Delivering Change for Children
Supporting immediate humanitarian needs and long-term development

Challenges in Kachin State

Kachin State in northern Myanmar has a population of 1.6 million people, including around 600,000 children. Since 2011, armed conflict has resulted in around 97,000 people living in camps for the internally displaced. Conflict is also severely exacerbating the state’s chronic underdevelopment. Just under 30 percent of the population of Kachin State lives under the poverty line. There are 61 under-five child deaths per 1,000 live births. A total of 13 percent of children are underweight. Almost a quarter of households do not use improved water resources and 14.5 percent do not have access to improved sanitation. The State has among the highest number in Myanmar of children of all ages living in institutions. While primary school attendance is very high, only 70 percent of children complete primary school on time, and attendance drops steeply immediately after. Illegal drugs, trafficking, and landmine contamination add to the vulnerabilities many children face as they grow up.

How we help

In 2020 UNICEF plans to assist around 60,000 conflict and crisis-affected children with humanitarian interventions and another 45,000 children with long term initiatives in education, water and sanitation, health, and child protection.

Boosting Health and Nutrition

Humanitarian support for the most vulnerable. UNICEF supports emergency assistance to internally displaced people (IDPs) in government controlled and non-government-controlled areas. In 2019, 23,000 children under five and women received life-saving health and nutrition assistance. Almost 399 basic health staff in remote and conflict-affected areas received trainings to improve maternal, new-born and child health services. We provided oral rehydration sachets, zinc tablets, emergency health kits and child survival kits to camps in government-controlled areas through the Kachin State Health Department, while our CSO partners delivered similar materials in non-government-controlled areas. The nationwide Measles and Rubella immunization campaign in October/November reached over 130,000 children while an earlier campaign against crippling Polio reached over 155,000 children in Kachin State.

Improving Water and Sanitation

Supporting state-level and community ownership in WASH. UNICEF’s emergency support with partners includes community-based water and sanitation
programmes in IDP camps, including 34 camps in non-government-controlled areas and building the capacity of the Township WASH technical support committees. We support WASH initiatives in around 200 schools and health facilities in three Townships, based on the Global 3-Star or Thant Shin Approach, as part of our support for the Government to unfold the national WASH strategy for rural areas at state level. UNICEF in Kachin State is also helping develop a national guidebook on WASH in school.

Raising Education Outcomes

**Humanitarian assistance and long-term planning.** Together with partners including Karuna Mission for Social Solidarity (K MSS) and Kachin Baptist Convention (KBC), UNICEF’s support for education in IDP camps includes supplying education and recreational materials, providing space for learning activities, and opening opportunities for Early Childhood Care and Non-Formal Education for older children. As part of its backing for the whole-state approach to strengthening education in Kachin State, UNICEF also supports trainings for teachers, and township-led improvements to local curricula. In addition, UNICEF has supported the development of teaching and learning materials for young children in eleven ethnic languages and trained 55 teachers. UNICEF is exploring how boarding houses which serve as places of safety for children from conflict affected areas and enable children to continue learning can be supported while adhering to protection standards.

Strengthening Child Protection

**Protecting children from harm.** To build long term protections for children, UNICEF is supporting the Government and Partners in strengthening an integrated case management system to address cases of violence and abuse of children in a whole state approach. A child-friendly interview room has been provided and equipped for children in conflict with the law. A total of 344 members of government and NGOs were trained on child protection in emergencies, including on safe migration, youth engagement and psychosocial support. UNICEF also supports information and trainings on Mine Risk Education (MRE) and awareness. UNICEF continues to co-lead the UN Country Task Force on the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism on the six Grave Violations against Children under UN Security Council Resolution 1612 on Children in Armed Conflict.

**COVID-19 Response**

Since the first case of COVID-19 was confirmed in Myanmar on 23 March 2020, the number of cases has risen daily. Given the trend in other countries, there is a high risk that the number of cases will soar, and community transmission seems unavoidable. With limited health facilities and personnel, in particular in rural and/or conflict-affected townships in Kachin State, there is limited capacity to deal with a major disease outbreak. Overcrowding, movement restrictions and blocks on humanitarian aid leave IDPs, many of whom have underlying medical conditions, especially vulnerable to a virus outbreak. The existing health, social and economic vulnerabilities of children and families living in conflict-affected areas will be further compounded by exposure to the pandemic.

UNICEF is working with Ministry of Health and Sport, Department of Rural Development, Department of Social Welfare and other Government and NGO counterparts with a focus on Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE), as well as provision of essential life-saving services and supplies to fill critical gaps in delivery. This includes local procurement and distribution of Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials and WASH supplies, as well as technical assistance to local authorities and frontline staff.

Our team

UNICEF’s team in Kachin State is based in the state capital, Myitkyina. Our programmes cover all of the state, including Government and Non-government-controlled areas. We strive to reach all children in immediate need, especially the most vulnerable, and together with partners we are helping to build long term systems for sustainable, peaceful development that can benefit all children and all communities.

**Results for children in 2019**

- **Around 22,000 children under the age of five** and women received life-saving health and nutrition assistance
- **173,357** people received information on mine risks while **30** master trainers were trained.
- **Nearly 87,000 children and women in IDP camps and conflict-affected areas** accessed safe water, sanitation and hygiene
- **Nearly 9,000 children affected by emergencies** received psychosocial support
- **Nearly 10,000 children** received assistance to enable them to continue learning in emergency situations
- Water, sanitation and hand-washing facilities in over 100 schools benefited nearly **120,000 children and 758 teachers** in Waingmaw and Moynin townships