



ICRC

MYANMAR

# ICRC RESPONSE TO COVID-19

MARCH TO DECEMBER 2020



With ICRC's support, 350 tailors produced 123,000 fabric face masks in just 2 weeks for displaced families in Rakhine State.

Since March 2020, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), in coordination with the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has adapted its humanitarian activities throughout the country to the new COVID-19 environment while supporting the Government of Myanmar and the communities affected by armed conflict and violence in their efforts to prevent and mitigate the risks associated with the pandemic.

Since the first COVID-19 case was confirmed in Myanmar on 23 March 2020, the ICRC – together with its Red Cross partners – has mobilized to prevent and mitigate the spread of the virus in Kachin, Rakhine and Shan States, with a focus on communities living in areas affected by armed conflict and violence, as well as in places of detention throughout the country. In parallel with its traditional humanitarian activities, ICRC teams have swiftly developed a specific response to address the needs of population particularly exposed to the risks of COVID-19, including internally displaced persons (IDPs), returning migrants, or people deprived of freedom.

The ICRC implements a multi-sectoral approach, which aims at strengthening primary public health services, increasing access to safe water and sanitation, and supporting the livelihoods of communities affected by the socio-economic impact of COVID-19. The ICRC also engages in awareness-raising activities with community leaders, ethnic armed and ethnic health organizations, religious circles and local media, as part of its comprehensive response.

The ICRC, together with the MRCS and the IFRC, is committed to pursue in 2021 its ongoing response to COVID-19 to ensure that no one is left behind, and that communities affected by armed conflict and violence receive the assistance and protection to which they are entitled to in line with International Humanitarian Law.

*The following operational overview reflects activities in response to COVID-19 conducted by the ICRC in Myanmar, in coordination with the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) from March to December 2020.*



## HEALTH RESPONSE

- **400** Ministry of Health and Sports staff and **20** community health workers trained in infection prevention and control in Kachin, Rakhine and Shan States
- **193,800** people reached through **300** community awareness sessions in Maungdaw and Sittwe Townships, Rakhine State
- **146,000** people in Kachin, Rakhine and Shan States received health and hygiene items such as face masks, face shields, hand gel, soap including **20,800** people in **40** quarantine sites
- **14,600** people in **34** IDP sites in Rakhine State supported with donation of protective equipment and information to prevent the spread of COVID-19
- **14,000** face shields, face masks, medical gowns produced in Myitkyina, Kyaing Tong and Hpa-An Physical Rehabilitation Centres
- **1,400** people suspected or confirmed with the virus transported for medical treatment with ICRC support
- **230** state-run quarantine centres received hygiene supplies, medical equipment and technical assistance in Kachin and Shan States
- **45** health structures received protective equipment including face shields, face masks and medical gowns and COVID-19 information posters



## IMPROVING ACCESS TO WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE

- **147,800** people (including students, teachers and volunteers) benefited from upgraded health & sanitation systems in **77** health structures as well as schools, quarantine centres & IDP camps
- **107,600** people reached through the installation of **1,990** handwashing stations in IDP camps, health facilities, quarantine centres and township hospitals
- **75,000** bars of soap distributed in Rakhine State and **15,000** bottles of liquid soap distributed in Northern Shan State for IDP camps and hospitals
- **44** quarantine centres with a capacity to accommodate approximately **6,300** people benefited from renovations, or donation of water and sanitation materials
- **170** emergency latrines constructed with the MRCS in quarantine centres for returning migrants



## INFECTION-CONTROL IN DETENTION AND QUARANTINE FACILITIES

- **34,000** detainees benefited from operations to disinfect the premises in **10** places of detention
- With the ICRC's technical support, **84,000** face masks were produced in **5** prisons
- **1,000** COVID-19 posters from Ministry of Health and Sports delivered to the Prisons Department for distribution
- COVID-19 prevention information, financial assistance and hygiene items provided to **2,500** people after their release from detention through the “**Safe Return Home**” programme
- **880** released detainees in quarantine sites from Rakhine were supported with food, blankets and hygiene kits
- SOPs for the prevention and control of COVID-19 in places of detention were shared with the Prisons Department



## RAISING AWARENESS OF COVID-19

- **3.5 million** Facebook users reached with an #InfoAsAid digital messaging focusing on hygiene promotion and COVID-19 prevention
- **186,600** people engaged the ICRC on Facebook for more information or to share COVID-19 prevention messaging
- **70,000** posters containing information approved by the Ministry of Health and Sports, shared with communities in Kachin, Rakhine and Shan States
- Over **38,800** prevention pamphlets distributed and **10** billboards established to raise awareness
- An advocacy note on “**IHL and COVID-19**” shared with civilian and military authorities, ethnic armed organizations and other stakeholders
- ICRC guidelines on dead body management in context of COVID-19 was shared with the armed and security forces of Myanmar
- Recommendations on risk and prevention measures related to law enforcement operations were shared with the Myanmar Police Force



## PARTNERING WITH MYANMAR RED CROSS SOCIETY (MRCS)

Across Myanmar, many of our programmes are implemented alongside MRCS. With the onset of COVID-19, ICRC was able to complement MRCS efforts with additional support, namely:

- Support for the production of **10,800** Red Cross identification aprons by MRCS and **14,000** Red Cross volunteers provided with waistcoats and protective helmets
- **3,600** MRCS staff and volunteers provided with COVID-19 insurance coverage and specialized training on the use of COVID-19 PPE and masks
- MRCS branches in Kachin, Rakhine and Shan States received an additional **1,400** face shields, **143,700** surgical masks, **500** protective goggles, **41,000** latex gloves, **250** non-contact thermometers, **800** bottles of hand gel
- Contingency stock for PPE items such as **8,000** face shields, **425,000** surgical masks, **1,400** protective goggles, **56,500** latex gloves, **200** non-contact thermometers, **3,000** hand-gel disinfectants distributed to MRCS Yangon office
- Cloth for close to **9,000** re-usable masks distributed to communities in Rakhine and to the MRCS in Shan State, along with the necessary equipment and material such as sewing machines, fabric, thread, elastic bands, etc.
- **45** township branches in Yangon Region financially supported for COVID-19 response activities
- **224** Red Cross volunteers from other states and regions deployed to work in COVID-19 treatment centres in Yangon
- **152** Red Cross township branches financially supported with office administration costs during the COVID-19 response
- Financial contribution made to the MRCS Emergency Management Fund for COVID-19 response and transportation costs covered for PPE items to township branches in Rakhine State



## OTHER ACTIVITIES WITH NEW COVID-19 PROTOCOLS

- **20,400** people assisted with multi-purpose cash grants in Kachin and Shan States in IDP camps with a high rate of loss of employment and labor opportunities due to COVID-19
- **2,000** COVID-19 prevention kits supplied to persons with disabilities as part of a partnership with the Disability Inclusion Committee
- **340** tailors in IDP sites in Kachin, Rakhine and Shan States produced **174,500** face masks for COVID-19 prevention, which also enhanced their livelihoods
- As many as **600** people in quarantine facilities in Kachin and Rakhine States received sim top up cards to stay in touch with family members and loved ones during their quarantine period while **28 “safe and well”** messages were collected from quarantine sites in Rakhine State
- Resumption of activities at the Physical Rehabilitation Centers in Kyaing Tong and Myitkyina in September for patients in urgent need of assistance

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