



WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME MYANMAR

November 2014 Operational Report

IDP ration cuts averted for November and December

In October, WFP was facing a severe immediate funding shortfall, which would have resulted in 20 percent rice ration cuts for 200,000 internally displaced persons in Kachin, northern Shan and Rakhine. WFP advised funding partners about the impending food pipeline break but insufficient funding came through. Just in time, WFP managed to deploy advance financing against an indicative forecast from one funding partner and succeeded in temporarily averting the rice ration cuts for IDPs for November and December. Nevertheless, if urgent funding is not received, it will result in 20 percent rice ration cut for IDPs as of January 2015.

Funding shortfalls threaten school feeding

Despite WFP having managed to avert rice ration cuts for IDPs in November and December, it still faces severe funding shortfalls. The advance financing was not sufficient to cover also take-home rice school feeding, which will need to be suspended in end-November 2014, if urgent funding is not received by then. This forced measure would affect 174,000 schoolchildren in Chin, Rakhine, Magway, Shan and Wa, as well as their 522,000 family members, who also benefit from the take-home rice school feeding ration. WFP has appealed to partners for immediate support to avoid the suspension of school feeding in the country.

New displacements in the Southeast

Through UNHCR and cooperating partners, WFP became aware of a new displacement of people in Kayin State, in southeastern Myanmar. It was reported that over 700 IDPs were newly displaced due to fighting which occurred between a Karen armed group and the Myanmar Army. After verification with the cooperating partner, WFP field office in Mawlamyine, Mon State, made a request to the Kayin State Government for provision of food assistance to the new IDPs.

The Chief Minister approved the food intervention. However, the food distribution is still pending due to restricted access to the conflict area. WFP is closely following up on the situation.

Enhanced collaboration with Government on HIV/TB and Nutrition

In October, WFP and the Ministry of Health finalised the text for an agreement on the implementation of food assistance to multi drug resistant TB patients on directly observed treatment with short-course chemotherapy (DOTS). The agreement is ready to be signed by both parties. Also, WFP will be involved in the development of the Myanmar National HIV nutrition guidelines. WFP along with National Nutrition Center and National AIDS Programme will oversee the development of the guidelines. Furthermore, WFP continued working with the Government and other nutrition stakeholders to finalise the national guidelines for the Integrated Management of Acute Malnutrition (IMAM). The document should be endorsed by the end of the year and will align the treatment of moderate and severe acute malnutrition among infants and children under 5 to the existing global guidance.



Schoolchildren in Magway will have their take-home rice rations suspended as of end-November
Photo: WFP/Arsen Sahakyan



Names to Faces: Introducing WFP beneficiaries

Marjuna, a mother of four underage children, is one of WFP's beneficiaries, receiving relief food assistance in northern Rakhine State. Two years ago, her husband left abroad by boat in search of work. With no news from him ever since, she has been constantly struggling to provide a living for the family. WFP currently provides food support to Marjuna. But as there are no other income generating opportunities or coping mechanisms, it is extremely hard to meet the family needs such as additional food requirements for fresh fish and vegetables, schooling, medical care and even housing. Marjuna with her children did not have a place to live, and they found a temporary refuge in a small attachment to the house of her brother-in-law. Out of her four children, only the eldest son attends school. He is in grade two now. During the peak season, Marjuna works in the rice paddies while the younger children beg in the street. The elder son helps by fishing in the sea and river when the school is off. Marjuna understands the importance of schooling and is strongly committed to ensuring that her elder son receives a secondary education. "I myself did not have an opportunity to go to school but now I realize how important education is. I will do everything possible so that my eldest son completes secondary school", says Marjuna. "Education will not only help him find a job and support the family needs but also prepare him for challenges he will encounter throughout his life".



Marjuna with her children

Photo: WFP/Maung Maung Hla

Supporting Rice Fortification Initiative

WFP continues supporting the Government's efforts in tackling micronutrient deficiencies in Myanmar. WFP is actively involved in the rice fortification project led by PATH NGO. As a member of the core technical working group, WFP provides technical assistance to the Government and partners on the production of fortified rice, helping build an enabling and sustainable environment for the rice fortification initiative.

Security Incidents

In October, several security incidents were reported in various states and regions of Myanmar, insignificantly affecting implementation of WFP activities. In particular, new clashes occurred between an armed ethnic group and the Myanmar Army in Mone See area in Kut Khai Township, Shan State. Due to the unstable security situation in the conflict affected zone, a cooperating partner postponed distribution of High Energy Biscuits to schoolchildren in Lone Wai school until November.

Resources

As of November 2014, food pipeline breaks are expected from end-November. WFP Myanmar is currently facing an immediate shortfall of US\$8 million in order to meet all food assistance needs through February 2015. WFP's total requirement until June 2015 is US\$29 million. New contributions are required as soon as possible, taking into account the lead time of food procurement and delivery and ensuring uninterrupted food assistance.

The top five funding sources to WFP in Myanmar are Japan, EU, USA, Australia and Switzerland. Funding has also been received in 2014 from Canada, Japan Association for WFP, UN CERF, Unilever and Yum! Brands.



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