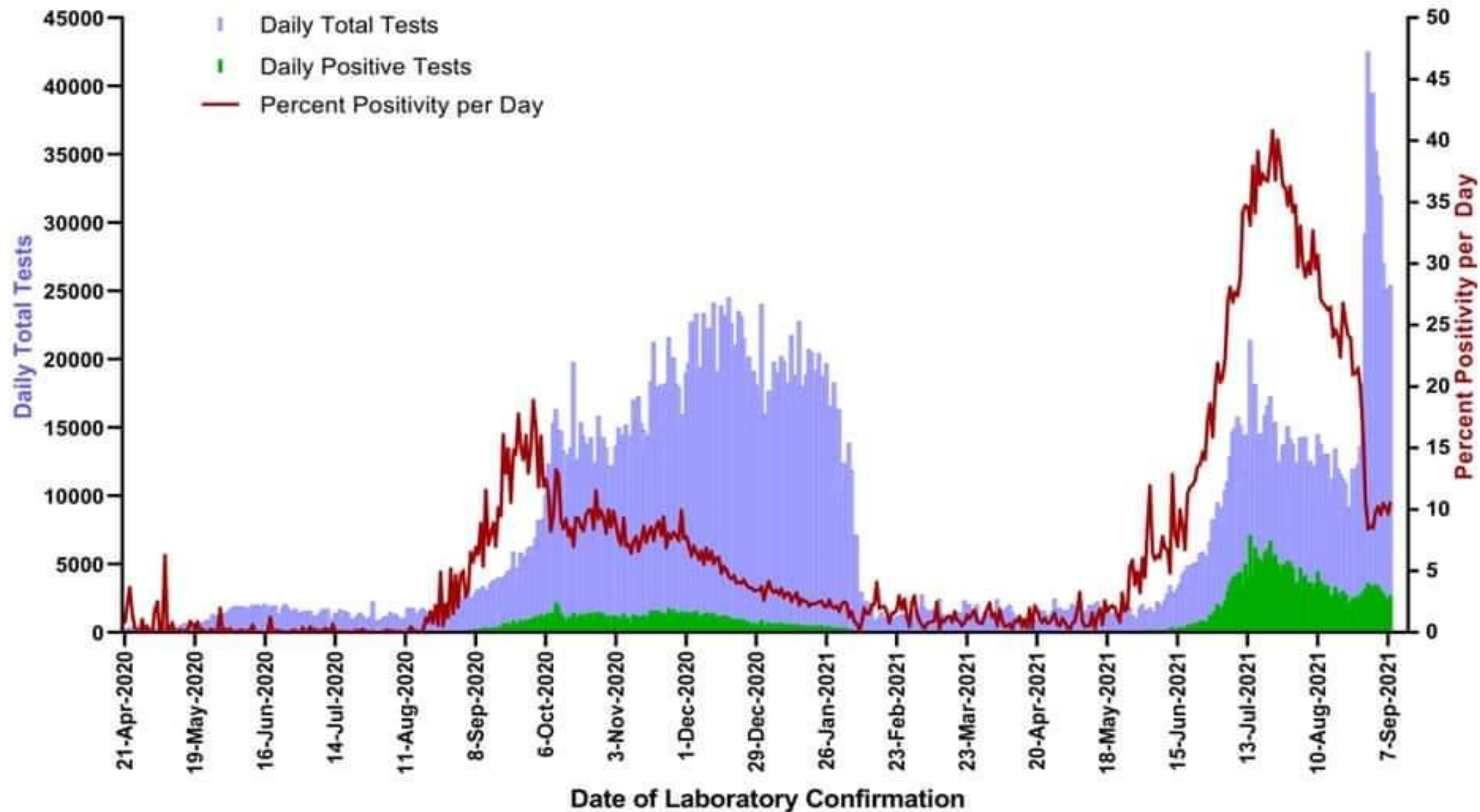


Fig. 1. Number of tests, confirmed COVID-19 cases and percent positivity in Myanmar (April 2020 – Sept 2021) (Source: MOH)

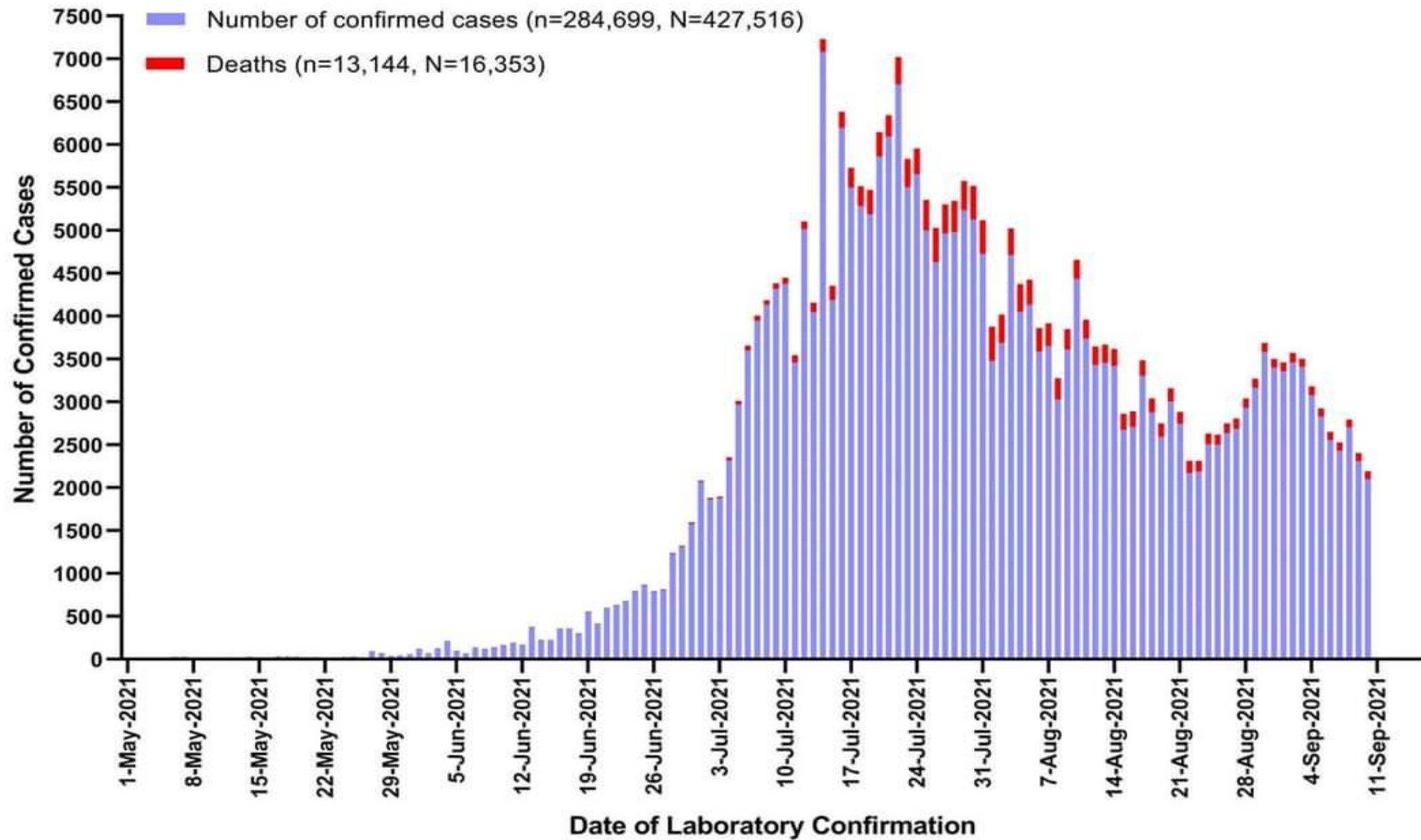


Fig. 2. Confirmed COVID- 19 cases and deaths in Myanmar (27 May – 10 September 2021) (during Third Wave) (Source: MOH)

MRCS COVID-19 National Society Response Plan: Three operational priority areas:

- (a) Health and WASH (Water Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion)
- (b) Addressing socioeconomic impacts of COVID 19 and relevant support
- (c) National Society's institutional strengthening

MRCS staff involved: 467

MRCS RCV involved: 6,600

II. MRCS supports to community

1. Form COVID-19 control teams in HQ, State/Region RC
2. RCVs continue to make awareness campaign; fever screening at town entry points and border areas; distribute IEC materials, masks, hand sanitizers to community; transport patients to hospitals/centres; provide oxygen filled cylinders to severe cases; provide psychosocial supports to patients; systematically transport dead bodies to cemetery; disinfecting at houses of dead cases; and providing hygiene and dignity kits etc.
3. Vaccination: RCVs continue to support health personnel at vaccination sites, such as registration, watching and reporting AEFI.

Key achievements from Jan 2020 up to July 2021:

- **2,599,689** people reached with key **RCCE activities** and hygiene promotion messaging
- **303,579** people in **quarantine/self-isolation** provided with material support
- **182,241** people underwent **fever screening**
- **50,749** people had **swab testing**
- **25,729** people had **ambulance services**
- **219** people received **oxygen related support**
- **33** people received **dead body related support**
- **212,914** people supported with **essential health services** in communities
- **127,400** people provided with mental health and psychosocial support (**MHPSS**)
- **76,560** people supported to get **COVID-19 vaccinations**;
- **43,500** people supported through community **WASH activities** such as hand-washing basins;
- **36,346** contacts of positive **COVID-19 cases** traced
- **5,302** people supported with **cash or voucher-based assistance**;
- **3,552** people from highly vulnerable groups (displaced, migrant, host families) supported with cash and/or in-kind **assistance for basic needs and livelihoods**.

III. MRCS supports to RCV and staff

1. MRCS provided masks/gloves/PPE gowns/soap/hand sanitizers and PSS Training to frontline RCVs
2. Health insurance: 5,147 RCVs are under health insurance coverage to date.
3. Financial support: MMK 500,000 provided as the Emergency Management Fund (EMF) to each of 282 township branches in June 2020, and each of remaining townships in December 2020.
An additional MMK 181 million to 303 townships
4. Volunteer risk allowance: Provision of financial and other crucial support to nearly 200 COVID - 19 positive RCVs and staff
5. Training: Epidemic control for volunteers (ECV) training has been conducted among 2,206 RCVs since September 2020

6. Emergency Ambulance Service Plan (21 July 2021) for MRCS staff and family in **Yangon Region**
7. Support to positive and dead cases
 - (a) Positive case:

MRCS provides MMK 100,000 for nutritional support and MMK 10,000 for phone bill
CB Health insurance also provides MMK 50,000. If hospitalized, MMK 10,000 per day is added
 - (b) Dead case: CB Health Insurance provides MMK 5,000,000
 - (c) Post covid patients checked with a post covid package (ICRC and PNS support)
8. Disinfection and ferry transport

Disinfection performed in MRCS Yangon Office building twice and Thanlyin warehouse
Three separate ferry cars arranged for MRCS staff for safer travel to and from Yangon Office
9. Vaccination
 - Request letters sent to MOH for vaccination among staff members of MRCS (88) and all PNS (133) and active RCVs (6,310) as priority groups across the country. MOH agreed to support.
 - ICRC supported COVIDSHIELD vaccine to 20 staff members (20 Aug 2021)
 - 44 staff members and 4,737 RCVs have been vaccinated in their living areas on their own schedule (as of 26 Aug)

IV. International supports to MRCS

1. MRCS NSRP (Feb 2020 – Jan 2022) Funding: total CHF 10 mil; 30% of total granted to date.
2. **Thai Myanmar Business Council** via Thai Business Association of Myanmar and the Thai Red Cross Society (300 units of oxygen cylinders (47 L) with a refilling service for five months) (first batch of 100 unit to be distributed on **7 Sept**)
3. **The Thai Red Cross** donated 40 units of oxygen concentrators
4. **Singapore Government** donated 300 units of oxygen concentrators via Singapore Red Cross
5. **IFRC** donated 20 oxygen concentrators
6. **EU (ECHO)** via IFRC donated Oxygen generator/concentrator/cylinder
7. **ICRC** donated 20 units of oxygen concentrators
8. **New Zealand budget**, 160 units of oxygen cylinders purchased.
9. **Fukuoka City Government, Japan** donated COVID-19 materials worth USD 63,000 – 90,000
10. **Taiwan RC** donated USD 10,000.
11. **Cambodian RC** donated USD 100,000.
12. **Finnish RC** donated EURO 100,000 for civil unrest and EUR 60,000 for oxygen equipment (via DRC led ECHO response operation)
13. **ASEAN AHA** (Medical supplies to be donated in **Sept 2021** to hospitals, community based- COVID-19 positive centres and communities) (**MRCS is a primary partner**)

V. Challenges encountered and MRCS responses

1. **Civil unrest** since Feb 1, 2021: MRCS supported 4,200 households in Chin, Kachin, Kayah and Shan (East) State with food and non-food items and mask and hand sanitizers etc.. First aid care and emergency patient referral project in 12 townships in Yangon Region (May- Sept 2021) (WHO Country Office Support)
2. Limited or no cash withdraw from bank during civil unrest. Now request is made to Central Bank of Myanmar via MOH to ease restrictions in cash withdrawal.
3. Limited Health personnel at hospitals and treatment centres and limited covid testing capacity. MRCS deployed RCVs to help in COVID-19 treatment centre
4. Insufficient oxygen supply/equipment. RCVs queue at oxygen distribution points and then transport oxygen filled cylinders to severe COVID-19 patients in community and hospitals

5. Concurrent natural disaster: Floods in five State/Region due to heavy rain **during July 2021**. MRCS supported foods and non-food items to floods-affected areas totaling 125,006 people from 26,237 households.

6. Food insecurity: MRCS distributed rice to low-income family members in *Dagon Seikkan* Township in Yangon (total households more than 68,000; rice 50 Kg to each household) and *Maha Aung Mye* and *Aung Mye Thar Zan* Townships in Mandalay Region (total 2,000 households) with kind support from WFP (**Aug – Sept 2021**). Now more than 1,700 tons of rice have been distributed to communities. Rice distribution will also be made in *Shwepyithayar* Township, Yangon in **Sept 2021**.

7. Current disaster preparedness (DP) stock position is < 10 – 50% in warehouses. MRCS requested IFRC AP Regional Director to fill up the gap.

MRCS had a triple burden – COVID-19 pandemic, civil unrest and natural disaster (floods)

VI. Requirements

COVID -19 vaccines

COVID-19 Ag- and Ab- RDT

Liquid Oxygen (to donate public hospitals via MOH)

COVID-19 essential drugs: eg. Remdesivir, Dexamethasone, Enoxaparin, Ceftriaxone etc. (to donate public hospitals via MOH)

DP stock to refill warehouses across the country

VII. The way forward

To increase momentum of COVID-19 responses including Health and WASH activities across the country collaborating with Ministry of Health, local authorities and civil society organizations and, PNS, UN agencies and international organizations

VIII. Photo session



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THANK YOU VERY MUCH !