



Rakhine State ©UNICEF Myanmar/2023/Naing Lin Soe

## Myanmar Office CYCLONE MOCHA Humanitarian Situation Report No.4

Date: 17 May 2023

### Highlights

- Four days after Cyclone Mocha made landfall in Myanmar it is still extremely challenging to get information on the magnitude of the disaster and the number of children and women affected by the crisis.
- Reports of damaged critical infrastructure, including roads, houses, schools and hospitals are reported, as well as intermittent or total power outages. Telecommunications and internet connectivity continue to be major challenges.
- There are concerns about contamination of water sources as a result of storm surges, landslides and flooding in some of the impacted locations.
- Drinking water, shelter, health and food have been consistently identified as priorities by communities consulted.
- The UNICEF funding situation is critical: to date the Myanmar 2023 Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) appeal for USD 169.6 million is only 11.8 per cent funded.

### Situation in Numbers



**5.4 million people** are estimated to have been in the path of the cyclone across Rakhine and the Northwest (OCHA)



**3.2 million people** are most vulnerable and likely to have humanitarian needs (OCHA)

### Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

The humanitarian community continues to face challenges in accessing information and in getting approval for travel authorisation to conduct needs assessments and reach affected populations with emergency relief. Network connection and intermittent electricity continue to be major challenges to communicating with partners across the affected areas.

In Northwest, humanitarian access and information availability are main challenges to reach to beneficiaries. Major power lines have been damaged in the west and northeast townships of Magway (Pakokku, Seikphyu, Salin, Yaesagyo, Pauk, Myaing, Saw and Kantkaw) areas. As a result, electricity is not expected to be restored before 19 May 2023.

In Rakhine, many infrastructures are reportedly damaged including public services – electricity, telecommunications, schools, hospitals and connectivity continues to be a major challenge. The latest information identified serious damage to at least 13 camps (out of 21) in Rakhine. It is estimated that 80% of school infrastructure is partially/totally damaged with roofs ripped off and damaged/collapsed walls. Schools reopening in Rakhine in June is therefore in question. Many teachers and volunteer teachers are also directly impacted and have had their homes partially or destroyed.

Concerns have also been raised over the possibility that the destruction caused by the cyclone in the camps for displaced populations (displaced prior to the cyclone) may lead authorities to push individuals to return to their places of origin as part of an effort to close down camps.

In term of the response, recommendations for in-kind assistance seems to be more relevant than cash, according to the community voices, as commodity prices are rapidly rising.

# UNICEF Preparedness and Response

UNICEF has a presence in Sittwe and in Maungdaw in Rakhine State, with 32 staff working to meet the needs of children in the State. For the Northwest (NW), the response is coordinated from Hakka and Yangon with 9 staff. The Operations team mission comprising of Supply, Administration and ICT staff has deployed to Sittwe to support the team and initiate repairs for the UNICEF Sittwe office and warehouse, which were heavily damaged.

## PREPAREDNESS

In anticipation of the projected impact, UNICEF has been implementing several preparedness actions:

- UNICEF has been coordinating closely with implementing partners to activate contingency clauses within existing partnership arrangements. These agreements cover response actions in WASH, CP, Education, Health and Nutrition.
- UNICEF has pre-positioned critical supplies in Rakhine State for WASH (including 5,000 hygiene kits, 32,000 soaps, water filters, water tanks, latrines and handwashing stations), Child Protection (2,000 kits), and Education (Essential Learning Package kits).
- UNICEF has pre-positioned critical supplies in the Northwest to cover 100,000 people for WASH and other services such as Child Protection, Health and Nutrition.
- Additional essential items are on their way to the UNICEF warehouses, including: 2,000 Child Protection kits, 8,220 ELP Kits, 1,900 roofing sheets (for Sittwe); and 3,000 ELP Kits and 500 roofing sheets (for Maungdaw).
- A deployment plan for in-country surge support to affected locations has been prepared, covering cluster coordination, programmes and operations.

## RESPONSE

### WASH

WASH and Child Protection sections are working together to jointly respond to the needs of the affected population in Chin, Magway and Sagaing. To meet the immediate needs of the affected population in northern Rakhine, 600 hygiene kits, 100 buckets, 5,000 water purification sachets and 3,000 soaps are being distributed urgently. The Rapid Needs Assessment is still awaited, pending travel authorization.

### WASH Cluster

The Myanmar Humanitarian Fund (MHF) first reserve allocation discussion was held with WASH Cluster partners. A WASH envelope of USD 500,000 will be distributed between three organizations with a “no-regret” approach for the response to the cyclone.

Visits to 14 villages in Mrauk-U township revealed that 6,393 people are affected, 44 latrines need total replacement, 5 latrines are damaged and hygiene kits are needed. 260 hygiene kits have been distributed to IDP sites in Mrauk-U. Repair of latrines and water points have also been initiated. 265 water filters were distributed in 5 villages along with hygiene kits to 34 households in one village. Gaps have been reported in terms of clean drinking water, distribution of water purification tablets and reinstallation of latrines in Sittwe protracted camps.

### Health

UNICEF continues to coordinate with other UN agencies such as WHO, UNOPS, UNFPA and IOM, for a harmonized approach to the response. The latest information identified serious damage to some health facilities and hospitals in host communities. Therefore, it is necessary to deploy mobile clinic teams as soon as possible, while restoring the functionality of damaged health infrastructure. The health sector is planning to target at least 25,000 people in need to be covered with mobile services.

### Nutrition

UNICEF, in collaboration with partners, is conducting an assessment for infant and young child feeding practices, as well as monitoring of unsolicited distribution of breast milk substitute. In addition to that, UNICEF has also resumed provision of nutrition counselling, mid-upper arm circumference (MUAC) screening, and referral and treatment of children with acute malnutrition. UNICEF is coordinating with partners at national and sub-national level for release of a joint statement on the promotion of breast feeding. More advocacy and support are needed to get travel authorization to deploy mobile teams for provision of integrated lifesaving nutrition services.

### Nutrition Cluster

The Nutrition Cluster is working closely through the inter-cluster coordination group to undertake rapid needs assessments subject to the authorities allowing these to be undertaken.

When the conditions and enabling environment allows, the Nutrition Cluster will proceed to assess the Breast Milk Substitutes (BMS) needs and working closely with UNICEF and the Global Nutrition Cluster will mobilize financial and material resources to ensure promotion of the importance of protecting, promoting, and supporting the feeding and care of infants and young children through optimal breastfeeding, their caregivers, especially pregnant, postpartum cannot

be neglected in this emergency. Meanwhile the Cluster continues to support drafting the joint statement of BMS which will now be released in about a weeks' time.

The Nutrition Cluster will contribute to drafting a plan for the Cyclone Mocha which will be an addendum to the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan and contribute to the Flash Appeal being coordinated by OCHA.

## **Child Protection**

Mental Health and Psychosocial support (MHPSS) messages targeting caregivers were shared on 12 May through social media. The post targeted areas most impacted by the cyclone including Chin, Sagaing, Rakhine, and Magway. The message, titled 'What Can You Do to Help your Children Cope in a Disaster?', included information on how to support children before, during, and after a crisis situation such as a cyclone. A total of 251,053 youth and caregivers were reached through the social media post in the targeted regions and the post was reshared by viewers 641 times. The UNICEF Child Protection team will continue to share targeted MHPSS messages related to the cyclone impact.

## **Child Protection AoR**

The Child Protection (CP) AoR has focused on strengthening engagement with child protection actors in the immediate aftermath of the cyclone. An ad hoc CP meeting was held in the Northwest. As the AoR awaits the communication channels to improve, response figures are not yet available. CP AoR partners have been using the standard CP AoR response messages in both Rakhine and Northwest, including MHPSS messaging, these were disseminated using community volunteers. Many children are in dire need of MHPSS support as they experienced the cyclone impacts. Some agencies have also set up (or are planning to establish) temporary Child Friendly Spaces (CFS). Child Protection partners are also engaged in the Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) to identify core basic needs and gaps. As people struggle with limited resources including food and shelter, child protection risks will continue to increase due to crowded living conditions and negative coping mechanisms, such as violence (inside the home and in community), child labour, trafficking and dangers and injuries (including reports of drowning) as children play in and near debris and water, These Child Protection concerns are primarily increasing in the weeks following a disaster, so the CP AoR is supporting partners with response activities and timelines for prevention and response in the coming weeks.

At national level, the AoR has coordinated with the Protection Cluster, including Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Mine Action AoRs to prepare emergency tips sheets on mainstreaming child protection for other clusters in the response. As the humanitarian footprint increases, so does the need for child protection to be considered by all clusters in their response. Additionally, common protection response messages, including child protection, are being collated for use by other clusters. CP AoR has developed a Rakhine dashboard on response capacity, and is preparing one for NW, to inform programming gaps and strengths.

Funding remains a challenge for many partners and there is an urgent need to mobilise resources, and to address access constraints. There are limited partners with capacity and access to support, particularly in Northwest.

## **Mine Action AoR**

Posters in support of clean-up efforts following the cyclone have been made and distributed today by Mine Action (MA) AoR. People undertaking clean up and children who will venture to see what the flooding might have brought are at a particular risk. The poster may be printed in both A4 and A3 sizes, which should make it possible to print at the office rather than having to rely on professional printers.

A MA AoR meeting was held in Rakhine. As a response to the cyclone, communication with Rakhine residents is conducted by partners through various forms of media and via Facebook messages. The messages have been viewed by more than 160,000 people. In addition, the content has been broadcasted by radios. Partners are working on a concept note for the delivery of explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) linked to non-food items (NFI) and cash support in eight different camps in Mrauk-U.

## **Education**

UNICEF is identifying funds to reprogram for immediate response needs. This includes infrastructure assessments, provision of essential learning materials, engagement with authorities and all stakeholders in the response, data/information management support, MHPSS services for teachers and children and provision of supplies for temporary school repairs (including tin sheets, tarpaulins, and other roofing materials).

## **Education Cluster**

In Rakhine, education sub cluster coordination meeting is being organized. Updates on the situation in camps and temporary learning centres (TLCs) is being collected.

## **Social Behaviour Change (SBC), Accountability to Affected Population (AAP)**

UNICEF has developed and disseminated a partner mapping tool through the Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) technical working group to collect information on partners working on Cyclone Mocha response. Key lifesaving messages around maternal and child health care, health care seeking, prevention of communicable diseases, awareness on snake bite and mine risks, MHPSS and nutrition are being prepared in collaboration with

programme sections. When these are finalized, the materials will be printed and distributed to support the field offices and partners for mass awareness raising on prevention of diseases and other lifesaving messages with the affected communities, particularly in temporary shelters and camps. SBC and AAP-related rapid assessment questionnaires are being developed and will be shared with UNOCHA to incorporate into rapid need assessments being conducted by humanitarian partners.

## Supply and Logistics

The office continues to follow up with the Foreign Economic Relations Department (FERD) for final approval of the 13 health and nutrition supplies shipments which have recently received Tax Exemption Certificates (TEC) clearance from the Ministry of Health (MoH). Advocacy for the remaining outstanding TEC approvals is ongoing. The modality for distribution of these health and nutrition supplies is not yet clear and agreed by the parties. MoH has so far only requested UNICEF to indicate the quantities for IEHK kits which will be delivered to them out of the 175 kits been released.

## Humanitarian Leadership and Coordination

OCHA is coordinating the overall humanitarian response with all clusters, with coordination mechanisms established at the national level as well as in Rakhine and Northwest. The Myanmar Humanitarian Emergency Response Preparedness Plan was activated nationwide since 8<sup>th</sup> May. A rapid capacity building on conducting Rapid Need Assessments has been undertaken in the high-risk areas, along with pre-positioning of contingency stocks. Advocacy for operational access to affected communities is being undertaken through the Inter Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) at national and sub-national levels. Under the leadership of OCHA in Rakhine, daily coordination meetings have been organised since Monday 15 May to review incoming information on needs and to determine the capacity of humanitarian organisations to deliver.

UNICEF will continue to provide leadership for Child Protection AoR, Education Cluster (co-led with Save the Children), Mine Action AoR, Nutrition Cluster and WASH Cluster. Cluster coordination meetings have been held for all clusters/AoRs. There are significant concerns about the lack of humanitarian funding and a number of supply gaps.

## Funding overview

The actual funding situation of Myanmar is 11.8 per cent of its 2023 HAC appeal, representing \$19.83 million as of end April. This was received from the generous support from the Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United States Fund for UNICEF, the Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission (ECHO), the Government of Japan, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the Government of Norway, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), the World Health Organization (WHO), Gavi the vaccine alliance and through UNICEF's Global Humanitarian Thematic Funding

UNICEF has mobilised US\$ 800,000 in internal resources, negotiations with Government of Japan to reorient US\$ 9 million to support immediate response to meet the priority needs of girls, women, and people with disabilities. No funds have been pledged for the cyclone response.

### UNICEF External Communications:

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