

# BURMA – FLOODS

FACT SHEET #2, FISCAL YEAR (FY) 2015

AUGUST 17, 2015

## NUMBERS AT A GLANCE

**106**

Fatalities Resulting from Recent Floods

OCHA – August 14, 2015

**1.3**

**million**

Estimated Number of People in Burma Affected by Recent Floods

OCHA – August 14, 2015

**15,197**

Houses Damaged or Destroyed by Flooding

GoB – August 14, 2015

**1.4**

**million**

Estimated Acres of Farmland Affected by Recent Floods

GoB – August 14, 2015

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Monsoon rains continue to cause severe flooding across Burma
- Floodwaters move southward, resulting in new displacement in Ayeyarwady and Bago regions
- USAID provides \$4.5 million to support relief efforts

## HUMANITARIAN FUNDING

FOR BURMA FLOODS TO DATE IN FY 2015

USAID/OFDA <sup>1</sup>	\$1,100,000
USAID/FFP <sup>2</sup>	\$3,000,000
USAID/Burma	\$400,000

**\$4,500,000**

TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE FOR BURMA FLOODS

## KEY DEVELOPMENTS

- As of August 14, flooding caused by heavy monsoon rains had resulted in more than 100 deaths, displaced nearly 300,000 households, and affected more than 1.3 million people in 13 of Burma's 14 states and regions, according to the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Coordinating Center for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management. Floods had damaged or destroyed more than 15,000 houses and affected approximately 1.4 million acres of farmland, as well as numerous roads, bridges, schools, health facilities, and monasteries, according to the Government of Burma (GoB).
- While flood levels receded in some areas, President Thein Sein of Burma urged people residing in the country's southern delta region to temporarily evacuate as floodwaters flowed southward towards Ayeyarwady, Bago, and Yangon regions. As a result, more than 61,000 households—approximately 268,000 people—had preemptively evacuated from Ayeyarwady and Bago as of August 8, according to international media reports. The GoB Department of Meteorology and Hydrology forecasts that additional rainfall in the coming days could cause further flooding in Ayeyarwady, where floods have already affected nearly 380,000 people, according to OCHA.
- Humanitarian assessments indicate that the most urgent needs among flood-affected populations include access to food and safe drinking water, agricultural support, and shelter supplies.
- Following U.S. Ambassador Derek J. Mitchell's August 4 disaster declaration for Burma, the U.S. Government (USG) has announced \$4.5 million in humanitarian support to flood-affected populations in Burma.

<sup>1</sup> USAID's Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (USAID/OFDA)

<sup>2</sup> USAID's Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP)

## HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

### **Magway Region**

- On August 8 and 9, three staff members from USAID/OFDA and USAID/Burma visited flood-affected villages in Magway, Pwint Phyu, and Yenanchaung townships, Magway Region, to assess the humanitarian situation and meet with international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) operating in the area, including Marie Stopes International, Pact, Save the Children/U.S. (SC/US), and Thirst-Aid.
- USAID staff reported that the majority of floodwaters had receded from visited areas and only a few villages in Magway Region continued to report flooding. In addition, many households in the villages had access to safe drinking water, as floodwaters contaminated few wells in the area, according to USAID staff. Numerous affected households continued to shelter at temporary displacement sites—primarily monasteries—as the floodwaters receded.
- Emergency food assistance and seeds for planting new crops to replace those inundated by floods are priority needs among flood-affected populations in Magway Region.

### **Ayeyarwady Region**

- On August 12, staff from USAID and the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) visited flood-affected villages in Ingapu Township, Ayeyarwady, to assess current needs and humanitarian conditions.
- Flooding and landslides destroyed many hand-dug wells in affected communities, while also contaminating some tube wells. Many communities lacked access to electricity, and several residents identified electric shock risks due to downed power lines. Residents reported rice crop loss of up to 70 percent due to the floods and expressed concern about replanting in time for the current season.
- Floodwaters have started to recede in most areas of Ayeyarwady as of August 13; however, water levels in major rivers remain at or near danger levels, according to local government officials.

### **Chin State, Rakhine State, and Sagaing Region**

- Although rapid needs assessments are underway throughout the affected states and regions, landslides and heavy rain have made some areas of Chin difficult to access, delaying the start of assessments in the area.
- As of August 12, the UN reported that flood levels in Rakhine had receded and the majority of evacuation centers had closed as people returned to their homes. The UN estimates that flooding has affected at least 30,000 people in the state, where more than half of reported flood deaths have occurred.
- The UN reported that floodwaters had receded in most villages in Kale Township, Sagaing as of August 11, although many roads and villages remained covered in up to three feet of mud and sediment. Local authorities, humanitarian responders, and volunteers were working to clear the mud and debris as of August 11.

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## SHELTER

- The GoB reported that flooding, landslides, and heavy winds had damaged or destroyed more than 15,000 houses across Burma as of August 14.
- Flooding and landslides have affected approximately 20,000 people in Chin and prompted nearly 6,000 people to relocate to 30 temporary evacuation centers across the state, according to the UN. Landslides in Chin have destroyed more than 1,800 houses, primarily in Hakha, Paletwa, Tedim, and Tonzang townships. Following landslides in Hakha that damaged or destroyed approximately 375 houses on August 12, local authorities evacuated nearly 4,000 people to safety, according to international media. In addition to those already displaced, approximately 500 families will be relocated in Hakha, as part of the Chin State Government's efforts to minimize risk in areas vulnerable to landslides.
- As of August 7, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) had provided blankets, lamps, and sleeping mats to approximately 600 households sheltering in eight evacuation centers in Rakhine. ICRC had also distributed more than 200 rolls of plastic sheeting to affected households in Rakhine's Maungdaw and Sittwe townships.

- MRCS is distributing emergency shelter kits containing materials for repairing damaged housing in Chin, Magway, Rakhine, and Sagaing. The UN and INGOs plan to deliver up to 10,000 emergency shelters in the coming weeks to address urgent housing needs throughout the country, according to the UN.

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## AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY

- USAID/FFP partner the UN World Food Program (WFP) and other humanitarian actors had reached approximately 386,000 flood-affected people with food assistance as of August 10, according to OCHA. As of August 14, the UN estimated that an additional 67,000 flood-affected people remained in need of food assistance.
- As of August 11, WFP had provided approximately 213,000 people with more than 910 metric tons (MT) of emergency food assistance in Bago, Chin, Kachin, Kayin, Magway, Mon, Rakhine, and Sagaing. Government assistance and private donations reached many of the affected populations in accessible areas during the initial days. However, WFP notes that most of those initial one-time donations will provide enough food for only a few days or few weeks. USAID/FFP is supporting WFP's ongoing food assistance efforts with \$3,000,000 in emergency response funding.
- As of August 12, a WFP convoy successfully transported High Energy Biscuits from Kale to affected populations in Hakha. WFP plans to use small jeeps to deliver much of the approximately 50 MT of planned food assistance to hard-to-reach areas in Chin, where damaged roads have made it difficult for large trucks to deliver emergency relief supplies.
- In response to the floods, ICRC distributed approximately 15 MT of rice to nearly 15,000 people in Rakhine's Mrauk-U town and surrounding villages. INGO Relief International (RI) also distributed 10 MT of rice to flood-affected households in Burma and plans to distribute rice seeds, in coordination with the International Rice Research Institute, to nearly 1,000 farmers to enable the replanting of crops when flood waters recede.

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## WASH AND PROTECTION

- As of August 14, approximately 500,000 people required emergency water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) interventions, according to the UN.
- As of August 12, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) had provided hygiene kits to approximately 50,000 people in Magway and Sagaing, as well as sufficient bleaching powder to clean contaminated wells that provide drinking water for an estimated 210,000 people. UNICEF is also supporting the construction of 80 emergency latrines and the creation of 10 child-friendly spaces at evacuation centers in Chin.
- UNICEF has provided four truckloads of WASH and protection supplies, such as kits to create child-friendly spaces, to flood-affected communities in Rakhine. UNICEF is also working to transport safe drinking water to areas where sea water contaminated wells and has coordinated with BBC Media Action to develop and broadcast safety messages tailored toward women and girls on local radio stations.
- With USAID/Burma support, RI had distributed approximately 800 gallons of safe drinking water, as well as water containers, water purification supplies, and mosquito nets, to flood-affected households in Mrauk-U as of August 12.

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## NATIONAL RESPONSE

- The GoB continues to lead response efforts through the national Emergency Operations Center (EOC), in coordination with MRCS and other international and local relief organizations, and has provided evacuation assistance, emergency food, safe drinking water, medicine, shelter assistance, and other relief items to flood-affected populations.
- The GoB Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement reported that it had provided more than \$448,000 worth of emergency food assistance, relief commodities, and cash assistance to flood-affected communities as of August 13. The GoB also plans to provide farmers with approximately 73 pounds of seed for every one acre of farmland, according to the GoB National Natural Disaster Management Committee.
- On August 6, Burmese Vice President U Nyan Tun met with an international delegation of disaster management specialists, including a USAID/OFDA-supported EOC technical advisor from the U.S. Forest Service, to discuss

ongoing response efforts and international coordination to meet flood-related needs. Vice President U Nyan Tun also met with EOC staff and local government officials on August 12 to discuss developing a national recovery framework, the official role of the EOC in response and recovery activities, and state-level coordination and response efforts.

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## **INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE**

- On August 7, UN Under-Secretary-General and Emergency Relief Coordinator Stephen O'Brien released \$9 million from the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF)—a pooled humanitarian fund established and managed by the UN to enable timely humanitarian assistance, especially in the early days of an emergency—to help facilitate rapid response operations in Burma and provide life-saving assistance to flood-affected populations.
  - On August 7, the E.U. announced it would provide €4.5 million—approximately \$5 million—to the flood-relief efforts.
  - The Government of Japan announced on August 14 that it would extend 325 million Japanese Yen—approximately \$2.6 million—in emergency grant aid to the GoB in response to the effects of the floods.
  - The Government of Bangladesh has provided \$800,000 in emergency relief supplies, including blankets, tents, medicines, and water purification supplies, to the GoB to assist in relief efforts.
  - The Government of India has delivered approximately 100 MT of rice, 10,000 packets of noodles, and 10 MT of medicines and WASH supplies, including chlorine tablets, to flood-affected communities in Burma.
  - On August 10, UN agencies and INGOs began a coordinated nationwide effort to gather humanitarian information through standardized humanitarian assessments, as requested by the GoB.
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## **USG RESPONSE**

- In response to the Burma floods, USAID/OFDA deployed a regional advisor to Burma on August 4 to help coordinate response operations and is providing \$1,100,000 to support emergency response efforts in Burma, including \$300,000 to SC/US to assist with emergency relief efforts in Chin State and Magway Region. USAID/OFDA continues to fund a technical advisor to support the efforts of the EOC and maintains funding support for World Vision International and IOM-led efforts to improve disaster preparedness in Kachin and Rakhine.
- On August 14, USAID's Office of Food for Peace (USAID/FFP) announced plans to provide \$3 million to the WFP to assist flood-affected populations in Burma. USAID/FFP previously contributed \$10 million in FY 2015 to WFP emergency operations in Burma in response to the country's ongoing complex emergency. A portion of prior USAID/FFP funding is benefiting flood-affected populations under WFP's Protracted Relief and Recovery Operation, which has the flexibility to respond to sudden-onset emergencies. WFP also locally and regionally procures food for internally displaced persons and other vulnerable communities in Kachin, Rakhine, and northern Shan.
- USAID and the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (State/PRM) continue to assist displaced and vulnerable populations in Burma and the region through approximately \$57 million in FY 2015 humanitarian assistance. USG-funded humanitarian projects already present in Burma when flooding occurred are working to meet the flood-relief needs of conflict-affected communities.

## USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE FOR BURMA FLOODS PROVIDED IN FY 2015<sup>1</sup>

IMPLEMENTING PARTNER	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	AMOUNT
<b>USAID/OFDA<sup>2</sup></b>			
Implementing Partners	Humanitarian Assistance	Countrywide	\$800,000
SC/US	Humanitarian Assistance	Chin State, Magway Region	\$300,000
<b>TOTAL USAID/OFDA ASSISTANCE</b>			<b>\$1,100,000</b>
<b>USAID/FFP</b>			
WFP	Local and Regional Food Procurement	Countrywide	\$3,000,000
<b>TOTAL USAID/FFP ASSISTANCE</b>			<b>\$3,000,000</b>
<b>USAID/BURMA<sup>3</sup></b>			
Implementing Partners	Humanitarian Assistance	Countrywide	\$400,000
<b>TOTAL USAID/BURMA ASSISTANCE</b>			<b>\$400,000</b>
<b>TOTAL USAID HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE FOR BURMA FLOODS IN FY 2015</b>			<b>\$4,500,000</b>

<sup>1</sup> Year of funding indicates the date of commitment or obligation, not appropriation, of funds.

<sup>2</sup> USAID/OFDA funding includes actual, obligated, and planned amounts as of August 17, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> USAID/Burma funding includes funding repurposed from existing awards.

## PUBLIC DONATION INFORMATION

- The most effective way people can assist relief efforts is by making cash contributions to humanitarian organizations that are conducting relief operations. A list of humanitarian organizations that are accepting cash donations for disaster responses around the world can be found at [www.interaction.org](http://www.interaction.org).
- USAID encourages cash donations because they allow aid professionals to procure the exact items needed (often in the affected region); reduce the burden on scarce resources (such as transportation routes, staff time, and warehouse space); can be transferred very quickly and without transportation costs; support the economy of the disaster-stricken region; and ensure culturally, dietary, and environmentally appropriate assistance.
- More information can be found at:
  - USAID Center for International Disaster Information: [www.cidi.org](http://www.cidi.org) or +1.202.821.1999.
  - Information on relief activities of the humanitarian community can be found at [www.reliefweb.int](http://www.reliefweb.int).

USAID/OFDA bulletins appear on the USAID website at <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/working-crises-and-conflict/responding-times-crisis/where-we-work>