

# FINAL REPORT



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies  
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge  
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja  
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والقمر الأحمر

## MYANMAR: RAKHINE CYCLONE

31 December 2005

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilising the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organisation and its millions of volunteers are active in over 183 countries.

### In Brief

Appeal No. 14/04; Period covered: 4 July 2004 – 30 September 2004; Final Report; Appeal coverage: 78.5%

*(Click here to go directly to the attached Final Financial Report). This Final Report replaces the Interim Final Report published on 3 December 2004.*

#### Appeal history:

- Launched on 4 June 2004 for CHF 201,000 (USD 163,770 or EUR 134,204) for three months to assist 14,000 beneficiaries.
- Appeal budget has been revised and doubled at 30 June after receiving latest evaluation reports - to CHF 413,048 for 25,000 beneficiaries – and the project extended by one month to 30 September to accomplish last distributions.
- Disaster Relief Emergency Funds (DREF) allocated: N/A

**Related Emergency or Annual Appeals:** Myanmar Annual Appeal 2004 ([Appeal No. 01.65/2004](#)); Southeast Asia Regional Appeal 2004 ([Appeal No. 01.66/2004](#))

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For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal.

## **Background**

Rakhine is a sparsely populated, coastal state (population 2.7 million) in the southwest of Myanmar, covering 14,200 square miles. Sittwe, the state capital, is the biggest city. The Rakhine people generally depend on fishing, prawn breeding, farming and salt production for their livelihood.

On 19 May, a cyclone, reportedly the worst to strike the area since 1968, generated winds of up to 160kph blowing in from the Bay of Bengal into the area near Myanmar's eastern border with Bangladesh. The cyclone affected areas including the townships of Sittwe, Myae Bon, Pauk Taw, Myauk Oo, Ponnar Kyun, Min Byar, Kyauk Phyu, Ann and numerous islands off the coast. Local authorities reported damage to houses, offices and religious buildings, schools, dams, embankments and prawn breeding ponds, while many motor and rowing craft were sunk.

At the request of the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS), an emergency appeal was launched on 4 June 2004. The overall goal of the appeal was to provide immediate assistance to those affected and in the longer term, to reduce risk of disaster and enhance the resilience of some of the most vulnerable people in Myanmar. The appeal budget was revised and doubled on 30 June 2004. This was to cover increased needs based on a joint assessment by MRCS and the Federation, after which the number of affected people significantly increased from initial reports to 25,000 (over 4,600 households).

## **Summary**

The programme undertaken by the Myanmar Red Cross (MRCS) to assist 25,000 people in Rakhine state following a severe cyclone in mid May 2004, has marked a significant milestone in the Society's development. During the four month operation, supported by the International Federation, the MRCS provided and, for the first time, directly distributed essential food and non food items to the most affected areas, fulfilling its role as the country's leading humanitarian organisation.

The strength of its volunteer network was demonstrated particularly through active participation in rescue and evacuation work in the immediate aftermath of the disaster, while established training regimes proved their worth as the operation matured. Inevitably, there are lessons to be learned, but overall the experience gained will stand the Society in good stead ahead of future emergencies - especially in its professional relationships with national and local authorities.

The general success of the operation was made possible by strong support from the Society's partners through the appeal, which was revised and doubled at the end of June. Including direct contributions from sister Societies to MRCS to complete the longer term elements, the appeal was almost fully covered.

## **Coordination**

MRCS plays an official role in providing auxiliary humanitarian services in official government relief operations. Good cooperation and common understanding between the Myanmar government and MRCS were further developed as a result of the launch of an emergency appeal. This operation was the first of its kind, as MRCS delivered relief items directly to beneficiaries through its own channels without special involvement from the National Disaster Relief Committee (NDRC). This approach was made possible through the advocacy of the headquarters assessment team that cooperated closely with regional commanders by explaining Red Cross procedures at the beginning of operations.

The relief operation was coordinated closely with participating organisations: World Food Programme (WFP), Bridge Asia Japan (BAJ) and Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA). Contributions from these and other donors were implemented by NDRC. MRCS received local donations from several private donors and BAJ. MRCS headquarters staff kept NDRC informed during all phases of the emergency operation that were carried out by the Red Cross. WFP provided 200 MT of rice for government distribution, BAJ donated MMK 4.5 Million (CHF 928,078) for Red Cross to purchase relief goods. MMCWA together with smaller private donors supported MRCS with direct contributions of cash and goods.

The IFRC delegation in Myanmar cooperated closely with all MRCS headquarters actions at state level during assessment, procurement and distributions. The delegation maintained close contacts with donor societies during the operation and also participated with a group from headquarters during monitoring and evaluation trips. The IFRC Southeast Asia regional delegation supported the country delegation with regular communications during the start of the operation. It also held regular contact with the Geneva Secretariat to provide accurate information of the situation at Myanmar.

The IFRC delegation provided information and supported other interested agencies with published facts and figures. An article highlighting good examples of volunteer commitment as evident in the Rakhine operation was published on the IFRC website. This can be accessed at <http://www.ifrc.org/docs/news/04/04062401/>.

## **Analysis of the operation - objectives, achievements, impact**

The impact of the cyclone was felt in eight townships, five of which were particularly hard hit. Rakhine state organised relief and assistance operations in the region; on 20 May an assessment group was sent from MRCS headquarters to support the Sittwe branch with damage and needs assessment. The first estimate put the number affected at 2,500 families (12,500 beneficiaries).

Immediate rescue efforts formed the first phase of operations. Red Cross volunteers participated from the very beginning, assisting their own local communities to establish evacuation centres at schools and monasteries and helping people to reach them. During the evacuation process, volunteers acted as supporting staff to health personnel at the centres. They participated immediately after the storm helping to clear roads, ditches and water ponds. These ponds are essential sources of water and most of them were polluted with seawater and mixed waste after the storm.

The authorities launched an emergency relief assistance appeal to assist rehabilitation work, which received good response from well-wishers, concerned business entities and local NGOs in terms of cash and in kind contributions. The national society itself responded promptly, sending 250 family packs, each comprising 24 items of relief supplies from the Yangon warehouse, to assist the most vulnerable people. Consignments were sent on 24 and 29 May and distributed in the first week of June.

MRCS officially launched an Emergency Appeal with support from the IFRC country delegation on 4 June to assist 14,000 beneficiaries over a three-month period.

The MRCS/IFRC evaluation team was also well-placed in the area to survey the public health situation. There were no outbreaks of waterborne or other diseases in the affected area. Red Cross volunteers from Sittwe also took part in damage and needs assessment with the national headquarters Disaster Assessment and Response Training (DART) team. The assessment information was delayed due to difficulties in transportation and communication reaching the affected area. During this evaluation it was clear that the number of affected families was higher than originally estimated. The figure agreed with NDRC was increased to 4,628 families.

**Emergency relief (food and basic non-food items):**

The relief operation was designed to cover the hardest hit areas for three months. Five townships out of 17 were chosen as operation priorities. The total number of affected households was 4,628 (some 25,000 beneficiaries).

**Table 1:** Distribution of 250 family packs at beginning of June

	Item	Amount	Unit
1	Blanket, single size	2	pieces
2	Plastic sheeting,	6 x 12 (6.7)	ft. (m <sup>2</sup> )
3	Nylon rope, 8mm	12 (10.9)	yd. (m)
4	Mosquito net, family size	1	piece
5	Plastic bucket	1	piece
6	Plastic basin	1	piece
7	Body soap	1	piece
8	Washing soap bar	2	pieces
9	Face towel	1	piece
10	Candle	24	pieces
11	Cooking pot, large	1	piece
12	Cooking pot, small	1	piece
13	Wooden rice ladle	1	piece
14	Steel spoon	4	pieces
15	Enamel plate	4	pieces
16	Mug	3	pieces
17	Man's shirt	1	piece
18	Man's loungyi (waist cloth)	1	piece
19	Woman's blouse	1	piece
20	Woman's loungyi (waist cloth)	1	piece
21	Boy's shirt	1	piece
22	Boy's short pants	1	piece
23	Girl's shirt	1	piece
24	Girl's short pants	1	piece

MRCS received a significant in kind donation of 16,800 blankets and 600 rolls of tarpaulins from Danish Red Cross. Due to the timing of the operation, only a part of the consignment was distributed in Rakhine. However, the remaining stocks formed a major part of the warehouse replenishment.

Local authorities, local donors, NGOs and INGOs donated basic food items and urgently needed materials for reconstruction of houses for affected families and damaged infrastructure such as schools, and fish and shrimp ponds destroyed by the cyclone.

Food items for distribution were purchased locally on a contractual basis in cooperation with the Rakhine state authority. The procurement of basic food items of rice, salt, cooking oil, and pulse (dhal) for 4,628 families for a period of two weeks was carried out for their immediate needs. The first Red Cross distribution (A) started on 14 June. Procurement continued for the second distribution (B) of another two weeks' food supplies; this commenced on 7 August.

Although the Red Cross distribution of basic food items was slightly delayed, the timing proved satisfactory as the local authorities had already arranged the previous distribution of rice to the beneficiaries, and that of the MRCS fulfilled the needs for the following month.

Apart from these basic food items, the beneficiaries faced a shortage of other household goods such as cooking pots and buckets for keeping safe water. At the affected area almost all water sources were destroyed or contaminated, rendering them unfit for human consumption at the time. The distribution of water for daily use was arranged by the local authorities involving local Red Cross volunteers. Buckets and cooking pots (C) were added to the second distribution (B) according to the needs assessment from the first (A).

The transportation arrangement of goods to the affected townships was made by the rice merchant according to the distribution plan. This, together with the local purchase of basic food items, saved funds and effort. Red Cross volunteers were deployed to take part in the distributions to the beneficiaries in the affected villages and towns in cooperation with local authorities. These operations took place starting from 14 July. Distributions at the first stage were carried out in areas that were easy to access. Red Cross volunteers helped beneficiaries to transport relief goods further out in coastal and inaccessible areas. Some of the most remote beneficiaries received the items straight to their houses. Distributions were monitored by MRCS and joint monitoring teams. Relief goods that were used from the Rakhine state Red Cross warehouse stock are to be replenished as first priority. The procurement of 3,000 family kits was carried out during the operation and they are now being deployed to warehouses.

**Table 2: Items distributed June –August (not including 250 family kits)**

	<b>Item</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Unit</b>	<b>Distribution(-s)</b>
1	Rice (50kg bag)	462,800	kg	A,B
2	Cooking oil	4,628	viss	A,B
3	Salt	2,314	viss	A
4	Pulse	4,628	viss	A,B
5	Bucket	4,628	pcs	B
6	Cooking pot 10"	4,628	pcs	C
7	Cooking pot 9"	4,628	pcs	C
8	Bowl	4,628	pcs	C
9	Bowl	4,628	pcs	C
10	Blanket (DRC)	4,628	pcs	C
11	Plastic tarpaulin	160	roll	3,000 (toilets)
DRC items on stock for replenishment: 440 rolls tarpaulin / 12172 blankets				
1 viss = 3.6 lb = 1.6135kg				

\* Note: Distribution C was actually a later part of distribution B, completed in September

Some beneficiary families in the hardest hit areas will receive latrine building material support from a joint operation between the state, UNICEF and MRCS. The national society contribution is 160 rolls of tarpaulin to be used as wall structures for these latrines.

After the replenishment and revised distribution procurement there is still an unspent balance of CHF 7,167, which is less than five percent out of total income of CHF 187,474. This will be reallocated to other Myanmar Red Cross programs supported by the IFRC delegation.

MRCS received direct donations from Chinese Red Cross (CHF 25,290) and Spanish Red Cross (CHF 18,348) for helping the affected of Rakhine cyclone and is presently in the process of planning further relevant activities consistent with operational objectives.

**Table 3: Beneficiaries by township**

<b>Township</b>	<b>Wards / villages</b>	<b>Families</b>	<b>Beneficiaries</b>
Sittwe	11 / --	213	1245
Pauk Taw	5 / 13	1694	10408
Min Byar	-- / 14	370	2120
Myae Bon	9 / 45	2051	9943
Kyauk Phyu	-- / 43	300	1328
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25 / 115</b>	<b>4628</b>	<b>25044</b>

## **Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement -- Principles and initiatives**

All Red Cross and Red Crescent principles were carefully applied throughout the implementation of the operation. One of the major achievements was the regional commanders' approval to carry out deliveries and distributions according to Red Cross and Red Crescent criteria:

When identifying the most vulnerable groups, the following were given special consideration:

- Households whose houses have collapsed.
- Households who have been evacuated to safe areas.
- Households that have no labour force.
- Households that receive no significant support from other sources.
- Households that have lost all their means of generating income.

Amongst these households, priority was given to the following:

- Disabled household members.
- Elderly household members.
- Households with young children (0-5 years).
- Households headed by women.
- Pregnant and lactating women household members.
- Households who have lost a family member (during the recent disaster).

## **National Society Capacity Building**

One of the key volunteers at Sittwe branch had participated in a DART course at 2003. He shared that information with other volunteers in the area so that they were able to participate more effectively in case of emergencies. This emergency operation demonstrated the usefulness of knowledge sharing at field level. As a result of this specific example of sharing, MRCS received relevant information more easily during the assessment. The only problem encountered was the lack of transport, as many boats were destroyed and there were no funds to cover fuel expenses. Another DART course, targeted at the Rakhine area, is scheduled for early 2005 to cover all 17 townships and four districts. MRCS disaster response and disaster preparedness (DPDR), training and health divisions are raising working with IFRC delegation to prepare a common curriculum. A combined community-based first aid (CBFA)/disaster preparedness training course aims to include preparedness and self response for villages for the most frequently occurring hazards.

During the cyclone disaster, warehouses in Kyauk Phyu and Sittwe were damaged and renovation was carried out by the Red Cross branches. The repair cost of the Rakhine state ambulance was also covered by the fund so that the ambulance could be mobilised again to provide medical services to the public. BAJ managed the repairs and maintenance for the ambulance.

The communication system is now improved compared to several years ago. The cyclone destroyed communication facilities in Sittwe but these have been repaired and restored. The telephone line and fax machine for the Rakhine State Red Cross branch will be available by the end of 2004 as part of the normal disaster management programme so that communication can be maintained with the national headquarters in case of emergencies. This is considered vital as Rakhine is cyclone- and storm-prone.

## **Assessment and lessons learned**

Like most of the population in the Rakhine coastal area, MRCS was not particularly prepared for this disaster. Weather forecasts only warned of a large low pressure area in the Bay of Bengal. It is possible that this tropical low pressure (now named 02B) never registered on any instruments as a likely storm or cyclone. Still not reaching proportions normally related to serious storms in forecast scales, it changed direction and passed through Rakhine state on the morning of 19 May. MRCS headquarters only received information from the Rakhine state Red Cross branch on 20 May after telecommunication systems were re-established by the government. The society then began immediate assessment measures and the first team of two arrived in Sittwe on the same evening to assist with the operation. Initial information on casualties and people affected was inadequate because of long distances over waterways. There were no other ways of communication to the most remote areas other than travelling by boat.

When the scale of the emergency became clear and the government asked for assistance, the IFRC delegation produced an appeal together with MRCS in order to support relief operations. There were unfortunately some delays with transferring funds to Myanmar, largely due to the financial accounting procedures (online accounts) and technical (e-mail) constraint of communications systems between the Myanmar delegation and the Kuala Lumpur regional finance unit. For the future, consideration should be given to having a national Red Cross emergency fund and/or applying for assistance from Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) which might hasten the Red Cross operations.

MRCS capacities are well utilised at all levels at time of disaster. From time to time the small disaster preparedness and response division together with other divisions and governance representatives are deployed to manage and coordinate efforts at field level. There was a great challenge to ensure that details of procurement, logistics and finance were followed.

Networking and collaboration with other partner agencies and organisations were strengthened during the operation. This cooperation is essential and should be continued in future both during and off disaster periods.

Having a large network of volunteers is an effective way of carrying out different kind of activities. This is also recognised by the government authorities. As these activities and needs should be in reasonable balance, MRCS have a challenge to develop a mid-structure support at state and division level. This system will also support response operations as it will have a significant role in strengthening volunteer network at township and village level.

### **Conclusions**

MRCS has a strong and reliable volunteer organisation at field level. It is clear that motivated volunteers are the ones who ensure that operations and programs reach the beneficiaries. This creates the eventual need to ensure strong support from national and state levels. An excellent example of this work at field level was the long reach of deliveries direct to affected families at the most remote and inaccessible areas. These strengths are important to support as MRCS was the only organisation allowed direct distributions.

National headquarters possess the knowledge and capabilities to carry out such operations. To ensure exact, regular and accurate implementation of its required purchasing, financial and reporting procedures, all headquarters divisions should be working with more closely to cooperate and support each other.

DART training is an essential tool for spreading knowledge and skills to respond to emergency. By reviewing the curriculum of DART training and combining community-based training courses (first aid and disaster preparedness) MRCS is well on the way to providing excellent tools for townships and villages to prepare themselves.

**[Interim final financial report below; click here to return to the title page.](#)**

**International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**

14/04 MYANMAR: CYCLONE RAKHINE

Selected Parameters	
Year/Period	2004/1-2004/12
Appeal	M04EA014
Budget	APPEAL

All figures are in Swiss Francs (CHF)

**I. Consolidated Response to Appeal**

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	TOTAL
Budget (A)		413'048				413'048
Opening Balance (B)		0				0
<b>Income</b>						
Cash contributions						
Australian Red Cross		27'024				27'024
British Red Cross		22'860				22'860
Danish Red Cross		8'748				8'748
Japanese Red Cross Society		10'516				10'516
Monaco Red Cross		15'290				15'290
Norwegian Red Cross		68'905				68'905
Swedish Red Cross		33'500				33'500
Cash contributions (C1)		186'842				186'842
Reallocations (within appeal or from/to another appeal)						
Norwegian Red Cross		-7'167				-7'167
Reallocations (C2)		-7'167				-7'167
Inkind Goods & Transport						
Danish Red Cross		143'958				143'958
Inkind Goods & Transport (C3)		143'958				143'958
Other Income						
Miscellaneous Income		632				632
Other Income (C5)		632				632
Total Income (C) = SUM(C1..C5)		324'266				324'266
Total Funding (B + C)		324'266				324'266

**II. Balance of Funds**

	Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation	TOTAL
Opening Balance (B)		0				0
Income (C)		324'266				324'266
Expenditure (D)		-324'266				-324'266
Closing Balance (B + C + D)		0				0

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Year/Period	2004/1-2004/12
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**III. Budget Analysis / Breakdown of Expenditure**

Account Groups	Budget	Expenditure					TOTAL	Variance
		Health & Care	Disaster Management	Humanitarian Values	Organisational Development	Coordination & Implementation		
A		B					A - B	
<b>BUDGET (C)</b>		<b>413'048</b>					<b>413'048</b>	
<b>Supplies</b>								
Shelter	85'000		80'195			80'195	4'805	
Clothing & textiles	107'700		85'310			85'310	22'390	
Food	94'000		87'532			87'532	6'468	
Water & Sanitation	32'000						32'000	
Medical & First Aid	1'000						1'000	
Utensils & Tools	21'000		31'568			31'568	-10'568	
<b>Total Supplies</b>	<b>340'700</b>		<b>284'604</b>			<b>284'604</b>	<b>56'096</b>	
<b>Transport &amp; Storage</b>								
<b>Storage</b>								
Distribution & Monitoring			1'851			1'851	-1'851	
Transport & Vehicle Costs	20'000		11'886			11'886	8'114	
<b>Total Transport &amp; Storage</b>	<b>20'000</b>		<b>13'737</b>			<b>13'737</b>	<b>6'263</b>	
<b>Personnel Expenditures</b>								
Delegates Payroll	12'000						12'000	
Regionally Deployed Staff								
National Staff								
National Society Staff			2'925			2'453	1'575	
<b>Total Personnel Expenditures</b>	<b>16'500</b>		<b>2'925</b>			<b>2'925</b>	<b>13'575</b>	
<b>Workshops &amp; Training</b>								
Workshops & Training			279			279	-279	
<b>Total Workshops &amp; Training</b>			<b>279</b>			<b>279</b>	<b>-279</b>	
<b>General Expenditure</b>								
Travel	5'000		2'622			2'622	2'378	
Information & Public Relation								
Office Costs	4'000		200			200	3'800	
Communications								
Financial Charges								
<b>Total General Expenditure</b>	<b>9'000</b>		<b>2'822</b>			<b>2'822</b>	<b>6'178</b>	
<b>Program Support</b>								
Program Support	26'848		19'899			19'899	6'949	
<b>Total Program Support</b>	<b>26'848</b>		<b>19'899</b>			<b>19'899</b>	<b>6'949</b>	
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE (D)</b>	<b>413'048</b>		<b>324'266</b>			<b>324'266</b>	<b>88'782</b>	
<b>VARIANCE (C - D)</b>			<b>88'782</b>			<b>88'782</b>		