

# DREF operation



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Myanmar: Tropical cyclone

GLIDE n° **TC-2008-000057-MMR**  
5 May 2008

The International Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent response to emergencies. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of national societies to respond to disasters.

*The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in 186 countries.*

**CHF 200,000 (USD 189,263 or EUR 122,683) has been allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Myanmar Red Cross Society in undertaking immediate assessments of affected areas and the distribution of relief items. Un-earmarked funds to repay DREF are encouraged.**

[<click here for contact details>](#)

[<click here to view the map of the affected areas>](#)

## The situation

Tropical cyclone Nargis made landfall as a category four (4) cyclone west-southwest of the city of Yangon, Myanmar at approximately 16:00 local time (12:00 UCT) on 2 May 2008. According to local sources, the cyclone with winds exceeding 190 km/hr ripped through the sprawling river delta city for more than ten hours from Friday night until Saturday noon, tearing off roofs, uprooting trees and destroying power lines.

Despite the cyclone reducing in strength while moving inland, reports indicate widespread wind damage to housing, vegetation and small scale infrastructure in its path. Power lines and telecommunication systems have also been badly affected.

At least 243 people are reported killed with figures expected to rise in the coming days and thousands of buildings have also been damaged, according to the state television service. BBC reports state officials have begun the distribution of food and oil. With debris blocking many of the roads and transport routes, it is difficult to obtain information on the true extent of the damage. Meanwhile, there are concerns with regard to access to safe drinking water, diesel and adequate food supplies.

Within Yangon itself, many homes are left without roofs while smaller less solidly constructed homes have been destroyed. A state of emergency has been declared in five regions: the city of Yangon, Ayeyarwady, Pegu and the states of Karen and Mon. All flights into Yangon have been cancelled until further notice.

Reports also indicate that 95 per cent of homes have been destroyed in villages along the south coast of the delta region. Among the seriously affected areas in the Ayeyarwady division are: Maubin, Nga Pu Baw,

Haing Gyi and Labutta. In the Yangon division, affected areas include Dahyan, Kawmu, Yankin, Shwedidah, Hlai Ngtaya and Daw Bin.

Immediate needs include shelter in the form of plastic sheeting, non-food items such as mosquito nets, cooking sets and emergency health kits. There is also concern around the future of crop production and employment opportunities to support the affected communities in rebuilding after the cyclone.

The government has established an emergency committee headed by the prime minister. At present, the five central and southern regions of Yangon, Ayeyarwady, Bago, Mon and Kayin states have been declared disaster areas. Authorities maintain that military and police units have been deployed for rescue, rehabilitation and clean-up operations in Yangon.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

The Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) together with the International Federation have been carrying out assessments in Yangon since Sunday afternoon. Assessments continue this Monday morning with a total of two teams deployed.

A DREF allocation of CHF 200,000 has been released by the International Federation to support the national society in this undertaking as well as in the distribution of household items and emergency shelters. The International Federation is currently working together with local authorities, local organizations and the international community to ensure the coordination of action. The ICRC in-country and from Geneva is also working together with the MRCS and the International Federation, and to date, has offered assistance in the form of four vehicles and drivers.

### The proposed operation

The MRCS warehouse in Yangon has sustained some damage, but its supplies are still usable. Pre-positioned stocks are also available from the national society's warehouses in the Bagon division, Mon state. The MRCS network covers the country with key branches in the most affected areas. Its own human resources include 17,800 first aid staff, 46 people who can provide psychosocial support (PSP), 95 people with water safety skills such as lifesaving, and 1,230 members under the disaster action response team (DART) trained in assessment and relief activities.

Monday, 5 May 2008, 8.00 a.m. local time sees three MRCS assessment teams deployed to the respective areas perceived to be most affected: the Ayeyarwady division, the Bago division and Karin. These teams will also take water purification tablets for distribution.

### Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)

The MRCS is making arrangements for trucks to transport approximately 2,000 family kits in Yangon. These kits include: shirts and trousers for men and boys, blouses and skirts for women and girls, *longgyi* for both men and women, blankets, mosquito nets, towels, plastic sheeting, soap for personal use and washing, two aluminium cooking pots, mugs, plates and spoons. The national society also has a further 2,200 family kits pre-positioned in branches across the country which they will also access.

Five thousand litres of drinking water has been mobilized for distribution to schools and pagodas which are presently housing people who have been displaced by the cyclone.

The regional logistics unit in Kuala Lumpur has pre-positioned stock in store including shelter kits, tarpaulins, blankets, mosquito nets, jerry cans and kitchen sets on stand-by to send to Myanmar by sea or air should these be requested.

Discussions between the MRCS and the International Federation are ongoing concerning immediate and future support needed, depending on results of assessments currently being undertaken.

## 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.

## Contact information

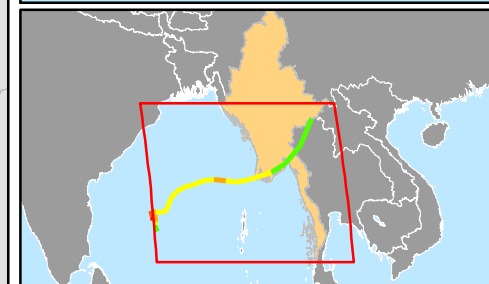
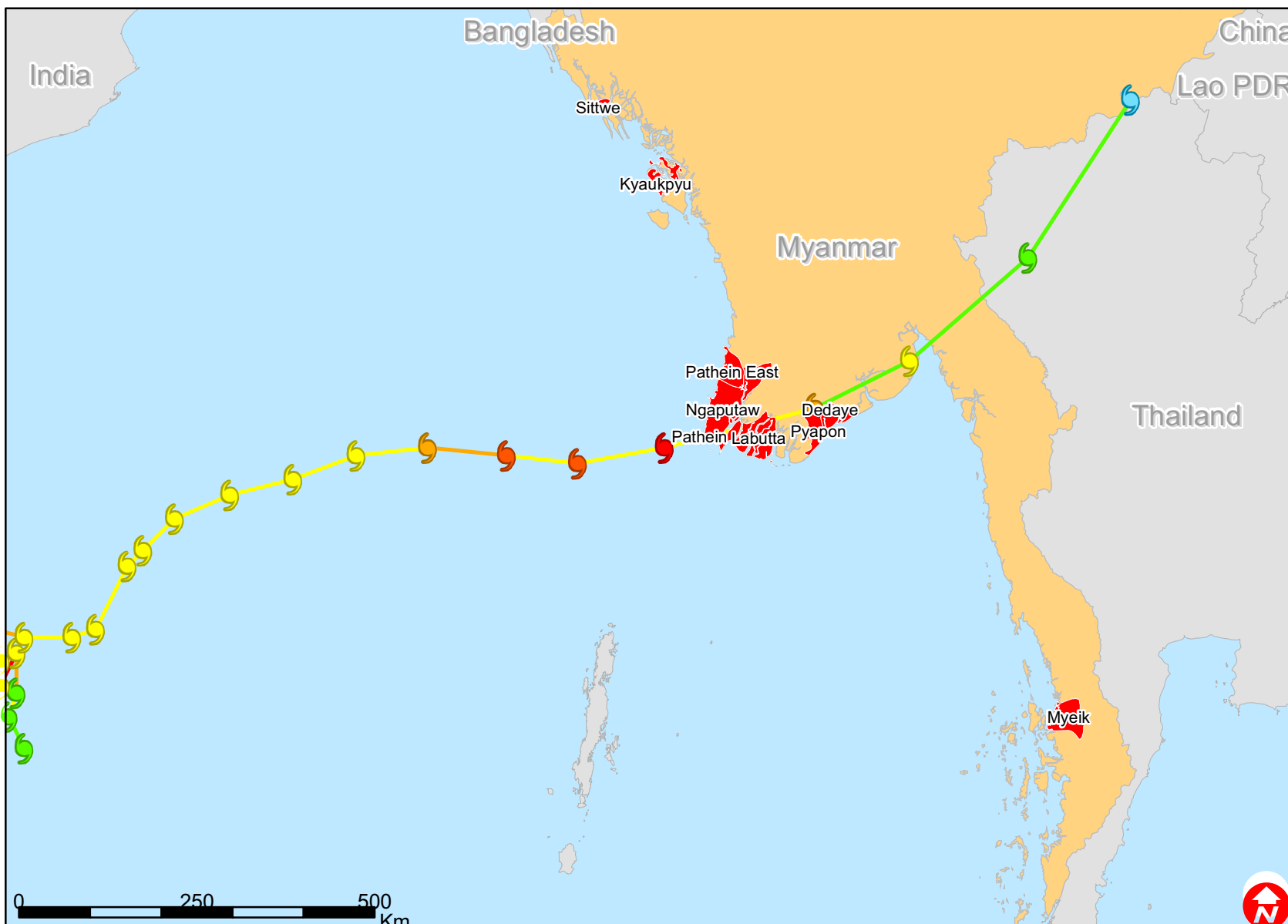
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- Affected areas
- CYCLONE-1
- CYCLONE-2
- CYCLONE-3
- CYCLONE-4
- TROPICAL DEPRESSION
- TROPICAL STORM