

Situation Report #3: Earthquake in Central Myanmar 2025



Providing clean water access: Water filters and bottled water were distributed to communities near the earthquake's epicentre. This initiative is part of a UNOPS-project reaching more than 4,500 impacted people.

Summary

- **One month after the devastating earthquake struck central Myanmar, UNOPS, through its programmes and partners, has mobilized US\$25 million and scaled up its response to reach half a million people with life-saving assistance.**
- **While immediate relief continues, the focus is increasingly shifting towards early recovery and urgently preparing communities for the impending monsoon season.**

Overview

One month on from the 7.7-magnitude earthquake and subsequent aftershocks that struck central Myanmar on 28 March 2025, the humanitarian situation remains critical. According to the latest publicly available figures (ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance - AHA Centre / OCHA), over 3,800 people have tragically lost their lives, more than 5,100 have been injured, and at least 116 remain missing. These figures are likely underestimates due to ongoing access and communication challenges.

The earthquakes have impacted vast areas across Sagaing, Mandalay, Magway, Bago, Shan, and Naypyitaw, home to over 28 million people. OCHA estimates over 17 million people live in the broadly affected townships, with more than 9 million in the hardest-hit zones requiring urgent support. Approximately 200,000 people are estimated to be displaced, with over 42,000 residing in temporary shelters.

Thousands live outdoors, in crowded displacement sites or makeshift arrangements, enduring extreme heat often exceeding 40°C. Widespread power outages and disruptions to water supplies persist, while severely hampered communication networks isolate communities. Significant damage to homes, schools (over 2,600 reported), health facilities (approx. 640 reported), religious buildings, and critical infrastructure like roads and water systems continues to impede relief efforts and daily life.

The destruction of agricultural infrastructure, including cropland and fisheries, threatens food security and livelihoods.

The disaster compounds an already complex humanitarian crisis marked by ongoing conflict and pre-existing vulnerabilities, pushing affected populations, especially women, children, and persons with disabilities, deeper into crisis. The fast-approaching monsoon season (May/June) poses an immediate threat of flooding, landslides, and disease outbreaks, making adequate shelter paramount.

Needs

- Urgent need for emergency shelter materials (tarpaulins, kits) and support for safer temporary and transitional housing solutions before the monsoon.
- Critical need for safe drinking water, repair of damaged water systems, emergency latrines, hygiene kits, and solid waste management support, especially in displacement sites.
- Continued need for primary healthcare, trauma care follow-up, essential medicines, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS), disease surveillance and prevention (malaria, waterborne diseases), and support for damaged health facilities.
- Immediate food assistance, support for restoring agricultural activities (seeds, fertilizer, and repairing irrigation), livestock support (feed, veterinary supplies), and recovery of fisheries (equipment, pond repair).
- Need for MHPSS, GBV prevention and response (safe spaces, support services).
- Debris clearance and management guidance, technical assistance for safe demolition and repairs, support for rebuilding infrastructure (especially critical facilities), and income support through cash-for-work programs.
- Communities urgently need information on building safety, simple repair techniques, safe debris management, and access to available support.

UNOPS Response

UNOPS Myanmar, leveraging its extensive presence and programmes and working through local and international partners, responded within hours of the earthquake. Thanks to donor flexibility and new contributions, UNOPS has reallocated and mobilized approximately **US\$25 million** for the response. Our reach scaled rapidly and is now estimated at **half a million people**.

UNOPS collaborates closely with UN agencies, OCHA-led clusters and implementing partners to ensure a coordinated and efficient response. Our response focuses on:

- **Immediate relief (ongoing):** Provision of multi-purpose cash assistance; distribution of emergency shelter materials (tarps, kits); delivery of safe water solutions (water trucking, filters, purification tablets); distribution of hygiene and dignity kits, blankets, food items, and mosquito nets; deployment of mobile medical teams providing primary health, first aid, trauma care, and referrals; expansion of MHPSS through various modalities.
- **Early recovery and infrastructure support:**
 - Deployed engineering teams (national and international specialists) conducted initial rapid visual assessments of critical infrastructure (schools, health facilities, community buildings) in six townships across earthquake affected areas. The assessments utilized ATC-20 methodology.
 - Providing communities with practical advice on safe debris management (sorting, reuse, disposal), guidance on safe, small-scale demolition, options for minor repairs.
 - Assessing damage and providing initial support to restore livelihoods, particularly focusing on agriculture and fisheries.
- **Media advocacy:** Increased external communications to highlight the situation, urgent needs, partner work, and the impact of donor contributions.

Challenges

- Security constraints, damaged roads requiring detours, bureaucratic impediments, and limited access hinder reach.
- Frequent aftershocks, extreme heat, the impending monsoon season, power outages, and severe telecommunications disruptions complicate logistics and service delivery.
- Debris removal remains a major challenge.
- Rising costs and availability of construction materials, fuel shortages impacting transport and facilities, and funding gaps limit the scale of response.
- There is a shortage of skilled labor (masons, engineers) for reconstruction, and communities lack knowledge of safe repair and retrofitting techniques.
- Ongoing conflict in some affected areas poses risks to civilians and responders.

Way forward

While immediate relief continues, UNOPS is transitioning towards early recovery and enhanced resilience:

- Supporting affected populations to secure safe and adequate shelter before the monsoon season arrives.
- Scaling up information campaigns on building safety and repair; establishing Technical Support Centres ('Safe Build Clinics') for community access to engineering advice and guidance; initiating mason training on improved construction techniques.
- Supporting wider, multi-sectoral damage and needs assessments for longer-term recovery programming.
- Connecting emergency support with activities to help families rebuild livelihoods, especially in agriculture and fisheries.

- Supporting development of a portal to manage assessed structures with the Early Recovery Cluster.
- Facilitating PSEA Train the Trainer in Mandalay with the PSEA Network.



Photo: UNOPS engineers conduct a Rapid Damage Assessment of a basic education middle school near the epicentre.

Further Information & Related Articles

- Statement (28 April 2025): *One month on: UNOPS scales up earthquake response in Myanmar* - Statement attributable to Sara Netzer, Country Director and Representative of UNOPS in Myanmar. [Link](#)
- News (01 April 2025): *In Myanmar, UNOPS mobilizes millions in funding for immediate earthquake response.* [Link](#)
- SitRep #2 [Link](#)
- SitRep #1 [Link](#)

Contact

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