

COVID-19

GNWP Mitigation and Adaptation Strategy and Appeal

April 2020

Country Update

Myanmar

As of April 8, 2020, the Government of Myanmar claimed to have confirmed 27 cases so far. [1] which health authorities found unlikely because it shares borders with China, Thailand, and India, countries which have been greatly affected by the virus outbreak. According to the US State Department Travel Advisory dated February 25, 2020, Myanmar has closed official land border crossings with China; however, there are many unofficial routes which are not controlled by either government.[2] On March 25th, the government reported three cases from Burmese nationals returning to the country.[3] However, there are concerns amongst the international community and health officials that although the virus is much more widespread, the Burmese government may be suppressing or under-reporting critical information.[4] In addition, according to Norwegian telecommunication provider Telenor, Myanmar government has expanded its restrictions on freedom of expression in the country and has demanded to shut down 221 websites because according to them it was spreading fake news related to COVID-19 or containing explicit content. [5] At this moment, GNWP's planned in-country activities for Myanmar are postponed to October-December 2020, and GNWP continues to closely monitor the situation. GNWP has held a series of online meetings with women's rights and youth organizations based in Myanmar to discuss contingency strategies.

[1] "Myanmar Reports Four More Cases of COVID-19." Anadolu Ajansı, 8 Apr. 2020, www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/myanmar-reports-four-more-cases-of-covid-19/1799363. Accessed 14 April, 2020.

[2] United States State Department Travel Advisory, March 27, 2020. Available at: <https://mm.usembassy.gov/health-alert-032720/>. Accessed 1 April, 2020.

[3] Zaw Zaw Htwe, "Myanmar Confirms Third COVID-19 Case", Irrawaddy, 25 March 2020. Available at: <https://www.irrawaddy.com/news/burma/myanmar-confirms-third-covid-19-case.html>. Accessed on 1 April, 2020.

[4] Kyodo News, "Myanmar still free of COVID-19 despite rising cases in neighbors", 21 March, 2020. Available at: <https://english.kyodonews.net/news/2020/03/c7c123b9b5ab-myanmar-still-free-of-covid-19-despite-rising-cases-in-neighbors.html>. Accessed on 1 April, 2020.

[5] "Myanmar: 3 Charged for COVID-19 Street Art." Human Rights Watch, 8 Apr. 2020, www.hrw.org/news/2020/04/08/myanmar-3-charged-covid-19-street-art. Accessed 14 April, 2020.