

Humanitarian Bulletin

Myanmar

Issue: September 2012

HIGHLIGHTS

- IDPs population figures continue to fluctuate in Rakhine. Government estimates indicate that over **75,000** people are currently displaced there.
- Up to **75,000** people are estimated to have been displaced by insecurity in Kachin and northern Shan States which started in June 2011.



In this issue

- Concurrent Emergencies P.1**
- Interagency assessment P.3**
- Sector Needs and Response P.4**
- Humanitarian Principles P.4**

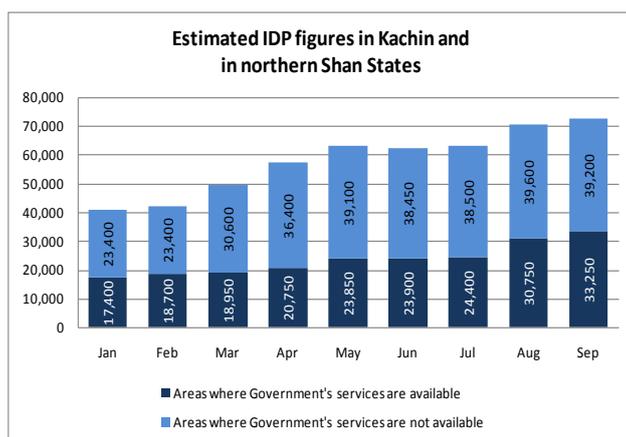
Concurrent emergencies in Rakhine and Kachin

Approximately 150,000 persons remain displaced in Kachin and Rakhine States and many more have been affected in the two crises. These emergencies continue to place serious pressure on humanitarian partners to meet the needs of the most vulnerable, in an environment where resources are inadequate and access is challenging.

The number of IDPs in Kachin and northern Shan states increased to some 75,000 in September from approximately 70,000 in August, following the intensification of clashes in some areas and the forced return from China of some 5,900 people.

Since mid-July international humanitarian partners have not been permitted to reach some 54 percent of the IDPs (over 39,000 people). Between April and mid-July, access was officially granted to all but 14,000 IDPs in hard to reach areas. Humanitarian assistance provision is urgently required, especially for those who have been recently displaced.

An additional concern is also the situation of some 8,000 to 10,000 IDPs in or around Hpakan being stranded due to ongoing clashes with several civilian casualties being recorded. By mid-October, clashes moved out of urban areas and some of the civilians managed to return home.



3,400
IDPs in
Kyauktaw

71,600
IDPs in
Sittwe

IDPs figures are also on the rise in Rakhine: The Government estimates indicate that there are some 75,000 in Rakhine accommodated in 40 camps and temporary locations in Sittwe and Kyauktaw Townships against some 70,000 last month. There are indications that some displacement may be taking place between villages. Humanitarian partners are working with the authorities to identify all individuals in need and provide assistance. The Government reported that all IDPs in Maungdaw moved to temporary shelters/tents close to their villages of origin. This is intended to facilitate the reconstruction of their houses and restart their livelihood activities as soon as possible. Renewed violence from 21 to 23 October caused

"I would like to mention in the first place that the people inhabiting in our country, regardless of race, religion and gender, have the rights to live in peace and security....."

Demonstrating our determination to resolve the issue in a transparent manner, we have facilitated field visits to the Rakhine State by the representatives from the OIC, ASEAN, UN agencies, the United States and resident foreign diplomats in Myanmar.

When it comes to the relief assistance, access is being facilitated to those organizations who are willing to provide it to both the communities without discrimination."

Speech of the President of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar

(27 September, 67th session of the UN General Assembly)

additional displacement, casualties and damages to houses and other buildings which are yet to be fully estimated.

In an effort to address the situation in Rakhine State, on 22 and 23 September, the Government and the UN, in collaboration with the Myanmar Development Research Institute (MDRI) organized a workshop on *"The Process of Relief, Rehabilitation, Rule of Law and Sustainable Development in Rakhine State"*. Some 370 participants, including government officials, members of parliament, community representatives, the UN, NGOs, diplomats and experts discussed challenges, and proposed ways to address existing concerns. Through presentations and group discussions, the workshop came up with recommendations on 1) security and rule of law, 2) reconciliation efforts, and 3) humanitarian, 4) recovery and 5) development challenges.

The Government's leadership in relief efforts, with the support from the UN and NGOs was highlighted, as it was the need for a political solution to long-standing issues. Participants also discussed the misperception over the delivery of assistance by international organizations, who are often accused of being partial in their assistance delivery. It was stressed that better communication with communities, and the establishment of complaints/feedback mechanisms would contribute to address such issues. The workshop also called for urgent provision of humanitarian assistance to all those in need, and recommended to pay attention to recovery and development initiatives in the region.

Several high-level delegations visited Rakhine over the past weeks, including members of the Investigation Commission (8-15 September), a US delegation led by Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asia and the Pacific Joseph Yun (8-9 September), and a mission of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC), led by OIC Permanent Observer to the UN Ufuk Gokcen (9-10 September). On 11 September, the OIC signed a memorandum of cooperation with the Ministry of Border Affairs to provide humanitarian aid in Rakhine State. A Turkish delegation visited the region on 11 September led by the Ambassador and accompanied by representatives from the Turkish International Cooperation Agency (TICA). A Malaysian delegation led by the Malaysian Ambassador to Myanmar and the Chairman of Kelab Putera 1 Malaysia visited Sittwe from 7 to 9 October. The delegation met with the authorities, the communities and visited IDPs locations.

Reaching all those in need to provide assistance is paramount

The Government is leading relief efforts in both Kachin and Rakhine operations, with the support from the UN and NGOs. However, partners are still facing difficulties in reaching all those in need to provide urgently needed assistance.

In Rakhine, while all IDPs locations are accessible, only few affected villages can be reached at the moment. Some improvement in access has been observed since the end of September. In late September, some partners, including WFP and UNHCR and some NGOs managed to slowly resume some of their regular activities in some areas of the three townships of northern Rakhine State, which were suspended since June 2012.

Misperception against humanitarian workers continues to exist with reports of calls to terminate relief activities of some agencies. Under the leadership of the RC/HC, the humanitarian community is stepping up measures to address the misperception issues through increased dialogues with key interlocutors as well as the communities.

In Kachin and northern Shan States, unhindered and sustained access to all affected locations is also essential to guarantee that all displaced receive much needed relief aid. While various local partners are reaching some locations, the prevailing insecurity and logistical challenges hinder operations. UN-led aid convoys have been on stand-by since mid-July as permission to reach IDP locations is not yet granted. The RC/HC continues to lead advocacy efforts with all parties for unimpeded passage for relief and those delivering it to all areas including those that are hard to reach. In addition, heavy rains have damaged roads and bridges in the region, making access to remote locations even more challenging.

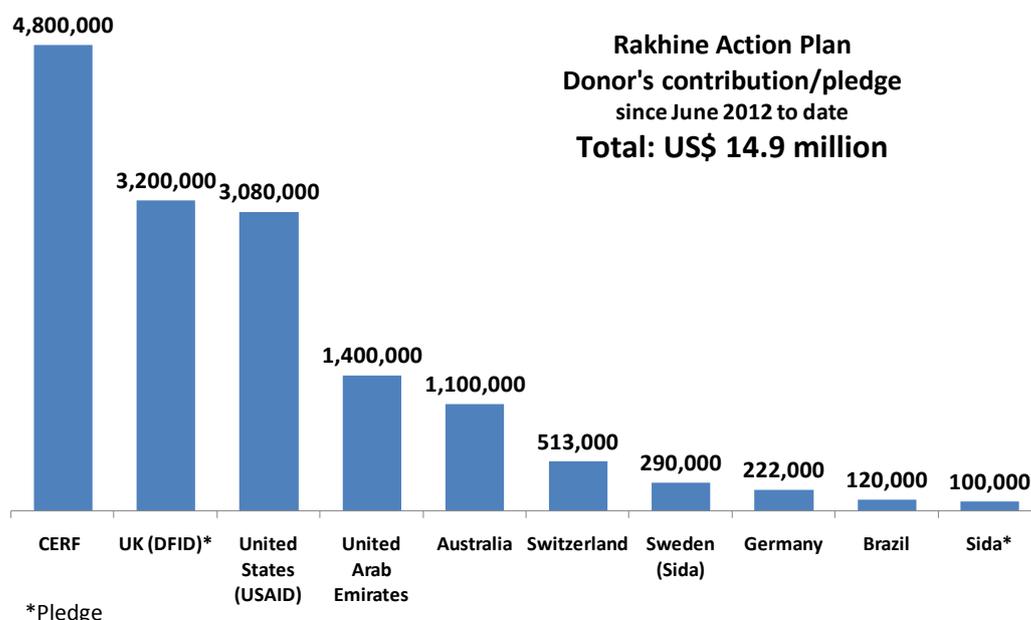
“At the same time while continuing its engagement with the Government for this longer term vision, we would urge development partners to also consider options for displaced people and those prevented from going back to work to be given livelihood opportunities, schooling for their children, health and nutrition and all that is needed for them to have a decent living condition. Second, the longstanding issue of statelessness and citizenship needs to be resolved. This issue has failed to be addressed effectively, for far too long. Third, the root cause of the problems in Rakhine State lies in the future of economic and social development for all the people. It is critically important that in moving forward we develop and implement a plan for sustainable economic and social development of Rakhine State.”

Speech of Dr. Ashok Nigam, UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Myanmar (23 September, Workshop on the Process of Relief, Rehabilitation, Rule of Law and Sustainable Development in Rakhine State)

Donors contributions to humanitarian response are critical

Some, US\$68.3 million are required to meet the immediate needs for the Rakhine and Kachin humanitarian responses. To date, only \$41.4 million has been raised or pledged.

The Rakhine Response Plan launched in July called for \$32.5 million. A total of \$14.9 million has been disbursed or pledged against the plan. As of 1 October, donations from the Government, private companies, religious groups and individuals amounted to approximately \$2.7 million. In the initial stage of the emergency, UN agencies mobilized some \$820,000 from their core funds to start operations.



The Kachin sectoral response plan (July 2012) estimated that a total of \$35.8 million is required to meet the humanitarian needs for up to 85,000 people between March 2012 and February 2013. As of 24 October 2012, \$26.5 million of funding has been received or pledged for humanitarian programmes from various sources, including contributions from the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) and bilateral donors.

Humanitarian partners, including donors and recipient agencies, are encouraged to inform OCHA's Financial Tracking Service (FTS - <http://fts.unocha.org>) of cash and in-kind contributions by e-mailing: fts@un.org.

Interagency Needs Assessment in Kachin



On 9 October, UNHCR, OCHA, UNICEF and WFP undertook an inter-agency mission to Lwegel Sub-Township in Kachin State to conduct needs assessments in IDP camps and discuss with authorities the needs of the population as well as the officialization of the camps in the District office list. This is an important step towards responding to the urgent needs of those families who were forcibly repatriated from China and now located in these camps.

The 232 people located in NyaungHna Pin Camp, including 87 children, need urgent assistance, including shelter and NFIs, food and nutrition support, protection, health and education services, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) interventions. WFP's local partner, Karuna Myanmar Social Services has successfully been providing food and is ready to continue to do so as long as additional support is provided.

Humanitarian Principles guide our work in every part of the world, and whenever we help address the immediate needs of those who suffer from the effects of natural disasters or conflict. So what are these principles? What do they mean?

Humanity: Human suffering must be addressed wherever it is found. The purpose of humanitarian action is to protect life and health and ensure respect for human beings.

Neutrality: We do not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

Impartiality: We provide humanitarian assistance on the basis of need alone, giving priority to the most urgent cases of distress and making no distinctions on the basis of nationality, race, religion, or political point of view.

Independence: Humanitarian agencies must be able to formulate and implement their own policies independently of the policies or actions of others, including governments, and be given the space to do so.

Sectoral Needs and Response

Assistance continues to be provided in partnership with authorities in all reachable areas, in full respect of the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and 'do no harm'.

EDUCATION

Rakhine—Although over 80 to 90 percent of schools in the affected townships have reopened, attendance of teachers and students remains low. A mission that visited 30 schools in Buthidaung, Rathedaung and Maungdaw townships observed that in most locations only half of the students registered were attending classes. In Sittwe, where 45 per cent of the IDPs in camps are children under 12, access to education is extremely limited due to lack of teachers and temporary learning spaces. An in-depth assessment needs to be carried out to capture the extent of needs and plan an appropriate response. In an effort to improve attendance, some schools operate in two shifts with different school hours for children belonging to different communities. Essential learning packages supported by UNICEF have been distributed to 60 schools in Maungdaw. Community teachers and some WFP-supported teachers who received CFS training from UNICEF are covering some of the needs but gaps remain.

FOOD

Rakhine—Since the beginning of the conflict, and as of 30 September, WFP has distributed over 4,400 metric tons (MT) of mixed food commodities to the affected people, including 1,120 MT to approximately 62,000 people in September. The needs are likely to increase as some vulnerable population from nearby villages arrived in IDP camps in Sittwe to access food assistance due to lack of livelihood opportunities in their villages. This raises concerns over overlapping of beneficiaries and highlights the need for proper registration exercise in the camps.

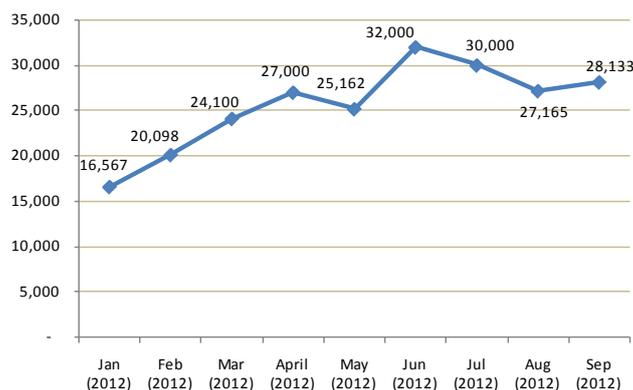
Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS), with support from Turkish Red Crescent (TRC) delivered 250 MT of rice packages to some 10,000 displaced households in Sittwe. Islamic Relief Worldwide (IRW) distributed over 1,300 food packages to the affected villages in Sittwe. The food sector is strengthening coordination efforts and is engaging in a mapping exercise to identify gaps and minimize duplication. This is particularly urgent as more actors have started their food distribution in affected locations.

Kachin—In September, WFP-supported assistance to IDPs in Kachin and northern Shan reached 28,000 beneficiaries with 422 MT of food. Oxfam through a local partner distributed a mixed food basket to 7,500 IDPs in hard-to-reach areas. Trocaire, in partnership with a local partner, distributed rice and oil to 300 IDPs in Lwejel and provided cash assistance to 400 IDPs in Nang Kham for complementary food.

HEALTH

Rakhine—WHO reported that no major disease outbreak has been recorded to date. Over 600 people have been tested with Rapid Diagnostic Test (RDTs) for malaria and provided anti-malaria treatment to 230 confirmed cases. Malaria is endemic in Rakhine State and continuation of services is key to minimize the incidence of the disease. In some locations, malaria programmes were interrupted following the violence in June. Some of these activities have reportedly resumed. The State Health Department with the support from WHO will start supplementary Immunization Programme for the polio virus infection in Buthidaung, Maungdaw and Sittwe in the coming weeks.

Food aid beneficiaries in Kachin and northern Shan



UNFPA distributed 2,000 dignity kits, six emergency reproductive health kits and contraceptives for 1,500 women. In September, over 2,700 people have been reached by UNFPA-sponsored mobile and static clinics providing maternal and reproductive health in Rathedaung and Sittwe townships. In Maungdaw, over 2,200 IDPs who were relocated close-by their villages are being served through seven mobile clinics, supported by Maungdaw Hospital and an INGO. As of 23 September, MSF medical teams provided 12,400 general illness consultations in the affected townships. Antiretroviral therapy (ART) patients support is ongoing, with over 300 patients being resupplied with essential life-saving drugs.

In Sittwe, MRCS continues to facilitate a 24-hour health referral service for all IDP locations in urban areas. The referral system also covers the rural camps during non-curfew hours. In September, some 40 patients received MRCS's referral service and 56 received emergency medical evacuation service. The Myanmar Health Assistants Association (MHAA) supported by UNICEF provided life-saving health services to over 7,100 IDPs through its mobile and static clinics, including some 870 children under age 5 in September. MHAA reached 2,800 people with health promotion activities that include awareness raising on prevention of the most common diseases such as diarrhea, pneumonia and malaria. Malteser provided psychosocial support to 342 children in eight camps in the affected locations. MRCS also provided psychosocial support to some 1,600 IDPs and health education to 5,800 IDPs.

NUTRITION

Rakhine –Although nutrition programmes are ongoing in IDP camps, nutrition partners estimate that interventions are yet to reach 29 per cent of the IDPs. With support from UNICEF, the State Health Department and MHAA provided over 1,200 children under age 5 with micro-nutrient sprinkles in September. Similarly, over 340 moderately malnourished children received supplementary feeding and some 260 severely malnourished children received therapeutic feeding. In an effort to enhance nutritional intervention, ACF and Save the Children, will set up nutrition programme in two camps in Sittwe for children with SAM/MAM. ACF is currently undertaking a nutrition assessment in Maungdaw which will be followed by appropriate nutrition intervention.

SHELTER and NFI

Rakhine –The Government has completed the construction of 370 barrack-style shelters (3,700 units) for 3,700 IDP families in Sittwe camps. UNHCR completed the construction of 15 barrack-style shelters at Ma Gyi Mya camp and additional 150 shelters are under construction in Ong Taw Gyi camp. Shelter partners estimate that over 230 long shelters remain needed for the IDPs in Sittwe camps. To enhance the knowledge of camp coordination and camp management (CCCM), the Rakhine Government officials were provided with a training on CCCM in Yangon in early October. A similar training will be organized in Sittwe with the participation of the camp focal points and agencies staff in Sittwe.

Since the beginning of the conflict, partners distributed 17,170 family kits to IDPs in Rakhine, including over 9,000 basic and complementary kits by UNHCR and over 8,000 sets by ACF, CARE, Malteser, Save the Children and UNICEF and local NGOs. Partners reported that over 2,400 NFIs are needed and that there is a need for enhancing coordination of distribution activities to avoid overlapping as many new actors are now joining the relief efforts.

Kachin –Additional shelters are urgently needed for newly displaced people, particularly in hard-to-reach areas, where IDPs camps are overcrowded and have no additional space for new arrivals. To date, UNHCR and its partners built 1,000 temporary shelter units in Myitkyina and 495 in Bhamo. Additional 1,000 temporary shelter units will be built in the coming months. Over 600 IDP families from Myitkyina, Chipwe, Lwegel and Momauk were provided with NFI kits.



PROTECTION

Under the arrangement of the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting of violations of child rights in armed conflict (CTFMR), 42 minors from different military commands were permitted to quit the military service and were handed over to their parents on 3 September. Prior to the release, UNHCR, a member of CTFMR, worked with the Immigration and National Registration Department to provide civil documentation to all children released. The Government and UN signed an action plan on 27 June which sets out concrete and time-bound activities to ensure separation of children from the Myanmar armed forces and to prevent further recruitment.

Rakhine – Provision of basic needs and services, particularly food and health care, is urgently needed for the affected people in remote villages to mitigate possible additional displacement. In Maungdaw and Buthidaung, several venerable people reportedly fled from their places of origin due to difficult economic conditions, fear and lack of access to resources. In Rahtedaung, some 2,000 to 3,000 vulnerable people from remote villages have limited access to basic services. Many of the affected people from Pauktaw also arrived in the camps in Sittwe to access relief supplies.

Kachin– Following the intense fighting in Hpakan, IDPs expressed their concerns over several protection issues including landmines, forced portering and detentions. UNHCR, through its implementing partners, provided assistance to around 20 extremely vulnerable individuals in the camps in September.



WATER, SANITATION and HYGIENE

Rakhine– Critical gaps of latrines and safe and clean water have been observed in most IDP locations, particularly in camps outside of Sittwe. Additional partners are being identified to respond to the immediate needs of the people. Hygiene promotion and provision of hygiene kits are critical in view of limited knowledge of hygiene practices prior to the displacement. MHAA provided hygiene promotion sessions to some 4,600 IDPs in nine camps in the affected locations. The Department of Rural Development (DRD) and WASH partners are stepping up their efforts to respond to immediate needs. DRD started the construction of 309 latrines and 52 wells for five camps in Sittwe. UNICEF, through local partners, distributed over 25,740 bottles of waterguard in IDP locations in Sittwe and completed the construction of six latrines and 16 bathing facilities in Mangan camp. Funding is available for the construction of an additional 19 latrines in Mangan camp by UNICEF. Malteser is constructing 139 latrines in Ohn Taw Gyi in Sittwe. MRCS provided over 1,000,000 litres of drinking water and 500 hygiene kits in IDP locations in Sittwe. Mercy Malaysia also distributed some 2,600 hygiene kits in Sittwe. WASH partners, however, reported that over 5,000 families remain in need of hygiene materials.

Kachin– WASH partners reported that resources are still needed to build adequate latrines and distribute hygiene items, particularly in IDP locations in hard to reach areas. Lack of access and continuous population movements makes it extremely difficult to estimate needs and gaps. Most camps still need to be provided with separate latrines for women and men with sanitary and hand washing facilities to keep the latrines clean and free from vector breeding. In some camps, the practice of open defecation continues to be recorded. Some 78 latrines were constructed in two camps in Mansi in Kachin and two locations in northern Shan State. Over 9,000 IDPs in Bhamo, Myitkyina in Kachin and Namhkan in northern Shan received 35 water storage tanks. Some 21,000 soaps were distributed to IDPs in Myitkyina and Bhamo. In September, a total of 15 hygiene promotion sessions were conducted in six camps in Bhamo and Mansi, benefitting over 2,718 IDPs.

For further information, please contact:

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The mission of the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is to mobilize and coordinate effective and principled humanitarian action in partnership with national and international