

Operations update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Myanmar: Cyclone Nargis

Emergency appeal n° MDRMM002
GLIDE n° [TC-2008-00057-MMR](#)
Operations update n° 17
20 June 2008

Period covered by this Update:

35 days since the revised emergency appeal was launched on 16 May 2008.

Appeal target:

CHF 52,857,809 (USD 50.8 million or EUR 32.7 million).

Appeal Coverage:

There continues to be a very generous response to the Cyclone Nargis appeal. With contributions received to date and those in the pipeline, the revised appeal is now nearly 96%¹ covered. A revised appeal is expected in the coming weeks and partners are requested to continue providing their excellent and much-appreciated support.

[<click here to link to the donor response list, or here to view contact details>](#)



For this family in Mawlamyinegyun in the Ayeyarwady delta, the roof no longer lets the rain pour through thanks to the Red Cross tarpaulin, but for many the mood remains sombre.
(Photo: John Sparrow/International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies)

¹ Including soft pledges

Appeal history:

- 16 May 2008: A revised emergency appeal was launched for CHF 52,857,809 (USD 50.8 million or EUR 32.7 million) to assist 100,000 families for three years.
- 6 May 2008: A preliminary emergency appeal was launched for CHF 6,290,909 (USD 5.9 million or EUR 3.86 million) for six months to assist 30,000 families.
- 5 May 2008: CHF 200,000 allocation from the International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF).

Summary:

To date, over 327,500 beneficiaries have received relief assistance from the Red Cross Red Crescent.

The four field teams with representatives from the International Federation and the French Red Cross who were granted access into the Ayeyarwady delta area last week have now returned. Updates on the operation and assessment of needs following these field trips continue to confirm that the significant damage caused by cyclone Nargis was confined to the central path of the cyclone. The damage includes saltwater contamination of water sources and rice plantations, heavy loss of livestock, and other sources of livelihood.

In many places, relief activities are being carried out with the support of various partners and the authorities. Various private organizations, UN agencies, and international non-governmental organizations are working to support the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS)/International Federation response. These collaborations include the coordination and delivery of small tractors and buffalo to the affected areas. Ongoing discussions with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) on the implementation of operations have led to clear cooperation in the areas of water and sanitation, and livelihood assessments with the Restoring Family Links programme being further enhanced.

Some restructuring of roles within the MRCS and with its partnerships has allowed the development of a unit focused on logistics. The establishment of this unit will allow the MRCS's disaster management division to concentrate on the relief and recovery aspects of the operation. New positions as well as replacement staff for some key divisions of the MRCS management structure continue to support the infrastructure development of the national society as it builds its capacity to respond over a sustained period.

Many partner national societies have already made contributions to the appeal: American Red Cross/American government, Australian Red Cross/Australian government, Austrian Red Cross, Belarusian Red Cross, Belgian Red Cross/Belgian government, British Red Cross/British government, Canadian Red Cross/Canadian government, Red Cross Society of China - Hong Kong branch and Macau branch, Cyprus Red Cross, Danish Red Cross/Danish government, Finnish Red Cross/ Finnish government, French Red Cross, German Red Cross, Hellenic Red Cross, Icelandic Red Cross, Irish Red Cross, Japanese Red Cross, Republic of Korea Red Cross, Kuwait Red Crescent, Luxembourg Red Cross/Luxembourg government, Malaysian Red Crescent, Monaco Red Cross, Netherlands Red Cross, New Zealand Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross/Norwegian government, Portuguese Red Cross, Qatar Red Crescent, Singapore Red Cross, Slovak Red Cross/Slovak government, Spanish Red Cross/Spanish government, Sri Lanka Red Cross, Swedish Red Cross/Swedish government, Swiss Red Cross, Taiwan Red Cross Organization, United Arab Emirates Red Crescent and Vietnam Red Cross Society. Contributions have also been received from the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Directorate General (ECHO), the Italian, Estonian and Slovenian governments, Total Oil Company and the Stavros Niarchos Foundation.

The International Federation, on behalf of the Myanmar Red Cross Society, would like to thank all partners for their very quick and generous response to this appeal.

The situation

Tropical cyclone Nargis struck the mid-south of Myanmar on 2 May. The scale of destruction and loss is massive with government figures listing 78,000 people dead and another 56,000 missing. The UN estimates that 2.4 million people are affected.

Red Cross Red Crescent action

Operations update

The four field teams comprising health, relief, logistics and management have returned from Bogale, Kyaiklat, Mawlamyinegyun and Pyapon in the Ayeyarwady delta area. The additional field assessments provided by these operational teams have been extremely valuable in helping the teams understand the needs of those affected and have provided an insight into the actions and achievements of MRCS representatives in the affected areas.

At township level, the MRCS representatives are being supported and encouraged in their use of any humanitarian coordination mechanism to report on activities and to help in the overall improvement of planning and targeting of the ongoing relief operations.

A logistics review comprising MRCS and International Federation logistics staff took place on 13 June where discussions focused on improving the flow of information between the field and headquarters. This is a further step in the move to further streamline the logistics operations, strengthen counterpart relationships and to continue building the capacity of the national society's structures.



Red Cross Red Crescent relief reaches the dockside of Mawlamyinegyun town in the Ayeyarwady delta. (Photo: John Sparrow/International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies)

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

The distribution of relief items continued over the past week to all major townships in the Ayeyarwady division and several others in the Yangon division. The priority for distribution of non-food items, remains clear.

While the present process and management of relief distributions are being maintained through records of relief items and beneficiaries, constant effort is being made to improve the process. Distribution records are being collected and the analysis of operational achievements at township level will commence. Movement and

distribution in surrounding areas, however, continue to remain a challenge with uncertain access to sufficient boats, land transport vehicles and fuel in the delta. *For a detailed list of relief items, click [here](#). Please note that data is not available for distribution operations conducted in the Bago, Mon and Kayin areas.*

Emergency shelter

Community tool kits and tarpaulins continue to be distributed to families and targeted households within village tracts through the volunteer network. Teams returning from the field report that much reconstruction and shelter repairs in many villages involve the use of plastic sheeting and other locally available material. In a recent distribution operation in Bogale, the MRCS and International Federation team noted on its return trip, that shelter materials distributed to the first village just hours earlier, had already been used to cover roof tops all over the village.

Emergency health and care

Approximately 80 Red Cross volunteers from the areas of Ayeyarwady and Yangon as well as S. Shan and Mon located outside the vicinity of the disaster, will undergo a day's training in Yangon before being deployed into the field. These volunteers will replace others leaving the field and will also provide support to the local MRCS branch in health, first aid, psychosocial support and relief distribution. This one-day briefing is organized by the MRCS training division, health division and volunteer unit representatives. Debriefing and a ceremony acknowledging the work for the out-going volunteers is also being discussed and planned with the MRCS.

Recruitment for branch health officers is ongoing with five now selected and undergoing briefing on their roles and responsibilities in the health operations in their respective areas in the field. Following this initial trip in the field, they will undergo a more comprehensive five-day training programme for branch health officers.

MRCS volunteers in townships are also intensifying community education for the prevention and control of dengue. The ICRC, WHO and UNICEF are contributing educational support materials for these activities and include health and hygiene information, education and communication materials.

The MRCS and the International Federation presented the community-based psychosocial training manual at the psychosocial support programme (PSP) cluster meeting. This manual was developed and pre-tested by the MRCS with assistance from the International Federation prior to Cyclone Nargis. The preparation of the manual also involved significant input and support from the University of Yangon's department of psychology.

Discussions on preparations for 'booster' Psychosocial (PSP) training for 20 staff and volunteers with MRCS counterparts are presently ongoing, and should be completed in the last week of June or early July. There is also a proposal from the IOM on a collaboration with the MRCS/International Federation on PSP training for MRCS volunteers, with additional support from the University of Yangon.

A health delegate returning from a five-day field trip to Kyaiklat township in the Ayeyarwady division, has reported that some medical facilities are up and running, but up to 19 rural health centres in the area have been damaged. Many of the village tracts have a mid-wife and trained traditional birth attendants. Some village tracts also have community-based first aid trainers but are lacking in first aid kits and other materials. The Myanmar Medical Association is supporting several medical teams working in the township. Some medical services are also being supported with mobile health clinics.

Water, sanitation and hygiene promotion

In Labutta, the French Red Cross has completed its installation of the water and sanitation emergency response unit which now produces 90 cubic metres of safe water a day. A 10 cubic metre bladder has been installed on a football field with tap stands serving over 2,000 internally displaced people. The task of distributing water to surrounding villages has been aided by UNICEF and the ministry of health.

The French Red Cross will also start discussions with the water, sanitation and hygiene cluster in Labutta on co-locating water from different production units for distribution to other villages. Another member of the French Red Cross will travel to the field this week to provide further support for the operation of the unit in Labutta, while a visit to Ngapudaw is also planned to assess the need for a water purification unit, pending approval for travel into the delta area.

The German/Austrian water and sanitation emergency response unit in Bogale is supported by two team members with technical expertise in engineering and in the regular operation of the installed units. One more unit has been installed in Satun village. The team has also provided training for seven engineers and technicians for



Health promotion is essential in the post-cyclone Ayeyarwady delta, says the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The use of polluted water for washing, cooking and drinking is one of the dangers that must be minimised through community health education. (Photo: John Sparrow/International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies)

water testing. This team is divided into three groups, one of which will remain in Bogale, and the other two will go to Labutta and Mawlamyinyun to conduct water testing. Together with MRCS volunteers, these teams will also begin assessments and the cleaning of ponds in villages.

The mobile safe water services provided by the Australian water purification unit continues to distribute water to four villages in Mawlamyinyun, operating from a boat. However, people are also able to collect and drink rain water.

The ICRC has installed the second water treatment unit in between Dedaye and Pyapon – it is currently servicing the needs of surrounding villages. Recent heavy rainfall in the area has made the demand for treated water significantly less than originally expected. Discussions on the need for a third water treatment unit to be deployed in the Pyapon township are currently ongoing. Assessments and confirmation of the need for this service are still to be ascertained.

Logistics

As of 18 June, a total of 1,200 tonnes of relief items have arrived in Yangon by air freight (charter and commercial). While the majority of incoming goods continues to arrive by commercial air freight, the first two consignments by sea freight have arrived at Yangon port and are undergoing customs clearance.

An analysis of the logistics pipeline was performed over the last week, the results of which were provided to the MRCS and the operation manager. These results will help in facilitating the monthly plan for distribution of relief items.

The four operational MRCS warehouses in Yangon are currently undergoing consolidation of goods where possible. Negotiations to secure an additional warehouse to relocate relief items have been

concluded successfully and the new warehouse is now operational. In Bogale, field assessments conducted by the International Federation logistics delegate confirmed the use of an inter-agency warehouse for the operations, and the use of basic stock management tools by MRCS volunteers in their work. A rubhall has been set up within the logistics cluster compound in Pyapon and will assist greatly in the storage of relief supplies.

Locally procured items over the past week included small generators and water pumps for the field. These small quantities continue to be integrated into MRCS processes as far as possible, with the assistance of the logistics delegates. The majority of required relief goods are still being obtained through the regional logistics unit based in Kuala Lumpur.

The ICRC has agreed to provide four vehicles for MRCS/International Federation field operations. These vehicles are a valuable addition and will remain in service as long as they are needed for the operations.

The International Federation wishes to emphasize that all Red Cross Red Crescent partners wishing to donate goods or provide vehicles for this operation should coordinate with its regional logistics unit in Kuala Lumpur. There are significant constraints and issues that need to be carefully coordinated. The importation of vehicles for

instance, is a very complex procedure that requires prior documentation and approval. Unsolicited goods can cause bottlenecks in logistics operations, so prior discussions are very important.

Coordination and partnerships

The Myanmar government has provided international non-governmental organizations, international organizations and the UN with guidelines when providing relief aid in response to Cyclone Nargis. These guidelines were developed by the government and include the Tripartite Core Group (TCG) which consists of high-level representatives of the Myanmar government, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the UN, as part of the approval processes. The general reaction is a concern that these guidelines are slowing down the relief process. The International Federation and other agencies are meeting with key stakeholders to discuss possible options for streamlining approvals.

The head of international operations at the Singapore Red Cross will arrive later this week following the recent meeting of South East Asian national societies in Kuala Lumpur. He will travel to the delta with the MRCS president and the International Federation's head of delegation. Whilst he is in Myanmar, a plan of action for his role to the MRCS president will be discussed and agreed upon.

Movement coordination meetings continue to be held in-country. Key issues include the modalities for how all programmes can be implemented through the MRCS hubs. The Japanese Red Cross bilateral delegate who provided needs planning support for relief distributions at township level, has completed his mission.

Three joint MRCS and ICRC field trips have resulted in some 9,000 people learning about the Restoring Family Links services offered by the MRCS. Nearly 400 *Safe/Well/Anxious for News* messages have been collected from the cyclone survivors. Registrations of unaccompanied and/or separated children continued during the field trips. MRCS volunteers undergoing Community-Based First Aid (CBFA) refresher training in Yangon have been trained in how to collect *Safe/Well/Anxious for News* messages. Efforts are underway to secure appropriate office space to enable the provision of *Restoring Family Links* services to members of the public who present themselves at the headquarters.

Inter-agency health kits sent by ICRC Geneva as part of the initial emergency response were distributed to three severely damaged Ministry of Health rural health centres in Dedaye Township during a joint MRCS/ICRC field trip. Tents were provided to two of these centres to enable the rapid resumption of activities. The Dedaye Township Hospital which did not sustain structural damage during the cyclone, has been provided with dressing and surgical kits, and surgical instruments.

Engagement with inter-agency clusters continues, especially the shelter cluster, in which the International Federation acts as a key player in terms of strategy and direction. The distinction between the roles and responsibilities of the delegation and those of the shelter cluster are clear and respected. Feedback from the delegation and shelter cluster delegates about the cooperation between the International Federation's delegation in Myanmar and the cluster has been very positive. The UN is planning to launch a revised Flash Appeal in early July.

Eight weeks after the disaster and following the Post Nargis Joint Assessment (PONJA) initiative, a meeting is being organised by ASEAN. According to ASEAN, it will be a chance "to assess its bearings and examine its aptitude as a regional outfit, as well as its posture in the global humanitarian arena. This will be an informal meeting in support of the ASEAN Humanitarian Task Force – one of four components of the ASEAN-led Coordinating Mechanism - and will be hosted by the Myanmar Government.

The meeting is also aimed at providing the Myanmar Government with PONJA's initial findings and recommendations from specific sectoral interventions. Approximately 30 MRCS volunteers from affected townships have been trained and deployed to assist with the Post Nargis Joint Assessment (PONJA) initiative for response recovery and reconstruction efforts, supported by ASEAN and the UN.

Participants of this meeting comprise the ASEAN Humanitarian Task Force, the Tripartite Core Group (TCG), invited experts from neighbouring countries, PONJA management and Yangon-based cluster group heads, as well as the International Federation who will be represented by the secretary-general of the Thai Red Cross. The secretary-general has been invited to attend the ASEAN Roundtable Meeting on Nargis. He will be supported by the International Federation's head of delegation, operation manager and Asia-Pacific Zone programme coordinator for International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles (IDRL).

Communications

Sustained media interest continues with international news agencies still reporting on the issues of access and the general situation seven weeks after the cyclone. The communications department in Geneva, with support from Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur, continue to provide updates to national societies on a regular basis. Updated stories, press releases and photos can be found at www.ifrc.org or www.flickr.com/ifrc.

How we work

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Disaster Relief and is committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The International Federation's activities are aligned with its Global Agenda, which sets out four broad goals to meet the Federation's mission to "improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity".

Global Agenda Goals:

- Reduce the numbers of deaths, injuries and impact from disasters.
- Reduce the number of deaths, illnesses and impact from diseases and public health emergencies.
- Increase local community, civil society and Red Cross Red Crescent capacity to address the most urgent situations of vulnerability.
- Reduce intolerance, discrimination and social exclusion and promote respect for diversity and human dignity.

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Total distribution of relief items by Red Cross Red Crescent up to 18 June

No	Items	Yangon	Ayeyarwady	Bago	Mon	Kayin	Total Distributed Qty.
WATER AND SANITATION							
1	Jerry Cans	6,807	54,687	-	-	-	61,494
2	Buckets	-	3,054	-	-	-	3,054
3	Purification tablets	139,400	298,000	-	-	-	437,400
4	Chlorine tablets	75,600	1,122,600	-	-	-	1,198,200
5	Water guard (bottles)	-	993	-	-	-	993
6	Latrines	-	-	-	-	-	-
7	Bottled Water (Liter)	20,660	22,385	-	-	-	43,045
FOOD							
8	Rice (kg)	29,450	30,000	-	-	-	59,450
9	Ovaltine	20,828	43,214	-	-	-	64,042
10	Corn Tins	600	5,700	-	-	-	6,300
11	Cooking oil (Litre)	-	3,080	-	-	-	3,080
12	Flour (kg)	-	1,500	-	-	-	1,500
13	Sugar (kg)	900	8,650	-	-	-	9,550
14	Ready-to-eat food	1,120	11,078	-	-	-	12,198
15	Noodles (packs)	6,945	23,410	-	-	-	30,355
16	Sardines (tins)	2,500	8,300	-	-	-	10,800
HEALTH							
17	First aid kits	-	14	-	-	-	14
18	Hygiene kits1	2,440	24,538	-	-	-	26,978
19	Mosquito nets	8,740	53,248	-	-	-	61,988
20	Oral rehydration salts (sachets)	5,700	90,800	-	-	-	96,500
21	Anti-bacterial soaps	32	-	-	-	-	32
22	Surgical spirit (Liter)	8	-	-	-	-	8
23	Alcohol swabs	700	-	-	-	-	700
24	Absorbent cotton wool (Kg)	13	-	-	-	-	13
25	Gauze (boxes)	511	-	-	-	-	511
26	Elastic bandages	120	-	-	-	-	120
27	Stretchers	8	66	-	-	-	74
28	Face Masks	250	3,050	-	-	-	3,300
29	Surgical gloves	300	1,900	-	-	-	2,200
30	Gloves	300	3,400	-	-	-	3,700
SHELTER							
31	Shelter Kit2	2,700	12,576	-	-	-	15,276
32	Tarpaulins	9,640	82,873	-	-	-	92,513
33	Plastic sheeting	-	-	-	-	-	-
34	Tents	-	-	-	-	-	-
NON-FOOD ITEMS							
35	Blankets	2,240	57,097	-	-	-	59,337
36	Sleeping bags	620	-	-	-	-	620
37	Sleeping mats	520	2,000	-	-	-	2,520

38	Torches	472	2,282	-	-	-	2,754
39	Batteries	1,888	5,096	-	-	-	6,984
40	Kitchen set3	3,420	20,106	-	-	-	23,526
41	Clothes (in bales)	4	12	-	-	-	16
42	Clothes (in pcs)	8,575	34,262	-	-	-	42,837
43	Raincoats	689	250	-	-	-	939
44	Boots	689	210	-	-	-	899
45	Slippers (pairs)	4,440	46,958	-	-	-	51,398
46	Shampoo	528	516	-	-	-	1,044
47	Soap	14,250	64,550	-	-	-	78,800
48	Emergency kit4	2,079	4,826	-	-	-	6,905
49	Family Kit5	230	1,291	-	318	-	1,839
50	Cooking pots	900	8,200	-	-	-	9,100
51	Plastic plates	1,300	4,500	-	-	-	5,800
52	Mug cups	2,400	4,500	-	-	-	6,900
53	Steel spoons	500	3,000	-	-	-	3,500
54	Towels	2,155	6,980	-	-	-	9,135
TOTAL NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES: 327,500							

This information does not capture all items distributed by local Red Cross branches without MRCS headquarters involvement or items distributed by other agencies using Red Cross Red Crescent structures.

1) One **hygiene kit** contains: Washing powder (3 kg), toilet paper (12 rolls), 5 soap, 5 toothpaste tubes (75 ml), 5 toothbrushes, shampoo (500 ml), 5 razors, and 8 hygiene pads.

2) One **shelter tool kit** contains a rope, hand saw, roofing nails, shovel, hoe, machete, tin snips, nails, tie wire, claw hammer and woven sack.

3) One **kitchen set** contains: Cooking pot, plates, mugs, spoons etc.

4) One **family kit** contains: Kitchen set, clothes for men/women, blanket, towels and soap.