impacted communities are experiencing risks to their safety, as IDPs experience strong winds, and landslides in some areas. The cyclone had a devastating impact on homes and infrastructures, leaving millions of people affected. Based on available information, the cyclone-impacted communities are experiencing risks to their safety and wellbeing, particularly women and girls. IDP communities who were instructed to move to safer relocation sites after the cyclone hit also faced flooding.

In Rakhine and Chin (South) States, Cyclone Mocha made landfall near Sittwe on May, resulting in heavy rainfall, strong winds, and landslides in some areas. The cyclone had a devastating impact on homes and infrastructures, leaving millions of people affected. Based on available information, the cyclone-impacted communities are experiencing risks to their safety and wellbeing, particularly women and girls. IDP communities who were instructed to move to safer relocation sites after the cyclone hit also faced flooding due to intense rainfall which left several infrastructures in urgent need of repairs.

In Kachin and Shan (North), arrests, forced recruitment and destruction of civilian properties were also reported.

RESPONSE

Myanmar

Against this dynamic backdrop, UNHCR continues to prioritize protection monitoring, build community resilience and empowerment, and support to people with specific needs while also delivering much-needed relief items to communities.

HIGHLIGHTS

According to the UN, an estimated 1,844,000 internally displaced people (IDPs) were reported across the country as of 12 June 2023, including some 1,516,000 people newly displaced since 1 February 2021.

UNHCR and its partners continue to respond to the devastating impact of Cyclone Mocha in Bangladesh and Myanmar, which made landfall on 14 May and compounded the hardships already faced by IDPs, refugees and host communities. Myanmar was the hardest hit and UNHCR is supporting response and coordination efforts as part of the United Nations Humanitarian Country Team. Some 7.9 million people were in the path of Cyclone Mocha and 3.4 million are estimated to need humanitarian assistance with Rakhine State bearing the brunt. On 23 May, Inter-Agency Flash Appeals for both Myanmar and Bangladesh were launched, building on the existing Humanitarian Response Plan for Myanmar and the Joint Response Plan for Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh. The $333 million Flash Appeal for Myanmar targets 1.6 million people across Rakhine, Chin, Kachin States, and Magway and Sagaing Regions while the $42 million Flash Appeal for Bangladesh focuses on the Cyclone Mocha response and seeks to enhance preparedness for the upcoming monsoon season. UNHCR also declared an internal Level-2 emergency for Myanmar and Bangladesh to scale up its internal capacity to respond to this new emergency.

In the North-West, the security situation continues to deteriorate with 27 Townships remaining under Martial Law. Communities affected by Cyclone Mocha in Chin State and Sagaing and Magway Regions experienced multiple vulnerabilities due to recurrent conflict and displacement with frequent airstrikes, artillery fire, security operations and widespread arson impacting the safety and security of civilian populations. Intense scrutiny, arrests, and detentions, particularly in Sagaing and Magway, were also recorded, as IDPs experience increasing difficulties in their search for safety due to attacks on displaced communities in villages or in forests.

In the South-East, airstrikes and shelling of villages, destruction of properties and arrests were also recorded in Kayin and Mon States, Bago Region (East) and Tanintharyi Regions. Landmine incidents were also reported, threatening the safety of the civilian population.

In Rakhine and Chin (South) States, Cyclone Mocha made landfall near Sittwe on May, resulting in heavy rainfall, strong winds, and landslides in some areas. The cyclone had a devastating impact on homes and infrastructures, leaving millions of people affected. Based on available information, the cyclone-impacted communities are experiencing risks to their safety and wellbeing, particularly women and girls. IDP communities who were instructed to move to safer relocation sites after the cyclone hit also faced flooding due to intense rainfall which left several infrastructures in urgent need of repairs.

In Kachin and Shan (North), arrests, forced recruitment and destruction of civilian properties were also reported.
In Kachin and Shan (North) State, UNHCR and partners distributed core relief items (CRIs), including mosquito nets, sleeping mats, blankets, and buckets, to 5,200 IDPs (1,100 families). As part of the COVID-19 response, over 3,800 personal protective equipment (PPE) was distributed in IDP camps in Kachin State. In addition, some 300 people (60 families) benefited from shelter support in Mansi, Momauk, Mogaung, and Chipwi Townships in Kachin State.

In Rakhine and Chin (South) States, UNHCR and partners provided shelter support to 2,600 people (1,100 families). UNHCR and other humanitarian actors are also continuing to advocate for unimpeded humanitarian access to assist communities requiring assistance after Cyclone Mocha.

In the South-East, UNHCR and partners distributed various CRIs, including mosquito nets, sleeping mats, kitchen sets, blankets, jerry cans, buckets, plastic tarps and solar lamps, to 4,900 people (1,200 families) in Kayah, Kayin and Shan (South) States. In addition, some 1,300 people (290 families) received corrugated galvanized iron (CGI) roofing sheets to support more durable shelter solutions in Kayah State. Together with UNICEF and UNFPA, UNHCR also distributed hygiene kits, dignity kits for women and girls, clean delivery kits for pregnant women, blankets, mosquito nets, mats, kitchen sets, shelter materials, and WASH items, to some 2,500 people (700 families) in Shan State (South).

In the North-West, despite the challenges, efforts are underway to reach and distribute relief items to affected communities, as substantial loss in arable farmland stand to compound food security and livelihood challenges.

Thailand

No new arrivals of Myanmar refugees were recorded by the Royal Thai Government during the reporting period. Following the April influx in Tak province and Ranong province of some 12,000 refugees who arrived in Thailand between 12 and 15 April before returning to Myanmar, partners are working to simplify the rapid needs assessment to better respond to these short and recurrent stays in the Temporary Safety Areas. Meanwhile, partners are planning a workshop to bolster the capacity and understanding of government and local community-based organizations (CBOs) on humanitarian and protection principles.

India

Over 700 new arrivals crossed into India in May 2023 due to the ongoing conflict in Myanmar’s Chin State and Sagaing Region, according to estimates by CBOs in Manipur and Mizoram States. This brings the total number of arrivals from Myanmar to India after the events of 1 February 2021 to approximately 54,200. State government and CBOs estimate that over 40,550 individuals currently reside in Mizoram while 8,450 individuals are in Manipur. To date, some 5,280 individuals have approached UNHCR in New Delhi for registration since February 2021.

More than 200 shelters in 10 temporary camps across three districts in south Mizoram were either fully or partially damaged after Cyclone Mocha made landfall on 14 May. Since then, humanitarian agencies and local CBOs have supported the repair of 150 shelters. Meanwhile, health agencies, in collaboration with the district administration, have begun implementing a safe motherhood programme for pregnant and lactating mothers in all four districts in south Mizoram, reaching close to 190 women.
UNHCR and partners distributing CRIs to displaced people in Kayin, Kayah, Shan (South) States and Bago (East) Region in Myanmar in May. © Meikswe Myanmar
Sex and age disaggregated data is not currently available for displacement figures, though efforts are being made to improve the quality of the data.

*Estimates by the Operation Center for Displaced Persons, Ministry of Interior (OCDP/MOI). All 22,300 refugees have reportedly returned to Myanmar.
UNHCR is grateful for the critical support provided by the following donors, who have contributed to our Myanmar situation response as well as those that contribute to UNHCR programmes with globally unearmarked funds and broadly earmarked funds for the Asia-Pacific region:

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