



## WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME MYANMAR June 2015 Operational Report

**Boat People Crisis:** In May, two boats, carrying more than 900 people, were intercepted by the Myanmar navy in the country's coastal waters. Among the rescued, 200 people were reported as Bangladeshi citizens while 733 claimed to originate from Myanmar. Following the request for assistance from the authorities, WFP provided food rations, consisting of rice, chickpeas, salt and oil. In addition, children under the age of five received fortified blended food. The response to the boat people crisis has been led by the Government of Myanmar, which handles the daily food distributions. In close coordination with IOM, UNHCR and other humanitarian actors on the ground, WFP continues to provide necessary food aid and constantly monitors the management of humanitarian assistance to help ensure accountability to the donors and beneficiaries. In early June, 150 confirmed Bangladeshi citizens were repatriated by the Government in coordination with the Bangladeshi authorities. WFP stands ready to provide further assistance as required.

**Kokang Conflict and Return of IDPs:** Despite the unilateral ceasefire, declared by the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army in June, tensions in Kokang continued. Local authorities, NGOs and civil society organizations provided food, non-food items and agricultural inputs (maize and paddy seeds) to the returnees, formerly sheltered in the Border 125 camp in Laukai area. WFP and other humanitarian agencies were not authorised to access Kokang itself. The Government estimated that 60,000 people remained displaced from Laukai. In Wa Self-Administered Division, the number of ethnic Kokang IDPs, who had found refuge in the Nam Tit camp, increased. In May, WFP distributed 8.5 mt of food to these IDPs. In northern Shan, over 700 IDPs in the camps within Theinne and Kut Kai townships, were provided with 4.3 mt of WFP food. Heavy fighting between the Myanmar military and Ta'ang National liberation Army (TNLA) around Nam Tu in northern Shan occurred last week of May. The Myanmar government forces arranged the evacuation of local households to safer places near Lashio town. The IDPs eventually returned to their places of origin, following the withdrawal of TNLA from the area.

**New Displacement in Kachin:** Hostilities between the Myanmar military and Kachin Independence Army continued in May. In the aftermath, a total of 270 people were displaced to the Moeguang and Sar Maw camps. An assessment, conducted by WFP, concluded that the IDPs were in need of food, water, shelter, cash and other non-food items as well as education support. WFP have distributed food rations to 69 people, displaced to the three existing camps in Moegaung township. The remaining IDPs will receive food assistance once the registration process is completed. The return of these IDPs to places of origin is impossible in the immediate future due to the potential presence of landmines in the surrounding areas. Lacking livelihood opportunities, IDPs relied exclusively on external sources, relatives and churches, whose assistance was no longer afforded.

**Japan's Ambassador Visits Rakhine:** On 27-28 May, H.E Tateshi Higuchi, Ambassador of Japan to Myanmar, visited Sittwe, Rakhine, to observe progress of the operations funded by Japan. The representatives of UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP as well as Rakhine State Transport Minister participated in the mission. Site visits included a WFP warehouse and Set Yoe Kya Rakhine IDP camp in Sittwe, a UNDP project site Oh Re Paw Village Rakhine village, and Baw Du Pha Muslim IDP camp in rural Sittwe. Japan remains WFP's top funding partner in Myanmar.



WFP Country Director Dom Scalpelli with Japan's Ambassador Tateshi Higuchi in WFP warehouse in Sittwe, Rakhine. *Photo: WFP/Ayuka Ibe*



Photo: WFP/Kyaw Zaw Tun

**Project Extension:** WFP in Myanmar is planning to extend the current 2013-2015 protracted relief and recovery operation (PRRO) to include 2016 and 2017. The extension will take into consideration Myanmar's political, peace and reconciliation, economic and administrative reforms as well as the goal for the establishment of a United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) in 2018. To improve the prospects for sustainability and hand-over, WFP will continue working with the Government of Myanmar to enhance national capacity to assess and respond to food insecurity and undernutrition by shaping national policies and ownership and focusing on the following priority areas of: i) emergency preparedness and response; ii) nutrition; and iii) provision of social safety nets.

**Letter of Intent with Ministry of Education:** On 5 June, the Ministry of Education and WFP signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) to partner on the National School Feeding Programme (NSEP) in Myanmar. The objective of LoI is to cooperate on the design and implementation of NSEP strategies and action plans, development of a school feeding policy as well as capacity building of the Ministry's key staff. Globally, WFP has supported governments for transitioning to nationally-owned school feeding programmes. The Government of Myanmar's transformational goal of reaching the Middle Income Country status by 2030 has signalled its readiness to employ school feeding as a social safety net. In this regard, WFP will handover the ownership of the programme to the national government by mainstreaming it in the country's national policies. The Ministry will lead the initiative whereas WFP will provide technical and financial assistance as well as support capacity-building. In the first year of the partnership, at the strategy design and development stages, WFP will retain its school feeding implementation in the current operational areas. The continuation of WFP's financial support for the operation beyond 2015 will be considered subject to further discussions. In August 2015, WFP intends to resume school feeding, shifting from take-home rations to a more child-centric on-site feeding with high-energy biscuits, targeting 1,866 schools, catering to more than 232,800 students across the country.

**Food Security & Poverty Estimation Surveys:** In May, the WFP implemented "Improved Food Security and Market Price Information System in Myanmar" project, funded by the Livelihoods and Food Security Trust (LIFT), has been extended for additional six months. In the framework of the project, the LIFT funding has contributed to WFP's food security and poverty estimation surveys in Ayeryawady, Bago, Chin, Dry Zone (South Sagaing, Magway and Mandalay), Kachin, north Sagaing, Shan and Yangon, conducted in partnership with the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development. The objective of the surveys has been to inform on food security levels and poverty patterns at the regional level, facilitating the targeting and prioritisation of nutrition specific and sensitive interventions as well as supporting the design of national poverty alleviation strategies. The current project extension will allow WFP to complete the outstanding surveys in Rakhine and the Southeast (Kayah, Kayin, Mon and Thanintharyi) with an ultimate goal of generating a first-ever food security atlas in Myanmar. The scope of the surveys, in particular its geographical reach, remains unprecedented. The remaining surveys are scheduled to commence in end-June.

#### **Resource Situation:**

In June, WFP received a generous and timely contribution of AUD3 million (US\$2.8 million) from the Government of Australia in support of WFP's relief activities in Myanmar, including emergency response to the boat people crisis.

WFP continues to face funding shortfalls in Myanmar and urgently requires a total of US\$29 million to meet all food assistance needs until the end of year. The food pipeline is expected to break in August 2015. If no new funding is received, WFP will prioritise life-saving food assistance to IDPs as well as nutrition support to pregnant women and nursing mothers and children under the age of five. Contributions are required as soon as possible, taking into account the lead time for procurement and delivery of food to operational areas during the monsoon season.

The top five funding sources to WFP in Myanmar are Australia, EU, Japan, USA and Switzerland.