

# HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PLAN MYANMAR

## MID-YEAR REPORT

2023

1 JANUARY TO 30 JUNE 2023



# About

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This document is consolidated by OCHA on behalf of the Humanitarian Country Team and partners. The Humanitarian Response Plan is a presentation of the coordinated, strategic response devised by humanitarian agencies in order to meet the acute needs of people affected by the crisis. It is based on, and responds to, evidence of needs described in the Humanitarian Needs Overview.

## PHOTO ON COVER

A child pumps water out of a hand pipe installed by community members of a new village set up by IDPs in Kachin, 2022. Credit: UNHCR

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# Table of Contents

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<b>04</b>	<b>Response Plan Overview</b>
<b>06</b>	<b>Key Figures</b>
<b>07</b>	<b>Changes in Context</b>
<b>08</b>	<b>Changes in Humanitarian Needs</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Response Trends</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>Adjustments to Response Priorities</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>Cluster Responses</b>
	Education
	Food Security
	Health
	Nutrition
	Protection
	Shelter/NFI/CCCM
	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)
	Coordination and Common Services

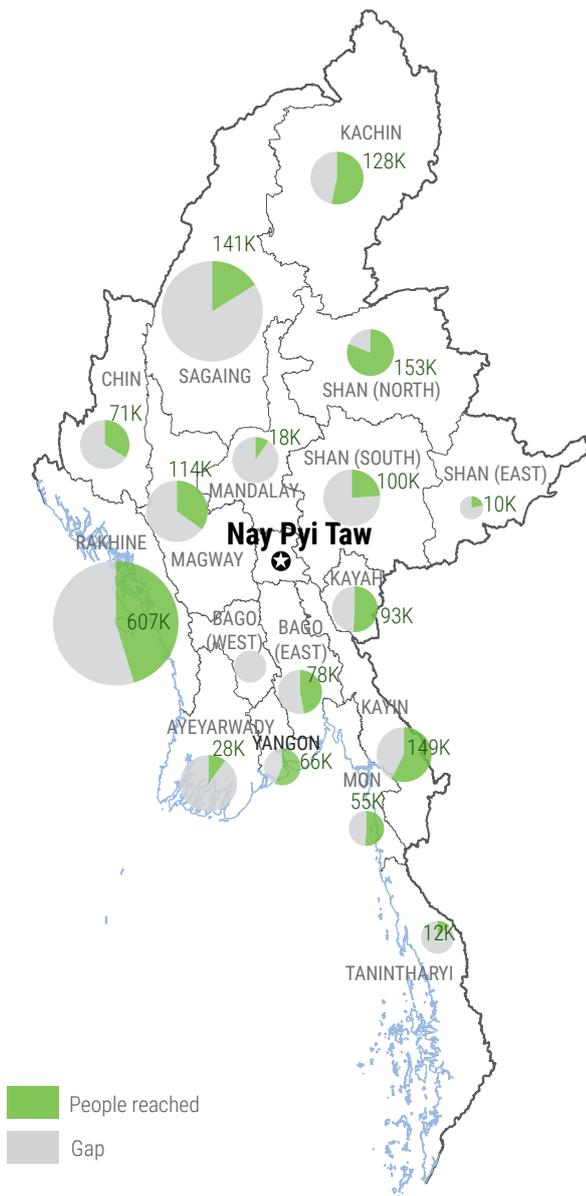
# Response Plan Overview

PEOPLE IN NEED	PEOPLE TARGETED	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)	FUNDED AS OF Q2 (US\$)
<b>17.6M</b>	<b>5M*</b>	<b>887M*</b>	<b>181M</b>

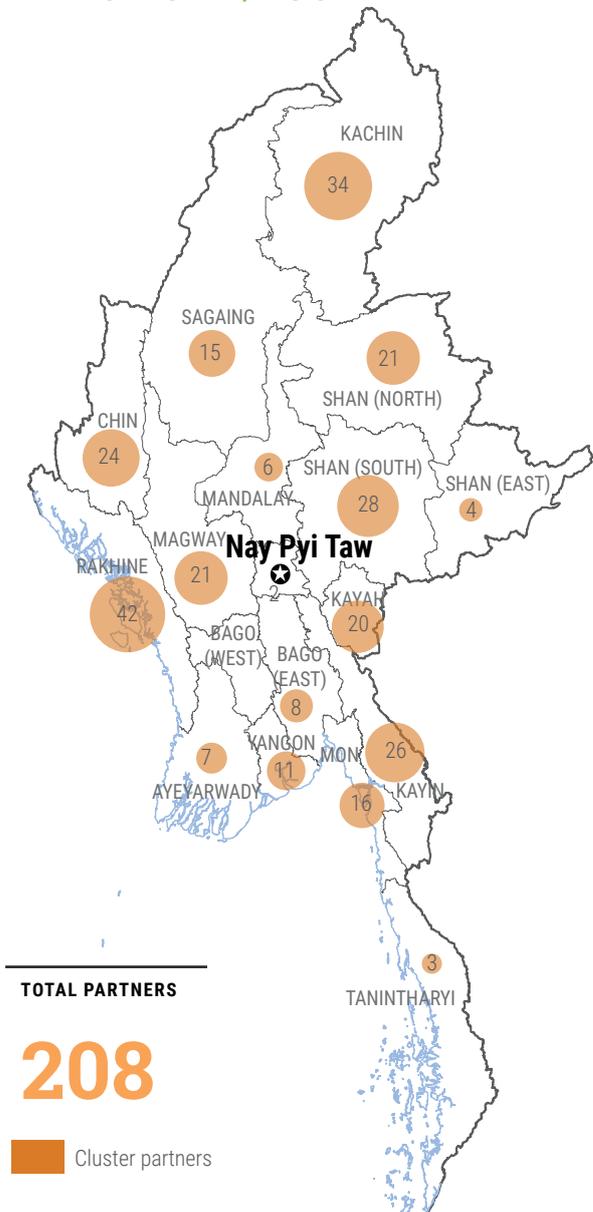
  

PEOPLE REACHED AS OF Q2	WOMEN AND GIRLS	CHILDREN (<18YRS)	ADULTS(18-59YRS)	ELDERLY(60+YRS)	WITH DISABILITIES
<b>1.8M</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>5%</b>

## PEOPLE REACHED BY STATE/REGION



## PARTNERS BY STATE/REGION



TOTAL PARTNERS

**208**

Cluster partners

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

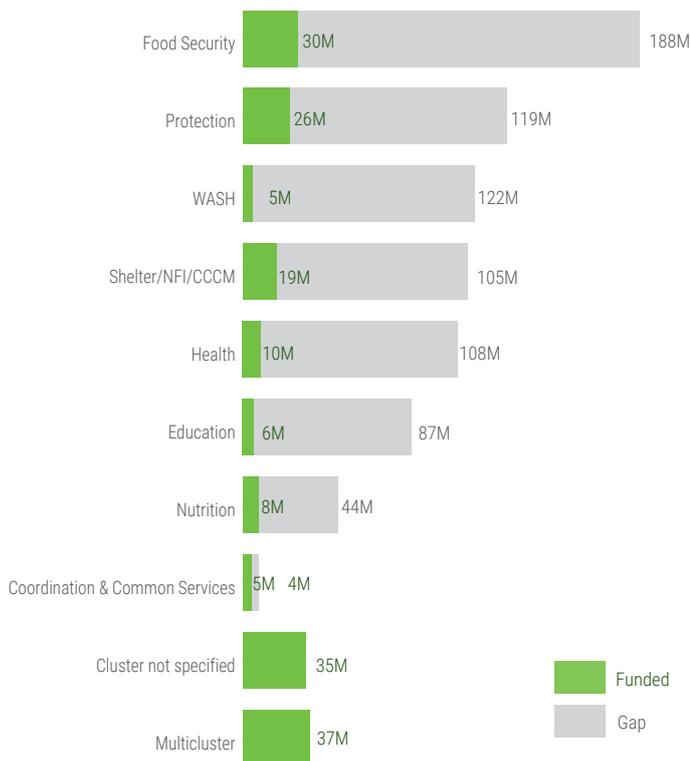
\* Includes cyclone Mocha Flash Appeal target and requirement data.

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS BY CLUSTER

CLUSTER	PEOPLE IN NEED	PEOPLE TARGETED	PEOPLE REACHED	WOMEN	% CHILDREN, ADULTS, ELDERLY (<18yrs, 18-59yrs, 60+yrs)	PERSONS WITH DISABILITY
EDUCATION	3.8M	1.5M	34% 500K	52%	95%   5%   0%	-
FOOD SECURITY	15.2M	2.6M	46% 1.2M	51%	32%   57%   11%	3%
HEALTH	10M	2.5M	23% 558K	68%	26%   67%   7%	-
NUTRITION	2.2M	590K	43% 252K	61%	77%   23%   0%	13%
PROTECTION	11.5M	2.1M	44% 929M	51%	35%   57%   8%	-
Child Protection	5.3M	1.1M	34% 370K	51%	35%   57%   8%	-
Gender Based Violence	7.7M	868K	30% 260K	51%	35%   57%   8%	1%
Mine Action	11.4M	2.1M	11% 232K	51%	35%   57%   8%	-
SHELTER/NFI/CCCM	3M	1.2M	44% 543K	52%	35%   55%   10%	1%
WASH	5.2M	1.6M	39% 637K	52%	37%   55%   8%	15%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17.6M</b>	<b>5M</b>	<b>36% 1.8M</b>	55%	40%   52%   8%	5%

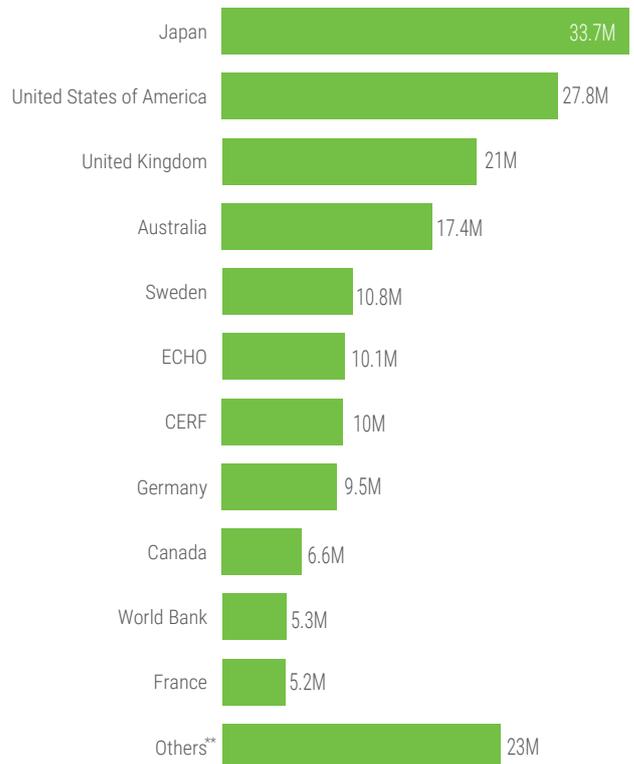
### FUNDING STATUS BY CLUSTER (US\$)

As of 30 June 2023



### FUNDING STATUS BY DONOR (US\$)

As of 30 June 2023



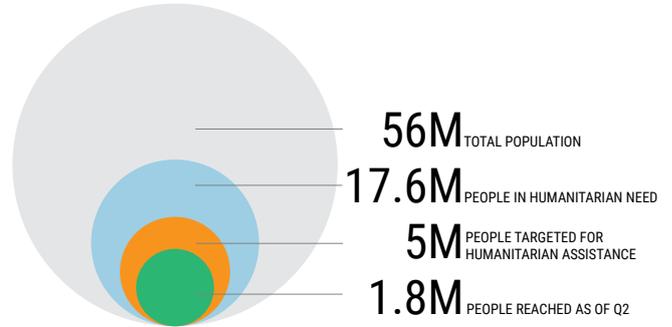
\*\* Others include Global Partnership for Education, Norway, Switzerland, Save the Children, New Zealand, MHF, Luxembourg, Ireland, UNFPA, Republic of Korea, United States Fund for UNICEF, WHO and Private (individuals & organizations).

# Key Figures as of 30 June 2023

## Humanitarian Response by Targeted Groups

POPULATION GROUP	PEOPLE TARGETED	PEOPLE REACHED	TARGETED REACHED
Internally displaced people (IDPs)	1.6M	0.7M	
Returned, resettled and locally integrated IDPs	190K	59K	
Non-displaced stateless people	447K	189K	
Vulnerable people with humanitarian needs	2.7M	0.9M	

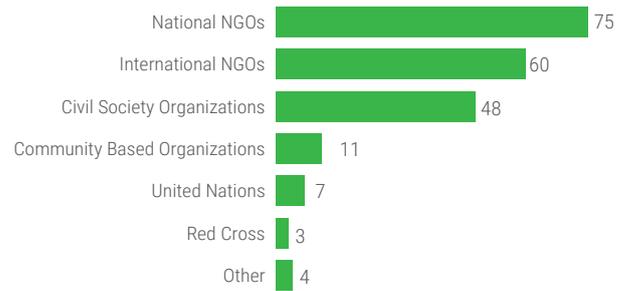
## People Targeted



## Humanitarian Response by Sex

GENDER	PEOPLE TARGETED	PEOPLE REACHED	TARGETED REACHED
Boys	828K	322K	
Girls	911K	394K	
Men	1.6M	0.5M	
Women	1.7M	0.6M	

## Humanitarian Partners by Type



## Humanitarian Response by Age

AGE	PEOPLE TARGETED	PEOPLE REACHED	TARGETED REACHED
Children (<18 yrs)	1.8M	0.7M	
Adults (18-59 yrs)	2.7M	0.9M	
Elderly (60+ yrs)	509K	0.1M	

## Humanitarian Response for Persons with Disabilities

	PEOPLE TARGETED	PEOPLE REACHED	TARGETED REACHED
Persons with disabilities	680K	96K	

## Changes in context

Almost three years since the February 2021 military takeover, the people of Myanmar remain exposed to an unrelenting political, human rights, economic and humanitarian crisis. The dire situation is posing grave protection risks for civilians, limiting access to vital services including health and education, and driving deep food insecurity. The deteriorating humanitarian situation continues to have severe consequences for millions of civilians who are bearing the brunt of widespread insecurity, escalating attacks and clashes, mass displacement, and limited access to critical services. Forced recruitment – including of children – is being increasingly reported. The use of heavy weapons, including air strikes and artillery fire, continues to claim lives and pose risks to the safety and security of civilians, while raids, random searches and arrests are of grave concern. The destruction of civilian properties, particularly homes, combined with the protracted fighting, is prolonging the displacement

of IDPs and further degrading people's already fragile living conditions. The ongoing conflict combined with spiraling inflation, is disrupting livelihood activities and depleting coping mechanisms, resulting in record humanitarian needs this year.

In May, the situation was further exacerbated by extremely severe cyclone Mocha, the worst natural disaster on record for Myanmar in nearly a decade. The cyclone and the ensuing flooding devastated communities across Rakhine, the Northwest and Kachin with thousands of homes, productive assets, vast swathes of farmland, and critical infrastructure such as hospitals and schools destroyed or severely damaged. It added an additional 500,000 people to the humanitarian target for 2023 (now 5 million people) and worsened the needs of 1.1 million people already targeted within the HRP.

### KAYAH STATE

IDP children read landmine education booklets at a temporary shelter in Kayah, 2022. Credit: UNICEF



# Change in Humanitarian Needs

## Surging displacement

The escalation of conflict across an increasing number of regions and states has led to an unprecedented displacement crisis within the country. The number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) rose sharply to 1.9 million as of 30 June 2023,<sup>1</sup> worryingly close to the initial Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) projection of 2.2 million (2.7 million total displacement minus half a million displaced people who returned home). Of these, more than 1.5 million have been displaced since the military takeover.

In the first half of 2023 alone, more than 400,000 individuals were newly displaced and are mostly unable to safely return to their places of origin due to the intensification of hostilities, severe protection risks, and widespread destruction of their homes and livelihoods. This surge in displacement has put immense strain on already limited humanitarian resources and services, exacerbated by the fact that a substantial portion of the newly displaced populations are in hard-to-reach areas where heavily localized responses are required, and access is sporadic.

Among those displaced after 1 February 2021, the Northwest (Chin, Magway, and Sagaing) accounts for more than half (approximately 55 per cent), while an additional 25 per cent are situated in the Southeast (including eastern Bago, Kayah, Kayin, Mon, southern Shan, and Tanintharyi). Nationwide, the states and regions with the highest rates of repeated/multiple displacement are Kayin, Sagaing and Magway. Additionally, close to 60,000 people have sought refuge in neighboring countries since the military takeover, with India being the predominant host among those reported to have crossed Myanmar's borders.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the dire humanitarian situation faced by affected people including IDPs, the State

Administration Council (SAC) has restricted the movement of essential supplies like food, medicine, and fuel in many affected areas. Humanitarian access to individuals in need continued to be impeded across various parts of the country, with a particularly severe impact in the Northwest. The situation is most acute in Sagaing, where telecommunication services, including internet access, have remained suspended in most townships since mid-September 2021.

In the Southeast, the number of IDPs has fluctuated during the first half of the year due to shifting levels of conflict intensity, leading to both new displacement and returns. Communities caught in conflict-affected zones are often unable to access sustained safety and essential services, often finding themselves displaced in informal sites and frequently moving from place to place. Reports persist of arrests, casualties, property destruction, and looting. Additionally, movement restrictions due to security checkpoints and roadblocks further compound the challenges faced by these people and humanitarian responders.

Most of the newly displaced people are seeking shelter in overcrowded displacement sites, remote jungles, forests, or other hard-to-reach locations, all with limited access to vital services. Both IDPs and the host communities are grappling with shortages of essential supplies, especially in the Northwest, where access, movement, and transportation have been severely restricted and household stockpiles of essential items, food and seeds have increasingly been depleted.

More than half (55 per cent) of IDPs are female while children (boys and girls) make up 40 per cent of the displaced population. These groups are especially susceptible to grave protection risks, including sexual and/or gender-based violence (GBV), exploitative labor, sexual exploitation, and abuse, as well as

<sup>1</sup> UN displacement figures

<sup>2</sup> UN displacement figures

harmful coping strategies such as early and forced marriage. Quantifying and verifying occurrences of such practices and incidents has proved exceedingly complex within the present environment. It is important to note that the absence of data should not be misconstrued as the absence of incidents.

The pre-existing needs among already vulnerable groups have intensified, particularly among the stateless Rohingya population (both displaced and non-displaced) as a result of cyclone Mocha and as a result of their extended displacement, as well as other individuals living in prolonged displacement, primarily in Kachin and northern Shan. The resilience of IDPs who are enduring prolonged displacement is steadily eroding, manifesting in a rise of detrimental coping mechanisms. These include the pursuit of hazardous migration routes, vulnerability to human traffickers, and the accumulation of unsustainable debt. The delay or absence of aid has compelled IDPs to resort to borrowing funds or food, as well as purchasing items on credit against which they have little or no means for repayment.

Reduced consumption in times of food scarcity has also led to health risks and contributed to malnutrition. Underfunding and bureaucratic complexities around importation waivers for ready-to-use therapeutic food (RUTF) for the treatment of acute malnutrition among children has resulted in acute shortages and pipeline disruptions, further impeding the timely assistance.

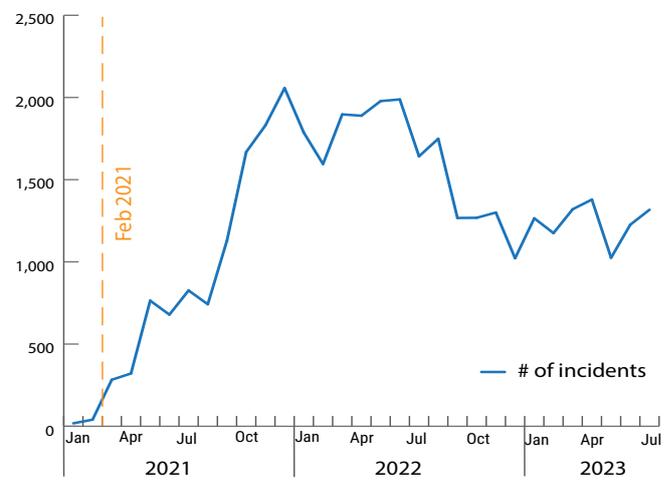
**Centrality of Protection**

The escalation of conflict during the first half of 2023 included indiscriminate and targeted attacks on civilian locations including homes, productive assets, and critical facilities including schools and hospitals. Between January and June alone, at least 37 attacks on health care were recorded,<sup>3</sup> resulting in 5 fatalities and impeding access to vital health services for people in the affected areas.

The use of air attacks continued throughout the first half of 2023, especially in the Northwest causing

hundreds of civilian fatalities and severe damage to homes and properties. On 11 April, more than 100 people, including several children, were reportedly killed in an air attack targeting a civilian gathering in Kanbalu township, in Sagaing region where the conflict has become more intense and increasingly brutal. Civilian homes and properties also continue to be targeted and set ablaze, with more than 70,000 civilian houses and structures, including religious buildings, now estimated to have been burnt down or destroyed in conflict-affected states and regions, mostly in the country’s Northwest.<sup>4</sup> These figures remain difficult to verify.

**Security Incident Trend (Jan 2021 to Jul 2023)**



Data source: ACLED

**Increase in explosive ordnance risks and incidents**

The risk and frequency of land mine, improvised explosive device (IED) and explosive ordnance (EO) incidents dramatically increased throughout the country during the first half of the year, causing hundreds of civilian fatalities and impeding livelihood activities, as well as affecting humanitarian access and programming. Between January and June alone, a total of 556 civilian casualties were recorded as a result of landmine and EO incidents across the country.<sup>5</sup> Twenty per cent of these casualties were children. Half-way through the year, this casualty figure is already 143 per cent of the 390 casualties reported throughout 2022, indicating a worsening risk for civilian movements, livelihood activities especially farming, and also access to critical services including schools and hospitals.

3 WHO surveillance system for attacks on healthcare

4 Data for Myanmar (up to 31 May 2023)

5 UNICEF ERW factsheet (January to June 2023)

The landmine and EO casualties recorded during the first half of 2023 were concentrated most significantly in Sagaing, which constituted 40 per cent of the total reported. Bago and Shan contributing 12 per cent and 6 per cent of the overall casualties, respectively. The remaining affected areas included Ayeyarwady, Chin, Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Magway, Mandalay, Mon, Rakhine, Tanintharyi, and Yangon, altogether accounting for 41 per cent of the total recorded casualties when combined.

### **Operating environment**

Humanitarian operations and personnel were also targeted or heavily affected by conflict, bureaucratic impediments, and restrictions. Between January and June, humanitarian organizations reported about 630 access incidents<sup>6</sup> across the country (60 per cent of which occurred in Q2), impeding the delivery of vital assistance and services to affected people particularly in Rakhine, the Northwest and Southeast. Stringent measures and restrictions including the movement of civilians and multiple checkpoints imposed by the SAC impeded access to critical services including health and medical assistance for vulnerable people such as IDPs. Humanitarian workers, particularly local NGOs delivering critical assistance in frontline areas, also continued to face harassment, arbitrary arrests/detention, and other forms of direct and indirect attacks.

### **Cyclone Mocha**

The already fragile humanitarian situation was further exacerbated in May by extremely severe cyclone Mocha which is estimated to have been packing winds of 305 kilometres per hour just before it crossed the Rakhine coast near Sittwe. The cyclone devastated communities across Rakhine and brought heavy rains, wind and flooding to the Northwest and Kachin. Thousands of homes, productive assets, vast swathes of farmland, and critical infrastructure such as hospitals and schools were destroyed or severely damaged.

Almost all buildings in Sittwe and Rathedaung in Rakhine suffered damage, leaving hundreds of thousands of people either homeless or living in

damaged houses. Significant damage was inflicted on displacement camps, where long houses were left in splinters and access bridges were washed away. Extensive areas of farmland and fishing infrastructure were affected, with severe losses of assets that are crucial for the agriculture and fishery sectors. In Magway and Sagaing, floodwaters damaged infrastructure and agricultural fields and washed away livestock and personal belongings. Significant damage to public infrastructure was recorded in all affected areas, including hospitals, health centres, banks, schools, bridges, and religious buildings. Water systems, sanitation facilities, water supply infrastructure and latrines were also affected, reducing access to safe drinking water and basic hygiene services, and increasing the risk of outbreaks of water-borne disease.

Cyclone Mocha rolled back some limited gains of recent years especially around agriculture and livelihoods and added an additional 500,000 people to the humanitarian target for 2023 (now 5 million people). It also exacerbated the situation facing 1.1 million people already targeted for assistance under the HRP.

On 23 May, the humanitarian community launched the cyclone Mocha Flash Appeal targeting some 1.6 million of the worst affected people (including 500,000 people not previously targeted in the HRP) with a total funding request of \$333 million. However, funding remained quite limited, undermined by the lack of approval by the SAC for the rapid scale-up of life-saving and critical supplies in the weeks immediately after the cyclone. At the mid-year point, some assistance had reached affected people in locations where humanitarians had pre-existing programmes and through alternative delivery modalities, but the assistance is not commensurate with the scale and urgency of needs. There are increasing concerns that these unmet critical needs will trigger people resorting to negative and harmful coping strategies that will worsen vulnerabilities in the second half of the year, and have flow-on impacts into 2024.

<sup>6</sup> UN monthly access monitoring

### Food insecurity

Rising food prices and constrained agricultural production are leading to continued food insecurity as items become more unaffordable for much of Myanmar's population, with particularly heavy impacts from cyclone Mocha. According to WFP's market price monitoring the average cost of a basic food basket in Myanmar (chickpeas, oil, rice, salt) increased by 70 per cent during a single year (July 2022 to July 2023). Increases in the price of palm oil are linked to depreciation of the Myanmar Kyat, as palm oil is imported from Indonesia and Malaysia. As of June 2023, the World Bank predicted modest GDP growth of 3 per cent in the year ending September 2024 (still far below pre-COVID levels), and average inflation of 14 per cent in the year ending in September 2023, easing to 6 per cent in the year up to September 2024. However, the currency devaluation witnessed in recent months is likely to drive growth down and inflation up more than originally predicted and updated forecasts in the coming months will guide planning for 2024.

Declining household incomes and limited livelihood opportunities have left many households unable to engage in agricultural activities, due to the unaffordability of inputs such as seeds. Restrictions by

the SAC have also impeded the import and transport of some agricultural inputs including fertilizers. The situation is further compounded by the impact of the escalating conflict including mass displacement and landmine/EO contamination of farming areas across nearly all regions/states. These factors have grossly reduced the coverage of food crop cultivation and agricultural activities in general.

Cyclone Mocha and its aftermath triggered severe losses in assets crucial for the agriculture and fishery sectors, further worsening the food insecurity situation across Rakhine, the Northwest, and Kachin.<sup>7</sup> At mid-year point, the destruction of the local fishing fleet and heavy loss of agricultural inputs was having dire consequences for livelihoods and is likely to trigger the adoption of negative coping strategies in the months ahead.

The onset of the monsoon season has also triggered floods, especially in the Southeast (Kayah, Kayin and Tanintharyi) where large swathes of farming land had already been affected as of June, with further weather impacts expected over the remaining months of the wet season.



SHAN STATE

IDP students and host community villagers prepare fabric in northern Shan State, 2022. Credit: UNHCR

## Response trends

Despite multiple challenges in the operating context and severe underfunding, humanitarian partners have continued to scale up in response to the deepening needs, reaching at least 1.8 million people during the first half of 2023. This represents 36 per cent of the 5 million people targeted for assistance through the combined 2023 HRP and cyclone Mocha Flash Appeal. However, across the response, assistance is not as deep, sustained, or multi-sectoral as planned due to access blockages and underfunding and this is a major impediment to addressing and preventing worsening needs. People have mostly not received a full package of assistance due to access constraints and underfunding, with food accounting for the largest proportion of reach.

At mid-year, more than 60 per cent of the people targeted for assistance in 2023, including those affected by cyclone Mocha, have not received the critical assistance and services they desperately need. A lot of people who were reached during the first half of 2023 still have significant unmet needs, particularly around nutrition and education services which had comparatively lower coverage. This will have long-term consequences if a deeper response is not provided.

Despite these challenges, the coverage of the response does reflect the prioritization of the most vulnerable groups, particularly IDPs and 'non-displaced stateless people', with partners collectively reaching 42 per cent of the targets for these population groups. Assistance to IDPs has increased substantially with almost as many IDPs reached in the first half of 2023 (700,000) as in the whole of 2022 (750,000). The reach for the 'other crisis-affected people' and 'returned, resettled, and locally integrated IDPs' is much lower at 33 per cent and 10 per cent respectively.

In terms of geographical reach, despite the multiple constraints and impediments, partners managed to prioritize and marginally scale up responses across some of the areas of highest needs in Rakhine, the Southeast (Kayah, Kayin), the Northwest (Chin, Magway, Sagaing), and northern Shan during the first half of the year. These areas have some of the largest concentration of IDPs, stateless people, and non-displaced people with acute humanitarian needs. In particular, it is worth noting that in the Northwest, humanitarians have reached closer to four times (343,000) the number of people they had reached at this time last year (94,000). The response results in the Southeast are lower than hoped but are partially the result of underreporting which is an ongoing feature of the response environment.

The 2023 HRP remains drastically underfunded, with only 20 per cent of the requirements received by the end of June, and only 28 per cent at the time of publication, according to the Financial Tracking Service. This dire funding situation is despite deepening needs, the surge in displacement, cyclone Mocha impacts, and soaring inflation that have further stretched the grossly insufficient resources across clusters. Heading into the second half of the year, partners will be forced to further reduce coverage and packages of assistance if immediate and sufficient funding is not received, leaving large numbers of vulnerable households without the critical services and support they need to survive.

## Adjustments to Response Priorities

With funding levels remaining at merely 20 per cent halfway through the year, and a marginal increase to only 28 per cent at the time of publication, clusters find themselves making tough choices regarding the prioritization of their lean resources for the remainder of the year. While the specifics of this prioritization will vary across different clusters, the cumulative outcome implies that a substantial portion of the 5 million individuals initially earmarked for assistance (HRP and cyclone Mocha Flash Appeal) will either receive no support at all or will not receive the full spectrum of essential services and support required for them to sustain a life of dignity.

Clusters are employing a multi-faceted strategy to streamline their efforts, aligning their approaches with the most pressing necessities and the resources at hand. When it comes to specific population segments, most clusters have opted to focus their assistance on displaced people, both those recently displaced and those in prolonged situations. However, their capacity to extend aid to newly displaced populations remains dependent on access trends, which continue to pose significant challenges. In Rakhine and the Northwest, areas affected by cyclone Mocha will be prioritized with advocacy efforts ongoing to secure permission for expanded work given the blockages imposed by the SAC in the immediate aftermath of the cyclone and the weeks that followed.

Within the context of the prioritization process, some clusters are refining the range of activities they intend to execute, placing a stronger emphasis on immediate life-saving interventions while scaling back on other initiatives. Additionally, some clusters are grappling with the funding deficit by reducing the quantity of aid allotted to each recipient, as a means of managing the constrained resources.

### **Expanding access to hard-to-reach areas**

Expanding the reach of humanitarian organizations to people in need in conflict-affected parts of the country will remain the humanitarian community's key priority in the second half of the year. Humanitarian organizations are developing strategies to focus their efforts more heavily on regions that have experienced large-scale new displacement and re-displacement, particularly in the Northwest and Southeast.

A central objective for the humanitarian community in the latter half of the year is to extend assistance to people in need in conflict-affected areas where humanitarian conditions are particularly dire and where access to livelihood opportunities and critical services are very limited given the escalating conflict. Humanitarian organizations are focusing on delivery in under-served regions that have undergone substantial and recent waves of displacement and disasters particularly in Rakhine, the Northwest and Southeast. In light of the escalating access difficulties, there is an urgent need for increased multi-sectoral aid within remote and hard-to-reach areas.

### **Increasing participation and empowerment of local/national partners**

The role of local organizations including CBO/CSOs and NNGOs continues to be critical in driving the response, especially in conflict-affected and hard-to-reach areas. The humanitarian operation is benefiting from the wider local acceptance and diversified access channels of this growing network of national and local organizations, who are shouldering an increasing burden of the response. Between Q1 and Q2 alone, the number of local partners who are reporting through the HRP jumped to 164 from 156.

In line with the commitments of the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) to strengthening localization, the first half of the year witnessed the implementation of a revised humanitarian coordination architecture

with greater emphasis on the roles of national/local partners both at strategic and operational level, as equitable partners. Efforts are ongoing to moderate the transfer of risk to these smaller organizations and a new HCT Localization Strategy is close to completion.

Substantial resources have been dedicated to equipping local partners with training in overall humanitarian coordination approaches, as well as specialized technical domains. This investment aims to expand the breadth of local involvement and empowerment, while fostering seamless local integration into the larger response framework. Clusters have prioritized identifying and strengthening the capacity of local partners to widen their coverage, including in under-served areas.

Donor support, including through funding for the newly established local coordination roles, as well as interpretation and translation services, will be critical to deepening the localization on which the response is now dependent.

**Partners reporting on HRP progress by quarter**

ORGANIZATION TYPE	QUARTER 1 (JAN -MAR)	QUARTER 2 (APR -JUN)
Civil Society Organizations	30	31
Community Based Organizations	4	8
Faith Based Organization	1	
International NGOs	53	51
National NGOs	57	62
Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement	2	2
United Nations	6	6
Other/ Private Sector	3	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>164</b>

**Addressing elevated protection risks**

The intensification of conflict is giving rise to heightened protection threats including violations of human rights, protection of civilian issues, IED,

landmine and EO risks, and a surge in dangers for children, women, individuals with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups. Critical protection services will be prioritized in the latter part of the year, particularly across conflict-affected areas. The emphasis will be directed towards identifying people with specific needs and ensuring that the most vulnerable receive essential life-saving and emergency protection services, often through community-based protection mechanisms to overcome access constraints. These efforts will aim to enhance people’s resilience, encompassing facets such as raising awareness about mine risks, while concurrently mitigating against the adoption of harmful coping mechanisms.

Advocacy efforts will be ramped up with stakeholders, conflict actors and parties, around the protections afforded to civilians and aid workers under international humanitarian law (IHL), international human rights law (IHRL), and other humanitarian and other international conventions. In line with the HCT Protection Strategy, the humanitarian community will continue to explore formal and informal channels to facilitate principled engagement with different actors to advocate on humanitarian access and secure operational humanitarian space to enable timely delivery of assistance to people in need.

**Increasing uptake of cash and voucher assistance (CVA):**

CVA continues to play an increasingly vital role in our humanitarian response efforts, with numerous humanitarian partners recognizing its feasibility as a primary method of delivering assistance in many of the different environments they are working in. The clusters, in collaboration with the Cash Working Group (CWG), are actively supporting partners in utilizing cash assistance as a valuable tool to achieve programmatic objectives. Notably, efforts have been directed towards coordination and support to cash for nutrition and shelter outcomes.

Capacity strengthening of local and national actors has been a key priority for the CWG during the first half of 2023, particularly around key concepts and approaches such as Multi-Purpose Cash Assistance (MPCA). A comprehensive basic CVA training program,

primarily for local actors, was conducted in Rakhine with plans for similar opportunities in other regions later in the year. The focus on local and national actors is crucial, considering their increasing involvement in implementing CVA and their eagerness to enhance their knowledge in this field.

In the aftermath of cyclone Mocha, several markets were damaged, posing significant challenges in terms of access for affected people. While initial responses primarily focused on in-kind assistance, market assessments carried out in collaboration with the Market Analysis Unit and CWG helped to assess the feasibility of implementing cash assistance, even in areas where markets were affected. This information proved valuable in supporting partners' swift transition to cash-based interventions, which quickly became an integral part of the response strategy.

The CWG recently updated the Survival Minimum Expenditure Basket (SMEB), a valuable tool that partners can utilize to inform the determination of CVA transfer values. Harmonization of transfer values for MPCA is being actively pursued by the CWG, using the SMEB as a foundation. In the second half of the year, further updates to the Minimum Expenditure Basket (MEB) and the SMEB are planned, leveraging the data expected from the Multi-Sector Needs Analysis (MSNA) exercise.

Considering the interest expressed by numerous partners in implementing MPCA, the CWG has established a task team and conducted extensive consultations. These consultations aim to develop a comprehensive MPCA guidance document, which will clarify the objectives of MPCA and support the harmonization of its implementation across different actors with further expansion expected in 2024.

### **Disability Inclusion**

To promote and support disability inclusion, the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group (ICCG) in Myanmar has created and empowered the Technical Advisory Group on Disability Inclusion (TAG). The objective of the TAG is to increase the efforts of each cluster towards a humanitarian response that builds on the strengths and better meets the needs of persons with disabilities

in Myanmar. This includes mainstreaming disability into preparedness, needs assessment and analysis, strategic planning, advocacy, resource mobilization, implementation, and monitoring.

To achieve this, in 2023 so far, the TAG has provided technical support to clusters and associated groups in the integration of disability inclusion into programming, as well as continued advocacy efforts to increase prioritization of disability issues in response planning. The TAG is providing technical review of all funded projects under the Myanmar Humanitarian Fund (MHF) to improve targeting of people with disabilities and accessibility of humanitarian services. The TAG has worked closely with the MHF to increase focus on disability inclusion in the allocation strategy, as well as technical aspects of proposal development.

In addition, the TAG has provided technical inputs for the ongoing MSNA, to strengthen the identification of people with disabilities and disaggregated data collection. The TAG has also supported the revision of the Multi-sector Initial Rapid Assessment (MIRA) form and standard operating procedures. Recently, the TAG was able to provide analysis and inputs for the Cycle Mocha situation updates and associated funding appeal. To support Clusters, the TAG has presented at cluster meetings for Child Protection, Food Security, Health, Nutrition, and Protection. These presentations serve as an opportunity for both advocacy and technical assistance to partners, to improve engagement with people with disabilities.

The TAG has made significant advances in strengthening the voices of local organisations, by prioritising inclusion of local Organizations of People with Disabilities (OPDs) within the TAG itself. With the support of MHF-funded interpretation and translation services, the TAG has been able to increase the membership of OPDs (mostly local organizations) to roughly 40 per cent of the TAG members. This is a significant increase since 2022 when they comprised only 10 per cent. OPDs have a strong voice within the TAG and regularly share their programming and advocacy priorities.

### **Strengthening accountability to affected people (AAP)**

During the first quarter of 2023, an AAP Specialist, together with the AAP/Community Engagement (CE) Working Group defined and developed a comprehensive work plan for the year. This guiding framework for inter-agency AAP activities in Myanmar is designed to help ensure a humanitarian response that is consistently informed by accountability. The work plan, along with the AAP/CE Terms of Reference, were translated into Myanmar language and shared with the working group members and their respective partner organizations. Work plan activities are being rolled out with the assistance of a dedicated AAP National Coordinator and IMO.

The AAP/CE WG mailing list was reviewed and each cluster now has at least one dedicated AAP focal point in the working group. There are currently 46 organizations represented in the WG and membership is expanding.

One of the key initiatives currently being pursued by the AAP/CE WG is the implementation of a country-wide Community Voices Platform. This platform aims to provide valuable insights derived from data collected by individual organizations on the current needs and challenges faced by affected people within the humanitarian response. Such insights will inform and enable better decision-making and program adaptation by humanitarian responders. One of the main challenges will be to align different data collection methodologies across organizations to ensure consistency in reporting. The AAP/CE Specialist and supporting staff will carry out training of focal points to ensure that the process is uniform, and that the data

collected is of high quality. It is hoped that additional support will be made available for promoting this work and training partners at the sub-national level in the second half of the year.

The AAP/CE WG has been proactive in fostering enhanced coordination on AAP/CE initiatives. Efforts have been directed towards strengthening data collection, establishing linkages between AAP and PSEA, and formulating strategies to amplify the voices of affected populations in key coordination and policy documents such as the HNO/HRP.

The online AAP course in the Myanmar language, which caters to humanitarian staff across the country, remains a fixed feature since its introduction in 2022. Additionally, the AAP team is engaged in reviewing and expanding the available AAP resources and training materials tailored to the local context. The AAP/CE WG Chair actively participated in cluster meetings, delivered presentations on AAP and provided technical advice and inputs in response to AAP/CE requests. The AAP/CE WG Chair also played a crucial role in advising on the inclusion of AAP-related questions in the 2023 MSNA and Humanitarian Situation Monitoring initiatives.

During cyclone Mocha, the AAP Specialist advocated for the centralization of awareness raising and preparedness messages on MIMU. As a result, clusters and partners were easily able to access a wide range of crucial resources that they could then disseminate to affected people and share on social media channels.

# Cluster Responses

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## KAYIN STATE

Children learn writing skills through reading club activities in Kayin, 2022. Credit: Save the Children



# Education



PEOPLE IN NEED		PEOPLE TARGETED		REQUIREMENTS (US\$)		FUNDED AS OF Q2 (US\$)	
3.8M		1.5M		93M		6M	
PEOPLE REACHED AS OF Q2	WOMEN AND GIRLS	CHILDREN (<18YRS)	ADULTS(18-59YRS)	ELDERLY(60+YRS)	WITH DISABILITIES		
500K	52%	95%	5%	-	-		

During the first half of 2023, the Education Cluster and partners continued to scale-up vital education-in-emergency (EiE) programmes and services reaching more than 500,000 beneficiaries, representing 38 per cent of the 2023 HRP target. About 95 per cent (473,000) of the beneficiaries reached were children, including 244,000 girls and 229,000 boys. Some 27,000 adults (PTAs, teachers/educators, school administrators, etc); roughly 16,000 women and 11,000 men, were also supported with various EiE programmes and services during the period.

The Cluster recorded considerable progress on a number of strategic targets such as the strengthening of systems and EiE response capacity through various strategies including localization. This enabled the onboarding and active participation of 25 new local partners during the reporting period alone. As part of efforts to systemically approach response capacity strengthening, the Education Cluster conducted capacity needs assessments (both at organizational and practitioner levels), and developed capacity development plans according to gaps identified and prioritized by partners. Implementation of identified capacity strengthening initiatives will begin in the second half of the year. To drive this process, the Cluster facilitated resourcing of local partners with small grants through the Global Partnership for Education’s (GPE) accelerated facility and grantees.

Despite the alarming funding shortages, the Education Cluster recorded limited progress in resource mobilization during the first half of 2023,

including the launch of the “Education Cannot Wait” Multi Year Resilience Programme funding and the GPE’s Education Sector Programme Implementation Grant (ESPIG).

### Challenges and course corrections

Funding deficits and access constraints were among major challenges that impacted the Education Cluster response in the first half of 2023. The Education Cluster is severely underfunded with only 7 per cent of the \$93 million funding requirement reported as of mid-year. Access impediments resulting from the ongoing conflict, as well as the strict bureaucratic measures imposed by the SAC including in cyclone Mocha-affected areas, hindered the delivery of education services. cyclone Mocha, which made landfall just a few weeks before the re-opening of schools for the new academic year, made the situation even harder due to devastation of educational infrastructure. Access constraints continue to hamper responses such as rehabilitation and reconstruction of temporary learning centres in the most affected locations.

Across the country, the Education Cluster actively supported local and community level partners to access resources. This has been pivotal to keeping the response moving forward despite the increasing challenges.

### Linkages with development programming

The Education Cluster strengthened nexus engagements and collaboration through platforms

like the Education Sector Representative Group (ESRG) (a replacement of the Local Education Group (LEG) after the February 2021 military takeover), the Education Donor Partner Group (EPG), as well as the Ethnic Education in Regions and States platforms. These engagements enabled information sharing for complementarity and alignment between humanitarian and development programming.

The GPE-funded ESPIG project, one of the largest ongoing investments, has been re-programmed to include deliverables across the full nexus spectrum, including access and quality on the humanitarian side, and system strengthening on the development side.

### **Prioritization for the remainder of 2023**

Despite the current challenges, especially funding shortages, the Education Cluster will continue working to sustain vital education services and minimum packages across the three main pillars of access, quality and system/EiE capacity strengthening, building on their interconnectedness to mitigate the impacts of current gaps. While resource mobilization efforts will continue, without additional funds, the scale and number of beneficiaries will have to be adjusted downwards in line with the available resources going into the second half of the year.

# Food Security



PEOPLE IN NEED	PEOPLE TARGETED	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)	FUNDED AS OF Q2 (US\$)
15.2M	2.6M	218M	30M

PEOPLE REACHED AS OF Q2	WOMEN AND GIRLS	CHILDREN (<18YRS)	ADULTS(18-59YRS)	ELDERLY(60+YRS)	WITH DISABILITIES
1.2M	51%	32%	57%	11%	3%

Since January 2023, Food Security Cluster partners have reached nearly 1.2 million people across Myanmar with vital food assistance as well as agricultural and livelihoods support, representing 46 per cent of the Cluster’s target for the year. Some 668,000 of those reached are IDPs supported with food assistance, while 423,000 others are non-displaced crisis-affected people. Agriculture and livelihood support was provided to some 95,000 people during the same period to help support crisis-affected farming communities.

The geographical spread of the response reflected the trend of the crisis and most urgent needs, with cyclone Mocha-hit Rakhine accounting for 51 per cent of the people reached, followed by Kayah and Magway at 8 per cent and 7 per cent respectively from the cyclone impact zone. Food security and agriculture needs soared in cyclone and flood impacted areas immediately after the cyclone due to the loss of stored food and agriculture supplies. The most dramatic increases in reach were seen in Sagaing and southern Shan, with a progression of 552 per cent and 230 per cent respectively from Q1 to Q2 2023.

The agriculture and livelihood response, including the provision of livestock kits and income generation activities remained remarkably low throughout the first half of 2023, with only about 14 per cent of the year’s target met, predominantly due to underfunding and access constraints. However encouragingly, from Q1 to Q2 partners did significantly scale up their agriculture and livelihoods programming.

### Challenges and course corrections

The Cluster response faced multiple challenges during the first half of 2023, particularly relating to acute funding shortages and access constraints linked to the escalation of conflict and insecurity, both impacting the coverage and scale of the response. The impact of the funding shortages was most telling on the agriculture and livelihoods response during the reporting period, with very limited coverage and depth of programming across cluster partners.

Rising inflation was another major challenge during the first half of the year, eroding the spending power of households and forcing cluster partners to adjust their programming. The cost of the basic food basket has increased by 70 per cent between August 2022 and August 2023. Prices of some commodities climbed dramatically during the reporting period, while others were relatively stable. Partners will have to continue to adjust the value of the cash envelopes in line with MMK devaluation, which is also challenging given the necessity to provide the same amount to all communities supported in the same geographical areas.

### Linkages with development programming

Throughout the first half of 2023, the Cluster strengthened its engagement with development actors to 1) better integrate food security development actors in the Cluster; 2) integrate private sector actors supported by development donors in the Cluster; and 3) strengthen cluster funds mobilization efforts. The Cluster explored measures to integrate private

companies that are receiving funds from development donors to enhance farmers' access to seeds, fertilizer, and agriculture extension services including technical training, machinery services for ploughing, etc. This close collaboration will allow overlaying the deployment of such services to complement ongoing assistance by cluster partners, enabling people to meet their immediate food needs and also engage in food production and livelihood activities.

**Prioritization for the remainder of 2023**

For the second half of 2023, the Cluster will prioritize the Northwest and Southeast to consolidate geographical coverage of programming in hard-to-reach areas. The Cluster will prioritize emergency food assistance and emergency agriculture and livelihood

responses for all areas classified by the cluster as "extreme" in order to cover critical gaps.

The Cluster will continue to encourage partners to engage affected people on the most suitable and preferred modality – in-kind or cash-based assistance – to ensure accountability and practicality depending on the context and preference. As it is critical to avert any further deterioration of food security, the Cluster will encourage its partners to consider supporting agriculture and livelihoods, including via programme complementarity with other organizations and development actors, so that people can more consistently meet their own needs.

# Health



PEOPLE IN NEED	PEOPLE TARGETED	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)	FUNDED AS OF Q2 (US\$)
10M	2.5M	118M	10M

PEOPLE REACHED AS OF Q2	WOMEN AND GIRLS	CHILDREN (<18YRS)	ADULTS(18-59YRS)	ELDERLY(60+YRS)	WITH DISABILITIES
558K	68%	26%	67%	7%	-

The Health Cluster reached more than 680,000 people in need in the first half of the year. While only 27 per cent of the 2023 target, this reach figure is more than 50 per cent higher than the total number of people (427,000) reached during the same period in 2022. During the first half of 2023, the highest number of people was reached in Kayin (46 per cent), Rakhine (21 per cent) and Bago East (13 per cent). More particularly, the cluster reached nearly 67,000 people living in the highest impact zone of cyclone Mocha.

Maternal, child and adolescent health, sexual and reproductive health, mental health, gender-related programmes accounted for 74 per cent of the critical and basic packages and services delivered by cluster partners during the first half of 2023. Community mobilization for and support to mass vaccinations and/or drug administration/treatments were also prioritized during the period, accounting for 14 per cent of the services and packages delivered. While the number of people reached increased in real terms compared to the same period last year, the health services delivered in several areas were intermittent and below standard due to legal and bureaucratic constraints and impediments.

The Cluster verified all 58 suspected health events reported through the Early Warning, Alert and Response System (EWARS) implemented in Rakhine and Kachin.<sup>8</sup> The Cluster also conducted five training courses for partners on 4/5Ws, EWARS reporting, and cholera preparedness and response to improve

monitoring and reporting and build capacity for emergency response.

### Challenges and course corrections

The Health Cluster and partners faced significant challenges relating to acute funding shortages, the escalating conflict, insecurity, and economic shocks, all of which impacted the delivery of services during the first half of the year. While there was limited improvement and a slight upward trend in the provision of services in some peri-urban areas including Mandalay, Nay Pyi Taw and Yangon since the pandemic and the military takeover of February 2021, overall access to health services remains severely constrained and fragmented with heavy reliance on local and community-based networks especially in frontline, conflict-affected areas.

The Health Cluster ramped up its coordination capacity with expanded staffing in the Northwest and Southeast in the first half of the year, leading to more meaningful engagement in the field and increased participation of local partners to strengthen localization and also better navigate the challenging operating context.

As of mid-year, only 8 per cent of the \$118 million funding required for the health cluster response had been received, posing major challenges for cluster partners in scaling up vital services and/or providing packages that meet the established cluster standards.

Health facilities, health workers, patients, and critical health assets including operational vehicles have

<sup>8</sup> EWARS Standard Operating Procedures (mohs.gov.mm)

continued to be objects of attacks amid the escalating conflict. In the first half of the year, 37 attacks on healthcare were documented via WHO's Surveillance System for Attacks on Health Care (SSA). These attacks resulted in at least five deaths. These attacks significantly impeded access to and availability of essential health services especially for women, children, and other vulnerable groups.

#### **Linkages with development programming**

During the first half of the year, the Cluster continued advocating for the de-politicization of the health sector as a national and global investment in the health and wellbeing of the population. Cluster partners participated in common humanitarian-development platforms such as the Health Cluster, the Transitional Cooperation Framework development processes, and inter-agency projects, leading to a strengthened collaboration with development actors in supporting

timely and effective public health services and referrals for primary and secondary care throughout the first half of the year.

#### **Prioritization for the remainder of 2023**

Given the persistent underfunding trend, the Health Cluster will prioritize the most critical and basic health care services and needs, using risk-based and cost-effective approaches for targeting and programming. The Cluster will focus on critical health services, basic packages, vaccination gap filling for children under-5, timely and effective response to outbreaks and training of partners. Activities such as COVID-19 response mainstreaming, and the complementary package for trauma and rehabilitation will only be provided at a reduced scale due to underfunding.

# Nutrition



PEOPLE IN NEED	PEOPLE TARGETED	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)	FUNDED AS OF Q2 (US\$)
2.2M	590K	52M	8M

PEOPLE REACHED AS OF Q2	WOMEN AND GIRLS	CHILDREN (<18YRS)	ADULTS(18-59YRS)	ELDERLY(60+YRS)	WITH DISABILITIES
252K	61%	77%	23%	-	13%

The Nutrition Cluster and partners ramped up the delivery of critical and life-saving services during the first half of 2023, reaching nearly 11,000 children including some 2,400 with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) and 8,400 suffering from mild acute malnutrition (MAM). This represents 17 per cent and 15 per cent of the 2023 targets for SAM and MAM treatment respectively.

The search for active cases to ensure timely referral and treatment for acute malnutrition was also intensified, with more than 174,000 children (52 per cent of the 2023 target) screened across the country during the first half of the year. A total of 29,000 pregnant and lactating women (PLW), representing 12 per cent of the target this year, were also screened, including 2,100 that were admitted for MAM treatment.

Cluster partners scaled-up preventative response activities including the blanket supplementary feeding programme (BSFP) reaching some 99,000 children under-5 (58 per cent out of the 171,000 targeted this year) during the reporting period. BSFP was also provided to some 26,000 PLW mostly in conflict-affected areas where livelihoods opportunities and access to health and nutrition services are limited. Infant and young child feeding (IYCF) services were also provided to 39,000 PLW and caregivers representing 15 per cent of the 2023 target. Multiple micronutrient powders were provided to nearly 21,000 children 6-59 months and 27,000 PLW - 11 per cent of the 2023 target.

### Challenges and course corrections

The Cluster grappled with challenges at the operational level during the first half of 2023 including acute funding shortages, restrictive humanitarian space, and access constraints relating to non-issuance of travel authorizations to several project sites. These challenges – coinciding with the escalating conflict and the related spike in displacement and emergency needs, rising inflation, and dwindling livelihood opportunities among the most vulnerable – impacted on the coverage and quality of the nutrition response and services.

The Cluster was also confronted with capacity constraints for some implementing partners, and shortages of supplies, exacerbated by the non-issuance of tax exemption certificates (TECs) and the complex bureaucratic bottlenecks around the importation of critical nutrition supplies. The non-issuance of TECs for the importation of vital nutrition items and the resulting unavailability of these essential commodities, especially ready-to-use therapeutic food, continues to pose a major threat to the treatment of acute malnutrition cases, in particular SAM.

Despite these difficult conditions, the Cluster made significant progress in integrating CVA into nutrition programming and services during the first half of 2023 as a way of expanding service delivery in the face of access constraints and in response to the wishes of affected people. To facilitate this process, a global webinar on “CVA in Nutrition in Emergencies” was

facilitated for partners and stakeholders and technical capacity was deployed to draft guidelines for the implementation of the webinar recommendations by the Cluster. Once finalized, the guidelines will provide the framework for partners to diversify response modalities to mitigate the impacts of the multiple operational challenges, including the access constraints faced in many areas.

The Cluster continues to face difficulties in undertaking appropriate assessments to establish the depth of the malnutrition situation. While the MSNA provides some level of understanding of the nutrition situation, it is not a technical assessment that allows the cluster to establish the prevalence of acute malnutrition. Options are being explored to undertake gold standard assessment to understand the situation better.

#### **Linkage with development programming**

The Cluster continued to strengthen the humanitarian-development nexus during the first half of 2023, including through a joint coordination platform established by the strategic advisory group bringing together development and humanitarian actors to complement programming. The platform facilitated discussions around joint planning and implementation

of nutrition preventative programmes that are common in complex emergency contexts. The lessons learnt from this interaction will strengthen the nexus approach, prioritizing immediate life-saving and critical nutrition needs under the humanitarian umbrella and linking up with development actors to strengthen systems and programmes to mitigate the spike in number of children and women falling into acute malnutrition where feasible.

#### **Prioritization for the remainder of 2023**

Given the current funding shortages, access constraints and other operational challenges, the Cluster will prioritize life-saving treatment of SAM cases and the management of MAM among children and PLW during the second half of the year. The Cluster will work to sustain preventative response activities like IYCF counselling, micronutrient supplementation, CVA in nutrition in emergencies and BSFP as much as possible in the current circumstances but reach is likely to be limited. The Cluster partners will work with development stakeholders to build resilience into their nutrition services and programming modalities to the extent possible to mitigate the potential impacts of the de-prioritization of certain services.

# Protection



PEOPLE IN NEED	PEOPLE TARGETED	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)	FUNDED AS OF Q2 (US\$)
11.5M	2.1M	145M	26M

PEOPLE REACHED AS OF Q2	WOMEN AND GIRLS	CHILDREN (<18YRS)	ADULTS(18-59YRS)	ELDERLY(60+YRS)	WITH DISABILITIES
929K	51%	35%	57%	8%	-

The Protection Cluster reached at least 929,000 people during the first half of the year, representing 44 per cent of the 2023 target, mostly with protection assistance and targeted life-saving and other protection services. The highest number of people was reached in Rakhine, followed by northern Shan, and Kachin. The Cluster sustained the operations of the national and sub-national coordination structures. This now includes activation of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Mine Action (MA) areas of responsibility (AoR) structures in the Northwest with regular monthly coordination meetings during the reporting period.

Networking and collaboration with local humanitarian actors and specialized protection agencies (ICRC, INGOs, and the UN) have been expanded and strengthened through bilateral meetings, regular briefings, and communication on the protection situation and response priorities during the reporting period. Technical guidance and support have regularly been provided to local humanitarian actors.

The Cluster, in collaboration with the Global Protection Cluster, intensified advocacy efforts for funding, protection of civilians, and humanitarian access including with donors, member states, and global parliaments. Cluster partners enhanced awareness raising on protection risks and services through community mobilization and information sharing sessions.

The Cluster facilitated capacity building programmes and training for partners, including local NGOs and other stakeholders covering community-based protection, the Protection Incident Monitoring System (PIMS), and protection mainstreaming as part of efforts to improve protection services and also strengthen localization. The Child Protection (CP), GBV, and MA AoRs facilitated similar trainings in collaboration with other clusters including Education, Health, Nutrition, Shelter/NFI/CCCM, and WASH, benefitting over 130 staff/focal points.

## Child Protection Area of Responsibility (CP AoR)

PEOPLE IN NEED	PEOPLE TARGETED	PEOPLE REACHED AS OF Q2
5.3M	1.1M	370K

The CP AoR provided essential life-saving child protection support to more than 207,000 children (105,000 boys and 102,000 girls) and 159,000 caregivers during the reporting period. CP AoR partners prioritized case management, awareness raising, psychosocial support (PSS), provision of child protection kits and strengthening of community level child protection (CLCP) mechanisms. At the

national level, the CP AoR strengthened guidance documents and working groups to support inclusive child protection activities and services in the field. Additionally, the CP AoR established a dedicated AoR Localization Working Group and localization dashboard to strengthen and monitor progress of the localization agenda and connect up with response-wide localization efforts.

## Gender-Based Violence Area of Responsibility (GBV AoR)

PEOPLE IN NEED

**7.7M**

PEOPLE TARGETED

**868K**

PEOPLE REACHED AS OF Q2

**260K**

The GBV AoR ramped up capacity building programs for multi-sectoral GBV response service providers during the reporting period. This included technical support initiatives for local NGOs, who have taken on an increasing role in responding to reported GBV cases.

The AoR worked closely with other humanitarian actors in the identification and mitigation of GBV risks through regular joint safety audit exercises. The AoR is also working on the mainstreaming and integration of GBV risk mitigation measures across all clusters. The AoR has been working with GBV case management service providers on expanding the use of GBV tools

to collect and analyze GBV data safely and ethically. This expansion will help facilitate better understanding of the trends at national level, which will in turn inform response planning and advocacy initiatives of the AoR.

The Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Working Group is working with its members and relevant clusters to strengthen the integration of the MHPSS Minimum Service Package (MSP) across their humanitarian interventions. Orientation sessions on MSP were organized for relevant AoRs and clusters to improve understanding of the MHPSS activities related to the targeted clusters/AoRs.

## Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR)

PEOPLE IN NEED

**11.4M**

PEOPLE TARGETED

**2.1M**

PEOPLE REACHED AS OF Q2

**232K**

The MA AoR responded to the needs of communities exposed to landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) by sharing communication and information materials particularly in the locations where EO risks are highest. Sagaing was a key focus of these efforts given the high number of incidents and, as a result, the AORs outputs in this region have increased.

In Kachin, the AoR has completed a survey of IDP return areas, as part of the Durable Solution Working Group's (DSWG) strategy around the return of 11,600

people in 53 villages. The results will be crucial for planning, allocation of resources and informing the humanitarian response. A comprehensive advocacy strategy has been developed in collaboration with AoR partners.

In Rakhine, the AoR has been able to secure a coordinator who assumed the role in May 2023, whilst in Shan the AoR is in discussion with mine action organizations to assist the current coordinator who is double hatting.

### **Challenges and course corrections**

Funding shortages, escalating conflict and worsening security across the country triggered increased restrictions on humanitarian access and civilian movement particularly in the Northwest and Southeast, impacting the delivery of protection services in some areas at high risk from EO. In many of these areas, cluster partners explored community-based mechanisms and local networks to sustain the most critical protection services. The limited number of operational partners in some regions, especially the Northwest, also posed some challenges, although marginal improvements were also recorded.

### **Child Protection**

To mitigate the impacts of the restrictive operating environment and funding shortages, the AoR adjusted some system strengthening activities, to build the capacity of CSOs during the first half of 2023. Community-led CP was also scaled up to sustain critical services in frontline areas.

### **GBV**

Despite the scale-up of multi-sectoral GBV prevention and response services, the ongoing conflict, security concerns and access restrictions deprived many women and girls and other vulnerable community members of lifesaving and multi-sectoral GBV response services. To address these challenges, GBV actors delivered response services through remote case management modalities.

### **Mine Action**

Ongoing conflict has created a volatile and unpredictable environment, hindering access to affected populations. Imposed restrictions continued to delay or restrict access to affected communities. Visas, TAs, as well as constraints on the movement of goods and personnel through checkpoints, impeded the timely and efficient delivery of material and resources in the first half of the year. The AoR has been overcoming some of these challenges by increasingly involving local organizations, providing remote or online delivery, as well as by using volunteers.

Cyclone Mocha has provided a challenge, but the AoR has been able to adapt quickly and respond in

affected areas using new and innovative ways of delivery including through the use of social media to distribute protection messages. The sheer scale of needs combined with limited response options in Myanmar remains a key challenge. Funding constraints and donor fatigue pose a significant threat as organizations often struggle to secure adequate and sustainable funding.

The AoR remained flexible in initiating adjustments in strategies, resource allocation, and response plans, ensuring that mine action remains relevant and effective to the extent possible.

### **Linkages with development programming**

#### **Child Protection**

The AoR worked to strengthen nexus programming through enhancing localization in both the development and humanitarian sectors. Safe migration was supported by the AoR, including through capacity building programmes for partners working on human trafficking. Furthermore, support was provided to communities to strengthen community-led CP to build resilience. Other nexus activities including advocacy on birth registration and access to justice for children will be prioritized together with development actors over the rest of the year.

#### **GBV**

GBV AoR partners facilitated projects focusing on long-term behavioral change components and related activities to strengthen community-based support and protection mechanisms. This is particularly important in the current context where access to legal services is very challenging.

#### **Mine Action**

The AoR worked closely with the overall Protection Cluster to develop and provide a training of trainers on protection mainstreaming to other AoRs and clusters. Protection mainstreaming into the wider humanitarian response is crucial in Myanmar and additional trainings are being planned to ensure quality service delivery. The AoR continued to work with the Myanmar Humanitarian Fund (MHF) to mainstream explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) into the overall

humanitarian response and will continue to reach a wider audience with EORE messages in the second half of 2023.

### **Prioritization for the remainder of 2023**

The Cluster will continue to prioritize the rollout of protection mainstreaming trainings, monitoring of the protection situation, providing direct Individual Protection Assistance (IPA) and referral for persons with specific needs (PSN), and exploring partnerships with legal service providers in the Northwest.

### **Child Protection**

In light of the funding deficits, the AoR will focus on life-saving child protection responses including case management for children who experience high risk protection concerns. The AoR will continue to work with community-led CP mechanisms to support families in mitigating and addressing cases of child marriage, child labour and violence in the home. The AoR will target the most affected and marginalized geographical areas, prioritizing IDPs, non-displaced stateless and returned, resettled, and

relocated people. Without additional funding, some children and caregivers in need of PSS services, CP kits, case management, and legal assistance will not be supported. At the current funding levels, the AoR will support relevant capacity building initiatives, prioritizing frontline GBV responders in areas worst affected by the ongoing conflict.

### **Mine Action**

With limited funding and resources, the AoR will continue to prioritize areas with the highest needs. Needs assessments will continue to guide resource allocation and targeting of the most vulnerable populations. Engaging local organizations, less affected by travel restrictions, is crucial and will continue through training and capacity building initiatives. The AoR will remain innovative to try and reach more people despite travel limitations, leveraging technology for greater efficiency. Advocacy remains paramount for improved access and to push beyond just EORE services.

# Shelter/NFI/CCCM



PEOPLE IN NEED	PEOPLE TARGETED	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)	FUNDED AS OF Q2 (US\$)
3M	1.2M	124M	18.6M

PEOPLE REACHED AS OF Q2	WOMEN AND GIRLS	CHILDREN (<18YRS)	ADULTS(18-59YRS)	ELDERLY(60+YRS)	WITH DISABILITIES
543K	52%	35%	55%	10%	1%

During the first half of the year, the Shelter/NFI/CCCM Cluster, reinforced by additional resources received after cyclone Mocha, reached around 543,000 crisis-affected people across 11 regions and states of Myanmar. This represented 45 per cent of the overall target for 2023, with 18 per cent of the population reached being those affected by the cyclone. The 36 cluster partners consisted of CBOs (14%), NNGOs (39%), INGOs (42%), and UN agencies (5%).

The Cluster provided CCCM assistance to approximately 284,000 people, while shelter assistance reached about 73,000 people and NFI assistance supported around 213,000 people. During the reporting period, the Cluster finalized the first phase of the capacity development strategy with provision of a CCCM training-of-trainers for 56 people from the Northwest, Southeast, Kachin and Rakhine. Some 792 camp actors, and more than 2,800 IDPs were also trained as part of the capacity development programme. Additionally, the Myanmar Basic Shelter and NFI Kit guidance was issued in February, through the collective efforts of cluster partners.

It is noteworthy that the higher than usual shelter response in Rakhine was due to cyclone Mocha's impact, prompting additional (though still critically insufficient) funds for immediate response. Conversely, the CCCM response was relatively lower in the Northwest and Southeast, when compared to the Northeast and Rakhine, which have protracted and formal settlements.

## Challenges and course corrections

The Cluster is confronting daunting challenges, including an 85 per cent funding shortfall out of a total requirement of \$124 million. This funding gap was particularly pronounced in some specific areas. For instance, in the Northeast, Northwest, and Rakhine, the impact of cyclone Mocha disrupted proposed activities, requiring the reallocation of funding to cover new sectoral priorities. Limited funding, unsafe transportation routes, and delays in financial transactions further hindered aid delivery in these areas. In the Northeast, access restrictions impeded assistance to more than 9,000 newly displaced people, with camp closure pressure and natural hazards exacerbating the situation, leading to premature IDP returns and increased vulnerability.

Ongoing MHF allocations cover approximately 5 per cent of the cluster's total funding requirements in 2023 considering the planned targets. Around 46 per cent of the MHF funds for this cluster are allocated to the Northwest, and 30 per cent to Southeast.

Mobilizing additional funding will help bridge the gaps in the cluster response across all areas. A plan to reach areas not yet assistance as part of the cyclone response is critical in both the Northwest and Rakhine, along with measures to enhance logistics and security for aid delivery. In the Northeast, continuous efforts are needed to expand access and establish robust disaster preparedness plans to mitigate the impact of future natural hazards.

**Linkages with development programming**

In the first half of the year, the Cluster primarily focused on emergency response due to both the ongoing crisis and the impacts of cyclone Mocha, limiting engagements with development actors. Nevertheless, the Cluster initiated discussions on the environmental impact of humanitarian assistance and flood preparedness. The cluster partners also collaborated with development actors on key issues, particularly for cyclone-affected non-displaced populations, encouraging durable shelter responses as required. Despite the challenging context in Myanmar, the Cluster continues to play an essential advisory role, ensuring conflict sensitivity and social cohesion considerations in engagements with development actors.

**Prioritization for the remaining of 2023**

For the remainder of 2023, the Cluster will prioritize emergency support for the increasing numbers of new IDPs in Kachin. Limited intervention will be possible in camps in the Northeast due to funding

constraints, with the cluster instead prioritizing the provision of assistance to families willing to leave the camps. Meanwhile, in the Northwest, cash-based interventions for shelter and NFIs will be emphasized in affected townships. The Cluster is working to extend its presence in northern Sagaing and aims to enhance CCCM capacity. In Rakhine, regular cluster assistance will continue in IDP camps, along with shelter reconstruction efforts and flood preparedness. In conclusion, prioritization will focus on vulnerable IDPs needing new shelter assistance, and preparedness for potential displacement in unaffected areas, as well as continued efforts to advocate for access and durable solutions.

# Water, Sanitation and Hygiene



PEOPLE IN NEED	PEOPLE TARGETED	REQUIREMENTS (US\$)	FUNDED AS OF Q2 (US\$)
5.2M	1.6M	128M	5.2M

PEOPLE REACHED AS OF Q2	WOMEN AND GIRLS	CHILDREN (<18YRS)	ADULTS(18-59YRS)	ELDERLY(60+YRS)	WITH DISABILITIES
637K	52%	37%	55%	8%	15%

The WASH Cluster and partners scaled up the delivery of critical support and services including access to clean water, hygiene promotion activities, sanitation among others, reaching a total of 637,000 people across the country between January and June - 39 per cent of the target this year. Some 459,000 (42 per cent) of those reached received potable water for drinking and domestic use, while 434,000 others received hygiene supplies/kits and awareness messaging on positive and safe hygiene practices. Sanitation services, including relevant kits, were provided to 296,000 people across affected areas during the reporting period.

The widespread devastation of vital WASH infrastructure by cyclone Mocha has impacted on people’s access to functional latrines and sanitation services in Rakhine since May, rolling back progress attained during the first quarter of 2023. About 90 per cent of humanitarian WASH superstructures were damaged during the cyclone across Rakhine. As part of the cyclone emergency response, cluster partners conducted latrine rehabilitation with basic materials such as plastic sheeting and bamboo for emergency use, while some 327,000 people benefitted from the distribution of critical WASH items as part of the cyclone response.

### Challenges and course corrections

Funding deficits, socioeconomic shocks including inflation resulting in higher programming costs, and access constraints, especially in conflict-affected areas, are some of the major challenges encountered by the Cluster during the first half of 2023.

The escalation of conflict and stringent bureaucratic measures impeded access to some communities especially across the Northwest, Rakhine and the Southeast, forcing many WASH partners to adopt third party measures and local/community-based mechanisms to sustain critical support and services. With access challenges expected to continue for the foreseeable future, the Cluster will explore alternative modalities to navigate and mitigate the impacts, ensuring critical services are sustained for the most vulnerable and affected people.

Due to a lack of funding, cluster partners also struggled with the delivery of services and supplies at established WASH minimum standards. Although the Cluster managed to reach 39 per cent of the overall 2023 target, many beneficiaries did not receive the full WASH service package due to the funding shortages, reducing the quality and impact of this response. At mid-year, the funding shortfall stood at 96 per cent of the total requirement of \$128 million. This gap comes at a time of increasing needs relating to the spike in displacement and also the devastating impacts of cyclone Mocha across Rakhine, Magway, Kachin and Chin with WASH infrastructure severely affected and more than 70 per cent of water ponds contaminated by flooding.

### Linkages with development programming

Throughout the first half of 2023, the Cluster strengthened coordination and engagement with development actors to identify and explore measures to address WASH needs and collaborate on finding durable and sustainable solutions to chronic WASH

gaps. These include water pond rehabilitation, the transition to solar pumping power, and promoting social cohesion programmes especially in areas where IDPs and host communities share the same WASH services to mitigate possible community tension.

**Prioritization for the remainder of 2023**

The Cluster will continue to prioritize critical services and gaps identified throughout the second half of the year. However, given the current funding deficit, the programmes and services may not meet the SPHERE, cluster and/or other international standards. This

situation will result in partners being unable to deliver the standard quantity of water per person/per day, not offering the most appropriate sanitation services, and people not receiving equitable, inclusive, and safe access to hygiene items on a regular basis.

## Coordination and Common Services



### Expanded reach through decentralized and strengthened coordination architecture

Throughout the first half of 2023, Cluster Lead Agencies and OCHA intensified engagement to rollout the prioritized recommendations from the Peer-to-Peer (P2P) mission. This is part of efforts to strengthen, decentralize and expand coordination mechanisms with increased emphasis on localization, efficient resource mobilization, and scaling up of humanitarian assistance and presence. This proactive approach is tailored to meet evolving humanitarian needs, and to advancing a humanitarian coordination architecture that is fit for purpose, accountable and closer to both people in need and frontline aid agencies.

In line with the HCT strategic vision to have operational and strategic mechanisms at all levels, OCHA and clusters worked to establish area humanitarian country teams (AHCTs) and area inter-cluster coordination groups (AICCGs) across all zones providing field partners with both strategic and operational platforms to deepen response and also strengthen linkages with the national HCT and ICCG. Seamless information flow, two-way information exchanges, more timely focus on emerging issues and harnessing of contextual opportunities of the respective zones are part of the central vision of the revised coordination architecture. To socialize the revised mechanisms, OCHA facilitated a series of roadshows both at national and sub-national/field levels across all regions and with local organizations to facilitate full implementation by August, in line with the HCT timeline.

Localization efforts remained a core priority, including expanding the representation and participation of CSOs, local and national NGOs in all coordination mechanisms at the national and sub-national levels. The revised coordination architecture, including the AHCTs and AICCGs across all zones have dedicated positions for local NGOs, including as co-chairs to bolster engagement in both operational and strategic fora. The HCT Localization Strategy is being finalized following extensive engagement and consultation

by the dedicate HCT Workstream to clearly map the deliverables and commitments, ensuring equitable partnership, risk sharing and also increased funding including for coordination roles to be filled by local partners.

Most of the new sub-national coordinators under the new coordination structure are national staff who can better engage with national partners and run meetings in Myanmar language. Interpretation and translation services were also provided to all clusters and working groups including meetings, publications, and programmes, promoting participation of local partners including during the cyclone Mocha response.

Significant progress was made in various critical cross-cutting areas and thematic workstreams during this period, particularly around Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), gender in humanitarian action (GiHA), the inclusion of people with disabilities, Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA), and cash assistance, among others. These advancements encompass a range of activities, such as strengthening the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) on Disability Inclusion, enhancing the strategic emphasis on multi-purpose cash assistance (MPCA) including during the cyclone Mocha response, and providing support for the implementation of training initiatives. Mapping of complaints and feedback mechanisms (CFMs) also progressed as part of efforts to strengthen AAP and community engagement across response streams.

As part of preparedness and planning for rapid onset emergency including natural disasters, OCHA and clusters finalized the national Emergency Response Preparedness Plan, mapping the risks, available capacities and resources, first-line actions, as well as steps to mitigate potential impacts and ensure immediate life-saving assistance to affected people. This was used extensively as preparation for the arrival of cyclone Mocha. OCHA also conducted trainings on rapid needs assessments (RNA) for more than 600 aid

workers, mostly local partners, and across all zones to ensure capacity for rapid analysis to guide initial responses in the event of rapid onset emergencies including natural disasters. These trainings proved pivotal in the context of cyclone Mocha enabling partners to conduct field observations that guided prioritized response.

Directly after the landfall of cyclone Mocha, OCHA coordinated with clusters and working groups to develop a flash appeal, enabling global visibility and funds mobilization for response. OCHA convened multiple ad hoc HCT and ICCG meetings and published flash updates and situation reports to track the needs and response, ensuring a coordinated approach to guide advocacy including with donors and stakeholders for a targeted response.

### **Evidence-based response**

In the first half of the year, the ICCG worked to address the significant lack of data available in the HPC process by promoting cluster and inter-cluster analysis, including sustaining, and strengthening the implementation of the Multi-Sector Needs Analysis (MSNA) platform. This work will ensure more accurate and informed planning by improving the nuanced evidence base for humanitarian needs analysis and

response. Clusters also developed SOPs and manuals on minimum standards, which will guide response planning and prioritization using cluster data on needs, gaps, and priorities. The Needs Monitoring and Analysis Working Group was strengthened to bring a more consistent approach across the response.

The ICCG continued to improve the quality, accuracy, and frequency of response monitoring with the publication of quarterly HRP progress reports and dashboards. This was accompanied by extensive outreach by clusters to partners on the importance of reporting to inform strategic and operational decision making. OCHA plans to continue this capacity building work on monitoring in the second half of the year with a focus on local/national partners to ensure their contributions are being fully reflected in the progress reports.



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MYANMAR  
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