



World Food Programme

SAVING LIVES
CHANGING LIVES

WFP Myanmar Country Brief August 2020



Photo: WFP emergency food assistance continues to be a lifeline for families taking shelter at War Taung IDP camp in Kyauktaw Township, central Rakhine. Photo: © WFP/Mary Zan

Operational Context

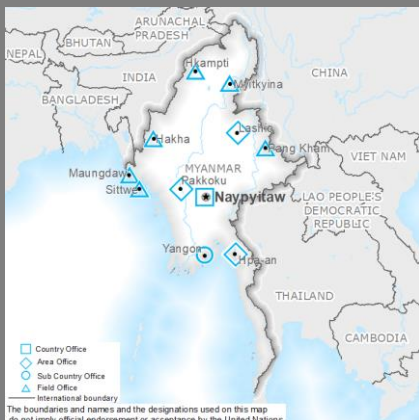
Despite making important socio-economic strides in recent years, Myanmar is faced with a multitude of challenges, including armed conflict, displacement, widespread poverty and food insecurity and more recently the COVID-19 pandemic, which hinder ongoing development efforts. An estimated 24.8 percent of its 54 million population live near or below the poverty line. Many struggle with inadequate physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food, with women, girls, and persons with disabilities and minorities particularly affected.

Malnutrition is a major challenge, and wasting rates prevail at 6.5 percent nationally. Likewise, Myanmar is one of the world's 20 high tuberculosis (TB) burden countries. It is also among the 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 limited access to livelihoods, many conflict-affected people urgently need food assistance.

Meanwhile, the COVID-19 pandemic presents particular risks in humanitarian settings in Myanmar, where internally displaced persons in overcrowded camps and communities in conflict-affected areas are at higher risk in the event of local-level outbreaks. Moreover, COVID-19 is likely to have a significant impact on livelihoods and further adverse socio-economic consequences on poor communities across Myanmar.

WFP implemented its first operation in Myanmar in 1978 in northern Rakhine and established its first office in 1994. Given the protracted humanitarian crisis in Rakhine, high rates of malnutrition countrywide, and high susceptibility to natural hazards, WFP remains committed to improving coordination with its national and international partners and developing innovative solutions to meet acute needs across the country.

Read the [Annual Country Report 2019](#) to learn more about key WFP activities and results in Myanmar during 2019.



Population:	54.1 million
Income Level:	Lower middle
2019 Human Development Index:	145 out of 189
Chronic malnutrition:	29% of children aged 6-59 months

In Numbers



588,000 people assisted in August 2020

3,421 mt of food distributed

US\$ 2.3 million in cash-based transfers made

US\$ 36 million in net funding requirements for all operations over next six months (September 2020 - February 2021)

Operational Updates

- Response to COVID-19:** Since April, as requested by the authorities, WFP has provided short-term food and nutrition assistance to 60,400 returning migrants for a 21-day period while they are in government-managed quarantine sites in 10 out of 14 states and regions.

In light of the August spike of COVID-19 cases in Rakhine State, WFP is finalizing an agreement with the authorities to provide short-term food assistance to government-managed quarantine sites in Ann, Kyaukphyu, Kyauktaw, Minbya, Mrauk U, Myebon, Pauktaw and Sittwe townships in central Rakhine, to complement government resources. Meanwhile, WFP has reduced the physical presence of staff at offices, distribution points and warehouse to minimize the risk of virus transmissions. WFP is closely monitoring the evolving situation in Rakhine and working closely with national and local authorities in identifying potential food needs and logistics gaps should they arise.

WFP expanded the storage capacity of its Sittwe warehouse to accommodate up to 1,600 m³ of cargo. WFP will make half of the storage capacity available for humanitarian and development partners if needed. Further details on the COVID-19 response are indicated in [COVID-19 Situation Report #10](#).

- Rakhine and Chin:** Despite insecurity and challenging road conditions, WFP distributed emergency food and nutrition assistance to 4,800 internally displaced people (IDP) in Paletwa Town and 3,300 IDPs in Samee (east of Paletwa Town), southern Chin State. WFP continues to pursue further deliveries to Paletwa given the scale of food needs.

Across Rakhine State, WFP increased the monthly ration size of fortified blended food from 3 kg to 6 kg to pregnant and lactating women (PLW) to ensure their nutritional needs are adequately met.

In central Rakhine, WFP provided food and cash assistance to 135,300 food-insecure people. Among them, 31,500 children aged 6-59 months and 5,700 PLW also received fortified blended food. Despite a volatile security situation, WFP also provided emergency food assistance in August to 36,100 newly-displaced people affected by the active conflict between the Myanmar military and the Arakan Army, which is the highest number WFP has reached to date.

In northern Rakhine, WFP assisted 98,400 people with emergency food and nutrition assistance, including 17,200 children aged 6-59 months and 3,100 PLW in Buthidaung and Maungdaw townships.

Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022)

Total Requirement (in USD)	Allocated Contributions (in USD)	Sept 2020 – Feb 2021 Net Funding Requirements (in USD)
427.6 m	174.7 m	36.0 m

Strategic Result 1: Everyone has access to food (SDG 2.1)

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

- **Activity 1:** Provide unconditional food transfers and/or cash-based transfers (CBT) 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.

- **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 social school feeding programme in targeted schools in support of the national programme.
- **Activity 4:** Provide conditional food or CBT in support of the creation and rehabilitation of assets, combined with nutrition messaging for targeted populations.

Strategic Result 2: No one suffers from malnutrition (SDG 2.2)

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

- **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 the age of two, and roll out community infant and young child feeding programmes, CBT 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.
- **Activity 9:** Provide unconditional food and/or CBT combined with nutrition messaging and counselling for people living with HIV and TB patients.

Strategic Result 8: Enhancing Global Partnerships (SDG 17)

Strategic Outcome 4: Humanitarian and development partners in Myanmar have access to reliable common services during crisis and normal situation.

- **Activity 10:** Provide humanitarian common services for humanitarian assistance operations in Myanmar.

- **Kachin:** Under the Government’s COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan (CERP), WFP assisted the Department of Disaster Management to distribute cash grants via e-money to approximately 16,900 IDPs in 33 IDP camps in Myitkyina and Waingmaw townships. Each IDP household received 40,000 Myanmar kyats (equivalent to USD 30).
- **Yangon peri-urban areas:** In August, WFP provided one-off distribution of 6 kg of fortified blended food to 1,500 PLW to boost their immune system. of pregnant and nursing

Challenges

- Due to COVID-19 movement restrictions, WFP has not been able to reach 1,800 IDPs in northern Rakhine and 1,400 people in central Rakhine who were to receive emergency food assistance in August. WFP efforts are ongoing to reach these beneficiaries.

Digitalising the national data collection system in Myanmar

Since 2016, WFP has been supporting the Central Statistical Organization (CSO) in transitioning from a paper-based data collection system to a near real-time mobile-based data collection system for market monitoring at township level. Through this initiative, WFP and CSO aim to enhance the national data collection and storage capacity, whereby allowing instant access to reliable data and accelerating information sharing.

In August 2020, to commemorate the completion of the new agile price collection tool, WFP handed over 100 mobile tablets to CSO, complemented by a series of training workshops on market price monitoring to senior CSO staff.

This support will also enhance the Government’s capacity to assess wider socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic across the country.



Photo: WFP Deputy Country Director handing over mobile tablets to the Director General of Myanmar Central Statistical Organization, at the opening ceremony of the market price mobile data collection training. Photo: © WFP/Aye Min Oo

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

Australia, Canada, Denmark, the European Union, Germany, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Livelihoods and Food Security Fund (LIFT), Luxembourg, Myanmar Humanitarian Fund, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Private Donors (including Japan Association for WFP), Russian Federation, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Republic of Turkey, United Kingdom, United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund, United States of America

*Listed in alphabetical order.