

HIGHLIGHTS

- IDPs in camps in Rakhine State urgently need repairs to their shelters ahead of the rainy season
- Dry season water shortages in Rakhine State
- Thousands displaced following renewed clashes in northern Shan State in February and March
- Majority of people in flood evacuation sites have now been resettled, but over 3,000 remain displaced
- Major assessment by FAO and WFP shows that food security and livelihoods are still at risk following 2015 floods
- Putting 'Protection' at the heart of humanitarian action in Myanmar

FIGURES

# of IDPs in Kachin and Shan states	100,000
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# of IDPs in Rakhine State	120,000
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FUNDING

\$ 190 million
requested (US\$) for the 2016 Humanitarian Response Plan

\$ 10 million
New contributions reported in 2016. (Includes \$6 million for activities in the Humanitarian Response Plan and \$4 million for other activities).



A girl in an IDP camp in Rakhine, Feb 2016. Credit: OCHA

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Rakhine: IDP shelters need urgent repair

Many IDP shelters in Rakhine in need of rehabilitation or major repairs

About 120,000 people remain displaced in 39 camps or camp-like settings across Rakhine State as a result of the inter-communal violence that broke out in 2012. While some repair and maintenance work occurred in 2014 and 2015, many of the long-houses that were built in 2013 as a temporary measure to last for two years are now in very poor condition. They have weathered three monsoon seasons, as well as Cyclone Komen, which made landfall in southern Bangladesh, close to Rakhine State, in July 2015. The next rainy season is two months away. Ensuring that people are protected from the elements and that they are able to live in dignified conditions is an increasingly critical need. This is particularly the case in Pauktaw and Myebon townships, where many shelters will have to be almost entirely rebuilt, with only 5 per cent of the original building structure being salvageable. Water and sanitation infrastructure is also in need of repair and maintenance in many IDP camps.



Shelter damaged by Cyclone Komen, Nov 2015. Credit: OCHA

In March 2016, the Rakhine State Government, Shelter Cluster Lead UNHCR, the Norwegian Refugee Council, Lutheran World Federation (LWF), the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and OCHA conducted a joint assessment of IDP camps in Sittwe, Pauktaw and Myebon townships. The 21 camps in these three townships account for over 90 per cent of all remaining IDPs across the state. Needs were categorized between full rehabilitation (requiring an almost total rebuild), major repair (requiring 60 per cent to be repaired), and minor repair (requiring 20 per cent to be repaired). The assessment found that in Sittwe Township of the 1,600 eight-unit structures, more than 60 per cent are in need of major repairs. In Pauktaw Township, the situation is worse: 80 per cent of the 298 eight-unit structures in three of the four camps need full rehabilitation. This is indicative of the more exposed location of these camps. The fourth camp in Pauktaw had significant shelter repair and maintenance in 2015. Significant work is also required in the one large camp in Myebon Township, which contains 89 long-houses.

Additional funds urgently needed

Based on these detailed assessments, the combined financial needs to complete rehabilitation and repairs stands at US\$3.2 million. UNHCR as Cluster Lead and LWF

If funding needs are not met, 38,500 IDPs living in shelters in need of major repairs or full rehabilitation in Sittwe Township will have to survive the rainy season in very poor quality shelters

have committed \$1.1 million and \$0.5 million respectively, leaving a remaining gap of \$1.6 million. Efforts to address this shortfall continue. To date, it is not known what the Rakhine State Government may be able to contribute. The funding currently available is being prioritized for Pauktaw and Meybon townships where the needs are most urgent, with the balance to be spent in some of the camps in Sittwe Township. Implementation will either be directly by UNHCR and LWF or by cluster partners, notably DRC.

If the \$1.6 million funding gap is not closed, thousands of displaced people, including small children and elderly people who are already living in precarious conditions, will be exposed to another rainy season without the necessary shelter repairs being undertaken. This includes 36,000 people in Sittwe Township in temporary shelters that are in need of major repair and 2,500 people in temporary shelters that are in need of full rehabilitation.

Thousands face water shortages in Myanmar, with Rakhine badly affected

Many communities affected by serious water shortages, including IDPs in camps

Myanmar is facing water shortages in many parts of the country. Rakhine is one of the most severely affected areas. The water shortages here are compounded by the fact that many ponds were damaged during the 2015 floods, leading to a reduction in pond water storage capacity. According to the National Disaster Management Committee, over 900 villages experienced water shortages in March and the Government has been distributing water by truck and providing other support to hundreds of affected villages.

Even before the current water shortages, the rural population in Rakhine had the lowest access to improved water supply and sanitation services of all the states and regions in Myanmar, with only 33 per cent of the population having access to improved water and only 24 per cent having access to improved sanitation. The Government, supported by civil society organizations (CSOs), is working to improve access to water and sanitation for vulnerable communities in townships across Rakhine State.

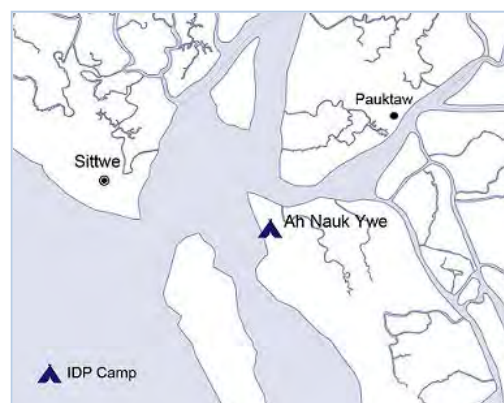
Water and sanitation infrastructure is also in need of repair and maintenance in many IDP camps across the state. Currently, an estimated 20,000 IDPs are facing acute water shortages, according to the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Cluster. When the rains do come, there is a risk of high rates of diarrheal-related diseases unless critical repairs to water and sanitation services are urgently carried out.

Costly project to deliver water by boat to displaced people in Ah Nauk Ywe camp

Access to sufficient clean water is a major concern for over 4,200 displaced people who live in Ah Nauk Ywe camp in Pauktaw Township, Rakhine State. The only known source of fresh water in the area is rain collected in ponds. This traditional method of collecting water is widely used in the area for drinking, domestic and farming purposes, with more than 25,000 households dependent on ponds for drinking water in Pauktaw Township, according to the 2014 National Census. Solidarités International, the INGO providing water and sanitation services in Pauktaw camps, operates a water treatment station that treats and disinfects the raw water from ponds prior to distribution. However, the ponds typically dry up at the height of the dry season in March until the rains start again in June.

For the past three years, the Rakhine State Government, UNICEF and Solidarités International have had to deliver water by boat to ensure that people in the camp have access to safe drinking and domestic water during this period. However, water boating is

Ah Nauk Ywe camp in Pauktaw, Rakhine



An estimated 20,000 IDPs in camps in Rakhine are currently facing critical water shortages

Additional ponds will address water shortages in Ah Nauk Ywe camp, where the only access to drinking water during the height of the dry season is water boating

a costly, unreliable and unsustainable solution. Solidarités International is therefore implementing a project with funding from the Myanmar Humanitarian Fund to build additional ponds in Pauktaw camps that will increase the quantity and quality of water available during the dry season. According to Solidarités International, the new ponds will enable people to have access to water throughout the dry season, reducing the risk of a potable water shortage and related water-borne diseases.

Despite these initiatives, a longer-term solution needs to be found for the families in Ah Nauk Ywe camp. As with some other IDP camps in Rakhine, the camp is on low ground in an exposed area, making people here highly vulnerable to cyclones, tropical storms and flooding during the rainy season. The displaced people in this camp are mostly from Pauktaw town. They were relocated to Ah Nauk Ywe following the violence in 2012.

Fighting displaces thousands in Shan State

Over 7,000 newly displaced by fighting in Shan State since February 2016

Armed conflict erupted in early February between the Restoration Council for Shan State (RCSS)/Shan State Army South (SSA-S) and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA) in Kyaukme Township, northern Shan State. As a result, about 4,500 people were displaced to Kyaukme town and surrounding villages. There were 22 IDP sites, according to state authorities and local CSOs. Since late February, displaced families started returning to their villages and as of 21 March, all those displaced had returned home.

Fighting in Nahmkan Township in February also forced over 1,200 people to flee to Mong Wee village, where over 200 people had also been displaced in December 2015. Around 200 people have since been able to return to their villages. In March, clashes between the Myanmar Military and the TNLA displaced over 1,400 people to Mong Yu Lay and Nam Hpet Kar villages, in Kutkai Township. Displaced families are mainly staying with host families and in two communal buildings. Small-scale and sporadic displacements were also reported in other areas of northern Shan State during the reporting period.

Civilians bear the brunt of the conflict

Local CSOs have reported abductions, looting of civilian property and other protection problems. Given limited access to these areas, particularly during times of active conflict, the UN has not been able to independently verify these reports. In some villages around Kyaukme town, disabled and elderly people and their carers were unable to leave areas of conflict due to the fighting. On 2 March, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Myanmar [issued a statement](#) expressing deep concern over rising tensions and armed clashes in Northern Shan State. The statement mentioned the following: “We remind all parties to armed conflict in Myanmar that they are bound to uphold their legal obligations to respect International Humanitarian and Human Rights Law. This includes the ensuring of protection of civilians, allowing safe passage to people fleeing conflict areas, allowing access of humanitarian assistance, and taking every possible measure to avoid harm to the civilian population. In addition, all parties to the conflict are obliged to protect the human rights of all, including when these rights come under threat as a result of military clashes.”

Displacement in northern Shan, Jan – March 2016



Over 7,300 people were newly displaced in northern Shan in 2016. Over 4,700 of these people were able to return home again by the end of March

Early recovery support is still required for returnees in southern Shan State

Local NGOs and CSOs at the forefront of the response

Relief items and services were provided to displaced families by state authorities, local CSOs/NGOs and the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS). The UN, INGOs and ICRC also provided assistance including water and sanitation support, hygiene kits, non-food-items, shelter materials, mobile health clinics and psychosocial support. While there is still limited information on the situation in villages of return, as some houses were reportedly burned down and livestock killed, including in Kyaukme Township, some support will likely be needed to help returning families once the security situation allows.

In southern Shan, most of the over 6,000 people displaced by conflict in October 2015 have since been able to return to their places of origin, with around 1,300 people still displaced in Hai Pa, Mongshu Township, as of late March. Many returned to find their houses had been destroyed or damaged during the conflict. Livelihoods support is still needed for these families.

New homes for flood affected families

Over 7,000 people relocated to new housing since October 2015

Relief and reconstruction efforts have continued following the floods that affected 12 out of 14 states and regions in Myanmar in 2015. The Government of Myanmar has been leading the reconstruction of public infrastructure, providing support for the farming sector, building new housing for people who lost their homes or who had to evacuate due to the risk of landslides, and providing other recovery support, with assistance from local groups and the international community.

Of the approximately 11,000 people who were staying in flood evacuation sites in Chin State and Sagaing Region at the end of October 2015, over 7,000 people had been relocated as mid-March 2016. People being relocated to new sites or returning to their villages of origin have received new housing or materials from the Government. In many of the relocation sites the state government, MRCS, the UN and national and international NGOs have provided water and sanitation facilities, cash assistance and other support. There is however still a need for improved access to healthcare, schools and other basic services at some sites, as well as for improved roads in villages, and an overall need to help people reestablish their livelihoods to ensure long-term recovery. Some families in Kalay Township also still need support to rebuild their houses.



Newly built houses for flood affected people in Kalay, Sagaing, March 2016. Credit: OCHA

Some relocation sites for people affected by floods and landslides in 2015 still require water and sanitation facilities, access to schools, healthcare and other basic services

3,300 people remain in evacuation sites

Around 1,900 people remain in evacuation sites in Hakha Town, the state capital of Chin State, where they are receiving assistance from the state government, local CSOs, MRCS, the UN and INGOs. Most families expect to be relocated to newly built resilient housing ahead of the rainy season in June. There is however still a need for water supply, healthcare and education services, as well as support to help people make a living in the relocation area as it is too far for people to travel to Hakha. Solutions also still need to be found for families who lost their rental accommodation due to the floods and landslides.

In Tongzan Township, also in Chin State, over 1,300 people were still staying in evacuation sites as of mid-March. Some families expect to be relocated by the state government by April to other safer areas within Chin State. However, there are several hundred households, who left their villages on their own accord and are staying at spontaneous sites. Going forward, a solution will need to be found for these households. In addition, there is also a need for increased shelter, water and sanitation, food

assistance and other support at some IDP sites that are located in the forest in hard to reach areas of Chin State.

Food insecurity in flood affected areas

Vulnerable communities in Rakhine and Chin states hardest hit

A joint assessment focusing on food security and the impact of the July/August 2015 floods on the agricultural sector was conducted by the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) and the World Food Programme (WFP) in late November/early December 2015. The [report of the Crop and Food Security Assessment Mission](#), released in March, found that poor rural communities are still experiencing increased levels of food insecurity. In particular, people in the hardest-hit areas of Chin and Rakhine states – already vulnerable before the floods – are still suffering from food insecurity, which serves to highlight their vulnerability to withstand similar emergencies in the future.

The assessment indicates that the extensive flooding of agricultural land caused severe localized losses to the 2015 monsoon season crops, especially paddy rice, in Chin, Rakhine, Sagaing, Ayeyarwaddy, Yangon and parts of Bago. In the worst affected areas such as Rakhine State, the annual paddy production is estimated to have decreased by as much as 15 per cent. Already vulnerable farming households and communities in remote areas such as Chin and Rakhine states continue to face severe food shortages during 2016 and to require assistance.

The floods also affected other parts of the agricultural sector. The highest livestock losses were recorded in Rakhine, Sagaing, Magwe and Ayeyarwaddy. More than 13,500 hectares of fish ponds and almost 23,000 hectares of shrimp ponds were damaged, 99 per cent of which were in Rakhine State.

In addition, the assessment found that the flooding exacerbated malnutrition in areas where malnutrition rates were already high, most notably Rakhine and Chin states. According to UNICEF, the Nutrition Sector lead, other factors also influenced the rise in malnutrition rates in these areas, including a change to the global WHO child growth standards, which along with the floods and chronic vulnerabilities aggravated the situation. Continued capacity building of local government systems to periodically monitor children's nutrition and deliver prevention and nutrition treatment interventions should be prioritized, according to the Nutrition Sector.

Recovery must focus on building resilience for future disasters

The FAO and WFP assessment report highlights the immediate need to rebuild livelihoods. Key recommendations for immediate assistance include amongst other things distribution of seeds for the 2016 monsoon planting season in the most affected areas; replacement of livestock to avoid fall in protein intake; distribution of fishing equipment; rebuilding of fishing gear and boats, and rehabilitation of fish ponds. The report also includes recommendations for long-term recovery, resilience building and disaster risk reduction, to enable people to better cope with future emergencies.

Funding shortages

The FAO/WFP report warns that people may face severe food shortages in the coming months and still require relief assistance. WFP intends to continue its flood response for 104,000 people until mid-2016 through relief, community asset rehabilitation and nutrition projects in an effort to prevent a deterioration of the food security and nutrition situation. However, WFP currently faces a funding shortfall of US\$ 34 million to meet all food

People in the hardest-hit areas of Chin and Rakhine states – already vulnerable before the 2015 floods – are still suffering from food insecurity



A woman stands amidst debris on her land in Sagaing following the 2015 floods, Dec. 2015. Credit: FAO/Hkun Lat

New OCHA Resources

Myanmar: Recent displacement in northern Shan State (as of 16 March 2016)

Myanmar: Recent displacement in northern Shan State (as of 29 February 2016)

Myanmar: the plight of internally displaced people and the Muslim minority must not be forgotten (1 March)

Myanmar: Recent displacement in northern Shan State (as of 16 February 2016)

2015 Humanitarian Response Plan Monitoring Report: January - December 2015

Myanmar: Emergency Response Fund 2015 Overview (4 Feb)

Myanmar: Snapshot of displacement and population movement in 2015 (as of 25 Jan 2016)

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assistance needs in Myanmar in 2016. Meanwhile, to meet the needs of all those targeted for assistance, FAO requires further funding of US\$ 7 million.

Putting “Protection” at the heart of humanitarian action in Myanmar

Delivering training to IDPs in Rakhine to strengthen protection in camps

Displaced people in Myanmar face a range of protection concerns, including sexual and gender-based violence, restriction on movement, exposure to land mines, inability to attend schools due to lack of ID cards, and arbitrary arrest.

However, what does ‘protection’ mean in practice, and how can protection principles be used to improve the daily lives of those who have been displaced? These were just two of the questions posed in recent trainings in camps for internally displaced people (IDPs) in Rakhine State. The sessions brought together nearly 800 IDPs, who work as staff for international organizations delivering water, sanitation and hygiene interventions, to discuss protection issues, including gender-based violence and child protection.

A total of 38 sessions, aimed at ensuring that protection is mainstreamed and integrated into all areas of humanitarian response – including water and sanitation, health, shelter and food security – were held in 2015 in IDP camps in Sittwe, Pauktaw and Myebon townships. Some workshops were led by IDP women, leading sessions among their male and female peers and ensuring that the voices of IDPs themselves are at the centre of discussions. The mixed-gender groups ensured that women were given the opportunity to share their opinions and actively participate.

Strengthening commitment to the “Centrality of Protection” in Myanmar

These trainings were part of wider efforts by the humanitarian community in Myanmar to put protection at the heart of humanitarian action. This stems from a 2013 commitment by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee to the “Centrality of Protection in Humanitarian Action”. This involves ensuring that humanitarian organizations place the perspectives of IDPs and affected people at the centre of their activities, recognizing the different risks and needs experienced by women, men, girls and boys. This broad holistic approach demands the involvement of all humanitarian actors.

In Myanmar, the Protection Sector worked with the humanitarian community to operationalize the commitment to the Centrality of Protection throughout 2015. This involved setting up complaints mechanisms in Kachin IDP camps, as well as activities to ensure that humanitarian programmes in Kachin, Rakhine and Shan states, as well as in flood-affected areas of Myanmar, take into account simple principles, such as equality and non-discrimination in service provision. Analysis was also done to identify and define a common understanding of the key threats and risks facing the security, rights and dignity of individuals, in order to align the programmes of different organizations.

In 2016, the humanitarian community in Myanmar continues to further integrate protection into programmes and activities. In March, the Protection Sector conducted a series of consultations, which identified a number of follow-up actions. These include reinforcing the commitment to protection by UN and NGO actors; strengthening analysis, information-sharing, communication and advocacy around protection; and ensuring that protection is integrated into all humanitarian activities.



A displaced woman in an IDP camp in Rakhine, March 2015. Credit: OCHA