

Myanmar: Floods

appeal no: 13
30 August 1997

***THIS APPEAL SEEKS CHF 1,015,000
IN CASH AND SERVICES
TO ASSIST 55,000 BENEFICIARIES FOR 6 MONTHS***

Summary

Extensive flooding along Myanmar's main rivers is affecting at least 360,000 people. The Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS), with Federation support, is preparing to launch a relief operation that will immediately assist 50,000 of the most vulnerable by providing basic relief supplies and then will help 1,000 families to rebuild their homes.

The Disaster

Monsoon rains in Myanmar in July and August have created flooding along the Ayeyarwaddy, Chindwin, Thanlwin, Thantwe, Sittaung and Yangon rivers and their tributaries. Over 360,000 people (70,000 families) are currently affected. At least 60,000 homes are under water.

In the hilly regions, flash floods and land slides swept away houses with considerable loss of property. In the low lying plains, villages and parts of towns remain submerged by flood waters which are very slow in retreating.

Transportation links have been destroyed, hampering delivery of relief. Thousands of acres of paddy land have been inundated and crops destroyed. People have lost their agricultural implements and much of their livestock.

Those affected are predominantly subsistence farmers and farm labourers. Their socio-economic base has been destroyed and it will be extremely difficult for them to rebuild their lives after the flood waters recede.

Local health authorities have expressed concern over the outbreak of water-related diseases such as dysentery and diarrhoea, since drinking water will be affected by the floods.

The Response so far

Government Action •

The Minister of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, accompanied by senior government officials, visited the flood affected areas and provided cash and material assistance (lungyis, blankets, cloth, cooking pots, bowls and bags of rice) to the flood-affected.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action •

The MRCS President, accompanied by the vice-president and other officials, travelled to Bago Division, one of the worst affected areas, on 23 August and distributed clothing and other relief materials received from Danish, Finnish and Republic of Korea National Red Cross Societies, plus Kyats 100,000. A similar cash and relief goods distribution was carried out in the Ayeyarwaddy Division on 26 August. Transportation of relief materials to other parts is hampered by the floods.

MRCS Branches have played a key role in rescuing and evacuating the affected people. Red Cross volunteers are collecting and distributing cooked food, donated by people unaffected by the floods, to those in temporary shelters. The first aid volunteers are playing a key role in monitoring and reporting health hazards such as diarrhoea and dysentery in the relief centres to the health authorities. RC volunteers have also been advising communities on safe drinking water sources.

Other Agencies' Action •

Various UN agencies have made cash contributions to the DHA appeal. Two assessment missions comprising of national officers of the UN Disaster management Team and representatives of World Vision International went to Bago and Ayeyarwaddy Divisions for on-site assessment.

The Intended Operation

The Myanmar Red Cross Society, with support from the International Federation -- which has advanced CHF 100,000 from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund -- is about to launch a relief operation for 50,000 people. It will immediately distribute an emergency food ration of rice, iodised salt, oil and canned food to 10,000 families and follow this up with a distribution of cooking utensils, jerry cans for storing potable water, lungyis, school uniforms and books, cloth sheeting and hurricane lamps.

In a second phase of the operation, because of the large scale damage to housing, 1,000 families will be provided with materials to construct bamboo-frame houses. A further 200 families from among the most vulnerable will receive all the materials needed to reconstruct their homes.

Assessment of Needs •

The MRCS, through its network of branches and field visits undertaken by National Headquarters staff, has determined that over 420,000 people have been affected by the flooding. The assessment reveals that those seriously affected will need basic food items for at least a month before they are able to return to their homes. In addition, the assessment shows, they will need a supply of cooking utensils, clothes, cloth sheeting, blankets, school uniforms and books, and construction materials to rebuild their houses.

Preliminary data collected by MRCS branches gives an indication of the scale of these floods:

Division/State	Townships	Villages	Houses damages	N° of households	Affected population
<i>Bago Division</i>	6.00	0.00	6,639.00	6,639.00	33,771.00
<i>Kachin State</i>	3.00	15.00	4,471.00	4,471.00	31,325.00
<i>Chin State</i>	1.00	20.00	822.00	822.00	4,125.00
<i>Sagaing Division</i>	4.00	87.00	16,957.00	16,957.00	121,714.00
<i>Shan State</i>	2.00	13.00	738.00	738.00	3,618.00
<i>Rakhine State</i>	4.00	132.00	10,397.00	10,397.00	42,120.00
<i>Ayeyarwaddy Division</i>	3.00	138.00	9,962.00	10,172.00	44,691.00
<i>Mon State</i>	3.00	22.00	10,210.00	10,427.00	60,250.00
<i>Kayin State</i>	5.00	53.00	13,289.00	14,010.00	74,422.00
<i>Yangon Division</i>	2.00	5.00	83.00	83.00	340.00
<i>Tanintharyi Division</i>	1.00	-	771.00	990.00	4,950.00
<i>Total</i>	34.00	385.00	74,339.00	75,706.00	421,326.00

MRCS intends to send another team of headquarters officials to make a final needs assessment. The Federation Regional Disaster Preparedness Delegate based in Kuala Lumpur is expected to assist in this assessment.

Immediate Needs •

Food, medicine, clothing, shelter.

Anticipated Later Needs •

Small scale rehabilitation assistance will be required. In this phase, which should follow immediately on the relief phase, the provision of housing packages to the most vulnerable victims is considered the most important.

Red Cross Objectives •

- To provide immediate emergency food rations to 50,000 persons (10,000 families) affected by the floods.
- To assist 1,000 families from among those who lost their homes by providing shelter and materials with which to reconstruct their homes.

National Society/Federation Plan of Action

Immediate Action •

MRCS will initiate a final assessment mission accompanied by the Federation Regional Disaster Preparedness Delegate based in Kuala Lumpur. It will also set in motion quotation and tender procedures for the local purchase of relief material and draw up a distribution plan.

Emergency Phase: *September - October 1997* •

Provision of emergency food rations to 10,000 families, together with cooking utensils, blankets, lungyis, cloth sheeting and school uniforms and books.

Phase Two: *November 1997 - Feb/March 1998* •

Provision of construction materials to 1,000 of the most vulnerable families to enable them to rebuild their houses.

Capacity of the National Society •

The MRCS Branches, together with their RC volunteers, have the experience and commitment to implement the planned relief and rehabilitation operation. A Disaster Response Team has already been established at the National Headquarters.

Present Capacity of the Federation in Myanmar •

The Federation Delegation in Myanmar is at present made up of a Federation Representative and two local staff. It is envisaged that a Relief Delegate from the region will be recruited for the period of the operation.

Evaluation •

Monitoring of the distributions will be carried out by the MRCS/Federation team. Situation Reports will be submitted to donors according to standard procedures.

Budget summary

See Annex 1 for details.

Conclusion

Nine of the 14 States and Divisions in Myanmar are affected by these floods and most of the people affected are from impoverished areas. The majority of those who will be assisted have lost all their possessions in the disaster. This appeal focuses on appropriate assistance to those worst affected among the most vulnerable and aims at helping them back to normal life.

Margareta Wahlström
Under Secretary General,
Disaster Response & Operations Coordination

George Weber
Secretary General

Acc. code	NEEDS IN CASH , KIND & SERVICES	FAMILIES	Rate in USD*	CHF
500	SUPPLIES			
520	Emergency food rations			
5229	Rice	10000	13	195000
5205	Cooking Oil	10000	2	30000
5203	Cooking Salt	10000	1	15000
510	Clothing			
5100	Blanket	10000	3	45000
5104	Child	30000	2	30000
5104	Male	10000	3	45000
5104	Female	10000	3	45000
5199	Shirt	30000	1.5	67500
5199	Longyi	30000	1.5	67500
5099	Cooking Utensils	1000	3	4500
5899	Housing Material	1000	100	150000
	Fluorescent Lamps	10000	12	180000
590	TRANSPORT AND STORAGE			
5941-2	Transport including monitoring			30000
5901-9	Storage			9000
605	PERSONNEL			
6050	Delegate costs: 2 Delegates/3 months			25000
6602	MRCS Staff			7500
7004-1	GENERAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES			7000
7004	Delegate Local/International Travel			1500
7100-7	MRCS Staff Local Travel			7500
7300	Information			1000
7400	Stationary and Office Supplies			3000
7909	Communications			1000
	Sundry			48000
	Secretariat Support			
	TOTAL			1,015,000. 0.00

(*Table rate :1 USD = 1.5 CHF)