

MYANMAR STRUGGLES TO CONTAIN THE SPREAD OF THE CORONAVIRUS

With 112 new cases reported on September 1st (highest single-day spike in the country so far), the number of COVID-19 cases in Myanmar is now 887, including six deaths. Rakhine state has the most cases, surpassing Yangon as the epicentre of the disease. The government has imposed stay-at-home restrictions and urged people to maintain safety precautions. Due to mounting local infections in Rakhine state, as well as other regions in the country, the government last week decided to close all public and private high schools, which would affect more than 1.2 million students. Myanmar authorities also extended the restrictions on entry visas to all incoming visitors and placed a ban on international commercial flights into the country's airports until the end of September.

(Source: WHO Dashboard, 5:36 PM CEST, September 1, 2020)

OUR REACH



45.9 million
people reached and
sensitised on COVID-19



1.3 million
life-saving information
materials distributed

DISTRICT GOVERNOR JOINS BRAC AFGHANISTAN'S COVID-19 CAMPAIGN

Shinwari is one of the remote districts in Nangarhar Province, with an influx of refugees, and now it has become the third hotspot for COVID-19 cases in Afghanistan. There have been 1,401 positive cases, 75 deaths, and minimal access to healthcare, education and other essential services.

BRAC Afghanistan carried out its awareness raising campaigns in 14 provinces including Shinwari district. With only 12 social organisers, it was a difficult task for the BRAC country team to convince people from 85 Community Development Councils (CDC) about the severity of the virus.

In a moment of crisis such as this, Azmat Ullah Zaki stepped forward to help by visiting the religious and local leaders in all 85 CDCs, meeting them individually and/or in groups and raising awareness amongst them.

“I knew that the only way to convince the people is to talk with them in the presence of their traditional and religious leaders and that worked,” he says. “We maintained precaution measures and arranged CDC meetings to keep people informed about the virus. Brochures, banners and presentations by the social organizers helped in raising awareness faster.”



In addition to making announcements through loudspeakers on cars to spread information throughout the communities, Zaki and the BRAC team convinced the religious leaders and local Imams to allow them to use the Mosques’ loudspeakers as well. However, despite all these efforts, many people still failed to maintain social distancing and mask protocols in crowded areas.

In order to tackle this issue, Zaki gathered some of the CDC leaders and religious scholars to meet the District Governor to ask for his help with the campaign. The Governor agreed to join the BRAC team and the CDC leaders for a one–day campaign in the city. He helped raise awareness by distributing brochures to the people in the marketplaces, and discussing the importance of maintaining the precautionary measures with them, alongside the social workers.

“I found involving religious and traditional local leaders along with high level government officials to be the most effective way to ensure that our awareness campaigns becomes successful,” shares Zaki.

BRAC STRENGTHENING IMMUNIZATION IN HELMAND PROVINCE

A new project titled “Strengthening the Routine Immunization in Helmand Province” supported by Global Alliance for Vaccination and Immunization (GAVI) has been initiated between BRAC Afghanistan and the Ministry of Public Health(MoPH), Afghanistan. The project will cover 308,125 children (under–5 years old) and pregnant mothers as well as approximately 1 million indirect beneficiaries in one year.

BRAC SIERRA LEONE TRAINS COMMUNITY HEALTH PROMOTERS ON COVID-19

BRAC Sierra Leone, in partnership with the Kenema District Health Management Team and the Kenema District COVID-19 Emergency Response Centre, has trained 50 Community Health Promoters (CHPs) on COVID-19 awareness in Bo and Pujehun districts. The purpose of the training session was to provide the participants with correct information regarding COVID-19



so that they can help the Community Health Workers (CHWs) to identify patients, make referrals, and trace contacts in their respective chiefdoms. The CHWs also help distribute face masks, raise awareness on social distancing, place handwashing stations and soaps, and ensure that essential equipment is being properly used.

Funded by the Center for Disaster Philanthropy, the Community Health Reach project distributed 50 hand washing stations and over 5,000 masks in the following chiefdoms: Niawa, Lenga, Valunia, Kauka, Tikonko, Jaiama and Lugbu. The aim is to increase awareness of the various ways the coronavirus can be contained. Local authorities have appreciated BRAC's timely intervention and call for proactive responses to keep the communities safe.

UPDATE ON GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES



Myanmar: In Rakhine State, locally transmitted cases continue to rise, with up to 173 cases reported between 19 and 26 August, bringing to 190 the total number of cases, including UN and INGO staff. The government ordered the shutdown of all high schools in the country effective August 27. A stay-at-home instruction is in effect for Sittwe, Kyaukpyu, Ann, Toungup and Thandwe Township since 20 August, excluding traveling for work in Government offices, businesses or factories, as well as visiting markets and seeking medical care .



Nepal: The District Administration Offices in 47 out of 77 districts, including Kathmandu valley (from 21 August) and Surkhet (from 17 August), have imposed a full lockdown, while 13 other districts have imposed the odd even rule in various parts of the country, where vehicles with odd numbers plates will be allowed on the road on odd days and same for even. Long distance travel is prohibited. Government has added 4 new test labs throughout the country this week. New website regarding mental health for healthcare workers has been set up by WHO and MoHP.

BRAC UGANDA'S EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME, WITH SUPPORT FROM LEGO FOUNDATION, IS TEACHING CHILDREN UNDER-FIVE VIA LIVE RADIO SHOWS. THIS INNOVATIVE RADIO PROGRAMME BROADCASTS TWICE A WEEK ON CBS 89.2 FM IN UGANDA.



Useful links

If you would like to find more detail about the current situation in each country, we recommend the following sources:

[Coronavirus COVID-19 Global Cases tracker](#)

Center for Systems Science and Engineering (CSSE) at Johns Hopkins University

[A selection of graphics: Tracking the global outbreak](#)

BBC News Website

[Key Economic Policy Responses to COVID19](#)

International Monetary Fund

[BRAC's Global Response Portal](#)

How BRAC International responding to COVID-19

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