

DELIVERING RESULTS FOR CHILDREN 2020

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for every child









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Foreword



Dear UNICEF partners,

As we prepare this annual report, the context in Myanmar has significantly changed as a result of the military takeover on 1 February 2021. However, it is worth noting the results achieved last year, and reflecting together on how to continue our critical work for children.

In 2020, the situation in Myanmar was overshadowed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The country confirmed its first positive case of COVID-19 at the end of March. As early as the end of April the Government published its COVID-19 Economic Relief Plan, which represented the main preparedness and response framework to the pandemic.

Myanmar managed to keep a limited rate of infections until the beginning of August, when community transmission was reported and cases rapidly increased. As of 31 December, Myanmar had 124,630 confirmed COVID-19 cases with 2,682 deaths, while 107,069 cases had recovered and were discharged from hospitals. A total of 310 out of 330 townships in Myanmar had confirmed COVID-19 cases across all 15 states and regions.

At the same time, insecurity and instability increased in 2020, with significant displacement and increased conflict in Rakhine and Chin States, and continuing conflict in Shan State. The number of people in Myanmar in need of humanitarian assistance reached more than 986,000. A total of 274,000 were internally displaced. Of those in need of assistance, 362,000 were children and 16 per cent were persons with disabilities. Humanitarian access became more constrained, with additional security clearance measures imposed as well as COVID-19 travel restrictions.

Despite these challenges, significant results were achieved for children in 2020.

The main focus of all UNICEF's work was adapting programmes to COVID-19-safe engagement modalities and ensuring critical activities continued. UNICEF Myanmar rapidly repurposed its operations to support a massive coordinated national COVID-19 response, to ensure that children in Myanmar, including the most vulnerable, stayed healthy, able to access critical services, and supported by strengthened systems to mitigate the secondary impacts of the crisis.

Working closely with the Ministry of Health and Sports, UNICEF procured 50,000 test kits, 390 oxygen concentrators, and US\$4.45 million worth of personal protective equipment to support the COVID-19 response.

As the leading organization on behavioural change, UNICEF together with partners scaled up Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) messaging which was vital to reach and protect specific vulnerable groups, and the public at large, with targeted and accurate information on COVID-19. UNICEF regularly co-chaired the inter-agency CCE Working Group along with the World Health Organization (WHO) to support the Ministry of Health and Sports and RCCE partners for information sharing and coordinated responses towards the COVID-19 outbreak.

Schools and learning centres, including temporary learning classrooms in camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs), were closed for the greater part of the year, with some high schools opening for around one month, mid-year. The continuity of children's learning was supported including with the development, printing and distribution of home-based learning materials for primary school children.

UNICEF continued to lead the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Cluster and together with partners supported the Government to provide safe drinking water, promote personal hygiene, and support functional excreta disposal systems. Support for WASH was rapidly stepped up in schools, facilities and communities.

UNICEF as a lead agency for the nutrition sector, ensured continuity of coordinated and harmonized life-saving nutrition services in spite of the COVID-19 challenges.

Throughout the country, adolescents and youth were empowered to become leaders in raising awareness about the pandemic and its relationship with child protection. UNICEF was also able to provide technical advice to support the expansion of the Mother and Child Cash Transfer programme to mitigate the socioeconomic effects of the pandemic.

Despite the increased access restrictions to areas of humanitarian need, UNICEF, together with partners, reached 266,000 people with humanitarian response activities, providing vital services in health, nutrition, education, WASH and child protection to displaced populations and vulnerable communities.

Myanmar also made significant strides on important policy initiatives, including on the Multi-Sectoral National Plan of Action on Nutrition, finalization of the implementation plan for Maternal, Infant and Child Nutrition (2021 – 2025) and the first integrated National Strategic Plan for Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (2021 – 2025), with support from UNICEF.

UNICEF continued to strengthen the quality and coverage of child protection services, including in the context of COVID-19. There was significant progress in policy reform for child protection, including drafting of the Rules and Procedures for the Child Rights Law and Child Protection Policy; and finalization of the cross-border

Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Thailand for protection of children affected by migration. UNICEF, with implementing partners, developed COVID-19-sensitive national guidelines on how to protect and care for children under quarantine. UNICEF also successfully advocated for children not to be prosecuted or detained if found in breach of immigration law during COVID-19.

In 2020, the UN Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR) on grave violations against children signed its first ever bilateral joint action plan with an Ethnic Armed Organization, the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA).

Finally, UNICEF is deeply thankful to our partners, including private and public donors, and we look forward to continuing and strengthening the partnerships. Through working together, we can achieve results for children and realize our shared goals of working for and with children in Myanmar in all situations. As the Executive Director of UNICEF, Henrietta Fore said, we must not let down the children of Myanmar at this critical time, when their lives, well-being and future are at stake.

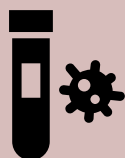
We will always stand firmly on the side of children.

June Kunugi
UNICEF Representative to Myanmar



Mitigating the effects of COVID-19 on children and communities

Results 2020: Quick facts and figures



50,000 test kits, **390** oxygen concentrators, and **US\$4.45 million** worth of personal protective equipment were procured by UNICEF



38 million people were reached with Risk Communication and Community Engagement messages



385,737 people, including 43,202 caregivers with children aged 0-23 months, were reached with nutrition promotion messages in the context of COVID-19



180,000 copies of the Myanmar version of the Global Guidelines on COVID-19 Prevention and Controls in Schools were distributed to **58,728** schools



7,500 handwashing stations were installed in high-risk locations across Myanmar, reaching **1.9 million** people



67,432 students from 317 schools and 27 health facilities were directly supported with basic WASH facilities



272,000 additional pregnant women received a one-off payment under the Mother and Child Cash Transfer programme to mitigate the effects of COVID-19



7.5 million people were reached with a counselling hotline



Mitigating the effects of COVID-19 on children and communities

UNICEF repurposed its operations promptly to support a coordinated national response against COVID-19 by the Government of Myanmar and partners to ensure that children in the country stayed healthy, able to access the critical services they needed and to benefit from initiatives to mitigate secondary effects of the pandemic.

➤ **RISK COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:**

Ensuring that the population at large, especially the most vulnerable, were reached with accurate information on how to stay healthy was a vital part of the national response to the pandemic. UNICEF mounted a massive Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) campaign, reaching over 38 million people through multiple platforms and different languages and approaches with COVID-19 prevention messages, including in hard-to-reach areas and non-government controlled areas.

Audio messages on COVID-19 prevention were developed and translated into 87 ethnic languages, and printed materials into 57 languages, to provide timely and accurate life-saving information to affected populations.

Close to 1 million copies of image-only COVID-19 materials were printed for no/low-literacy communities to improve access to information about protective behaviours.

Posters on school re-opening guidelines translated into local languages reached students, teachers and community members in over 48,000 schools in more than 4,000 ethnic villages.

➤ **HEALTH AND NUTRITION:**

UNICEF procured 50,000 test kits, 390 oxygen concentrators, and US\$4.45 million worth of personal protective equipment (PPE) to support the Ministry of Health and Sports' COVID-19 response.

Due to the anticipated increased needs during COVID-19, UNICEF also provided additional life-saving supplies, including ready-to-use therapeutic food and therapeutic milk, and anthropometric equipment, as well as sanitation materials.

A total of 385,737 people, including 43,202 caregivers with children aged 0-23 months, were reached with nutrition promotion messages adapted to the COVID-19 context.

233,875 caregivers of children aged 0-23 months were reached with messages aiming to promote breastfeeding in the context of COVID-19.

Around 300 health workers were trained virtually on simplified nutrition protocols to enhance their capacities to provide nutrition services.

UNICEF supported the development of COVID-19 adapted nutrition guidelines that helped continuity of essential nutrition services, such as treatment of wasting and nutrition messaging to caregivers on infant and young child feeding.

➤ **EDUCATION:**

180,000 copies of the Myanmar language version of the Global Guidelines on COVID-19 Prevention and Controls in Schools were distributed to 58,728 schools, including in IDP camps and conflict-affected villages.

With funds from the Global Partnership for Education and other sources, UNICEF supported the roll-out of Mental Health and Psycho-Social Support services and referrals training, targeting 72,000 teachers in 65 'COVID-19 hotspot' priority townships across the country. The training sought to promote positive coping skills around COVID-19 among teachers and students.

Essential learning packages and school kits were distributed to 27 COVID-19-affected townships, targeting 120,000 students.

8,868 children received home-based learning materials and support in IDP camps in Rakhine, Kachin, Kayin and northern Shan States.

UNICEF supported the development of the Ministry of Education's COVID-19 response and recovery plan, in collaboration with other partners.



WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE:

Over 7,500 handwashing stations were installed in COVID-19 high-risk locations across Myanmar within the first months of the response, reaching 1.9 million people. To track the installation and functionality of the facilities, a RapidPro-based tracking tool was developed using the Viber app.

67,432 students from 317 schools and 27 health facilities were directly supported with basic WASH facilities like handwashing facilities with soap, safe drinking water, and gender-separated toilets.

1.5 million people were reached through COVID-19 response messages on hygiene and handwashing.



CHILD PROTECTION:

In order to enhance the national case management system to better respond to COVID-19, UNICEF, together with implementing partners, developed Guidelines on Case Management and Alternative Care amidst COVID-19 and trained more than 350 case managers and medical social workers.

UNICEF expanded Mental Health and Psychosocial Support services (MHPSS) and workforce capacity of Government and non-government partners, and supported two dedicated MHPSS helplines for children, caregivers and frontline workers reaching 75,352 children, caregivers and frontline workers.



SOCIAL PROTECTION:

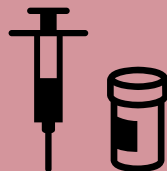
To mitigate the economic impact of the pandemic, UNICEF supported the expansion of the Mother and Child Cash Transfer (MCCT) programme with a one-off payment to an additional 272,000 pregnant women living in states and regions where MCCT is not being implemented.



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Improving the lives of children in their communities

Results 2020: Quick facts and figures



Nationwide immunization campaign reached **870,000** infants and adolescents with routine and new immunizations



9,953 children with Severe Acute Malnutrition were treated



26,639 pregnant and lactating women were provided with multiple micronutrient supplementation.



2,085 out-of-school children (1,041 girls) in northern townships of Rakhine State (Buthidaung and Maungdaw) received remedial education to prepare for formal school in a bid to bring children from different ethnic backgrounds to learn together

1,000 tablet devices using the Android operating system were provided to the Department of Alternative Education, supporting education for 3,400 children



43,382 people gained access to basic drinking-water supply services



130,164 people were directly supported with access to basic sanitation services



67,432 students from 317 schools and 27 health facilities were directly supported with basic WASH facilities



18,399 girls, boys and women received gender-based violence services, including awareness raising and survivor assistance.



Improving the lives of children in their communities

In 2020, UNICEF and its partners continued to support the delivery of services with a focus on the need to holistically address children's and adolescents' development following a life-cycle approach, and in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.



HEALTH AND NUTRITION:

The nationwide immunization campaign reached 870,000 infants with routine immunizations. Two new vaccines, Rotavirus and Human Papilloma Virus (HPV), were introduced nationwide in 2020.

9,953 children with Severe Acute Malnutrition were treated and UNICEF remained the sole provider of ready-to-use therapeutic food for treatment of Severe Acute Malnutrition in Rakhine, Chin, Kayin, and Shan States, and Magway and Ayeyarwady Regions.

Around 5.4 million children were reached with Vitamin A supplementation during the Nutrition Promotion month organized using COVID-19 infection prevention and control measures.



EDUCATION:

UNICEF developed home-based learning materials that were uploaded to the Government's platform.

1,000 tablet devices using the Android operating system were provided to the Department of Alternative Education through which education support was given to 3,400 children.

2,085 out of school children (1,041 girls) in northern townships of Rakhine State (Buthidaung and Maungdaw) received remedial education to prepare for formal school in a bid to bring children from different ethnic backgrounds to learn together.



WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE:

130,164 people were directly supported with access to basic sanitation services.

67,432 students from 317 schools and 27 health facilities were directly supported with basic WASH facilities.

43,382 people gained access to basic drinking-water supply services.

225 communities, comprising 105,178 people, were externally verified as open defecation-free villages.



CHILD PROTECTION:

18,399 girls, boys and women received gender-based violence services, including awareness raising and survivor assistance.

4.5 million people, including 1.6 million adolescents, were reached through a virtual campaign in support to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Elimination of Violence against Children by UNICEF and Plan International.



SOCIAL PROTECTION:

300,000 persons with disabilities, including children, benefited from a UNICEF-supported pilot programme on a registration and certification system for persons with disabilities in Kayin State, Yangon and Bago Regions.



BIRTH REGISTRATION

More than 3.3 million children's birth records were permanently archived in the Vital Registration E-Platform developed with UNICEF's support.



Rising to humanitarian challenges

Results 2020: Quick facts and figures



145,622 beneficiaries were reached with primary health care services, a 138 per cent achievement of the annual target



266,000 people were reached with humanitarian response activities



14,391 children aged 9-18 months were vaccinated against measles-95.9 per cent of the annual target-in humanitarian response areas



9,953 children with Severe Acute Malnutrition were reached with life-saving treatment



47,507 conflict-affected children were provided with education-in-emergency learning services and material supplies



3,900 township officials, head/teachers and parents in 39 townships were reached with student participation initiatives



58,000 people were reached with WASH interventions in communities across northern and central Rakhine State



63,450 conflict-affected children were provided with child protection services and supplies in Rakhine, Kachin and Shan States



16,404 children were provided with Explosive Ordnance Risk Education



7 children and youth were released from the Myanmar Army, bringing the total number to **1,243** since 2012



Rising to humanitarian challenges

In addition to providing life-saving services amid the COVID-19 pandemic, UNICEF continued to lead the WASH, Nutrition, Education and Child Protection clusters providing support for the overall strategic direction and strengthening of the humanitarian response.

➤ **HEALTH AND NUTRITION:**

A total of 145,622 beneficiaries were reached with primary health care services, which was more than the annual target.

44,471 children aged 6-59 months and 28,262 pregnant and breastfeeding women were reached with preventive nutrition services.

A total of 14,391 children aged 9-18 months were vaccinated against measles – 95.9 per cent of the annual target in humanitarian response areas.

➤ **EDUCATION:**

In Rakhine, Kachin and northern Shan States, 47,507 conflict-affected children were supported with education-in-emergency services and supplies.

3,900 township officials, head of schools, teachers and parents in 39 townships, mainly in Kachin State, were provided with student participation initiatives to help them encourage adolescent participation in school-based activities and increase community engagement.

➤ **WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE:**

Water quality testing was conducted in 72 schools and WASH infrastructure rehabilitation was completed in 74 schools in eight townships in Rakhine State.

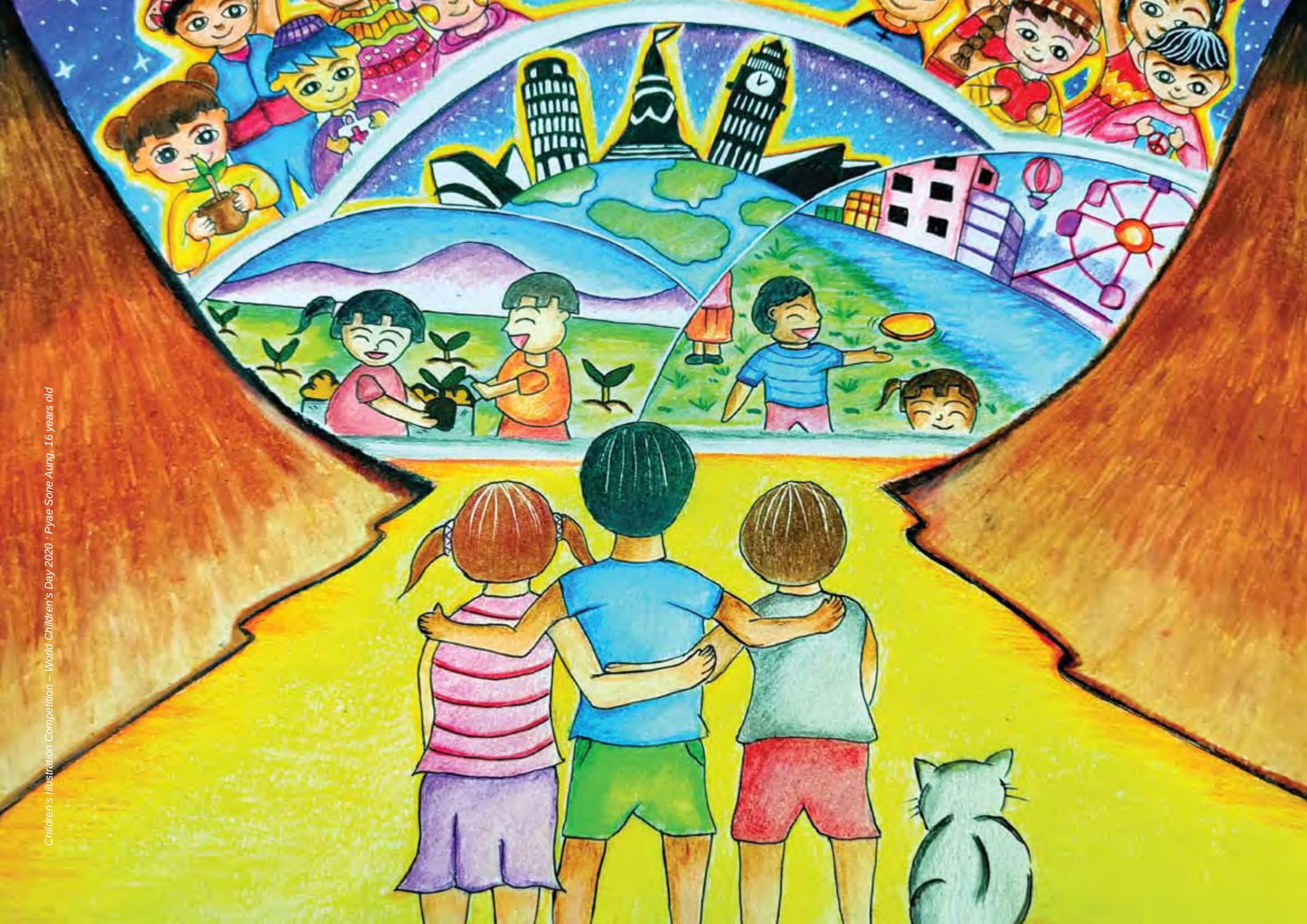
UNICEF-supported community WASH interventions such as construction and rehabilitation of water points, distribution of water filters, water boating and harvesting rainwater in communities across northern and central Rakhine State, reached almost 58,000 people.

660 emergency latrine stances were installed across 32 IDP sites, ensuring improved sanitation to 47,777 IDPs and host populations in Rakhine State.

➤ **CHILD PROTECTION:**

63,450 conflict-affected children in Rakhine, Kachin and Shan States accessed child protection services including Mental Health Services and Psycho-Social Support, case management services, and life skills interventions.

73 per cent of targeted children living in areas contaminated with landmines and other explosive weapons were provided with explosive ordnance risk education.



Strengthening systems

Robust systems are needed to deliver quality services and improve children's lives. In 2020, UNICEF supported the strengthening of national systems for health, education, water and sanitation, and child protection services.

➤ **HEALTH AND NUTRITION:**

UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health and Sports in the scale-up of integrated management of acute malnutrition and Infant and Young Child Feeding in Rakhine, Chin, Kayin, and Shan States, and Magway and Ayeyarwady Regions.

UNICEF supported the finalization of the implementation plan for Maternal, Infant and Child Nutrition (2021 – 2025) and the first integrated National Strategic Plan for Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (2021 – 2025).

Nutrition cluster coordination (NCC) training-of-trainers was organized in collaboration with the Global Nutrition Cluster for senior-level government and partner staff.

Nutrition in emergency guidelines were updated, incorporating COVID-19 infection, prevention and control measures and virtual training was provided to about 300 nutrition workers from government and INGO partners.

➤ **EDUCATION:**

With UNICEF's support, a national framework for equitable continuous professional development and in-service teacher education for basic education teachers was endorsed by the National Policy Education Commission.

To make schools more inclusive and violence-free for both girls and boys, UNICEF supported the finalization of the Positive Discipline Guideline and an accompanying training manual.

UNICEF provided technical assistance to the Department of Alternative Education to draft and finalize the Alternative Education Partnership Coordination Framework.

➤ **WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE:**

Through partnership with WaterAid, technical assistance was provided to the Department of Rural Development to strengthen the information management system.

UNICEF supported the Ministry of Health and Sports with the development of the National Rural Sanitation Policy and Costed Implementation Plan (2020 – 2030) and minimum guidelines on water sanitation and hygiene in health care facilities.

➤ **CHILD PROTECTION:**

With UNICEF's support the Rules and Procedures for the Child Rights Law and the Child Protection Policy were drafted.

UNICEF supported the strategy development and inception of the Social Service Workforce Strengthening Assessment.

With support from UNICEF, the implementation of the Social Model Assessment Tools for people with disabilities was initiated.

2,338 individuals (1,294 female) from Government departments, non-government organizations (NGOs), civil society organizations (CSOs,) and various volunteers received the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse online training for frontline workers in the Myanmar language.

➤ **SOCIAL PROTECTION:**

UNICEF provided technical and capacity strengthening support for the adoption of emerging technologies for social protection programmes like Mother and Child Cash Transfer, disability registration and certification of birth registration.



Understanding the situation of children

Evidence is vital for better understanding the situation of children and guiding action to help improve their lives through improved policies and budgets. In 2020, UNICEF contributed to strengthening national systems to generate high-quality data on the situation of children to inform policies and budget allocations on COVID-19, health and nutrition, education, water and sanitation, and child protection services.



OVERALL SITUATION OF CHILDREN:

With UNICEF's technical support, Myanmar established baseline data on globally comparable Sustainable Development Goals and Joint Monitoring Programme indicators, through a nationwide Inter-Censal Survey.



COVID-19:

Through monthly surveys and focus group discussions, UNICEF collected data from over 9,300 respondents to understand how the public experienced COVID-19. The findings informed several stakeholders in their creation of information materials that proved critical for all sectors, including health and nutrition, education, and water and sanitation.

To ensure community perceptions were taken into consideration for communication responses for COVID-19, phone interviews were conducted about COVID-19 perceptions and practices with over 1,500 respondents across the country. Insights from this data (especially from Rakhine State) were presented in the inter-agency RCCE working group, prompting immediate response including new infographics from the WHO, answering communities' requests for information.



HEALTH AND NUTRITION:

UNICEF and the National Nutrition Centre supported the Multi Sectoral National Plan of Action on Nutrition (MS-NPAN), including in undertaking a Nutrition Budget Analysis.



EDUCATION:

UNICEF finalized the second Education Budget Brief, with a stronger equity focus and using evidence to show linkages between per capita allocations in basic education and matriculation results.



WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE:

UNICEF supported the WASH analysis and financing of public expenditure in the rural water sector.



Mobilizing states and regions

UNICEF field offices, which are strategically located around Myanmar, help to boost outcomes for children, women and communities through strengthening government systems and services. The aim of this collaboration at regional/sub-national level is to support the delivery of sustainable results in the sectors of health, water and sanitation and child protection. In 2020, UNICEF increased its presence in the capital city, Nay Pyi Taw.

CHIN

Chin is one of Myanmar's least developed states, with the highest poverty rates of all states and regions (73 per cent in 2014). Close to six people in 10 are living below the poverty line. In a 2015 survey, almost 80 per cent of households surveyed had poor or borderline food security. One in 10 children are not expected to live to age five. Chin State's mountainous terrain and lack of infrastructure act as significant obstacles to improving service delivery. In 2020 southern Chin continued to experience armed conflict and displacement due to clashes between the Arakan Army and the Myanmar Army (Tatmadaw).

Key results:

- 162,849 items of COVID-19 information materials were distributed in nine townships, and home-based learning materials in four townships.
- 1,047 handwashing basins with 1,220 packs of soap, each containing 12 bars, were provided at 373 locations, and 500 individual hygiene kits were provided to people in quarantine centres in eight townships.
- 5,398 boys and girls aged 6-59 months were screened for malnutrition while 176 children with Moderate Acute Malnutrition were given treatment. A total of 3,429 boys and girls aged 6-59 months received micronutrient supplementation.
- 2,920 Essential Learning Packages, 20 recreation kits, 5 school kits, 8 school tents and 2,000 roofing sheets were provided for students in conflict-affected parts of Paletwa.
- Story books and a teacher's guide for kindergarten were translated into 30 ethnic languages in Chin and 10 languages for the Naga ethnic group.

KACHIN

Kachin State in the mountainous north of the country has a population of 1.64 million people and has suffered from renewed conflict between the Kachin Independence Army and the Myanmar Army since 2011. In 2020 although the intensity of armed clashes decreased, around 167,000 people remained in need of humanitarian support, including around 95,400 people in camps for the internally displaced, of whom almost 70 per cent were women and children. Approximately 40 per cent of the displaced are in remote locations in the eastern part of the State that are hard to reach, and access was further severely restricted this year due to COVID-19.

Key results:

- Integrated package of WASH, nutrition, child protection and health services reached over 19,500 children in hard-to-reach areas.
- 10,620 school-aged children were supported to access learning opportunities, including through the non-formal education programme.
- Mine Risk Education reached 20 per cent of the 30,000 target population.
- Lockdown restrictions led to the development of an online WASH School in Emergency course in collaboration with the State Department of Education.

RAKHINE

Rakhine State is the most western state in Myanmar, with a population of 3 million. Conflict between the Arakan Army and Myanmar Army grew in intensity in 2020, resulting in the displacement of approximately 100,000 predominantly ethnic Rakhine people by December, an increase of over 60,000 since the beginning of the year. There was little change for the 130,000 mainly Rohingya IDPs who have lived in displacement camps since 2012, and the additional 600,000 living in villages with severely restricted freedom of movement and access to basic services. Access restrictions remained in place in seven townships throughout the year, severely affecting assistance to an estimated 100,000 people.

Key results:

- Integrated health and nutrition services were delivered in fixed and mobile clinics in 20 IDP camps, 39 IDP sites, 52 village tracts and 161 villages in nine priority townships in central and northern Rakhine.
- Despite COVID-19, coverage for integrated nutrition services in Rakhine State increased from 159 to 185 locations, including 39 new IDP sites, across nine conflict-affected townships.
- 2,037 out-of-school children completed a Learning Together programme to strengthen social cohesion, in a programme targeting 40,500 students in 163 schools in 11 townships.
- In preparation for school reopening, 472 recreational kits and WASH supplies (hygiene kits, menstrual hygiene management kits, life straws) were distributed to 163 targeted schools.
- UNICEF's partnership with WFP for soap distribution reached more than 210,000 people in central and northern Rakhine State.
- Over 167,000 beneficiaries were reached with Maternal and Child Cash Transfers, with UNICEF support.
- Community-based, adolescent-led activities were repurposed to address issues of mental health, violence and abuse exacerbated during COVID-19.

SHAN

Shan State has the largest population of children of all Myanmar's states and regions. Shan has many remote, hard-to-reach areas as well as areas affected by violent conflict between Ethnic Armed Organizations and the Myanmar Army. Increasing conflict in northern Shan State has led to a deterioration in humanitarian access. In 2020 UNICEF's Shan team acted as a main supporter for coordinating migrant-focused COVID-19 social support initiatives among agencies and preparing a state-level response plan and resource mobilization. Over US\$1 million was mobilized from more than 40 agencies.

Key results:

- In northern Shan, UNICEF and partners continued to deliver humanitarian support to over 12,000 IDPs, including 4,800 children, as well as surrounding communities, including in hard-to reach areas with essential WASH services.
- 53,715 members of vulnerable communities from hard-to-reach areas in northern Shan received emergency WASH assistance in eight townships, including non-government-controlled regions.
- COVID-19 Information, Education and Communication materials were translated into at least 10 local ethnic languages in southern Shan. Materials were also distributed in soft and hard copies to Ethnic Health Organizations and Ethnic Community Based Organizations.
- The Mother and Child Cash Transfer programme supported more than 3,000 pregnant women and mothers.

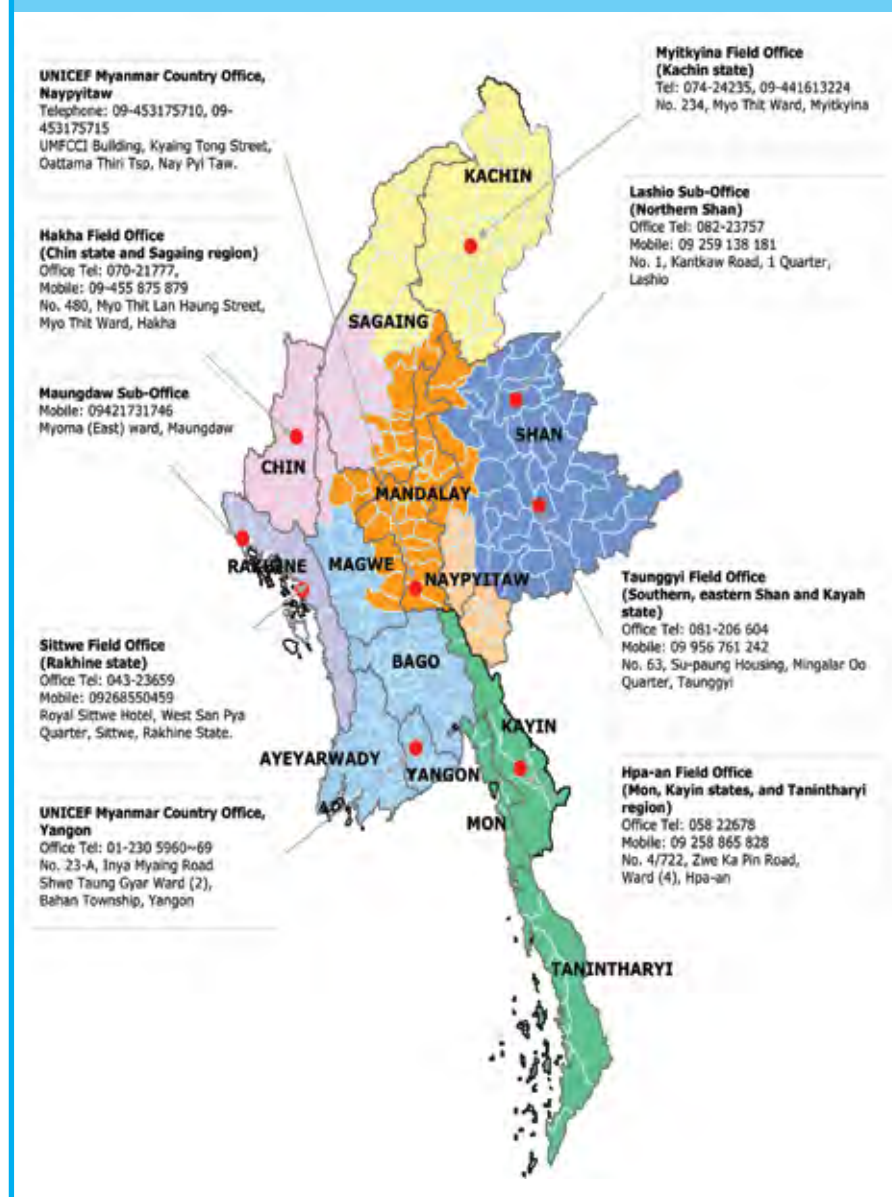
THE SOUTHEAST

Encompassing Kayin, Kayah and Mon States, Tanintharyi Region, and parts of eastern Bago Region and eastern and southern Shan State, the Southeast is home to around 11.5 million people of different ethnic groups and cultures. Parts of the Southeast have endured armed conflicts for decades. While ceasefires were in place, sporadic conflicts erupted during 2020, causing new displacements. Many areas are still heavily militarized, and landmines pose a constant danger. Based in Hpa-An, the capital of Kayin State, UNICEF works across a large territory with complex challenges including limited infrastructure and difficult terrain, with some areas coming under separate administrations. The return of thousands of migrant workers from Thailand saw cases of COVID-19 rise significantly in the Southeast during the latter part of 2020.

Key results:

- COVID-19 Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) materials were distributed to more than 3 million people.
- Cold chain expansion was carried out in Kayin and Mon States and Tanintharyi Region, including in non-government-controlled areas of Kayin State.
- Home-based learning materials were sent to 465 schools in Hpa-An Township, enabling 48,036 students to continue learning.
- 57,709 Essential Learning Packages were received by primary students in IDP camps.
- In Kayin State, more than 5,000 IDPs gained access to safe drinking water for domestic purposes.
- 176 trafficking victims, including 13 children, were supported, included with repatriation and reunification.

Location of UNICEF Field Offices in Myanmar



Yangon City Hall lights up in **blue** on the eve of **World Children's Day** to show Myanmar's support for child rights! **World Children's Day** is celebrated on 20 November each year to promote international togetherness, awareness among children worldwide, and improving children's welfare.



Promoting a culture of child rights

UNICEF's advocacy agenda focused on the COVID-19 response while maintaining the focus on other priorities including advocating for the rights of children affected by conflict, for expanded investment in every child, and for greater efforts to protect children from the socioeconomic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

ADVOCACY PRIORITIES

COVID-19 response: An advocacy and communication strategy for the COVID-19 pandemic was developed and implemented. The UNICEF Myanmar social media campaign "Start with yourself to prevent COVID-19" reached 10 million people by the end of the year. UNICEF identified social media influencers with a wide reach and pursued partnerships with them to share our social media messages through their accounts.

Ahead of the Union Parliamentary debate on the supplementary budget, an advocacy brief outlining key recommendations was distributed to Parliamentarians to highlight the need for the budget to be used to address the impacts of COVID-19.

Rakhine State: Focusing on the importance of education, UNICEF Myanmar finalized the joint advocacy strategy on education for Rohingya children in Rakhine State and in Cox's Bazaar with UNICEF Bangladesh. In March, UNICEF Chief of Education and Associate Director, Robert Jenkins, visited Rakhine State and advocated for making quality education available and accessible to every child in Myanmar a priority.

Children and Armed Conflict: In 2020, the UN Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR) on grave violations against children signed its first ever bilateral joint action plan with an Ethnic Armed Organization, the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA).

UNICEF issued multiple statements and social media posts in response to children being killed and maimed in conflict and advocated for a greater protection of children affected by conflict.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR ADVOCACY

In 2020, UNICEF continued to make strategic use of advocacy partnerships with the Union and State Parliaments and religious leaders, looking at alternative ways of engaging them during COVID-19 when face-to-face meetings were not possible.

In early February, UNICEF delivered a child rights training workshop for the Chin State Parliament as part of a systematic approach to build the relationships of all Field Offices with their state or region parliament.

UNICEF also engaged with the Union Parliament during discussions of the draft Education Bill in February.

VOICES OF ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH

Advocacy efforts around COVID-19 placed important emphasis on youth engagement to share accurate information on the pandemic, while also channelling the concerns and views of young people to policy makers.

The U-Report platform was sustained during the COVID-19 pandemic, using alternative ways to continue to recruit U-Reporters, and to engage them online rather than through face-to-face meetings.

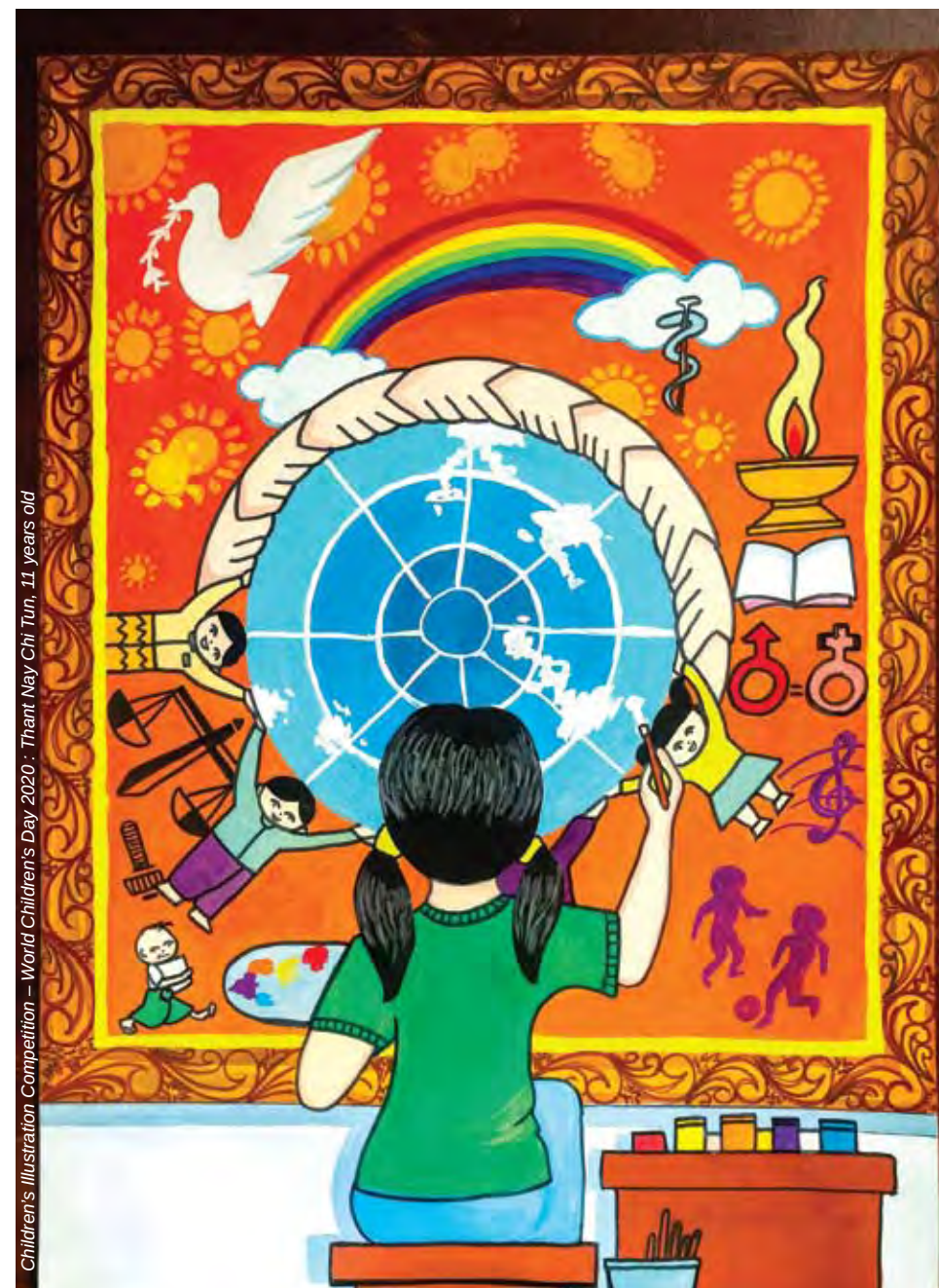
U-Reporters participated in surveys focusing on misinformation, with 67,635 messages sent on this topic to 35,000 U-Reporters, of whom approximately 10,000 actively participated.

A Viber bot was used to disseminate information and answer questions on COVID-19, with approximately 17,000 users submitting questions, to which almost 50,000 responses were provided.

MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

In 2020, UNICEF continued its engagement with national media with a focus on increasing awareness on COVID-19 and highlighting UNICEF's role in the fight against the pandemic. Simultaneously, UNICEF ran eight Facebook campaigns to generate awareness and behaviour change, each of which reached an average of 2 million people.

Public engagement through digital and social media increased with the efforts to increase information on COVID-19. Coverage of stories on the impact of UNICEF's support to children and families led to a significant increase in the number of website users from 60,496 in 2019, to 232,984 in 2020. Linked to this, the Myanmar Country Office's Facebook follower base increased from 94,180 in 2019 to 261,324, with almost 1 million people following the page at the end of 2020.



Children's Illustration Competition – World Children's Day 2020 : Thant Nay Chi Tun, 11 years old

Being fit for purpose

The rapidly changing nature of the country means UNICEF has needed over the years to constantly keep close oversight of programme direction, funds, and staffing, and be prepared to adjust as necessary. In 2020 UNICEF was able to rapidly repurpose its operations to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, scale up its approach to preparedness and response, and introduce several evidence-based programmatic innovations, including home-based education and an online WASH School in Emergency course.

The UNICEF Myanmar Country Team ensured business continuity of the office through alternative working arrangements, including working from home. Capacity for remote and virtual team collaboration increased significantly during the pandemic. Staff quickly became accustomed to holding meetings through online platforms, processing transactions electronically and accelerating certain transactions and processes.

Due to access restrictions, UNICEF pre-positioned essential health and nutrition supplies in hard-to-reach-areas; there was also increased use of RapidPro and Third-Party Monitoring for effective monitoring.

UNICEF Myanmar continued to participate in the United Nation's Operations Management Team, including in the working groups on finance, administration, human resources, information and communications technology, and procurement and logistics. The Business Operations Strategy version 2.0 was rolled out and is expected to generate US\$4.7 million in cost avoidance and savings during 2018 – 2024. UNICEF led on seven of the 32 service lines (cleaning service, fuel management, travel services, vehicle rental, capacity development activities, Harmonized Approach to Cash Transfers audit and micro-assessment).

In 2020, UNICEF Myanmar utilized US\$64.35 million, of which approximately US\$20.88 million went directly to humanitarian response. Of the US\$90.8 million revenue received, 15 per cent was in flexible regular resources received from UNICEF headquarters. In 2020, Myanmar (GAVI), Japan and USA (USAID) OFDA were the top three donors to UNICEF Myanmar.

UNICEF Myanmar has 222 staff:

	184 National		115 Female
	38 International		107 Male



Cooperating to advance children's rights

COVID-19 brought the need for strengthened collaboration with partners to ensure economies of scale and efficiency and effectiveness.

With an annual programme expenditure of US\$64.35 million, UNICEF managed a total of 64 strategic partnerships (with 20 government departments and 44 NGOs and other partners).

UNICEF collaborated with the WHO and the United Nations Office for Project Services to spearhead the procurement and distribution of COVID-19 test kits and personal protective equipment since the beginning of the pandemic. As the grant agent for GAVI, UNICEF teamed up with the WHO to support the Government to re-programme around US\$8 million for COVID-19 response and prepare its COVAX deployment plan.

Building on its long-standing support to the Government on Maternal and Child Cash Transfers and in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme and the International Labour Organization, UNICEF led the pillar on resilient and pro-poor social protection of the Socio-Economic Response Framework.

As the leading organization on behavioural change, UNICEF strengthened partnerships with the Government, research institutions and local organizations to scale up Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) activities within the framework of the national RCCE strategy.

UNICEF partnered with the Global Partnership for Education to ensure continuity of learning at scale by working on measures to retain students' learning achievements following COVID-19.

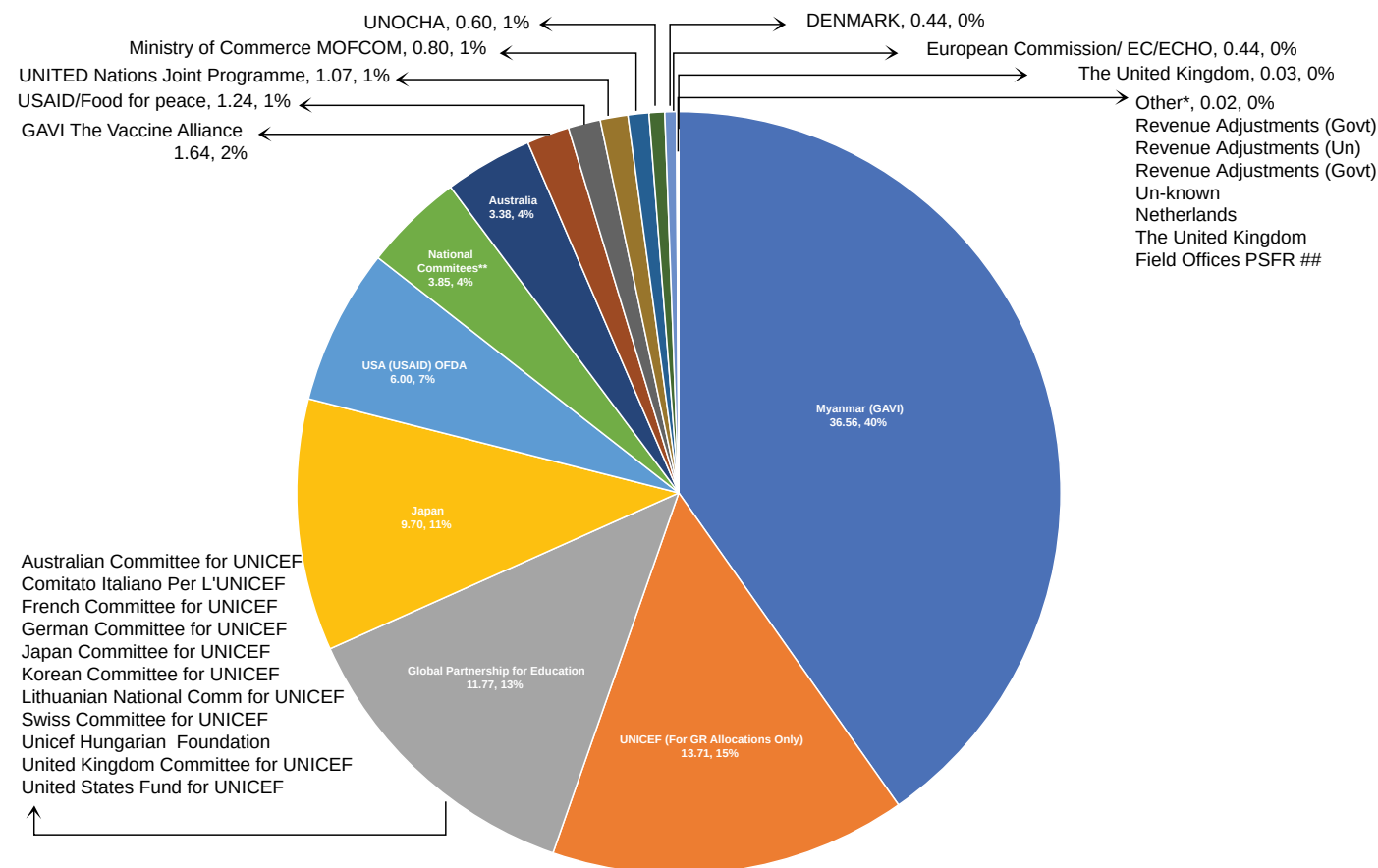
As chair of the Scaling up Nutrition UN Network comprising nine UN agencies and the World Bank, UNICEF facilitated joint UN action and coordination in support of the Multi-sectoral National Plan of Action for Nutrition.

Finally, the positive results of this report would not have been possible without the support of trusted resource partners that trusted UNICEF's capacity to deliver tangible results for the children of Myanmar and to advocate for their rights to access basic social services and protection regardless of race, sex, language, religion, ethnic origin, disability or birth status. For that we are most grateful.





In 2020 UNICEF Myanmar's programme was financed with support from:



Regular resources by contribution received globally, 2019 (in millions of US dollars)

Country	Regular Resources
Japan National Committee	118
United States of America	113
Republic of Korea National Committee	74
Germany	67
Spain National Committee	64
Sweden	63
United Kingdom	51.9
France National Committee	51.6
Norway	51.5
Germany National Committee	43

*2019 data



The illustrations contained in this report were created by children from across Myanmar as part of a competition held to celebrate World Children's Day 2020.

They depict children's hopes and dreams for the future of their communities and country.



for every child

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Children's Illustration Competition – World Children's Day 2020 : Jack AC Art, 18 years old