

UNITED NATIONS



OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

**Cyclone Nargis, Myanmar
OCHA Situation Report No. 29
9 June 2008**

This situation report is based on information received by the clusters, whose partners include UN Agencies, national and international NGOs, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and IOM.

SITUATION OVERVIEW

1. Cyclone Nargis struck Myanmar on 2 and 3 May 2008, making landfall in the Ayeyarwady Division and hitting the former capital, Yangon. Of 37 townships affected by the cyclone, 15 are considered to be 'worst-affected'. Current estimates suggest that 2.4 million people were affected. 1.3 million people are estimated to have been reached so far by International NGOs, the Red Cross and the UN. Official figures as of 16 May state that 77,738 people have been killed and 55,917 remain missing.
2. A Tripartite Core Group (TCG), composed of representatives of the Government of Myanmar, ASEAN and the UN, was established at the donor conference of 25 May to oversee the coordination of relief assistance. The third meeting of the group took place on 9 June, chaired by the Director General of Social Welfare.
3. A joint relief and early recovery assessment (Post-Nargis Joint Assessment/PONJA) coordinated by the Tripartite Core Group was officially launched in Yangon on 9 June. The assessment involves humanitarian needs and damage components: a Village Tract Assessment (VTA) and a Damage and Loss Assessment (DaLA), for which field surveys in the 30 affected townships are planned between 10-19 June. (Results from the VTA are expected at the end of June and will feed into a revised Flash Appeal.) Assessment team trainings for both components took place during the past week, advance teams have been travelling to affected areas, and a pilot assessment took place over the weekend.
4. There is a mixed picture regarding access for international staff. UN agencies report no major issues with obtaining visas for their staff, with 179 visas issued as of 9 June. National and international UN staff have been travelling to the Ayeyarwaddy delta in increasing numbers with Government approval; 86 international UN staff have visited the affected-areas as of 9 June. International NGOs are experiencing greater difficulties in entering the country; visa requests in some cases have been pending for up to three weeks. Some International NGOs report problems in accessing the affected areas, with reports of organizations being turned away at police checkpoints despite authorization and unexplained withdrawals of authorization.
5. The Myanmar Cyclone Flash Appeal requests US\$201 million for UN agencies and NGOs to meet the most urgent needs. The appeal is 41% funded as of 9 June, with firm contributions of US\$82 million and a further US\$51 million in uncommitted pledges. According to the OCHA Financial Tracking System (FTS) US\$164 million has been committed to relief operations in Myanmar in total as of 9 June, with a further US\$108 million in uncommitted pledges. For updated information on financial contributions, please visit the OCHA Financial Tracking System (FTS) website: <http://reliefweb.int/fts/>. Donors are encouraged to verify contributions and inform FTS of corrections and additional information at fts@reliefweb.int.

NATIONAL RESPONSE

6. The 'New Light of Myanmar' newspaper reports that Prime Minister General Thein Sein, who is also Chairman of the National Disaster Preparedness Central Committee, visited cyclone-affected areas in the Delta by helicopter from 7 – 9 June. The Prime Minister publicly denied reports of forced relocation and stated that the Government will support people living in relief camps and provide assistance for voluntary returns or resettlement.
7. The Myanmar Red Cross reports that it has reached 228,000 beneficiaries as of 4 June, 36,605 of which are located in Yangon Division, 190,000 in Ayeyarwady Division and 1,590 in Mon State.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

8. The following information is provided by the clusters, which meet regularly to coordinate the humanitarian response of national and international NGOs, the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement and UN agencies. For more detailed up-to-date information relating to cluster activities please visit the Humanitarian Information Centre (HIC) website: <http://myanmar.humanitarianinfo.org/>

9. EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Overall Achievements

- The Emergency Telecommunications cluster is providing communications support for the humanitarian community in Yangon, Laputta, Bogale, Pyapon, Mawlamgyun, Patheingyi and Bangkok.

Challenges

- Emergency telecommunications equipment is currently being held at customs. Although release of the equipment has now been approved by the Government, finalization of the clearance is pending.
- Access to the Delta is improving and the cluster is currently assessing the long-term implications.
- Restrictions on official import of telecommunications equipment remain in place.
- Although the use of telecommunications equipment is prohibited in the Delta, some verbal approvals have been given in Laputta and Bogale.

Funding

- The Emergency Telecommunications cluster is currently reviewing its funding requirements. UNICEF has indicated it may need to revise its flash appeal project. WFP will not at this stage.
- The Emergency Telecommunications cluster is 73% funded in the Flash Appeal according to the OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS).

10. FOOD

Needs Assessment and Analysis:

- The food cluster is providing support to the Post-Nargis Joint Assessment (PONJA) with data collection and analysis capacity as well as logistical support.

Challenges

- Food prices are observed to have risen, due to scarcity of commodities, in townships that have been visited.

Overall Achievements

- Total food distributed by all food cluster partners in May was 5,206 MT.
- WFP and its implementing partners have distributed 5,816 MT of food to the affected areas to date.
- WFP is distributing cash in lieu of food in certain areas, with figures based on the cost of the typical WFP food basket in the local market. 16,448 beneficiaries have received a cash allocation to date.

Gaps and Future Planning

- WFP initially planned to procure food commodities locally to the extent possible and then import commodities to avoid disruption to local markets. The Government has now agreed to permit importation of rice, despite being initially opposed.
- Food commodities catering to children under five years of age is a continuing gap in the food response. The food cluster is working with the nutrition cluster to consider local production.

Funding

- WFP requires US\$41.4 million for its immediate emergency food assistance programme. The funding requirement is urgent as the imminent importation of food commodities is likely to double the cost of providing food assistance.
- The Food cluster is 21% funded in the Flash Appeal according to the OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS).

11. HEALTH

Overall Achievements

- Between May and July, IOM plans to provide emergency medical services through mobile medical teams, medicines, medical equipment and supplies in Bogalay, Malamnyine Kyune and Pyapon.
- HelpAge International (HAI) is working with local NGO YMCA to provide health services in Kyiaklat township. Services will be extended to Mawlamyinegyun, Dedaye township from 10 June.
- IFRC is recruiting 40 health/hygiene officers to work with the Myanmar Red Cross (MRCS) from mid-June onwards.
- Community-based first aid refresher training for 216 MRCS volunteers from the Ayeyarwady and Yangon divisions continues. The main focus of the training is safe water and sanitation, prevention of communicable diseases and psychosocial support. Community education training is being conducted in collaboration with UNICEF.

Gaps and Future Planning

- Three joint Ministry of Health/WHO mobile health teams will undertake a one-week mission this week Laputta, Ngaputaw and Bogalay to trace TB patients with interrupted treatment and provide general non-TB curative and public health services. Nine sub-teams will visit camps and villages. Patient-tracing teams will be sent out to trace patients the following week. WHO will assist with data compilation and analysis and convene a TB working group week beginning 16 June.
- An action plan for dengue prevention and control in cyclone-affected areas has been developed by WHO and the Department of Health and will be presented to the health cluster on 10 June.

Funding

- The Health cluster is 77% funded in the Flash Appeal according to the OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS).

12. LOGISTICS

Overall Achievements

- 1,925MT of cargo, including 1,334MT of food, was dispatched by the logistics cluster between 20 May and 9 June.
- Helicopters operations continue. An MI8 MTV completed 4 rotations from Labutta on 9 May delivering UNICEF shelter materials and WFP pulses to Ah Mat Gyi, Kwa Kwa lay, Kwin Thone Fint, Twe Pin Kaing. Three other helicopters (2 MI8 MTVs and 1 Puma) operated from Bogale delivering rice and HEBs from WFP and mosquito nets from UNICEF to Yoe Kone and Seik Ma (West).
- Detailed logistics information and up-to-date maps can be found on the Logistics Cluster Myanmar dedicated webpage at <http://www.logcluster.org/mm08a/>

Funding

- The Logistics cluster is 12% funded in the Flash Appeal according to the OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS).

13. WASH

Needs Assessment and Analysis:

- The working figure of affected population is still 2.4 million. Cluster agreed to revise the figure after the release of the VTA results. Cooperation with the local authorities in the assessment of damaged infrastructures (ponds) is generally good.
- The cluster started to discuss a common framework of Training of Trainer Hygiene Promoters at Township level with the Central Health Education Bureau
- Population movements in IDP locations are still very fluid. Smaller camps are reportedly merging to be seen as a smaller number of larger camps in Laputta.
- The WASH cluster is aiming to achieve the following indicators:
 - Clean drinking water (3l per capita per day), 10l per day for bathing and cooking
 - 1 sanitary facility for every 100 persons
 - General availability of soap, safe water containers and basic hygiene items

- 1 community trained hygiene promoter per 2,000 people
- The strategy and plan of action for the WASH cluster has been approved by the Director of the Department of Development Affairs and the Deputy Director of the Department of Health.
- A Strategic Advisory Group has been established. Revision of the WASH strategy for the flash appeal, including Early Recovery, is ongoing.
- The following agencies are focal points for WASH at the township level: GAA (Bogale), CESVI (Dedaye), World Vision (Kyaitlat, Pathein, Hlaingtharyar, Dagonmythit-Seikkan), Merlin (Labutta), Save the Children (Mawlamyinegyun, Ngapudaw) and UNICEF (Khawmu).

Overall Achievements

- Disinfectant for over 6 million liters of water is being distributed every day, covering the needs of approximately 2 million people. Penetration of point-of-use treatment, even in remote communities, is good.
- Rainwater collection is increasingly being introduced, and represents the main source of freshwater in the worst-affected areas south of the Delta.
- 10 water treatment units have been deployed in the Delta region. A total of 50 units are now in-country. Training of local staff on use of the units is ongoing in Yangon.
- Pond rehabilitation activities are ongoing and will be prioritized particularly in the southern delta area.

Challenges

- Scarce information about population movements makes systematic provision of service difficult.
- Progress with sanitation is relatively slow in villages due to technical difficulties (high water table) and prevailing cultural practices (pre-cyclone sanitation coverage was 25%).

Gaps and Future Planning

- The level of service is generally better in the areas around Yangon and in the township capitals. Penetration in the southern delta is still extremely slow due to lack of logistic assets and scarcity of staff.

Key Message

- There is an urgent need for skilled personnel (technicians for the water treatment plants, hydro-geologists, hygiene promoters, sanitation engineers) in affected areas for prolonged periods to establish systematic operations.

Funding

- The WASH cluster is 115% funded in the Flash Appeal according to the OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS).

MAPS

For the latest maps relating to the Cyclone in Myanmar please visit:

<http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb.nsf/doc404?OpenForm&emid=TC-2008-000057-MMR&rc=3>

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