
Political unrest in Myanmar

On February 1, 2021, Myanmar's military seized power in the country. It declared a state of emergency, dissolved parliament and arrested the democratically elected head of government, Aung San Suu Kyi, as well as other high-ranking members of the ruling party. Aung San Suu Kyi is accused of election fraud and violating various laws.

Daily protests and strikes followed. One of the central messages of the protesters is that they do not want a military dictatorship. The protest rallies throughout the country have been bloodily suppressed by the military and police since late February. More than 50 people have been killed and over 1,000 people have been imprisoned — including journalists.

Helvetas has adjusted its activities in Myanmar in response to these developments. The Swiss development cooperation and humanitarian aid organization is working directly with the people and civil society organizations, and not with the current de facto regime.

Adapted support

In this difficult, volatile and unpredictable situation, Helvetas remains true to its mission of supporting disadvantaged people as long as the safety of its staff and partners is guaranteed. Certain work is not possible at the moment and most of Helvetas' in-country contacts are not working — they have joined the pro-democracy effort known as the [Civil Disobedience Movement \(CDM\)](#).

Helvetas is adapting its projects and integrating humanitarian activities into its long-term development projects. At this time, the organization is focused on delivering local interventions in cooperation with civil society organizations and private sector companies.