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OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

Myanmar Cyclone Nargis
OCHA Situation Report No. 47
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OVERVIEW & KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- Cyclone Nargis hit Myanmar on 2-3 May 2008, affecting some 2.4 million people living in Ayeyarwady and Yangon Divisions. Almost 140,000 people were killed or remain missing. Four months into the post disaster response, the focus is increasingly shifting towards early recovery efforts in parallel with the remaining relief activities. Many agencies are starting programming for livelihoods and early recovery support.
- The revised Appeal, launched on 10 July, remains 41% funded, US\$198 million out of US\$ 481.8 million requirements, with US\$33.5 million uncommitted pledges, according to OCHA's Financial Tracking Services (FTS). Agriculture and early recovery continue to be the least funded in the revised Appeal whilst these activities are increasingly critical. Together with almost US\$149 million contributions reported to FTS outside of the revised Appeal, the total funding to the Nargis response recorded in FTS is US\$346 million with US\$73 million uncommitted pledges.
- The Post-Nargis Joint Assessment (PoNJA) was released on 21 July to provide a comprehensive multi-sectoral assessment of the situation in cyclone-affected areas. PoNJA was conducted jointly by the Government of the Union of Myanmar (GUoM), ASEAN and the United Nations. Discussion continues on the technical modalities and methodologies on the proposed post PoNJA periodic review, the first of which is planned for November. The overarching objective of the periodic review is to assess progress and remaining gaps for informed planning for ways forward. It is planned that the review would cover the same geographic areas as the Village Tract Assessment (VTA), a component of PoNJA. A TOR for the technical consultative working group has been developed.
- The Tripartite Core Group (TCG), consisting of high-level representatives of the GUoM, ASEAN and the United Nations, was established since 31 May and continue to provide a forum for discussions and ways forward on issues affecting efficient delivery of post Nargis response. For recovery and reconstruction, line ministries have already developed their recovery plans which the GUoM has collated into one "Master Plan." The government plan is scheduled to be shared at the TCG meeting next week.
- The WFP air bridge from Bangkok completed its mission on 22 August. Since starting the operation on 24 May to support humanitarian logistics needs for the post Nargis response, 232 flights were dispatched from the Don Mueang hub, delivering nearly 4,000 tons of cargo to the affected areas. Ten chartered WFP helicopters were also staged through the Bangkok air bridge, arriving in Yangon in early June to fly supplies and personnel into the Delta. Two helicopters remain in operation in-country for another 3 months to continue support air movements of humanitarian personnel and light cargo to the Delta during the rainy season. The CERF is supporting part of the current UNHAS operation costs with the US\$1.3 million rapid response grant.
- In the two remaining IDP camps in Labutta ("3 mile" and "5 mile" camps), the return to the places of origin had stopped since MSF's cash grant distribution (MMK50,000) which was completed on 18 August. The Government reported that the remaining IDP caseload of 497 households are encouraged to see by themselves the conditions of the places of origin and, if they prefer not to return at this point, they would be given an option of remaining in the current camps or moving to two resettlement sites (Min Kone and Pein Nei Taung villages) where a total of 450 houses are to be built. An inter-agency visit was conducted to assess the conditions of these resettlement sites. The situation will continue to be monitored.

- UNAIDS held a workshop on field testing of the revised “IASC guidelines for HIV prevention and response interventions in humanitarian settings” on 26 August in Yangon. Almost 50 participants from UN agencies, local and international NGOs and the Red Cross attended to provide feedback in particular from the recent experience of the post Nargis response.

CLUSTER UPDATE

Currently, 10 clusters are operational at the Yangon level with the participation of UN agencies, local and international NGOs. The clusters are now being rolled out to the field level “hubs”. The common challenges include the information flow between Yangon and the field, in particular the maintenance of 3Ws, which is currently addressed and streamlined by cluster IM focal points and MIMU, together with OCHA sub-offices. Following updates are provided by the cluster lead agencies.

AGRICULTURE

Needs Assessments & Analysis

- A report from the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MoAI) indicates that in order to achieve an average rice yield of 65-70 baskets per acre, 50 kg of urea fertilizer should be applied once before flowering and again at the booting stage. The supply of additional quantities of urea fertilizer to farmers was signalled as needed support, among others, in order to achieve the target monsoon rice production.

Response & Achievements

- Fishing gear distribution of FAO Dedaye township has been initiated through implementing partner Cooperazione e Sviluppo (CESVI) and is being prepared by Welt Hunger Hilfe (GAA) in Bogale.
- 9,500 boats are being provided to Nargis-affected fishers by the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries. Of this total, 433 boats are being distributed to fishers in Yangon Division and 9,067 boats in Ayeyarwady Division.
- Between 15 August to date, International Development Enterprise (IDE) distributed 32.8 tonnes of paddy seed, 8,994 gallons of diesel, 8,333 bags of superphosphate fertilizer (50 kg per bag) and 30 707 bags of urea fertilizer (50 kg per bag) to cyclone-affected farming households in 11 townships of Ayeyarwady and Yangon Divisions. Within the same timeframe, IDE also distributed 1,018 bags of superphosphate, urea and potash fertilizer (50 kg per bag) and 170 knapsack sprayers to affected households in 12 village tracks of Kyaiklat township, on behalf of FAO.
- With increased requests for technical support on crop-, livestock- and fisheries-related interventions, the agriculture cluster is facilitating access to information resources and sub-sector specialists in order to match field-level concerns with appropriate guidance and solutions.

Challenges

- In some areas of central and northern Bogale, farmers are facing problems with the survival of pre-germinated rice seed. Follow-up from the Land Use Division of Myanmar Agriculture Service and the agriculture cluster lead indicated that the problem could have been caused by factors such as water depth, iron toxicity or high exchangeable sodium content, of which the latter seems the most likely cause. The agriculture cluster is sending soil and water samples for analysis to identify the source of the problem and the possible remedies to be applied.
- Beneficiary selection and the modalities under which support is given to fishers (loans, grants, etc.) have a number of implications that may not always be clear or intended, such as those related to ownership, licensing requirements and associated credit arrangements.

EARLY RECOVERY

Response & Achievements

- UNDP continues to implement Phase I of the Basic Services Package (BSP), the first of a number of sectoral areas and approaches included in UNDP’s Integrated Community-based Early Recovery Framework (ICERF) for cyclone-affected areas. Phase I of the BSP identified and reached 250 of the most vulnerable villages, servicing 27,673 households and a population of 114,102, with activities and follow-up continuing in all 250 villages.
- A three-member M&E Team from the French NGO Urgence Rehabilitation Developpement (URD) provided by BCPR Geneva, is now on mission in Myanmar from 26 August to 6 September. They will be available to meet with cluster leads and with Early Recovery Focal Points and other interested

stakeholders including NGOs during the week, will conduct a short field trip and will present their preliminary findings on 6 September. They will also draft the M&E Section of the Early Recovery Strategic Framework.

Future Plans

- The cluster inputs for the Early Recovery Strategic Framework have now been all submitted to the cluster lead. The compilation will continue and the RC's signed off and the submission to the HQs is planned by the end of September.

EDUCATION

Needs Assessments & Analysis

- The UNICEF architect presented the findings of the team's field assessments and draft school designs and costings to education cluster partners. Designs shared are for more child-friendly schools, each with 45, 100 and 250 children. All designs include adequate water and sanitation facilities, and covered outdoor areas for play or learning. Larger schools include additional spaces for a kitchen or for community use. Schools are designed to be earthquake resistant and cyclone proof. Depending on size, they can serve as shelters for 245 to 970 community members in the event of cyclone. Schools are to be built on a North-South alignment to resist the prevailing South-Westerly monsoon wind, while walls around the perimeter add protection from tidal surges. Designs have incorporated traditional local architecture and use materials that are readily available in-country, while including innovations to reduce heat and noise.
- The first Emergency Preparedness and Response Education working group (incorporating disaster risk reduction) met on 26 August, chaired by UNESCO and with 14 participants including representatives from the Ministry of Education (MOE). TOR for the working group were agreed, resource materials shared, and specific activities for the group suggested.

Response & Achievements

- Early Childhood Development/Psychosocial working group partners have produced a children's book on "Nargis days", which aims to support children's psychosocial needs through the telling of five stories about the disaster. Two additional materials are in the final stages of development. TOT and multiplier trainings on psychosocial support for young children are also ongoing in the affected areas.
- To date, over 2,500 schools and 239,000 children have benefited from supplies provided by cluster partners.
- 1,050 temporary safe learning spaces are being established in affected areas to allow learning to continue where schools were completely destroyed. 640 kits of tools needed for school construction have been distributed.
- 600 schools-in-a-box have been provided, benefiting up to 48,000 children, as well as 553 recreation kits. 750 schools have received furniture including desks, chairs and blackboards. 237 boxes of library books have been delivered to schools in the Delta. 2,670 teachers and 184,000 children have now received essential teaching and learning materials.

Gaps and Future Planning

- Several cluster partners are now including a focus on rebuilding of destroyed schools. MOE staff again welcomed requests to work in rebuilding. The Ministers of Education and Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement have jointly called for a meeting with interested cluster partners on 30 August, to discuss needs, plans and gaps for school reconstruction. Several additional NGOs have come forward to undertake school rebuilding.

EMERGENCY TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Response & Achievements

- Radio communications training was conducted for UN agencies and NGOs in Bogale.
- Radio programming for UNICEF in Yangon and the field has been completed.

Challenges

- Challenges remain the same as before, the restriction on the importation of telecommunications equipment and on the use of telecommunications equipment by NGOs in the Delta.

Future Planning

- Training in for UN agencies and NGOs in Yangon is planned.

FOOD

Needs Assessment & Analysis

- Final planning for the upcoming Food & Nutrition and Household Food Security Assessments (WFP/UNICEF/Ministry of Health – MOH) is continuing. The mode in which these will be conducted has been presented to the food cluster members.
- WFP and FAO have commenced tentative planning for a possible Food & Crop Assessment to be conducted in September.
- Re-targeting exercises in preparation for a reduction in beneficiary caseloads from September, as well as the introduction of supplementary feeding and food-for-work activities, are ongoing.

Response & Achievements

- As of 28 August, a total of 28,458 tons of food assistance has been delivered to affected areas, of which 25,680 tons has been distributed.
- The food cluster has reached a total of 733,500 beneficiaries with food and cash assistance: 684,000 in the Ayeyarwady Division (food) and a further 49,500 in the Yangon Division (cash transfer).
- The distribution of food commodities among beneficiaries in the Yangon Division (originally targeted through the suspended Cash Transfer Programme) commenced this week. WFP, in collaboration with two cooperating partners, is targeting 119,815 affected individuals across 7 townships with the provision of a complete food basket for approximately 10 weeks.
- The final tranche of a 3,125 tons purchase of parboiled rice from India has now been received by WFP.
- The first tranche of 600 tons of rice from Thailand (of a total 3,403 tons purchase) has arrived in Yangon and is currently being cleared. Arrival dates for the remaining quantities, as well as an additional 5,000 tons from India, have yet to be confirmed.
- In preparation for the instigation of supplementary feeding activities in October, 300 tons of corn-soya blend is scheduled to arrive in Myanmar in the first week of September.
- The dispatch of various commodities into the Delta is continuing, and recently included the delivery of 277 tons of rice to Labutta on 24 August.
- The emergency food assistance operation is still experiencing a rice pipeline break, resulting in the distribution of reduced rations throughout August. It is expected that the pipeline will be restored in September (with only a minimal rice shortfall) following the arrival of regional purchases.

Challenges

- The prohibition of local rice purchases continues to pose a significant challenge. The emergency food assistance operation is currently experiencing a pipeline break, and the successful and urgent conduct of regional procurement will continue to be a high priority in order to avoid future breaks.
- Logistical challenges remain in transporting sizeable quantities of commodities into the Delta for rapid dispatch to partners.

Gaps & Future Planning

- Planning for the local production of rice-based blended food for young children is ongoing.
- The food cluster is continuing to plan for the introduction of supplementary feeding and food-for-work/cash-for-work activities, scheduled to commence in October and November respectively.

HEALTH

Needs Assessment & Analysis

- Results of nutritional assessment from Kyauklat township, conducted by health cluster partners in collaboration with MOH, shows low prevalence of severe acute malnutrition (<1%).
- Mental Health and Psychosocial Support working group plans to undertake an assessment of health partners and prepare a 3W to avoid overlapping of activities of mental health and psychosocial support.

Response & Achievements

- A health cluster coordination meeting with all TMOs, RSOs, focal points from all the townships under Ayeyarwady division was held in Patheingyi on 17 August. The meeting discussed further improvement of coordination and collaboration. Reporting mechanism was emphasized in the meeting. A strategic work plan will be developed by MOH.

- Two layouts designs for rural and sub-rural health facility constructions have been prepared by the working group. One design was from Myanmar Association of Architects, and the second one is from the Ministry of Planning. The designs are 95% complete and will incorporate suggestions from health cluster partners.
- Regarding SRH, a TOT on Minimum Initial Service Package (MISP) took place last week participated by humanitarian actors and the government.
- Health cluster partners have conducted latrine installation, surgical distribution and school building in Kungyangon township.
- Mass larvicidal activities by MOH are continued for Dengue control.
- Anti-snake venoms have been distributed to all townships.
- MOH is promptly investigating reported cases of bloody diarrhoea.

Challenges

- Completeness and timeliness of reporting for early warning system for surveillance needs to be improved and respective township coordination meeting will have to take action in this regard.

Gaps & Future Planning

- Health cluster partner will be providing training on MISP and birth spacing to health cluster partners' health workers.
- A presentation on progress and future strategy for early recovery to the health cluster will be made in the coming meeting. Sub-groups of health cluster including mental health and psychosocial support, SRH and HIV working group and Early Recovery working group will meet in the coming weeks to carry forward their activities.

NUTRITION

Needs Assessment & Analysis

- A WFP/UNICEF/MOH Food & Nutrition Survey methodology will be presented by a National Nutrition Centre (NNC) at the nutrition cluster meeting.

Response & Achievements

- An organigramme has been created showing names and townships covered by the field nutrition officers / cluster coordinators. It would improve the flow of reporting systems between Yangon and field level within the nutrition cluster and with OCHA/MIMU.
- The generic / specific TOR for the 3 sub-working groups and their respective members lists have been finalised and will be endorsed at the next cluster meeting on 29 August.
- 10,000 booklets on the infant and young child feeding operational guidance have been translated to Myanmar. The distribution will target the 36 townships. INGOs, LNGOs, and MOH can obtain the booklet through UNICEF.
- Breastfeeding counselling modules, re-lactating modules and wet feeding modules have been finalized to be used for trainings.

Challenges

- In Mawlamyinnegyun township, the transportation of products is a serious issue as only the public water transportation is available and appropriate, given the rainy season conditions. It delays the accessibility of the products by the population.

Gaps & Future Planning

- A meeting, to be held at Yangon, between UNICEF and NNC by the representatives of the 6 Hospitals Nutrition Units, is to share the progress, the issues, the constraints and the needs related to the Management of Severe Acute Malnutrition.
- 800MT of CSB (Corn Soya Blended) will arrive at Yangon with 300MT for September and the 500MT left in October. 500MT of WSB (Wheat Soya Blended) is scheduled to arrive at Yangon in October.
- In collaboration with food cluster, the nutrition products will be distributed to the same households covered by the general food distribution and will target the children between 6 – 59 months and the PLW (Pregnant and Lactating Women) in Mawlamyinnegyun Bogale, Labutta, Pyapon townships.
- A breastfeeding video shot is in progress. It will be distributed to 36 townships during the Nutrition Promotion week in September.

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN & WOMEN

Needs Assessment & Analysis

- Child Protection agencies are collating and analyzing initial child protection related assessment data for presentation to the Department of Social Welfare.
- The report on women's livelihoods in Labutta has been finalized and posted on the MIMU Web site (ref. Sitrep No. 45). The mission to Labutta provided feedback to communities, organizations and government counterparts, and verified that findings were accurate. It is anticipated that the report will soon be translated into Myanmar. Action will be taken to pilot test women's livelihood activities in Labutta, with the intention of developing a model that can be upscaled and replicated given sustainable funding.
- The Women's Protection/Department of Social Welfare's assessment for all cyclone-affected areas is in progress with assessment tools currently being translated into Myanmar.

Response & Achievements

- The Women's Protection Technical Working Group has finalized the "Operational Terms and Definitions." This document has been posted on the MIMU web site and will be further disseminated to other clusters. The intention of the document is to provide actors who are unfamiliar with the terminology an understanding of the terms, and why they are used.
- A total of 254 child-friendly spaces have been established in affected areas, 141 in Ayeyarwady Division and 113 in Yangon Division.

Challenges

- Strengthening links and information flow between the various PCW Cluster agencies at township and national levels remains a challenge.

Gaps & Future Planning

- Cluster members met with the Department of Social Welfare on 25 August to discuss the Child Protection response to the emergency, and the implementation to date of the Plan of Action for Child Protection in Emergencies (CPE). The DSW requested that a meeting be held in September on implementation to date of the Plan of Action.
- The CPE TWG is planning a training workshop for field-based Child Protection staff focusing on community-based care and protection, including family tracing and reunification. The challenges that colleagues in the field are facing, and other issues including interim care, alternative care, and follow up will be covered. The workshop aims to link the theory field officers have received on child protection with the reality of what they are managing, and trying to address on a daily basis. The proposed dates are 15-17 September.
- Referral pathway development and training in response to gender-based violence (GBV) will be prioritized by the Women's Protection TWG over the coming weeks. The TWG will ideally develop a generic, and several location-specific, referral pathways, and will work very closely with a similar process being implemented by Child Protection partners
- A GBV workshop focusing on basic skills related to GBV is scheduled for 8 September. The workshop is open to all, with a focus on staff from organizations from the Protection of Children and Women and the health clusters.

SHELTER

Needs assessments & Analysis

- Various reports confirm that the initial fast pace of self-recovery for basic shelter has not sustained itself. Many shelter structures and cover materials are temporary and will quickly deteriorate.
- The emergency shelter operation is tapering off quickly in August, including for non-food items and tool kits.
- The shelter cluster has commissioned a new survey assessing residual needs for emergency shelter items and the pace and capacity for further self-recovery. The results are expected in early October.

Response & Achievements

- Over 629,000 plastic sheets have been distributed by the cluster, covering 65% of the estimate affected households. 55,000 tool kits have also been distributed, along with 390,000 blankets, 816,000 mosquito nets, 420,000 jerry cans and 181,000 kitchen sets.
- Through the Joint Procurement Initiative, 10,000 household kits have started to arrive in Yangon and are now available to organisations active in the shelter cluster for distribution in September and October. The shelter cluster has additional funds put in trust with the cluster that will be allocated to organisations capable of addressing emergent needs and gaps.

- The Technical Work Group for “Build Back Safer” technical parameters will soon complete its work by publishing and disseminating a guideline. Discussions both with humanitarian organisations and national stakeholders are on-going to set up new technical work groups.

Challenges

- Shelter support is now quickly moving from emergency support to early recovery, which will be more various in scope, scale and timing. Funding for shelter support is insufficient.

Gaps & Future Planning

- The cluster is currently mapping the updated shelter implementation plans of various humanitarian organisations, as a road map for the months ahead.
- A key issue is to support stronger coordination and information management at the various hubs and to re-endorse focal point organisations at the hubs for shelter beyond the emergency phase.

WASH

Needs assessments & Analysis

- “Key Risk” areas are being identified, where there would be potential shortage of water during the immediate scarcity period and the dry season.
- Joint field visits are to be undertaken to un-served areas to ascertain whether these areas should be categorised as “unmet” or “less affected.”

Response & Achievements

- Approximately 1,566 ponds have been cleaned, benefiting about 603,000 people in the affected region. Many more still require cleaning.
- About 33,000 latrine kits have been distributed. The figure could be higher since not all agencies have reported.

Challenges

- Latrine construction and improved sanitation needs to be looked at seriously since the high water table in some areas is making the construction and excreta disposal a difficult task.
- Salinity ingress is creating an impediment in pond cleaning activities. Cleaned ponds are reportedly becoming saline again, in coastal areas like Bogale and Labutta.

Gaps & Future Planning

- WASH cluster will recruit four Information Assistants at the township level. The IAs will support the field agencies in collecting, collating and sharing WASH related information in a timely manner. They will further assist the WASH information manager to streamline the IM systems.
- Assessment needs to be done to understand the traditional coping mechanisms that people resort to for water supply during the dry season. (The traditional sources are planned to be identified, improved and strengthened). Assessment also needs to be done to see if the conventional water transportation mechanisms (boats, tanks) could be improved and whether the mobile water treatment units would be feasible.

FIELD UPDATES, COORDINATION & ACCESS

OCHA continues to strengthen general coordination and inter-cluster coordination both at Yangon and the hub level. Six sub-offices are now almost fully staffed and initiating general coordination as well as support to the IM activities of field-based clusters. To further support field IM activities by clusters, IM associates were recruited for each sub-office and went through induction training on 28 August in Yangon before the deployment to the field.

Most hubs are identifying growing needs for coordination of early recovery activities as more organisations are gearing towards recovery programming.

Pyapon

- OCHA met with the Chairman and Secretary of Township SPDC and agencies operating in the township (IDE/M, Save the Children, MRCS, MSI). There is no TCC in Maubin and the township SPDC is in the process of establishing a coordination structure to improve cooperation with NGOs.

Major needs reported by local authorities include shelter and the rehabilitation of damaged schools and health facilities. No IDP remains in the township at this time.

- Uncertainty remains as to the coverage of areas on the borders between Kyaiklat and Maubin, and Kyaiklat and Pyapon. Clusters are looking into the issue that these areas were less severely affected than Pyapon but the damage may be significant from the local perspective.
- Local authorities informed that Ka Don Ka Ni area has now been returned to Bogale township administration but the TCC Pyapon remains responsible for relief efforts for the area.

Bogale

- Several villages such as Pyin Ma Kon of Kyun Nyo village tract are accessible only by boat at flood tide and are reportedly not receiving sufficient assistance.
- The WASH team visited Hpoe Lay and Tha Pyay Kan village tracts to assess gaps indicated by the 3W map. The team found that all ponds in these village tracts have been cleaned by the EGG (Ever Green Group) from Pyapon and by villagers themselves.
- EPI (Extended Programme on Immunization) has been successfully implemented in 48 villages in Sat San, Kyein Choung, and Kyon Thar Yar Village Tracts with the support of UNICEF.

Labutta

- The upgrading of Labutta from a township to a district has been announced. The district now includes Mawlamyinegyun and the Middle Island. There is an increasing interest among NGOs to work in the Middle Island. Malteser has just opened an office.
- The health cluster in Labutta has undertaken a comprehensive distribution of treated bed nets, targeting all households. The second round of immunisation was completed in mid-August. The transportation of health workers and patients between the RHCs and town proper is becoming a major challenge. Communication difficulty is posing a challenge to disease surveillance.

Access

As of 27 August, a total of 380 entry visas and 156 visa extensions have been approved by Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since the last issue of Sitrep, 7 entry visa and 3 visa extensions have been approved and some are pending due to the travelling of the Deputy Foreign Minister during the reporting period. The Department of Social Welfare has approved 480 travel permits to date, 30 during the reporting period. These figures concern only the requests made to date through OCHA on behalf of UN agencies and INGOs relating to the Nargis response.

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