WFP Myanmar Opens its 10th Field Office
WFP officially opened its field office in Mawlamyine, Mon State on 4 June 2014. The new office will enable WFP to assist the most vulnerable populations in conflict affected areas in Mon and Kayin States and Tanintharyi Region. It will also assist the eventual return and resettlement of Myanmar people currently across the border in Thailand. Moreover, the strategic location of the office is instrumental for WFP capacity building efforts with the local Government for cyclone emergency and disaster preparedness, response and fast recovery. It will also allow WFP to quickly deploy its emergency assistance to the entire south-east region, where floods and cyclones regularly hit the coastal region especially in the monsoon season, augmenting WFP’s coastal presence already in Maungdaw, Sittwe and Yangon.

Resettlement of Displaced Families in Myitkyina
On 10-11 May, the Kachin State Government resettled 113 families of internally displaced persons from camps in Myitkyina and Waing Maw Townships to the newly built Government houses in Palana village, west of Myitkyina. WFP with other humanitarian partners assessed the site for living conditions before the relocation took place. The Government has requested support from international actors, to provide initial assistance to resettled families. WFP have provided a one-off resettlement food ration for three months to the families in Palana village.

Relief Assistance in Northern Shan State
In early May, several clashes broke out in Mone Baw and Mone Yar areas under Muse Township, Northern Shan State between the Myanmar military and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA). As a result of the fighting, some 650 people from 152 households were displaced to Muse downtown, where they were accommodated in two church compounds. WFP distributed one month food ration to the newly displaced persons on 10 and 11 May. On 26 May, some 230 displaced persons from the Kachin Baptist Convention camp in Muse returned to their original villages, while approximately 300 people remain at the KBC Muse Camp and 260 people in the Muse Roman Catholic Church.

Back to School in Myanmar
As the new academic year kicks off in June, WFP is restarting its national school feeding activities, which aim to reach some 232,000 children in more than 1,800 schools in the most food insecure states of Chin, Rakhine, Northern and Southern Shan as well as Magway Region. WFP provides High-Energy Biscuits (HEB) as a nutritious snack to children in schools and nurseries. The fortified snack diversifies children’s diet and increases their micronutrient intake. In areas where many families are highly food insecure, take-home rations of rice are also provided for families of children who attend classes regularly. These rations help build a safety net mechanism at the household level, increasing family income and encouraging school attendance.

In Myanmar, it only costs 28 US cents per day to feed a child in school. WFP’s school feeding activities in Myanmar are made possible thanks to support from the Government of Australia as well as Japan Association for WFP (JAWFP), Unilever and Yum! Brands.
Training of Trainers on Nutrition Support in HIV Care Programme

A Training of Trainers (TOT) on Nutrition Support in HIV Care Programme was organized in Lashio, Shan State from 21 to 22 May. Twenty-nine participants from six WFP cooperating partners (CPs) and four staff from WFP field offices attended the training. The participants were trained as trainers to carry out follow up trainings on HIV care programme to the field staff in their respective operational areas. Since 2003, WFP has been providing food by prescription to support HIV and TB clients through its CPs in Shan State and Magway Region with the main objective of “enhancing treatment success through the provision of nutritional support”. The objectives of the TOT training were to enhance the knowledge and communication skills for quality Nutrition Assessment, Education and Counselling (NAEC), contributing comprehensive care and support to the people living with HIV. Moreover, the training also aimed to improve the coordination and monitoring of food assistance for HIV/TB treatment and nutrition support activities provided by WFP’s CPs. The two-day training was facilitated by experts from Thai Red Cross AIDS Research Center, National Nutrition Centre, National AIDS Program - Lashio and WFP Regional Bureau in Bangkok.

Pre-monsoon Food Security Monitoring Training

WFP, as a lead and member of the Food Security Information Network (FSIN), through its Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) unit has conducted pre-monsoon food security monitoring data collection trainings in Shan and Chin States as well as Yangon and Magway Regions to train FSIN members for pre-monsoon food security data collection. The analysis of the food security situation of the country will support WFP and the development partners to design programme activities. The data collection is on-going in the FSIN operated areas, and the analysis result is expected by August 2014.

Training on Food Security, Geographic Information System (GIS), Global Positioning System (GPS) and Open Data Kit (ODK)

From 12 to 17 May, WFP Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) unit organized a week-long training on food security, GIS/GPS/ODK at the newly established regional resource center at the Yezin Agricultural University in Magway. The objective of the training was to improve the Government and cooperating partners (CPs) staff capacity on food security concept, survey techniques, application of GPS in the field, data analysis data and production of thematic maps for their own project activities. Thirty participants from the Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Rural Development, District Development Administration, Yezin Agricultural University, and CPs staff attended the training. The resource centre at the Yezin Agricultural University was set up for strengthening the capacities, coordination and information sharing on food security among FSIN members and in the region.

Emergency Preparedness Measures for the Rainy Season

For DFID funded project, jointly with UNICEF, WFP is commencing its three main activities for emergency preparedness: Logistics Capacity Assessment (LCA) of the population, transport and road accessibility, etc., preposition of high-energy biscuits (HEB) and ready-to-deploy equipment to coastal areas and prepare capacity building training for the Government, partners and WFP staff. In May, WFP regional logistics and interagency officers visited Nay Pyi Taw and met with the Director General of Relief and Resettlement Department. The mission's aim was engage further the Government on emergency preparedness, to share the WFP experience in the region and to discuss future cooperation with the Government on emergency preparedness and disasters response.

Resources

In May, WFP Myanmar received timely contributions of US$5 million from USA under the USAID Food for Peace Programme and US$2 million (€1.5 million) from the EU through ECHO. The both grants have been allocated in support of relief assistance to the conflict affected and displaced populations in Rakhine, Kachin and Northern Shan States.

As of June 2014, food pipeline breaks are expected from September onwards. WFP Myanmar is currently facing a shortfall of US$18.6 million in order to meet all food assistance needs till 31 December 2014. New contributions are required by latest July, taking into account the lead time of procurement and to ensure uninterrupted food assistance.

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