

## Highlights

- Humanitarian assistance has begun reaching people affected by cyclone Mocha in Myanmar's Rakhine State as communities race to rebuild their lives and homes ahead of the monsoon.
- On Sunday, cyclone Mocha devastated coastal regions in Rakhine, including Sittwe and Rathedaung, damaging or destroying homes, before moving inland where it brought severe flooding.
- Vulnerable people continue to seek shelter in evacuation centers and monasteries in the aftermath of the cyclone.
- In the past two days, the World Food Programme has delivered emergency food assistance to some 6,000 IDPs and people sheltering in cyclone shelters in the Rakhine capital Sittwe. Shelter support has also been delivered to communities in need and mobile health teams have been treating people in the field.
- Humanitarians have been working to gauge the full impact of the cyclone in areas where they have access while partners await approval for coordinated field missions that would allow for the wider-scale distribution of assistance based on observed need.
- The limited availability and soaring prices for essential items, especially shelter materials, are presenting significant challenges for those trying to reconstruct their damaged homes and shelters with the monsoon looming.
- Although fuel supplies have arrived in some areas, a shortage of crucial public services, such as health facilities and water treatment, persists.
- Awareness-raising messages are being disseminated in a bid to prevent waterborne diseases and casualties from landmines in flooded areas.
- Urgent funding is required to meet the significant needs arising from Cyclone Mocha. Currently, the existing [US\\$764 million Humanitarian Response Plan \(HRP\)](#) is only 10 per cent funded.
- On 18 May, the Emergency Relief Coordinator has approved an allocation of \$10m from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) to support the response to cyclone Mocha in Myanmar.



*A man repairing his Cyclone-affected house in Ku Taung village, Rathedaung, Rakhine. Credit: OCHA*

## Situation Overview

Five days have passed since Cyclone Mocha struck Myanmar's west, causing extensive damage and significantly affecting millions of people across Rakhine and the Northwest. Some parts of Kachin and northern Shan also experienced heavy rains and strong winds associated with the cyclone as the weather system moved inland. Electricity and telecommunication services are still unreliable in the affected townships.

Vulnerable people, including women, expectant mothers, children and the elderly, many of whom have not previously experienced displacement, are seeking shelter in evacuation centers and monasteries after being left homeless by the cyclone. Those who have returned home are facing the daunting task of rebuilding their damaged houses with limited available resources. Although some markets have re-opened, the soaring prices of basic shelter materials, such as tarpaulins, aluminum sheets, and nails, has made this task unaffordable for most people in these very impoverished parts of the country. For instance, the cost of a tarpaulin sheet has more than doubled, increasing from MMK 40,000 (\$19) before the cyclone to MMK 97,000 (\$46). Food costs are also soaring. For example, the price of one bag of rice has also increased from MMK 80,000 (\$38) before the cyclone to MMK 120,000 (\$57). Such a sharp increase cannot be absorbed by most families.

Humanitarian partners have begun reaching people with support based on field observations in various townships where they had previously approved access or where there has been new access approved. On 18 May, the World Food Programme received permission to distribute emergency food in 8 townships: Sittwe, Kyauktaw, Ponngayun, Pauktaw, Rathedaung, Minbya, Meybon and Mrauk-U, as well as approval for assistance in Buthidaung and Maungdaw in northern Rakhine. It has been possible for partners to distribute some shelter assistance as well in locations where they had pre-existing operations and mobile health teams have been operational in affected communities. Humanitarians are seeking access for coordinated field missions to distribute wider assistance based on observations of the situation on the ground.

In recent days, initial humanitarian supplies have also been transported via trucks to Sittwe township from Yangon and humanitarians are exploring a range of approaches to try and move supplies to the impact zone from inside and outside the country, pending approval. Additionally, fuel supplies arrived in Sittwe city on 18 May and were distributed to gas stations. As of 19 May, gas stations are operational, and the price of fuel has dropped from MMK 2,700 (more than \$1) to MMK 2,200 (\$1). However, there is still a shortage of fuel, particularly for essential public services, such as health facilities and water treatment. Other critical needs include shelter, food aid, medical supplies, and healthcare services.

Concerns persist in flooded areas regarding the spread of waterborne disease and the movement of landmines in conflict areas. Humanitarian partners have preemptively developed awareness-raising messages in local languages around these concerns. These messages are being disseminated among affected communities in these areas to raise awareness and promote safety precautions.



*Vehicles and tuk-tuks queuing in a Cyclone-affected gas station in Sittwe. Rakhine. Credit: OCHA*

### **In Rakhine**

- Humanitarian partners continue to redirect their responses to people affected by the cyclone wherever they can.
- So far, some 6,000 IDPs and people in cyclone shelters have been assisted with WFP emergency food assistance. There are further plans to step up distributions substantially in the coming days in IDPs camps and other priority affected areas. Assessments are being conducted in parallel with the distributions to gauge the depth of food insecurity post-cyclone.
- They report that almost 1500 households were reached with NFI and shelters assistance in displacement sites across 5 townships.
- In Sittwe city, about 600 Rakhine people are still sheltering in 6 monasteries since the cyclone as their houses were completely destroyed.
- In Sittwe township's Basara Camp which is home to about 2,530 IDPs, 3 out of 52 longhouses were destroyed and the rest were damaged, according to the Camp Management Committee (CMC). No reports of death or major injuries were reported as most of these IDPs were evacuated to the nearby Technological High School ahead of the cyclone. However, they lost their food supplies. Their urgent needs include food, shelter materials, medicines and healthcare to treat minor injuries. They also require tetanus jabs.

- In Pauktaw township, initial field observations reveal less damage compared to Sittwe township. The most affected areas were observed in Sin Tet Maw village, where most of the houses suffered damage, and in the neighboring Sin Tet Maw Rohingya IDP camp.
  - In Nget Chaung-1 IDP Rohingya camp, home to 5,157 IDPs, 40 out of 1,136 houses were destroyed and approximately 40 per cent of the houses were damaged. Eighty percent of latrines sustained damage and livestock perished, according to a camp leader. The water supply from the main pond was disrupted during the cyclone, and fuel for the water pumps was stolen. IDPs are currently utilizing water from an alternative pond filled with rainwater from the cyclone which is projected to last for a week. Immediate needs include food, water, hygiene kits, shelter materials, and other relief items.
  - In Nget Chaung 2 IDP camp, where 5,288 Rohingya IDPs reside, 20-30 per cent of individual houses were destroyed, while the longhouses sustained damage. No deaths were reported and the majority of the IDPs had relocated to Sittwe and other villages ahead of the cyclone. Approximately 500 men remained in the camp during the cyclone. Currently, IDPs are using rainwater for drinking because five out of the six ponds located within the community have been contaminated. Half of the latrines were destroyed. Additionally, 60 out of 200 fishing boats suffered damage and 4 out of 8 Temporary Learning Centers in the camps were also damaged. At present, IDPs have access to the market in Thae Chaung in Sittwe. According to the camp leader, urgent needs include in-kind food and water.

### The Northwest

- Initial field observations suggest that communities affected by the cyclone in Sagaing and Magway regions are experiencing heightened vulnerability, worsened by ongoing conflict and secondary displacement.
- In conflict-affected areas, residents reported losing their shelters, farms, and plantations due to the cyclone and subsequent flooding. Immediate needs reportedly include water and sanitation support, food, health services, and psychosocial support.
- Disrupted telecommunications, restrictions on physical access, roadblocks, ongoing conflict, and limited funding present significant challenges for humanitarian workers who are trying to get a clear picture of the situation across the Northwest.

### Northern Shan

- Partners report that approximately 140 houses in Kutkai, Kyaukme, Manton, Muse, and Namhsan townships sustained damage due to the heavy rains and strong winds in the aftermath of Cyclone Mocha. Affected families have expressed an urgent need for shelter, food, and hygiene and dignity kits. Humanitarian partners are responding by offering cash assistance for food for one week, and they are also providing necessary shelter materials.

## Coordination

Coordination meetings at various levels continue to take place to address urgent issues and needs, and to ensure coordinated responses across all clusters.

The humanitarian community is channeling existing resources from different sources to deliver vital assistance to the most impacted communities, especially in Rakhine, Chin, Sagaing, Magway, and Kachin. It is important to highlight, though, that the 2023 Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) has received less than 10 per cent of the necessary funding and a massive injection of resources is needed to facilitate the necessary scale-up of assistance. On 18 May, the Emergency Relief Coordinator quickly approved a \$10m allocation from the Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF) to support the response to the cyclone in Myanmar.

Ensuring unrestricted access to humanitarian aid by affected people is critical. More clarity and flexibility around the process of obtaining Travel Authorization for cyclone response distributions is required. It is also necessary to ease banking restrictions and speed up customs clearances for essential supplies. Establishing reliable telecommunications connectivity is crucial for humanitarian partners' operations and to support to communities as they rebuild their lives.

**Information in this update is based on inputs from humanitarian partners and local sources. The next Flash Update will be issued on 21 May 2023.**

For further information, please contact:

**Danielle Parry**, Officer in Charge, [parryd@un.org](mailto:parryd@un.org), +95 9797002713 (Phone/Signal)

**Suhad Sakalla**, Humanitarian Affairs Officer, [sakalla@un.org](mailto:sakalla@un.org), +95 9797007815, +972 054433 4202 (Signal/WhatsApp)

**Lesly Lotha**, Communication Specialist, [lesly.lotha@un.org](mailto:lesly.lotha@un.org), +959 796139223 (Phone/Signal)

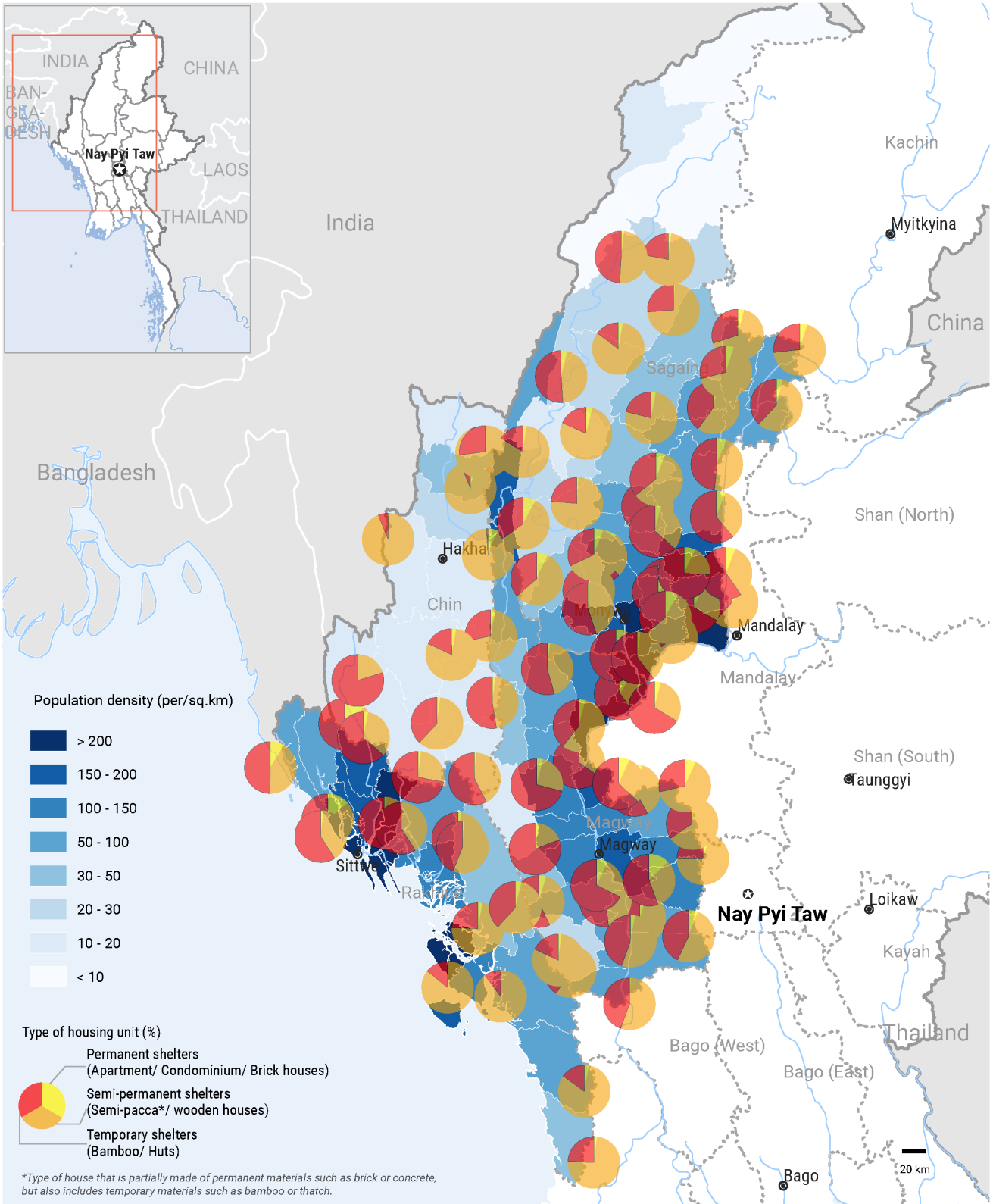
For more information, please visit [www.unocha.org](http://www.unocha.org) | <https://reliefweb.int/country/mmr> | <https://www.facebook.com/OCHAMyanmar>



# MYANMAR

## Population Density and Type of Housing in Cyclone-Affected Areas

As of 19 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.  
 Creation date: 19 May 2023 Sources: JTWC, Census 2014. Feedback: ochamyanmar@un.org www.unocha.org www.reliefweb.int