

Highlights

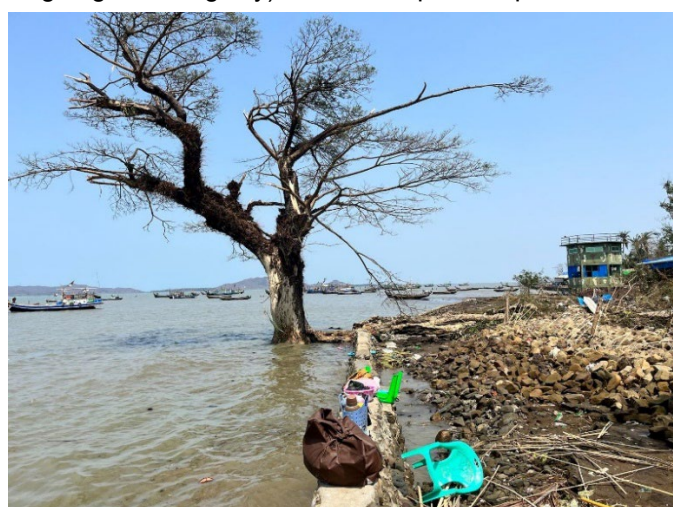
- The gradual restoration of communications is allowing humanitarian teams to gather a clearer picture of the impact of on millions of people who were in the path of Cyclone Mocha that hit Myanmar with brutal force on Sunday afternoon.
- Widescale destruction of homes and public infrastructure throughout Rakhine state is being seen, including in the capital Sittwe and in Rathedaung where there are scenes of widespread devastation.
- Partners continued observations in various locations in Sittwe and other townships and are ready to start coordinated field missions to gauge the full scope of the humanitarian situation, as soon as access is granted.
- Urgent needs include shelter, clean water, food assistance and healthcare services. There are rising concerns in flooded areas about the spread of waterborne disease and the movement of landmines.
- The lack of electricity in certain areas, as well as physical and bureaucratic access constraints, continue to be a challenge. Several bridges providing access to displacement camps in Sittwe have been washed away and are hampering movement.
- The road between Yangon and Sittwe has now reopened, potentially providing a transport route for much-needed supplies, if approved. It is also hoped the Sittwe airport will re-open on Thursday.
- The impact of the cyclone was also felt heavily in the country's northwest where houses were blown or washed away. Strong winds and rains have also damaged camps for displaced people in Kachin State.
- Efforts are under way to mobilize resources for the response, but an urgent injection of funds is needed with the \$764M Humanitarian Response Plan just 10 per cent funded.



*Destruction in Ah Htet Myat Lay IDP camp after cyclone Mocha. Ponnagyun, Rakhine.
Credit: OCHA*

Situation Overview

Cyclone Mocha has devastated the lives and livelihoods of millions of people in Rakhine and northwest Myanmar (Chin, Sagaing and Magway), two of the poorest parts of the country. Displacement sites in Kachin also suffered damage in the



A jetty damaged by cyclone Mocha in Sin Tet Maw village. Pauktaw, Rakhine. Credit: OCHA

aftermath of the cyclone as the weather system moved inland. Several reports highlight destruction of public infrastructure, including hospitals, health clinics, schools, and religious buildings in all these areas, particularly caused by heavy rains and strong winds. However, the true impact of the cyclone will only be fully understood once comprehensive field missions are conducted and authorizations for these are still pending approval.

The immediate priorities identified by partners include shelter, clean water, in-kind food assistance in some areas and healthcare services. There is also a significant concern about shortages of drinking water and the risk of waterborne disease. Additionally, efforts will be required to provide explosive ordnance risk education and hygiene awareness, along with psychological support.

Although more partners have established contact with their staff, the telecommunications services in the affected areas remain unstable. While only intermittent telephone connectivity is available in Sittwe town, the Ooredoo services in the camps are functioning relatively well, albeit with limited top-up facilities. Electricity is still unavailable in most townships in Rakhine.

Rakhine

- In Rathedaung township, most villages have reportedly sustained severe damage. In some villages, people are still sheltering in evacuation centers. The Station Hospital in In Ku Taung village was destroyed. In Mo Zé island, about 40 per cent of the houses were reportedly destroyed and 90 per cent of the houses were damaged, according to the local authorities. Casualties have also been reported here.
- In six displacement sites in Ponnagyun township, all the shelters were reportedly destroyed. Some casualties were also reported. In Ponnagyun town, less damage was reported, and the market had reopened as of 15 May.
- In Pauktaw, about 2,000 Rohingya IDPs from Sin Tet Maw Rohingya IDP camp were evacuated to a nearby Rakhine village before the cyclone and have returned to the camp. In total, 85 out of 100 shelters, as well as some latrines, were damaged. In Sin Tet Maw Village, most of the houses were damaged. Major needs are shelter, in-kind food assistance and drinking water.
- In Sittwe, the bridges allowing access into the Sittwe IDP camps need urgent repairs. These were heavily damaged by the cyclone. Two out of the three access routes are barely functional (as per the map below) and will hinder the IDPs ability to receive assistance in a timely manner and at scale.

The Northwest

- In Chin, an estimated 710 houses were destroyed: 153 houses in Hakha township, 74 houses in Falam township, 93 in Thanglang township, and 305 in Matupi township.
- In Magway, according to the local authorities in Pakokku township, some 1,000 people were heavily affected by floods, as of 17 May. The local authorities reported that they provided emergency relief items to these people. They requested food assistance. The local authorities are still verifying the list of all affected people, but there are many inaccessible locations at this stage. According to partners, 182 houses in Gangaw township were damaged.
- In Sagaing, trucks are needed to transport evacuated people to Kale town and for tarpaulins for roofing shelter for 15,000 people.

Kachin

- Destruction of shelters and damage were reported in the aftermath of the cyclone in Waingmaw and Tanai townships, according to partners and camp leaders.
- In Shanjai IDP camp, which is hosting about 1,000 IDPs in Waingmaw township, 8 houses were destroyed and the roofs of 74 other buildings were reportedly blown off due to a heavy downpour and strong winds on 15 May. Similarly, Maga Yang/Sha It Yang IDP camp, Hka Shau IDP camp and Pajau/Janmai camps in Waingmaw township witnessed damage to a total of 85 houses, 20 latrines and a school.
- In Tanai township, at least 42 shelters in the Roman Catholic Church IDP camp were affected by heavy rains and strong winds.
- The IDPs urgently need support to rebuild their shelters.
- Humanitarian access to these camps remains challenging as they are located outside SAC-control. Humanitarian actors are providing support to affected people wherever access is permitted.

Coordination

The humanitarian community is ramping up resource mobilization efforts to deliver urgently needed assistance across the worst affected communities, especially across Rakhine, Chin, Sagaing, Magway and Kachin. The 2023 HRP is severely underfunded (less than 10 per cent of requirements). Many partners were struggling to sustain critical services prior to the cyclone because of acute funding shortages.

Cluster meetings have started taking place in addition to the sub-national inter-cluster coordination meetings in the affected areas to address specific concerns that were reported in previous updates. Planned field missions in six priority townships of Kyauktaw, Maungdaw, Pauktaw, Ponnagyun, Rathedaung and Sittwe in Rakhine, are still pending approval. In Magway and Sagaing, local partners and CSOs are closely coordinating efforts to respond to needs over the coming days.

As of 17 May, the Sittwe airport remains closed for civilian use, although there are reports that it will re-open for commercial travel on 18 May. If flights and regular road transport do not resume soon, fuel will become a major concern. Thandwe airport in southern Rakhine is partly damaged. The road between Yangon and Sittwe has now reopened providing a possible access route for much-needed supplies, depending on approvals.

Unhindered and timely access is urgently needed to reach people in need in the affected areas. This will require flexibility around the requirements for securing Travel Authorization for both assessments and distributions, the relaxation of banking restrictions and urgent customs clearances for vital supplies. Telecommunications connectivity is also critical for partners to be fully functional and for the communities to rebuild their lives.

Information in this update is based on inputs from humanitarian partners and local sources.



MYANMAR

Access to IDP Camps in Sittwē

As of 17 May 2023



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
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