



ICRC

# UPDATE ON MYANMAR FLOOD RESPONSE

15 November 2015



MRCs and ICRC staff lower a pump into a well in a flood-affected village in Rakhine State. Ensuring communities have access to clean water has been a priority for the Movement since the first days of the crisis. Photo credit: ICRC

## CONTEXT AND SCOPE

Three months ago torrential rains and the offshore approach of cyclone Komen caused devastating floods and landslides in Myanmar. The disaster displaced almost 1.7 million people and took the lives of 132, according to the Myanmar government. Half a million houses and 1.15 million acres of farmland were damaged, forcing the replanting of some 495,000 acres of crops, with serious consequences for the livelihoods of thousands of families. Following a massive relief effort, the Red Cross response is now firmly into the recovery phase, focusing on restoring economic security for the worst-hit households.

Twelve of the country's 14 States and Regions were affected, with Hakha in Chin State, Kale in Sagaing Region, Pwintbyu in Magway Region and Minbya and Mrauk-U in Rakhine State identified as the five most affected townships by the National Disaster Management Committee (NDMC). Mobilising more than 1,400 staff and volunteers in the 12 affected States/Regions, the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCs) – with the support of the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) – **assisted the evacuation of more than 380,000 people** from flood areas and provided first aid, relief supplies and clean water during the emergency phase.



An MRC volunteer teaches schoolgirls in Kale, Sagaing Region how to wash hands and cut nails to ensure good hygiene. Photo credit: IFRC

Pre-positioned disaster preparedness stocks in 28 MRCS warehouses around the country enabled swift distribution of much-needed supplies. To date, the Red Cross Movement has provided essential relief items or the equivalent of amount of cash to **around 130,000 people** in the affected States and Regions. MRCS volunteers distributed over 80,000 water purifiers around the country and trained communities in their usage. Distributions were accompanied by hygiene promotion and health education sessions for affected communities.

On August 11 the IFRC launched an emergency appeal for 4 million Swiss francs (4.1 million USD) to allow the MRCS to support some **58,000 people** over the subsequent 12 months. The appeal was later revised to 3.28 million Swiss francs and is now 96% covered. The operation, to be managed from a new MRCS hub office in Kale Township, Sagaing Region, will channel support to communities in the worst-affected areas of Sagaing Region and Chin State. This will mainly focus on the provision of unconditional cash grants allowing affected people to choose how they meet their recovery needs. The appeal will also provide water and sanitation, health and livelihood support as well as helping communities to be better prepared for future disasters.



MRCS volunteers distribute vital supplies to people from a flooded community in Kale, Sagaing Region. Photo credit: IFRC

The MRCS has received substantial local donations that it plans to allocate to recovery activities in Magway and Ayerwardy Regions with technical support from the IFRC. By the end of September the MRCS had raised a total of more than 1 billion Kyats locally (780,000 USD). This is the most the MRCS has ever received in funds for a local appeal. Activities will include rehabilitation of communal water sources, household latrine construction and hygiene promotion; construction of community centres; livelihood recovery using cash transfers where appropriate; health promotion, first-aid training and psycho-social support; and disaster preparedness and risk reduction activities.

The organisations have now begun to support livelihoods and provide job opportunities for those whose way of life was disrupted. Around **25,000 people** will benefit from cash grants or cash-for-work projects, which will rehabilitate public infrastructure such as roads and water ponds while providing income to the community. The ICRC is using its budget under the 2015 annual appeal, for which it also continues to seek funding.

In Rakhine State in the days following the floods the MRCS and ICRC distributed rice, household items and/or shelter kits to more than 25,000 people. In September they distributed food, household items or an equivalent in cash to **60,000 people** in Mrauk-U, Kyauktaw and Minbya and provided health education sessions for communities. They also worked to ensure access to safe drinking water and to clean contaminated ponds, cleaning 36 for the benefit of over 40,000 people.

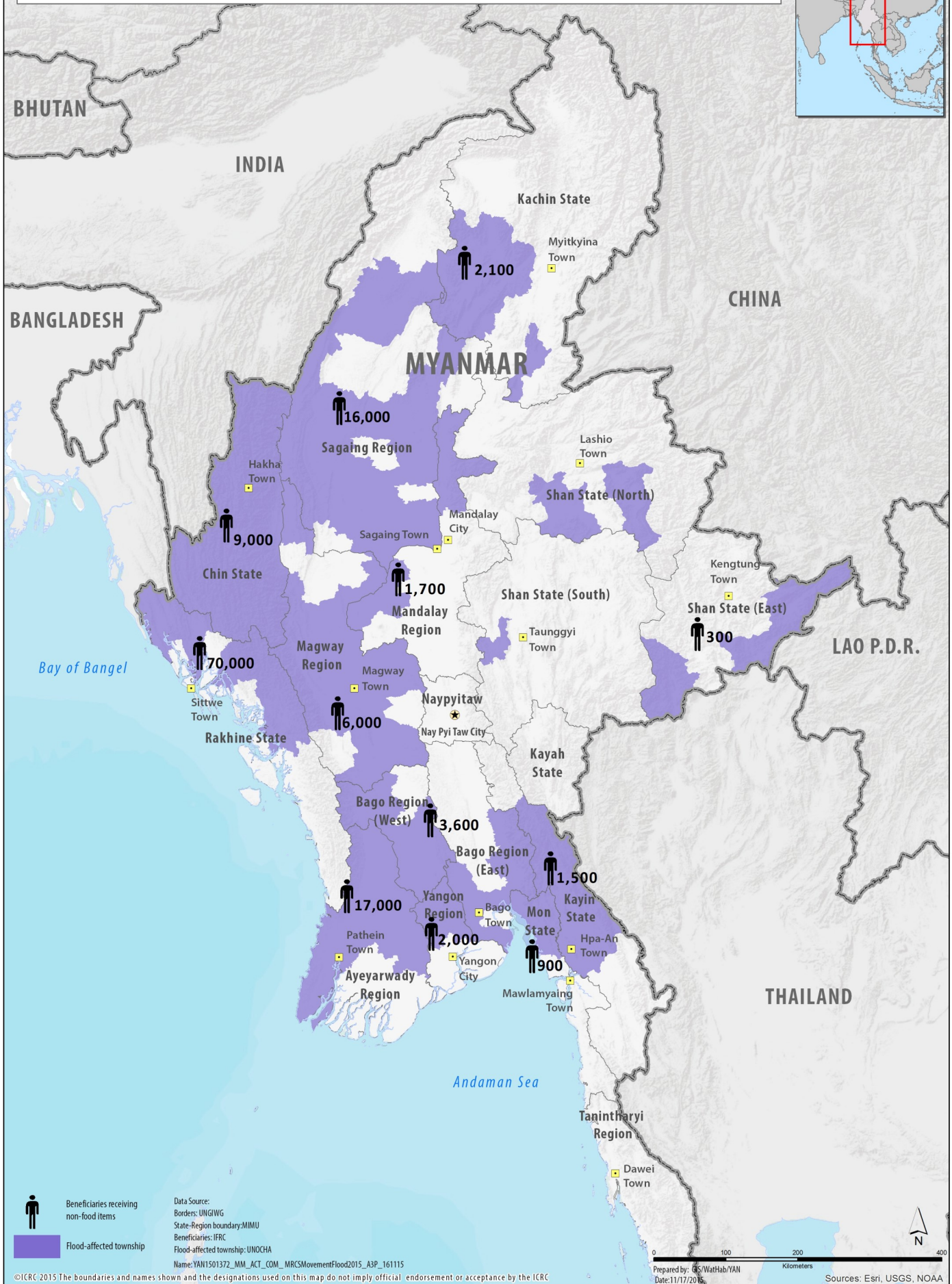


MRCS volunteers are briefed on livelihood restoration activities in Mrauk-U, Rakhine State. Photo credit: ICRC

Across the country MRCS volunteers addressed the needs of families separated by the floods, especially in Sagaing and Magway Regions. Volunteers helped 21 people to restore contact with their families, facilitated the reunion of 27 families and registered more than 1,000 as alive and well. Using TV and radio interviews, the RFL Yangon office publicised its flood-related services; 18 “anxious for news” requests were received from families from Shan, Bago and Yangon Regions/States, as well as further afield in Dubai, Thailand and Singapore. All cases were closed positively.

All Movement components continue to work closely together on the ground and at headquarters level. This brief outlines MRCS/IFRC/ICRC activities implemented up to 15 November 2015 in response to the floods.

# MOVEMENT FLOOD RESPONSE 2015 MYANMAR



Beneficiaries receiving non-food items  
 Flood-affected township

Data Source:  
 Borders: UNGIWG  
 State-Region boundary: MIMU  
 Beneficiaries: IFRC  
 Flood-affected township: UNOCHA  
 Name: YAN1501372\_MM\_ACT\_COM\_MRCSMovementFlood2015\_A3P\_161115

Prepared by: GIS/WatHab/YAN  
 Date: 11/17/2015  
 Sources: Esri, USGS, NOAA

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## 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 189 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 disasters, 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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