

MYANMAR 2026 - 2029



COUNTRY PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

“A better quality of life for all in an urbanizing world.”





UN-Habitat ROAP Country Programme Overview

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CONTENT

1. INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 CURRENT CONTEXT OF POLYCRISIS	5
1.2 FACT SHEET	10
2. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	11
2.1 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORKS	13
2.2 ACTION PRIORITIES	16
3. PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS	17
3.1 WASH AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT	18
3.2 CLIMATE ACTION	20
4. FROM RELIEF TO RESILIENCE BUILDING: A FRAMEWORK EARTHQUAKE EARLY RECOVERY	26
4.1 POPULATION DISPLACEMENT	28
4.2 PUBLIC HEALTH AND DRR	31
4.3 CLIMATE RESILIENT SCHOOLS	35
4.4 LOCALLY-LED RESILIENCE BUILDING	39
4.5 RESILIENCE BUILDING FOR URBAN POOR	42

A woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a green and yellow patterned dress, stands in the foreground with her arms crossed. She has a serious expression. The background shows a cluttered outdoor area with makeshift structures made of wood and corrugated metal. There is a lot of debris on the ground, including sticks, branches, and trash. In the background, other people are visible: a woman in a blue shirt and yellow skirt, and a child. There are trees and a blue sky in the distance. The entire image has a blue tint.

1. Introduction

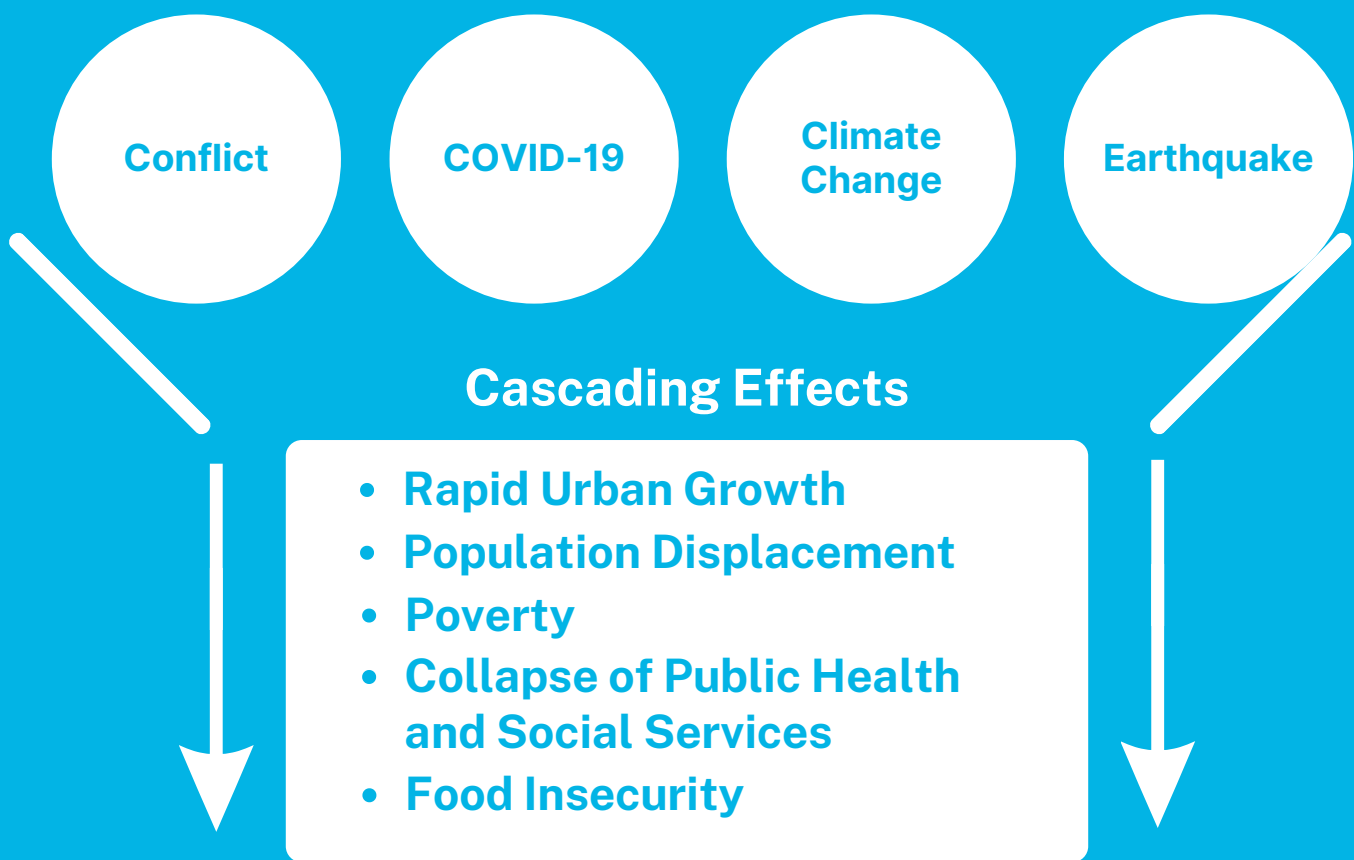


Pushing a waste collection cart in an informal settlement in Yangon

1.1 Current Context of Polycrisis

Myanmar is a country of vast diversity, beauty, and a wealth of natural resources, including oil, gas, mining, water, timber, land, and not least, a rich cultural heritage. Despite this, four years after the military takeover, the country experiences a severe and protracted multidimensional crisis, with **conflict-related displacement and socio-economic impacts** exacerbated by **climate change, particularly affecting the most vulnerable groups**. Recent and increasing population displacement is creating new pockets of vulnerability, with serious protection risks such as harm, abuse, exploitation, violence, limited access to basic services, acute food insecurity, and economic shocks. An estimated nearly 20 million people—more than a third of the total population—are currently in need of humanitarian aid. This figure is an increase of over one million compared to 2024, and includes 3.5 million internally displaced people as of February 2025.

Myanmar’s Polycrisis

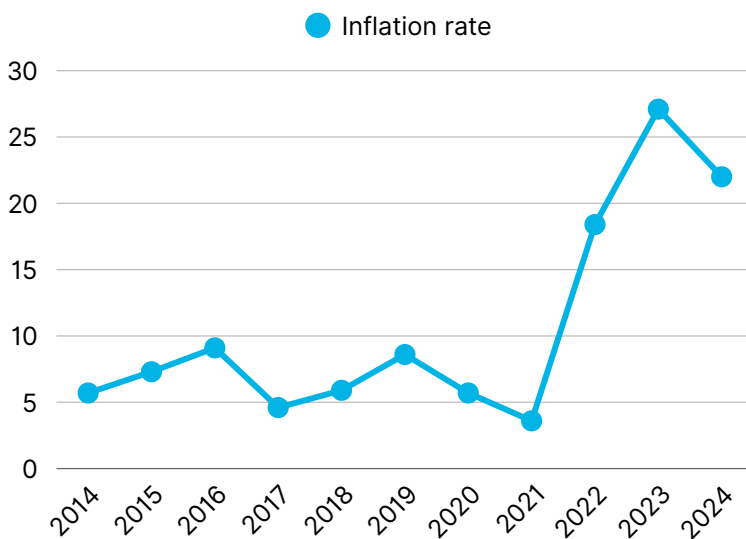


Urbanisation

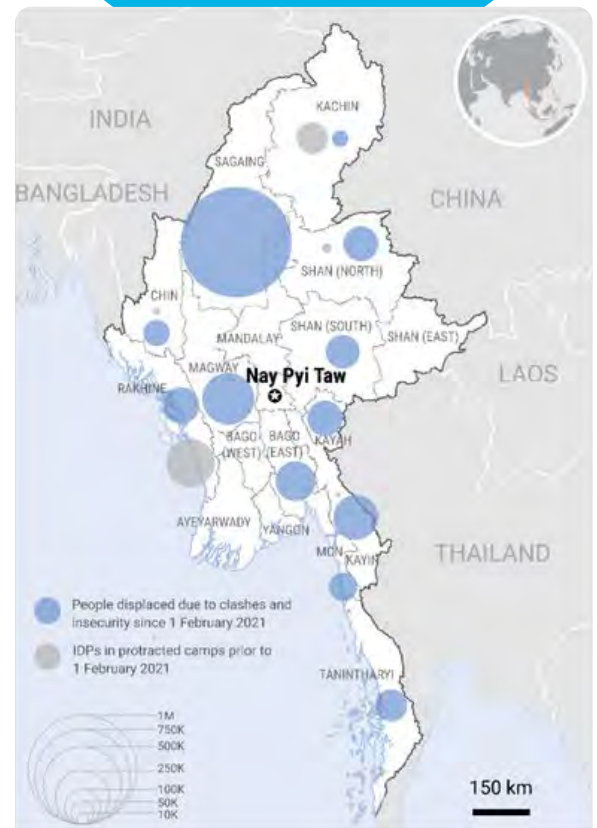
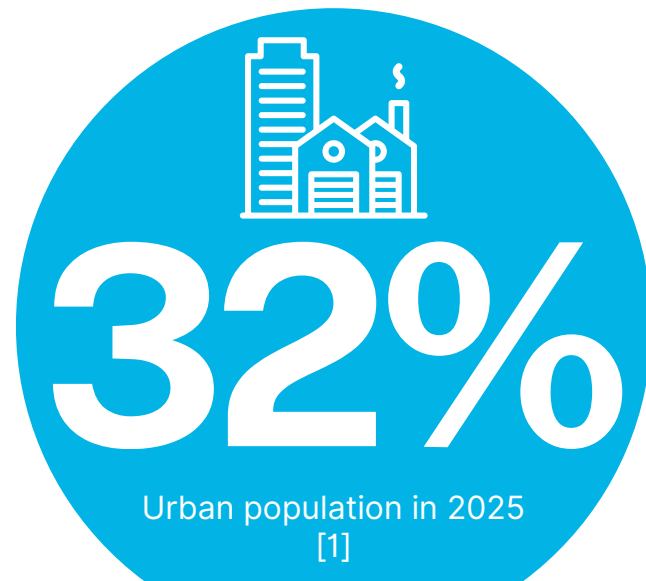
While only **32% of the population is estimated to live in urban areas**, urbanisation is occurring rapidly in Myanmar [1]. Most of the population growth is concentrated in the three biggest cities of the country—Yangon, Mandalay, and Nay Pyi Taw. The demand for basic services such as clean water, waste management, and electricity as well as shelter and housing in these areas is growing. As such, there are many opportunities to put sustainable urbanisation practices in place. However, as a result of affordable housing shortages, many displaced persons move into informal settlements, where they live **without secure tenure rights and basic services**.

Population Displacement

Since the coup in February 2021, the humanitarian crisis in Myanmar has continued to spiral. An **uptick in fighting in October 2023** has resulted in an **additional 700,000 people fleeing their homes**, bringing the total number of internally displaced people (IDP) to 3.5 million as of February 2025 [2]. The uptick in IDPs has resulted in increased urbanisation, particularly in informal settlements. This further strains basic services and infrastructure, which were already weakened by years of chronic underinvestment. Forced eviction for gentrification or land use change continues to decrease the existing low-cost housing stock and the adaptive capacity of informal settlements to absorb the population fleeing to cities. Meanwhile, the National Urban Policy (NUP)—and other policy instruments that would allow Myanmar to effectively manage its human settlement growth—has stalled since the military takeover.



The inflation rate peaked at 27.1% in 2023, the highest over 10 years, decreasing only slightly to 22% in 2024 [3].



Due to conflict, both before and after the 2021 military coup, a constantly growing number of people are displaced internally within Myanmar [2].

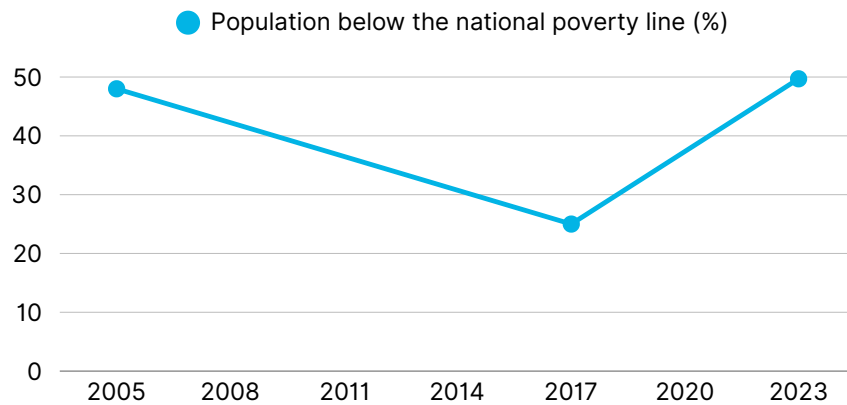
[1] World Bank, 2023; [2] UN Myanmar, 2025; [3] IMF, 2025

Economic Recovery

Myanmar is the only country in Southeast Asia to have not returned to pre-pandemic levels of economic activity. Compared to 2019, **GDP per capita remains 10% smaller and is only projected to grow about 1.1% in 2025**. Conflict has fueled economic uncertainty and led to increased labour and logistics costs. **Inflation reached 24.6% in March 2024**, with even higher rates projected for 2025. Persistent power outages have also had a negative impact on the economy, with 65% of firms surveyed by the World Bank in late 2024 reporting frequent, unplanned power blackouts affecting their operations [4]. Energy insecurity is in part attributable to the ongoing conflict, with authorities reporting **229 attacks on the power grid** from February 2021 to April 2023 [5].

Poverty

Development gains made before the COVID-19 pandemic have been lost. As a result of rapid economic growth, the percentage of the population below the national poverty line decreased from 48% in 2005 to 25% in 2017 [6]. However, **in 2023, the poverty rate has almost doubled to around 50%** compared to 2017 [7], demonstrating the devastating economic impact of the current multidimensional crisis in Myanmar.



The notable decrease in poverty in the 2000s and 2010s has reversed, rising back to 49.7% in 2023.



Housing conditions in informal settlements in Yangon

[4] World Bank, 2024; [5] World Bank, 2023; [6] World Bank, 2020; [7] UNDP, 2023

Climate Change

Myanmar is **one of the world's most climate vulnerable countries** considering both climate risk and coping capacity. Myanmar also experiences significant threats from natural disasters including cyclones, landslides, earthquakes, and droughts. Natural disasters alone cost Myanmar about 3% of its GDP every year [8].

1

Warming

In every region in Myanmar, **temperatures are expected to rise by the middle of the 21st century by 1.3°C–2.7°C**. The eastern and northern hilly regions are projected to see the most dramatic warming among all regions of Myanmar, with hot season average temperatures rising by up to 3°C [9].

2

Extreme Heat

During 1981–2010, Myanmar had about one day of extreme heat per month. In the future, projections show that Myanmar could experience anywhere from **four to 17 days of extreme heat each month**, with extreme heat anticipated to have negative impacts on agriculture [10].

3

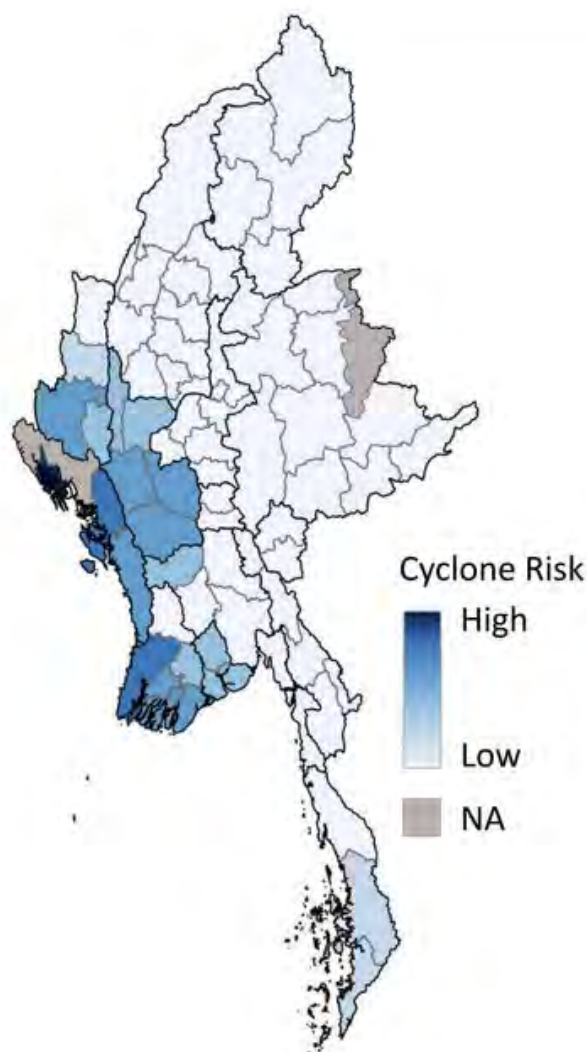
Cyclones

Climate change and environmental degradation are anticipated to intensify cyclones and increase risks for coastal communities, who are the most vulnerable to these extreme weather events [10]. Cyclone Mocha was the most impactful cyclone to hit the country in more than 15 years. Over **200,000 buildings were damaged or destroyed in Rakhine**, where over 70% of the total damage occurred. A total of **3.4 million people were highly impacted** and almost 1 million were evacuated [11].

4

Rainfall Patterns

Over the last 40 years, **rainfall has become more intense and more likely to cause damage**. Total annual rainfall has increased without an increase in the number of rainy days, indicating more intense rainfall. Intense rainfall paired with environmental degradation results in negative impacts such as **floods** and **decreased groundwater**. Meteorological **drought** is also associated with changing rainfall patterns and has cascading impacts on agriculture [12].

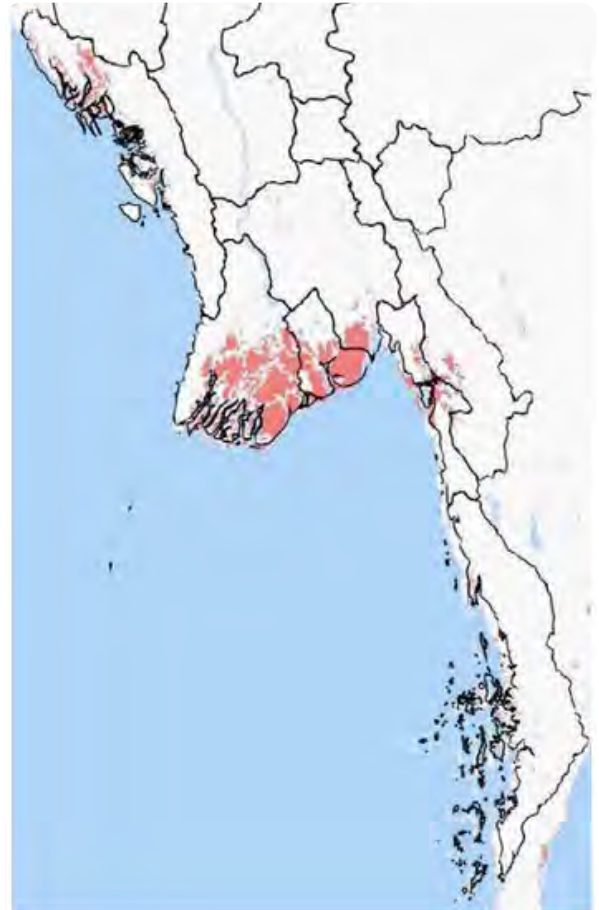


Cyclone risk based on storm surge and wind hazard [8]

5

Sea Level Rise

Sea level rise projections for the coastline range from **20 cm to 41 cm** by mid-century. Although projected changes in cyclone severity and frequency are still uncertain, coastal flooding both during and independent of cyclones will worsen as sea levels rise [13]. Rising sea levels can also cause salt water intrusion, threatening groundwater quality, farmers, and fishermen.



Projected sea level rise by 2050, based on the current trajectory of carbon emissions. [15]

6

Deforestation

While Myanmar has a high level of forest cover of around 11%, it also has a high estimated **deforestation rate between 1% and 2.5%** over the last 20 years. Deforestation threatens not only biodiversity, but also the ecosystems and households reliant on them. Mangroves in particular can play a large role in protecting coastal communities from natural disasters and extreme weather events. However, **mangroves are also the most rapidly disappearing forests** [14].



Youth Panel Discussion at Myanmar Climate Action Week 2023

[13] Horton et al., 2016; [14] De Alban et al., 2020; [15] Climate Central, 2022

1.2 Fact Sheet



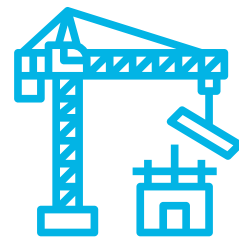
54.1M

Population [16]



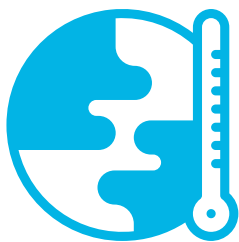
3.5M

Internally Displaced
People [17]



1.8%

Urban Population
Growth [18]



6th

most vulnerable country
to extreme weather
events [19]



1.1%

Annual GDP Growth
[20]



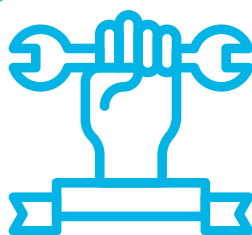
25.4%

inflation in March
2023 - March 2024
[21]



67

Life Expectancy [22]



59.3%

15-64 y/o in Labor
Force [23]



135

Nationally recognized
ethnic groups [24]

[16] World Bank, 2023; [17] UN Myanmar, 2025; [18] World Bank, 2023; [19] WRI 2024; [20] IMF, 2025; [21] World Bank, 2024;
[22] World Bank, 2023; [23] World Bank, 2023; [24] International IDEA, 2022

The background image shows two women, likely of Southeast Asian descent, focused on a task. The woman on the left is wearing a white patterned blouse and is writing on a piece of paper with a blue marker. The woman on the right is wearing a green patterned shawl over a white shirt and is looking down at the work. The entire image is covered with a semi-transparent blue filter. At the bottom, there are several white, wavy, line-art style decorative elements.

2. Strategic Priorities



UN-Habitat established a presence in Myanmar in the early 1990s through 2004 during which time the agency pioneered the "People's Process"—its flagship community-driven development philosophy—and implemented the first community-led projects in the Dry Zone, Shan State, and the Delta region. The country programme was re-established in 2008 in the context of Cyclone Nargis emergency response. Reconstruction and rehabilitation work followed the principles of Build Back Better by incorporating disaster resilient construction techniques. UN-Habitat continues to work in disaster risk reduction and sustainable urbanisation, while also addressing climate action and building resilience with direct input from local communities.



Post disaster WASH and hygiene awareness sessions



Solar Powered Water Pumping and Water Distribution Facility for earthquake affected community in Mandalay

Recent and Ongoing Work

Project	Duration
Project for Construction of Community Facility cum Evacuation Center	2021-2024
Water for Life Project	2025-2026
Myanmar Climate Change Alliance Phase 2	2021-2026

2.1 Strategic Frameworks

UN-Habitat Myanmar aligns its work within several operational and global frameworks. These frameworks guide the work the office undertakes to ensure the outcomes align with the broader international goals, as well as the goals of UN-Habitat and the UN in Myanmar.

Global Frameworks

Framework	Description	Programmatic Linkages
Sustainable Development Goals	The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 global objectives established by the UN General assembly in 2015 to tackle various social, economic, and environmental challenges, aiming to create a more equitable, inclusive, and sustainable world by 2030.	Custodian agency for SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities in addition to SDG 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, and 13.
New Urban Agenda	The New Urban Agenda, established at the Habitat III conference in 2016, aligns with SDG 11 and presents a strategy for sustainable urban development, particularly at the local level, while emphasising inclusive and resilient cities.	Sustainable urbanisation, climate adaptation and mitigation, basic services
The Paris Agreement	The Paris Agreement is an international treaty within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that aims to limit global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, with actions outlined in Nationally Determined Contributions.	Integration of climate concerns into programming, sustainable urbanisation, community resilience to climate change
Sendai Framework for DRR	The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction is a 2015 global agreement endorsed by the UN that focuses on reducing the risk of disasters and building resilience. It outlines understanding, improving governance to better manage, investing in, and enhancing preparation for disaster risk as priorities for action. It is guided by principles such as Build Back Better.	Support for better preparation for disaster risk and enhancing response, recovery, and resilience in communities
The Action Agenda on Internal Displacement	The Action Agenda on Internal Displacement was created by the UN Secretary-General in 2022 as a vision to better resolve, prevent, and address internal displacement crises. It was introduced to help IDPs find durable solutions, preventing new displacement crises, and ensuring effective protection and assistance for those facing displacement.	Assistance to IDPs and host communities and support for finding durable solutions to displacement
Convention on Biological Diversity	The four goals of the 2022 Global Biodiversity Framework are to protect and restore ecosystems, prosper with nature, share benefits fairly, and invest and collaborate to secure means of implementation for biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.	Supports communities' ability to meet their needs through sustainable use of natural resources and implementation of blue and green urban spaces and ecosystem-based adaptation

UN-Habitat Presence in Myanmar



Current Projects



Proposed Projects

UN-Habitat Strategic Plan (2026-2029)

The UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2026–2029 sets out a comprehensive framework to address the growing global housing and urban crisis, recognizing that nearly 2.8 billion people lack access to adequate housing, land, and basic services. At its core, the plan positions housing as a fundamental entry point for achieving sustainable development, human dignity, and resilience. It focuses on three interconnected impact areas: promoting inclusive prosperity and poverty reduction through improved access to housing and livelihoods; advancing climate action and environmental sustainability by supporting low-carbon, resilient urban development; and strengthening crisis response and recovery in contexts affected by conflict, displacement, and disasters. To deliver these outcomes, the plan emphasizes integrated urban and territorial planning, participatory and multi-level governance, strengthened data and knowledge systems, capacity building, and strategic partnerships, alongside enhanced resource mobilization. Overall, the strategy aims to transform cities into inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable spaces by translating global commitments such as the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda into practical, locally driven action.



Transitional Cooperation Framework (TCF)

The Transitional Cooperation Framework (TCF) for Myanmar serves as the UN in Myanmar’s strategic plan, addressing key development needs based on internal analysis and external stakeholder input. Priorities include saving lives, enhancing the resilience of essential services, empowering communities, and strengthening peace drivers. Given Myanmar’s unique circumstances and competing claims to authority, this two-year outlook focuses on delivering life-saving aid, essential services, and building resilience while countering human rights erosion in a multidimensional crisis. The framework seeks to create space for humanitarian assistance, basic services, and community resilience through a nexus approach, emphasizing collaboration with civil society, stakeholders, and development partners.

The Transitional Cooperation Framework (TCF) for Myanmar aligns strongly with the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan 2026–2029 in its focus on crisis response, essential services, and community resilience. Both frameworks prioritize life-saving support, resilient infrastructure, and recovery in crisis-affected contexts, while emphasizing people-centered, locally driven approaches through civil society and community engagement. The TCF’s nexus approach—linking humanitarian action, development, and resilience-building—directly reflects UN-Habitat’s integrated urban strategy, where housing, services, governance, and livelihoods are addressed together. Overall, the TCF can be seen as a country-level operationalization of UN-Habitat’s global strategic priorities, adapted to Myanmar’s complex and fragile context.

2.2 Action Priorities

Operating in a polycrisis with competing and overlapping demands in terms of humanitarian priorities, climate and biodiversity action, governance, and equity, requires comprehensive approaches. UN-Habitat Myanmar has outlined the following framework to organize and shape the work of the office in order to address the multidimensional crisis and its cascading effects in Myanmar. As an overarching intervention strategy, UN-Habitat in Myanmar is committed to promoting **community resilience** in order to ensure local communities' capacity to adjust to the overlapping shocks and impacts of the crisis. Under this broad goal, the framework includes four critical areas of work that are necessary to achieve community resilience: resilient infrastructure and shelter; socio-economic resilience; climate action and DRR; and inclusive communities.

Focus Area	Alignment with Proposed Activities
SP1: Housing, Land, Basic Services & Urban Environment	Activities on innovative construction, climate-resilient housing, WASH access, eco-villages, mangrove restoration, and resilient infrastructure directly support improved housing conditions, basic services, and environmental sustainability in vulnerable communities.
SP2: Planning, Finance Policy, Localization & Governance	GIS mapping, climate risk integration, participatory planning, and strengthening community capacity for project design and decision-making contribute to localized, inclusive, and risk-informed urban governance systems.
SP3: Knowledge, Data, Digitalization & Capacity Development	Climate vulnerability assessments, RS/GIS tools, climate modelling, and multi-level training programmes enhance data-driven decision-making, technical knowledge, and long-term capacity development.
SP4: Partnerships, Coalitions, Advocacy & Communication	Engagement with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), NGOs, private sector, MCAN, and collaboration with FAO/IOM, along with awareness campaigns and school outreach, strengthens multi-stakeholder partnerships, advocacy, and community engagement.
SP5: Technical Cooperation & Resource Mobilization	Demonstration projects (eco-villages, NbS, resilient construction), skills development, and access to financing support technical cooperation, innovation, scaling, and mobilization of resources for replication.

The background is an aerial photograph of a densely packed residential neighborhood. The roofs of the houses are visible, many of which are a dark blue or grey color. The overall image has a blue tint. At the bottom of the image, there are several white, wavy, horizontal lines that resemble topographical map contour lines or stylized waves.

3. Project Highlights

3.1 WASH and Waste Management

The project “**Building resilience against COVID-19 through WASH and waste management support in urban informal settlements**” began in March 2021. Based on the 2020 COVID-19 response survey in Yangon’s informal settlements, the project aims to increase community resilience, particularly in urban informal settlements. The project comprises of three sub-components:



Enhancing access to safe water and improved environmental sanitation



Improving solid waste management



Improving hygiene awareness and capacity of communities

The project has involved collaboration and knowledge exchange with the private sector and water experts in Myanmar, Japan, and Arcadis’ international team. Initial phases focused on controlling and reducing the transmission of COVID-19 through securing access to sustainable water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and solid waste management services. Schools, health centres, and vulnerable households were targeted with the aim of preventing further COVID-19 expansion within households and communities. This phase involved distributing information, education, and communication (IEC) materials, personal protective equipment (PPE), and masks within communities and schools. The project has additionally involved the installation of hand-washing stations, latrines, and water distribution systems, as well as solid waste management education and activities in communities and schools. Focus has also been placed on critical elements such as the integration of innovative water governance schemes and the inclusion of nature-based solutions such as rainwater harvesting.



Man sealing bottles of water from a newly constructed water supply system in an informal settlement in Yangon.



Drilling a well for a water supply system in an informal settlement in Yangon

Project Statistics

- 8 townships
- 45 locations
- 257 schools
- 42 community health clinics
- 22 water supply systems
- 120 household latrines
- 45 school latrines
- 1,039 hand-washing stations
- 21,030 households supplied with drinking water
- 4,150 home care support packages with PPE
- 139,364 reusable cloth masks given to students
- 22 locations served with SWM activities
- 25,000 households given IEC materials
- 170,777 students given IEC materials



Children washing their hands at a handwashing station in an informal settlement in Yangon

3.2 Climate Action

With financial support from the European Union, the **Myanmar Climate Change Alliance (MCCA)** programme entered Phase 2 in 2021 and was completed in 2026. MCCA2 aims to provide technical support to resilience planning at community level so as to guide mainstreaming of climate action into local level development planning. In order to deepen the understanding of community-based climate change adaptation and mitigation, and undertake gender responsive climate action at local level, the programme includes two main outputs:

1

Building of resilience at local level, considering the specific needs and demands of women and youth

2

Improved climate sector dialogue through knowledge generation, awareness raising and communication

MCCA Phase 1, which ran from 2013 to 2018, built awareness and advocacy capacity about climate change and supported the development of climate policy instruments. Additionally, MCCA1 piloted climate change vulnerability assessments and adaptation planning tools in three geographically distinct townships. Under Output 1, MCCA2 piloted a simplified community-based climate change vulnerability assessment tool through workshops in eight townships across the country including townships in Yangon, Shan State, the Dry Region, and the Ayeyarwady Region. The assessment tool has been used to develop local level climate action plans that empower communities to adapt and mitigate to climate hazards themselves.

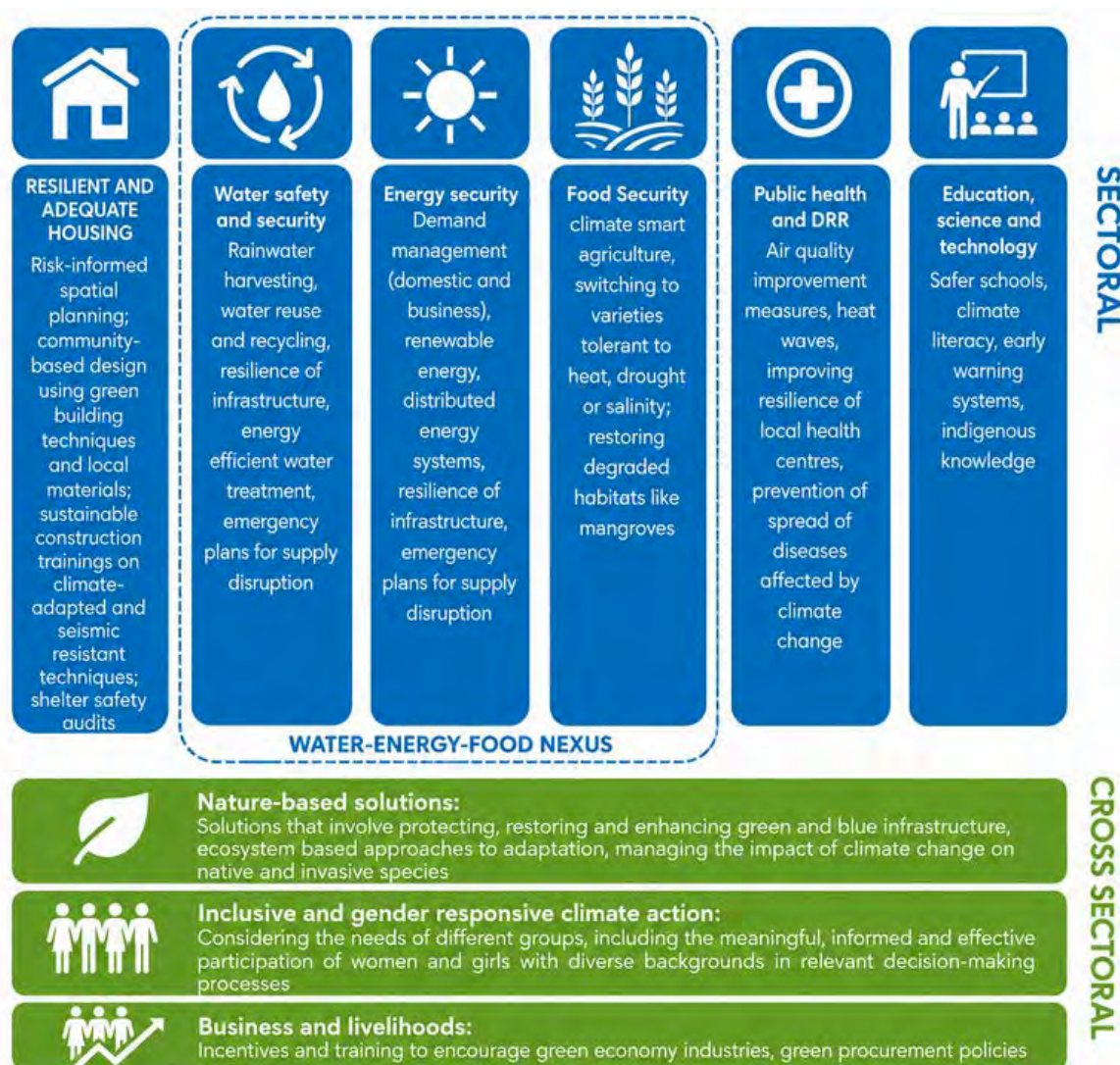


Flood resilient veneer shelter in Taung Gyi township

Several initiatives were carried out under output 2. In 2022, UN-Habitat worked with Myanmar Journalism Institute (MJI) to build the capacity of journalists on climate change reporting in Myanmar. A total of 30 stories and 2 video documentaries were created and by 31st December 2022, the published articles and stories had reached approximately 273,500 viewers. UN-Habitat also drafted a Climate Change Communication Strategy. The strategy was implemented through various initiatives, including plastic waste reduction campaigns at local supermarkets and art competitions advertised on social media. UN-Habitat additionally engaged with private sector actors in order to identify the ways in which they can contribute to climate action. A roundtable discussion on the topic was held on World Cities Day in October 2023 with 13 speakers and over 70 attendees. The results of this roundtable discussion were used to develop the following resilience building model.



Participatory climate hazard mapping sessions for Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment



The MCCA2 resilience building model is structured along six key sectors and 3 cross-sectoral themes. Local climate action is being promoted as a priority under these themes.



Household rainwater collection systems for vulnerable communities



Off-grid solar systems for community schools



Community mangrove restoration



Underground rainwater harvesting systems (Tametotto)



Community clean-up activities with School Eco Clubs

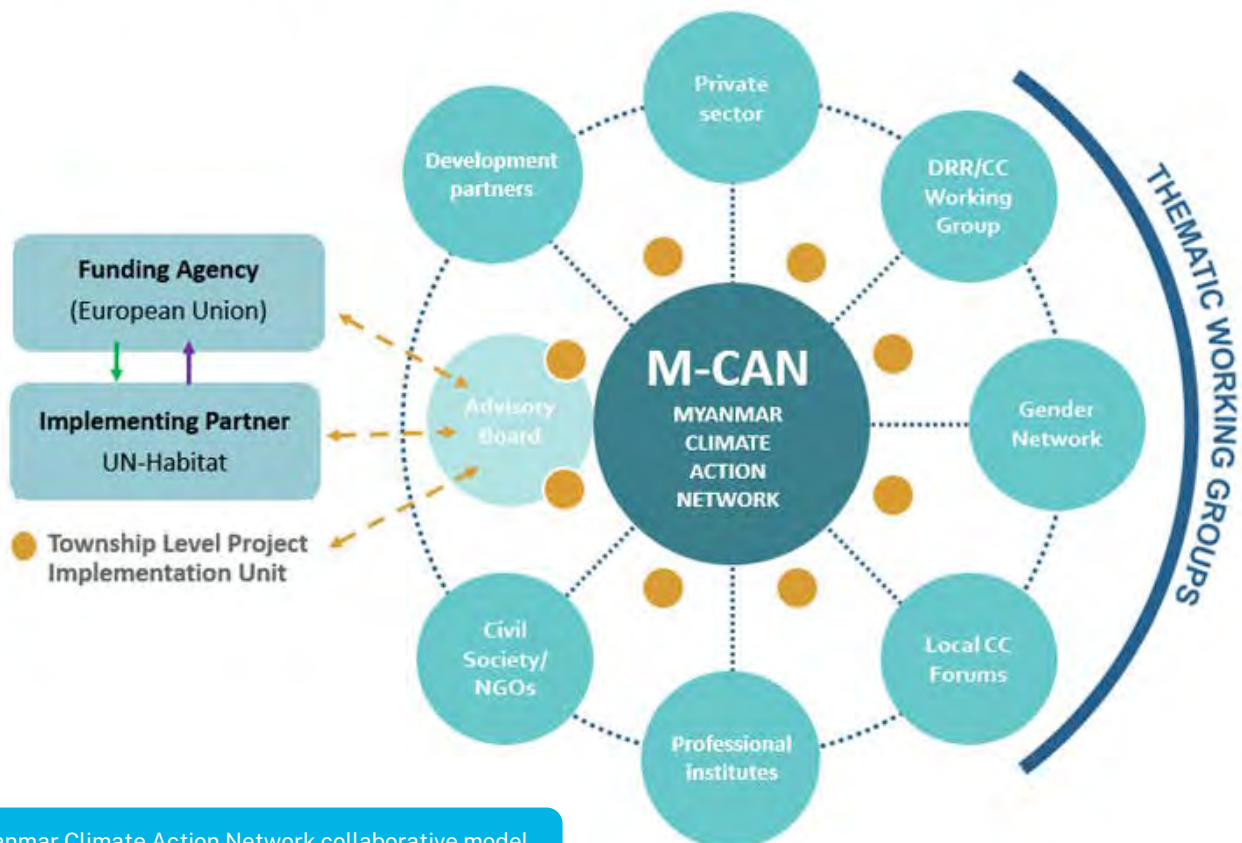


School level climate action planning and School Eco club formation

Also under MCCA2, the Myanmar Climate Action Network (M-CAN) was launched in March of 2023 during the first Myanmar Climate Action Week. The network aims to revitalise climate dialogue while creating a space where partners can work collaboratively to enhance awareness, dialogue, and local resilience to climate change. M-CAN includes over 200 non-state climate actors in Myanmar including community organizations, individuals, and private sector actors. A virtual knowledge hub has been created to provide open and improved access to climate change data and resources for all Myanmar citizens. These actions aim to mainstream the inclusion of diverse voices and local knowledge in climate action to ensure outcomes equitable, effective, and tailored to community needs.

“Indigenous people are also part of the solution because of the way we live in a sustainable and sufficient economy. We just need more of our voices heard and our role respected and to be part of planning and implementation at the international level...”

- Naw Ei Ei Min, Director of POINT, at Myanmar Climate Action Week 2023



Myanmar Climate Action Network collaborative model

3.3 Earthquake Recovery

On 28 March 2025, a devastating 7.7 magnitude earthquake struck central Myanmar, severely impacting Sagaing, Mandalay, and surrounding regions. The disaster compounded an already critical humanitarian situation, with nearly 20 million people in need of assistance prior to the earthquake. The crisis resulted in widespread destruction, with over 65,000 structures damaged or destroyed, and millions facing disrupted access to essential services such as water, sanitation, and healthcare.

More than 17.2 million people live in affected areas, with over 6 million in urgent need of humanitarian support, particularly in WASH (Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene). The collapse of water systems, overcrowding in temporary shelters, and damaged sanitation facilities significantly increased the risk of disease outbreaks such as cholera and diarrhea, while also heightening protection risks, especially for women and girls.

In response, UN-Habitat, with support from the Japan Habitat Association (JHA), implemented the Water for Life Project to address urgent WASH needs and support resilient recovery in earthquake-affected communities.

Project Overview

- Implementing Agency: UN-Habitat
- Donor: Japan Habitat Association (JHA)
- Budget: USD 78,000
- Duration: August 2025 – January 2026
- Target Areas: Mandalay Region and Sagaing Region
- Beneficiaries: Approximately 800 households (~4,000 people), prioritizing displaced and vulnerable populations



The project adopted an integrated, people-centered and resilience-based approach, combining infrastructure development with community engagement and behavioral change. Its key objectives were to:

- Restore access to safe water and sanitation
- Reduce public health risks and disease outbreaks
- Ensure gender-sensitive and inclusive WASH services
- Strengthen community ownership and local capacity
- Support early recovery and long-term resilience

A strong emphasis was placed on participatory planning, ensuring that interventions reflected local needs, cultural practices, and protection concerns

Key Components and Activities

Component 1: Access to Safe Water and Gender-Sensitive Sanitation

- Installation of solar-powered water pumping systems in off-grid areas
- Construction of disaster-resilient community water storage tanks
- Construction of gender-segregated, disaster-resilient latrines in monastic schools
- Application of safe siting principles to reduce health and protection risks
- These interventions ensured reliable, climate-resilient water access and improved sanitation conditions, particularly for vulnerable groups.

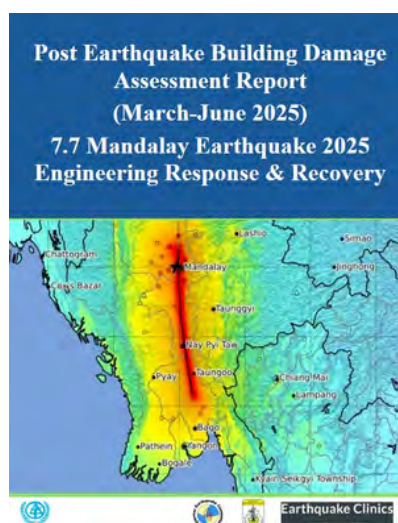
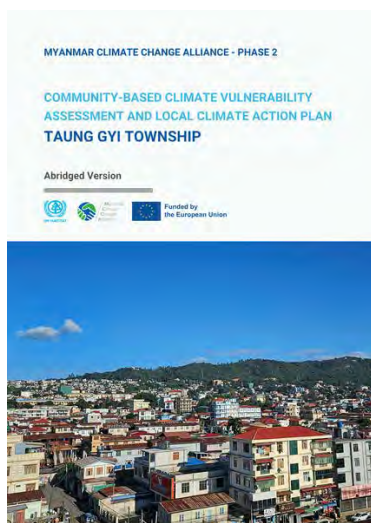
Component 2: Hygiene Promotion and Community-Led Waste Management

- Delivery of hygiene promotion campaigns focusing on handwashing, menstrual hygiene, and safe water use
- Distribution of gender-sensitive hygiene kits (soap, sanitary items, water containers, etc.)
- Implementation of community-led solid waste management (SWM) activities, including clean-up campaigns

These efforts reduced disease risks and improved environmental health in post-disaster settings.



Recent Publications

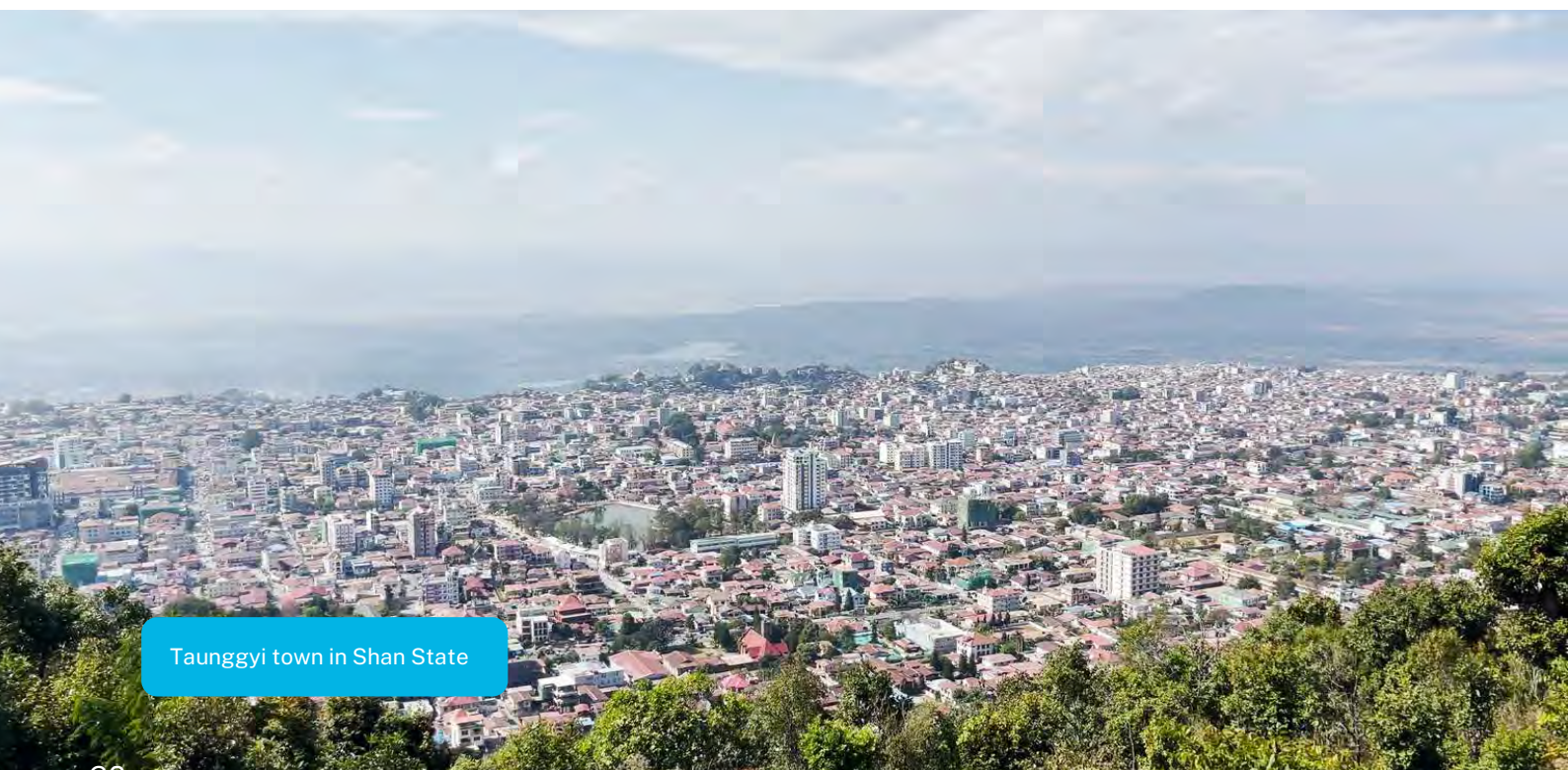




4. Future Areas of Work

Overview of Proposed Projects

Project	Duration	SGDs
Supporting Displaced People and Host Communities through Network Strengthening and Resilience Building	18 months	     
Strengthening Livelihoods and Food Security through Nature-based Solutions in Ayeyarwady Region, Myanmar	2 years	        
Resilient Schools and Disaster Risk Reduction in Myanmar	2 years	   
Building Community Resilience through Ecosystem Based Adaptation and Nature-based Solutions	3 years	       



Taunggyi town in Shan State

4.1 Population Displacement

Context

With 3.5 million displaced people in Myanmar—a number that continues to increase as the crisis intensifies—there is a desperate need to provide support to those affected. In addition to internal displacement, IOM monitored 1.3 million border crossings from Myanmar to Thailand in 2023, and estimates approximately 40,000 Myanmar nationals are leaving the country each month. With the recent enactment of the 2010 conscription law, internal and cross-border migration is expected to increase rapidly. The movements are disrupting internal and cross-border networks and making it more challenging for actors to collaborate across borders to protect human rights and promote inclusive, protected, empowered, and resilient communities. Migrants, IDPs and host communities are in acute need of support to protect and promote their human rights as well as their resilience, economic wellbeing, and social cohesion.

Project Details

Project Title	Supporting Displaced People and Host Communities through Network Strengthening and Resilience Building
Potential partners	Humanitarian cluster partners
Timeframe	18 months
Location	Southern Shan, Kayin, and Mon States
Est. Budget	2 M
Target Beneficiary Groups	Displaced people, host communities
SDG's	1 NO POVERTY 6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION 8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 13 CLIMATE ACTION



A farmer in Kalaw Township, Shan State, demonstrates the traditional method of planting garlic.

Project Overview

Purpose

This project will focus on building and strengthening the capacity and resilience of migrants, IDPs and host communities directly experiencing the effects of increasing displacement. A consortium of IOM, UN-Habitat and CSO partners propose to focus on enhancing networks between Myanmar and Thailand to strengthen coordinated, rights-based, and localized initiatives that protect human rights; strengthen community resilience and economic wellbeing; and address community resilience issues, particularly related to migration and displacement. The project will diversify and boost opportunities for building climate resilient communities and livelihoods and to strengthen social cohesion, community stabilization and peace among displaced and host communities, while ensuring inclusive representation of gender, youth, and persons with disability.

Description

The project is formulated to include activities that address issues that both displaced and host communities are facing while strengthening cross-border ties to the diaspora in Thailand.

Outcome 1 aims to strengthen sustainable cross-border networks for Myanmar-Thailand migration and displacement by facilitating information sharing and providing technical support to civil society partners on both sides. It includes enhancing cross-border referral networks, promoting cooperation with small grants, and engaging the cross-border diaspora for the resilience of civil society and human rights protections. Activities encompass peer-to-peer mentoring, capacity building for young diaspora leaders, and potential financial support to Myanmar's diaspora communities. The outcome will also focus on raising awareness of cross-cutting issues through collaboration with local partners and communities, addressing environmental human rights, climate justice, rights of minorities, and conflict resolution.

Outcome 2 concentrates on enhancing resilience, economic well-being, stabilization, social cohesion, and livelihoods in Southeast Myanmar's local communities. The project collaborates with CSOs and community leaders, providing continuous technical support and financial assistance based on capacity assessments. The outcome also emphasizes collaboration with ethnic groups and social and welfare groups for inclusive, rights-based approaches, supporting community resilience, inclusive governance, and small-scale projects. The outcome also includes building resilience and income opportunities for communities vulnerable to displacement and climate change through diversified livelihoods and skills building. Community resilience will also be enhanced through guidelines on sustainable housing, climate-smart infrastructure, and nature-based solutions, along with training for community groups, CSOs, and technical committees.

Expected Accomplishments

1

Strengthened cooperation networks facilitate the protection and promotion of human rights and participatory processes in Myanmar

2

Improved community resilience, economic well-being, stabilization, and cohesion in local communities in Southeast Myanmar

Strategy

CSO consortium partners are envisaged to include local community leaders, organizations, and departments, as well as additional Community-based Organizations (CBOs), women and youth groups, in collaboration with local authorities. The project will engage and strengthen existing networks on both sides of and across the border, including relevant CSO/NGO networks, Myanmar Climate Action Network (M-CAN), and existing cross-border coordination fora. These groups will receive organizational support, capacity building, and financial assistance to enhance their ability to support displaced groups and build inclusive, peaceful, and resilient communities. Project target areas in Myanmar will include Southern Shan, Kayin and Mon States, given their importance as regions with significant cross-border linkages and movements with Thailand, while also building on additional cross-border and regional networks as relevant.

Address linkage with the current SP and ROAP regional implementation plan

SP 1 and SP4

Strengthens capacity and increases resilience of conflict displaced people and their host communities



Loading drinking water onto water delivery cart in an informal settlement in Yangon

4.2 Nature-based Solutions for DRR

Context

The Ayeyarwady Region, also known as the Delta region of Myanmar, encompasses a vast coastal area with a complex network of waterways. Despite being agriculturally significant with rice production and fishing playing pivotal roles, the region faces challenges such as high poverty rates, limited healthcare access, malnutrition, and waterborne diseases. Vulnerability to climate change, including tropical cyclones and rising sea levels, poses severe threats, exemplified by the devastating impact of Cyclone Nargis in 2008. The region's mangroves—essential for coastal protection—are alarmingly diminishing due to deforestation for agriculture, with a 36 percent reduction in mangrove cover from 1996 to 2016. This project, based on a literature review and consultation with UN-Habitat's network, identifies the urgent needs of Bogale, Labutta, and Pyapon townships in the Ayeyarwady Region.

Project Details

Project Title	Strengthening Livelihoods and Food Security through Nature-based Solutions in Ayeyarwady Region, Myanmar
Potential Partners	Community volunteers, Community Development Committees (CDCs), CSOs, Sustainable Agriculture Center
Timeframe	2 years
Location	Bogale, Labutta, and Pyapon Townships
Est. Budget	\$2M USD
Target Beneficiary Groups	982,585 people (487,520 women, 2,400 students)
SDG's	        



Women in a group discussion for a climate change vulnerability assessment and local adaptation plan

Project Overview

Purpose

The project focuses on addressing the specific challenges faced by Bogale, Labutta, and Pyapon Townships in the Ayeyarwady Region. In Bogale, the transition area between floodplain and estuarine zones faces saltwater intrusion issues, and limited access to improved drinking water sources. Labutta, a low-lying area, experiences socio-economic and infrastructure challenges, with 75 percent of the population living in areas lacking basic health and education services. Pyapon, also low-lying, faces issues with safe sanitation and improved drinking water access. The project aims to benefit the entire community and vulnerable groups, including women, youth, small-scale producers, women-headed households, poor households, persons with disability, and students from six schools. Implemented by UN-Habitat through an inclusive and gender-responsive participatory approach, the project seeks to engage the community, reduce implementation costs, and utilise local labour and materials where possible. The ultimate goal is to indirectly benefit around 1 million people by enhancing the resilience of poor and vulnerable groups through better nutrition, increased food security, and sustainable livelihoods that are able to withstand shocks and stresses. These goals will be achieved by locally-led, climate-smart and nature-based initiatives. The project will have three strategic outcomes:

1

Improved nutritional status of vulnerable households through resilient small-scale infrastructures and increased food security

2

Improved livelihood strategies and income generation opportunities through livelihood diversification, including cash-for-work interventions and non-formal financial products

3

Increased community resilience through locally-led nature-based solutions (NbS) and community risk management

Address linkage with the current SP and ROAP regional implementation plan

SP 1

Improving climate resilience through nature-based solutions, strengthened livelihoods and income generation, and infrastructure for food security

Description

The proposed project in the Ayeyarwady Region aims to enhance the resilience of impoverished and vulnerable groups by focusing on nutrition improvement, ensuring food security, and promoting sustainable livelihoods through locally-led climate-smart and nature-based initiatives.

Outcome 1 focuses on empowering communities in Bogale, Labutta, and Pyapon townships by improving nutritional status and food security. This is achieved through the implementation of resilient small-scale infrastructures, such as irrigation systems, road segments, and rainwater harvesting tanks. These infrastructures not only prevent seasonal flooding and saltwater intrusion, but also enable farmers to practise double or triple cropping, thereby enhancing local agricultural productivity. The project also employs a cash-for-work program to engage community members in the construction and maintenance of these infrastructures, providing both economic opportunities and community development.

Outcome 2 targets improved livelihood strategies and income generation opportunities through diversification. The project recognizes that vulnerable groups often struggle to absorb economic shocks, so it supports them by exploring income-generation opportunities through livelihood diversification options. These options include ecosystem-based income-generation initiatives and vocational and skill training. Additionally, the project prioritises the upgrading and rehabilitation of coastal ponds and mangrove areas, with a focus on mud-crab culture. By providing support to casual labourers and small farmers, the project aims to enhance income opportunities and reduce dependence on a single income source, thereby improving the resilience of marginalised groups.

Outcome 3 emphasises increasing community resilience through locally-led nature-based solutions (NbS) and community risk management. The project supports the formation and strengthening of Community Development Committees (CDCs) to lead inclusive and gender-responsive NbS initiatives. This involves designing and implementing NbS aligned with the communities' specific needs and aspirations, as identified through Community-based Climate Vulnerability Assessments (CCVAs) and Local Community Action Plans (LCAPs). The project also addresses energy security issues by installing small solar panels in households, schools, and clinics to ensure access to information and minimise daily energy consumption. Furthermore, the project supports the establishment of community mangrove nurseries and constructs eco-friendly water supply systems in schools, promoting mangrove restoration, water conservation, and awareness on WASH practices.

Strategy

The strategy involves implementing resilient infrastructure in the form of small-scale irrigation systems, road segments, and rainwater harvesting tanks to enhance food security and prevent flooding in the target townships. Unskilled or semi-skilled individuals, especially women and youth, will be empowered through employment opportunities and skill development. Locally-led NbS and community risk management initiatives will be facilitated by strengthening CDCs and aligning nature-based solutions with community needs. The project also addresses energy security by installing small solar panels for households, schools, and clinics. Additionally, community mangrove nurseries and eco-friendly water supply systems in schools are part of the strategy to restore mangrove ecosystems, enhance access to potable water, and promote healthier communities. All construction works will be done and managed by the community and supported by cash-for-work interventions, contributing to community ownership and reducing implementation costs.

Mangrove restoration in Labutta, Ayeyarwady Region, under the MCCA programme



4.3 Climate Resilient Schools

Context

School communities can play an instrumental role in local level climate adaptation and resilience building. Preparing young generations is fundamental for building a climate resilient future in Myanmar. The school environment encourages school children and youth to change their attitudes and behaviour and enables them to be a part of the solutions while also empowering them to make informed decisions. Based on the recent experience of leading climate action in Myanmar, UN-Habitat has been assessing the needs and opportunities to support the education sector in addressing climate change. While Myanmar was classified as the second most climate affected country for the period from 2000 to 2019, there have been only marginal efforts in Myanmar to improve climate literacy at the school level to engage young people in addressing the climate crisis. It is critical to engage children in thinking and learning about the environment from early ages. While climate education can empower and motivate the younger

Project Details

Project Title	Resilient Schools and Disaster Risk Reduction in Myanmar
Potential Partners	CBOs, Schools, Parents and Teachers Associations, Community volunteers, CDCs.
Timeframe	2 years
Location	Private and/or monastic schools in Myanmar
Est. Budget	\$3M USD
Target Beneficiary Groups	School communities across Myanmar
SDG's	   

generations to promote climate action throughout their lives, the school communities can also be empowered to act. By designing and learning to make informed shared decisions about their physical environment, the school communities can also learn about the right to the city.



School children during climate change awareness session under MCCA2

Project Overview

Purpose

The project aims to foster climate resilience by engaging school children and youth, empowering and motivating them to take climate actions throughout their lives. The project specifically focuses on turning school children into climate ambassadors by involving them in thoughtful discussions and learning about the environment, implementing climate actions, and sharing knowledge among themselves and back to the communities where they reside. Through this project, we will identify opportunities for the education sector to take action, localise climate solutions, and prepare today's students to lead a sustainable future. The project envisions a future where Myanmar's schools serve as models for climate actions, climate solutions, and sustainability.

Description

The project is designed to formulate a school-level climate action plan with interconnected outcomes that collectively address the challenges of limited climate education, capacity building, and access to climate change-related knowledge at the school level.

The project is expected to enhance the knowledge of the school children by delivering a series of school awareness training by using age-appropriate knowledge materials and tools for school children and young people. The project will conduct complete capacity building training and outdoor activities tailored for teachers/educators and school children which focus on scientific knowledge of climate change, global and local climate impacts and nature-based solutions applicable at local level. In each school, relevant educators will be able to continue to engage in teaching the rising generation of students to be better equipped to address climate change.

The project will initiate climate action planning at school level through active engagement of relevant local climate actors: Analysing the challenges in relation with lack of awareness and action on climate change and opportunities for improving climate change education and actions in schools. Based on the analysis, the project will provide clear recommendations on both soft interventions and hard interventions on how the schools can be empowered to play a role in local level climate adaptation and resilience building.

Following the recommendations, the project will implement the prioritised interventions of the school climate action plan with the support of school children, teachers, youth groups, local NGOs/CSOs, and communities, among others. The project will implement resilient school retrofitting pilot projects tailored to the conditions of each selected school, such as rainwater harvesting facilities, solar power systems, sustainable school gardening and campus composting, and climate education learning grounds. In these interventions, school children, teachers, and community members can have active peer learning experiences. These initiatives will later serve as 3D textbooks defining environmental sustainability and climate change resilience.

Address linkage with the current SP and ROAP regional implementation plan

SP 1 and SP 3

Addresses resilience, adaptation, and mitigation actions for sustainable and resilient schools

Expected Accomplishments

1

Strengthened the knowledge of Myanmar’s young generation on climate change and natural disasters to better respond to local climate impacts

2

Enhanced school-led adaptation and resilient building participatory interventions contextualised to each selected school to create climate resilient school infrastructures or spaces so that the children and communities can gradually move towards more complex ideas about climate change, the causes, impacts, and what they can do to help reduce it or adapt the changes

3

Model schools for climate actions, where the youths and communities can further build lasting change to advance a sustainable future

Strategy

Under this project, UN-Habitat will collaborate with selected private or monastic schools in cyclone-affected areas to develop a school-level climate action plan. This plan will encompass short-term and medium-term goals, focusing on enhancing local planning for climate actions. To ensure the success of this plan, UN-Habitat will work in conjunction with school leaders, educators, students, families, and communities. The project aims to position the schools as "learning and demonstration centres" for climate change, benefiting school children, youth, and communities. It strives to promote participatory approaches and intergenerational dialogues, which are crucial for encouraging climate actions. The project will specifically target middle schools (grades 6 to 9) and high schools (grades 10 and 11) to elevate climate awareness and effectively engage school children in addressing climate challenges.



Community manager at newly constructed water supply system in an informal settlement in Yangon

4.4 Ecovillages for Resilient Communities

Context

The UN estimates that urban poverty in Myanmar has tripled under the combined impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing political crisis. Debt levels of households have risen exponentially. Job losses, along with continued imposition of martial law from early 2021, has hindered people's access to work and exacerbated vulnerabilities. Additionally, climate change and the increasing rate and severity of natural disasters are impacting the viability of some traditional livelihoods. With these combined threats, communities' resilience and ability to cope and adapt is low. Among the hardest hit population are those living in informal settlements. Settlers often experience a high level of mobility as a result of their inability to pay rent and repay debts, as well as forced evictions. A sense of insecurity prevails, causing social problems and tensions and leading to lack of social cohesion, low-trust and isolation. Women and children are disproportionately affected by these challenges, with women more

Project Details

Project Title	Building Community Resilience through Ecosystem-based Adaptation and Nature-based Solutions
Potential Partners	UN Women, private sector, CBOs, Community volunteers, CDCs, Women Entrepreneurship Network
Timeframe	3 years
Location	Country wide
Est. Budget	\$ 3M USD
Target Beneficiary Groups	470,000 residents in informal settlements (300,000 direct beneficiaries & 170,000 indirect beneficiaries)
SDG's	

likely to be engaged in vulnerable employment and over-represented in sectors heavily impacted by the crisis.



Water committee members in Dagon Seikkan township in Yangon

Project Overview

Purpose

This project aims to address some of the most prevalent urban poverty issues through the reinforcement of community resilience, adopting principles of ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) and nature-based solutions (NbS). The overarching goal is to foster community resilience, by integrating socioeconomic and environmental regenerative action, encompassing climate-resilient infrastructure and services. This includes initiatives such as enhanced drainage systems, flood protection measures, and improved access to reliable, safe drinking water. Furthermore, the programme will strive to elevate livelihoods and enhance the income-earning potential of individuals within these communities. This holistic approach encompasses strategic support to micro and small enterprises, designed to align with the natural environment and promote sustainability. Additionally, the initiative incorporates comprehensive vocational and skills training programs that harness the inherent benefits of nature-based solutions, ensuring that community members acquire skills that resonate with the local ecology. The program includes three main components:

1

Communities empowered to undertake inclusive, participatory development and basic service delivery through EbA and NbS

2

Climate resilient community infrastructures for the most vulnerable upgraded /developed following principles of EbA and NbS

3

Improved livelihoods and economic well-being, with particular focus on women, youth and girls

Linkage with the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan

SP 1, SP 3, SP 4

Improves accessibility of WASH, livelihoods, and economic well-being to the poor and vulnerable people

Creation of climate resilient community infrastructures for the most vulnerable including drainage systems, flood protection, access paths and roads via EbA and NbS

Description

The programme will function as a UN joint programme involving UN-Habitat and UN Women. The programme adopts a "by community, for community" approach, placing communities in the selected townships at the centre of all planned resilience measures. The program builds upon recent initiatives in Yangon, such as UN-Habitat's project on "Building resilience to COVID-19 through WASH and waste management support in informal settlements (2020-24)" and the "Myanmar Climate Change Alliance Phase 2". These projects have piloted solutions to delivering basic services and community based climate action and adaptation respectively. This programme will continue these works through increased integration of EbA and NbS principles. UN Women will collaborate closely with UN-Habitat to ensure gender mainstreaming in all activities and implement activities targeted at women in all areas.

Strategy

The programme strategy will be based on direct interaction with the selected communities, leveraging UN-Habitat community volunteer groups established under pre-existing programs and expanding to develop new community groups. The assumption guiding the programme is that individuals residing in the selected areas (e.g., informal settlements and their immediate vicinity) are motivated by specific developmental interests, making them willing to form groups around these common interests. For instance, communities affected by water supply shortages will be motivated to address this issue, while communities interested in specific income-generating activities will form special interest groups, and so forth. The programme will directly address these interests via the application of applicable EbA and NbS solutions, supported through private sector collaboration. The programme additionally aims to establish these new community groups with a gender-balanced approach, also encouraging a women- and youth-led approach to promote gender and youth-responsive climate action at the local level.



Girl in agricultural field in Taunggyi, Myanmar

4.5 Resilience Building for Urban Poor

Context

On the afternoon of March 28, 2025, a catastrophic magnitude 7.7 earthquake struck central Myanmar, with its epicenter located near Mandalay. A powerful magnitude 6.4 aftershock followed just 12 minutes later. The shallow depth of 10 kilometers amplified the seismic impact, resulting in extensive destruction across multiple regions including Sagaing, Mandalay, Naypyidaw, Bago, Magway, and portions of Shan State.

The earthquake's impact varied significantly across different population groups, revealing complex multi-hazard vulnerabilities and cascading risks throughout affected communities. Urban poor populations residing in informal settlements with limited access to basic services experienced disproportionately severe consequences. Women, children, and those dependent on informal livelihoods were particularly vulnerable, facing compounded challenges due to their precarious living conditions and limited resources for early recovery and resilience building.

Overview

Than Hlyat Maw (West) Ward, located in Maha Aung Myay Township, Mandalay, is a densely populated urban settlement housing 31,333 residents across 6,270 households. With a population density of 16,288 persons/km², it represents the township's second-largest ward, characterized by concentrated low-income and informal households living below the national poverty threshold.



Linkage with the UN-Habitat Strategic Plan

SP 1 and SP 4

Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction, Recovery and Resilience building through an area-based approach.



People living in the relief camp exposed to severe weather conditions.

The earthquake's impact on Than Hlyat Maw (West) Ward was severe and widespread, affecting over 400 households and displacing approximately 1,800 to 2,000 residents. The disaster completely destroyed traditional bamboo and wooden structures with corrugated iron roofing, while concrete buildings suffered significant damage and were declared unsafe for habitation. This extensive structural damage left the majority of the community without adequate housing.

Critical infrastructure systems was adversely affected and the disaster revealed fundamental community vulnerabilities including widespread insecure land tenure arrangements, insufficient basic infrastructure development, and the absence of sustainable urban planning frameworks. These underlying weaknesses amplified the earthquake's impact and complicated immediate response and long-term recovery efforts.

Strategies

The overall strategy integrates three core components: Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction, Recovery and Resilience building through an area-based approach. This integration operates across multiple dimensions:





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