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Myanmar Office

CYCLONE MOCHA

Humanitarian Situation

Report No.3

Date: 16 May 2023

Highlights

- Information on the impact of the cyclone in Myanmar is gradually becoming available, confirming significant levels of destruction in the locations where the cyclone has passed.
- In Rakhine, initial reports indicate major damage to shelters, latrines (structures, flooding in some camps) and contamination of water sources (though hand pumps are functioning). Health services are reported to be non-functioning and the hospital which serves the camps has been badly damaged. Taing Nyo IDP site in Mrauk-U, one of the largest, is reported to be seriously affected.
- In the Northwest, heavy damage has been reported in Magway and Sagaing, as well as in Chin, Bago and Ayeyarwaddy
- UNICEF, in coordination with OCHA and other humanitarian organisations, is still working to assess the situation and needs on the ground. Clearance for rapid needs assessments in the field is still pending approval of Travel authorisation.
- The UNICEF funding situation is critical: to date the Myanmar 2023 Humanitarian Action for Children (HAC) appeal for USD 169.6 million is only 11.8 per cent funded.

Situation in Numbers



16 million people

potentially exposed to Cyclone Mocha, including over 1.2 million already internally displaced (UNOSAT/UNITAR, 13 May 2023)



5.6 million children

potentially exposed to Cyclone Mocha



8 States/Regions

potentially cyclone-affected: Rakhine, Sagaing, Magway, Mandalay, Ayeyarwady, Chin, Bago and Naypyitaw (UNOSAT/UNITAR, 13 May 2023)

Situation Overview & Humanitarian Needs

As information is beginning to reach the humanitarian community, emerging priority needs are for shelter, drinking water, latrine reconstruction / repair, and food due to the limited functionality of markets.

In the Northwest, an estimated 22,209 people from 34 villages in 2 townships of Sagaing, and 2,462 people from 2 townships of Magway have been evacuated /relocated.

Massive damages are reported in Magway and Sagaing, as well as in Chin, Bago and Ayeyarwaddy. In the northern areas of Magway and Sagaing, electricity has been intermittent since Monday 14 May and around 3,676 houses partially or fully damaged in 98 villages in Magway region due to flash flooding and heavy rains. Drinking water is reported as a critical issue in downtown Sittwe, as due to the electricity cuts the municipal water supply is not operating. The roofs of 724 houses, 9 schools and 10 churches were reported to have blown off and be partially or fully damaged due to strong winds in Chin state.

In northern Rakhine state, Maungdaw, electricity and telecommunication are not yet restored. A number of casualties were reported due to damage/collapse of temporary buildings. Some initial reports indicate that significant damage has been incurred in all the Sittwe camps, with shelters and latrines damaged . UNICEF Field Office team has been communicating with partners and collecting information on the areas and numbers of people affected by the cyclone. Passenger ferries / boats began arriving in Sittwe this morning from Mrauk U. Telecommunication across Rakhine remains a challenge due to the severe damage to the main telecoms tower during the cyclone. UNICEF partner reported

that: in Mrauk-U 25-40% building were damaged; one whole village – Nge Swal destroyed with no place for people to take shelter.

Sittwe airport remains closed for commercial flights. The road between Mrauk U and Sittwe is operational for vehicles but not trucks (according to UNDSS). Opening the road from Yangon to Sittwe is being prioritized by authorities. The status of road conditions from Yangon to Mrauk U are still to be confirmed. The jetty area in Sittwe has some damage, but the is partially open and movement by boat is possible.

The UNICEF office in Sittwe suffered some additional rain damage overnight due to broken windows. UNICEF staff will work from the OCHA office as an interim measure while a temporary office is being identified. Cleaning and moving of supplies from the damaged should be completed on 17 May. UNICEF stocks in the Maungdaw warehouse are in good condition.

UNICEF Preparedness and Response

UNICEF has a presence in Sittwe and in Maungdaw in Rakhine State, with 32 staff working to meet the needs of children in the State. For the Northwest (NW), the response is coordinated from Hakka and Yangon with 9 staffs.

PREPARDNESS

In anticipation of the projected impact, UNICEF has been implementing several preparedness actions:

- UNICEF has been coordinating closely with implementing partners to activate contingency clauses within existing partnership arrangements. These agreements cover response actions in WASH, CP, Education, Health and Nutrition.
- UNICEF has pre-positioned critical supplies in Rakhine State for WASH (including 5,000 hygiene kits, 32,000 soaps, water filters, water tanks, latrines and handwashing stations), Child Protection (2,000 kits), and Education (Essential Learning Package kits).
- UNICEF has pre-positioned critical supplies in the Northwest to cover 100,000 people for WASH and other services such as Child Protection, Health and Nutrition.
- Additional essential items are on their way to the UNICEF warehouses, including: 2,000 Child Protection kits, 8,220 ELP Kits, 1,900 roofing sheets (for Sittwe); and 3,000 ELP Kits and 500 roofing sheets (for Maungdaw).
- A deployment plan for in-country surge support to affected locations has been prepared, covering cluster coordination, programmes and operations.

RESPONSE

WASH

Although communication with partners in Rakhine needs to be restored to understand the full extent of the damage, WASH assistance is already emerging as the priority across all communities, as significant damage is reported to water supplies and sanitation infrastructure, including latrines. Procurement of additional life-saving WASH supplies (to supplement contingency stocks), including water purification chemicals and hygiene kits has been initiated.

WASH Cluster

The WASH cluster has been conducting a series of coordination meetings at both national and sub-national level to review and update the partners' capacity mapping, stock taking and updating/ sharing the WASH Cluster emergency capacity snapshot. The WASH cluster is also working on the first reserved allocation of Myanmar Humanitarian Fund (MHF), which is proposed only for WASH, Health, Shelter and NFIs. Partners, including local CSOs, have been invited to apply for procurement of supplies and cash interventions. Contingency stocks have been prepositioned by WASH partners in Rakhine: with 20,000 Hygiene promotion materials, capacity to cover 12,000 households (HH) with hygiene items, water filters to cover 750 HH, and water treatment for 90 days for 8,000 HHs. The main challenge remains lack of communication with WASH partners, with the exception of a few partners who are operating from OCHA office in Rakhine.

Health and Nutrition

Pending the results of the rapid needs assessment (RNA) to be led by UN OCHA, UNICEF team continues to assess the level of stocks, as well as the capacity of implementing partners on the ground to provide a vital package on health and nutrition interventions. Preliminary analysis reveals an alarming situation, especially for nutritional supplies which are no longer visible in warehouses at all levels. It is necessary to accelerate the distribution of existing stocks in the country, as well as to distribute them in the priority areas as soon as possible. Additional resources are also needed urgently to replenish stocks in UNICEF warehouses. UNICEF continues to work with the health cluster coordination in finalizing a response strategy document which will be critical for resource mobilization.

Nutrition Cluster

The Nutrition cluster intensified preparedness for the Cyclone with prepositioning of supplies completed in Rakhine and the Northwest. Out of 1,639 cartons prepositioned in Rakhine, 80 percent are pre-positioned in Sittwe, 15 percent in Bathidaung and the rest in other strategic townships.

At the national level, the Nutrition Cluster's Infant and Young Child Feeding and Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IYCF/IMAM) technical working group has begun drafting a joint statement on Breast Milk Substitutes (BMS) to mitigate the impact on optimal IYCF practices during the emergency. The joint statement is expected to be released on 17 May. To further complement the statement, an assessment will be made of the BMS needs to facilitate requesting urgent support from UNICEF Headquarters as necessary.

Finally, the Cluster is supporting sub-national Nutrition Cluster rapid needs assessment in both Rakhine and the Northwest from the 16 May. As soon as the needs on the ground are established, more efforts will be put in advocating for resources and drafting a Cyclone Mocha addendum plan to the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan.

Child Protection

The child protection response is gradually being scaled up in response to the impacts of Cyclone Mocha on vulnerable communities in Rakhine and NW. UNICEF is conducting widespread Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) messaging on 'caring for children during adverse situations' using social media platforms, and is delivering critical explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) messages on the risks of landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) that could migrate as a result of the cyclone; and is providing information for children and families on how to prevent separation. A series of capacity building activities are underway for child protection agencies in Rakhine and the NW on how to deliver psychological first aid to affected children and families.

The family tracing and reunification (FTR) mechanism for Rakhine and NW was activated, UNICEF and partners will set up "lost child and caregiver help desks" for rapid reunification as part of the emergency response in the first 72 hours. Contextualized FTR guidance, as well as unaccompanied and separated children (UASC) guidance was widely disseminated and shared with FTR and non-FTR partners

Child Protection AoR

For Rakhine and NW, UNICEF as the co-lead of the CP sub-national AoRs has convened partners to develop and activate the preparedness and response plan. The plan involves coordination between various stakeholders, including humanitarian organizations, and communities, to ensure that children's needs are prioritized and that they receive adequate support and protection throughout the emergency. The plan also focus on building the resilience of children and their families, ensuring their long-term recovery and well-being. The plan involves over 24 local NGOs and CBOs that will support the delivery of critical child protection services, including non-food items (NFIs) and FTR through case management processes, Psychosocial First aid, and messaging around the risks of separation of children from their families.

To further accelerate the response in the next days, UNICEF is supporting the national level CP AoR in the roll out of a National Emergency capacity mapping survey to map the stock and human resource capacity, and to assess the capacity of the available child protection workforce, to deliver response services in hard hit areas. In addition, the CP AoR is building a dashboard to visualize and take stock of the progress.

Mine Action AoR

Warning messages and a poster have been prepared by MA AoR to be disseminated by partners, and they are intended to alert impacted populations to the possibility of landmine migration. Flooding is a common occurrence caused by severe cyclones. If flooding occurs in places that are contaminated with landmines, this could result in the migration of landmines, turning formerly safe areas into locations that pose a threat to people's safety. Communities are being encouraged not to touch anything suspicious and are requested to report any potentially hazardous items that they come across.

Education

Cyclone Mocha came at a time when schools are on break. UNICEF had been working with implementing partners to already pre-positioned roofing sheets and Essential Learning Package kits for Rakhine and Northwest and with implementing partners. In addition, UNICEF is re-directing such supplies that had been allocated to other parts of the country to the Cyclone affected regions.

Social Behaviour Change (SBC), Accountability to Affected Population (AAP)

UNICEF has provided emergency preparedness messages for communities "before, during and after a cyclone" through various social media platforms (Viber, Facebook, Youtube) in Burmese, Rakhine and Rohingya languages and has reached 1.26 million population with messages on being prepared for the cyclone. The Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) technical working group has also shared these key messages and materials, developed by UNICEF and WHO, with RCCE partners for further dissemination and circulation in the field. Partner

mapping is being proposed to identify all the partners with resources in cyclone-affected areas for an immediate RCCE-related response to the emergency.

Following the aftermath of the cyclone, key messages around maternal and child health care, health care seeking, prevention of communicable diseases, awareness on snake bite and mine risks, MHPSS and nutrition are being prepared in collaboration with programme sections. When these key communication messages are finalized, the materials will be printed and distributed to support the field offices and partners with mass awareness raising on prevention of diseases and other lifesaving messages with the affected communities, particularly in temporary shelters and camps. SBC and AAP-related assessment questionnaires are being developed to incorporate into rapid need assessments conducted by the field team and partners. Two SBC Officers are ready for deployment to support the emergency response in Rakhine and Northwest.

Supply and Logistics

The office has been following up with the Foreign Economic Relations Department (FERD) for final approval of the 15 health and nutrition supplies shipments which have recently received Tax Exemption Certificates (TEC) clearance from the Ministry of Health. Advocacy for the remaining TEC approvals is ongoing. The modality for distribution of these health and nutrition supplies is not yet clear and agreed by the parties. MoH has so far only requested UNICEF to indicate the quantities for IEHK kits which will be delivered to them out of the 175 kits been released.

Due unavailability of flight to Sittwe, the Operations team mission comprising of Supply, Administration, and ICT staff did not take place.

Humanitarian Leadership and Coordination

OCHA is coordinating the overall humanitarian response with all clusters, with coordination mechanisms established at the national level as well as in Rakhine and Northwest. The Myanmar Humanitarian Emergency Response Preparedness Plan was activated nationwide since 8th May. A rapid capacity building on conducting Rapid Need Assessments has been undertaken in the high-risk areas, along with pre-positioning of contingency stocks. Advocacy for operational access to affected communities is being undertaken through the Inter Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) at national and sub-national levels. Under the leadership of OCHA in Rakhine, daily coordination meetings have been organised since Monday 15 May to review incoming information on needs and to determine the capacity of humanitarian organisations to deliver.

UNICEF will continue to provide leadership for Child Protection AoR, Education Cluster (co-led with Save the Children), Mine Action AoR, Nutrition Cluster and WASH Cluster. Cluster coordination meetings have been held for all clusters/AoRs. There are significant concerns about the lack of humanitarian funding and a number of supply gaps.

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