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WFP Myanmar Country Brief

April 2019



Operational Context

Myanmar is amidst an important political and socio-economic transformation. The country is highly susceptible to natural disasters and climate risks. An estimated 37.5 percent of its 53 million population live near or below the poverty line. Many struggle with physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food with women, girls, elderly persons with disabilities and minorities affected most.

Wasting prevails at 7 percent nationally. Myanmar is one of the world's 20 high tuberculosis burden countries. It is also among 35 countries accounting for 90 percent of new HIV infections globally.

Ethnic conflict exacerbates an already fragile situation. Over 1 million people have been displaced from their places of origin since June 2011. With restrictions on movement and lack of access to livelihoods, many conflict-affected populations rely on assistance to survive. Attacks on border outposts in August 2017 and ensuing violence forced over 700,000 Muslims to flee Rakhine State and seek refuge in Bangladesh, leading to a humanitarian crisis and activation of WFP's corporate Level 3 response, since downgraded to Level 2.

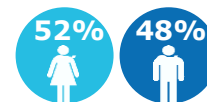


WFP implemented its first operation in Myanmar in 1978 in Rakhine State and established its first office in 1994.

2015 Human Development Index:
145 out of 188

Chronic malnutrition: **29% of children**
under the age of 5

In Numbers



324,672 people assisted in April 2019

US\$ 668,560 cash-based transfers made

3,940 mt of food distributed

US\$ 26.30 million six months (May - October 2019)
net funding requirements

Operational Updates

• Emergency Relief & Nutrition

Rakhine: Internal displacements continued to increase across Rakhine, with 33,000 new displacements estimated by the end of April as a result of the ongoing armed conflict between the Myanmar military (Tatmadaw) and Arakan Army. WFP continued to assist the newly displaced people with plans to extend the assistance in the coming months.

WFP's emergency relief assistance reached 92,570 conflict-affected people from 170 Muslim, Buddhist and Hindu villages in Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships in northern Rakhine State. In addition, WFP reached over 17,630 children under five years and pregnant and lactating women (PLW) through nutrition interventions. In central Rakhine, 4,820 PLW and 24,820 children under five were reached with nutrition interventions, and 128,090 food-insecure people received relief assistance.

Kachin: WFP successfully introduced E-Money – the transfer of cash for relief assistance through mobile phones – in four internally displaced camps in Myitkyina Township, expanding the use of E-Money to a total of ten IDP camps in Kachin State. WFP plans to expand E-Money coverage in Kachin State, leveraging technology to maximize efficiency in humanitarian assistance.

WFP continued to provide emergency food assistance to 43,720 displaced people in 12 townships in Kachin State through cash and E-Money transfers. Over 1,970 PLW and children under two received WFP's nutrition assistance.

Shan: An unstable security situation persisted in northern Shan State with continued armed clashes and subsequent internal displacements. WFP's emergency relief distributions continued to support 15,350 beneficiaries across northern Shan State as well as from conflict-affected villages in the northernmost part of KoKang Self-Administered Zone. Over 2,150 PLWs and children under two received nutrition assistance.

- **School Feeding:** As the holiday season continued for government-run schools, WFP provided nutritional snacks or meals to 11,550 primary school children from 120 schools in Wa Self-Administered Division, an autonomous region in northeastern part of Myanmar. The National School Feeding Multi-Sectoral Technical Coordination Group met in early April to discuss ways to increase food and nutrition assistance to young students across Myanmar.

Photo: Child from Rakhine State holding fortified blended food for nutrition support

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Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	May - October Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
336.9 m	95.6 m	26.30 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food

Strategic Outcome 1: Crisis-affected people in food-insecure areas meet their food and nutrition needs all year round.

Activities:

- **Activity 1:** Provide unconditional food transfers and/or cash-based transfers (CBTs) to populations affected by crisis.

Strategic Outcome 2: Vulnerable people in states and regions with high food insecurity and/or malnutrition have access to food all year round.

Activities:

- **Activity 2:** Provide technical advice, policy support and training for the Government to improve delivery of national social protection and emergency preparedness programmes and food systems.
- **Activity 3:** Implement a comprehensive school feeding programme in targeted schools in support of the national programme.
- **Activity 4:** Provide conditional food or cash-based assistance in support of the creation and rehabilitation of assets, combined with nutrition messaging for targeted populations.
- **Activity 5:** Provide unconditional food and/or cash-based assistance combined with nutrition messaging and counselling for people living with HIV and TB patients.

Strategic Result 2: End malnutrition

Strategic Outcome 3: Children under 5 in Myanmar have improved nutrition in line with national targets by 2022.

Activities:

- **Activity 6** – Provide implementation support, research-based advice and technical assistance on national policies and action plans for the Government and partners.
- **Activity 7** – Implement preventive nutrition interventions for adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and girls, and children under 2, and roll out community infant and young child feeding programmes, CBTs for mothers of young children, and social behaviour change communication (SBCC).
- **Activity 8** – Provide specialized nutritious foods for the treatment and management of acute malnutrition among pregnant and lactating women and adolescent girls, and children under the age of five.

Donors & Funding Sources to WFP Myanmar Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

Australia, Canada, Denmark, the European Union, Germany, Italy, Japan, Japan Association for WFP, LIFT, Luxembourg, the Republic of Korea, Myanmar Humanitarian Fund, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Turkey, United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund, the United Kingdom, the United States of America.

- **Community Asset Creation:** Over 14,300 vulnerable people from Chin and Kayin State benefitted from WFP's cash assistance. WFP also delivered nutrition-related knowledge to beneficiaries following the completion of 12 community asset creation projects in Kayin State.
- **HIV & TB:** WFP supported 2,350 HIV and tuberculosis patients with food and nutrition assistance in Kachin, Mon, Shan and Rakhine states, and Yangon Region.
- **Nutrition in non-emergency areas:** Over 3,380 children under five and PLW from Yangon peri-urban areas, Chin State and Naga Self-Administered Zone benefitted from nutrition interventions.

Challenges

Nutrition interventions at some of the Moderate Acute Malnutrition (MAM) treatment centres in three townships of central Rakhine – Kyauk Taw, Myauk U and Minbya – remained suspended since March due to the ongoing armed conflict. WFP continued to coordinate with local authorities to ensure unimpeded access to people in need across Rakhine State.

Monitoring

Situated in the mountainous part of western Myanmar, Chin State is one of the poorest and least developed states and regions in Myanmar, susceptible to frequent natural disasters. WFP has been assisting communities through nutrition support, asset creation and emergency relief. In April, WFP organized a monitoring mission to Tonzang Township of Chin State to study opportunities and challenges in expanding its nutrition interventions and community asset creation projects.

The mission learned from beneficiaries and local communities that WFP's fortified blended food helps lactating women produce richer breast milk, and that pregnant women feel increased fetal movements in the days they consume the food. The communities told WFP that periods of interruption in the provision of the fortified food made it difficult to re-introduce the food to the children. WFP also learned that with this nutrition assistance, children are born with a higher birthweight and in better health. WFP observed the need for sustained support to existing land development projects and for technical assistance for fuel-efficient stoves.



Photo: WFP's nutrition beneficiaries in Chin State