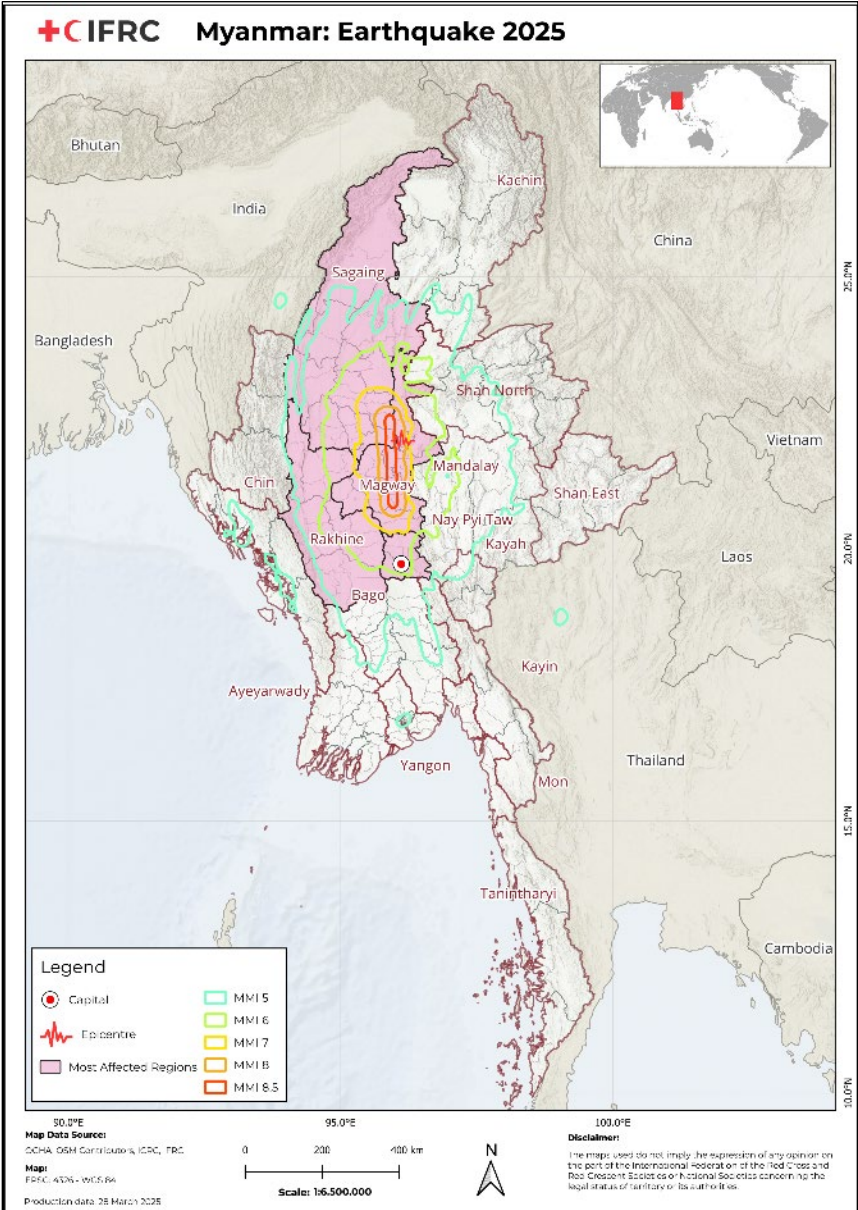


MYANMAR | 2025 EARTHQUAKE DISASTER BRIEF

EQ-2025-000043-MMR | 28 March 2025



Crisis category: Red



At 12:50 local time, a 7.7-magnitude earthquake struck central Myanmar. The epicenter was located about 16 km north-north-west of Sagaing city, and 19 km north-west of Mandalay city. The quake caused widespread destruction, collapsing multiple buildings. Twelve minutes later, a 6.7-magnitude aftershock intensified the devastation, further damaging structures in Mandalay and Sagaing. 1.3 million internally displaced people live in Sagaing. The full extent of the destruction and official casualty figures are yet to be confirmed.

Initial estimates indicate that 18.3M people, 4.04M households, and \$77.5 Billion (USD) of infrastructure are concentrated within the affected area.

7,7M
People exposed to
very strong (VII) or
higher shaking
*GDACS 7.7 alert –
28/03/2025*

15,2M
Affected Population
by Earthquake
*GDACS 7.7 alert –
28/03/2025*

1,3M
Internally Displaced
Persons (IDPs) in
Sangaing
ECHO– 28/03/2025

10k-100k
Most probable fatalities range according to the USGS PAGER
GDACS 7.7 alert – 28/03/2025

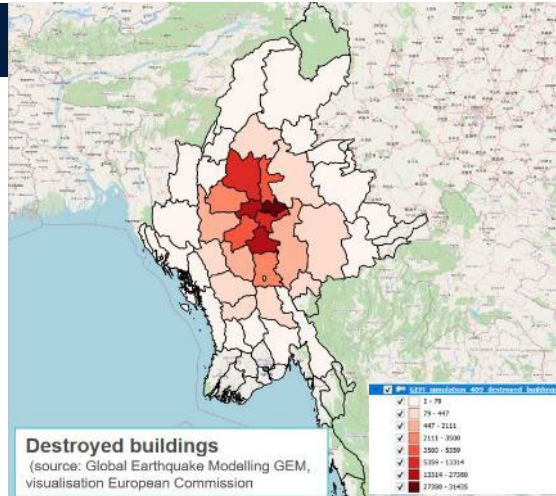
Crisis Impact

Drivers & Aggravating Factors

Myanmar is already facing a severe humanitarian crisis, with 19.9 million people, over a third of the population estimated to be in need of aid prior to the earthquake. The crisis is exacerbated by pre-existing conflict affecting 96% of the country, displacing 3.5 million people.

Prior to the earthquake, 10.4 million women and girls are estimated to be in need of assistance amid gender-based violence linked to the armed conflict. In the Mandalay region impacted by the earthquake, recent airstrikes (March) killed civilians and destroyed homes, and there are about **1,3 million IDPs in the Sagaing region alone who may not be adequately considered in the impact estimates**. Sagaing and Mandalay, the most affected regions, were still recovering from **severe monsoon floods in July 2024** when the earthquake struck. The floods had already damaged shelters, WASH facilities, and livelihoods, making communities even more vulnerable.

Nearly 15.2 million people face acute food insecurity in the country, with 2 million at risk of famine. The healthcare system is collapsing, with over 1,500 attacks on medical facilities since the 2021 coup, limiting access to care. Children are among the hardest hit - 55% live in poverty, and 40% of young children lack nutritious food. **In addition, due to the conflict, banking restrictions, currency depreciation, and inflation are affecting all regions.** Cash shortages are limiting market functionality and humanitarian operations as well as rising costs of fuel, food, and basic commodities.



Damage and losses

The earthquake caused widespread destruction, including the collapse of **multi-story buildings, of houses, and key infrastructure**. Based on initial reports, Sagaing and Mandalay are significantly impacted. Main public and religious buildings and businesses collapsed in Mandalay city as well as Swar dam near Yedashe Ts in Bago. Bago, Pyay, Yedashe and Taungoo were also heavily affected.

With such scale of disaster, **health services, water source and WASH related infrastructure potentially endure significant damage**, exacerbating pre-existing weaknesses of the health system due to COVID-19 and the political conflict. There has been reports of influx of injured people to hospital in Mandalay and Naypyidaw (NPT) with lack of resources and equipment.

Systems disruption

Buckling roads have been observed in Naypyidaw, the capital of Myanmar. YGN-NPT highway and two bridges are damaged, which might affect the dispatched route of assistance from YGN to NPT or Mandalay, two of the hardest hit areas. Structural damages are reported for bridges and main roads connecting main cities of NPT, Mandalay and Sagaing. The extent of the damage has yet to be verified. There are only 3 international airports in the country: Mandalay Intl (VYMD-MDL) and Naypyidaw intl (VYNT-NYT) are closed because of Earthquake. Yangon intl (VYYY - RGN) is still open but far from the earthquake area. These 3 airports can receive all the major cargo planes.

Nationwide, prior to the earthquake, only 53% of households had access to electricity, dropping to 20% in rural areas. Since the earthquake, electricity and network lines are down in Mandalay and Sagaing. Telecommunications are down in parts of Mandalay, Sagaing, and Southern Shan, hampering communication and situational awareness.

Operational Constraints

Humanitarian Access

The Sagaing bridge, providing access to the affected areas from Mandalay to Sagaing region collapsed due to the earthquake, blocking the access to the affected area to all aid actors.

According to IFRC security phase framework, conflict affected areas such Chin State, Kachin State, northern Shan State, Kayah State, Kayin State, Mon State, Rakhine State, Magway Region, Sagaing Region, Mandalay Region, Thanintharyi Region, and part of Bago Region are classified as **ORANGE**. Field movement are further restricted outside of Sittwe. The rest of the country is classified as YELLOW.

Since 2020, 45 aid workers have been killed in Myanmar, 19 of them while being kidnapped. A total of 39 aid workers have been injured during the same time span. Besides MRCS, other humanitarian actors continue to face a range of challenges to their operational capacity across all sectors, primarily pertaining to access, logistics, resources, and security. Furthermore, humanitarian footprint in Myanmar has been significantly undermined by the recent USAID funding cuts.

Access to communications by humanitarian actors and by affected population has been limited by Myanmar authorities. The new draft Cyber, and the use of virtual private network (VPN) is likely to be restricted as well. The use of satellite internet without permission is subject legal action

International Sanctions

Myanmar remains under international sanctions, notably imposed by countries such as the US, EU, UK, Australia, and Canada, due to ongoing human rights concerns and the undermining of democracy. These sanctions target key figures and entities within the government. Despite their intent to pressure the government, sanctions also pose challenges for humanitarian efforts, particularly in delivering aid to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and providing medical supplies. For instance, restrictions on financial transactions have hindered the ability of international aid actors to purchase essential goods locally, while logistical challenges have delayed the transportation of aid to remote areas.

Logistics and Supply chains

IFRC does not have Status agreement in the country, therefore Myanmar RCS to be consignee of the goods. IFRC logistics estimated 3 to 6 months for imported goods and items to clear the customs.

Operational logistics are challenged by limited infrastructure and equipment, and pipeline arrangements, frequently resulting in shortages and stock-outs at the sub-national level. For those supplies that can be imported or are being procured locally, challenges include physical roadblocks, confiscation of aid supplies, damage to key infrastructure, and flooding. Frequent power cuts pose a threat to the shelf life of medicines and medical supplies requiring uninterrupted cold-chain management.

Airport Status

- Mandalay International Airport: **Closed** due to structural damage from the earthquake.
- Yangon International Airport: **No current reports of closure**;
- Naypyidaw Airport: Operational status **uncertain**;

Humanitarian Conditions

According to 2024 HNO/HRP, **6.2 million people in need** are living in the affected states of Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, northeastern Shan State, Naypyidaw, and Bago state, an increase above 10% from 2023.

Health. Since 2023, essential health services have partially resumed in few urban centres, but overall access to health care in Myanmar continues to be critically disrupted and heavily reliant on private facilities. *The unaffordability of treatment contributes to worsening maternal and child health outcomes, missed routine immunizations, and poor emergency care for pregnant women.* Efforts by community health organizations to close these gaps are critical but are unable to fully keep pace with the immense needs

Shelter. *In Myanmar, protracted insecurity and recurrent natural disasters have been driving the pre-crisis for safe emergency shelter* that is supported by inadequate services. The aftermath of the earthquake will further exacerbate the needs from safe shelter as new households will have to rehabilitate their home or to relocate in safer areas.

WASH. Nearly all households reported having sufficient access to drinking water, but *unimproved drinking water sources are used by all population groups during both monsoon and dry seasons, exposing people to the threat of disease and malnutrition.*

Humanitarian conditions are likely to dramatically deteriorate following the earthquake due to the reliance on humanitarian aid, compounded by successive years of unmet humanitarian and development needs. The reliance on aid is also linked to persistent underfunding as well as the inability of development actors to sufficiently implement disaster risk reduction (DRR) and community resilience work since the introduction of the State of Emergency in February 2021.

Crisis Outlook

Recent earthquakes in Myanmar have caused secondary hazards such as landslides that may create compounded localised crisis as well as increase the numbers related to damage and losses.

Weather forecasts indicate that today (28/03/2025) and the next few days will be generally dry and mostly sunny, with low to moderate wind speeds and high but not extremely high temperatures during the day. Night-time temperatures will be between 21 and 26 °C, with daily highs reaching 36 to 40°C, but locally highs may exceed 40 °C over the weekend.

There are indications from global models that **rainfall and thunderstorms could start to develop in the vicinity of the crisis area from Saturday 5 April.**

Risk Watch:

- Heatwaves. April is typically the hottest month of the year in Myanmar, with temperatures often exceeding 40°C, especially in the central dry zone (e.g., Mandalay and Bagan).
- Pre-Monsoon Cyclones: Cyclones frequently occur during mid-April to mid-May, particularly affecting coastal areas like Ayeyarwady and Rakhine State. These cyclones can cause severe destruction, flooding, and storm surges. The frequency and intensity of cyclones have increased in recent decades.
- 3 tropical storms/ tropical cyclones (TCs) that make landfall per year. Category 1 TCs make landfall once every two years. Category 2 TCs make landfall once every 5 years. Category 3 TCs make landfall once every 8 years.

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National Society Capacity and Readiness

587
Staff

6,432
Volunteers

274
Branches

There are currently 2 active operations in Myanmar, 1 Emergency Appeal for Typhoon Yagi and 1 DREF. There have been 10 operations in the country in the past 5 years. Historically, one DREF for Earthquake was requested in 2011 for a total amount of 157.540 CHF and targeting 7,500 people.

The MRCS had an income of 13,407,416 CHF in 2023 and expenditures of 7,549,632 with more than 64,000 people trained in first aid. The NS is supported by 9 PNS in various sectors. Its strategic priorities focus on Climate and Environment, Health and wellbeing, Disaster and Crisis and Ongoing Emergency Operations.

The MRCS is well-established as an auxiliary to the state/public authority. However, while there are IHL training, MRCS promotion of IHL is limited. Due to ongoing crisis in Myanmar, it has been suggested to implement IHL promotion differently, with actors from national to local level. This component has been highlighted in the last PER cycle in 2022.

Priority components in need of strengthening according to the 2022 PER cycle are Information Management, Disaster Risk Management Policy, Safety and Security Management.

IFRC Operations in Myanmar since 2010 (GO)

6 EAs

EA mean requested (CHF): 14M

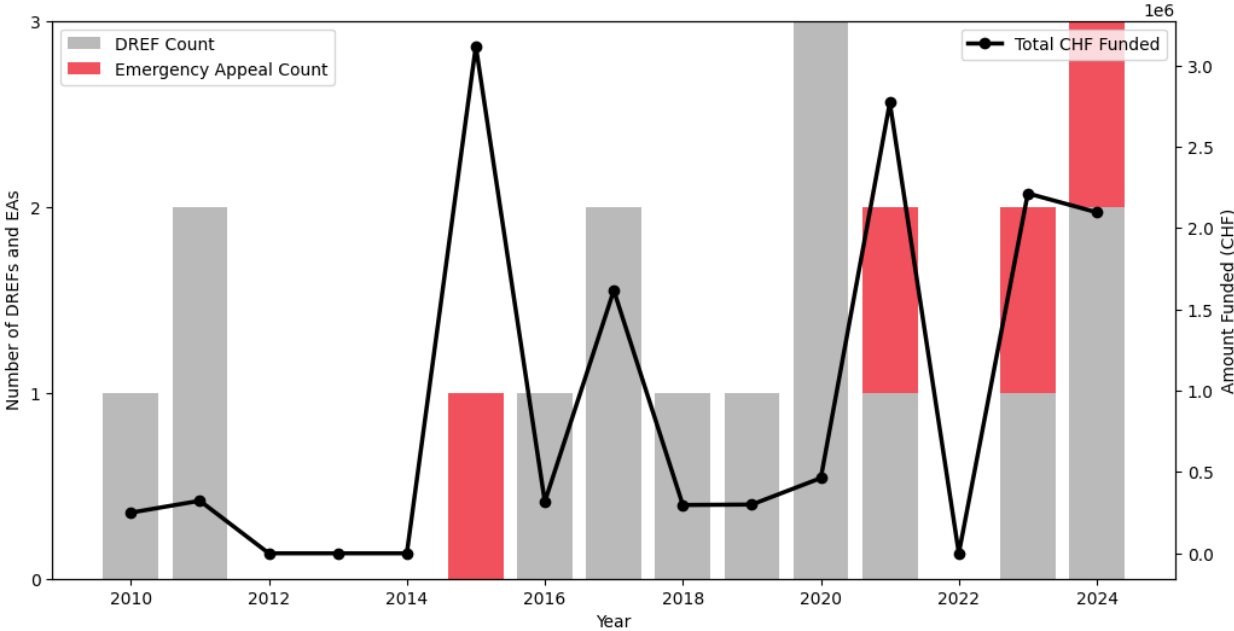
EA mean coverage: 12%

EA mean targeted people: 140k

15 DREFs

DREF mean requested (CHF): 235k

DREF mean targeted people: 12k



Operational Learning

1) **Operations following floods (2015) and cyclones in Myanmar faced significant challenges in timely and integrated recovery interventions. Cash-based interventions were notably impacted by logistical delays, lack of integration in recovery planning,**

- Recommendation to develop and implement a structured cash-based intervention (CBI) integration protocol.
- Recommendation to conduct rapid recovery planning workshops during early operation phases.

2) **Effective volunteer management and monitoring processes were significant operational gaps in MRCS activities and need to improve volunteer capacities through targeted training significantly enhances distribution effectiveness and monitoring outcomes (2018).**

- Recommendation to Establish volunteer training and deployment guidelines
- Recommendation to Implement standardized Post-Distribution Monitoring (PDM) protocols

3) **Coordination at the township level emerged as a critical gap, notably in disaster response scenarios involving multiple local actors (2021).**

- Recommendation to develop and circulate township-level coordination frameworks.
- Recommendation to establish a local information-sharing hub or platform.

Learn more and filter by area, sector and date: [IFRC GO](#)

Local Units in Myanmar (GO)

