

MYANMAR

Working environment

The context

The year 2011 has seen the political environment of Myanmar marked by the transition from military rule to a civilian government, which took office in February. Though the first session of the new Parliament dealt mainly with issues of transfer of power, the second has looked into areas of interest to UNHCR, including proposals to improve the status of the Muslim residents of northern Rakhine State (NRS). However, with the Government's response to the proposals being a reiteration of current policies, UNHCR foresees a continuing need for programmes to assist residents without citizenship in NRS.

UNHCR will also assist those without citizenship in other parts of Myanmar. To this end, it is conducting a survey to map statelessness in Myanmar by determining the number and legal status of population groups without citizenship in the country. UNHCR's other priorities are to support communities affected by displacement in the south-east of the country, and help Myanmar refugees returning from Thailand.

In NRS, UNHCR assists some 800,000 Muslim residents who do not have citizenship. Members of this group were allowed to vote in the November 2010 elections, using temporary registration cards issued for that purpose by the Government. Initial discussions on replacing the temporary documents with cards denoting full citizenship took place at different administrative levels, but did not yield any concrete results. Indeed, there has been no improvement in the legal status or living conditions of the Muslim residents of NRS.

In south-eastern Myanmar, UNHCR supports some 239,000 people in communities affected by displacement. This support comes in the form of protection monitoring and advocacy with the Government for improved access to essential services. In 2012, UNHCR plans to expand its operational area in this region to gain access to and assist more than 100,000 individuals as well as about 2,000 spontaneous returnees from Thailand.

As in previous years, UNHCR will maintain the capacity to provide emergency aid to families and individuals affected by natural disasters inside and outside UNHCR's operational areas when requested by the authorities. This includes the provision of emergency shelter and non-food items, as well as addressing protection gaps.



The needs

Lack of citizenship and the Government's restrictive administrative policies and practices are the main protection and livelihood problems faced by the Muslims of NRS. The development of essential services such as health care, water, sanitation and education, as well as food security and basic communal infrastructure have been neglected in the State, and access restricted to the little that exists.

Fostering peaceful coexistence between Rakhine and Muslim communities and increasing the participation of women and girls in decision-making within their communities are other important areas of intervention for UNHCR. Furthermore, UNHCR will address the needs of the most vulnerable

Planning figures for Myanmar

TYPE OF POPULATION	ORIGIN	JAN 2012		DEC 2012 - JAN 2013		DEC 2013	
		TOTAL IN COUNTRY	OF WHOM ASSISTED BY UNHCR	TOTAL IN COUNTRY	OF WHOM ASSISTED BY UNHCR	TOTAL IN COUNTRY	OF WHOM ASSISTED BY UNHCR
Returnees (refugees)	Various	2,000	2,000	3,000	3,000	20,000	20,000
IDPs	Various	239,000	67,000	239,000	100,000	200,000	100,000
Returnees (IDPs)	Various	-	-	-	-	39,000	39,000
Stateless	Various	797,390	120,000	1,700,000	420,000	1,700,000	420,000
Total		1,038,390	189,000	1,942,000	523,000	1,959,000	579,000

¹ The Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC) estimates that there are at least 446,000 IDPs in the rural areas of eastern Myanmar, 239,200 of whom are estimated to be in the three States and Regions where UNHCR works.

households by providing them with non-food items and basic shelter. Advocacy, awareness-raising and training aimed at reducing statelessness in the Muslim population will continue in 2012.

In the south-east, UNHCR works to improve the coping mechanisms of communities affected by displacement. Assessments have shown the need to improve access to basic services such as health, water and sanitation as well as non-food items and shelter. Years of conflict and displacement have weakened traditional self-management structures of the communities, and these need to be strengthened.

Through an expanded presence, greater access and new partnerships with local NGOs, UNHCR will monitor the situation of this population, raise protection concerns with central and regional authorities, and provide legal assistance where necessary. An improved data collection and management system as well as referrals will assist in the latter.

| Strategy and activities |

In keeping with its key role in the implementation of the UN Strategic Framework for Myanmar (2012-2015) and its leadership of the national protection working group, UNHCR will address a wide range of protection issues relating to populations without citizenship and communities affected by displacement.

The main focus of the protection interventions will be on advocacy for the Government to grant citizenship to affected populations, recognize its responsibilities towards communities



affected by displacement, and lift restrictive legal and administrative practices. UNHCR's strategy also includes the expansion of legal aid to address the lack of civil documentation, land confiscation and other consequences of population movement.

Efforts to continue to build upon a relationship of trust and an open dialogue with the new Government will continue in 2012. UNHCR will also strengthen partnerships with civil society groups such as community and faith-based organizations, academic institutions and local and international NGOs. It will work with them to improve conditions for communities affected by displacement, returnees from Thailand and populations without citizenship in its operational areas.

Protection training and capacity-building, especially at the field level, will be key elements of this effort. UNHCR also plans to step up its efforts to train central and regional government officials on protection issues facing people of concern. Protection monitoring as a preventive measure, advocacy and

Main objectives and targets for 2012

Favourable protection environment

- Laws to aid people without citizenship are developed or strengthened.
 - ☞ Statelessness is gradually reduced or prevented through advocacy, monitoring, awareness-raising, and the provision of protection training to regional and central authorities.

Fair protection processes and documentation

- The quality of profiling is improved.
 - ☞ Some 50 per cent of displaced populations in operational areas are monitored and their needs and protection concerns assessed.

Security from violence and exploitation

- The risk of sexual and gender-based violence is reduced and the quality of the response to it is improved.
 - ☞ Some 80 per cent of reported cases of sexual and gender-based violence receive legal and medical assistance or counselling, as needed.

Basic needs and essential services

- The supply of potable water is maintained or increased.
 - ☞ At least 20 litres of clean drinking water are provided per person per day among displaced and host communities accessible to UNHCR and its partners.

- The population has optimal access to education.
 - ☞ Enrolment at the primary level increases to 95 per cent.
 - ☞ The literacy rate rises to 30 per cent.
 - ☞ Up to 60 per cent of children aged 3-5 attend early childhood development classes.
 - ☞ More girls are able to attend secondary education.

Community mobilization and self-reliance

- Community mobilization is strengthened.
 - ☞ At least 50 per cent of community leadership structures in accessible areas composed of women, and community leaders and members receive life-skills and leadership training.
- Local communities co-exist peacefully.
 - ☞ Tensions between the Rakhine and Muslim populations gradually decrease.
 - ☞ The participation of women and girls in decision-making increases through existing and new inter-ethnic community centres, which serve as a venue for early childhood development classes, skills training, community leadership training and literacy and computer classes.

UNHCR's presence in 2012

□ Number of offices	3
□ Total staff	82
International	10
National	54
JPOs	2
Others	16

capacity-building will be complemented by improvements in access to basic services such as water, sanitation, health and education, as well as the provision of essential non-food items. Special emphasis will be placed on strengthening community leadership structures, peaceful co-existence between ethnic groups, and increasing the participation of girls and women in decision-making.

○ Constraints

The programme in NRS is based on the assumption that a constructive dialogue with the newly established regional and central Myanmar authorities, and an investment in targeted development and infrastructure programmes will lead to the creation of greater humanitarian space. It is also hoped the programme will allow UNHCR to discuss community projects and to raise awareness of protection issues with the authorities. Though the situation in NRS is not amenable to immediate resolution, progressive measures to build confidence and foster co-existence are being implemented.

In south-eastern Myanmar, the lack of reliable statistics poses a variety of challenges for UNHCR, as does the remoteness of areas affected by displacement. The thin presence of humanitarian agencies in the region also makes it difficult to reach all those in need of assistance.

Organization and implementation

○ Coordination

UNHCR remains an active participant in various coordination mechanisms, both at

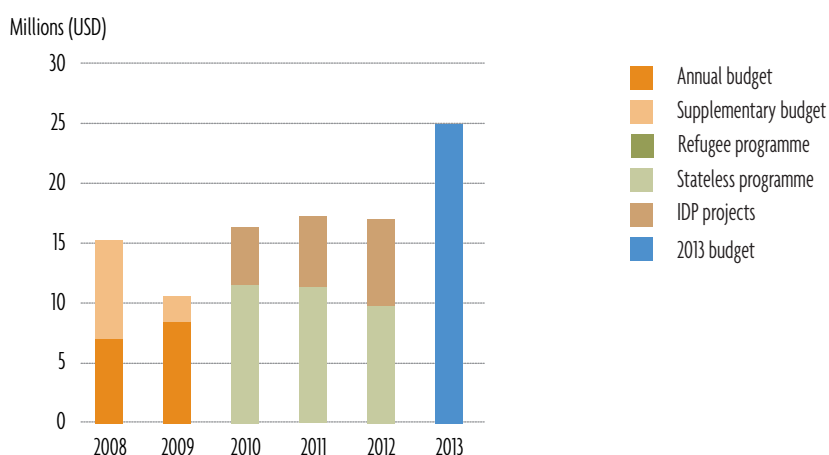
the central and local levels in Myanmar. For instance, it leads the nationwide protection working group, which started as a protection cluster working group during the Cyclone Nargis response, and later expanded to countrywide coverage. As the lead agency in its two operational areas, UNHCR maintains close relations with operational partners such as UN agencies, NGOs and central and regional authorities. UNHCR hosts regular inter-agency meetings in the field and in Yangon, and in 2011 has set up a protection working group in NRS. UNHCR also provides an operational umbrella for several agencies with which it has formal operational agreements in Myanmar.

Financial information

UNHCR's budget has been rising steadily over the past five years, with a spike in 2008 owing to assistance required by survivors of Cyclone Nargis. Budgets for populations in the south-east and NRS, however, have remained stable. Since 2009, UNHCR has allocated additional resources to expand assistance to the Muslim population in NRS in five priority sectors that are also supported by the Government. This has continued in 2011, with additional funds allocated for assistance to victims of natural disasters in Rakhine State.

The year 2011 has also shown growth in the budget for projects in south-eastern Myanmar, thanks to an increase in support from donors. While overall funding levels have increased, UNHCR's needs-based, comprehensive budget in Myanmar has remained stable since its introduction in 2009, owing mainly to limited access and implementation capacity at field level.

UNHCR's budget in Myanmar 2008 – 2013



2012 UNHCR Budget in Myanmar (USD)

BUDGET BREAKDOWN	REFUGEE PROGRAMME PILLAR 1	STATELESS PROGRAMME PILLAR 2	IDP PROJECTS PILLAR 4	TOTAL
Favourable protection environment				
Law and policy	0	279,874	0	279,874
National administrative framework	0	179,583	294,634	474,216
Access to legal assistance	0	67,291	155,422	222,714
Subtotal	0	526,748	450,056	976,804
Fair protection processes and documentation				
Registration and profiling	0	0	428,422	428,422
Civil status documentation	0	117,583	0	117,583
Subtotal	0	117,583	428,422	546,005
Security from violence and exploitation				
Protection from effects of armed conflict	0	0	513,634	513,634
Prevention of and response to SGBV	0	98,583	333,634	432,216
Non-arbitrary detention	0	59,083	0	59,083
Subtotal	0	157,665	847,267	1,004,933
Basic needs and essential services				
Health	0	886,457	535,422	1,421,879
Reproductive health and HIV services	0	709,874	383,422	1,093,296
Nutrition	0	546,874	0	546,874
Water	0	779,165	1,183,845	1,963,010
Sanitation and hygiene	0	618,457	766,845	1,385,301
Shelter and infrastructure	0	734,583	575,422	1,310,005
Basic domestic and hygiene items	0	602,291	550,211	1,152,503
Education	0	918,748	500,422	1,419,170
Subtotal	0	5,796,449	4,495,591	10,292,039
Community empowerment and self-reliance				
Community mobilization	0	438,874	112,211	551,085
Co-existence with local communities	0	567,291	0	567,291
Natural resources and shared environment	0	30,291	0	30,291
Self-reliance and livelihoods	0	592,291	225,211	817,503
Subtotal	0	1,628,748	337,422	1,966,170
Durable solutions				
Greater reduction of statelessness	0	212,583	0	212,583
Subtotal	0	212,583	0	212,583
Leadership, coordination and partnerships				
Coordination and partnerships	0	60,083	0	60,083
Subtotal	0	60,083	0	60,083
Logistics and operations support				
Logistics and supply	0	864,874	206,422	1,071,296
Operations management, coordination and support	0	482,457	446,267	928,724
Subtotal	0	1,347,331	652,690	2,000,020
Total	0	9,847,188	7,211,448	17,058,637
2011 Revised budget	31,000	11,392,196	5,850,185	17,273,381

PARTNERS

Implementing partners

Government agencies

Ministry of Immigration and Population
(Immigration and National Registration Department)

NGOs

Action Contre la Faim
Aide Médicale Internationale
Community and Family Services International
Bridge Asia Japan
Myanmar Red Cross Society
Malteser International
Save the Children

Operational partners

Government agencies

Ministry of Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs

NGOs

Norwegian Refugee Council
Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
CARE
Médecins Sans Frontières Netherlands,
Médecins Sans Frontières Switzerland
World Vision