

Myanmar

Operational highlights

- UNHCR addressed gaps in public health in Northern Rakhine State (NRS). New health and nutrition projects helped some 200,000 persons to benefit from better public health services and knowledge of reproductive health.
- More than 35,000 residents of NRS received temporary registration cards from the Ministry of Population and Immigration (IND) with UNHCR's support.
- Some 36,000 residents of NRS, including returnees from Bangladesh, benefited from educational and community services which facilitated their integration into society and contributed to the empowerment of girls and women.
- In the south-east, 230 community-based health, education and water projects were implemented to ease conditions for 136,000 people affected by population movements.

Working environment

The after affects of the social unrest in August and September, triggered by an increase in fuel prices, had a negative impact on the working environment of the UN. UN Special Envoy Ibrahim Gambari visited Myanmar several times in the latter part of the year.

Achievements and impact

Main objectives

In 2007, UNHCR's objectives were to facilitate the voluntary repatriation of refugees from Bangladesh; assist their re-establishment in NRS; and monitor the situation of residents in the State (including returnees) to mitigate the likelihood of any renewed outflow. The Office also sought to design assistance to strengthen



beneficiaries' coping mechanisms, with a particular emphasis on the situation of girls and women within their communities. Other aims were to improve public health services and the nutrition situation in the State. In the south-east of Myanmar, UNHCR's goals were to expand micro-projects and to improve access to basic services.

Protection and solutions

In NRS, the legal status of the people of concern, including returnees from Bangladesh, remained unclear. Consequently, they faced an uneven application of policies and procedures for birth registration, permission to marry, and restrictions on movement and house

construction. These factors increased the vulnerability of the population and hampered their search for adequate livelihoods. However, local authorities allowed UNHCR to implement its activities without major interruption, and the Office's protection interventions benefited some 12,500 families.

The Office maintained an active dialogue with the Myanmar authorities on public policies and governance issues affecting the population in the area. This succeeded in bringing selected issues to the attention of the authorities, to the benefit of NRS residents. For instance, the Government began distributing temporary registration cards to residents of the state. The move was noteworthy as these are the only identification documents that this population has ever received.

In addition to the difficulties faced by the returnees and residents of the state in general, traditional restrictions on women and adolescent girls made it difficult for them to improve their livelihoods. UNHCR-operated community centres provided tailored assistance for those with specific needs in NRS, particularly women and girls. In addition to basic Myanmar language instruction, the community centres offered vocational training and community development activities.

Activities and assistance

Community services: In NRS, 29 community centres provided a venue for community activities outside the home for women and girls. Some 12,500 beneficiaries, mainly women and girls, participated in Myanmar language lessons, vocational training sessions and awareness-raising programmes in the centres.

In the southeast, vocational training in basic masonry, carpentry and bookkeeping benefited up to 60 participants. Some 10 village committees for rural health and 12 village committees for primary schools aimed to enhance the sustainability of the projects in these sectors. Other community training activities in 36 hamlets benefited more than 750 persons.

Education: Myanmar language classes, children's language training, programmes to re-enrol children in state primary schools, and early childhood development classes benefited some 23,500 persons. In the south-east, UNHCR completed the construction of 12 primary schools to aid some 2,000 students.

Health and nutrition: Following a joint UNHCR/UNFPA assessment in 2006, a special allocation in early 2007 helped four specialized health agencies in NRS to expand their services. This led to new activities in the areas of basic health, antenatal and postnatal care, tuberculosis and malnutrition referrals, therapeutic feeding, contraception and community education. The services were provided by fixed and mobile clinics. UNHCR supported the training of community health workers, auxiliary midwives and traditional birth attendants. More than 200,000 people benefited from these activities. In the southeast, 10 health centres were constructed to serve 69,000 people. Some 140 rural health centres benefited from the provision of basic medical equipment and staff training.

Legal assistance: In NRS, the first phase of the temporary registration card distribution campaign began in mid-March 2007. The processing of the documentation was completed in June and the distribution in November. During this first phase over 35,500 applications were accepted. All temporary registration cards had been distributed either directly by the Myanmar authorities or through the Village Peace and Development Council. In the south-east, UNHCR conducted a workshop on refugee law and UNHCR's mandate for both Government officials and the staff of implementing partners.

Operational support (to agencies): UNHCR helped implementing partners to meet their project management costs.

Transport and logistics: UNHCR gave logistical support to implementing and operational partners to facilitate their work in NRS.



Under the gaze of curious villagers, a young girl in northern Rakhine state picks up newly-issued cards for her family, as part of a UNHCR documentation campaign to ease the effects of statelessness.

UNHCR/K. McKinsey

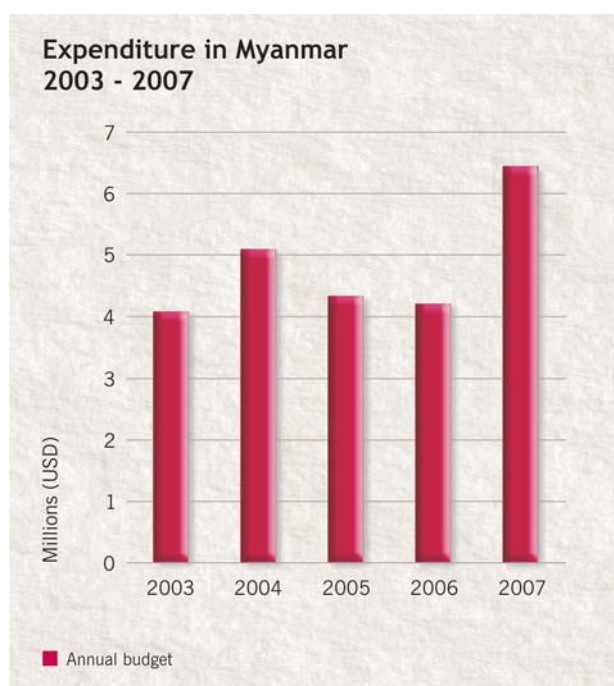
Water: Forty-two water projects in the south-east supported the digging of tube-wells and open wells, the construction of gravity-flow water systems and the installation of pond and rainwater collectors. UNHCR and ECHO conducted a workshop to address problems related to the sustainability of water and sanitation projects.

Constraints

In the south-east, delays in the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Government caused difficulties for project implementation.

Financial information

In NRS, the budget was increased at the beginning of the year by special funding to address unmet needs in the health and nutrition sectors. These funds allowed health NGOs to expand their activities and provided the flexibility to meet more needs. Additional contributions were also provided to support reproductive health activities. Similarly, in the south-east the approved budget was increased as a result of a CERF contribution to address unmet needs in the health sector. In sum, operations in Myanmar were adequately funded in 2007, though the capacity of UNHCR and its partners remains limited. Compared to previous years, expenditure in 2007 increased significantly due to the expanded geographical coverage in NRS, as well as two additional contributors.



Organization and implementation

Management

In 2007, UNHCR had a total of 74 employees, including 13 international staff, 17 UNVs and JPOs in two offices (Yangon and Maungdaw) and a field unit.

Working with others

UNHCR worked with nine implementing partners, two in the south-east and eight in NRS. Four other UN agencies (FAO, UNDP, UNICEF and WFP) and eight international NGOs work in NRS. Monthly inter-agency and sector coordination meetings were held in Maungdaw to ensure joint and complementary approaches. UNHCR cooperated with FAO, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP to submit a proposal to the Human Security Trust Fund. In the south-east, UNHCR participated in UN inter-agency meetings on HIV and AIDS, education, water and sanitation, and gender. UNHCR also chaired the working group on population movement.

Overall assessment

In NRS, the resumption of individual document distribution to residents of the state illustrated that progress on wider issues was possible when UNHCR's goals coincided with those of the Government. Reproductive health and contraception were other areas for cooperation. In the south-east, despite various constraints UNHCR managed to implement projects that addressed the vulnerability of the communities affected by population movements. UNHCR recently began discussions with the Ministry of Health to increase access to basic health services.

Partners

Implementing partners

Government: Ministry of Immigration and Population
NGOs: Action Contre la Faim, Aide Médicale Internationale, Bridge Asia Japan, Community and Family Services International, Malteser Hilfsdienst, Médecins Sans Frontières Holland, Myanmar Red Cross Society
Others: UNDP (UNV)

Operational partners

Government: Ministry of Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs
Others: Asian Development Bank, *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische* FAO, UNICEF, WFP, UNFPA, UNDP

Budget, income and expenditure (USD)

	Final budget	Income from contributions	Other funds available	Total funds available	Total expenditure
Annual budget	6,590,167	5,349,448	1,092,112	6,441,560	6,441,560

Note: Income from contributions includes contributions earmarked at the country level. Other funds available include transfers from unearmarked and broadly earmarked contributions, opening balance and adjustments.

Financial Report (USD)

Expenditure breakdown	Current year's projects	Previous years' projects
	Annual budget	Annual and supplementary budgets
Protection, monitoring and coordination	39,520	0
Community services	155,834	27,876
Domestic needs and household support	58,481	0
Education	285,104	141,485
Health and nutrition	1,137,973	34,195
Income generation	0	(60,037)
Legal assistance	359,823	100
Operational support (to agencies)	250,349	43,805
Sanitation	2,977	0
Transport and logistics	375,244	93,159
Water	209,635	112,158
Instalments with implementing partners	1,007,685	(392,741)
Sub-total operational activities	5,017,203	0
Programme support	1,424,357	0
Total expenditure	6,441,560	0
Cancellation on previous years' expenditure		(3,301)
Instalments with implementing partners		
Payments made	2,548,904	
Reporting received	(1,541,219)	
Balance	1,007,685	
Previous years' report		
Instalments with implementing partners		
Outstanding 1st January		430,012
Reporting received		(392,741)
Refunded to UNHCR		(37,271)
Adjustments		0
Balance		0