

DREF operation update



International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

Myanmar: Cyclone Giri

DREF operation n° MDRMM003
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Update n° 1
18 Nov 2010

The IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent response to emergencies. The DREF is a vital part of the IFRC's disaster response system and increases the ability of national societies to respond to disasters.

Period covered by this update: 29 Oct to 15 Nov 2010.

Summary:

On 29 Oct 2010, CHF 250,000 (USD 255,775 or EUR 183,300) was allocated from the IFRC's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to support the Myanmar Red Cross Society in delivering immediate assistance to 3,750 households (18,750 beneficiaries) affected by Cyclone Giri. Replenishment of DREF funds have been received from AusAID (via Australian Red Cross), Canadian Red Cross and the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department (DG ECHO).

The DREF operation is expected to be implemented over three months, and will therefore be completed by 31 January 2011. A final report will be made available three months after the end of the operation, by 30 April 2011.

DREF assistance (for the 3,750 households mentioned above) is part of the MRCS's overall emergency response which targets 14,300 households over a four-month period, with the support of the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement.

MRCS support to communities consists mainly of the supply of drinking water and distributions of non-food items to most affected households comprising displaced families living in evacuation centres or with host families, as well as families who sustained severe loss or damage. To date, the society has reached 3,782 affected families with distributions of relief items. MRCS is being aided in its efforts by the IFRC country office in Myanmar, International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and French Red Cross.



The Myanmar Red Cross Society has provided relief assistance to a total of 3,782 affected households, so far. (Photo: MRCS)

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The situation

Category 4 Cyclone Giri made landfall in western Myanmar's Rakhine State on 22 October at about 8.00 pm (local time), triggering storms, heavy rains and huge tidal surges in coastal areas. Tidal surges hit the islands and coastal areas seven to eight metres above normal water levels. The speed of winds measured 177 kph (110 mph) upon landfall.

The cyclone damaged houses, buildings, and infrastructure in its path towards Magway, Mandalay and Sagaing regions. Some communities have also sustained damage to livelihoods. The most affected areas are the coastal townships of Rakhine State, especially Kyaukphyu, Minbya, Myebon and Pauktaw. Several townships in Magway Region¹, including Salin, Seikphyu, Pakokku and Pauk, were also affected to varying degrees. Many roads, bridges, utility and telecommunications facilities and houses have been partly or completely destroyed. Power supply and phone lines have been cut off and most roads, if not all, are currently inaccessible. Relief teams are relying mainly on waterways to reach affected communities.

According to the reports received so far from MRCS assessment teams and local data collected in the affected areas, the estimated damage caused by the cyclone in Rakhine State is as follows:

Estimated damage to homes in Rakhine State

Total no. townships affected	Total no. houses severely damaged	Total no. houses partially damaged	Total no. households affected	Total no. people affected
8	20,380	30,564	50,944	254,720

People whose homes were completely or partially destroyed are now still staying in temporary shelters set up in various places by local authorities and the MRCS, and some are living with relatives.

The Myanmar government and local authorities prepared themselves for a timely response, and search and rescue efforts before the cyclone hit the country. State radio and television announcements warned communities about the storm in advance. Local authorities evacuated people to safer places. Red Cross volunteers took an active part in relaying early warning messages to people living in areas at risk, setting up relief camps and helping people evacuate in time.

The Myanmar government also immediately mobilized its National Disaster Preparedness Central Committee (NDPCC). It sent a mission to the affected areas in the morning (of 23 Oct) after the cyclone to assess the situation. The mission was composed of senior officials of the Ministry of Transport, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement; and the Ministry of Home Affairs. Local authorities and communities have been providing assistance to the population through distributions of relief items and the establishment of temporary shelters. The authorities have sent food, water and relief supplies to affected areas by plane and helicopter, and plan to airlift more relief supplies in the coming days. Rescue teams from fire brigades are working in affected areas.



In the coastal townships of Rakhine State, the hardest-hit area of Cyclone Giri, a total of 50,944 families sustained severe or partial damage to their homes. (Photo: MRCS)

International and local humanitarian organizations including the Myanmar Red Cross Society, as well as the UN, have dispatched assessment teams to the affected areas and have started distributions of relief

¹ Myanmar consists of state or regional administrative structures.

items in close consultation with local authorities. At this stage of the operation, assessment information is being verified by various organizations, and the recently activated cluster mechanism is in the process of consolidating the data.

Coordination and partnerships

Red Cross Red Crescent Movement coordination

The MRCS emergency task force formed on 23 Oct, includes representatives of IFRC, ICRC, and French Red Cross. The four parties are maintaining daily coordination to aid effective assessments and a timely response. IFRC has deployed a senior field officer to Kyaukphyu township in Rakhine State, and a French Red Cross officer has been stationed in Minbya township in the same state, to facilitate coordination with local authorities, MRCS branches and other agencies in the field. The IFRC country office is supporting the MRCS in assessments, data collection, operational planning in various sectors, and volunteer management, among others. It has requested travel authorizations to the affected areas for its delegates. The IFRC's Asia Pacific zone office in Kuala Lumpur and its Southeast Asia regional office in Bangkok are also supporting the operation with additional technical support and close contact with the media and donors.

French Red Cross has offered MRCS 75 plastic rolls (for shelter purposes) which will assist about 350 households. The ICRC delegation in the country is also on standby to provide support.

Inter-agency coordination

IFRC is a member of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT)² and the International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGO) Forum, and closely coordinates with the UN as well national and international non-governmental organizations at a central and local level. IFRC has contributed to the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) *Country Contingency Plan* and is the convener of the emergency shelter cluster in natural disasters. IFRC and MRCS are also members of the CERF (Central Emergency Relief Fund of the UN) working group.

The IFRC country office hosted a first informal shelter coordination meeting on 26 Oct, ahead of the activation of the cluster mechanism by the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in the first week of November. IFRC is currently the convener of the emergency shelter cluster for the Cyclone Giri response and is participating together with MRCS in other cluster meetings covering health; water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), and livelihoods.

Based on a caseload of 52,000 affected households in need of emergency shelter, the shelter cluster has so far registered confirmed distributions and/or pledges from the UN, international NGOs and the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement for family kits (non-food items) and shelter kits (covering 83 per cent of the needs) and for community shelter toolkits (covering 56 per cent of the needs). Presently, UNHCR³, UNDP⁴ and IOM⁵ are preparing a CERF funding application to cover the remaining needs for shelter kits and community shelter toolkits.

MRCS and UNICEF⁶ have an agreement on the distribution of 1,000 family kits and 1,000 sheets of tarpaulins. The commodities are on standby, ready for distributions. Twenty Red Cross volunteers each from Munaung, Thantwe and Toungup townships in Rakhine State, are set to participate in this joint intervention.

MRCS has positioned its senior staff from headquarters at the three current coordination centres of the government and the UN, situated in Sittwe, Myebon and Kyaukphyu townships in Rakhine State, to strengthen liaison efforts with local authorities and national and international actors.

The World Food Programme (WFP) as cluster lead for logistics, is providing mobile storage units and has set up a logistics hub in Sittwe township. The government continues to provide boat transport for relief items from Yangon to Sittwe.

WFP and partners plan to distribute rice to 200,000 people over the next three months. Up to 8 November, 1,367 tonnes of rice had been dispatched to affected areas, while a total of 84,000 beneficiaries have already received 784 tonnes of rice. Local authorities have distributed 1,200 bags of rice to 5,000 people on

² The in-country inter-agency coordinating body for the response to Cyclone Nargis. The Humanitarian Country Team replaced the Inter-Agency Standing Committee as the main forum for inter-agency coordination in Myanmar, in mid-2009.

³ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

⁴ United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

⁵ International Organization for Migration (IOM).

⁶ United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

a daily basis in Myebon township. In Kyaukphyu township, the Department of Social Welfare has distributed 100 bamboo poles and a tarpaulin sheet to each of 1,000 affected households, as well as 200 tents for 1,270 evacuees. Six Myanmar non-governmental organizations are planning to provide emergency food assistance (rice, oil, salt and pulses) to 5,000 affected people for one week. Action Aid Myanmar has distributed food to 1,000 families in Kyaukphyu and Myebon townships. ACF⁷ continues its distribution of two-week nutrition rations to 3,000 households in Minbya and Myebon townships in Rakhine State.

The WASH cluster meeting was convened with Merlin, Save the Children, WFP and Swanyei (a local NGO), on 2 Nov, in Myebon. Of the 12 village tracts in Kwin Chaung sub-township, MRCS has taken the responsibility for assisting three village tracts (about 987 households) for water and sanitation purposes, while NCV⁸ is taking charge of nine village tracts (about 800 households). In addition to Kwin Chaung, MRCS is also responsible for assisting nine village tracts in Dai Bon sub-township. Four water and sanitation staff members and one assessment team member are engaged in assessments on the feasibility of emergency water purification units set up in both these sub-townships. District health teams are chlorinating the water sources in the affected areas in Kyaukphyu township. Sanitary latrine coverage is reported to have been at 65 per cent in Kyaukphyu township before the cyclone. CARE is planning to rehabilitate dug wells, and undertake pond cleaning and chlorination in Taung Zin Kan Station Area in Myebon for the benefit of 1,000 households. IRC⁹ is planning to reach 40,000 people in Myebon township with activities which include emergency water treatment units, pond construction and pond cleaning. Action Aid is planning activities which include well rehabilitation in 15 villages each in Myebon and Kyaukphyu townships. OXFAM is planning to cover 25 villages in Myebon, 13 villages in Kyaukphyu, and 25 villages in Pauktaw, with response activities which include pond cleaning.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

On 20 October, MRCS headquarters and state/regional branches issued an early warning to its respective township branches. The branches in turn, in close cooperation with local authorities, helped alert the communities concerned and were actively involved in the evacuation of people in areas at risk to safer places. Red Cross volunteers were also placed on standby.

In the immediate aftermath of the cyclone, MRCS volunteers represented a vital part of the society's emergency response. Together with rescue teams from the fire brigade, they were involved in rescuing affected people and providing first aid and other necessary assistance. They helped clear blocked or damaged roads in order to access the most affected villages. Red Cross volunteers are also busy with assessments, as well as caring for people staying in temporary shelters in stadiums, monasteries and schools.

During this reporting period, the national society deployed 141 volunteers from Yangon, Mandalay and West Bago regions to affected areas to provide relief support. They have been aided by senior volunteers at state and township levels, as well as MRCS officers from headquarters.

Many of the cyclone-affected areas are townships in which MRCS has implemented its community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM) programme with the support of IFRC. In each township, MRCS trained six community members as CBDRM facilitators who then conducted multiplier courses in villages. These trained people played important roles in relaying early warnings to their communities and continue to provide significant support in the ongoing assessments and the



A total of 23 'safe and well' phone calls for displaced villagers, was facilitated by the Restoring Family Links unit of the Myanmar Red Cross Society. (Photo: MRCS)

⁷ Action Against Hunger (ACF).

⁸ Noble Compassionate Volunteer (NCV), a local non-governmental organization.

⁹ International Rescue Committee.

emergency relief operation.

Progress towards objectives

Needs assessments

Objective: The immediate needs of affected people are identified to determine a Plan of Action.

Activities planned:

- Engage MRCS branches in affected townships in immediate assessments in the field.
- Dispatch three MRCS assessment teams to affected areas for detailed assessments in various sectors.
- Coordinate with local authorities and various agencies involved in assessments.
- Develop a concrete Plan of Action based on findings of assessment reports.
- Support MRCS in conducting assessments as per the relevant guidelines.
- Assist MRCS in the collection, analysis and compilation of data and operational planning.

Progress and impact:

In the immediate aftermath of Cyclone Giri, MRCS volunteers in the affected townships undertook preliminary assessments and provided initial information on people affected and damage sustained. MRCS headquarters then deployed three assessment teams (each composed of five trained staff) on 24 Oct to Kyaukphyu, Pauktaw and Minbya townships, the most affected areas in Rakhine State, to support local assessments and to verify information received. After two days, the assessment team from Kyaukphyu was redirected to Myebon (due to greater needs which were emerging there) and additional staff from Yangon were sent as replacements to Kyaukphyu. At the time of writing this update, two of the assessment teams are still in the field finalizing health; and water and sanitation sectoral assessments. Some assessment team members have also been involved in beneficiary selections and in setting up a relief distribution system.

The three assessment teams dispatched comprise trained staff from the relief, health; and water and sanitation, RFL (restoring family links) and communications departments. The teams carried out the assessments by engaging in the following actions:

- visiting affected areas.
- using standard MRCS assessment forms (which are based on IFRC basic assessment guidelines).
- meeting with Red Cross Volunteers (RCV) on the ground, the local authorities concerned, affected people, and various UN and other agencies working in Rakhine State.

Based on the findings of the assessments, a comprehensive and more detailed Plan of Action is in the process of being drawn up.

The following are the summarized needs identified by MRCS assessment teams so far, in close consultation with other humanitarian actors and local governmental authorities on the ground:

Identified needs

Sectors	Needs
Evacuation centres	Provision of safe drinking water and sanitation facilities, emergency repairs to evacuation places (e.g. tarpaulins for roofing at monasteries), first aid and basic health care, provision of family kits (non-food items).
Non-food items	Cooking utensils, clothing, bedding, mosquito nets, soap, water containers, and hygiene kits.
Water and sanitation	Provision of safe drinking water in villages, repairs to latrines and hygiene promotion, distribution of water purification tablets.
Health	First aid, disease surveillance, immunization of children, essential medical supplies (oral rehydration salts, eye ointment, diarrhoeal kits), psychosocial support; information, education and communication (IEC) materials.
Shelter	Shelter materials, tools and technical assistance, repair materials for community buildings (e.g. monasteries).

Logistics	Warehouse capacity in all townships; boats for relief distributions.
Human resources	Additional Red Cross volunteers specialized in relief distributions, psychosocial support, and community-based health and first aid

MRCS has formed an operations coordination team under the leadership of the head of the society's disaster management division. Representatives of the society's finance, logistics, communications, volunteer management and other related units are also part of the team. Clear roles and responsibilities for each sector have already been defined in order to speed up the operation. It has also activated its recently finalized contingency plan and standard operating procedures (SoP) applicable in disasters. The SoP which defines processes relating to assessments, beneficiary selections, volunteer mobilization, logistics, and roles and responsibilities at headquarters, state/region, and township branch level, has proven to be very valuable.

The society aims to assist about 14,300 households over a four-month period until end-Feb 2011, with the support of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. In this regard, it has decided to focus on the distribution of non-food items (including kitchen sets, blankets, mosquito nets and clothing), shelter kits (tarpaulins, rope, hammer, and community shelter kit) and drinking water. It will also maximize its available resources to provide health services such as first aid, hygiene promotion and psychosocial support.

Activities will be conducted in Myebon, Pauktaw, Kyaukphyu and Minbya townships of Rakhine State and Pakokku township of Magway Region.

Challenges:

The lack of access, human resources and communications are the biggest challenges at the moment. Transportation of relief items by road remains difficult in most areas, with relief teams relying mainly on waterways.

Distribution of drinking water and non-food items

Objective:

Up to 3,750 families (18,750 people) comprising most affected households¹⁰, are supplied with drinking water and non-food items.

Activities planned:

- Set clear beneficiary selection criteria and define distribution protocols.
- Deploy two water and sanitation emergency response teams and equipment to affected areas and supply drinking water.
- Procure, transport and distribute non-food items including kitchen sets, blankets, tarpaulins and mosquito nets to 3,750 families.
- Engage Red Cross volunteers in first aid, relief assistance, water and sanitation support, and clean-up activities.
- Monitor and evaluate the water supply and the distributions of non-food items.
- Develop a plan for follow-up action.

Progress and impact:

Recognizing those affected by disaster as dignified human beings, operation staff are prioritizing community participation in beneficiary selections. This is being done mainly through the active engagement of local Red Cross volunteers and community leaders through cyclone relief committees¹¹ in the affected areas, and in encouraging these community representatives to identify their own needs and possible measures to meet these needs. Guided by the IFRC's Gender Policy, the operation's beneficiary selection process will strive to be sensitive towards socially or economically-disadvantaged and excluded groups, and will give consideration to disability, gender, age, and minority. Efforts will also be made to ensure that the respective sectoral standards in SPHERE (Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response) are met.

The following people will be among the priority groups targeted for assistance:

- Families headed by single women

¹⁰ These comprise displaced families living in evacuation centres or with host families, as well as families who sustained severe loss or damage. Displaced families include those who lost their homes and belongings completely.

¹¹ The committees were established in the aftermath of the cyclone by local authorities and other stakeholders.

- Families headed by children
- Families headed by disabled persons
- Families headed by elderly persons
- Families which have not been beneficiaries or recipients of any substantial assistance from the government and other organizations.
- Families with person(s) with disabilities and other socially excluded groups.

The beneficiary selection process will take into consideration other agencies' ongoing and planned activities in the targeted areas, in order to avoid any duplication. This will be ensured through coordination with other actors through established mechanisms of the local authorities and UN system.

To date, MRCS has distributed relief items comprising non-food items and shelter kits to 3,762 families. *For details, see the table below.*

MRCS has mobilized its disaster preparedness stock from its warehouses in several strategic locations. Family kits from the central warehouse in Yangon and other warehouses nearby were transported by trucks and boats to the respective distribution areas in four affected townships. IFRC has already begun the process to replenish 3,750 sets of standard disaster preparedness stock with DREF funds, as planned. The stock is scheduled to be in MRCS warehouses before the end of this month. DREF funding covers the partial cost of shelter kits and does not cover the cost of family hygiene parcels (one of the non-food items).

Relief distributions

State or Region	Township	Village Tract	Households reached
Rakhine State	Myebon	Pyae Chaung	150
		Kukko	367
		Kung Tharyar	519
		Lang Darate	212
		Daing Bon	357
		Nga Shwe Pyin	106
		Urban Wards	481
		<i>Total</i>	<i>2,192</i>
Rakhine State	Pauktaw	Byain Thit	150
Rakhine State	Minbya	Auk Nyet Pyaw Chaung	131
		Yan Htaing	527
		Zin Yaw Maw	83
		<i>Total</i>	<i>741</i>
Rakhine State	Kyaukphyu	Rakhing Paik Seik	65
		Kalar Paik Seik	150
		Pyin Phyu Maw	74
		Thaung Yin	90
		<i>Total</i>	<i>379</i>
*Magway Region	Pakokku	Lel Yar	300
Grand total			3,762

**The support for Magway is not covered by DREF funding.*

Safe drinking water

MRCS is maximizing its three water purification units which it received upon the conclusion of the relief phase of the ongoing Cyclone Nargis operation. One water purification unit has been installed in the football grounds in Kyaukphyu township, where over 255 persons are taking shelter. The unit has been producing safe drinking water since noon on 1 Nov. The water is being stored in a 5m³ bladder tank and water quality testing is being done every hour. Up to 4 Nov, a total of 8,000 litres of safe drinking water has been distributed to the community there.

Two other water purification units have been installed in Myebon township. They have been producing safe drinking water for a total of 356 households since 7 Nov.

Hygiene promotion

MRCS volunteers have administered first aid among affected communities. While no threats of disease have been reported, volunteers have also conducted health education sessions including hygiene promotion activities for the benefit of communities. A total of 5,460 information, education and communication (IEC) materials focusing on hygiene promotion, psychosocial support, and first aid, have been distributed in the affected areas with the support of the Cyclone Nargis operation. A five-day basic first aid training in Myebon also drew 100 participants from affected communities. Other distributions during this reporting period include 19,000 units of oral rehydration salts, 1,000 gloves and 680 pieces of soap.

Restoring Family Links

The Restoring Family Links (RFL) team visited four relief camps in Myebon township and collected necessary information from the local authority. According to official data, five people are missing in Myebon. During the assessments, the RFL team disseminated information on the process of RFL services to evacuees. On 30 Oct, affected people made 'safe and well' phone calls to their relatives or received the same. In total, 23 'safe and well' phone calls have been made between Myebon and other parts of Rakhine State as well as Yangon, Kachin State, Mon State and Mandalay Region. No further requests/inquires for RFL assistance have been received from the affected areas, so far. MRCS mobilized nine CDMA (restricted access portable phones) telephones for the use of assessment and RFL teams during this reporting period. The phones were procured with the support of the Cyclone Nargis Operation for disaster management programming in Sept 2010.

Challenges:

The lack of access, human resources and communications are the biggest challenges at the moment. Transportation of relief items by road remains difficult in most areas, with relief teams relying mainly on waterways.



Villagers in a cyclone-affected area participate in a registration exercise prior to distributions. (Photo: MRCS)

How we work

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGOs\) in Disaster Relief](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of nonviolence and peace.

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