



**Cyclone Nargis
Myanmar
OCHA Situation Report No. 15
19 May 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.

HIGHLIGHTS

1. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) today announced that **Myanmar had agreed to accept international aid agencies and medical workers from all ASEAN countries** to help with the relief effort. The 10-member ASEAN group also said **Myanmar should allow more international relief workers into stricken areas**. The Foreign Minister of Singapore said that ASEAN "will establish a mechanism so that aid from all over the world can flow into Myanmar". Indonesia's Foreign Minister said that each ASEAN country would send a team of 30 medical personnel very soon, with unrestricted movement in the country.
2. Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator John Holmes arrived in Myanmar on Sunday evening. Today (Monday) he was able to visit Labutta and Wakema townships in the Ayeyarwady delta and saw first hand the situation in this area. The ERC spent time speaking with the IASC Country Team, Cluster Leads and representatives of the Myanmar Red Cross Society and the IFRC to gain a clear picture of the progress and challenges in the response. **Tomorrow (Tuesday) the ERC meets with the Government of Myanmar.**
3. The humanitarian community indicates that 500,000 people receive some form of international assistance. This is substantially less than the 2.4 million estimated to be affected of whom more than half (1.4 million) in severely affected areas requiring prioritised assistance. **It is clear that the emergency phase is set to continue for some time.** Some people are moving back to their places of origin where they will need humanitarian assistance as well as the necessary support to restart their livelihoods and farming.
4. **Heavy rains are continuing and the conditions for road transportation remain poor in delta areas.**
5. **Local authorities in Labutta granted access to villages outside of the town that had previously been restricted**, as well as to eight government distribution stations, for the delivery of food assistance.
6. Health supplies continue to reach the key hospitals in the major centres, yet **delivery of this assistance beyond the hospitals to the outlying communities remains a challenge.** At least 50% of health structures are damaged or destroyed and restricted access continues to hamper the relief efforts.
7. **Reliable reports of severe watery diarrhoea continue to cause concern.** It is important to note that the **number of cases is still within the normal seasonal range.** A reliable early warning system has been put in place by the Ministry of Health, UN,

national and international NGOs in the affected areas. The water supply system has been compromised in many areas forcing people to collect water from ponds and rivers which seem to be widely contaminated. **Every possible action to prepare for a potential outbreak is being taken** as all risk factors are present. With the upcoming rainy season dengue fever is also expected, however the current situation poses a more serious outbreak. The Ministry of Health has begun preparing prevention activities with the support of the Health Cluster.

8. Also of concern is the **fragile situation of children in the cyclone-affected areas**. Pre-cyclone statistics did indicate that about one-third of children under five there suffer from some form of malnutrition. While the food supply to the affected areas has improved over the past few days, clearly **huge infusions of food assistance are urgently required**. Children are among the most vulnerable in any disaster and with so many children already in a weakened state, lack of nutrition, water, sanitation and shelter, can be a lethal combination.
9. The Government of Myanmar today declared three days of national mourning for the victims of Cyclone Nargis, beginning on Tuesday 20 May. State media today reported that over 50 billion Myanmar kyats (approximately USD 46.3 million) have been spent on relief works and rehabilitation tasks to date.
10. There has been no change in the official figures for dead and missing. **77,738 are reported dead and 55,917 missing**.

I. NATIONAL RESPONSE

11. The National Disaster Preparedness Central Committee (NDPCC) reported, through a series of news releases, that 122 civilian and military medical teams comprising 2,029 members were working with local health staff for disease prevention and treatment in Yangon and Ayeyarwady Divisions. NDPCC reported that no infectious diseases, except normal diseases common to the storm-hit areas, had been found. The NDPCC also stated that the Emergency Supply Supervisory Committee would work in collaboration with UN agencies and INGOs to ensure that all the relief funds and supplies go to the storm victims.
12. The public works department is planning to construct bailey bridges for the replacement of damaged wooden bridges in Labutta, and are strengthening the Nyaung Chaung bridge, which is currently in bad condition.
13. The Myanmar health authorities are providing daily reports on disease cases from the affected townships. These are being provided by Divisional Health Directors to the Ministry of Health's (MOH) Central Epidemiological Unit (CEU).
14. MOH has a team of high level officials working out of Yangon General Hospital responsible for planning, managing and coordinating the overall emergency response in health.
15. MOH is expanding coverage beyond hospitals to outlying affected areas by sending health assistants and midwives to the delta region. Reports coming in highlight the need for this and stress the need for health workers who can tackle health promotion and disease prevention activities.
16. NGOs continue to send health teams to the affected areas as reports are still coming in of the need for trauma care and wound care. Several reports coming back from affected areas also describe apathy and resignation among the people in temporary shelters. Social and moral support is needed and while a few NGOs are proving psychosocial support, their capacity to respond to the level of needs is limited.

II. INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Coordinated In-Country Response (For more detailed Situation Reports for each cluster please check the HIC website <http://myanmar.humanitarianinfo.org/>)

Food Assistance

17. In order to ensure that food assistance is provided to the affected populations effectively it is important that the cluster move down from the township level. Closer collaboration with community based organisations to reach those at the village level is a priority of the Cluster.

18. Cluster partners operating at the field level in Bogale, Kyaiklat, Maubin and Pyapon met on 18 May to discuss geographical coverage, distribution modalities, and to develop a response plan at the local level. A similar exercise for Labutta will be conducted on 19 May.
19. The cluster is working with the local authorities in Labutta to transport food to the government stations where it is distributed to beneficiaries. Two monitors will be deployed to each station where the distributions will be organized and monitored by the local relief committee and WFP. Staff report that food distribution using this arrangement previously has been working smoothly.
20. WFP has dispatched 245.7 tons of food during May 17 and 18 to Ayeyarwady Division. WFP emergency food assistance rations will be composed of:
 - Rice 400g per day per person
 - Pulses 100g per day per person
 - Vegetable oil 30g per day per person
 - Iodized salt 5g per day per person

The monthly relief food basket for a family of five includes 60 kg of rice, 15 kg of pulses, 4.5 kg of oil and 0.75 kg of iodized salt. High-energy biscuits are to be provided for children under five years of age.
21. Since the cyclone hit, WFP has dispatched more than 1,480 tons of food to affected areas; and distributed 859 tons of food to approximately 255,000 beneficiaries. Food Cluster is in process of consolidating the data on food assistance provided since the cyclone in order to get a clear picture of the gaps.

Logistics

22. The Logistics Cluster in Yangon has secured a dedicated fleet of 30 trucks for inland road transport in Myanmar. Furthermore, three barges with a capacity of 200 - 800 MT will be operating out of the ports of Yangon and Patheingyi, covering the eastern and the western parts of the Ayeyarwady delta respectively.

Health

23. According to an ongoing assessment, there is an urgent need to provide safe and clean delivery space within settlements for pregnant women. UNICEF is working to provide temporary safe delivery space and has already sent clean delivery kits to the affected townships
24. The Health Cluster is providing medical supplies to 200 extended first-aid posts run by Myanmar Red Cross volunteers and Ministry of Health doctors in cyclone-affected areas.
25. The Health Cluster has procured more than 350 MT of medical supplies and equipment for cyclone-affected areas to date. Supplies include three million water purification sachets, 90,000 water containers, more than 50,000 insecticide-treated mosquito nets, shelter equipment, emergency health kits and essential medicines requested by the national and local health authorities, have been procured.
26. IFRC has mobilized four basic health clinics (emergency response units).
27. WHO has supplied one emergency health kit to the Maubin Hospital, which is functioning as a referral hospital for the affected areas. MOH has redeployed 10 medical doctors and 12 nurses from Mandalay and Yangon General Hospital to Maubin Hospital as well as three Public Health Officers. Public health activities such as chlorination, vaccination, mobile teams and disease surveillance are being carried out by health workers.

Nutrition

28. Nutrition Cluster partners (ACF, SC, Merlin, PSI, MSF-Switzerland and UNICEF) are working to identify the locations and types of nutrition interventions to be undertaken in next six months.
29. A joint call for support for appropriate infant and young child feeding was finalised by WHO, UNICEF and SC. Essential messages on exclusive breastfeeding were shared with all partners.

Emergency Telecommunications

30. IPSTAR connectivity to Bogale is being installed by UNICEF, and emergency power supply to support communications in Labutta for the humanitarian community is being provided by WFP. Both WFP and UNICEF continue to provide technical support to the humanitarian community in Yangon, Laputta, Bogale and Bangkok.

WASH

31. Relief agencies that are not registered to operate in Myanmar have made available several water treatment units for the use of agencies already operating in-country. The cluster lead is coordinating requests.

32. Discussions are ongoing on standardization of supplies. The regional cluster has provided details of stocks available in Bangkok for immediate shipment to Myanmar on request of agencies.
33. There is shortage of sanitary facilities and water containers in Labutta and Myaungmya townships. Coverage of WaterGuard disinfectant solution appears to be good.
34. Merlin is currently addressing water and sanitation and basic health needs with its 73 staff in Labutta and is partnering with other agencies in order to be able to expand the reach of services. By 17 May, Merlin had reached 64,000 beneficiaries in Labutta town, in 21 villages in the area, and in seven temporary settlements.

Child Protection

35. Child Protection cluster partners have established 55 functioning Child-Friendly Spaces (CFS) to date, with 92 more being set up. In Yangon Division there are 51 functioning CFS and 75 being set up, while in Ayeyarwady Division four are functioning and 17 are being set up. The CFS are supported by World Vision, UNICEF, Save the Children, EMDH, MRCS and local NGOs.
36. Assessment teams have returned from Labutta, Myaungmya and Bogale, and are compiling figures of separated and unaccompanied children, to inform cluster partners' response.
37. The Child Protection Cluster has now finalised the Myanmar language versions of the *Code of Conduct to prevent any form of sexual abuse and exploitation for staff, humanitarian workers, partners and volunteers*, and the *Ethical guidelines on photography, interviewing and reporting on children in emergencies*.

Early Recovery and Agriculture

38. While Agriculture and Early Recovery remain separate clusters, both are collaborating closely and strategic planning is done jointly. The most affected areas are predominantly rural and normally produce a significant proportion of the country's agricultural output.
39. Early Recovery strategy will focus on two components: Immediate Activities, and Early Recovery. Cluster partners have identified priorities for the Immediate Activities component of the Early Recovery programme. Immediate Activities are to organize assistance to help farming communities in the delta to prepare for the monsoon planting (early June to July). Assistance includes agricultural inputs, provision of livestock and poultry, fishing boats and nets, as well as non-agricultural support, in particular shelter, sanitation and water collection tanks, cleaning of ponds, clearance of debris, essential village access infrastructure such as footpaths, culverts and jetties. The Early Recovery component will provide a framework for a more comprehensive recovery programme that will form the foundation for a long-term recovery plan, and will begin in 4-6 weeks. Planning (including data collection and analysis), resource mobilization and programming will begin immediately.
40. A UNDP field team conducted an assessment this week in Kyaiklat township including consultation with 24 self-reliance group members from UNDP HDI projects in 12 villages. The assessment also extended to Bogale township, however participation of villagers there was limited due to difficulties in access. Immediate activities were identified based on the villagers' own assessment, and options for implementation arrangements were discussed. Cluster partners felt that this was a sound approach for needs assessment in affected townships. Cluster partners agreed on developing an Action Plan in the immediate term (in next two weeks) based on the having village communities to prioritize their needs.
41. UNDP and FAO are in discussion with Ministries of Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries, and Cottage Industry Department and Department of Development Affairs for organizing assistance activities in the delta. UNDP hopes that this process will also facilitate access of INGOs to the field.
42. Partners of various clusters have together examined Cash for Work strategy, feasibility and modalities of implementation. An inventory of agencies planning to engage in Cash for Work activities is now available.

Update on Security Situation

43. The UN is still in Phase 1, and no change to this is foreseen.

Update on Financial Pledges

44. As of 19 May 2008, USD 99.6 million has been committed to relief operations, with a further USD 107.9 million pledged. The UN Flash Appeal for Myanmar currently requests \$201 million. \$43 million has been contributed to the Flash Appeal so far, \$20.4 million of which has been provided by the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

45. For updated information on financial contributions, please refer to the OCHA Financial Tracking System website: <http://reliefweb.int/fts/>. Donors are encouraged to verify contributions and inform OCHA Financial Tracking System (FTS) of corrections/additions/values to this table. The direct email address is: fts@reliefweb.int.

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