

### HIGHLIGHTS

- More than 200 people killed or injured by landmines since the start of 2015.
- Approx. half a million people temporarily displaced by annual floods.
- Earthquake preparedness stepped-up in Yangon.
- New restrictions on access in Kachin and Shan States.
- The benefits of shifting to cash assistance in Myanmar.
- NGOs supported through Myanmar Humanitarian Fund.
- New online platform for tracking World Humanitarian Summit commitments.

### DISPLACED PEOPLE

# of IDPs	218,000 total
# Kachin	87,000
# Shan	11,000
# Rakhine	120,000

### HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PLAN FUNDING

**189.5 million**  
requested (US\$)

**103.8 million**  
received

**55%**  
funded



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## The scourge of landmines: 51 killed since 2015

### Mine risk education and clearance critical to preventing civilian casualties

Since the start of 2015, 202 people have been killed or injured by landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) across Myanmar according to figures collated by the country's Mine Risk Working Group. Of the 51 people who have died, 21 were children. It is a legacy of decades of conflict and an increasing priority for the humanitarian community as it searches for durable solutions for internally displaced persons (IDPs).

34 year old U Aike Lu was among this year's landmine victims. He was travelling home after harvesting tea leaves north-west of Kyaukme Town, in northern Shan when he stepped on a mine. With the help of HALO Trust and its partners, Ta'ang Students and Youth Organization (TSYU) and Kham Ku Center for Study and Development (KKCSD), he was rushed to hospital for major surgery. He lost the toes on his left foot but survived after spending a month in hospital recovering.





Landmine victim U Aike Lu receives assistance from the Halo Trust to support his medical treatment and recovery. Credit: Min Han/Halo Trust


For the past year, the Myanmar Humanitarian Fund has been collaborating with the HALO Trust and its partners in northern Shan to provide support to civilian landmine victims by helping with their immediate evacuation, medical care and ongoing needs. These vital funds help relieve the financial burden of medical costs placed on families who otherwise might not be able to afford them.


To support coordinated work on mine risk education and response in affected areas, the national Mine Risk Working Group was established in 2012 it is co-chaired by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and UNICEF. It includes 12 ministries and 28 international and national organizations. State-level working groups have also been established in Kachin, Kayah, Shan and Kayin States.


Myanmar remains one of a handful of countries not to sign the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty. The continued use of landmines in conflict zones poses an enormous danger to civilians, especially IDPs. [A 2015 report by the Danish Demining Group and the Danish Refugee Council](#) estimates that approximately 50 percent of the recorded victims of landmines are IDPs.


 *Most recorded landmine incidents have occurred in Shan and Kachin*

 *Half of mine victims in Myanmar are IDPs*

 *Landmines are a barrier to IDP returns*

 *Mine risk education is critical until clearing is complete*

 *5,600 living in temporary sites in Kayin due to fighting*

 *US\$3.6 million CERF allocation for flood-affected people in Ayeyarwady, Magway and Mandalay.*

"We call on all parties to stop the use of landmines and explosive weapons, and to protect schools, health facilities and other places used by children and civilians from any military action," said Bertrand Bainvel, UNICEF Representative to Myanmar.

In a bid to address the needs of people injured by Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW), UNICEF and the Department of Social Welfare are supporting a new Victims Assistance Center opened in Kawkareik in Kayin State run by Handicap International and the Myanmar Physically Handicapped Association. It provides access to essential social services including psychosocial support and referral to rehabilitation services. It promotes the rights of ERW/Landmine survivors and children with disabilities.



One of the posters from the MRE Toolkit. Source: Mine Risk Working Group

A survey conducted in 2014 highlighted an urgent need to scale-up mine risk education programming with the vast majority of children revealing they did not know how to protect themselves from landmines or know the signs that landmines might be present in an area. In response, the sector has designed a common Mine Risk Education (MRE) Toolkit which has been endorsed by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. It is now being rolled out across affected parts of the country with clear messaging available in four local languages.

In the longer-term, demining will be critical for the return, relocation or resettlement of displaced people in conflict areas. Earlier this year, the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar, Ms Yanghee Lee, noted that many IDPs she spoke to remained afraid to return to their villages, partly due to the risk posed by landmines. She praised the limited demining efforts reported by the Ministry of Defence in a small area of Kayin State but said a much greater effort is needed. The Mine Risk Working Group says scaling-up this work is possible now.

"De-mining work need not wait until the peace process is complete in order to begin. As long as areas are currently conflict-free, preparatory work such as fencing and surveys can start immediately," Bertrand Bainvel said.


## Thousands temporarily relocated in Kayin State


According to Government authorities, approximately 5,900 people remain relocated in Myaing Gyi Ngu village in Hlaingbwe Township, Kayin State as a result of intensified fighting near their homes. Many were temporarily moved by authorities in anticipation of the conflict between the Myanmar Military and the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) splinter group. The relocated people are staying at temporary sites including the Myaing Gyi Ngu monastery, as well as with host families. Kayin State authorities are leading the assistance effort and report that most needs, including food, NFIs, education and health, are being met with support from humanitarian partners.


## Half a million people temporarily displaced by heavy flooding

Myanmar experienced heavy monsoon flooding again in 11 states and regions in June, July and August 2016, temporarily displacing approximately half a million people and damaging agricultural land, fish farms, schools, roads, bridges, wells and communal buildings. In flood-affected areas, most immediate needs were covered by the Government, the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS), local organizations and private donors with support from international organizations. UN support for these efforts is being underpinned by a US\$3.6 million allocation from the UN's Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF).

 **CERF projects focus on food security, health and protection**

 **The need for greater investment in preparedness was a key message from the World Humanitarian Summit**

 **Rakhine simulation helps prepare for monsoon flooding**

 **6.8 magnitude quake points to need for emergency preparedness**

The grant provides initial funds over a period of six months to jump-start life-saving activities benefiting more than 80,000 flood-affected people, particularly in the Ayeyarwady, Magway and Mandalay regions. The allocation will focus on the needs of the most vulnerable population groups, particularly in terms of food security, health and protection. The Food Security Sector's work involves two components. FAO (US\$1 million) will kick-start seasonal activities and supplement household food security needs through a crop and livestock package, while WFP (US\$1.5 million) will provide life-saving food assistance interventions to people displaced by floods in Ayeyarwady and Magway. In the Health Sector, UNFPA (US\$620,000) will support life-saving sexual and reproductive health services. In Protection, UNFPA (US\$450,000) will support prevention and emergency response to sexual and gender-based violence. MRCS also was able to mobilize international emergency funds to support the response in addition to its local resources.



Yesagyo Township, Magway, 10 Local Red Cross volunteers evacuated local residents and helped local authorities sandbag along the swollen Chindwin river. Credit:MRCS

## Preparing for disasters

The mid-year floods again underscored the importance of preparing for this annual hazard. On 24 and 25 August, WFP ran a simulation exercise in Sittwe in collaboration with colleagues from OCHA. The simulation is the first of its kind at the state level and focused on a scenario where Rakhine is threatened by a cyclone, bringing heavy rain and widespread flooding to the area. It tested the preparedness, response and coordination mechanisms of the Rakhine State Government and humanitarian organizations.

Approximately 80 Rakhine State Government officials and UN/INGO representatives participated in the exercise. It revealed areas for improvement including coordination and information flow. Participants agreed these would be priority actions over the months ahead.




Sittwe, Rakhine State, Myanmar (24 August 2016), Planning for flood response at the disaster simulation in Rakhine. Credit:WFP/ May Myat Swe


## Central Myanmar shaken by earthquake


### Risk and preparedness planning stepped up in Yangon


On 24 August, a 6.8 magnitude earthquake rocked central Myanmar, killing three people, damaging schools, hospitals, houses, and hundreds of pagodas. The most severe impacts were seen in communities along the border between Magway and Mandalay, with the archaeological site of Bagan suffering significant damage. This was the fourth tremor higher than magnitude 6.0 in Myanmar since 2008 and has been a timely reminder of the country's vulnerability to earthquakes. While the damage in this sparsely populated region was relatively small, an earthquake of this size in Yangon would be likely to have a far greater impact.

 4th tremor higher than 6.0 since 2008

 Yangon earthquake forum planned for 8 October

 Deteriorating humanitarian access in conflict-affected areas.

 Predictable access is critical for people to receive relief items, and protection

 Scaling-up cash transfer programming was identified as a priority at the World Humanitarian Summit

In light of this very real earthquake threat, partners have begun working with relevant authorities to evaluate the risk, get technical advice on preparedness and develop contingency plans for response across Yangon. In the lead-up to the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction, a forum will take place on 8 October, bringing together partners working in this field to focus on preparedness in Yangon. This work is in collaboration with the Yangon Regional Government and the Relief and Resettlement Department.

At the same time, ECHO is funding a Myanmar Consortium for Community Resilience (Action Aid Myanmar, Action Contre la Faim, Help Age, Oxfam, Plan International and UN-Habitat) to review the earthquake preparedness and contingency plans of two specific townships in Yangon. As part of the project, the group is assessing the earthquake risk faced by systems and staff at Yangon General Hospital and other key pieces of urban infrastructure with a view to providing retro-fitting options to make these buildings safer. Six schools will also be assessed for earthquake vulnerability and training will be provided to local emergency responders.

## New restrictions on humanitarian access in Kachin and Shan States

### UN Secretary-General notes shrinking humanitarian space

In his most recent [report to the UN General Assembly on the Situation of human rights in Myanmar](#), the United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, noted the protection and aid delivery challenges being experienced by the humanitarian community in Myanmar.

“[P]ractical humanitarian access to non-government controlled areas in Kachin State has been shrinking. Since May, international humanitarian staff have been routinely prevented from entering those areas altogether. This deteriorating situation challenges basic humanitarian principles, leaving up to 50,000 internally displaced persons living in these areas more vulnerable and less protected,” the Secretary-General said.

Providing regular, predictable and sustained humanitarian access to the civilian populations affected by these conflicts is critical and was acknowledged by the Myanmar

Government in its [address at the World Humanitarian Summit](#), held in Istanbul, Turkey, in May 2016. While some organizations have been granted access to areas beyond Government control for monitoring purposes only, access should also be restored for the delivery of vital assistance, including food and protection, in areas the Government itself cannot reach.



Nay Pyi Taw, 30 August 2016, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon meets with State Counsellor Daw Aung San Suu Kyi during his visit to Myanmar. Credit: UNIC Yangon

## Increased use of cash in humanitarian action

### The benefits of providing cash assistance

In Myanmar, cash programming is increasingly being used to respond to the needs of people affected by violence, conflict and natural disasters. Support for scaling-up this approach was a key outcome from the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul and is being fully embraced in Myanmar with benefits including increased choice, support for local markets and a reduction in aid dependency as IDPs build self-reliance. As of the first

## **\$ Benefits of cash assistance:**

- *Quick, efficient distribution*
- *Supports local markets*
- *Provides choice for IDPs*
- *Encourages self-reliance*
- *Gradually reduces aid dependency*

quarter of 2016, almost 30 organizations were already implementing and planning at least US\$10.5 million worth of cash transfers, with the highest proportions in Rakhine and Kachin States. More than 27,000 displaced people in Government-controlled areas of Kachin now receive cash instead of food commodities.

A range of humanitarian organizations are also opting to transition IDPs to a combination of cash-plus-food in places where affordable markets exist. Following a cash feasibility study conducted in six camps in Kachin in July this year, Oxfam and KBC have started moving from full food rations to rice-plus-cash assistance in four of the camps. The camps are located in hard-to-reach border locations in Kachin. The pilot is funded by ECHO and will run for three months.

30 Year old Khawn Nang is one of almost 7,000 IDPs who will begin receiving the combination of in-kind and cash assistance. She and her family of ten have lived in Shing Jai Camp for five years after fleeing their home in Kaw Nan village, Waingmaw Township, when the armed conflict erupted in 2011. Where previously her family received rice, oil, pulses and salt from Oxfam and KBC each month, they will now receive rice plus MMK 7,300 (US\$6) per person in cash.



Shing Jai IDP Camp, Kachin, Orientation session by KBC and Oxfam on the transition to cash-plus-rice assistance.  
Credit: Hkawng Naw /KBC

“The rice and cash programme allows my family to manage the cash ourselves. I like this programme because it enables us to make choices to meet our needs,” Khawn Nang said. “I will buy oil and salt for a month and I can spend the rest on beans, eggs and meat. I can buy food easily at the shops in the camp. I will also have some cash to spend if there are any urgent needs or a family member needs healthcare.”

To lay the groundwork for an expansion of humanitarian cash assistance in Myanmar, the Cash Working Group, chaired by WFP with support from OCHA, has developed a checklist to assess cash feasibility in an emergency. The group has also established closer relations with the Government to ensure coordination on cash in future emergencies. Joint efforts to improve coordination of market assessments and establish relations with financial service providers are ongoing. Members are also exploring possibilities for piloting the distribution of assistance using mobile money in places where people are already receiving cash support. In addition WFP, UNHCR, UNICEF and OCHA, are working on a joint cash feasibility study to provide multi-purpose cash transfers to people affected by disaster and conflict.

## **Increasing funding to local NGOs**

### **Myanmar Humanitarian Fund allocates US\$5.2m in 2016**

The Myanmar Humanitarian Fund (MHF) is continuing to support the work of local NGOs with the generous support of Australia, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The MHF third Reserve Allocation for 2016 is currently being finalized. A total of 18 project proposals have received approval from the MHF Advisory Board with a total value of almost US\$4m. All are from NGOs and half are from national NGOs.

The fund's strong backing for national NGOs is in line with commitments made at the World Humanitarian Summit to provide more direct financial support to local partners. The argument for supporting local humanitarian action in Myanmar is a strong one. In Kachin, Shan and Rakhine States, local organizations are already central to providing vital humanitarian relief to those in need. Providing donor funds to eligible national partners

### **Web links to new OCHA resources:**

[Myanmar Humanitarian News Digest \(September 2016\)](#)

[Myanmar IDP Sites in Kachin and northern Shan states \(August 2016\)](#)

[Myanmar IDP Sites in Rakhine State \(July 2016\)](#)

[Myanmar: Humanitarian Overview \(29 August 2016\)](#)

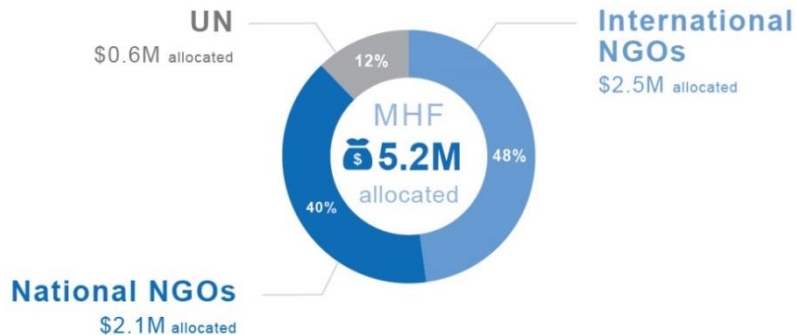
[OCHA Update: Earthquake in Central Myanmar](#)

[Humanitarian Response to flood, July 2016, photo gallery](#)

through the MHF is a practical way to localize humanitarian response and better meet the needs of affected people.

The MHF supports projects aligned to priority sectors identified in the Myanmar Humanitarian Response Plan. Overall funding for the Plan currently stands at 55 per cent.

2016 Myanmar Humanitarian Fund (as of 30 Sep 2016)



#### Web links to more reading on World Humanitarian Summit outcomes:

Summary analysis of WHS global commitments

Humanitarian Coordinator's World Humanitarian Day Op-Ed

Joint Press Release with Daw Pansy Tun Thein, Director of the Local Resource Centre in Myanmar

Op-Ed by Metta Development Foundation's, Laphai Seng Raw, on localization

Interview with OCHA Head of Office on localization

## World Humanitarian Summit Next Steps

### Implementing the Agenda for Humanity in Myanmar

On 22 September, United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon presented his [roadmap for implementation of outcomes](#) from the first-ever [World Humanitarian Summit](#), which took place in Istanbul in May this year. He called on all those involved in the Summit to uphold their commitments and transform their pledges into meaningful outcomes for the millions affected by crises. He highlighted the need to report on achievements and review progress in a high-level stocktaking meeting to take place within three to five years.

To provide transparency and showcase results, the Secretary-General launched the Agenda for Humanity online Platform for Action, Commitments and Transformation, or PACT, at [www.agendaforhumanity.org](http://www.agendaforhumanity.org). The PACT will be a dynamic space for reporting on progress and showcasing results, facilitating engagement around the Agenda for Humanity and catalyzing new partnerships.

Implementing the outcomes from the World Humanitarian Summit was the focus of World Humanitarian Day commemorations in Myanmar on August 19, particularly in terms of localization. In Myanmar, the case for greater localization of funding and response is a strong one. When a natural disaster strikes or conflict breaks out in Myanmar, it is always local people, national Civil Society Organizations, government authorities and NGOs who are the first to respond.

"There is now an urgent need to make good on the global promises and messages from the World Humanitarian Summit, turning commitments into concrete action. I am pleased to say that here in Myanmar, the humanitarian community is already taking strides in the right direction when it comes to supporting local and national CSOs," Humanitarian Coordinator, Renata Dessallien, said on World Humanitarian Day.

The Secretary-General's Agenda for Humanity sets out five core responsibilities as a framework to guide the changes that are needed to alleviate suffering, reduce risk and lessen vulnerability on a global scale. Work is now underway to incorporate the Agenda for Humanity into the Myanmar Humanitarian Response Plan for 2017.

The Myanmar Government made 24 specific commitments at the World Humanitarian Summit. These commitments are primarily related to strengthening natural disaster preparedness and response. They can be found [here](#) on the PACT website.

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