



Myanmar Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AOR)



Children in CFS in South East Region

Child Protection AoR Strategy 2024-2025

Contents

Introduction	2
Context	2
Child protection situation	5
Psychosocial distress and trauma	6
Dangers and injuries.....	6
Violence and maltreatment	6
Recruitment into armed forces and armed groups.....	7
Child marriage.....	7
Child Labor	8
Grave violations.....	8
Unsafe migration and trafficking.....	9
Unaccompanied and separated children	9
Children in contact with the law	10
Principles	10
Strategic objectives	12
Strategic approaches	12
Priorities within the strategic approach.....	13
Case Management	13
Mental Health and Psychosocial support.....	14
Community Level Child Protection (CLCP)	14
Adolescent programming.....	15
Awareness Raising.....	15
Working Across Sectors.....	15
Advocacy and resource mobilization.....	16
Coordination structure	17
Sustainability and transition strategy	19
Monitoring	19
Constraints	20
Conclusion	21
Glossary	22
References.....	22

Introduction

The present strategy was developed in a consultative manner with the CP AoR and members of the CP AoR Strategic Advisory Group (SAG). The strategy aims to support CP AoR members with directions in programming towards achieving a common goal¹. Also, the strategy is intended to be useful for external audiences to draw attention to the child protection needs and the response approaches in 2024 - 2025. CP AoR targets the following population groups: Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), Non-displaced Stateless persons, Returnees and Other Crisis Affected Persons (OCAPS). The CP AoR strategy should be read together with the Myanmar Protection Strategy and the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan (HNRP) in 2024 and 2025. The CP AoR strategy covers the period from September 2024 to September 2025 with amendments added as needed.

Context

The context in Myanmar is evolving and rapidly deteriorating across the country. For more detailed context analysis for 2024, please see the HNRP for 2024². The context overview for 2025 will be linked to the 2025 HNRP. The purpose of the present strategy is not to describe the overall humanitarian context in Myanmar.

Myanmar is in a humanitarian crisis that has continued to worsen since the military takeover in February 2021. Most parts of the country are experiencing conflict with a multitude of armed actors across the country. Displacement figures continue to rise, and as of July 2024, the overall displaced population stands at 3,245,300³. IDPs live in formal and informal IDP sites as well as in host communities which in itself poses a protection concern and has compounded impacts on children. Returnees, non-displaced stateless people and other crisis affected groups also fall within the humanitarian caseload.

With the conflict escalating since October 2023, key developments that have increased protection concerns for children and their families include:

- Implementation of the Military Service Law⁴ (**conscription law**) has triggered increased displacement, irregular migration flows, child marriage, and recruitment into armed forces and armed groups.
- **Armed clashes, artillery shelling, and indiscriminate attacks** reported in about all 15 states and regions of the country have resulted in a deep human rights crisis and have contributed to the emergence of a major humanitarian crisis across Myanmar.
- **Displacement** itself increases protection risks for children, noting that IDPs are three times more likely to drop out of school than non-displaced⁵.
- The deteriorating **socio-economic** and living conditions are exacerbating already poor protection environment and triggering negative coping strategies.

¹ It is important to note that in Myanmar Clusters and AoRs fall squarely within the humanitarian structure with life-saving activities. Development actors work on more development and resilience efforts in Myanmar. This was agreed under the Transitional Cooperation Framework (TCF)

² <https://reliefweb.int/report/myanmar/myanmar-humanitarian-needs-and-response-plan-2024-december-2023-enmy> Note that 2025 HNRP will be added in January 2025

³ UNHCR displacement figures July 2024

⁴ Note that the law applies to ages 18 to 35 year olds but has seen impact on children seeking to avoid conscription through joining armed groups or forces, early marriage, and irregular migration

⁵ World Bank Report *Populations in Peril: Decoding Patterns of Forced Displacement in Myanmar*, May 2024

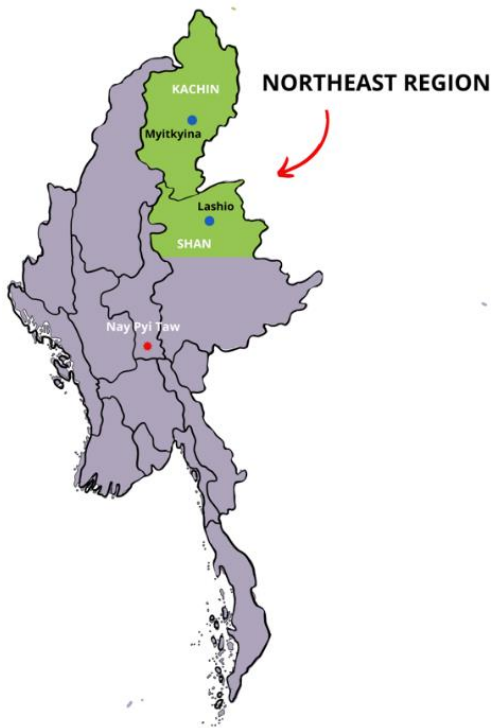
- Many parts of the country are prone to **natural disasters**, including flooding and cyclones, adding to the extreme vulnerability of affected people and having negative impact on children’s mental health and well-being.

Despite this extreme humanitarian scenario, Myanmar remains largely invisible in the crowded global humanitarian landscape with chronically underfunded emergency and limited advocacy at a world stage.

- **Rakhine**: The humanitarian situation in Rakhine⁶ is particularly alarming with fighting intensifying with inter-communal tensions rife. In addition to non-displaced stateless persons and other crisis affected people, as of July 2024, there were **305,100 IDPs**. The region has a history of ethno-political conflict, which has led to chronic poverty, social exclusion, and low resilience to natural disasters. Irregular movement is a long-standing concern in Rakhine. During the dry season there is a notable movement of people by land and sea to destinations like Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand. Along the migratory route within Myanmar, the children are often intercepted and prosecuted. Periodic ethnic tensions and violence have forced hundreds of thousands to flee. In addition to chronic insecurity and social and economic challenges, **there are increased child protection risks of inter-communal conflict, poverty, early marriage, trafficking, illegal migration, use of children, forced recruitment/child labour, conscription law, illegal detention and discrimination.**

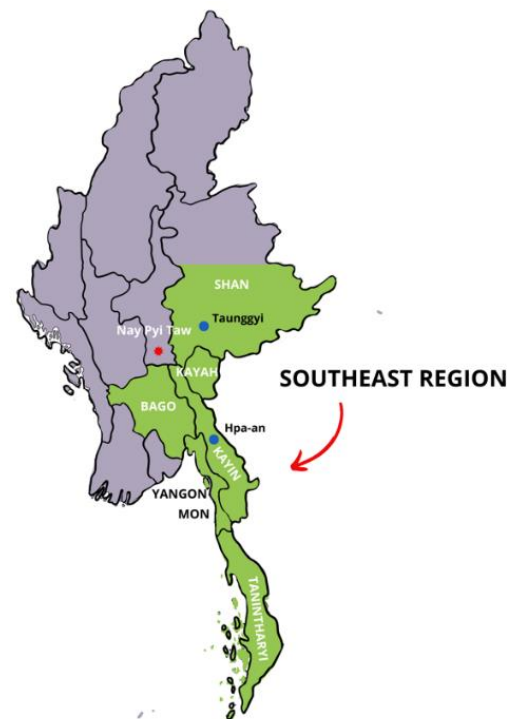


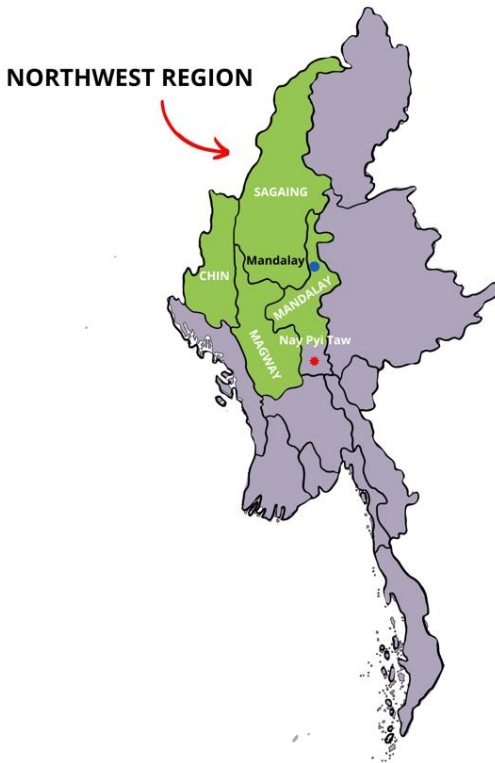
⁶ . Over 5,000 civilians have reportedly been killed since the military takeover, including over 600 children. This is not limited to Rakhine but draws from *Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar covering the period from 15 August 2023 to 31 July 2024*.



- **Northeast:** The situation in Northeast has been severely impacted and the security situation remains volatile. As of July 2024, there were **169,400 IDPs** in the Northeast. The impact of armed conflicts has led to an alarming rise in grave violation incidents, including forced recruitment. Underage recruitment by EAOs is high in this region. Child **trafficking and smuggling** continues, especially of girls for marriage. In addition to the ongoing and emerging armed conflicts, parts of Northeast have recently experienced devastating **floods from the end of June to the end of July, displacing over 10,000 individuals** and causing significant property damage.

- **Southeast:** The situation in Southeast Myanmar presents a dire humanitarian landscape characterized by a merging of armed conflict, natural calamities, economic pressures, and human rights violations. Since November 2023, the region has witnessed a surge in hostilities between the Myanmar Armed Forces (MAF) and the allied forces of Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs), spanning across various territories. As of July 2024, there were **912,700 IDPs** in Southeast. Primary caregivers have been noted to migrate for labour purposes, leaving children left behind. Informal residential care arrangements, not subject to proper regulatory mechanisms exist with child abuse notably high. **Child protection concerns, including grave violations, irregular migration, child recruitment and exploitation, extortion, arbitrary arrest, and effects of conscription law, continue to increase.**





- **Northwest:** The Northwest has experienced the greatest intensification of conflict and has seen the biggest surge in displacement since 2021. As of July 2024, there were **1,569,100** IDPs. Escalating conflict and displacement in the Northwest in 2024 have significantly heightened child protection risks. **Reports indicate that boys and girls as young as 15 are being forcibly recruited into armed groups or armed forces, increasing concerns among adolescents, and restricting their movement.** Locals also expressed concerns about forced recruitments due to the rewards offered for those who brought individuals, including children. Arbitrary arrests and detentions have increased. Killing and maiming has increased for children due to airstrikes, drone attacks, landmines, and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW). **The announcement of the Conscription Law has led to a significant rise in child marriages, affecting girls as young as 14.** Additionally, the risk of irregular migration and child trafficking has surged as children attempt to evade conscription, with many migrating abroad.

Child protection situation

Whilst data is scarce in Myanmar, partner reports, collated available data from the CPIMS+, PIMS, MSNA⁷, and the Secretary General report on children and armed conflict from June 2024 offer insights into child protection concerns across Myanmar.

The conflict has severely weakened the protective environment for children in Myanmar, making them further vulnerable to **violence, sexual abuse and exploitation, and neglect**. Pre-existing risks, such as children witnessing or experiencing **violence in their home, schools⁸ and in their community**, and neglect have been exacerbated by the conflict. Social and gender norms are some of the root causes for child protection concerns. Current protection risks include the risk of **explosive ordnance, child recruitment, child labor, sexual abuse and exploitation**, physical and emotional maltreatment, increased burden of being family providers, **child marriage, trafficking**, and the militarization and **attacks against educational services**. The **lack of parental care and peer-to-peer contact and engagement** have significant impact on their psychosocial well-being. Case Management trends analysis indicates a significant increase in reported child protection cases in 2024. Increasing reported cases are expected to continue over the next year.⁹

⁷ See glossary.

⁸ Multi-country school health survey twice in the past decade or so and showed very alarming trend of different types of violence

⁹ Additional case management analysis is provided per child protection concern outlined below, as available.

Further challenges are amounting due to enforcement of the Military Service Law (**conscription law**) such as **early marriage, unsafe/irregular migration** and **recruitment into armed groups**. Some of the most vulnerable children include children with **disabilities** or whose primary caregiver has a disability. Furthermore, the activation of the NGO registration law in late 2023 created new challenges for agencies actively addressing child protection concerns in Myanmar. Further scrutiny of NGOs has continued to increase and is rising at the time of drafting this present strategy.



Psychosocial distress and trauma

The current context in Myanmar gives rise to children experiencing distress, anxiety, depression, and fear. The Myanmar crisis can cause immediate and long-term psychological and social suffering to children and their caregivers.¹⁰ According to MSNA 2023, **one-third of all IDPs reported experiencing fear, anger, fatigue, disinterest, hopelessness, and other negative emotions in the past 30 days, adversely impacting their ability to undertake regular activities such as taking care of children, sleeping, participating in community activities or self-care**¹¹. According to Case Management data, **psychosocial distress is the highest reported child protection concern in 2024** and has dramatically increased in Q2 compared to Q1¹².



Dangers and injuries

Globally, unintentional injury accounts for over 25% of deaths among children aged 5–14 and is the leading cause of death and severe to permanent impairment among children aged 15–19. For every child killed by unintentional injury, many more are permanently impaired. The nature of injury varies considerably according to gender, age, disability, location, socioeconomic status, roles and responsibilities, and the hazard that caused the injury. Humanitarian crises can increase everyday hazards and risks and create new ones, particularly for children who are displaced in unfamiliar surroundings.¹³ In Myanmar, exposure to **land mines** is particularly risky for children, leading to killing or permanently injuring children across the country. Additionally, killing and maiming due to **indiscriminate fire** including aerial shelling is reported to be affecting children. As of July 2024, there have been 100 incidents involving children and mines; however, explosive ordnance incidents are severely underreported, with actual incidents likely being much higher. Furthermore, in displacement settings, children are increasingly left without adequate supervision, playing in dangerous sites. In the monsoon period, children have been reported to have **drowned** whilst playing in rivers or other water sources. Construction sites, often left unattended, have potential to lead to more dangers for children.



Violence and maltreatment

In Myanmar many families are living in overcrowded living conditions, have lost homes, livelihoods and exist in a state of fear and uncertainty which leads to a range of negative coping mechanisms. One of these is an increase in violence in the home, with **children witnessing and/or**

¹⁰ Child Protection Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Action 2019 (hereafter CPMS 2029)

¹¹ World Bank Report op cit.

¹² Case Management trends analysis Q2 2024

¹³ CPMS 2019

experiencing an increase in violence in the schools, homes and communities because of the humanitarian context. Maltreatment has serious short- and long-term effects on children and subsequent generations¹⁴. Case Management trends analysis for 2024 indicates a high rate of physical abuse/violence in Myanmar¹⁵. Moreover, maiming and physical injury was reported as the highest concern facing children according to PIMs¹⁶. Neglect is also prevalent in Myanmar, especially for younger children, as captured in the 2024 Case Management trends analysis and as increased in Q2 of 2024 when compared to Q1. Emotional or psychological violence is similarly high in case management trends analysis and increased in Q2 of 2024 when compared to Q1. Violence and maltreatment in home and communities requires a holistic response, with child protection actors requiring the skills to implement Community Level Child Protection, MHPSS, positive parenting sessions and case management with referral to specialized services as required.



Recruitment into armed forces and armed groups

The current complexities in Myanmar have had the negative impact of children being **recruited** into armed forces and groups. With the country hosting a range of armed actors, including different Ethnic Armed Groups, as well as the Myanmar Armed Forces (MAF)¹⁷, there are ample opportunities for children to join armed actors in both combatant and non-combatant roles. Furthermore, with the enforcement of the Military Service Law (conscription law), trends have shown an increase in children joining armed groups where familiar affiliations lie to avoid conscription at the age of 18. In 2023, verified instances of recruitment and use of children in armed conflict in Myanmar increased by nearly 400 per cent¹⁸. Children associated with armed forces or armed groups (CAAFAG) is also recognized as one of the worst forms of child labor.¹⁹



Child marriage

According to the MSNA 2023²⁰, households reported that it was common for younger children in their communities to get married, this was evidenced against all 4 population groups. Families often have their girls married early due to insufficient livelihoods and resources within the home, in many cases, a caregiver may desire their girl to get married to protect her against sexual violence. **Moreover, with the enforcement of the conscription law, CP AoR partners have reported an increase in child marriage cases as it is an exemption under the law and many children are being married early.** Furthermore, reports of children seeking to travel abroad for marriage is a concern with it being seen as both a driver for irregular migration as well as a method through which traffickers can exploit children. Households with a Medium or High Reduced Coping Strategies Index (rCSI) were slightly more likely to

¹⁴ Child Protection Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Action 2019 (hereafter CPMS)

¹⁵ Case Management Trends Analysis Q2, 2024

¹⁶ Protection incident Monitoring

¹⁷ Secretary General Annual report on Children in Armed Conflict June 2024 A_78_84 2-S_2024 – 03 June 2024

¹⁸ Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar covering the period from 15 August 2023 to 31 July 2024.

¹⁹ CPMS 2019

²⁰ Multi-Sectoral Needs Assessment: IDP, Returnees, non-displaced stateless and OCAP all reported between **28% and 30%** of households aware of children getting married before 18 years old. Note that the MSNA is household surveys therefore often respondents unlikely to admit to controversial issues such as child marriage and child labor to humanitarian assessor.

reportedly live in a community with cases of child marriage when compared to households with no coping to low rCSI.²¹ The pre-existing social and gender norms, including restrictive gender roles and limited autonomy for girls, lack of education, and poverty contribute to early marriage. The [GBV-CP Working Group](#), under both the GBV AoR and the CP AoR has developed [key messages for communities, caregivers and children on child marriage](#) and will continue to support both AoRs with appropriate responses.



Child Labor

Myanmar is facing a crisis of child labor, with the 2023 MSNA demonstrating that a significant number of households agreed that child labor was common in their communities. **It is further relevant to note that forced labor or slavery was reported as high with children in the PIMS Q2.** Many child laborers are engaged in the worst forms of child labor (WFCL)²², including forced labor, recruitment into armed forces and armed groups, trafficking for exploitation, sexual exploitation, illicit work or hazardous work. As more and more people in Myanmar from all population groups live below the poverty line, and food security and livelihoods are impacted by the ongoing humanitarian situation, negative coping strategies are increasingly employed, including children contributing to the household income. In 2024, a study showed a higher share of households with borderline or poor food consumption reported that they relied on children under 15 working to contribute to household income as a livelihood coping strategy in the past 30 days compared to households with an acceptable food consumption²³. The reduction in the number of young people in the workforce is also contributing to the dire socioeconomic outlook for Myanmar, with credible reports of increased levels of child labor²⁴. According to Q1 PIMS information, there were extremely high number of reported cases of child labor in Myanmar. IDPs are also much more likely to have children involved in child labor than not displaced.²⁵



Grave violations

The CTFMR²⁶ is directly responsible for the monitoring and reporting of the grave violations against children. The CP AoR collaborate closely with this country task force to monitor the violations against children across the country. The six grave violations²⁷ include Killing and maiming of children; Recruitment or use of children; Sexual violence against children; Abduction of children; Attacks against schools or hospitals; and Denial of humanitarian access for children. Despite underreporting, in 2023, grave child rights violations continued to rise with 2799 grave violations against 2093 children, representing an additional +128 per cent increase compared to 2022. All six grave violations against children except abduction of children showed an increasing trend across the country. **The number of children recruited and used by parties to the conflict increased by 398 per cent and the number of children killed and maimed increased by 65 per cent compared to 2022.** With the escalation and

²¹ Food Security and Protection Brief 2024

²² See https://normlex.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C182 for ILO C182 – Worst Forms of Child Labor convention 1999 (No. 182)

²³ Food Security and Protection Brief 2024

²⁴ Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar covering the period from 15 August 2023 to 31 July 2024.

²⁵ World Bank Report *Populations in Peril: Decoding Patterns of Forced Displacement in Myanmar, May 2024*

²⁶ Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting

²⁷ <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/six-grave-violations/>

geographical expansion of conflict affected areas, challenges to conduct the monitoring, verification and response have increased especially due to lack of or limited access to many conflicts affected areas, shutdown of telecommunication networks, and safety and security risks and perceived fear of reprisal of the partners. Due to the escalation of conflict in 2024, this dire situation and increase in 2023 is anticipated to continue to rise at the end of 2024. The Secretary General annual report on children²⁸ and armed conflict raises serious concerns regarding Myanmar and grave violations. Further, the report of the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar²⁹ produced reliable evidence of sexual and gender-based crimes in detention committed against all genders, including children under age 18. CP AoR uses information related to MRM as well as PIMs and there were alarming number of cases of children affected by violence or physical injury, as well as high numbers of children killed.



Unsafe migration and trafficking

As the conflict in Myanmar escalates, more and more people seek to flee to neighboring countries and abroad, including children. Invariably, this correlates to more cases of trafficking being anecdotally reported with promises of labor, marriage and a better life leading to children being further exploited. Given the high proportion of children amongst displaced populations and the fact that girls and boys face unique protection risks while fleeing, responding to their specific needs is a key priority. Furthermore, the enforcement of the Military Service Law (conscription law) has led to an increase of irregular movement by youth and young people to escape conscription. In remote communities, civil documentation is problematic, therefore children do not have any proof of age and easily treated as over 18 and recruited. Data shows that 60-75 % of Rohingya migrants are girls/women. **There have also been reports of children detained trying to flee across borders and returning from abroad without proper documentation, this detention is often without trial.** The CP AoR will support partners to disseminate key messages on safe migration and irregular movement so that children and families can make informed choices whilst being aware of the risks associated with unsafe migration.



Unaccompanied and separated children

Due to the rapid and often multiple displacement context in Myanmar, children are separated from their caregivers, leading to unaccompanied or separated children (UASC). Many children reside with community or extended families. A number of child protection issues are linked to family separation and care arrangements, such as unaccompanied and separated children or children living on the streets and require alternative care options, with family-based alternative care being the preferable case, but not always attainable in the context. In addition to causing emotional distress, separation may create significant barriers to accessing humanitarian services, necessitating CP AoR to include the need for other clusters to have measures for child headed households and other separated children in service delivery. **The 2024 Case Management trends analysis indicates that children without primary caregivers dramatically increased in Q2 when compared to Q1.** More information on UASC and the care arrangements for separated children is required to have a better picture of the situation. Children living in unregulated institutions is another key issue. With intensification of the conflict the informal residential

²⁸ Secretary General Annual report on Children in Armed Conflict June 2024 June 2024 pp20-23 June 2024

²⁹ Report of the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar, Human Rights Council Fifty-seventh session 9 September–9 October 2024 July 11th 2024

care arrangements has increased. The overwhelming majority of these are not regulated leading to high protection risks and minimal safeguarding standards. Traditionally and culturally, children who are separated from or left behind by their parents will be taken care by their extended family members and yet might not receive the care and protection they deserve. Formal regulated family-based care system is not available in Myanmar although capacity building has been carried out for child protection actors to promote family-based alternative care option for the best interest of children over an institutional care.



Children in contact with the law

Children who break the law do not do so of their own free will, but rather as a result of restricted opportunities available for their development. Such opportunities become even more restricted once they enter the criminal justice system. Juveniles from risk groups that could get in conflict with the law are often victims of abuse and neglect, negligent and poor parenting and economic difficulties; this aligns with the current situation in the Myanmar context. Labelling children as having association with the law rather than assisting them in rehabilitation and other alternative forms of addressing child crime lead them to exclusion from society including by the communities themselves. If juvenile offenders continue being criminalized while at the same time being denied a ‘second chance’ that they deserve, their ‘chances’ will lead to likelihood of their reoffending when they grow up. These children need support while they are still children, although the context in Myanmar does not allow for flexibility for humanitarian actors to interfere in cases of children who are implicated with the law, the CP AoR could leverage on high level intervention supporting this pillar while the AoR continues to ensure prevention measures to child crime.

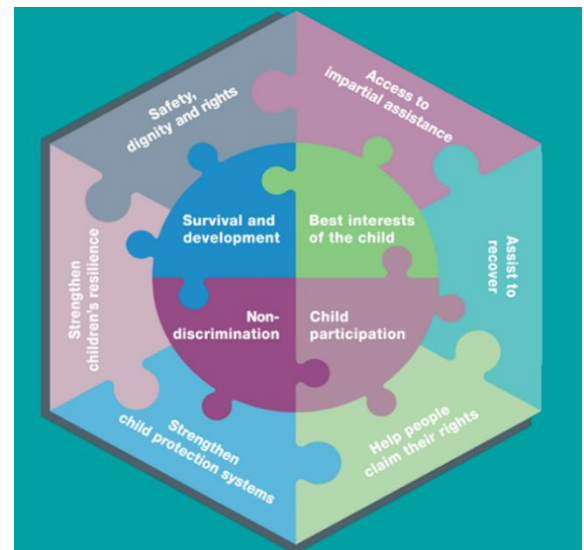
Principles

The CP AoR adheres to and promotes the Principles from the Child Protection Minimum Standards, 2019³⁰.

Additionally, the CP AoR respects the following principles in all its actions:

Centrality of protection

Protection is the purpose and intended outcome of humanitarian action, central to preparedness efforts, as part of immediate and life-saving activities, and throughout the duration of humanitarian response and beyond. All humanitarian actors have the responsibility to contribute to protection outcomes by ensuring the protection needs of affected and at-risk populations inform decision-making and activities. These commitments include children, their specific child protection needs, and the unique protection risks they face. The CP AoR will work with its protection counterparts, as well as non-protection actors to advocate and ensure that children and their protection are placed at the center of the humanitarian response in Myanmar and that child protection is recognized as lifesaving and prioritized accordingly.



³⁰ CPMS pp39 to 47 <https://www.myanmarchildprotection.com/child-protection-minimum-standards>

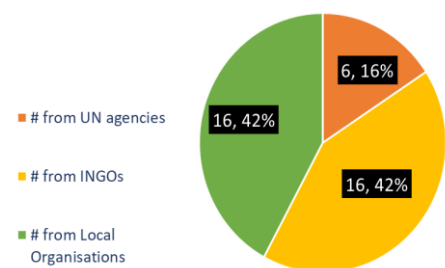
Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) and Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA)

The CP AoR strive to be accountable to children, ensuring that children and child participation are integrated into all aspects of our work, in line with the [IASC's Commitments on Accountability to Affected Populations within Humanitarian Action](#). The humanitarian community in Myanmar has a duty to contribute to protecting children, to safeguarding them from harm, and protecting them from sexual abuse and exploitation. All accountability procedures, including complaints and feedback mechanisms, post-distribution monitoring, refugee protection procedures, and referral pathways must be child-friendly and accessible to children. The CP AoR has produced a guidance/[tip sheet for all humanitarian actors to ensure complaints and feedback mechanisms are child friendly](#). The CP AoR constantly strives to ensure children, caregivers and communities are actively engaged in all stages of the program cycle and provide invaluable inputs into our activities. The CP AoR is further committed to Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) through active engagement with the PSEA Network in Myanmar and specific interventions to protect and respond to SEA against children.

Localization

Localization is a commitment for humanitarian response in Myanmar, with CP AoR proactively advancing localization. The CP AoR work on localization is led by its [Localization Working Group](#). The Localization Working Group is comprised of both national and international partners. The CP AoR produces a bi-annual [Localization Dashboard](#) which guides the localization WG to actively strengthen CP AoR's approach to localization, including how its international and national partners contribute, influence decision making, and share power within its structure.

Membership by different partners in CP AoR



Meaningful and inclusive participation and engagement

Inclusive and meaningful engagement of children and adolescents — of all ages, genders, abilities, and backgrounds — throughout all stages of the program cycle is necessary for children to realize their full rights, capacities, and potential. The CP AoR and its partners will work to include meaningful child participation within the stages of the child protection program cycle and encourage its collaborators and other sector partners to do the same, strengthening capacity to support the safe and ethical consideration of child participation within humanitarian programming. Child participation is not only a primary principle through which the CP AoR implements activities but is embedded in all activities within the present strategy, as well as a protection prevention and response methodology.

Moreover, CP AoR strives to enhance disability inclusion in 2025. The CP AoR has already produced a [Disability Inclusion Tip Sheet](#) for Cp AoR members, as well as capacity building initiatives which will be further advanced in 2025. There exists a [Disability Steering Committee](#) within the CP AoR which focuses on supporting the AoR partners to be more disability inclusive.

Gender inclusiveness is also critical to ensure meaningful participation. The CP AoR has an active [Gender Steering committee](#), comprised of CP AoR members and is supported by UN Women to support AoR partners to ensure gender is meaningfully addressed in all aspects of our CP programming.

Strategic objectives

1. Children who have experienced violence receive tailored support through inclusive, gender-sensitive, age appropriate and climate-resilient services that allow them to recover and thrive.
2. Strengthening the protective environment and resilience factors that enable and empower children, their families, and their communities in their own protection. All children in their diversities are supported by safe environments where communities challenge harmful social and gender norms.
3. Advocating with humanitarian community to centralize children’s safety and well-being in their work.

As the situation is ever changing and evolving, the strategic objectives including targets, geographical coverage and population groups will feature in the 2025 HNRP³¹. For the remainder of 2024, these details can be found in the [Myanmar HNRP 2024](#). However, for the purposes of the present strategy, it is important to note that the CP AoR partners will aim to reach IDPs, returnees, non-displaced stateless and other crisis affected children and caregivers with all the strategic approaches outlined below with a view to achieving the objectives.

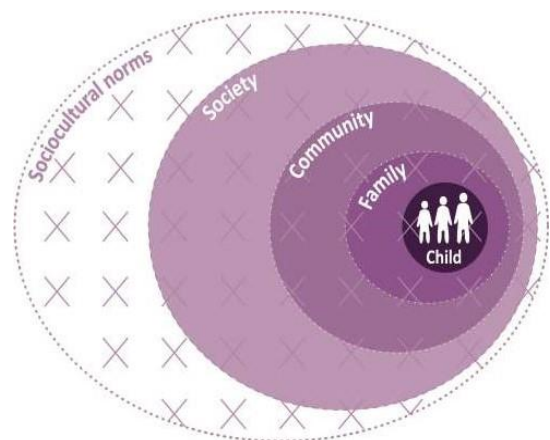
Indicators for each strategic priority, as well as guidance for monitoring are all collected in line with the HNRP for 2024 and will be adjusted for 2025 (see Monitoring below).

Strategic approaches

The CP AoR in Myanmar has identified several key overarching approaches, or **activity groupings** towards meeting the abovementioned objectives. The priorities were identified through consultations with CP AoR members, whilst no means exhaustive, these have been identified as Myanmar CP AoR priorities.

These priorities are guided by the socio-ecological model (Child Protection Minimum Standards 2019) which considers the interaction between personal and environmental factors across four nested levels— the individual (child), family, community, and society— and how these interact and influence risks and protective factors, which in turn influence child development and wellbeing. Throughout, the CP AoR will ensure an equal focus on **preventing** harm and risks to children, in addition to **responding** to existing protection needs.

Implementation of this strategy and engagement on these priority approaches will require intersecting and overlapping approaches and activities.



³¹ Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan, Myanmar

The context in Myanmar requires a holistic approach to address the abovementioned child protection risks. Most systems in Myanmar are fragile and not always functioning to reach the needs of children and families. The CP AoR considers community systems to be strengthened and provides the basis of steps towards linking when formal systems become more favorable. CP AoR will work with communities to strengthen their interaction and engagement with service providers at township, state, and national levels, including for example, health and education services, to further strengthen child protection.

Priorities within the strategic approach

Whilst the present document does not provide a complete breakdown of activities under the CP AoR, it provides an outline of the key activity groupings through which the CP AoR will strive to achieve the abovementioned objectives. In 2025, the CP AoR coordination group and Strategic Advisory Group (SAG) will develop short **guidance notes for each activity**. Progress towards these activities are monitored through the HNRP dashboard on a quarterly basis.



Case Management

Quality case management³² requires coordinated, holistic, and multi-sector support delivered in a timely, sustained, and reliable manner. It connects to several aspects of the child protection system and requires consistency and stability of resources and services. The provision of case management as an approach to address complex and individual needs of children at risk or already experiencing harm is a key area of work for child protection AoR actors, linking closely with the [Case Management Task Force \(CMTF\)](#). Scaling up of case management to reach a wider number of children across the country requires increased funding due to it being a resource-intensive³³ life-saving service. Currently there are insufficient actors funded to provide holistic case management.

- CMTF has worked to **harmonize case management tools** and there is a need to ensure all CP AoR members are part of the CMTF, the CMTF will provide adequate training and support.
- CP AoR supports the **CMTF** to strengthen case management in Myanmar with a view to ensure and promote the use of safe **information management** systems including CPIMS+³⁴.
- With adequate funding, the CP AoR and the CMTF will provide in person **trainings**, as well as online refresher trainings on case management and coaching and supervision in 2025, focusing on improving the quality of this life saving service and facilitating scale up of this essential service.
- **Community engagement** is considered a priority for greater sustainability and to support integral components of the case management approach. Beyond **identification** and **referrals**, community leaders, volunteers, and groups are fundamental to helping prevent harm through the identification and assessment of risks and the strengthening of protective factors that exist within communities.
- CP AoR will work closely with the GBV AoR and the Case Management Task Force (CMTF) to ensure that case workers have adequate capacity to address or **refer cases of child survivors of sexual violence** through capacity building and related documents.

In 2025, CP AoR and partners, together with the Case Management Task Force will also work towards:

- Strengthening referral from other sectors including identification and referral

³² See standard 18 CPMS 2019.

³³ As per the HNRP unfortunately with insufficient funding (only 25%), CP AoR will not deprioritize population groups but will need to prioritize less resource intensive activities such as case management (see 2024 HNRP)

³⁴ Case Management Information Management System (Primero)

- Enhance mobile teams’ and their capacity to identify and refer cases.
- Explore new methodologies towards ensuring case management services available to more children across Myanmar.



Mental Health and Psychosocial support

The volatile context in Myanmar suggest that Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) should be prioritized with **multidisciplinary** approaches involving field responders under Child Protection to include case managers, social workers, volunteers, faith-based leaders, and community workers. Mental Health and Psychosocial Support interventions are crucial as they help mitigate the increased vulnerability of children and build their resilience as well as to promote mental health welling of stressed caregivers and mitigate negative coping mechanisms. CP AoR aims to support partners to address all layers of the [MHPSS pyramid](#). The key interventions under MHPSS include:

- Provision of **group** and **individual** psychosocial well-being activities;
- **Child Friendly spaces** and **recreational** activities are a key entry point for group MHPSS activities³⁵
- Provision of MHPSS to caregivers and **promote positive parenting** and coping mechanisms.
- Development and distribution of **key materials** for enhanced MHPSS
- Whilst most CP AoR partners do not provide level 4, specialized MHPSS and instead **refer cases requiring specialized services**. Case Management (see above) is a level 4 service provided by CP AoR partners.
- **Integration of MHPSS** interventions directly link into child protection activities as they act as key entry points for necessary supports to bridge the gap on child psychosocial well-being.
- Additionally, CP AoR will endeavor to expand supports through broader **multi-sectoral** integrations involving Protection, Health/Nutrition, and Education to reach children and caregivers effectively.

In 2025, the CP AoR will support partners to strengthen their capacity to provide MHPSS through collaboration with partners for examples of best practice, as well as sharing tools and resources.



Community Level Child Protection (CLCP)

Families and communities are the first layer of protection for children. The CP AoR is proactively moving away from traditional “community-based child protection” to a more bottom-up approach which involves more community ownership of these interventions.

Community engagement and leadership in child protection is essential for sustainable approaches, as is building on local knowledge and understandings of child protection to strengthen ownership and increase accountability to affected populations. To be most effective, this engagement must be broad and **inclusive** of community members of different genders, abilities, and backgrounds. Leadership and decision-making must also engage **children and adolescents** themselves.

Whilst this approach takes more time **building trust** within communities, the outcomes are more likely to

The CP AoR has developed a [Tip Sheet on CLCP](#) for Myanmar context which provides more guidance to child protection actors towards this shift from CBCP to CLCP. The CP AoR has also facilitated a webinar for partners on the shift towards CLCP. Furthermore, there is a [CLCP Working Group](#) hosted by the CP AoR in Myanmar focused on further supporting partners to this more bottom up, sustainable approach, recognizing that the protection of children is a shared responsibility.

³⁵ See Standard 15 CPMS

be **sustainable**. This requires approaching CLCP with one of **shared responsibilities** as communities have a responsibility to children. The CP AoR approach to CLCP recognizes that agencies can only support communities but for more sustainable child protection outcomes, communities have the responsibility to protect after agency intervention is no longer available. For more sustainable child protection outcomes, communities including families need to be conceptualized and adapted where the responsibility of protection mainly leans to them when the agency intervention is no longer available.



Adolescent programming

Adolescents have unique needs and face unique challenges in Myanmar. Whilst these vulnerabilities must be considered, it is also critical to recognize the unique ability and importance of adolescents participating in the decision making and develop solutions to issues that affect their lives. Whilst adolescents may receive activities under all strategic approaches, **additional and proactive measures will be taken to ensure unique programming targets adolescents and caters to their vulnerabilities as well as their strengths**. CP AoR recognizes the heightened and unique risks such as child marriage and other GBV concerns for adolescent girls because of their age and gender and these nuances will be integral in 2025. Adolescent programming in Myanmar takes a range of methods including:

- Supporting “adolescent groups” for empowerment and peer support,
- Offering life-skill programming for adolescent girls and boys,
- Catering MHPSS activities to adolescents as distinct from younger children. Simultaneously ensuring their meaningful participation in activities.



Awareness Raising

Awareness raising is a critical lifesaving component of the CP AoR partners’ activities in the field. Providing key information to communities, caregivers and children about key issues can prevent harm to children, including separation and contributes to empower people to make informed choices and plans. To date, the CP AoR has developed key messaging for partners on: [Child Marriage](#), [Floods, Cyclone and Conflict](#). Furthermore, the CP AoR in 2024 will finalize messaging on safe migration given the high rates of unsafe migration that is currently on the rise in Myanmar.

In 2025, the CP AoR will continue to support partners with key messages, standardized across the country for different thematic issues. Moreover, the CP AoR is coordinating with both Mine Action AoR and GBV AoR to share tailored messages.



Working Across Sectors

Child protection cannot be worked on in a silo. The inter-disciplinary nature of child protection risks and concerns, such as child labor, child marriage, violence against children and mental health and psychosocial distress requires holistic, multi-sector approaches to identifying and assessing risks, strengthening protective factors, and addressing root causes in an integrated manner to prevent and respond to harm. Working across sectors to address the diverse protection needs of children not only strengthens protection outcomes for children but helps to strengthen overall outcomes across sectors for their families and communities.

The CP AoR will continue to work to strengthen all humanitarian actors to meaningfully **mainstream** child protection in their work. Including trainings, guidance notes and tip sheets to ensure partners are adequately capacitated to mainstream child protection in their specific cluster activities, tailored to the different clusters accordingly. Much of the mainstreaming work is done collaboratively with Protection

Cluster. In 2024 alone, more than 400 people have been trained on mainstreaming, these efforts will continue in 2025 and stronger mainstreaming and integration training will be done by CP AoR.

Furthermore, ongoing efforts to ensure cluster partner staff, including field staff, contractors or consultants are trained on recognition and referring child protection cases safely and appropriately. The CP AoR has already been working to ensure this is embedded within the humanitarian response and in line with the HCT protection strategy, in 2025, more efforts will be made both with other clusters as well as with partners implementing multi-purpose-cash assistance.

Moreover, CP AoR seeks to promote and expand **integrated** programming with other sector partners. Integrated programming requires specific child protection objectives, outcomes, and indicators within multi-sectoral programming. Clusters such as Education Cluster, Mine Action AoR³⁶, Food Security Cluster, WASH cluster, Cash Working Group and Health Clusters could easily complement child protection outcomes for the better and wider protection of children.

Working across sectors is a critical component of child protection programming, leading to increased overall service provision for children and caregivers. CP AoR will continue to build these linkages with other sectors in 2025.



Advocacy and resource mobilization

The CP AoR will undertake advocacy for global awareness on the child protection situation and to support resource allocation for child protection AoR and Child Protection partners in order to make life-saving interventions for children and caregivers. As the context evolves, the CP AoR, with support of the CP AoR SAG, will develop and disseminate key talking points for use by CP AoR partners.

Proactive discussions with donors, Global CP AoR, Global Protection Cluster, and other external actors will be prioritized in 2025 both independently and collectively with the Protection Cluster, GBV and Mine Action AoRs. Despite the scarcity of available data in Myanmar, CP AoR SAG will work towards developing briefings through triangulation of available information such as the **MSNA**, the **CPIMS+ trends analysis**, the **MRM publicly available data**, **PIMS** as well as stories from partners to paint a picture of the context and the needs in-country.

In 2025, the CP AoR will develop short quarterly briefings based on available information sources to share for public advocacy purposes. Additionally, CP AoR will endeavor to use **success stories**, **case studies**, and **data-driven impact reports** to showcase the effectiveness of past humanitarian interventions. This can build credibility and trust with potential donors.

This will be with a view to support partners in bilateral and pooled fund resources. The CP AoR will monitor results in the **Financial Tracking System** to support advocacy for resource mobilization.

Finally, the CP AoR coordinators will provide quarterly inputs to the Myanmar Humanitarian Update (MHU) to support drawing attention to the child protection needs, responses and gaps within Myanmar.

³⁶ With the increase in school dropouts, as well as the high rates of mine related incidents affecting children, CP AoR is proactively prioritizing working together with Education Cluster and Mine Action AoR in 2024 and 2025.

Coordination structure

Coordination is one of the Coordination is Commitment Six of the Core Humanitarian Standards³⁷. [The CP AoR Terms of Reference](#) outlines the roles and responsibilities of the CP AoR coordination team.

National level CP AoR coordination consists of one dedicated CP AoR coordinator, one part-time NGO co-coordinator and one dedicated Information Management Officer. National CP AoR supports the subnational coordinators through development of tools, resources, and capacity building opportunities.

The national CP AoR meets monthly and on an ad hoc basis as needed. The national level CP AoR supports CP AoR partners at national and subnational level to ensure activities are of a high quality, responses to issues are timely and appropriate and that the quality of CP activities are maintained. CP AoR further contributes to information sharing, as well as advocacy efforts.

Subnational: The Sub-national/Regional AoR coordination mechanism are essential to the Child Protection AoR. They ensure a well-coordinated, appropriate, context specific and efficient response to child protection humanitarian action through their presence on ground and close working relationships with partners, the Area ICCG and other clusters/AoRs.

Subnational coordinators are supported by the national CP AoR coordinators through development of tools, resources, and capacity building opportunities. This will be scaled up in 2025 as it is recognized that subnational coordinators are currently operating with dual functions due to funding constraints.

To avoid non-child protection staff investigating cases of suspected child protection concerns, as well as to preserve the anonymity of some child protection agencies, the subnational coordinators are responsible for [referrals](#).

At subnational the CP AoR is coordinated according to the common humanitarian architecture with four subnational regional hubs as follows:

- *Southeast*: two part-time coordinators and one NGO co-coordinator
- *Northwest*: one part-time coordinator
- *Northeast*: two part-time coordinators
- *Rakhine*: one dedicated coordinator.

[CP AoR Strategic Advisory Group](#)

The CP AoR [Strategic Advisory Group \(SAG\)](#) of the CP AoR is made up of selected key child protection partners that come together regularly to provide strategic direction to the Child Protection AoR. The purpose of the SAG is to provide strategic advice to the CP AoR recognizing that decision making resides with the members of the CP AoR.

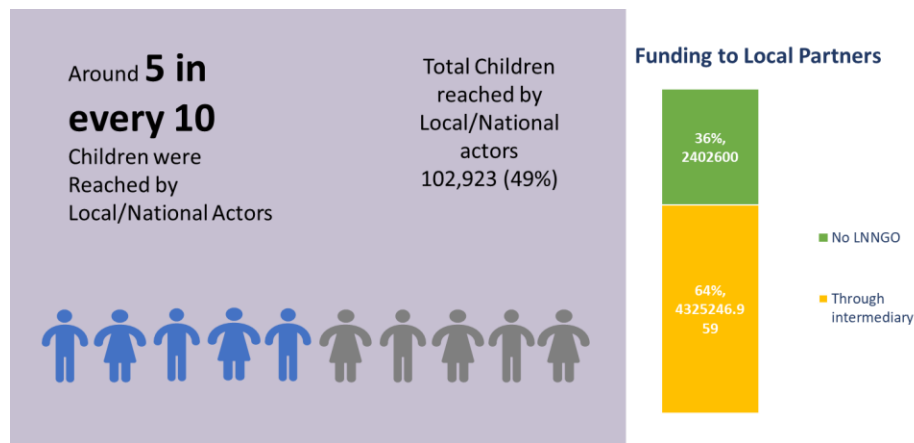
[CP AoR Working Groups and Steering Committees](#)

With a view to ensure key thematic areas are progressed under the CP AoR, a number of Working Groups and Steering Committees under the AoR umbrella. Membership of these is on a voluntary basis from CP

³⁷ CPMS 2019

AoR members dedicated to support the wider AoR. Each group is comprised on UN agencies, International NGOs and local/national NGOs or CSOs and therefore offer a wider range of perspectives.

- *GBV-CP Working Group* falls jointly under the GBV AoR and the CP AoR in Myanmar and seeks to support both AoR partners with guidance and tools common to both GBV and CP. The WG is coordinated by one NGO coordinator. The GBV-CP WG meets monthly.
- *CLCP Working Group* falls under the CP AoR and seeks to support the CP AoR to strengthen CLCP activities in Myanmar. The CLCP WG is coordinated by one NGO coordinator. The CLCP meets monthly.
- *Disability Steering Committee* falls under the CP AoR and seeks to support all CP AoR actors with tools, resources and capacity building initiatives to ensure CP activities are disability inclusive. The DSC meets monthly.
- *Gender Steering committee* falls under the CP AoR and is supported by CP AoR partners and UN Women. The GSC seeks to ensure that gender is considered in all phases of the CP programs. The GSC meets quarterly.
- *Case Management Task Force* is coordinated jointly between Save the Children and UNICEF and supports CP AoR partners with effective tools and resources for case management. It is an interagency mechanism designed to support partners who are implementing case management for children in Myanmar.
- *Localization Working Group* falls under the CP AoR and seeks to support the CP AoR to progress towards the localization agenda. The LWG meets monthly.



Protection cluster, GBV AoR and MA AoR

The Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR) is an integral part of the Protection Cluster, working alongside the Gender-Based Violence (GBV) AoR and Mine Action AoR. Robust collaboration is maintained through joint planning and priority-setting and through the development of unified cluster strategies, mainstreaming protection efforts, conducting training and capacity building, reporting on humanitarian interventions, as well as undertaking joint advocacy initiatives. This close and strategic partnership plays a crucial role further in shaping and advancing the Humanitarian Country Team’s (HCT) protection strategy, which includes identifying trends, and reporting on protection concerns, as well as advocating for the inclusion of protection priorities in funding appeals, policy discussions, and decision-making processes.

Overall, the cluster functions through close consultations between the cluster and relevant AORs, cultivating a shared sense of responsibility and commitment to achieving protection goals. This collaborative approach is crucial for attaining positive protection outcomes in Myanmar.

Inter Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG)

At both national and subnational levels, the CP AoR actively participates in the Inter Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) for an overall coordinated and complementary humanitarian response in Myanmar. The ICCG comprises of the cluster, AoR and Working Group coordinators and OCHA with representation from UNICEF as Cluster Lead Agency and other actors essential to overall humanitarian coordination. The ICCG supports clusters to work together to facilitate the delivery of the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan's (HNRP) strategic objectives in the most efficient and effective way. This coordination among clusters also helps in the identification of core advocacy concerns emerging from the operational response and the identification of resource gaps impacting operational delivery. The ICCG meets every two weeks.

Sustainability and transition strategy

Myanmar humanitarian crisis has been ongoing since 2021 and has escalated further since October 2023. The CP AoR activities towards “systems strengthening” primarily relate to communities and linking communities to the wider structure of services and actors at township, state, and national levels. Through an increased focus on Community Level Child Protection (see above), the CP AoR promotes a more sustainable approach to child protection with a decreased reliance on aid for basic child protection services and support. Through capacity building and working with communities and wider service providers, the CP AoR focuses on the longer-term systems building within Myanmar. At this stage in the humanitarian response, the humanitarian cluster system is fully activated, and no immediate exit strategy is planned for the duration of this strategy.

Nevertheless, through linkages with the TCF (transitional cooperation framework), the humanitarian activities build the blocks towards the humanitarian-development nexus in Myanmar which leads to sustainability and the road for exit strategy in coming years.

Furthermore, by strengthening localization and strengthening the capacity of local actors in line with the Localization Dashboard findings, further strengthens the sustainability of humanitarian response and will facilitate a smoother transition to recovery and development as the situation evolves.

Monitoring

Progress towards the abovementioned activity groupings/approaches will be monitored through the [CP AOR HNRP monitoring dashboard](#). The dashboard is developed using the results of the 5Ws and collected on a quarterly basis. The 5Ws are collected with the guidance to partners in both Myanmar and English, detailing what activities are to be monitored under each indicator³⁸. The results of the 5Ws will be complemented by stories and reports from CP AOR partners to create a full picture of the CP AOR progress towards the objectives in the strategy and the 2025 HNRP.

The CP AoR will also monitor its progress as a coordination body through annual Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring (CCPM) undertaken by the Global CP AoR on an annual basis and compiled based

³⁸ Indicator Guidance is available upon request for 2024 and will become available for 2025.

on responses from CP AoR partners. The results of the CCPM will support the CP AOR coordination mechanism to have a regular *pulse check* and identify areas of improvement on cluster coordination functions.

Constraints

Child Protection partners face considerable challenges and constraints in Myanmar to deliver life-saving services to children, caregivers, and communities specially since the escalation of conflict in October 2023:



Access to population groups in dire need of child protection services is a major challenge across the country. With restrictive travel authorization processes, delays in renewal of agreements, increased scrutiny of humanitarian workers all contribute to an inconsistent and unreliable access situation. Nevertheless, child protection partners remain committed to “stay and deliver” with repeated attempts to gain access to those most in need. Furthermore, remote service provision has been scaled up, as well as increased reliance on volunteers to provide essential services. Lastly, we will work with Access Working Group and in areas which have higher level access constraints, we will support advocacy and negotiation initially with a view to maintaining our reach to vulnerable populations in line with HNRP targets.




Safety and security remain a considerable challenge for child protection partners. Child protection partners in many parts of the country are being constrained by safety risks and agencies need to balance the risks with the security of their staff in order to deliver lifesaving services. Preventing and responding to safety and security risks of the partners and protection response providers will be taken into the consideration while implementing the CP AoR strategy.



Funding: Myanmar humanitarian response is chronically underfunded. As of July 2024, CP AoR is only funded 26.2% against the HNRP. The HNRP was already conservative in its funding ask given present of Myanmar being an underfunded emergency. Child Protection partners continue to strive to reach children with essential services. Monitoring demonstrates that whilst partners nevertheless reach children, it is necessary to provide the less expensive services, while more resource intensive services such as case management. As CP AoR coordination team, similarly, funding constraints limits our ability to provide capacity building and workshops to improve quality of response, as well as inability to have dedicated subnational coordinators in each region.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS BY CLUSTER

CLUSTER	PEOPLE IN NEED	PEOPLE TARGETED	PEOPLE REACHED	WOMEN	% CHILDREN, ADULTS, ELDERLY (<18yrs, 18-59yrs, 60+yrs)
 Child Protection	8M	2.0M	13% 263K	52%	32% 57% 11%

Information and connectivity gaps also remain a challenge. Information such as situation monitoring, assessments and data remain extremely difficult in the current context. CP AoR relies heavily on reports

from partners. Furthermore, connectivity in many parts of the country results in partners unable to participate in coordination meetings and receive support towards their activities.

Conclusion

The present strategy is intended to provide information and direction for CP AoR members to provide quality, holistic response across Myanmar.

The strategy was developed in consultation with CP AoR members, the SAG, the Protection Cluster, UNICEF as Cluster Lead Agency and the Global CP AoR.

The strategy will be updated and amended should the context or priorities dramatically change. Alternatively, the strategy will be adapted and updated in September of 2025.

For more information on the CP AoR in Myanmar, or the present strategy. [Please contact the national CP AoR coordinators in Myanmar.](#)

Glossary

AoR	Area of Responsibility
CAAFAG	Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups
CCPM	Cluster Coordination Performance Monitoring
CTMFR	Country Taskforce on Monitoring and Reporting on Grave Violations
CP AoR	Child protection Area of Responsibility
CPIMS+	Child Protection information Management System
CPMS	Child Protection Minimum Standards
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
GBV	Gender Based Violence
HCT	Humanitarian Country Team
HNRP	Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan
ICCG	Inter Cluster Coordination Group
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
MA	Mine Action
MRM	Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism
MSNA	Multi Sectoral Needs Assessment
PIMS	Protection incident monitoring system
PiN	People In Need
PSS	Psychosocial Support
SAG	Strategic Advisory Group (CP AoR)
TCF	Transitional Cooperation Framework

References

Case Management CPIMS+ Trends Analysis

Child Protection Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Action 2019

<https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/six-grave-violations/>

CP AoR Myanmar website <https://www.myanmarchildprotection.com/>

CP AoR partner reports

Food Security and Protection Brief 2024

Multisectoral needs assessment Myanmar 2023

Myanmar Protection Cluster Strategy 2024-2025

Protection incident Monitoring Q2 trends analysis

Report of the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar* Human Rights Council Fifty-seventh session July 2024 [Report of the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar.pdf](#)

Secretary General Annual report on Children in Armed Conflict June 2024 A_78_84 2-S_2024 – 03 June 2024: <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n24/095/07/pdf/n2409507.pdf>

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights of Rohingya Muslims and other minorities in Myanmar covering the period from 15 August 2023 to 31 July 2024

UNHCR displacement figures July 2024

World Bank Report *Populations in Peril: Decoding Patterns of Forced Displacement in Myanmar*, May 2024