

Developing International and Internal Labour Migration Governance (DIILM)

Feb 2016 – June 2021

DIILM'S RESPONSES TO THE NEEDS OF MIGRANTS DURING THE COVID -19 PANDEMIC

In March 2020, thousands of Myanmar migrants rushed to the border to return home from Thailand and China to be with their families during the Covid -19 pandemic and because they had been temporarily laid off. ILO, together with the DIILM project partners immediately scaled up operations to ensure the safety of returning migrants and to curb the possible spread of Covid-19. Over the following six months, more than 150,000 migrants have returned from Thailand and China, with over ten thousand being repatriated from Malaysia, Jordan and other countries. The ILO has provided care packages or food aid to 107,000 returning migrants and supported PPE for government officials providing services to returning migrants on the border, in quarantine facilities and in labour exchange offices.

Immediate responses to the Covid 19 crisis

- ✓ 40,000 facemasks, 1,000 hand sanitizer bottles, 1,800 face shields, and 150 thermal thermometers delivered to 78 Labour Exchange Offices, and 6 Skills Training Centres Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population (MOLIP).¹
- ✓ 110,810 returning migrants and frontline responders provided with Covid prevention care packages or food aid.
- ✓ 600 hand sanitizers provided to Kayin State Government to support the Karen Ethnic Health Organization Consortium at health screening points and village tract health centres.

Samaritan's Purse provided emergency materials at No.2 Myanmar Thai Border Gate, Myawaddy Township



Mawk Kon delivered food and water at a Quarantine Facility, Tachileik Township



¹ Labour Exchange offices in Nay Pyi Taw Council (2 LEOs); Yangon Region (16); Mandalay Region (11); Kachin State (3); Kayah State (2); Kayin State (3); Chin State (2) Sagaing Region (8); Tanintharyi Region (1); Bago Region (5); Magwe Region (7), Mon State (4), Rakhine State (1), Shan State (7); Ayeyawaddy region (6); and to MOLIP Skills Training centres in North Dagon and Yankin in Yangon; Mandalay, Hpa An, Setse, and Pathein.

Covid-19 care packages and food aid provided by DIILM (March 23rd – September 7th)²

Locations	Number of male beneficiaries	Number of female beneficiaries	Total beneficiaries
Bago	12,330	9,054	21,384
Htee Khee	2,877	2,494	5,371
Kaw Thaug	9,488	7,504	16,992
Mawlamyine	750	750	1,500
Myawaddy	21,225	14,094	35,319
North Dagon	5	5	10
Pa-an, Than Taung Gyi	1,500	1,500	3,000
Pakokku	500	500	1,000
Payar Thone Su	4,629	3,475	8,104
Sagaing	1,000	1,000	2,000
Shan-Thai border	3,051	3,050	6,101
Tachileik	4,958	4,071	9,029
Thaton	500	500	1,000
Total	62,813	47,997	110,810



INTERMEDIATE RESPONSES TO THE COVID-19 CRISIS

DIILM has provided funding:

- ✓ to Yang Chi Oo Workers Association to set up mask making and hand gel workshops employing 23 workers who had been dismissed from factories due to Covid-19. 7,400 items produced by the workshops have been donated to the Ayeyarwaddy, Mandalay and Yangon Regional Government's Covid-19 committee and nearly 15,000 masks have been distributed to factory workers in Shwe Pyi Thar Industrial Zone.
- ✓ to CTUM to work with 30 volunteers to disinfect areas of Hlaing Thar Yar industrial zone where hundreds of thousands of internal migrants live and work.

DISTRIBUTION OF CRITICAL INFORMATION TO MIGRANTS

DIILM partners provided information on Covid 19 prevention during the pandemic and on safe migration including updates on government policies in Myanmar and in Thailand. MAP Radio (<https://www.facebook.com/mapradiocmms/>) broadcast online in Shan and Myanmar to their 12,000 followers; while partners in Myanmar distributed pamphlets to nearly 30,000 returned migrants.

² Distribution is ongoing at time of publication

FUTURE INTERVENTIONS

DIILM continues to monitor the situation closely in order to advocate for longer term interventions for:

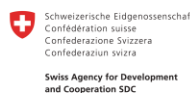
- Inclusion of migrants in social protection packages in Myanmar and in countries of destination;
- Migration policies that would allow migrants to migrate to countries of destination to fill existing labour shortages safely and without bearing the costs of quarantine and testing;
- Through collaboration across ILO projects, increase livelihood opportunities for returned migrants through job creation and support to set up small businesses;
- Greater access to vocational training and further education for returned migrants;
- Cash for work programs to support improving or building local infrastructure and developing climate change resilient communities.

The Developing International and Internal Labour Migration Governance in Myanmar (DIILM) (2016 - 2021) project works with tripartite constituents and civil society organisations in Myanmar to strengthen the legislative and policy framework governing labour migration. The people of Myanmar have long used migration as a survival strategy; for safe refuge and for livelihood. Improving labour migration governance can ensure a migration experience that is more beneficial for women and men migrants, and better contributes to the development of Myanmar. DIILM and the tripartite partners work to 1) support development of key legislation and policy; 2) promote decent work for all migrants including in the informal sector; 3) increase the coverage and the quality of services offered to migrants and 4) strengthen policy coherence.

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