Rakhine State is located in the Western part of Myanmar, bordering with Chin State in the North, Magway, Bago and Ayeyarwaddy Regions in the East, Bay of Bengal to the west and Chittagong Division of Bangladesh to the north-west. It is one of the most remote regions in Myanmar, geographically separated from the rest of the country by mountains. The population of Rakhine State is 3.3 million of which 288,000 live in Sittwe and 459,000 in Maungdaw Townships. Chronic poverty and high vulnerability to shocks are widespread throughout the State. A recent nutrition survey carried out by ACF in Northern Rakhine reported 20 percent prevalence of global acute malnutrition.

WFP is the main humanitarian organization providing food assistance in Rakhine. Its first operation in Myanmar commenced in 1978 in Northern Rakhine, following the return of 200,000 refugees from Bangladesh. For three years, WFP provided food aid to the returnees to help them rebuild their livelihoods through its emergency operations. In 1994, WFP returned to Rakhine to assist the repatriation of 250,000 Muslims, whose food security and nutritional status was affected by restrictions to travel to certain parts of the State to work or trade for their livelihood, to access health and education services.

In 2012, several waves of inter-communal violence broke out, leading to the displacement of 140,000 people in Rakhine. As a consequence, the food security situation of the State has further deteriorated and the nutritional status of the internally displaced people (IDPs) is concerning, especially among children and pregnant and lactating women. Since June 2012, WFP has been providing life-saving food assistance to the IDPs through its sub offices in Maungdaw and Sittwe. WFP purchases 90 percent of the food locally thus contributing to the local economy. Since January 2013, 24,000 metric tons of rice has been locally purchased in Rakhine.

**OPERATIONAL STRATEGY**

Relief assistance to IDPs in Rakhine will remain a priority intervention for WFP in 2014 and 2015, as long as they are unable to return to their villages of origin or to resume their regular livelihood activities due to the movement restrictions imposed by the government. WFP will therefore continue its general food distribution to the IDP population, mainstreaming nutrition interventions for children under five and pregnant and lactating women, in order to avoid a worsening of their food security and nutritional status. In addition, WFP will keep assisting the conflict-affected and most vulnerable communities to protect and restore access to basic services and livelihoods through protracted relief activity, school feeding and asset creation programmes as well as nutrition interventions for HIV/Tuberculosis patients on retroviral treatment. Cash-based programming will be expanded when and where local markets and the security situation allow to do so.

As the main humanitarian organization that provides food assistance to all IDPs and most vulnerable households in Rakhine, WFP has a crucial role to play in coordinating the food security sector’s contribution to the humanitarian response plan for Rakhine. WFP will continue its efforts to extend collaboration with local and international cooperating partners in Rakhine.

**PARTNERSHIPS**

- Ministry of Development Affairs
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Planning and Economics

**UN Coordination Agencies and WFP Cooperating Partners**

In Northern Rakhine, WFP faces difficulties in finding cooperating partners
Prolonged inter-communal violence among Muslim and Buddhist communities in Rakhine started in June 2012 and has led to the displacement of approximately 140,000 IDPs including Rakhine. WFP distributes monthly food rations consisting of rice, pulses, oil and salt to all IDPs. Children under five and pregnant and lactating women also receive nutritious blended food to avoid further deterioration of their nutritional status.

Under its protracted relief programme, WFP also assists the poorest and most vulnerable households in 630 villages across Northern Rakhine (including Rakhine people who returned from Bangladesh). During lean season (May-November), approximately 70,000 people benefit from general food distribution, including 17,000 children under five and pregnant and lactating women, who also receive blended food. From March 2014, WFP has scaled up its nutrition activities in Sittwe by targeting 1,000 children under five from the IDP camps for moderate acute malnutrition treatment.

WFP started its asset creation programme in Northern Rakhine State in 2008 to help the most vulnerable populations to build common assets based on the communities’ greatest needs. Asset creation projects range from dam renovation and road construction to erosion control activities in Northern Rakhine. WFP facilitates technical expertise to implement the projects and provides food assistance to the programme participants and their families. Implementation of a pilot cash-for-assets programme in Sittwe township targeting conflict-affected communities. Planned activities include but are not limited to road/school construction and renovation and fishing nets weaving.

WFP has been supporting ACF’s nutrition programme in Rakhine since 2003. Blended food is distributed to children under five and pregnant and lactating women through supplementary feeding in order to prevent and support treatment of moderate acute malnutrition.

WFP started its school feeding programme in the three townships of Maungdaw, Buthidaung and Rathedaung in Northern Rakhine State in 1996, with the objective of increasing the enrollment rate of girls and boys in primary schools. Moreover, school feeding aims to facilitate access to quality education to children from the most vulnerable and food insecure areas by providing monthly take-home rations (10 kg rice) to students who attended at least 90 percent of classes. School feeding programme is currently implementing in 141 Muslim schools, 114 Rakhine schools and 63 Muslim and Rakhine mixed schools in Rakhine State.

In cooperation with Malteser and MSF-Myanmar, WFP provides food assistance to people affected by HIV/TB who are undergoing anti-retroviral therapy in Northern Rakhine.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Food (mt)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relief Assistance</td>
<td>227,510</td>
<td>32,151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition</td>
<td>37,376</td>
<td>2,291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Feeding</td>
<td>191,074*</td>
<td>2,406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asset Creation</td>
<td>14,646**</td>
<td>186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV/TB Support</td>
<td>1,141</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>420,509</strong></td>
<td><strong>37,103</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*School feeding beneficiaries include school children’s families, who benefit from rice take-home rations.
**Asset creation beneficiaries include the participant’s families, who benefit asset creation activity rations.

Sittwe Sub-Office
Head of Office: Victoria Ta-Asan
Number of Staff: 25

Maungdaw Sub-Office
Head of Office: Hongyi Xie
Number of Staff: 83

Warehouse Capacity
- Rathedaung: 135 mt
- Buthidaung: 700 mt
- Maungdaw: 1,500 mt
- Sittwe: 3,000 mt

Myanmar Country Office
5, Kanbawza Street,
Shwe Taungyang Ward 2, Bahan Township
Yangon, Myanmar

Sittwe Sub-Office
Phone: +95 9 8610017, 09 8610148

Maungdaw Sub-Office
Phone: +95 9 8610018, 09 8610005