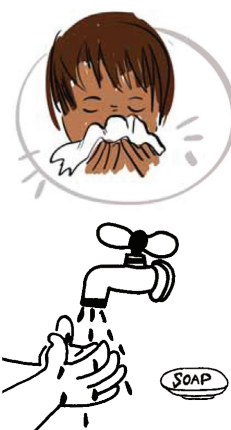




## Seasonal influenza update

June to end-September is commonly influenza season in Myanmar coinciding with the monsoon. Seasonal influenza is a serious public health problem in every country - causing severe illness and death, especially in high risk populations. To minimize the influenza burden, simple prevention measures are advised:

- **cover** your nose and mouth by coughing or sneezing into elbow or arm. Or, use a tissue to fully cover mouth and nose, then discard used tissue well
- **wash** your hands with soap and water, thoroughly and frequently
- **eat** nutritious food and drink plenty of water
- **get** plenty of rest and exercise mildly
- **seek** advice from health professionals if you have symptoms, such as fever & cough.



Our newsletter **Help prevent influenza**, of July 2019, has details in English and Myanmar languages, at <https://bit.ly/30cGpjN> and <https://bit.ly/2JvrZV2>. In addition, influenza details are available at Ministry of Health & Sports <https://bit.ly/2mA4pik>

## Curbing dengue & chikungunya – all of us can help

**No mosquitoes = no dengue**  
So do your part by cleaning up mosquito breeding sites!

Empty water storage containers, scrub the insides and reseal carefully after refilling	O	
Clean the insides of flower vases, plant pots or pet bowls and change the water	C	
Clean drains and gutters	a	
Dispose of any unused containers and objects that can accumulate water	W	
Turn over any containers that cannot be thrown away and protect them from rain	e	

Even a bottle cap can contain enough water for a mosquito to breed!

**Dengue** is a seasonal viral disease transmitted by infected mosquitoes, either *Aedes aegypti* or *Aedes albopictus*. Dengue may mostly be mild, but can be severe, leading to death in rare cases if not managed well. Peak transmission season for dengue in Myanmar coincides with the monsoon. Preparedness for prevention and control of dengue is crucial before the monsoon. Community advocacy is key - as practiced by Yangon Region health authorities in June 2019 with the support of WHO and partners. This helped mobilize communities for active participation, so important for dengue prevention and control.

**Chikungunya** is also a viral disease transmitted by the same family of *Aedes* mosquito as dengue. *Aedes* mosquitoes mainly bite during the day. High fever, muscle and joint pain are common symptoms. Chikungunya shares clinical signs and symptoms with

dengue. Prevention and control of dengue and chikungunya relies on controlling mosquito breeding sites through simple prevention measures. Our special factsheet **Help prevent dengue & chikungunya**, of 9 Sept 2019 has the details. It is available in English and Myanmar languages at <https://bit.ly/2kuM1Xj> and <https://bit.ly/2lqaL3A>

## Myanmar polio alert highlights 2019

On 25 June 2019, a vaccine-derived poliovirus type 1 (cVDPV1) was detected and reported by Ministry of Health & Sports in **Hpa Pun township, Kayin state**. Subsequently, five more cases have been identified and confirmed from Hpa-pun township, a remote location of Kayin state, where government access for providing basic health services, including immunization is very limited. A vaccine-derived poliovirus is a very rare strain of the poliovirus that occurs mainly in populations with low immunization coverage.

**Three vaccination campaigns** with bivalent oral polio vaccine (bOPV) have been conducted in 12 nearby townships around Hpa-pun. Ministry of Health & Sports, in collaboration with WHO and partners, conducted one large scale bOPV vaccination campaign in **25-27 August**, with a second large scale campaign scheduled last week of **October 2019** to cover **98 high risk townships** across the country. This is targeting **1.2 million** children under five years old *twice*. The second large scale bOPV campaign will further include measles and rubella vaccination, thereby adding protection against two further diseases targeted for elimination. WHO Myanmar produced *special* newsletters on preventing polio in English and Myanmar languages -- available at <https://bit.ly/2T6m2T0> and <https://bit.ly/2YWfD33> -- and on measles prevention in both languages, available at <https://bit.ly/2T6m2T0> and <https://bit.ly/2YWfD33>

# Myanmar health cluster bulletin

The Health Cluster Bulletin provides an overview of needs, key information, and activities of *Health cluster* partners. Its purpose is to keep stakeholders informed.

The first issue covered January-April 2019. The contents are updates on current humanitarian crises, activities of partner organizations, updates from the Global Health Cluster, summary information on Early Warning and Response System (EWARS), funding status, and list of partners. It is available at <https://bit.ly/2mvTeHg>

The next issue will come out soon and will cover May-August 2019. It is expected to include updates from Kachin, Rakhine and Shan States, including on preparedness and response activities during the monsoon season.



## Health emergency updates on displacements in Rakhine and Chin States

The armed conflict between Myanmar Military and Arakan Army has displaced approximately 30,000 people in Rakhine and Chin States since December 2018. This further compounded the existing humanitarian situation, creating significant needs for those who fled their homes, and among communities hosting them. This also led to restriction on access to communities previously receiving assistance in affected areas.

While access was restricted for most UN and INGOs at the onset, the Government, local civil society organizations, Red Cross Movement and other humanitarian partners have been at the forefront of the emergency response. Myanmar's Humanitarian Country Team endorsed a strategy of integrated allocation by Central Emergency

Response Fund (CERF) and Myanmar Humanitarian Fund (MHF). An integrated allocation of USD 5 million covers life-saving activities in six key sectors, including health, which was allocated with 400,000 USD (150,000 CERF; 250,000 MHF).









WHO received USD 136,000 from CERF which supports mobile clinic teams by Ministry of Health and Sports. This is delivering life-saving health care services to newly affected populations in priority townships in Rakhine State. Services commenced early May 2019 and continue under this support for six months.

### References:

- 1) *Supplemental Response Plan, Myanmar, May 2019;*
- 2) *Integrated Allocation Strategy, Myanmar. CERF rapid response, MHF reserve allocation, May 2019.*

## 8 SEAR Regional flagships

The Regional Director, with the WHO Representatives of South-East Asia Region (SEAR) has renewed the flagship priorities for SEAR for the period 2019-2024, taking forward WHO transformation at regional and country levels. The 8 regional flagships are:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
|  <p>1. Measles and rubella elimination by 2023</p>  |  <p>5. Building national capacity for preventing &amp; combating antimicrobial resistance</p>   |
|  <p>2. Prevention &amp; control of noncommunicable diseases through multisectoral policies &amp; plans, with focus on "best buys"</p> |  <p>6. Scaling up capacity development in emergency risk management in countries</p>            |
|  <p>3. Accelerate reduction of maternal, neonatal and under five mortality</p>  |  <p>7. Eliminate neglected tropical diseases and other diseases on the verge of elimination</p> |
|  <p>4. Universal health coverage with a focus on human resources for health and essential medicines</p>                               |  <p>8. Accelerating efforts to end TB.</p>  |

# Help reduce air pollution



Indoor and outdoor air pollution is a great concern in Myanmar and globally.

In Myanmar, it is estimated that the majority of households rely on unclean fuels, for example for cooking, leading to *indoor air pollution*. It is an important issue to address.

*Outdoor air pollution*, too, is an issue. The level of particulate matter (PM2.5) in urban areas is on the rise. At the same time, we can all help prevent air pollution, in numerous ways. For further details, our newsletter *special* on the subject, in English and Myanmar languages, is available at <https://bit.ly/2Hvuvef> and <https://bit.ly/2JOQejs>

# Trachoma elimination in Myanmar



Examination of children for trachoma in Shwebo township, Sagaing Region. 11 May 2019

Neglected tropical diseases elimination is one among 8 WHO South-East Asia Regional Flagships (see page 2). One of these neglected tropical diseases is *trachoma*, a bacterial disease of the eye that leads to blindness. In Myanmar, several townships of Mandalay, Magway & Sagaing Regions reported *trachoma* cases in the past.

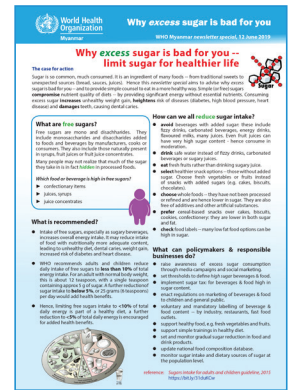
To help address the situation, WHO fielded international experts to further train on trachoma elimination. Additional exposure for Myanmar staff was facilitated in Ethiopia, to identify trachoma cases and support a validation survey, now on-going. Training and validation are necessary for certification of trachoma elimination, targeted in 2020.

# Why excess sugar is bad for you

Sugar is so common, much consumed. It is an ingredient of many foods -- from traditional sweets to unexpected sources (bread, sauces, juices). Hence our newsletter *special* explains *why excess sugar is bad for you*. It provides simple advice to eat in a more healthy way.

Sugars compromise the quality of diets -- by providing significant energy without essential nutrients. Consuming *excess* sugar leads to unhealthy weight gain and increases risk of diseases (*diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease*). It also damages teeth, causing dental caries.

Our newsletter special *Why excess sugar is bad for you*, of 12 June 2019, is about limiting sugar intake for healthier lives and contains five keys to a healthy diet. It is available in English and Myanmar languages, at <https://bit.ly/2MGGoCK> and <https://bit.ly/2SBZyZG>



## Three signature cancer initiatives in Myanmar

**United Nations Joint Programme on Cervical Cancer Prevention and Control** -- Myanmar is among six countries selected globally as focus countries, representing South-East Asia Region (<https://bit.ly/2mu8EM9>). A first *inception mission* visited Myanmar in 2017 to help launch this global pilot programme. A follow up mission in 2019 reviewed progress. Most notably, for example, is the preparation by the national health authorities for nation-wide introduction of vaccination against **Human Papilloma Virus**, one of the leading causes of cervical cancer. This is targeted for implementation from June 2020.

**National Childhood Cancer Control Programme** -- Myanmar was designated by WHO as the first focus country in the South-East Asia Region for the Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer. More info available at <https://bit.ly/2KRcS8C> In this regard, a landmark 2<sup>nd</sup> national workshop, on childhood cancer control, was held in both Yangon & Naypyitaw during May 2019.

**C/Can 2025: Yangon City Cancer Challenge.** A partnership which aims to unite the cancer community through networking. Yangon is the first city in Asia to be part of this initiative. More info available at <https://bit.ly/2kUN17c>



## External programme reviews - example malaria

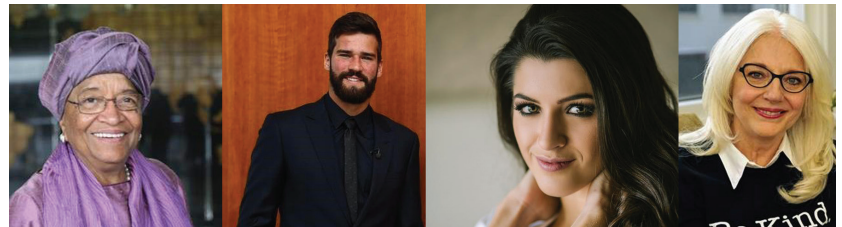


Briefing with external malaria review team at the WHO Myanmar office in Yangon.

With the Ministry of Health & Sports, WHO supported an independent malaria programme evaluation during early 2019, to review performance and achievements of malaria prevention and control in Myanmar. Spectacular success is evident in malaria elimination as Myanmar has curbed 85% of cases and 95% of deaths in 2018 compared to 2012, benefiting all communities. At the same time, recommendations for further progress highlighted to focus on the remaining high burden townships, address forest-related and outdoor malaria transmission, optimize human resources and include malaria as a

notifiable disease. The evaluation will form the basis for Myanmar's next *national malaria strategic plan for elimination, 2021-2025*. It will also be a guiding document for resource mobilization.

## New WHO Goodwill Ambassadors promote global health



Following the World Health Assembly 2019, four new WHO Goodwill Ambassadors were nominated to help draw attention to health issues affecting people's lives and well-being:

- Her Excellency **Ellen Johnson Sirleaf**, Africa's first elected female Head of State and former President of Liberia, a health for all advocate -- WHO Goodwill Ambassador for **Health Workforce**
- Footballer **Alisson Becker**, goalkeeper of the Brazil and Liverpool football teams and advocate to promote physical activity, especially among children -- WHO Goodwill Ambassador for **Health Promotion**
- **Dr Natália Loewe Becker**, a medical doctor and health advocate from Brazil and passionate to promote childhood immunization and nutrition for children and improving sanitation in local communities -- WHO Goodwill Ambassador for **Health Promotion**
- **Ms Cynthia Germanotta**, president of *Born This Way Foundation*, which she co-founded with her daughter Lady Gaga in 2012, with the goal of supporting wellness of young people to build a kinder, braver world -- WHO Goodwill Ambassador for **Mental Health**

For more information, kindly visit <https://bit.ly/2IU8SUB>

## WHO presence in countries 2019



The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development views health as vital for the future of our world. Enshrined therein is a commitment to "ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages".

WHO, as specialized agency of the UN system, and many partners, support countries in reaching health-related SDG targets and goals.

WHO presence in countries is available at: <https://bit.ly/2mEg8vZ>

Important dates

**72<sup>nd</sup> WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia, New Delhi**  
**2-6 September 2019**

**Myanmar national rehabilitation strategy launch**  
**18-19 September 2019**

**first World Patient Safety Day**  
**17 September 2019**

**World Antibiotic Awareness Week**  
**12-18 November 2019**

**World AIDS Day**  
**1 December 2019**