

60,363 Myanmar returnees

returned to Myanmar

2,623 returns to Kachin

mainly from China

6,808 quarantine facilities

nationwide

21 days of quarantine

required for migrants upon arrival



Migrants at an unofficial border crossing near Myawaddy, Kayin State. © IOM 2020/Lynn Phyo MAUNG

SITUATION OVERVIEW

As of 23 April, as based on available data, a total of 60,363 migrants had returned to Myanmar, with the number of official returns remaining very low due to the closure of the border, and with only a small number of returns permitted through the Three Pagodas Pass checkpoint.



IOM partner, Chin Human Rights Organization (CHRO), supporting the Falam Township COVID-19 Committee to install a community hand-washing station near Falam, Chin State. © CHRO 2020

However, a second influx of migrants returning from Thailand is expected in the coming days (estimated 20,000-50,000) and the real number of returns is almost certainly considerably higher if returns from other countries and through unofficial border crossings are included, with the State Counsellor having stated that total returns likely exceeded 150,000 in the two weeks prior to the Thingyan holidays.¹

Source: State Counsellor official Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/100049181212011/posts/122508329398540/?d=n>

There has been a large-scale influx of returnees to Kachin State, mainly from China, with an estimated 2,623 people having returned through Lweje so far according to data from the Department of Labour. They are being transported to Myitkyina and from there, to their communities of origin where they will be quarantined. The total number of migrants expected to return to Myanmar from China is between 10,000-18,000 by late April.

Migrants face several challenges upon arrival, including being required to quarantine for 21 days upon arrival, with most migrants primarily requested to quarantine in community-based quarantine facilities (mainly schools and monasteries). However, due to insufficient capacity, the majority of returnees have been practicing home-quarantining. A total of 6,808 quarantine facilities have been set-up nationwide.

UN CORE GROUP ON RETURNING MIGRANTS

IOM is coordinating the response of the United Nations to the situation of returning migrants in Myanmar through the UN Core Group on Returning Migrants.

The Group is coordinating on a rapid assessment and immediate assistance measures for returnees, including ensuring a consistent humanitarian assistance package during the quarantine period.

Based on the TORs finalized for the Core Group, agency focal points have been assigned at state and regional levels for Kayin (UNHCR), Mon (IOM), Shan (UNICEF), Kayah (UNHCR), Kachin (IOM and UNDP) and Rakhine (IOM) states, as well as Magway Region (IOM) so far.

IOM and CSO partners in Shan, Chin, Kayin, and Mon states and Magway, Mandalay and Ayeyarwady regions, with support from LIFT and in coordination with state and local authorities, continued distribution of hygiene kits, WASH supplies, and IEC materials on risk communication and reducing stigma to quarantine facilities and returning migrants, reaching a total of 48,583 (25,350 women, 23,233 men) since the beginning of April, primarily returning migrants from Thailand and China. In line with national preparedness plans and **with support from the Government of Japan, the Myanmar Humanitarian Fund and Access to Health**, IOM is also supporting the Ministry of Health and Sports and State/Region Health Departments in Kachin, Rakhine, Mon, Kayin and Yangon, in the logistics and procurement of supplies; in surveillance and health screenings for COVID-19 near points of entry; in liaison, coordination and partnerships with different actors, including ethnic health organisations; and in the development and distribution of risk communication and community engagement materials.

The UNOPS LIFT Fund worked with implementing partners to restructure their programmes in mid-March, reallocating USD 450,000 of existing project budgets to provide emergency assistance to migrants. Interventions in Yangon, Kayin, Mon, Shan, Tanintharyi, Bago, Chin, Mandalay, Magway and Ayeyarwady, reached 103,698 direct beneficiaries as of mid-April, and LIFT and its donors (United Kingdom, European Union, Switzerland, Australia, United States of America, Canada and Ireland) also mobilised an additional USD 3 million in funding at the end of March to scale up the COVID-19 response. This funding will be used to improve the effectiveness of Myanmar's response to the COVID-19 crisis, ameliorating its negative impacts on the health, livelihoods and human rights of vulnerable migrant populations around the country.

UNHCR is scaling up assistance to reach 11,600 people in Kachin, Kayin and Kayah states, as well as in Bago and Tanintharyi regions, through the provision of PPE, blankets and personal hygiene items to State Health Departments and community quarantine facilities. As of mid-April, UNHCR has provided 100 NFI kits to quarantine facilities in Myawaddy and Hlaing Bwe; 350 sets of IEC materials and 275 blankets to quarantine facilities in Myitkyina; 18 washing machines to the quarantine facility near the border crossing at Waingmaw; and 700 sets of blankets and mosquito nets to quarantine facilities under the General Administration Departments of Momauk and Bhamo.

ILO in coordination with local partners and supported by LIFT and AusAid, is providing hygiene kits and IEC materials on COVID-19 prevention in Kachin, Shan and Kayin states, in Bago

and Tanintharyi regions, as well as in Yangon, reaching an estimated 25,220 beneficiaries as of mid-April.

WFP is providing food assistance to returning migrants in quarantine centres in Kayin State in response to requests from the State Government, and on April 12, WFP donated 12.5 MT of rice for use at the Myawaddy gate quarantine facilities. WFP and partners plan to provide 53,000 beneficiaries in Kayin with food assistance by the end of June. WFP is also responding to requests from other state and regional governments, and in March it provided food to cover the needs of an estimated 4,000 returnees in quarantine under the Yangon Regional Health Department. All food assistance operations are accompanied by relevant IEC messaging on good nutrition practices.

UN Women and its partners are supporting 10 quarantine centers in Kayin State with financial support for PPE, IEC and dignity kits for women. UN Women also developed gender guidelines, codes of conduct and leaflets for quarantine centres in coordination with GBV, PSEA, ICCG and migration working groups, and these will be disseminated in the following weeks.



ILO partner, Confederation of Trade Unions of Myanmar, distributes masks and IEC materials in Bago Region. © ILO 2020

The GBV sub-sector, led by UNFPA, is updating the GBV referral pathways for Rakhine, Kachin, northern Shan and Kayin states. These GBV referral guidelines aim to action a survivor-centred GBV referral process, and UNFPA is also engaging in discussions with government, NGO and CSO partners on enhancing the access of returning migrants in quarantine centres to essential health services, including on SRHR, GBV and MHPSS. UNFPA is also working with the Department of Social Welfare to support women returning migrants, and it has provided dignity kits to women returning migrants in Muse; as well as an online training targeting government case managers on providing basic psychosocial support to GBV survivors in community quarantine centres.

IOM'S COVID-19 RESPONSE IS SUPPORTED BY...



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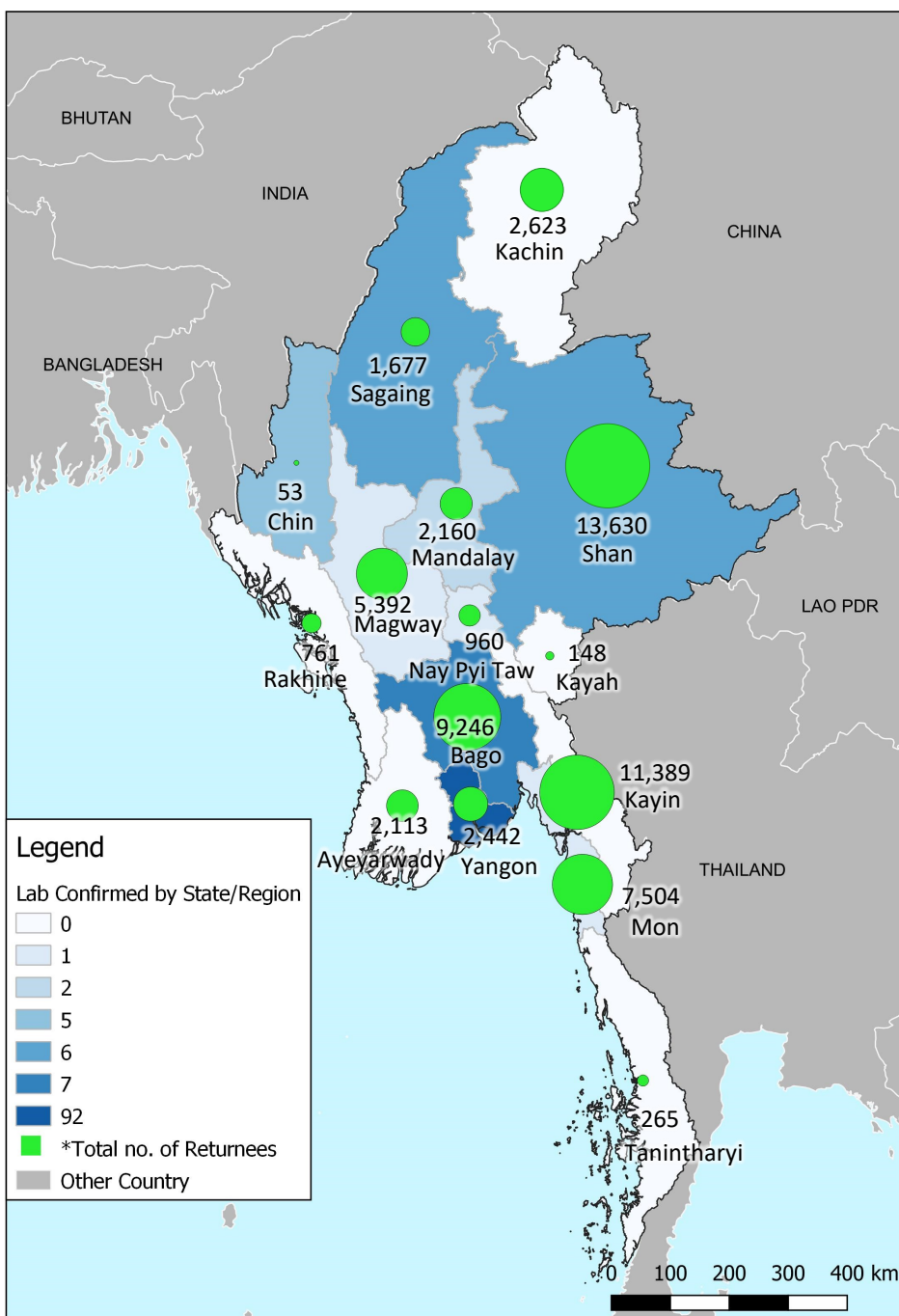
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COVID-19 Lab Confirmed Cases and Returnees Map

As of: 22 April 2020



State/ Region	PUI/ Suspected Cases by State/ Region Hospitals	No. of Township	Lab Confirmed	Death	Recovered	No. of Facilities Quarantine List	Total no. of quarantine people
Ayeyarwady	49	-	-	-	-	240	839
Bago	131	2	7	1	-	644	3,659
Chin	12	1	5	-	-	33	133
Kachin	17	-	-	-	-	408	5,082
Kayah	51	-	-	-	-	18	138
Kayin	66	-	-	-	-	425	2,913
Magway	80	1	1	-	-	1,755	8,754
Mandalay	254	2	2	-	1	762	3,814
Mon	69	1	1	-	-	149	1,784
Nay Pyi Taw	50	1	1	-	1	3	1,035
Rakhine	33	-	-	-	-	162	985
Sagaing	48	1	6	-	-	1,468	7,116
Shan	208	4	6	-	-	491	5,307
Tanintharyi	24	-	-	-	-	228	633
Yangon	997	23	92	4	7	22	1,346

Reference: WHO

Data source - CEU, DMS, NHL, States and Regions Health Department, MOHS, DOL. (as of: 20 April 2020)

*Migrant Returnees information as of: 16 March 2020 to 20 April 2020.

Disclaimer: This map is for illustration purposes only. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the International Organization for Migration