



## RED CROSS RESPONSE TO MYANMAR FLOOD - 6 MONTHS ON

9 February 2016



Floods, Kalay, Sagaing, Myanmar/ 18 August 2015

### Context

In mid-July 2015, heavy monsoon rains, coupled with high winds and heavy rain from Cyclone Komen which passed nearby on 30<sup>th</sup> July, caused devastating floods and landslides in several parts of Myanmar throughout July and August, with severe humanitarian consequences. According to government figures, 125 people lost their lives and over 9 million people were affected in 12 of the country's 14 states and regions. Over 1.1 million acres of farmland were inundated, with more than 872,000 acres of crops destroyed and over 15,000 homes heavily damaged, causing loss of homes, livelihoods, crops and food stocks. In addition, 1.7 million people were temporarily displaced.



A man from Aye Thar Yar village tries to save part of his home swept away by the flood waters / 18 August 2015

### The main figures



**9 million** people affected



**400,000** people received assistance and support from the Myanmar Red Cross and its Red Cross Movement partners



**1,400** Red Cross volunteers mobilised



**60,000** people benefited from cash grants



**1,485** people were registered as alive and well, and over 25 families were reunited

On 31 July the President of Myanmar U Thein Sein issued a statement declaring natural disaster zones in Chin, Rakhine, Sagaing and Magway regions and the Government called for international assistance. Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement partners worked in coordinated approach in response to the disaster, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) working as primary partner with the Myanmar Red Cross (MRCS) in Rakhine State, and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and partner National Societies present in the country supporting MRCS in other affected states and regions.

On 11 August, the International Federation launched a 4 million Swiss francs (3.96 mio USD) emergency appeal targeting over 58,000 people with relief and recovery assistance over a one year timeframe, while the ICRC used its budget under the 2015 annual appeal. By the end of August, 55,000 people (11,130 households) had already received assistance.

Six months after the floods affected Myanmar, the response has now shifted from relief to recovery. In almost all of the affected areas displaced people have returned home, however in areas such as Hakha in Chin State, where homes were completely destroyed, there are still approximately 10,000 people living in camps in urban areas and in temporary shelters within their villages. Damage to crops and arable land has disrupted the planting season and poses a risk to long-term food security. Since the beginning of the crisis, Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement partners have helped more than 400,000 people.



Cash grant distribution in Pwint Phyu Township, Magway region.  
11 December 2015

## From relief to early recovery

As soon as the flooding started in July, MRCS mobilized over 1,400 volunteers involved in supporting evacuations, providing first aid, distributing relief items to families in evacuation centres and affected households, and providing clean water and water purification tablets. Red Cross branches across all 12 affected regions and states reached 130,000 people with relief items and over 380,000 people were supported during evacuations. In Rakhine alone, the ICRC and MRCS assisted 70,000 people (14,329 households) including by providing food, household items (mats, blankets, hygiene kits and mosquito nets) and shelter kits, as well as distributing cash grants and implementing cash for work schemes, which also contributed to the rehabilitation of roads and infrastructure damaged by the floods. In addition, both organizations helped communities regain access to safe drinking water and to clean contaminated ponds and wells for the benefit of over 120,000 people. They have also supplied drugs and other medical items to three township hospitals, and support an ongoing mobile clinics service to affected areas.

Recovery programming started in October based on a revised concreted plan of action which followed detailed assessments to determine the recovery needs of affected populations. The main focus of MRCS recovery activities to date has been on providing cash assistance to address the range of early recovery needs faced by the worst affected households,



A family receives a cash grant in Kalay, Sagaing region  
30 December 2015

including home repairs and livelihoods support, from restoration of farming land to diversification of income sources like pig farming or setting up small enterprises. So far, 60,000 people have received cash grants from the Red Cross all around the country. Around 20,000 people (3,249 households) in Sagaing, Magway, Ayeyarwady Regions and Chin State have received cash grants of between 300,000 MMK and 600,000 MMK (approx. 230 and 465 USD) to date. A second phase of cash grants will be delivered between March and April for an additional 630 households in Kalay and Tamu townships. In Rakhine, targeted livelihood support was provided and job opportunities created in 10 village tracts for around 18,000 people (over 3,000 households) whose way of life was disrupted.



## Building more resilient communities

The final phase of the recovery operation will focus on ensuring that communities and the local Red Cross branches are better prepared to cope with and respond to future disasters. Community based activities will include first aid and health education to ensure that communities are prepared for accidents and potential health threats; community based disaster risk management training and setting up community committees to improve communities' preparedness; as well as infrastructure rehabilitation. In parallel, MRCS, with the support of Its Movement partners, will endeavour to build the capacity of local red cross volunteers to respond to future disasters with training for volunteers including volunteer management and community engagement trainings, as well as national disaster response team and emergency response team trainings. It will also ensure the prepositioning of relief items such as family kits, hygiene kits and dignity kits, and will reinforce its fleet with additional boats to assist in reaching future flood affected communities.



Preparation for recovery activities in Mrauk-U Township, Rakhine State / 13 October 2015

## About us/Contact

As the leading and oldest humanitarian organization in Myanmar, the **Myanmar Red Cross Society** (MRCS) is committed to improving the health and well-being of vulnerable people. It began its operations in 1920 as a branch of the Indian Red Cross Society. After Burma formally separated from India in 1937, the Society obtained official, national status in 1939 and was admitted to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in 1946.

The **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies** (IFRC) is the world's largest volunteer-based humanitarian network, reaching 150 million people each year through its 190 member National Societies. The IFRC has been in Myanmar since 1991 with the deployment of a relief delegate. The delegate assisted the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) in its relief operation for fire victims in Meiktila, Mandalay Region. In 1993, an IFRC office was founded to provide longer-term support to MRCS.

Present permanently in Myanmar since 1986, the **International Committee of the Red Cross** (ICRC) protects and assists people affected by armed conflict and other situations of violence. In case of other emergencies, for instance natural disaster, it also contributes to the relief efforts of its partners from the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (the Movement) in those areas. In response to the floods, the ICRC focuses its work in Rakhine, where it has a strong operational presence, owing to the consequences of the outbreak of intercommunal violence in 2012.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

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