

UNITED NATIONS



OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

Myanmar Cyclone Nargis OCHA Situation Report No. 34 23 June 2008

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. 37 townships were significantly affected by the cyclone. 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 put the number of dead or missing at more than 130,000.
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/VTAs) and damage components (Damage and Loss Assessment/DaLA) with support from the Government of Myanmar, ASEAN member states and the United Nations. Some 250 members of the PONJA team completed data collection in 30 affected townships across Yangon and the Ayeyarwady Delta on 20 June. The next stages of data entry and early analysis are continuing. A progress report will be presented at the ASEAN roundtable meeting in Yangon on 24 June, while the final report is planned for release on 18 July.
3. The new Government guidelines for international organizations providing assistance in cyclone-affected areas were introduced on 10 June. On Friday 20 June, a decision was made in the TCG-meeting to revert to the procedures in effect before 10 June, where all requests for visas for the Nargis relief response, from UN agencies and NGOs, will be handled by the TCG and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Requests for travel authorizations from all UN agencies and NGOs will again be handled by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. During the weekend, all backlogs of visa requests and travel authorization requests were processed and granted, with a few exceptions that are still being worked on. As of 19 June, more than 230 visas have been granted to the UN international staff for the response to Cyclone Nargis, and more than 200 operational UN staff have travelled to the affected areas.

NATIONAL RESPONSE

4. The Government of Myanmar's New Light of Myanmar newspaper reports that Prime Minister General Thein Sin, who is the Chairman of the National Disaster Preparedness Central Committee (NDPCC), accompanied by several government officials, visited cyclone affected areas in Bogale and Labutta on 21 June to monitor the progress of various rehabilitation efforts and handed over relief assistance.
5. IFRC reports that the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS), working with the IFRC and the ICRC, has reached more than 327,500 beneficiaries with water, food and other relief items as of 20 June.

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>.

6. EDUCATION

Needs Assessments and Analysis

- A team of 12 people, including 2 colleagues from the Ministry of Education, conducted a preliminary analysis of partial data received from the VTA. Overall the data is consistent with earlier assessments and observations.

Overall Achievements and Response

- In Yangon (6 townships) 166 primary schools have been repaired using 16,271 roofing sheets. Essential learning packages have been provided for 45,945 children and 435 Schools-in-a-Box and 459 Recreation Kits have also been distributed, potentially benefiting 34,800 children.
- In Irrawaddy (7 townships) 256 primary schools have been repaired using 29,354 roofing sheets and tarpaulins.

Challenges

- The massive scale of the response, exacerbated by the onset of the monsoon, is presenting unprecedented logistical challenges, particularly for the organization of transport for the distribution of supplies.
- In the quest to resume schooling as soon as possible, repairs are being carried out at a speed which jeopardizes the safety of buildings.
- There are still significant issues in communication flow between private contractors and Township Education authorities that is leading to duplication of efforts.
- Printing delays are causing delays in distribution of 250,000 textbooks.
- Food security issues are paramount and older children in particular may be required to assist with the onset of the planting season, thus affecting school attendance.
- There is a risk of children who are seeking education that is no longer available locally, being separated from their families at a time when psychosocial support from families is greatly needed.

Gaps and Future Planning

- Education Cluster partners are planning to repair, rehabilitate or reconstruct 1,640 schools, set up 1,315 Temporary Learning Spaces and train 9,300 teachers in psychosocial support and child-centred learning methodologies to benefit 362,400 children. Additionally, another 520 Temporary Learning Spaces will be set up for ECD.
- More than 1,000 schools are still not covered in the response plan.

Funding

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

7. PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND WOMEN (PCW)

Needs Assessment & Analysis

- The PCW Cluster has received the initial data from the Village Tract Assessment.

Overall Achievements

- A letter from the Director General of the Department of Social Welfare, facilitating the movement of PCW Cluster agencies in the field, has been received and is currently being distributed to members.
- Cluster Co-Chairs met with members of the Early Recovery Cluster to discuss the inclusion of the protection of children and women, and the strengthening of community-based mechanisms, as part of the Early Recovery Strategy.
- Promoting Protective Environments - Child-Friendly spaces are being set up in villages and temporary settlements on an ongoing basis. In Yangon Division, a total of 58 Child-Friendly spaces (CFS) are functioning, and in Ayeyarwady Division a total of 58 CFS have been set up.

Funding

- The PCW cluster is 25% funded in the Flash Appeal according to the OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS).

8. WATER AND SANITATION (WASH)

Needs Assessment and Analysis:

- Preliminary data and analysis from the VTA more or less confirms other assessments. On average more than 35% of the population is drinking from unsafe sources and in more severely affected areas as high as 75%. The trends for open defecation have also increased after the cyclone.
- More detailed analysis of the data is ongoing and further inferences are expected in the coming days.
- The Cluster is currently aiming to reach the following indicators:
 - clean drinking water (3l per capita per day), 10 l per day for bathing and cooking
 - 1 sanitary facility for every 100 persons
 - generalized availability of soap, safe water containers and basic hygiene items
 - 1 community trained hygiene promoter per 2'000 people
- Technical guidelines for Rainwater harvesting, household water treatment, water testing, pond rehabilitation have been completed and being used in the field.
- The strategic advisory group has now finalized the WASH cluster strategy and response plan.
- Focal points for WASH at township level are currently GAA (Bogale), CESVI (Dedaye), World Vision (Kyaitlat, Pathein, Hlaingtharyar, Dagonmythit-Seikkan), Merlin (Labutta), Save the Children (Mawlamyinegyun, Ngapudaw), UNICEF (Khawmu)

Overall Achievements

- Pond rehabilitation activities are ongoing and over 250 ponds have been cleaned so far with more being added every day.
- Distribution of disinfectants for drinking water is ongoing. Penetration of point-of-use treatment, even in remote communities, seems good.
- Rainwater collection is increasingly being introduced, and represents the main source of freshwater in the most affected areas in the South of the Delta.
- The number of water treatment units has increased to nearly 25 units. A total of 50 units are at the moment in country. Training for local staff on the use of the units is ongoing in Yangon and in the field. The treatment plants are now supplying potable drinking water to nearly 250,000 people (with 3 l per capital per day).

Challenges

- The flow of information from Township level to national cluster level is erratic owing to difficulties in communication. The cluster agencies are discussing ways to make this more efficient. A new data collection and reporting format is being finalized.
- Scarce information about population movements makes systematic provision of service difficult.
- With the movement of population back to villages, it is now increasingly difficult to reach the population and ensure that interventions like house hold water treatments are implemented regularly.
- Progress in terms of sanitation is relatively slow in villages, due to both technical difficulties (high water table) and behaviour (pre cyclone sanitation coverage was 25%). The cluster is discussing various technical options that can be suitable and a technical working group has been formed on this issue, and technical guidelines are now being finalisd.

Gaps and Future Planning

- In general, the level of service seems to be relatively better in the areas around Yangon and in the towns of the south, while penetration in the southern delta is still slow due to the lack of logistic assets and scarcity of staff.

Funding

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

9. EMERGENCY SHELTER

Needs Assessments and Analysis

- The emergency shelter cluster continues to use a working figure of 2.4 million people affected by Cyclone Nargis, representing 486,000 affected households in 37 townships.

- Preliminary results from the VTA suggest high level of self recovery which coincides with a number of field reports. Assistance in shelter, however, is still expressed as greatly needed.
- Basic local building materials resources such as thatch are reported to be scarce, forcing the use of palm leaves for roofing which is unsatisfactory.
- Plastic sheeting remains a priority for the shelter cluster agencies.

Overall Achievements

- Over 310,000 plastic sheets have been distributed by the cluster.
- The arrival of 125,000 plastic sheets from a US donor has started over the weekends and plastic sheets have been distributed to the consignees.
- Following the cluster's gap analysis, at least one agency has diverted its fund towards procurement of household relief kits.
- The process for Joint Procurement Initiative (JPI) in Bangkok has been finalised and presented to the cluster, encouraging its members to submit for a free quotation.
- At the MNGO, INGO, and UN Networking day organised by Local Resource Centre and NGO Liaison, the cluster shared its current thinking on strategic framework, encouraged partnerships between local and International organisations and established a focal point for MNGO who will be joining our next cluster meeting.

Challenges

- Attempts are being made to put local agencies with distribution capacities in touch with international agencies with supply of plastic sheets.
- Accounting for distributions continues to be challenging with distributions difficult to track in all areas.
- Obtaining pipeline data from cluster agencies and keeping it up-to-date remains critical.

Gaps and Future Planning

- The cluster will continue to closely monitor the supply and pipeline data for plastic sheets.
- Household relief kits are expected to be identified as cluster priority in the coming weeks.
- The requests to cluster partners to update planning figures and area of responsibility for efficient distribution of plastic sheets per township remain.
- The development of the Emergency Shelter Cluster early recovery strategy will be finalised over the next week following input from cluster members and collaborating results from the VTA.
- The cluster has informed its member of the decision to initiate a performance management system in Yangon. This will be an ongoing process for the duration of the Emergency Shelter Cluster.

Funding

- The Shelter cluster is 47% funded in the Flash Appeal according to the OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS).

10. EARLY RECOVERY

Needs Assessment and Analysis

- Two staff from Early Recovery cluster, who are working with the VTA data team, are pulling together early recovery information from across all four assessment tools (household survey, key informant interviews, observations, and focus group).

Overall Achievements

- The Response Plan and project sheets will be submitted for the revised Appeal.
- The Early Recovery Strategy has been modified to incorporate changes from the cluster members. It will continue to be revised as more information becomes available on recovery needs and priorities.
- UNDP has almost completed Phase 1 of the early recovery "Basic Services Package", which was rolled out earlier this month. To date, 202 villages have commenced the programme, with 250 (23,973 household or 131,611 people) to be completed by 27 June.

Gaps and Future Planning

- Support to agencies working on early recovery activities in the disaster affected area.

Funding

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

11. FOOD

Needs Assessment & Analysis

- Inter-Agency Assessment mission covering 100 villages within 50 Village Tracts across Labutta Township is ongoing. Data entry for one month's distribution has now commenced, and release of the Assessment Report is due at the end of June.

Overall Achievements

- 17,086 MT of food assistance has been delivered to the affected areas as of 23 June, with 9,197.87 MT of food now distributed in total.
- The food cluster has now reached 729,000 beneficiaries (684,000 in the Ayeyarwady Division and a further 45,000 in the Yangon Division) with food assistance.

Challenges

- The embargo placed upon local procurement of rice, with sourcing from outside of the country now a priority.
- Frequent population movements remain a challenge with the targeting of food assistance.

Gaps & Future Planning

- Final budget and caseload figures will be provided in the revised Appeal
- 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).

12. HEALTH

Needs Assessment and Analysis

- The Health Cluster assessment teams have come back from a mission to trace TB and Leprosy default patients missing after the Cyclone. All missing patients have successfully been tracked.
- Joint Plan of action to scale up prevention of Dengue and the practical guide on dengue prevention, including larviciding, have been approved for implementation. The plan includes disease surveillance, prevention and care management. For prevention, the focus is on larviciding 2 rounds at 6-8 week interval, covering around 900,000 houses. Next week, the Vector Born Diseases Control (VBDC) will start larviciding in selected wards in 11 townships in Yangon Division.
- Some Key Issues that need to be addressed include the roles of INGO's in the implementation of the plan; membership of the working group; resource mobilization; and development and implementation of communications strategy.
- ASEAN Coordinating Office held a Medical Mission Feedback Workshop today. Recommendations for the Cluster include strengthening coordination and cooperation with GoM, and the provision of psychosocial supports.

Overall Achievement

- A medical team comprising house surgeons of the University of Medicine-2 has carried out health care services in storm-hit villages in Kungyangon Township.
- Deputy Director-General Dr Kyaw Nyunt Sein of Health Department (Disease Control) under the Ministry of Health and party encouraged specialists led by Dr Ni Ni Hlaing who are rendering medical treatment to storm victims at Bogale People's Hospital in Ayeyawady Division.

Gaps and Future Planning

- The final meeting on the new WWW Tool is to be held today. Once being completed the new WWW tool will be experimented with Merlin over the coming week.
- The MoH and the WHO are currently working on a survey for 6 townships on psychosocial mental health provision. It has been identified that training in the area of psychosocial and mental health is curtail.

Funding

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

FUNDING

12. The private sector has contributed \$30 million, which includes \$10 million raised by UNICEF National Committees. Some of the largest private sector contributors include the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, which gave a total of \$3 million to non-governmental organizations, and Total oil company, which gave \$2 million through the Red Cross and provided fuel for the transportation of relief supplies.
13. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is providing an additional \$3 million to WFP to support its logistical operations in the Cyclone-affected areas. The funds will help keeping the running of WFP's managed UN Joint Logistics Common Pipeline through which relief supplies, provided by the international community, are distributed to the affected communities by barge, small boat, trucks and helicopters.
14. 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 65.9% funded as of 23 June, with firm contributions of US\$132 million and a further US\$24 million in uncommitted pledges. According to the OCHA Financial Tracking Service (FTS) US\$243 million has been committed for all relief operations as of 23 June, with a further US\$66.4 million in uncommitted pledges.
15. 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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