WFP Myanmar
COVID-19 Situation Report #01
03 April 2020

Situation

- Myanmar confirmed its first two cases of COVID-19 on 24 March. According to the Ministry of Health and Sports, there are 20 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Myanmar as of 2 April, including seven of local transmission.

- The Government of Myanmar continues to ramp up efforts to increase its surveillance and prevent the spread of COVID-19. These include the prohibition of public gatherings, the temporary suspension of all international commercial flights and visa issuance for all foreign visitors, the closure of the land border with Thailand until further notice, and the imposition of a mandatory 14-day facility quarantine for all returnees from all border areas.

WFP Operations

- WFP fully tested its Business Continuity Plan on 23-25 March and most staff members are now working from home.

- To minimise exposure to the risk of COVID-19, WFP has developed a set of standard operating procedures for in-kind and cash distributions in the context of COVID-19. This includes an emphasis on hygiene practices, including the provision of hand sanitizers at distributions points and personal protective equipment (PPE) for WFP and cooperating partner staff, and the implementation of social distancing during distributions as far as possible.

- The World Health Organization/Ministry of Health and Sports/WFP messaging on COVID-19 and good hygiene practices is being disseminated at all distribution sites.

Food and Nutrition Assistance

- Starting from April, WFP is shifting its emergency relief assistance to a two-month ration in most of its operational areas, and a three-month ration in the hard-to-reach areas.

- As requested by the Yangon Regional Health Department, WFP is in the process of extending food and nutrition assistance to 4,000 people in quarantine shelters in Yangon. WFP is continuing discussions with the local authorities to confirm further support needs to quarantine sites in Kayin State (the southeast) and Shan State for returnees from Thailand. On 1 April, WFP has started the dispatch of food and non-food items (NFI) in coordination with the Yangon Regional Health Department.

Highlights

- WFP is working closely with partners in support of the Government of Myanmar’s response to COVID-19. This includes the procurement of basic medical equipment and the provision of food assistance to quarantine sites for returnees.

- Based on demand, WFP stands ready to provide common logistics services support to the UN and humanitarian community, including supply chain coordination and an aviation service for passengers and cargo.

Supply Chain

- WFP is part of a joint UN effort to purchase basic medical equipment as requested by the Government.

Common Services Support

- The Inter-Agency Logistics Coordination Group (where WFP is the lead agency) has started mapping the potential logistics gap and the cargo requiring urgent airlift to Myanmar from different UN agencies and international NGOs.

- In addition, WFP is taking an active leadership role in the joint-UN Procurement Working Group in Myanmar, particularly in coordinating and supporting the mass procurement of PPEs across UN agencies.

Aviation Service Support

- WFP is looking into setting up an aviation service for the humanitarian community to enable the dispatch of vital supplies and access for essential personnel. A consultation process to quantify the Myanmar needs is currently underway.

Resourcing Situation

- WFP urgently requires more funding to sustain its operations, particularly emergency relief operations and nutrition activities.

- WFP will communicate estimated resourcing needs in relation to supporting the COVID-19 response in the coming days, as soon as these become clearer.

- The pipeline for relief operations in Rakhine, Kachin and Shan States is expected to break in June 2020 if no fresh funding is received within the next couple months, given the lead time for procurement of food and delivery to operational areas.

WFP 6-month Net Funding Requirements
(April 2020 – September 2020)

| Country Strategic Plan (2018-2022) | USD 34.45 million |

Contact: Stephen Anderson, Country Director (wfp.myanmar@wfp.org)