

UNITED NATIONS



OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS Myanmar Cyclone Nargis

OCHA Situation Report No. 35
26 June 2008

SITUATION OVERVIEW

1. Cyclone Nargis struck Myanmar on 2 and 3 May 2008, affecting 37 townships across Ayeyarwady and Yangon divisions. Official figures show number of dead or missing at 130,000. 1.3 million out of estimated 2.4 million affected people have been reached so far by International NGOs, the Red Cross and the UN.
2. A Tripartite Core Group (TCG), consisting of high-level representatives of the Government of Myanmar, ASEAN and the UN, was established at a donor conference in Yangon on 25 May to oversee the coordination of relief assistance. Following the meeting, the Post-Nargis Joint Assessment (PONJA) was initiated to produce a common assessment report that covers humanitarian needs (Village Tract Assessment/VTA) and damage components (Damage and Loss Assessment/DaLA) with support from the Government of Myanmar, ASEAN members states and the United Nations. The preliminary findings were presented at the ASEAN Roundtable meeting in Yangon on 24 June. For example: 45% of households have received food through humanitarian assistance, while 56% obtaining food from the markets; 60% of households admitted that access to clean water is inadequate; 22% of households have suffered from psychological stress; 59% of houses were severely damaged; 60% of village leaders suggest that there are not enough seeds for the next planting season; and 78% of households have reported the lack of access to credit.
3. As a result of the TCG-meeting on 20 June, requests for visas related to the Nargis response, from UN agencies and NGOs, will be handled by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Requests for domestic travel authorizations also related to Nargis will be handled by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.

NATIONAL RESPONSE

4. The Government of Myanmar's New Light of Myanmar newspaper reports that the Myanmar Port Authority has repaired six jetties along Yangon River, while two heavily damaged jetties have been removed. This enables better flow of vessels transporting commodities from the delta region to Yangon and other regions.

INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

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>.

5. EDUCATION

Needs Assessments and Analysis

- The analysis of the VTA and preparation of sector input to PONJA together with MoE staff are ongoing.

Overall Achievements and Response

- In Yangon (11 townships) 440 primary school roofs (government, monastic and affiliated) have been repaired using 16,271 roofing sheets. Essential learning packages have been provided for 52,610 children and 435 Schools-in-a-Box and 459 Recreation Kits have also been distributed, potentially benefiting 34,800 children. 98 Early Childhood Development (ECD) Kits have also been distributed.
- In Ayeyarwady (10 townships) 824 primary school roofs have been repaired using 29,354 roofing sheets and tarpaulins. 123 tents have been provided to Labutta and Bogale townships and 48 have been set up to provide Temporary Learning Spaces. Essential learning packages have been provided for 59,600 children in 6 Delta townships. 77 ECD Kits have also been distributed.

Gaps and Future Planning

- The initial assessment indicates a total of 4,106 schools damaged, most of which were primary schools. Of these, 1,255 had totally collapsed.

Funding

- The Education cluster is 23% funded in the Flash Appeal according to the OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS).

6. EARLY RECOVERY

Needs Assessment and Analysis

- The initial analysis of the preliminary VTA data suggests that widespread destruction was caused by strong wind combined with storm surge and excessive rainfall, faulty early warning systems, and inadequate village disaster response plans. In the aftermath of the disaster, shifting income sources are observed: a decrease in agriculture from 34% to 22%, a decrease in fisheries from 16% to 8%, but an increase from “other” sources of income from 10% to 29%. Vital community-level infrastructure has been destroyed: 72% of schools and educational facilities, 57% of religious institutions, and 23% of health facilities are currently in urgent need of rehabilitation. Finally, people’s coping mechanisms are strained and 79% of the respondents report that they lack access to credit, thus reducing their capacity to restart livelihoods without some form of external assistance.

Overall Achievements

- The Early Recovery Strategy will continue to be revised as more VTA information becomes available.

Funding

- The Early Recovery cluster is 141% funded in the Flash Appeal according to the OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS).

7. WATER AND SANITATION (WASH)

Needs Assessment and Analysis:

- The VTA preliminary findings indicate that 35% of the population is drinking from unsafe sources, this rises as high as 75% in more severely affected areas. Open defecation has also increased after the cyclone due to destroyed latrines.
- The cluster has the aim to ensure that each village has at least one desalinated pond.

Overall Achievements

- A presentation of the cluster activities was made to the Ministry of Health on 25 June together with health cluster. The interaction helped foster partnership between the clusters and the government.

Funding

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

8. HEALTH

Overall Achievement

- In Laputa, a training session for NGOs on vector control methods, the community and DoH staff was organized on 19 June, followed by demonstrations on use of larvicide using “Abate”. Larva control activities are proceeding correctly through township medical officers and other partners for training, spraying and supplies. 8 frontier outposts have received medicine, vaccine, transportation and additional health staff.
- In Bogalay, roofing sheets have been provided for the repair of six rural health centers (Aunk Hle Seik RHC; Sein Haing RHC; Ma Ye Ywa Thit Sub-RHC; Kan Gyi Sub-RHC; He Man RCH; Pharyar Thone Sub-RHC).
- Nurses, midwives and health assistants are being sponsored to deploy as additional workforce for Township Health Offices of 12 affected townships for primary health services. They are now working for health centers, outreach, vector control and health education activities.
- 300,000 copies of health and hygiene education booklets and 50,000 copies of dengue prevention pamphlets/posters have been distributed to the affected people through MOH as well as NGO partners.

Gaps & Future Planning

- The new WWW service is being designed to provide numerical quantitative information over the course of the emergency response. This is intended to highlight gaps in health care provision.

Funding

- The Health cluster is 82% funded in the Flash Appeal according to the OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS).

9. FOOD

Needs Assessment & Analysis

- The Food Cluster actively participated in the VTA component of the PONJA, in analysis of food security-related data.
- In collaboration with Cooperating Partners, WFP plans a Market Assessment Survey on 27 June, covering 35 markets across 21 Townships in the Delta. Regular monitoring of rice prices will follow.

Overall Achievements

- As of 26 June, a total of 17,993 MT of food assistance has been delivered to the affected areas, of which 9,197.87 MT has been distributed.
- The Food Cluster has reached approximately 729,000 beneficiaries with food and cash assistance: 684,000 in the Ayeyarwady Division (food) and 45,000 in the Yangon Division (cash).
- On 25 June, approval was granted by the Government to resume the Cash Transfer Programme throughout 9 Townships of Yangon Division. In collaboration with the concerned cooperating partners and targeting a total 200,000 beneficiaries (40,000 households), cash transfer activities resumed on 26 June. WFP will accompany their partners to each Township Chairman to explain modalities.

Challenges

- The definitive prohibition of local rice purchases makes regional procurement is a priority. Efforts to import quantities from Thailand and India are continuing to avoid an imminent pipeline break.
- Frequent population movements remain a challenge for targeting of food assistance.
- Following a very positive response from donors in the initial weeks after the cyclone, new contributions have not been forthcoming, creating a significant concern for future food distribution.

Gaps & Future Planning

- Planning for the local production of rice-based blended food for young children is ongoing.

Funding

- The Food cluster is 45% funded in the Flash Appeal according to the OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS).

10. EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Overall Achievements

- Training of local ICT assistants continues; 2 ICT assistants have deployed to their duty stations; tools have been purchased for SO ICT Assistants; and stock tracking and entry into AMD continues.

- WFP's (Logs Cluster) additional 3 satellites are being prepared for shipping. Commissioning is in progress.
- Yangon communication centre have been installed, with remaining ETC equipment en route.
- Consolidation of additional equipment needs is ongoing.
- One mobile has been installed with short distance safety equipment as training exercise for ICT Assistants.
- Short distance safety channel 12 has been installed at UN Yangon (UN only and main UN channel).

Challenges and Gaps

- Equipment is still held in customs.
- Restriction on official imports of telecommunications equipment remains.
- Use of telecommunications equipment in Delta region is still prohibited.

Future Planning

- Finalise transferred Bangkok stock replacement/charging, depending release of withheld equipment.
- WLAN installation in Pyapon.
- Additional BGAN installation in Pyapon.
- Assist UNDSS with radio operator interviews.

Funding

- The Emergency Telecommunications cluster is 73% funded in the Flash Appeal according to the OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS).

FUNDING

- The Myanmar Cyclone Flash Appeal is appealing for US\$201 million for UN agencies and NGOs to address the most urgent humanitarian needs. The appeal is 66% funded as of 26 June, with firm contributions of US\$133 million and a further US\$24 million in uncommitted pledges. According to the OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS) US\$243.6 million has been committed for all relief operations as of 26 June, with a further US\$66.4 million in uncommitted pledges.
- For updated information on financial contributions visit the OCHA FTS website at <http://reliefweb.int/fts/>. Donors are encouraged to verify contributions and inform FTS of corrections and additional information at fts@reliefweb.int.

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