

HIGHLIGHTS

- Need to scale-up shelter repairs and maintenance in Rakhine and Kachin;
- Pilot citizenship verification exercise for IDPs in Myebon, Rakhine;
- Most vulnerable displaced people in Meiktila need blankets, mats and other assistance for the winter;
- Some 174,000 school children and their families are at risk of food ration cuts before the end of the school year.

Key FIGURES

People targeted for humanitarian assistance in Rakhine State

IDPs*	139,000
Food insecure people	70,000
People in host or surrounding villages	100,000

People targeted for humanitarian assistance in Kachin and northern Shan states

IDPs in camps	86,000
People in host families	13,000

FUNDING

192 million
requested (US\$)

50% funded

Source: UNHCR, OCHA, CCCM
* UNHCR (CCCM) figures on 31 October



Boy with his grandfather at IDP camp in Laiza Kachin. Credit: OCHA

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Repairing IDP shelters in Rakhine and Kachin

More than two years have passed since the inter-communal violence in Rakhine that led to mass displacement and the setting up of 23 main IDP camps and many other smaller IDPs sites. Some 139,000 people are still living in camps for displaced people in rural Sittwe and in other townships across the state. After more than two years of wear and tear, one of the key needs in camps is maintenance and repairs of temporary shelters. Temporary shelters were constructed for a short life-span, and most now require significant improvements and regular maintenance to ensure they remain at an acceptable standard.

Humanitarian organizations, including the Danish Refugee Council, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Lutheran World Federation and UNHCR, are working in support of the Rakhine State Government (RSG) to carry out essential repairs. Support from humanitarian agencies for shelter repairs in camps in Rakhine is critical, as displaced people face restrictions on movement and do not have access to building and repair materials.

Throughout the rainy season from June to the end of September, the priority has been essential roof repairs to shelters. Floors, walls and doors are also being replaced or repaired and organizations are carrying out structural repairs and maintenance to housing in the camps.



Children in a shelter in Nget Chaung IDP camp, Pauktaw, Rakhine, Aug. 2014. Credit: OCHA / C. Learson

Shelters for over 15,000 people in Rakhine in urgent need of repair

Humanitarian organizations providing shelter assistance agreed with the RSG that international organizations would take the lead in ensuring care and maintenance of shelters in 20 camps for displaced people in Sittwe, Pauktaw and Myebon townships. These camps host approximately 80 per cent of displaced people in the state. The RSG agreed to take responsibility for the maintenance and repair of shelters in camps in other townships across the state.

By the end of October 2014, assessments conducted in 18 camps had identified 5,704 shelter units, housing over 30,000 people, in urgent need of repair. To date, half of these

repairs have been completed using local building contractors, selected in coordination with the RSG. Assessments are still required in two camps in Pauktaw, as well as in camps and locations where the RSG has agreed to take responsibility for maintenance and repairs.

Empowering displaced people to carry out housing repairs in Kachin

In Kachin, some 100,000 people have been living in camps for displaced people for over three years since the fighting restarted between the Kachin Independence Army and Government forces. Most of the existing shelters were constructed in 2011 and no longer provide sufficient protection from rains and wind.

In 2014, as part of a pilot project from June to September in six camps in Government controlled areas in Kachin, humanitarian organizations have been supporting displaced people to carry out minor repairs and general maintenance themselves. The work is carried out by the Camp Management Committees, who administer a small fund, provided by UNHCR through its local partners, to pay for repair work. The project is implemented with support from local NGOs. According to UNHCR, this approach to carrying out repairs and maintenance to shelters is more cost and time efficient than if aid agencies had to be directly involved in all repairs. It also increases the ownership and independence of displaced people.

Most of the existing shelters in Kachin were provided in 2011 and no longer provide sufficient protection from rains and wind



Shelters before and after maintenance and repairs in Hpakan camp, March 2014. Credit: KMSS

Scale-up of shelter activities needed

There is a major need to scale-up maintenance and repair work in Kachin, to reduce the need for re-construction of shelters. Out of over 2,000 family units built in 2014, at least fifty per cent are replacements of shelters that could not be repaired or upgraded. Building new shelters is costly, with one family unit shelter costing almost US\$1,000, while repair work averages at \$50 - \$100. Humanitarian organizations are currently carrying out assessments to better determine the need for repairs and maintenance across camps, and are aiming to gradually extend the programme to all camps in Kachin in 2015.

Citizenship verification exercise in Myebon

Since June, the Government of Myanmar's Immigration, Naturalization and Registration Department has been conducting a pilot citizenship verification exercise in Taung Paw camp for displaced people in Myebon Township. According to Government sources, 1,218 individuals applied for citizenship as part of the pilot, representing 93 per cent of the eligible adult population of the camp. A "scrutinizing committee" at the township level assesses applications as a first step in the verification process. Verification also takes place at the state and at the Union level.

In September, the Government issued 209 citizenship cards (40 citizenship pink cards and 169 green cards for naturalized citizenship), according to media reports.

UNHCR estimates that there are some one million people without citizenship in Rakhine State.

Displaced people in Meiktila need assistance for the winter

With winter approaching, mats, blankets and other essential items are needed for the most vulnerable of those who remain displaced in Meiktila

In Meiktila Township, Mandalay region, some 3,300 people remain displaced following the inter-communal violence that erupted in 20 March 2013. The violence displaced over 12,000 people across 15 townships. So far in 2014, 350 households have been resettled to newly built housing, according to the Government. Other displaced people have built homes using their own means or found other solutions.

With winter approaching, mats, blankets and other essential items are needed for the most vulnerable, including the elderly and women-headed households.

Continued provision of adequate water and sanitation services in the four camps for displaced people remains critical.

The Mandalay State Government has indicated that it will try to secure Government funding to complete housing for the remaining displaced families. After funding is secured, it will take at least six months to complete the new homes.



IDPs at the stadium camp in Meiktila, May 2014. Credit: OCHA

School children at risk of food ration cuts

The World Food Programme (WFP) in Myanmar has been able to mobilize resources to avoid having to make a 20 per cent cut to monthly rice ration distributions for 200,000 displaced people in Rakhine, Kachin and northern Shan states. Funding indications from donors have enabled WFP to deploy its own internal advance financing, ensuring full IDP food rations at least until April 2015.

However, unless additional funding is received in November, WFP will have to suspend take-home rations of rice for some 174,000 children and their 522,000 family members benefiting from the school feeding in Chin, Magwe, Northern Shan, Rakhine and Wa. WFP needs \$3 million to keep full rations for school children until the end of the Myanmar school year in February 2015.



Take-home rice distributions for school children in Magwe, July 2014. Credit: WFP / A. Sahakyan

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