**MSF Steps Up Response in Myanmar Following Devastating Earthquake**

On 28 March 2025, a powerful 7.7 magnitude earthquake struck central Myanmar, devastating the regions of Mandalay, Naypyidaw, Sagaing, and Shan State. As of 8 April, official figures reported over 3,600 deaths, more than 5,000 people injured, and an estimated 17 million individuals affected—many severely. Key infrastructure, including hospitals, roads, and water systems, sustained significant damage, while ongoing telecommunications disruptions continue to hamper relief efforts.

The earthquake struck a country already gripped by several health crisis and conflict, compounding the challenges faced by affected communities. Limited resources, staff and supplies have left some facilities over-burdened and struggling to respond to the growing health needs.

In the immediate aftermath, Doctors Without Borders (MSF) reaffirmed its commitment and capacity to deliver large-scale emergency medical assistance across all impacted areas. MSF has prioritised its response in the hardest-hit and currently accessible cities of Mandalay and Naypyidaw, while serious concerns persist for populations in more remote and less accessible areas such as Sagaing.

Our staff have reported extensive destruction. Many residents remain outdoors, fearing aftershocks, while monasteries have opened their doors to host displaced families and local communities are demonstrating remarkable solidarity.

In the hardest-hit cities, damage to infrastructure has disrupted essential services like water, electricity, and sanitation, severely impacting hospitals' ability to function. In some cases, structural damage forced medical staff to treat patients outside, due to fears of further building collapse.

In Naypyidaw and Mandalay, where hospital systems were particularly hard hit, MSF carried out assessments, delivered medical supplies, and initiated discussions with key stakeholders, including the Ministry of Health.

In Mandalay, MSF teams quickly moved to improve water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) conditions in damaged hospitals by installing water tanks and additional handwashing basins. Waste management was reinforced with dozens of bins, and fans were set up in temporary shelters to help patients cope with extreme heat – often reaching 40°C – while awaiting treatment outside damaged facilities.

At the same time, mobile medical teams began providing consultations in makeshift shelters, including monasteries, treating a range of conditions from common illnesses to chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension. In southern Myanmar, mobile teams also distributed essential non-food items, restored clean water sources, and continued assessments in affected and displaced communities.

Mental health is a key part of MSF’s response. In Mandalay teams composed of trained staff and student volunteers have been visiting patients in surgical, orthopedic, and trauma wards at local hospitals to provide psychological first aid (PFA). These efforts are essential in a context where survivors face high psychological stress following both the disaster and fear of aftershocks which continue to be recorded, and in addition to the consequences of the ongoing conflict ravaging many parts of the country.

With the rainy season approaching, flooding and landslides could exacerbate existing access challenges, particularly in remote areas. The rainy season also significantly heightens the likelihood of public health threats associated with outbreaks of waterborne disease such as cholera, and vector-borne diseases like malaria or dengue fever. This is due to the potential flooding-related contamination of the already reduced number of safe water sources. Immediate actions like scaled up provision of clean water, safe sanitation facilities, distribution of mosquito nets and hygiene promotion are essential to mitigate the additional threads.

In order to address the immense needs it is crucial for humanitarian aid to reach all affected areas unhindered, including hard to reach locations. A further significant scale-up of aid and access to healthcare in all affected areas, is urgently needed to avoid longer-term harmful consequences for people grappling with the aftermath of this earthquake.

As part of its long-standing presence in Myanmar since its first intervention in 1992, MSF reaffirms its readiness to provide emergency medical humanitarian assistance wherever needed, as it continues to support communities affected by conflict, disease, and now, one of the worst earthquakes to strike the region in recent history.