

This update is compiled by OCHA in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It was issued by OCHA Myanmar Country Office. It covers the period from 20 September to 25 October 2011. The next update will be issued depending on the availability of information.

I. HIGHLIGHTS/KEY PRIORITIES

- The instability in Kachin State that started in early June 2011 has resulted in the displacement of populations, loss of livelihoods and damages to infrastructure.
- The recently-completed joint assessment in 39 locations in Kachin State reveals urgent needs in several sectors, including food, education, shelter, health, NFI and water and sanitation.
- Access and delivery of assistance remain challenging.

II. Situation Overview

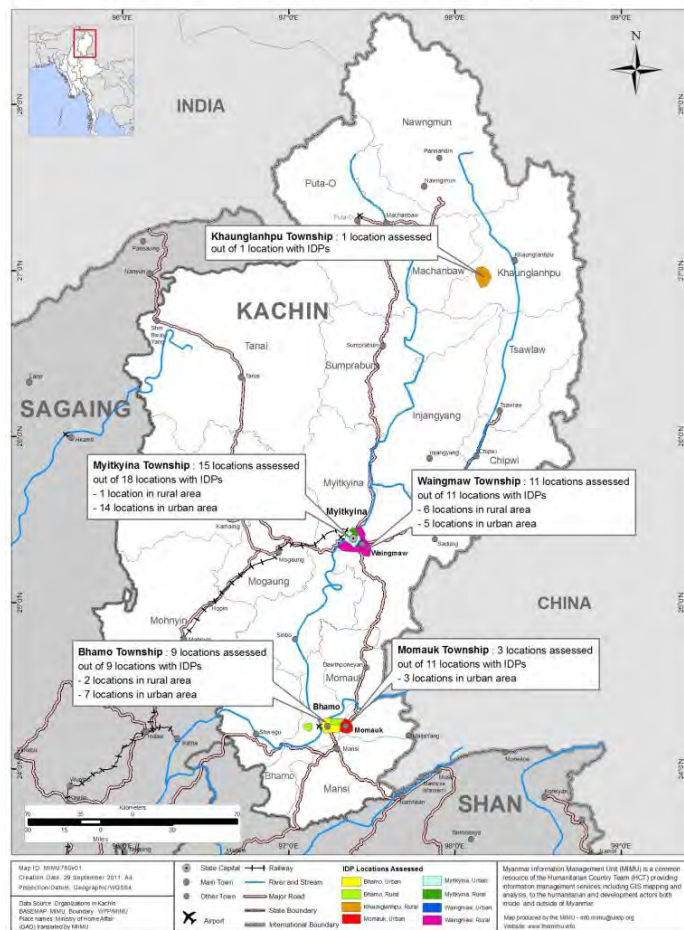
Instability in Kachin and Shan States started in early June 2011 and resulted in the displacement of populations, loss of lives and livelihoods and damages to infrastructure.

The Kachin State Government, national NGOs, community-based organizations, churches and monasteries, with the support of UN agencies and international NGOs have been providing some assistance to the IDPs since June.

Although exact figures are yet to be confirmed, more than 20,000 Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) may have left their homes and sought refuge in camps and with friends and relatives across the affected region. The UN Humanitarian and Resident Coordinator has discussed in several occasions with the Authorities the situation and the need provide humanitarian to all civilians in need.

Following a Government invitation, a rapid needs assessment was conducted from 20-26 September in 39 locations in some areas of five townships: Bhamo, Momauk, Myitkyina, Khaunglanhpu and Waingmaw, and targeted 5,925 internally displaced persons (IDPs). Two townships Mansi and Shwegu could not be assessed due to security reasons.

Locations Assessed in Kachin State - 20 to 26 Sept 2011



Since then, the Relief and Resettlement Department (RRD) of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MoSWRR) indicated that the number of IDPs in the seven townships of Myitkyina, Waingmaw, Putao, Bhamo, Momauk, Shwegu, and Mansi has increased to reach 7,029, as of 21 October.

Four additional camps have been established in Myitkyina to receive new IDPs in the last few weeks. At present, RRD confirmed the presence of IDPs in 46 IDPs sites in seven townships: five in Bhamo, four in Momauk, one in Mansi, three in Shwegu, 11 in Waingmaw, 21 in Myitkyina and one in Khaunglanphu. The number of IDPs locations in other areas of Kachin and Shan states is yet to be confirmed.

III. Humanitarian Needs and Response

In general, due to easier accessibility and the presence of a larger number of aid agencies, the IDPs in Myitkyina and Waingmaw have been receiving more assistance than those in Bhamo and Momauk. Access and delivery of assistance for many of the locations continue to be a major challenge, including in the southern townships of Bhamo, Momauk, Mansi and Shwegu given the security situation and damage to infrastructure, including access routes. Whilst partners are doubling efforts and use all available resources to respond to the needs of population affected by instability, more support is required, especially to local partners which have been the primary respondent both in terms of technical expertise, materials and funding.

The September assessment findings, targeting some 5,975 IDPs indicate that living conditions, particularly in larger temporary camps/shelters and community buildings where the population density is high, are challenging. Some 20 IDPs locations are in urgent need of additional shelter, water and sanitation. Camp management measures and expertise are required to find adequate solutions. Major needs include NFIs, WASH, food, medical assistance and education materials.

Whilst immediate humanitarian assistance is urgently required, many have lost their sources of livelihood as well, and even if the situation return to normal in the coming days and weeks, many will need more long-term assistance to rebuild their lives in their areas of origin, including livelihood assistance.

Findings of the assessment were presented to the Kachin State Government by the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator a.i. on 8 October, when access and logistic issues were also tabled.



CAMP MANAGEMENT

The September assessment findings highlighted the need for capacity building on good practices for effective camp management for the IDP location managers, including local NGOs, FBOs, CBOs, local authorities and volunteers. As a result, UNHCR is carrying out a three-day camp management training in Myitkyina from 25-27 October, targeting local authorities, local and international NGOs, FBOs, CBOs, volunteers and UN staff directly involved in camp management activities in Myitkyina and Waingmaw Townships. Partners are looking at replicating such trainings in other affected locations.



EDUCATION

Some 1,055 primary school children and 1,249 secondary to high school children were identified amongst the assessed IDPs. Primary school children in all assessed locations have access to varying degree of schooling support - either access to nearby school facilities or to temporary learning spaces - which they regularly attend. However, only a few secondary and high school children seem to attend school, due to lack of access and their contribution to household chores, particularly in the absence of household heads. Education materials are in short supply at all locations. Temporary learning spaces are not sufficiently equipped. More information is required for additional IDPs locations not targeted by the assessment.

Early Childhood Development (ECD) centers have been established in six locations, benefiting 201 or 20% of all under-five IDP children. Efforts to construct additional ECD centers are ongoing. UNICEF, in partnership with local NGOs, CBOs and FBOs, provided education materials and essential supplies to some 418 children to continue their schooling in their temporary centres in Myitkyina and Waingmaw. Additional assistance is required in other affected locations.



EMERGENCY SHELTER AND NON FOOD ITEMS

Living conditions, particularly in larger temporary camps/shelters and community buildings where the population density is high, are challenging. The assessment found that 20 of the 39 surveyed locations are in urgent need of additional shelter assistance. IDPs in community buildings such as churches and community halls also suffer from over-population and the resulting lack of adequate sleeping space as well as lack of privacy for families.

While some non-food items (NFIs) have been provided by the Government, local NGOs, FBOs and CBOs, most of the IDPs require additional NFI support, including plastic sheeting, cooking utensils, blankets and clothes. These needs are most urgent in Bhamo and Momauk. As a response, UNHCR dispatched some

1,500 family kits (mosquito net, kitchen sets, blanket, and tarpaulin) to Myitkyina for distribution by local partners to IDPs. A first batch of 500 kits will arrive in Myitkyina by 27 October. UNICEF has dispatched additional items which are expected to arrive early next week to the state capital and to Bhamo. MRCS has distributed NFI to more than 1,000 households in 20 sites/camps in Myitkyina and 10 sites/camps in Waingmaw township at the end of August 2011.

In addition, Partners have established four additional camps in Myitkyina to accommodate new IDPs. However, more shelters remain needed as most of the camps are now over-crowded due to the increasing inflow of IDPs. The authorities have requested UNHCR for support in establishing temporary shelters for approximately 1,000 IDPs and UNHCR is currently discussing the details for this response with RRD.

FOOD

The September assessment findings indicated that over half of IDPs in temporary camps/shelters and community buildings are facing food access issues. While food assistance has temporarily alleviated concern over immediate food shortages in over half of the locations that reported food access difficulties, a number of sites have yet to receive food assistance. WFP and partners are continuing to ramp up distribution cycles to increase their coverage.

As of 15 October, WFP, either directly or through its partners (World Vision and Shalom Foundation) distributed 88.8 MT of rice, 9.854 MT of pulse, 4.9777 MT of oil and 0.82 MT of salt to approximately 5,500 IDPs in three townships in October. RRD has requested additional food assistance for some 1,900 newly arrived IDPs across six townships in the last couple of week. WFP food distribution to newly arrived IDPs has already started in Myitkyina and Waingmaw.

HEALTH

There has been no report of disease outbreak or mortality cases since June 2011 in surveyed locations. Over half of the sites currently have access to health care services provided by basic health staff, while the others in 14 locations only receive minimal health support through community health workers. At the time of the assessment, essential medical supplies were needed in 35 out of the 39 locations. Since July, UNICEF provided 30 Inter-Agency Emergency Health Kit (IEHK), Oral Rehabilitation Salt, Bleaching powder, water purification tablets and 300 bed nets to the State Health Department for distribution to IDP locations in Myitkyina, Waingmaw, Bhamo and Momauk townships.

Measles vaccine immunization will be needed for under-two children, staying in IDP locations in Myitkyina, Waingmaw, Momauk and Bahmo area.

PROTECTION

The number of under-18 separated or unaccompanied children was 221 at the time of the assessment, while 12.5% of households were either female or child-headed. This situation points to the need for preventative measures to mitigate potential risk factors. Extra measures for ensuring the safety of women and children would need to be taken, particularly in the temporary camps/ shelters, including improved lighting at night, separate bathing spaces and latrines for men and women and appointment of security focal points.

In order to increase the existing response capacity, UNICEF started a child protection training, including sessions from 24-27 October in Myitkyina and from 31 October to 3 November in Bhamo. UNICEF has also dispatched child friendly space kits to Myitkyina and Bhamo to allow displaced children access to equipped child friendly spaces, provided through local partners.

The camp management training conducted by UNHCR provided guidance on practical ways to address the specific needs of women, children and the elderly in the IDP locations.

WATER SANITATION HYGIENE

While access to water for domestic and hygiene uses is sufficient in assessed locations, less than half of assessed IDPs have access to sufficient quantities of safe drinking water. The issue is particularly critical in Bhamo, where all assessed locations reported insufficient access to drinking water. Some of the surveyed locations with larger number of IDPs needed more sanitation facilities (e.g. latrines). The situation is likely to have further worsened with the arrival of additional IDPs. Local partners will with UNICEF's support build additional latrines in each of the camp locations identified in the assessment, and organize hygiene

awareness training, to improve the sanitary situation.

Since July, UNICEF provided 10 drums of bleaching power and 20,000 water purification tablets to the State Health Department for distribution to the IDPs locations in Myitkyina and Waingmaw, Bhamo and Momauk townships. In addition, local partners will distribute sufficient water purification material for 1,500 families to last three months, starting next week.

IV. Coordination

In the field, partners are encouraged to liaise with the OCHA and UNICEF staff at the hub established in Myitkyina at the UNICEF office. In Myitkyina, an Inter-Agency coordination meeting is organized on fortnightly basis with the participation of the government.

On 24 October the Kachin State Government Social Affairs Minister and RRD Director visited community leaders in Waingmaw to explain to them how relief support is being organized. They were accompanied by representatives of UNICEF, UNHCR and OCHA.

In order to strengthen the capacity for assessment, identification of beneficiaries and relief distribution to address needs also in other townships in Kachin state, MRCS with support of ICRC has conducted a 4-day Emergency Response Team training in Myitkyina last week. MRCS will continue to offer its services to the local authorities in assessment and provision of relief supplies. The communication system of MRCS volunteers will be strengthened by providing telecommunications equipment.

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