



**Cyclone Nargis
Myanmar
OCHA Situation Report No. 2
5 May 2008**

This situation report is based on information received from the UN Resident Coordinator's Office, Myanmar, UN agencies, regional humanitarian partners and media sources.

I. SITUATION IN MYANMAR

1. Cyclone Nargis struck Myanmar on 2 and 3 May 2008, sweeping through the Ayeyarwady (Irrawaddy) delta region and the country's largest city, Yangon. The authorities have declared five states and divisions (Yangon, Ayeyarwady, Bago, Mon and Kayin) to be disaster areas. Yangon sustained a direct hit, which downed power and communications lines, and inflicted major damage to buildings in the city. Many roads are blocked either by flooding or fallen debris. Damage was most severe in the delta region, where the effects of extreme winds were compounded by a sizable storm surge. The Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Social Welfare, Relief and Rehabilitation and Information noted in a briefing this evening that up to 10,000 people are expected to be dead, with 3,000 more missing in Ayeyarwady Division alone. State media have reported that in Haing Ky, an island in the delta, 162 were killed and nearly 20,000 houses were destroyed, leaving 92,706 homeless. Several hundred thousand are estimated to be without shelter and safe drinking water.
2. Efforts to carry out a comprehensive assessment continue to be hindered by the lack of communications and blocked roads, however. The Government has announced that military and police units have been deployed as part of rescue and cleanup operations. It has also established an Emergency Committee, headed by the Prime Minister.
3. The number of people in need of assistance is expected to be considerable. The combined total population of the declared disaster areas is around 24 million. Roughly 6 million live in Yangon and a significant population is spread across the delta region. The UNCT still expects that critical needs will be plastic sheeting, water purification tablets, cooking sets, mosquito nets, emergency health kits and food. Fuel shortages have also been reported. The food security situation in the country, which was already severe, is likely to become more acute.
4. The Government indicated in a briefing with UN agencies and the diplomatic community this evening that it is open to international assistance, although it would appear at this stage that the assistance envisaged is primarily bilateral, with assistance going directly to Government relief agencies. The Government itself has pledged approximately USD 5 million for relief.

II. SITUATION IN THAILAND

5. The Government of Thailand has reported that five districts in Tak Province along the Thailand-Myanmar border have encountered severe flooding conditions from continuous heavy rain. More than 100 households have been inundated and over 1,000 people have been left homeless. Damage is also reported to roads in the affected areas.

III. NATIONAL RESPONSE IN MYANMAR

6. There is limited information on relief measures taken by the government beyond reports in state media that police and military have been deployed for rescue and cleanup operations. The Government is now providing more detailed figures on the impact of the cyclone.

IV. INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE IN MYANMAR

Coordinated In-Country Response

7. The IASC Country Team met this morning to share information, and agreed to activate clusters in the following sectors:

Sector	Lead
Water/Sanitation	UNICEF
Health	WHO
Shelter	UNHCR
Logistics	WFP
Telecommunications	TBC
Early Recovery	UNDP
Education	UNICEF
Protection	UNICEF

8. FAO has also offered to lead on agriculture, but will most likely assist on food security during the initial phases. It is hoped that the cluster approach will facilitate the preparation of a Flash Appeal, should such an appeal be launched. The IASC Country Team has carried out initial preparedness and coordination activities involving clusters already.
9. The UNDAC system has been activated. Potential members of a team to provide support to the IASC CT are gathering in Bangkok Monday evening, with the final person arriving Tuesday morning. The team is awaiting further information on visas.
10. The possibility of expedited customs and visa procedures for relief stocks and personnel has been raised with the authorities, though there are as yet no clear answers about the Government's openness to such measures.
11. The United Nations is also prepared to make available a grant from the Central Emergency Response Fund in the event that it is needed.

Updates from Regional Cluster Leads

12. A meeting for regional IASC partners was hosted by OCHA ROAP this morning, and provided an opportunity to share information on the cyclone's impact, concerns, and lead agencies' preparedness to carry out their roles.
13. IOM is well represented in Mon State, and in a good position to distribute medical and non-food supplies in that area. WFP has 500 metric tonnes of food in place in the country and is looking at moving further supplies from outside.
14. USD 189,263 has been allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund to support the MRCS in undertaking immediate assessments of affected areas and the distribution of relief items. Water purification and family kits have been released in-country. MRCS assessment teams were deployed at 08:00 local time this morning. IFRC is also considering issuing an emergency appeal, and FACT and RDRT have been alerted. Its regional logistics unit in Kuala Lumpur has pre-positioned stocks in store, which are on standby to send to Myanmar by sea or air, should they be requested.

15. Visas have been flagged as a concern by a number of regional partners. This issue has been taken up with the Permanent Mission of Myanmar in New York, the Embassy in Bangkok and by the acting RC/HC in his discussions with the Government in-country.
16. Obtaining information on the geographical impact of the storm and on populations affected has been a major challenge. Assessment data collected from ground surveys will be essential, and a key issue will be how to consolidate information from field teams. The Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU) was set up last year and has established geographical data standards and common lists of names of villages etc. A 3W database is online, and ready to be populated with information. Possible deployment of IM staff, and equipment, including from OCHA FIS has been discussed as a means of building the capacity of the MIMU.

Update on bilateral/ASEAN assistance

17. The Secretary-General of ASEAN has called on Member States to provide urgent relief assistance to victims of the cyclone. ASEAN has not received a request for assistance from the Government of Myanmar itself. ASEAN focal points have been told to be on high alert and the Secretariat has proposed activation of the ASEAN SASOPs. ASEAN focal points in Singapore and the Philippines are on standby for deployment as part of the proposed UNDAC team.
18. In today's briefing in Yangon, the Myanmar authorities said that Thailand is sending a C130 with emergency supplies. The plane is due to fly into Myanmar tomorrow (6 May). The shipment has been reported in international media as containing food, medical supplies and construction equipment.

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