Security operations in Rakhine: Following the authorisation from the local authorities on 18 December, WFP managed to shortly resume relief and nutrition activities and assist 28,096 food-insecure and vulnerable people in 169 villages of Buthidaung and Maungdaw Townships. Since 19 December, WFP reached 18,740 people in 95 villages of Maungdaw and 9,356 people in 74 villages of Buthidaung. Access to many areas most affected by the ongoing security operations in northern Maungdaw were rendered inaccessible again on 28 December, due to safety and security concerns from authorities, but were resumed once again on a sustained basis for January distributions. Between 13 and 20 January, WFP distributed food to 16,147 people, most of whom received food assistance for the first time.

Unstable Security Situation in Shan State: The security situation in the northern region of northern Shan State remained unstable due to sporadic fighting between the military and ethnic armed groups. The conflicts resulted in WFP being unable to deliver food assistance to affected people in Kokang during December, while access to the townships of Muse, Nam Kham, Kut Khai, Nam Tu and Man Tone was limited. In order to ensure delivery to people in need, food assistance was replaced with cash assistance in Muse, Nam Kham and Kut Khai. WFP continues to follow up with the Ministry of Border Affairs about the situation and stands by to resume food and cash distributions in affected areas when the security situation is once again stable.

Access restrictions affect WFP operations across Myanmar: WFP aimed to assist 574,900 people estimated to be in need of food assistance across Myanmar in December. Of these, a total of 442,938 people were reached. In effect, 131,917 people went without lifesaving food-assistance for December, thus further exacerbating a situation marked by difficulties in maintaining a sufficiently nutritious diet among several communities in Myanmar. Ongoing conflicts and the precarious situations in Rakhine, Kachin and Shan States are the main reasons for this large group of people going unassisted, largely due to the restrictions on movement and transportation they cause.

2016 in Review: In total in 2016, WFP provided 34,684 tons of food to the most vulnerable and food-insecure communities in Myanmar. The vast majority of this food, 27,228 tons (nearly 80 percent), was procured locally in Myanmar, thus contributing to the economic development of the country and support of local businesses producing commodities such as rice and pulses. As part of WFP’s relief activities, food and cash assistance was provided to internally displaced persons and the most food insecure people in Kachin, Shan and Rakhine States. This action continued to be essential to meet the basic needs of displaced women, girls, boys and men as a majority of IDPs still relied on life-saving assistance due to lack of livelihood opportunities, restriction of movement and security concerns. In addition, the National School Feeding Programme was expanded in four new states (Sagaing, Mon, Kayin and Kayah) in the second half of the 2016-17 academic year, starting October 2016. With the inclusion of these additional areas, the school feeding programme reached approximately 300,000 school children across nine states and regions by the end of 2016. In terms of WFP’s community asset creation activities, most of the areas affected by the floods in 2015 and 2016, namely Rakhine, Sagaing, Chin and Magway States, were assisted in rehabilitating community assets such as roads, dikes and drinking-water ponds. The completed projects played a significant role in improving the livelihoods of the affected communities across the country. Furthermore, WFP implemented food and nutritional support to people living with HIV and TB/MDR-TB.
clients in collaboration with two disease control programmes of Ministry of Health and Sports (MoHS) and eight INGO partners in Myanmar including UNOPS. The programme targeting MDR-TB clients, implemented in collaboration with the National TB Programme (NTP) of MoHS, was extended as a nation-wide programme, funded by the Global Fund, reaching 100% of MDR-TB clients who are registered in NTP’s treatment programme. In addition, a pilot programme with the National AIDS Programme of MoHS, was also implemented in the second half of 2016. Cash Based Transfers have been further ramped-up during the year 2016. A year on year increase of close to 90% has meant that close to 190,000 beneficiaries have received multipurpose cash to supplement their basic food needs.

Water Supply System Built in Pang Kham: As part of WFP’s community asset creation activities, construction of a gravity flow water supply system was completed in Mui Hao village in Lian Haw Township in Wa Self Administrative Zone. Forty-nine inhabitants participated in the construction in exchange for food and cash assistance, enabling them to buy food and necessary household items at local markets. The water supply system is the first in the village, thus easing households’ access to water for hygienic and cooking practices.

Resource Situation:

In January, WFP welcomed a generous and timely contribution of US$ 5 million from the Government of the United States to support people displaced by conflicts in Kachin, Shan and Rakhine states.

WFP still faces a shortfall of US$ 20.5 million with an expected pipeline break by February 2017 if no new contributions come through. 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. WFP’s top five funding partners in Myanmar are Japan, United States, European Union, Australia and Switzerland.

Voices from Kachin: Hkawn Tawng is a WFP beneficiary in Du Kahtawng IDP camp near Myitkyina in Kachin State, receiving cash to support her family of 5, including her two young girls aged 6 and 2 years old. The armed conflict around her village in Waing Maw township forced her to flee to the camp in August 2011, while being pregnant.

"I was worried about how long we could stay here when I arrived to the camp, because we did not have relatives here. There was no education for our children, no experience and no job opportunities in Myitkyina Township. However, the conflict was happening, so we could not go back to our home". She continued "In the early period of receiving cash assistance, we were worried that the cash would not be enough to buy the food we needed, such as rice, pulses, oil and salt. Actually, we could buy all these commodities. Moreover, we could have a chance to choose a better quality of rice for us to eat.” She added "Cash assistance and blended food from WFP is hope for our daily livelihood in our family".

Contact us: wfpmyanmar.pi@wfp.org