

On 28 March 2025, a powerful earthquake of 7.7 magnitude struck central Myanmar at 12:50pm local time, with its epicentre near Mandalay and Sagaing cities at a shallow depth of 10 kilometres. A second earthquake of 6.4 magnitude further south followed within minutes. More than 200 aftershocks followed, delaying emergency rescue activities.

Preliminary reports indicate that over 2,719 people have been killed and over 4,521 others injured, while many remain missing in central and northwestern Myanmar. The United States Geological Survey estimates that the death toll is likely to surpass 10,000 people.

The earthquake caused widespread destruction of homes and severe damage to critical infrastructure such as major bridges, roads, airport, universities, hotels, historical and religious sites, and public service buildings in urban and rural areas heavily damaged. Thousands of people are spending nights on the streets or open spaces due to destruction of homes and fear of more aftershocks.

Supply infrastructure and communication towers were also severely affected, and electricity and water services disrupted. As the full scale of the disaster unfolds, urgent humanitarian assistance is needed to support those affected. There is a critical need for safe water, sanitation, food, shelter, and emergency medicines.

The military-led State Administration Council (SAC) has declared a state of emergency for Sagaing, Mandalay, Nay Pyi Taw Union Territory, Bago Regions and parts of Shan State and called for international assistance.



Risks and challenges:



Clients affected: It is primarily estimated that more than 12,000 clients might be affected with many facing damaging homes, loss of businesses and income generating sources



Areas of operation affected: Offices from 23 out of 68 operating areas from across 30 townships affected



Staff affected: 149 staff have been working in those 23 affected offices and no casualty has been reported



Office buildings damaged: 15 office buildings damaged, with some remaining without power and basic infrastructure



BRAC Myanmar's response:

1. The country emergency response team and field-level emergency response teams were immediately activated
2. 200 million Myanmar kyat (USD 95,000) allocated from the microfinance social welfare fund to support affected clients with emergency food and medicine.
3. Power generators, fuel, medicines, rechargeable lights, dry foods dispatched to support four locations
4. BRAC staff moved away from damaged homes and offices and into safer locations
5. All microfinance operations in five branch offices suspended from 1 April until further notice

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