



## WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME MYANMAR December 2016 Operational Report

**Situation in northern Rakhine State:** While the situation in northern Rakhine remained precarious, WFP was able to deliver food assistance to people in need on three occasions. On 8-10 November, 7,232 people in four villages of Maungdaw Township, affected by the ongoing security incidents, received food baskets enough for two weeks. Likewise, on 21 and 25 November, having temporarily been granted access, WFP reached 18,623 of the most vulnerable people with cash assistance in 185 villages in Buthidaung Township, enabling them to buy food at nearby local markets and meet immediate needs. On 23 November, following a request received from the local authorities, WFP completed a food distribution to 121 ethnic Rakhine and Mro people at the Ah Lo Daw Pyay monastery in downtown Buthidaung.



A woman affected by violence in northern Rakhine in receipt of Japan funded WFP rice in Maungdaw ©WFP/Mohamed Eliyas

Despite having reached a number of people in need of food assistance, the ongoing security operations in northern Rakhine State still limited WFP's ability to reach all people who were affected by the situation. For the month of November, 43,000 schoolchildren received high-energy nutritious biscuit snacks as part of WFP's regular school feeding programme, but due to access restrictions and temporary closures of pre-primary and primary schools, 25,000 children who were normally part of the programme were not reached. WFP continued its efforts to gain access to the vulnerable communities in northern Rakhine and stood ready to deliver life-saving food and cash assistance to those in need when access became once again possible. As some

of the affected and food-insecure areas in Maungdaw were still out of reach, WFP calls for full access in order to assess and meet the food needs of people facing continued food insecurity.

**Limited access in Shan State:** The security situation in Shan State was unstable since 20 November. Conflicts between the Government forces and a collaboration between ethnic armed groups affected operations in north and north-western townships of the northern part of the state. In most areas affected by the conflicts, WFP experienced difficulties accessing vulnerable communities six affected townships where approximately 18,000 people, who were part of WFP's regular relief, school feeding and community asset creation activities, could not receive food or cash assistance. WFP was ready to conduct assessments for food assistance and reach people affected by the conflicts once access became possible.

**Expansion of school feeding programme:** Myanmar's national school feeding programme was expanded in November to include four new states and regions; namely Sagaing, Mon, Kayin and Kayah. The inclusion of the most food-insecure areas in these states and regions meant WFP would reach an additional 16,000 schoolchildren in ethnic minority areas, who had never benefited from WFP school feeding, and supporting their regular access to primary school education. In order to ensure success in the included areas, township education officers and school teachers/headmasters completed field-level trainings on the implementation of the programme. The inclusion of those new schoolchildren is part of the Government's expansion plan for the school feeding during the 2016-2017 academic year aiming to reach 300,000 schoolchildren after the inclusion of 100,000 additional students.

**Campaign against Gender-Based Violence:** WFP once again supported the global "16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence" campaign from the 25 November to 10 December. In support of the initiative, WFP in Myanmar raised awareness to end violence against women, by decorating offices across the country in the official colour of the campaign, orange, to symbolise a brighter future, free from violence against women and girls. The kick-off and



WFP assisted schoolchildren during a lunch break in Ngwe Pyaw San Pya of Kachin State

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subsequent events across the WFP offices in Myanmar emphasised how food insecurity and lack of access to sufficient resources could exacerbate and reinforce gender-based violence. Among various activities, interactive sessions were held with WFP-assisted schoolchildren in Pakokku as well as guest speakers from the Gender Equality Network in the Country Office in Yangon.

**Japan grant agreement signing ceremony:** On 7 December, the Government of Japan, which remained WFP's largest funding partner in Myanmar, donated JPY 300 million (US\$ 2.6 million) to WFP. The generous and timely donation would support the recovery and treatment of malnourished children under the age of five, help people living with HIV and TB clients with nutritional support during treatment, provide meals in schools to help children finish primary education and assist the building and repair of community assets such as dams and fishing ponds. Japan's contribution would allow WFP to procure at least 1,900 tons of mixed food to benefit more than 140,000 food-insecure people across Kachin, Magway,

Mon, Sagaing and Shan. Likewise, specialized nutrient-dense food and nutritious biscuit snacks will help children increase their intake of vitamins and minerals, which are crucial to their healthy and continued growth. The grant was formally handed over to WFP Deputy Country Director and Officer-in-Charge Ms Naoe Yakiya by His Excellency Tateshi Higuchi, Japan's Ambassador to Myanmar. The grant agreement signing ceremony, which took place in the capital Nay Pyi Taw, was officiated by His Excellency Lt Gen Ye Aung, Union Minister for Border Affairs representing the Government of Myanmar.

**Nationwide operations:** In November, WFP reached a total of 480,500 people in need of food assistance through its five programmes, namely relief, nutrition, community asset creation, school feeding and food-by-prescription for people living with HIV and TB clients. Out of 595,000 people in need of food assistance across Myanmar targeted in November, 114,500 people were not reached. This was largely due to the access constraints caused by the recent security incidents in northern Rakhine State, which has led to widespread security operations. WFP stood by to assess the situation and was ready to resume delivery of food and cash assistance to people facing food insecurity, once access became again possible.



From the left: Japan's Ambassador to Myanmar H.E. Tateshi Higuchi, Minister of Border Affairs, H.E. Lt. Gen. Ye Aung and WFP Deputy Country Director Ms Naoe Yakiya at the Japan grant signing ceremony ©WFP/Philip Havmose

#### Resource Situation:

In addition to Japan's contribution of JPY 300 million (US\$ 2.6 million), WFP also welcomed a timely donation of SEK 10,000,000 (US\$ 1.1 million) from the Government of Sweden in November in support of the relief operations.

WFP still faces a shortfall of US\$ 25 million with the imminent pipeline break by end-January 2017. WFP overall needs for 2017 are currently estimated to amount to US\$ 53 million. With recurrent conflicts and resultant displacements of people in several parts of the country, a rise in the number of beneficiaries in need of immediate life-saving food assistance and consequently increased funding requirements are anticipated in the coming months. Fresh funds are urgent considering the lead time for procurement, delivery and distribution of food to the displaced and other most vulnerable populations with their food security and nutrition status at risk.