

### Highlights

- Communities have spent the day cleaning up and counting the cost of Extremely Severe Cyclone Mocha that smashed Myanmar's western states and regions on Sunday and continues to bring heavy rain in some areas as a depression.
- Mocha was one of the strongest cyclones ever to hit the country and has left a trail of devastation, particularly in the state capital, Sittwe.
- Few houses have escaped damage in Sittwe and there is widespread destruction of flimsy bamboo longhouses in displacement camps.
- Health, relief items, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene needs are already being reported. Explosive ordnance risks are high in conflict-affected rural areas where landmines may have been shifted during flooding and where people have been on the move to safer areas.
- Communications with partners on the ground was partially restored during the day but still remains limited after extensive damage to telecommunications towers. Water and power services have been badly interrupted all day with generators now the primary source of electricity for most people due to downed lines.
- Humanitarian partners are working to start rapid needs assessments (RNAs) in the field on 16 May to confirm the magnitude of impact from the cyclone and the immediate assistance that is required. A priority will be assessing the damage in the following locations: Sittwe, Pauktaw, Rathedaung, Maungdaw, Ponnagyun, Kyauktaw.
- Early reports have also started coming in of widespread flooding and needs in the Northwest – an area that is also heavily conflict-affected.
- An urgent injection of funds is desperately needed to facilitate a full-scale response to the impact of the cyclone and subsequent flooding. To date, the [US\\$764M Humanitarian Response Plan \(HRP\)](#) is only 10 per cent funded.



Flooded street after Cyclone Mocha. Sittwe, Rakhine. Credit: OCHA



Uprooted tree on the street after Cyclone Mocha. Sittwe, Rakhine. OCHA



## Situation Overview

The Extremely Severe Cyclone Mocha crossed the coast between Cox's Bazar in Bangladesh and Kyaukpyu township, near Rakhine's capital of Sittwe in Myanmar at lunchtime on 14 May. Winds were estimated as high as 250 kmph. Communications with teams on the ground are still limited but early reports suggest the damage is significant, particularly in Rakhine, and that needs across all communities will be high. Extremely strong winds brought down power lines, uprooted trees, and damaged and destroyed houses. Storm surge knocked out bridges and inundated homes. In Sittwe, most housing is thought to have been damaged in some way and many flimsy long houses in IDP camps have been destroyed.



Two children walk through damaged Thae Chaung Camp. Sittwe, Rakhine. OCHA

In addition to immediate NFI, shelter, and WASH needs, the affected population will require prompt emergency healthcare, including lifesaving and trauma care and continuous primary healthcare services (maternal and child healthcare and non-communicable diseases care). Psychosocial First Aid for affected people after the disaster is also critical. The potential for communicable disease outbreaks in affected areas is high, requiring close monitoring. Moreover, landmines and other explosive remnants of war pose risks to communities moving to safer areas or returning home. The ongoing flooding and landslides can dislodge or carry the devices to locations previously deemed safe.

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## Rakhine

- On 15 May, the Rakhine State de facto authorities under Section 11 of the National Disaster Management Act declared all 17 townships in Rakhine to have been affected by the cyclone.
- Affected communities have spent the day cleaning up the debris strewn across the area, especially in Sittwe which took a direct hit from the cyclone on Sunday.
- Houses across Sittwe and other towns in Rakhine have lost roofs, walls and sheeting. Displacement camps and sites are particularly badly damaged.
- Based on field staff observations in Sittwe, shelter and WASH assistance are priority needs across all communities. One partner reported significant damage to latrines and shelter in IDP sites in Kyauktaw and Ponnagyun townships.

There are unconfirmed reports of people missing in some IDP camps in Sittwe township, including Basara, Dar Pai, and Thae Chaung IDP camp, which flooded heavily due to proximity to the coast. Three bridges near Dar Pai, Thae Chaung, and Thet Kae Pyin IDP camps have collapsed. Fishing boats were also smashed together during the cyclone.

- Some of the IDPs are still staying in cyclone shelters near the camps, with some reports of injuries and needs for medical treatment. Those staying in temporary shelters, such as schools, require assistance.

- Movement is challenging and debris clearance is ongoing. Heavy traffic was reported during the day due to large numbers of people returning to their Sittwe homes from inland areas, combined with debris on the roads. Local fire brigades and charity groups/volunteers were seen clearing streets in Maungdaw, Mrauk-U, and Sittwe townships.



A bridge to Thae Chaung IDP camp that was destroyed by Cyclone Mocha. Sittwe, Rakhine. Credit: OCHA



- Many people remain in evacuation shelters, although there are reports that families have started to return to their homes to assess the damage, including some 6,000 people in Mrauk-U who had been evacuated on 14 May. The Thein Nyo displacement site hosting around 2,860 IDPs in Mrauk-U was reportedly destroyed, along with 80 houses in the host community, according to local media reports. This is to be confirmed.
- The Mytel phone network is reportedly working intermittently in Kyauktaw township, and reports from there indicate significant damage. Local media reported near total damage to some 260 houses in Oke Kyut village in Kyauktaw township. Also in Kyauktaw, 2 school buildings providing free education to more than 600 students were reportedly destroyed by the cyclone. This damage is to be confirmed.
- In Minbya township, around 40 houses in Tha Yet Oke village were destroyed, according to local media.
- Township authorities have reportedly been deployed to assess initial damage in villages in Rakhine.
- Limited information has been received from the northern townships of Buthidaung and Maungdaw due to telecoms being down, where more than half of the shelters are either temporary or semi-permanent, placing households at very high risk in case they were not able to reach evacuation centres. A major clean-up operation was underway in Maungdaw during the day according to partners, as the community attempted to clear fallen trees that were blocking roads. There are no reports of flooding the Maungdaw downtown area but the situation in the countryside is not yet known.
- In Ponnagyun, the OCHA field team observed that most houses were collapsed and damaged in Kun Taung, Pa Day Thar, Sin Inn Gyi, and Ywar Thar Yar, including heavy damage to roofs. So far, there have been no reports of death or injuries there by local communities.



*Damaged shelters in Dar Pai IDP camp. Sittwe, Rakhine. OCHA*

### **Magway, Chin and Sagaing**

- Continuous heavy rain has caused the Ayeyarwady River to overflow and flood townships in Magway. There are concerns that flood warning messages may not have reached all townships.
- Local authorities reportedly evacuated people from low-lying areas around Pauk and Pakokku townships and are providing them with food and shelter at designated evacuation sites in monasteries and other public infrastructure. Some 1,200 households in Pakokku were reportedly affected by the cyclone, and people need food, shelter reconstruction and agricultural support. In Pauk township, 1,400 households have been affected. Urgent needs include food, clothing, and tarpaulins, according to local partners.
- In Saw township, local partners reported that houses and other infrastructure were damaged or destroyed by the cyclone, including a dam, and that agricultural land and equipment was washed/blown away. Animals are gone. About 600 households are affected. Tarpaulins and food are the most urgent needs being reported by partners, followed by livelihoods and agriculture activities and infrastructure repair.
- The situation in Myaing township is reportedly similar to Saw, according to a partner, and about 80 households need food.
- One partner reported four villages near Myit Chay township were damaged by flooding, and that households need assistance, particularly NFIs. A local partner based in the area is preparing to conduct a rapid needs assessment.
- According to local media, some 100 people, including elderly people, from 20 villages around Kyun Yin village in Salin township are reportedly unable to evacuate to higher ground due to their remote location along ravines near the Salin River. The Red Cross is assisting community members from the 20 villages affected by flooding in Salin township.

- An IDP camp hosting some 3,000 people in Pauk was destroyed by the storm, according to local media. Food and snake bite anti-venom were reported as urgent needs.
- In Pakokku in Magway, a partner is providing food assistance to 600 people from Sin Pauk Hla village who were affected by the cyclone and plans to begin an assessment there shortly.
- In Magway and Sagaing, there are reports of communities being displaced by conflict as the cyclone approached. According to partners on the ground, more than 23,000 people from Kani, Khin-U, and Monywa townships of Sagaing were displaced by conflict on 14 May, leaving them extremely vulnerable in the aftermath of the cyclone. Food assistance, shelter, and WASH are reportedly urgently needed. Conflict is also affecting the ability to conduct needs assessments of cyclone-affected communities in Magway.
- Humanitarian organizations and local authorities in Chin are struggling to get details of damage due to interruptions to telecoms networks but ahead of the storm they reported that the areas that are most vulnerable to flooding and landslides due to the heavy rain are Kanpetlet, Mindat, Matupi, Paletwa, Thantlang, and Hakha townships. Evacuations were carried out prior to the cyclone in Matupi, Mindat and Hakha townships. Possible structural damage to schools, homes and fields has been reported by partners in Chin. Shelter support is understood to be a top priority. Discussions are underway about possible scale-up of humanitarian support to affected people. The road between Kale (Sagaing) and Hakha (Chin) is understood to be accessible. One organization reported that cash-based support has already been provided through community-based church groups.

## Coordination

Humanitarian partners have spent the day trying to confirm all staff are safe and get offices back up and running. UN buildings, including warehouses, have also suffered damage. OCHA continues to gather information and convened coordination meetings at the sub-national and national level today to kick-start the response to all communities. OCHA and its humanitarian partners are working to prepare for rapid needs assessments (RNAs) which it is hoped can begin on 16 May to confirm the impact of the cyclone and people's needs. Access requests for assessments have been pre-submitted and hundreds of trained partners are standing by, ready to deploy across the affected areas once given access. While travel authorizations (TAs) are still needed and advocacy continues for flexibility around the related requirements, as well as urgent customs clearances for supplies.



*Damaged shelters in Thae Chaung camp. Sittwe, Rakhine. Credit: OCHA*

As of 15 May, the airport in Sittwe remains closed and commercial flights have been cancelled tomorrow morning. Several banks are expected to re-open tomorrow in Sittwe.

Funding is critically needed to sustain the response across all clusters for cyclone Mocha. The 2023 HRP is less than 10 per cent funded and a significant injection of resources is urgently required to support a disaster response operation of this scale. Health, NFIs, shelter, and water, sanitation and hygiene support are emerging as immediate priorities and humanitarians are working to quickly mobilize funds for these sectors.

**Information in this update is based on inputs from humanitarian partners and local sources. The next update on the cyclone response will be issued on 16 May.**

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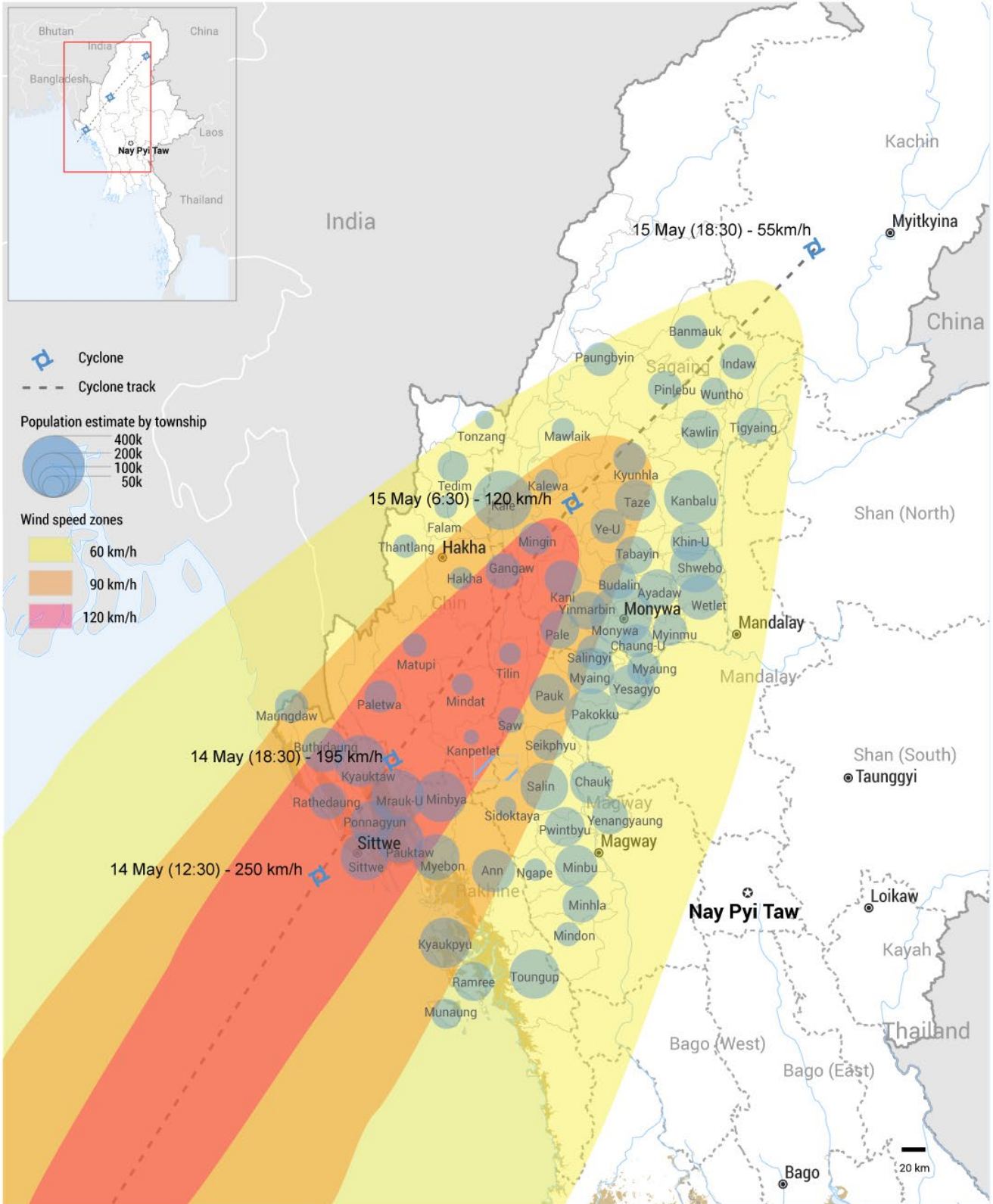




# MYANMAR

## Cyclone Mocha

As of 15 May 2023



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