ASSOCIATION OF MEDICAL DOCTORS OF ASIA

Bridges of Hope

How a remote mountain community overcame isolation to secure maternal & child healthcare and a resilient future

AMDA (MONGYAI OFFICE), NORTHERN SHAN STATE, MYANMAR — JULY 2026

In the emerald, undulating peaks of northern Shan State, the Mongyai region unfolds as a breathtaking expanse of dense forests, mountains, and winding waterways. Yet, for the families living within this beautiful landscape, the arrival of the annual monsoon has historically transformed nature's abundance into a perilous barrier.

During the rainy season, torrential downpours routinely turn peaceful mountain streams into raging torrents, washing away fragile roads and destabilizing local infrastructure. For generations, this seasonal isolation severed the lifeblood connecting remote villages to essential health services, critically impacting the region's most vulnerable populations: pregnant women, infants, and the elderly.

Climate Change & Seasonal Vulnerabilities

Due to unprecedented rainfall in recent years, the Mongyai region has experienced multiple landslides, which have destroyed several temporary bridges connecting rural communities.



Figure 1: Field assessment teams surveying raging, flooded mountain streams that completely isolated communities from emergency healthcare access.

Historically, the resilient villagers had always relied on their own collective strength, rebuilding lost crossings on a self-reliant basis. However, bound by limited community funds and a lack of engineering expertise, these hand-built wooden structures were fragile stopgaps. They rarely survived more than a single season before being damaged or swept away once more, leaving communities trapped in a cycle of constant rebuilding.



Figure 2: The remnants of self-reliant traditional wooden crossings destroyed by severe monsoon pressures.

> *"When the waters rose last year, we weren't just cut off from the markets; we were cut off from safety. Bringing our pregnant mothers or elderly parents to the health center became an act of absolute desperation."*
>
> ***— A LOCAL RESIDENT, NAR WAH VILLAGE TRACT***

Engineering a Shared Vision & Overcoming Logistics

Recognizing that sustainable health outcomes are inextricably linked to reliable physical access, the Association of Medical Doctors of Asia (AMDA) intervened. With generous funding support from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) of Japan, AMDA launched a targeted infrastructure initiative to replace seasonal vulnerabilities with permanent access.

435	2	100%
HOUSEHOLDS BENEFITING	BRIDGES COMPLETED	COMMUNITY DRIVEN



Figure 3: Overcoming heavy mud and waterlogged routes to haul structural bricks and masonry materials.

Community Mobilization and Construction

Throughout April and May 2026, construction progressed rapidly under profound community mobilization. Guided by an AMDA engineer and the proactive coordination of the village heads, local volunteers worked alongside field coordinators to mix aggregates, sift sand, and construct robust retaining networks.



Figure 4: Local community volunteers, youth, and elders systematically constructing framing decks and foundations.

Completed Infrastructure: Smooth Safe Crossings

The completed Namp Sin - Man Tat and Net Ma - Man Tat structures feature premium concrete/brick masonry base walls and high-capacity wooden superstructures. Today, over 435 rural households navigate the landscape seamlessly. Pregnant mothers travel securely to the Man Tat Health Center, school attendance has improved, and local economic activities continue unhindered.

To ensure the sustainability of the bridges, maintenance committees were formed, minor repair training was provided, and maintenance funds were established.



Figure 5: The fully finalized concrete/brick masonry and wood decks providing smooth, safe passage for local residents

Through the powerful convergence of international goodwill, professional engineering, and an unyielding community spirit, the mountains of Mongyai are no longer a barrier to health and development—they are home to a connected, resilient community.

Project Partnership & Implementation:

This project was implemented by the Association of Medical Doctors of Asia (AMDA) in support of Maternal and Child Health services, generously funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) of Japan.