

A HUMANITARIAN CALL

THE ASEAN RESPONSE TO CYCLONE NARGIS



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The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established on 8 August 1967. The Member States of the Association are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam. The ASEAN Secretariat is based in Jakarta, Indonesia

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We thank the ASEAN Member States for their unwavering support during such a critical juncture. Our experiences over the course of the Task Force's two-year mandate are certain to shape ASEAN's approach to disaster management and humanitarian relief for generations to come.

It is due to our collective efforts that two years after Cyclone Nargis we now see signs of recovery in Myanmar's Ayeyarwady Delta. Rice farmers plant seeds where rice fields once stood fallow, brand new school-cum-cyclone shelters dot the landscape and bamboo plants and mangrove bushes are sprouting up around the once devastated areas.

This book is dedicated to the survivors of Cyclone Nargis, whose strength, courage and resilience in the face of unimaginable adversity is at once humbling and inspiring and, no doubt, will spur the ongoing recovery effort in the months ahead.

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Foreword by the Secretary-General of ASEAN

Death, destruction and despair followed in the path of Cyclone Nargis. As news spread that the Cyclone had flattened entire villages, killing or injuring hundreds of thousands of people, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) felt compelled, out of a sense of compassion, urgency and fraternity, to support one of our Member States. The ASEAN community immediately reached out to help Myanmar recover from the worst natural disaster in the country's recorded history.

The complexity of the emerging tragedy called for a cohesive and coordinated plan. ASEAN was urged to take the lead. Never before had we undertaken such an ambitious and large-scale undertaking. But buttressed by the Government of Myanmar and the international community, ASEAN's confidence grew and our association was "baptised" by the Cyclone that wreaked havoc on one of our Member States.

Cyclone Nargis occurred at a pivotal time, when ASEAN Member States were embracing the ASEAN Charter and the association was striving to become a more collective, dynamic and inclusive entity. The disaster provided ASEAN with a window of opportunity to make meaningful progress on the goals of the Charter to bring ASEAN closer to the people, enhance the well-being and livelihood of ASEAN peoples, alleviate poverty and narrow development gaps through close cooperation with the Government of Myanmar.

Experience from Nargis demonstrates that ASEAN, with support from partners, can strengthen disaster risk reduction among Member States and provide an effective coordinating mechanism to facilitate the delivery of international assistance in a Member State during the post-disaster relief and recovery process. Our collective response in the aftermath of Cyclone Nargis is an example of the benefits that broader integration and closer partnerships can yield.

ASEAN's response to Nargis, in cooperation and collaboration with the United Nations, the international humanitarian community and civil society, helped ease the pain and suffering that the Cyclone inflicted on people living in Ayeyarwady and Yangon Divisions of Myanmar. Since the region as a whole is prone to disasters, it is imperative, particularly as we reach the end of the mandate of the ASEAN-led coordination mechanism in Myanmar, to document and disseminate the lessons ASEAN has learned in the wake of Nargis.

Through this publication, we wish to share within and across the region what we have gained from our experience carrying out ASEAN's first-ever large-scale humanitarian operation in a Member State. It is our sincere hope that our lessons will be of service to others and our best practices replicated in the event of future disasters.



SURIN PITSUWAN



Chapter One

Cyclone Nargis and the Need for Action from ASEAN

Impact of Cyclone Nargis

On 2 and 3 May 2008, Cyclone Nargis swept in from the Bay of Bengal and made landfall in Myanmar's Yangon and Ayeyarwady Divisions, resulting in large-scale loss of life and destruction of infrastructure, property and livelihoods. Approximately 140,000 people were killed or unaccounted for following the Cyclone. One third of the inhabitants of Ayeyarwady and Yangon Divisions—2.4 million people—were affected. The Cyclone struck 37 townships, covering an area of 23,500 square kilometres, a landmass slightly smaller than the country of Haiti. Globally, Cyclone Nargis was the eighth deadliest cyclone ever recorded and it was by far the worst natural disaster in Myanmar's history.

Cyclone Nargis had a substantial long-term impact on people's livelihoods and resulted in enormous physical losses, including the destruction of homes and critical infrastructure such as roads, jetties,

fuel supplies, electricity, and water and sanitation systems. A large proportion of water supplies were contaminated and food stocks were damaged or destroyed. This damage was most severe in the Delta region, also known as the country's rice bowl, where the effects of extreme winds were compounded by a 3–4 metre storm surge, devastating most of the fertile areas and submerging countless villages. Nargis struck just as the Delta's paddy farmers were at the very last stage of harvesting their so-called "dry season" crop, which accounts for 25 per cent of the annual production in the affected areas, and destroyed several rice warehouses and their stocks. The total damage and losses estimated for the agricultural sector ranged from K570,000 million to almost K700,000 million¹.

Immediate action was required to address the basic humanitarian needs of the Nargis-affected population given the immensity of human suffering and the social and economic toll the disaster had on families and communities. So, too, was the need for

Devastation caused by Cyclone Nargis in Bogale Township. Photo courtesy of MNA



Loss and damage resulting from Cyclone Nargis based on the PONJA

Damage from the Cyclone was estimated at US\$ 4.1 billion.

800,000 houses were damaged or destroyed

Total economic losses amounted to approximately 2.7 per cent of Myanmar's projected GDP in 2008.

Affected households were extremely vulnerable—55 per cent reported having only enough food to feed themselves for one day or less. Reliance on the steady flow of relief supplies was widespread.

The scale of the impact was similar to that inflicted on Indonesia following the Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004.

Over 90 per cent of needs were at the community level and could be addressed through community-based approaches.

*Three scenes of devastation caused by Cyclone Nargis in various parts of Ayeyarwady Delta.
Photos courtesy of WFP*

*A mother comforts her children after Cyclone Nargis.
Photo courtesy of WFP*







*The winds from Cyclone Nargis were so strong they blew off rooves.
Photo courtesy of WFP*

an early recovery programme that could ensure that transition into medium- and longer-term recovery would focus on the restoration of livelihoods, assets of the poor and essential services.

National Response

The national response following Cyclone Nargis was immediate. Prime Minister Thein Sein activated the National Disaster Preparedness Central Committee (NDPCC) at 8:30 am on 3 May in Nay Pyi Taw, assigning rescue, relief and rehabilitation tasks to ministers and deputy ministers. The Prime Minister, together with high ranking military officers and Cabinet Ministers, relocated to Yangon the same day, where an office was established to carry out rescue measures, provide coordination and closely supervise the effort. The Government declared the Cyclone-affected regions national disaster areas.

The next day, the Prime Minister and several ministers inspected the Cyclone-affected areas in Ayeyarwady and Yangon divisions and the Government began distributing emergency relief supplies and providing health care service to survivors. Government personnel were dispatched to carry out search and rescue operations and clear debris from major transportation routes.

Navy and Air Force aircraft and vessels transported food, clothing and medical supplies around the clock. But the scale of the devastation quickly proved overwhelming.

International Assistance

Humanitarian assistance from international agencies was made available quickly, but supply stocks existing within the country were limited and soon exhausted. In this context, it was vital that the international community be granted access to bring in relief for the Cyclone-affected communities.

Initially, some of the offers of assistance and Myanmar's reaction to them sparked confusion. The Government met with diplomats on 5 May in Yangon to clarify a coordinated response

to the disaster at which time it was stated that the Government would only accept bilateral aid. Donations of cash, relief goods, medical supplies, food and water began pouring into the country. Entry visas were granted for the ASEAN-Emergency Rapid Assessment Team (ASEAN-ERAT) 9 May.

Meanwhile, some offers of aid were refused. A clarifying statement was issued 9 May indicating that the Government welcomed donations of cash and emergency aid, but "was not ready" to receive search and rescue teams or journalists from foreign countries.

ASEAN brokers historic aid coordination agreement

Amidst the chaos and confusion ASEAN took the lead in breaking down the communication and trust barriers that were preventing the flow of aid and international relief workers into the country. The Secretary-General of ASEAN took it upon himself to personally persuade Government leaders to permit the entry of relief workers into the country to assist Cyclone survivors in the spirit of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER).

As the crisis unfolded, governments and organisations around the world urged ASEAN Member States and the Secretary-General of ASEAN to continue their efforts to broker agreements with Myanmar to open up space for humanitarian assistance.

Singapore, as the Chair of ASEAN, responded by calling for a Special Meeting of the ASEAN Foreign Minister in Singapore on 19 May.



Distribution of rice and other emergency relief items after Nargis. Photo courtesy of UNDP



25 May 2008



ASEAN Chair and Singapore's Foreign Minister George Yeo (left to right), Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Thein Sein, and Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon at ASEAN-UN International Pledging Conference, 25 May 2008. Photo courtesy of Khin Maung Win (Shwe Inn Thar)

United Nations (UN) officers in Yangon provided advice to ASEAN about how the aid delivery process had worked in Myanmar prior to Cyclone Nargis and in the weeks that followed helped brainstorm strategies for securing a more sustainable pact with the Government on the acceptance and coordination of aid.

Myanmar agreed on an ASEAN-led mechanism upon assurances that assistance provided through ASEAN would not be politicised. An ASEAN Humanitarian Task Force for the Victims of Cyclone Nargis (AHTF), headed by the Secretary-General, was established and ASEAN's first-ever

collective engagement in a disaster management and humanitarian assistance mission began in earnest.

For its part, Myanmar shifted its stance from the acceptance merely of aid from the international community to allowing aid and relief workers into the country irrespective of nationality. In a tangible demonstration of its faith in the new ASEAN-led coordinating mechanism, the Government agreed to the immediate deployment of medical teams from all ASEAN Member States into Myanmar, signalling the launch of what would become a strong and effective working partnership in the post-Nargis response.



Secretary-General of ASEAN Dr Surin Pitsuwan presents the structure of the ASEAN-led coordinating mechanism at the ASEAN-UN International Pledging Conference, 25 May 2008. Photo courtesy of Khin Maung Win (Shwe Inn Thar)

Cyclone Nargis, ASEAN Charter and AADMER

Cyclone Nargis occurred on the eve of the ASEAN Charter – a critical juncture in the region’s progressive integration. ASEAN’s response to Cyclone Nargis was an opportunity to begin working towards the goals of the Charter, such as bringing ASEAN closer to the people and enhancing the well-being and livelihood of the peoples of ASEAN through close cooperation with civil society as well as national and international humanitarian agencies.

The AADMER is the cornerstone of ASEAN’s regional cooperation on disaster management. The Indian Ocean Earthquake and Tsunami in 2004 and the Hyogo Framework for Action (HFA), adopted by the international community in January 2005, provided the momentum to expedite the finalisation of AADMER. This agreement entered into force on 24 December 2009 after ratification by all ASEAN Member States. AADMER is the basis of a progressive framework to develop regional cooperation in disaster risk reduction (DRR), preparedness, response and recovery. It builds upon ASEAN’s experience in disaster relief and rescue operations,



One of the teams sets out in the field. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

the International Disaster Response Laws, Rules and Principles (IDRL) and UN instruments such as the 2005 Hyogo Framework for Action.

ASEAN's response to Cyclone Nargis was in line with the spirit and purpose of AADMER, even though at the time of Nargis, the agreement had not yet entered into force. ASEAN rose to the humanitarian challenge by activating the Standard Operating Procedure for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations (SASOP), which provided emergency assistance, situation updates, around-the-clock monitoring and recommendations for action.

Key Events

Immediately after the Cyclone, ASEAN took an active role in providing emergency assistance by coordinating the international response in collaboration with the Government and UN agencies.

5 May 2008 Forty-eight hours after Cyclone Nargis struck Myanmar, ASEAN Member States successfully extend relief assistance to the victims of Cyclone Nargis. Singapore and the Philippines dispatch experts to join the UN Disaster Assessment Coordination (UNDAC) Team assembled in Bangkok. The ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta requests all relevant ASEAN focal points to

be on high alert and make preparations to mobilise emergency assistance.

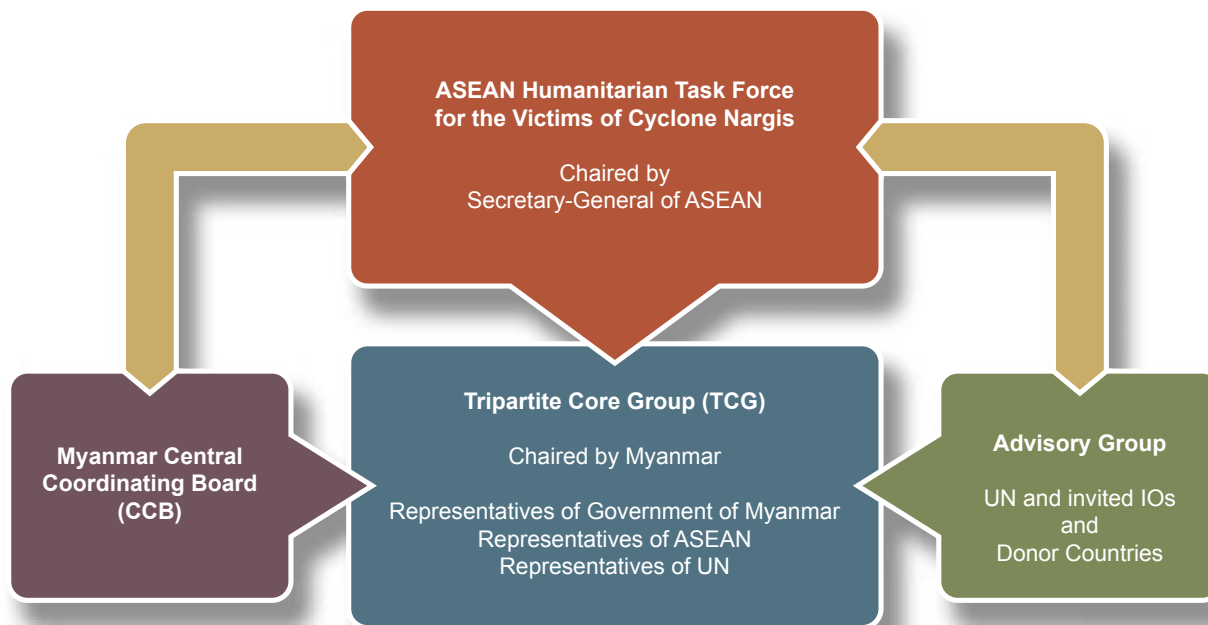
The Secretary-General of ASEAN appeals to all ASEAN Member States, the private sector, and civil society to assist the people of Myanmar. The Secretary-General of ASEAN also seeks to mobilise resources to assist survivors and alleviate suffering through funds from the ASEAN Cooperation Fund for Disaster Assistance, an emergency humanitarian relief fund created by the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta on 8 May.

9–18 May 2008 A week after the Cyclone, the ASEAN-ERAT, coordinated by the ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management (ACDM), is dispatched to assess critical needs in the aftermath of the Cyclone. The team comprises experts with specific

knowledge in coordination, water and sanitation, health, logistics and food. The ASEAN-ERAT is deployed to work in partnership with the rapid assessment efforts by the UNDAC team and those of the Government. The ASEAN-ERAT recommends the establishment of a “Humanitarian Coalition for the Victims of Cyclone Nargis,” to act as a coordinating platform for relief and recovery.

19 May 2008 At the Special Meeting of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers in Singapore, the Ministers recognise the outpouring of goodwill and strong determination of the international community to help the survivors of Cyclone Nargis. Following the recommendation of the ASEAN-ERAT, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers agree to establish an ASEAN-led coordinating

Structure of ASEAN-led Coordinating Mechanism





The Emergency Rapid Assessment Team before being deployed to the field. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

mechanism to facilitate effective distribution and utilisation of assistance from the international community and incoming international assistance, including the expeditious and effective deployment of relief workers, especially health and medical personnel. To operationalise the ASEAN-led approach, the Foreign Ministers set up the AHTF. The AHTF comprises 20 high-level and senior officials from ASEAN Member States, and is chaired by the Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr Surin Pitsuwan. The AHTF provides policy decisions and sets the priorities and targets with regard to the implementation of the ASEAN-led initiative. In order to assist the AHTF in providing relevant technical expertise and inputs, an Advisory Group to the AHTF is established, consisting of representatives from the neighbouring countries of Myanmar (i.e. China, India, and Bangladesh), UN, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement,

the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and INGOs. At a later stage, the AHTF also invited representatives from donor countries to participate in the Advisory Group.

21 May 2008 The Secretary-General of ASEAN meets with Prime Minister of Myanmar in Yangon to convey the messages agreed to in Singapore and to discuss the possibility of establishing the Tripartite Core Group (TCG).

25 May 2008 An ASEAN-UN International Pledging Conference on Cyclone Nargis is held in Yangon, attended by representatives from 51 countries. This conference represents an important exercise towards building greater trust, confidence and cooperation between the Government and the international community. Unanimous agreement is reached on the need to scale up urgently and significantly the existing relief efforts, to ensure that all those in desperate

need would be reached quickly and with adequate life-saving relief supplies. Furthermore, it is agreed that an effective flow of supplies be maintained for as long as necessary through the establishment of suitable logistical arrangements and an acceleration of the arrival and distribution of vital relief goods. For the purpose of managing day-to-day operations, the AHTF sets up a Yangon-based TCG as a working mechanism for coordinating, facilitating and monitoring the flow of international assistance to Myanmar. It is chaired by Myanmar and is made up of three representatives each from ASEAN, the Government, and the UN.

To support the ASEAN-led coordinating mechanism, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, as Chairman of AHTF, establishes a Coordinating Office in Yangon to work closely with representatives from the Government and UN under the TCG, and provide secretariat support for the AHTF.

25 May 2008 AHTF convenes its first meeting just before the Pledging Conference at which time it lays the foundation for establishment of TCG.

31 May 2008 TCG convenes its first meeting, agreeing to conduct a Post-Nargis Joint Assessment (PONJA) to determine the full scale of the impact of Cyclone Nargis and requirements for both immediate humanitarian assistance needs and medium- to longer-term recovery.

2 June 2008 PONJA team enters Yangon and Ayeyarwady Divisions, facilitated by 10 helicopters contracted by the World Food Programme (WFP). The helicopters play a key role in the deployment of the teams from 11 to 20 June 2008.

10–19 June 2008 Approximately 250 enumerators carry out the PONJA, visiting 291 villages across 30 townships.

23 June 2008 A workshop is held in Yangon to elicit feedback from national and international medical missions on post-Nargis relief and early recovery. The workshop seeks recommendations for future collaboration and considers future protocols for disaster management and response for medical and public health.

24 June 2008 AHTF convenes the ASEAN Roundtable for Post-Nargis Joint Assessment for Response, Recovery and Rehabilitation in Yangon, which serves as part of ASEAN's efforts to help Myanmar manage the impact of Cyclone Nargis. The Roundtable brings together disaster recovery management experts from countries with similar experiences, such as Indonesia, Thailand, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

21 July 2008 PONJA report is launched at the meeting of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers in Singapore. The report is released concurrently in Yangon. In addition, ASEAN's mandate to continue its role coordinating relief and early recovery in Myanmar is extended for a further 12 months.

26 November 2008 A TCG Roundtable is organised. The TCG is recognised as being instrumental in the post-Nargis relief effort, providing a new modality for the international humanitarian community to work in a post-disaster context. It is also recommended that the TCG mechanism be extended and expanded.

17 January 2009 AHTF convenes the fifth meeting to review the progress of the relief and recovery work in Nargis-affected areas. At the same time, AHTF members consider recommendations for the ASEAN-led mechanism, including the proposed extension of the TCG beyond July 2009.

9 February 2009 TCG launches the Post-Nargis Recovery and Preparedness Plan (PONREPP), which complements the Government's reconstruction plan and seeks to provide a platform for the transition from emergency relief and early recovery towards medium-term recovery.

27 February 2009 During the 14th ASEAN Summit in Cha-am Hua Hin, Thailand, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers agree to extend the mandate of the AHTF and the TCG until July 2010. The Secretary-General of ASEAN is entrusted as the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Coordinator, a role that may be activated at the request of an affected ASEAN Member State in the event of a major disaster. The extension of the ASEAN-led mechanism up to July 2010 serves as the platform for the TCG



An Indonesian medical team helps Cyclone survivors in cooperation with staff from the Ministry of Health. Photo courtesy of Indonesian Embassy

to further develop the existing coordination and funding mechanisms defined in the PONREPP.

2 July 2009 AHTF convenes its sixth meeting in Jakarta and recommends the continuation of the TCG's coordination role in the Cyclone-affected areas, with an emphasis on strengthening coordination between the Government's national development strategy and the existing recovery strategy articulated in the PONREPP.

17 – 20 July 2009 ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM) in Phuket approves the AHTF recommendations:

1. ASEAN Member States to continue support for the implementation of the post-Nargis recovery efforts under PONREPP mechanism prioritising livelihoods, shelter, health, education and disaster risk reduction
2. Government of Myanmar to maintain its commitment through TCG to coordinate international assistance for post-Nargis recovery operations
3. TCG to continue to play three functions: (i) coordinate resources; (ii) facilitate operations; and, (iii) coordinate monitoring and evaluation on the progress and

Achievements of the ASEAN-led coordinating mechanism in collaboration with TCG and partners

1. Facilitating through the TCG the issuance of 3,833 visas for humanitarian workers.
2. Comprehensively assessing needs, losses and damages through the Post-Nargis Joint Assessment.
3. Community monitoring, through Periodic Review and Social Impacts Monitoring, to inform humanitarian assistance strategies and programme changes to optimise benefits to the people affected by Cyclone Nargis.
4. Providing a framework for medium- to longer-term recovery with a view to promoting productive, healthy and protected lives through the Post-Nargis Recovery and Preparedness Plan.
5. Supporting TCG-endorsed projects to assist in livelihoods rehabilitation, infrastructure reconstruction and disaster risk reduction through the ASEAN Volunteer Programme.
6. Strengthening humanitarian coordination at the township level to bolster the mainstream coordination mechanism to ensure focused assistance to affected populations.
7. Sustaining a coordinated effort as recovery enters the medium to longer-term stage based on the guiding framework articulated by the PONREPP.
8. Maintaining momentum and a sense of urgency through every phase of the relief and recovery.
9. Establishing the Recovery Coordination Centre, Recovery Forum and Recovery Hubs in partnership with the Government and United Nations.
10. Mobilising support and funding from the international community to address the critical needs through the Post-Nargis Assistance and Regional Partnership Conference.
11. Developing a Recovery Information and Accountability System to monitor the implementation of the PONREPP Prioritised Action Plan.
12. Establishing linkages between the recovery and development framework and preparing a strategy for transition through the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MoSWRR).
13. Handing over coordination tools to the MoSWRR.
14. Developing a knowledge management database of post-Nargis experiences to be incorporated into AADMER.
15. Sharing lessons learned and institutionalising good practices of post-Nargis into AADMER and the ASEAN Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on disaster management (AHA Centre).

The Revised Flash Appeal

Following the ASEAN-UN International Pledging Conference, the UN issued a Revised Flash Appeal in New York on 10 July 2008, securing US\$349 million for the immediate, life-saving humanitarian response or 73 per cent of the total sought. It was judged as a substantial and generous commitment to the post-Nargis relief and recovery effort. Private individuals and organisations contributed about one-fifth of the funds or US\$71 million. The United Kingdom provided US\$54 million, the United States US\$45 million, Australia US\$28 million. The Central Emergency Response Fund contributed just over US\$26 million and the European Commission provided US\$25 million. Other contributors included Japan (US\$14.6 million), Canada (US\$14.2 million), Netherlands (US\$12.3 million), Denmark (US\$11 million), Norway (US\$9.8 million), Sweden (US\$7.9 million), Italy (US\$4.7 million), Germany (US\$4.6 million), UN agencies (US\$3.9 million), Spain (US\$2.5 million), New Zealand (US\$2.2 million), United Arab Emirates (US\$1.8 million), Switzerland (US\$1.6 million), Finland (US\$1.2 million), France (US\$1.2 million), Ireland (US\$1.2 million), Turkey (US\$1 million), Belgium (US\$0.6 million) and Morocco (US\$0.5 million).

Source: UNOCHA Financial Tracking Service

*A man fetching water. Photo by
AHTF Coordinating Office*



achievements of the relief and recovery work in the Nargis-affected areas

4. PONREPP to be reviewed on a yearly basis, considering that the AHTF mandate ends in July 2010
5. AHTF and TCG need to be given sufficient authority to work closely and openly with relevant ministries to coordinate programmes for longer-term development
6. ASEAN should document the good practices from the post-Nargis operations to strengthen the AADMER.

2 October 2009 The Recovery Forum — a strategic arm of the TCG, a platform to synthesise policy and discuss strategic issues concerning the recovery process in the Delta— is held for the first time. The forum, chaired by the TCG, is a multi-stakeholder group with members from the Government of Myanmar, ASEAN, bilateral and multilateral donors, UN agencies, I/NGOs and private sector.

17 October 2009 TCG issues the PONREPP Prioritised Action Plan at a cost of US\$103 million. The plan sets out interventions in Education, Health, Livelihoods, Shelter, and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) up to July 2010.

23 – 25 October 2009 At the 15th ASEAN Summit, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers approve the Prioritised Action Plan proposed by TCG.

25 November 2009 AHTF organises the Post Nargis and Regional Partnership Conference at UN Conference Centre in Bangkok to raise funds based on the information obtained from the Prioritised Action Plan. The conference successfully raises US\$88 million (or 85 per cent of the appeal) to address outstanding critical needs for Nargis-affected population. Pledges are received from all over the globe—Australia, Denmark, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, the Netherlands, the European Commission, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and the United States, amongst others.

13 January 2010 ASEAN Foreign Ministers confirm the completion of the mandate of AHTF and TCG in July 2010 at an ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Da Nang, Viet Nam.

8 March 2010 The Seventh AHTF meeting is held in Ha Noi, Viet Nam to discuss the progress of the post-Nargis effort and the completion of the AHTF and TCG mandate at the end of July 2010. It is decided the AHTF would hand over the knowledge and lessons from the post-Nargis experience to the Government of Myanmar through the MoSWRR.

12 March 2010 The Second Recovery Forum is organised to discuss the recommendations for a transition strategy and the way forward after July 2010 for future recovery in the Cyclone-affected areas.

7 April 2010 ASEAN Foreign Ministers agree on actions and events towards the completion of AHTF mandate in Da Nang, Viet Nam.

18 June 2010 Third Recovery Forum convenes in Nay Pyi Taw handing over of recovery coordination function from the TCG to the MoSWRR.

31 July 2010 Completion of ASEAN-led coordinating mechanism and TCG in Myanmar. 🇲🇲

Chapter Two

The ASEAN-Led Coordinating Mechanism

Within hours of the Cyclone, the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta, in performing the functions of the AHA Centre, had sprung into action, alerting all relevant ASEAN focal points to prepare to mobilise emergency assistance to Myanmar. The Secretariat created an emergency humanitarian relief fund for just that purpose on 8 May 2008 called “the ASEAN Cooperation Fund for Disaster Assistance.”

Meanwhile, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr Surin Pitsuwan, personally appealed to all ASEAN Member States, the private sector and civil society to help the people of Myanmar. Some ASEAN Member States extended relief assistance and dispatched assessment experts to work in partnership with the UNDAC team. ASEAN-ERAT, coordinated by the ACDM, was also dispatched to assess critical needs. The ASEAN-ERAT was the first official international assessment team to enter Myanmar and the Nargis-affected areas.

ASEAN’s collective response to Cyclone Nargis kicked into high gear 19 May at an emergency meeting of Foreign Ministers in Singapore. An agreement was reached to establish an ASEAN-led coordinating mechanism based on the ASEAN-ERAT recommendation that a humanitarian coalition be formed to assist the survivors of Cyclone Nargis.

The agreement provided the framework for collaboration and cooperation among ASEAN, the Government of Myanmar, the UN and regional and international agencies to respond to the disaster in a systemic, efficient and responsible manner. To operationalise the mechanism, the AHTF was established, comprising high-level officials from ASEAN Member States and chaired by the Secretary-General of ASEAN. The establishment of the AHTF was a watershed in the history of ASEAN, marking the first time since its inception in 1967 that ASEAN had taken the helm of a large-scale humanitarian operation in a collective manner.

Secretary-General of ASEAN Dr Surin Pitsuwan (far right), and Chairman of the TCG and Chairman of the Civil Service Selection and Training Board U Kyaw Thu (second from right) visit Seikgyi village, September 2008. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office



Launch of ASEAN Humanitarian Task Force

The AHTF was tasked with facilitating “the effective distribution and utilisation of incoming international assistance, including the expeditious and effective deployment of relief workers, especially health and medical personnel.” The AHTF coordinated the policy that supported the Government of Myanmar’s post-Nargis relief, recovery and reconstruction effort.

An Advisory Group was also established to assist the AHTF. It was made up of representatives of Myanmar’s neighbouring countries, including China, India and Bangladesh, the UN, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the World Bank, the ADB and INGOs. Later, the AHTF invited representatives from donor countries, including Australia, the United Kingdom and Norway, to participate in the Advisory Group.

The AHTF convened seven meetings during the period of May 2008 to March 2010, where high-level strategic policy decisions were made and priorities and targets set to guide the overall ASEAN-led initiative. Half of those meetings were held in 2008 due to the urgency of the emergency situation in the months that followed the Cyclone; two were held in 2009 and the last meeting was convened in March 2010.

One of the AHTF’s first decisions was the establishment of the TCG, which provided an operational umbrella to facilitate and lead the relief and recovery effort. The TCG was made up of nine members, with equal representation from the ASEAN, Myanmar Government and the UN. It was carefully crafted as a smaller entity with the flexibility and agility to carry out the ASEAN-led coordination mandate on the ground through the swift resolution of challenges and elimination of obstacles that impeded progress.

Decisions made at the meetings were either implemented immediately or subsequently tabled at higher-level meetings within the ASEAN framework such as meetings of ASEAN Foreign Ministers.

AHTF Meetings

1st AHTF meeting: Laying the foundation

The first AHTF meeting was held just before the ASEAN-UN International Pledging Conference on 25 May 2008 in Yangon at which time the AHTF agreed to the ASEAN-led coordinating mechanism, including the creation of the TCG. The formation of the TCG received unanimous support from the pledging conference.

2nd AHTF meeting: Growing momentum and confidence

Signs of growing momentum and confidence in the coordinated relief effort were evident at the second AHTF meeting, convened on 29 May 2008 through video and teleconferencing.

The Government of Myanmar had appointed Deputy Foreign Minister U Kyaw Thu as Chair of the TCG. Singapore’s Ambassador to Myanmar, Mr. Robert Chua, was named senior ASEAN member to the TCG and Mr. Dan Baker, UN Resident Coordinator, was named as the lead representative from the UN.

There was an urgent need for the TCG to meet as soon as possible. The meeting noted the necessity to expedite the nomination of two more Myanmar officials to be part of the TCG apart from the Deputy Foreign Minister.

The meeting noted that the AHTF and the TCG would be operational at least until December 2008, after which the ASEAN Foreign Ministers would decide whether to continue the coordinated effort based on the recommendations of the Task Force and the TCG.

3rd AHTF meeting: Assessing damages and mobilising resources

At the meeting conducted on 25 June 2008 in Yangon, the TCG reported the successful completion of the first stage of the PONJA. Data collection had been completed and data analysis was underway.



Under Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP Dr Noeleen Heyzer (centre), UN Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator and UN representative to the TCG Bishow Parajuli and Kerren Hedlund, representative from the NGOs, confer at the third AHTF Meeting in Yangon, 25 June 2008. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

Assessment findings would be fed into a revised appeal for Myanmar and a plan for recovery and reconstruction. It was agreed that all three parties of the TCG, along with the ASEAN Chair, should be present at the release of the final PONJA report at the AMM on 21 July 2008 in Singapore.

The meeting noted that Dr Anish Kumar Roy, then the Director of the Bureau of Resources Development at the ASEAN Secretariat, had been concurrently appointed as the Secretary-General of ASEAN's Special Representative in Yangon to liaise with the Government of Myanmar and its line ministries and agencies.

4th AHTF meeting: Planning after the PONJA

The meeting, held on 12 July 2008 in Singapore, reviewed the expectations of the international community, especially donors, on the modalities/management of resources, including an exit strategy and timelines for the ASEAN-led coordination coordinating mechanism. The meeting also agreed that following the PONJA, the TCG would carry out three tasks: monitoring the progress of humanitarian assistance in the field through Periodic Reviews; strengthening coordination at the hub level; and, developing a recovery plan.

Decision of ASEAN Foreign Ministers

The AHTF Chairman outlined some of the major decisions related to the Task Force made at the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting on 27 February 2009 and the 14th ASEAN Summit held 28 February to 1 March 2009 in Cha-am Hua Hin, Thailand, including:

- ASEAN Leaders praised the success of the ASEAN-led mechanism in helping survivors of Cyclone Nargis and pledged to continue supporting Myanmar in its recovery efforts following the launch of the PONREPP. The ASEAN Leaders also endorsed the decision by the Foreign Ministers to extend the mandate of the AHTF and the TCG to July 2010.
- ASEAN Leaders agreed to entrust the ASEAN Secretary-General with the role of ASEAN's Humanitarian Assistance Coordinator, which can be activated any time at the request of an affected ASEAN Member State in the event of a major disaster, whether it be a natural disaster or a pandemic.
- ASEAN Leaders tasked the Foreign Ministers and the Secretary-General of ASEAN with exploring ways and means and brainstorming strategies to mobilise further resources from Member States, dialogue and sectoral dialogue partners, development partners and interested donors to implement the Cha-am Hua Hin Declaration in an effective, timely and sustainable manner.

5th AHTF meeting: Recommendations to extend ASEAN-led coordinating mechanism

The meeting, held in Bangkok on 17 January 2009, reviewed the progress and achievements made under the ASEAN-led coordinating mechanism. Task Force members also discussed and prepared the recommendations to be presented to the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN, particularly of the role of the ASEAN-led coordinating mechanism during the recovery period 2009–2011.

6th AHTF meeting: Setting the recovery framework and programme

At the meeting on 2 July 2009 at the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta, Task Force members agreed that since the mandate of the ASEAN-led coordinating mechanism had been extended to July 2010, ASEAN needed to continue to strengthen its partnerships with the international community to ensure that post-Nargis humanitarian and recovery operations were effective, transparent, accountable and sustainable.

The Recovery Coordination Centre (RCC) would be established with support from ASEAN and the UN and recovery hubs set up in Pyapon, Bogale, Labutta and Yangon Divisions to work closely with Township Coordination Committees (TCC).

The issue of continued access also was raised at the meeting. The process for granting access to Cyclone-affected areas had changed hands between the fifth and sixth meetings of the AHTF, creating a backlog of visa approvals that affected agencies working across the Cyclone-affected areas. The Government representative advised that visa applications be submitted well in advance.

The AHTF Chairman announced the deployment of Dr William Sabandar, former chief of Nias Recovery Programme for the Indonesian Bureau for Recovery and Reconstruction Agency (BRR), as the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of ASEAN for post-Nargis recovery in Myanmar.

ASEAN Foreign Ministers, at the 42nd AMM held in Phuket between 17 and 20 July 2009, approved the recommendations



Former head of AHTF Coordinating Office and TCG member Ms Adelina Kamal (far right) and Deputy Director-General of Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and senior TCG member U Aung Tun Khaing (second from right) sit with representatives from the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement at the Third AHTF Meeting in Yangon, 25 June 2008. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

of the AHTF with regard to post-Nargis efforts, reaffirming that post-Nargis recovery is one of ASEAN's top priorities. The six recommendations would serve to guide the ASEAN-led coordination mechanism and AHTF operations until the end of its mandate in July 2010.

7th AHTF meeting: Managing the handover to the Government of Myanmar and institutionalisation into AADMER

At the meeting on 8 March 2010 in Ha Noi, Viet Nam, the AHTF resolved to work towards nine goals in anticipation of the end of its mandate in July 2010:

- The TCG would accelerate the delivery of assistance to Nargis survivors until the end of July 2010, including facilitating access for the humanitarian workers for effective and timely aid delivery.
- The TCG would facilitate the implementation of Periodic Review (PR) IV and Social Impacts Monitoring (SIM) III, as well as the transfer of knowledge from PR and SIM to the Government of Myanmar.
- AHTF and TCG would accelerate and complete the ASEAN Volunteer Programme in the Ayeyarwady Delta prior to July 2010.
- AHTF would produce a final accountability report, which would be presented to: (i) the Prime Minister of Myanmar

The following policy recommendations were made at the sixth AHTF meeting on 2 July 2009 and submitted to the ASEAN Foreign Ministers at the 42nd ASEAN Ministerial Meeting, July 2009 :

- ASEAN Member States would continue providing support for the implementation of post-Nargis recovery efforts. Whether it was in the form of cash or in kind, the support should be consistent with the PONREPP and priority given to the following sectors: livelihoods, shelter, health, education and disaster risk reduction.
- The Government of Myanmar would continue the TCG with full authority to coordinate international assistance for post-Nargis recovery operations, including the authority to facilitate access for bona fide humanitarian workers to support the relief and recovery work in the Nargis-affected areas.
- The TCG would continue to carry out three key functions: (i) coordinate resources; (ii) facilitate operations; and, (iii) coordinate monitoring and evaluation of the progress and achievements of the relief and recovery work in the Nargis-affected areas.
- Priority deliverables of the PONREPP would be reviewed and monitored over the following 12 months in anticipation of the end of the AHTF mandate in July 2010.
- Given that its mandate would end in July 2010, the AHTF and TCG would need to be given sufficient authority to work closely and openly with relevant Government ministries to coordinate programmes that have longer-term development outcome.
- ASEAN should document and make use of the good practices from the post-Nargis operations to strengthen the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response.

and other representatives of the Government; (ii) ASEAN Foreign Ministers; and, (iii) international donors and partners in the international humanitarian community. The final report would be presented to the Government of Myanmar in Myanmar. ASEAN Foreign Ministers would receive the final report at the AMM in July 2010.

- There would be a formal handover of post-Nargis coordination to the MoSWRR, which had been designated by the Government to take on the role. In this regard, TCG would help clarify the specific arrangements of post-TCG coordination under the Government of Myanmar and ensure that access for agencies working in the Delta after the end of the TCG mandate would be facilitated.
- AHTF would document and institutionalise knowledge and lessons learned from the post-Nargis experience, to strengthen the AADMER. The knowledge and lessons learned would be handed over to the AHA Centre through the ACDM.
- AHTF would hand over the knowledge and lessons learned from the post-Nargis experience to the Government of Myanmar through the MoSWRR and support the Ministry in its effort to promote disaster management initiatives in Myanmar.
- ASEAN and the UN would document and institutionalise lessons from the post-Nargis effort to strengthen ASEAN-UN partnership in managing disasters in the region.
- ASEAN would continue to support Myanmar and other members as the organisation continues to advance towards closer integration and cooperation between ASEAN Member States.

TCG and Operational Coordination

A Yangon-based TCG comprising nine representatives—three each from ASEAN, the Government of Myanmar and the United Nations—was established following the 1st AHTF meeting. U



Secretary-General of ASEAN, Chairman of the AHTF, Dr Surin Pitsuwan (centre), Chairman of the TCG and Chairman of the Civil Service Selection and Training Board U Kyaw Thu (left), and then the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of ASEAN deliberate with Dr Anish Kumar Roy at the fifth AHTF Meeting in Bangkok, 17 January 2009. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

Kyaw Thu, Deputy Foreign Minister of Myanmar, chaired the TCG. Its main functions were:

1. To coordinate resources;
2. To facilitate operations, including access for humanitarian workers;
3. To coordinate monitoring of and evaluation on progress and achievements.

The TCG convened 43 meetings during the period of May 2008 to July 2010 to share information, to smooth out issues and to communicate progress on the post-Nargis effort.

The TCG was successful in building trust and confidence in the post-Nargis humanitarian relief and recovery effort and facilitating cooperation between the Government of Myanmar and the international community.

The TCG has been lauded as an innovative example of a body that ASEAN and other regional associations around the world could replicate in response to future emergencies.

It has demonstrated ASEAN's usefulness in acting as a bridge to build trust and open lines of communication between the Government and the international community and act as nexus for the transfer of knowledge and locally-adapted expertise, providing regionally crafted solutions to regional problems.



TCG members meet on 20 June 2008. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

The TCG set three levels of coordinating mechanisms:

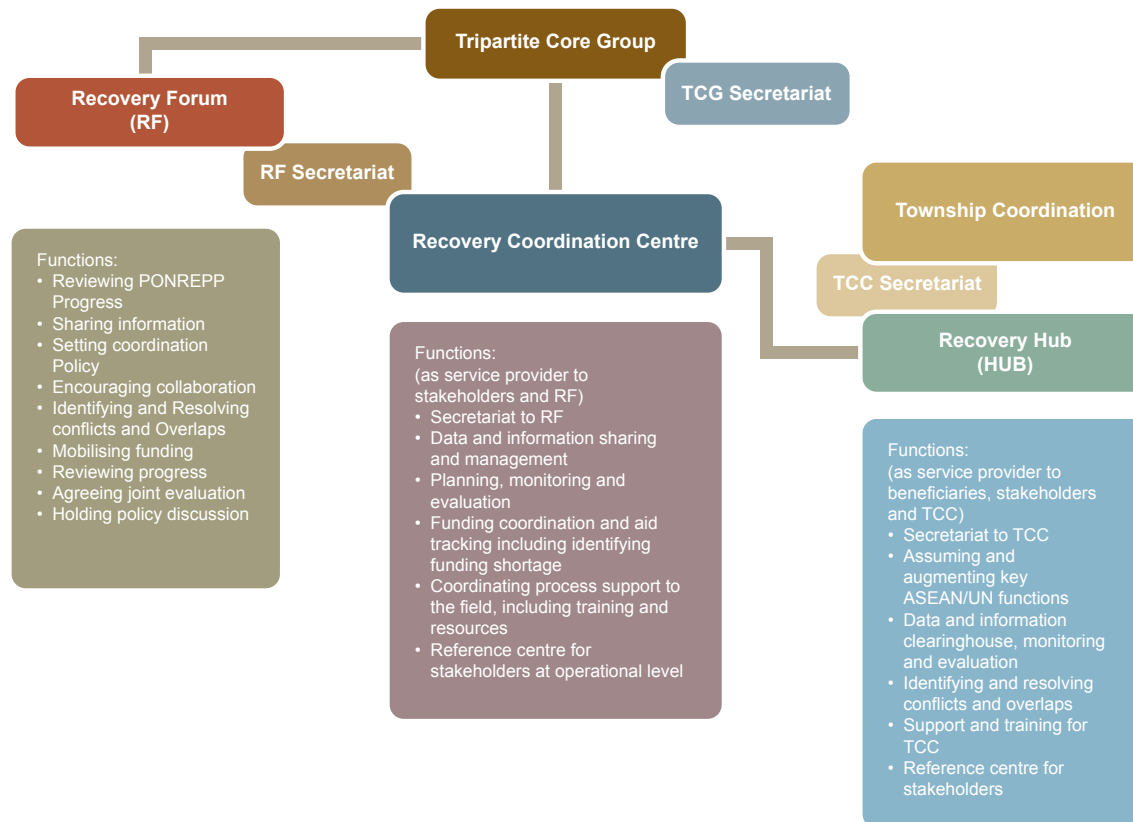
1. Recovery Forum (RF), which focused on strategy and policy with wide stakeholder membership;
2. The RCC, which served both the RF and the TCG as a technical coordinating unit at the operational level and aimed to exploit opportunities for enhanced coordination of funding; and,
3. Recovery Hub, the coordinating unit at the field level that built on the hub structure developed during the emergency response to strengthen two-way flows of information, thereby strengthening existing coordination structures, decision making and implementation at both the township and village levels.

The Recovery Forum

The Recovery Forum (RF) was the high-level body that reviewed the overall post-Nargis recovery effort in an inclusive and transparent manner. Its key role was bringing together all stakeholders to discuss and debate the effectiveness of recovery assistance and to make recommendations on operational and financial matters to maximise impact for the beneficiaries.

The objective of the RF was to promote an inclusive forum that allowed all recovery partners and stakeholders to engage in strategic discussions in relation to the recovery to address humanitarian needs. To achieve this objective, the RF had at least six core functions:

TCG Recovery Coordinating Structure



- To hold policy discussions on broad strategic issues;
- To share information and review PONREPP progress;
- To review policy coordination measures to encourage collaboration and aid effectiveness;
- To identify gaps, resolve conflicts and avoid overlaps;
- To support resource mobilisation strategies; and,
- To discuss joint reviews, monitoring and evaluation of recovery programmes.

First Recovery Forum

The First Recovery Forum was held on 2 October 2009 in Yangon to formalise the membership of the forum and discuss funding constraints and resource mobilisation for future recovery in the Cyclone-affected areas.

The forum, chaired by the TCG chair, was attended by ambassadors of participating countries as well as high level

representatives from ASEAN, the UN and INGOs. The forum reviewed post-Nargis assistance to date and explored the PONREPP Prioritised Action Plan to July 2010, which focused on five sectors: Education; Health; Livelihoods; Shelter; and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene; .

The First RF urged stakeholders to mobilise resources required to carry out the PONREPP Prioritised Action Plan. An invitation was extended to the international community to continue to support the PONREPP Prioritised Action Plan.

Second Recovery Forum

The Second Recovery Forum Meeting was convened on 12 March 2010 in Yangon. The forum focused on transition strategies in anticipation of the end of the AHTF and TCG mandate and challenges facing people in the Delta at the peak of the dry season.

Key RCC Accomplishments

Coordination	<p>Promote cooperation and close relations between and among the various Government agencies, NGOs (local and international) and UN agencies through the following approaches and initiatives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Organised and maintained functional Delta Recovery Working Groups for Livelihood, Protection and Basic Services. 2. Convened regular meetings of Chairs and Co-chairs to discuss cross-cutting issues among the various working groups. 3. Convened regular TCG meetings and recovery forums to discuss operational and policy related concerns for the recovery of Cyclone-affected communities in the Delta. 4. Organised monthly RCC/RHO meetings to strengthen coordination at various levels.
Capacity Building	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhanced knowledge and skills of staff in the RCC and RHO level on community-based disaster risk reduction, community nutrition and gender-based violence. 2. Responded to the request of various working groups to facilitate sessions on the topic of disaster risk reduction. 3. Built capacities of international and local staff in facilitating meetings, taking minutes and writing reports.
Research	<p>Undertook, with the Delta Recovery WASH Working Group, research work on Dry Season Rapid Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation on Water Shortage in Nargis-Affected Communities.</p>
Workshops	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Undertook, with the Delta Recovery Livelihood Working Group, a series of workshops to share experiences and lessons learned on the following topics: (a) Livestock and agricultural inputs; (b) Mechanisation and shared use of productive assets; (c) Financing livelihoods and post harvest and value addition; and, (d) Fisheries and support for other livelihoods. 2. Assisted in the facilitation of the national early warning workshop.
Resource Mobilisation	<p>Advocated to donor agencies and INGOs for provision of additional funds for recovery efforts related to protection (i.e. construction of bridges), basic services (i.e. addressing water shortages with long-term solutions) and livelihoods.</p>
Newsletter	<p>Produced a monthly Recovery Update, which was disseminated to a wide range of stakeholders.</p>



Coordination meeting members make plans at Recovery Hub Office in Labutta. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

The forum, chaired by the TCG Chair, was attended by ambassadors of participating countries as well as high-level representatives from ASEAN, the UN and INGOs and NGOs.

It was stressed that when the TCG's mandate would end 31 July 2010, Myanmar's MoSWRR would take over responsibility for coordinating the remaining projects slated to complete recovery efforts in the Delta.

Third Recovery Forum

The Third Recovery Forum Meeting was convened on 18 June 2010 in Nay Pyi Daw. Co-chaired by the TCG Chair and the Deputy Minister of MoSWRR, the forum was attended by high-level representatives of ministries and departments of the Government of Myanmar, UN agencies, ASEAN, the international community, NGOs and INGOs. The forum signified the handover of the coordination functions of the recovery effort from the TCG to the MoSWRR after July 2010. The forum

discussed the progress of the recovery effort in the Delta in the sectors of livelihoods, shelter, education, health, WASH, DRR, environment and protection.

Recovery Coordination Centre (RCC)

The RCC was created by the TCG with the functions of:

1. Being the secretariat of the RF;
2. Carrying out planning, monitoring and evaluation of PONREPP-related initiatives;
3. Tracking aid pledges, contributions paid in and disbursements to implementing agents;
4. Identifying funding shortages;
5. Managing and sharing data and information; and,
6. Being a centre of reference for actors seeking information and guidance on matters related to recovery and the PONREPP.



An informal ranking exercise on critical needs is carried out in Bogale, December 2009. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

The RCC liaised closely with the Yangon Recovery Working Groups (YRWGs), Field Recovery Working Groups (FRWGs) and TCCs through the Recovery Hub Office (RHO) on how best to achieve desired results and targets for each sector and township. At the township level, the FRWGs and TCCs sought to assess progress on meeting needs at the household–and community–level, and liaised with the RCC and YRWGs on feeding this important aspect of community feedback into the monitoring and evaluation system.

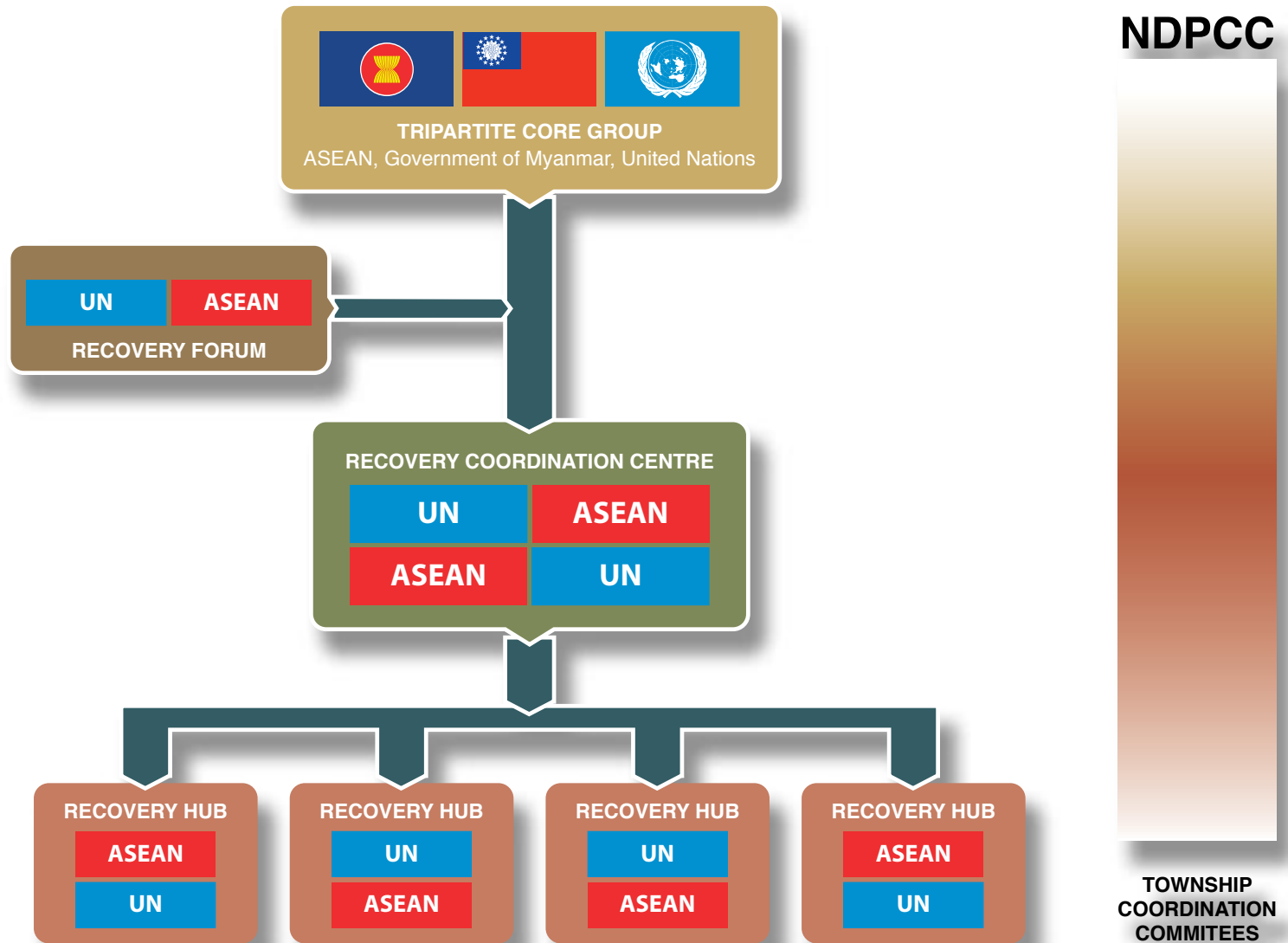
ASEAN and the UN provided technical and financial support for the RCC. The RCC's operational costs were shared equally by ASEAN and the UN; its staff members were seconded from ASEAN and the UN.

Recovery Hub Offices: Field coordination

The Recovery Hubs were the TCG's coordinating forum at the field level. Its function was to facilitate data, information, technical support and monitoring and evaluation services to beneficiaries, stakeholders and the TCC. Recovery Hubs were established in Bogale, Labutta, Pyapon and Yangon.

The hubs set up FRWGs that focused on: Livelihoods (production, processing, trade, employment, micro credit, and related services); basic services (health, WASH); and, physical and social protection (DRR, shelter, environment, protection and vulnerable groups). These sectors were also the focus of working groups established at the national level.

ASEAN-UN Shared Roles in TCG Recovery Coordination Structure



RHO Labutta Key Achievements

Coordination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promoted cooperation and relations between local authorities and humanitarian agencies in Labutta, Myaunmya, Middle Island and Pathein. 2. Organised regular Township General Coordination meetings and produced meeting minutes and monthly update reports for all agencies and the local authorities (TCC and DPDC) in both languages (Myanmar and English). 3. Coordinated and facilitated data collection for all Periodic Reviews. 4. Resolved relocation issue, which was pending for nearly one year, and facilitated village relocation from 7 and 14 Miles IDP. 5. Identified villages for ASEAN Volunteers Project in Labutta. 6. Facilitated prioritisation exercise with Government and humanitarian agencies for input into PONREPP Prioritised Action Plan. 7. Provided regular reports and updates to AHTF and RCC on various issues, such as results of coordination activities for reference or immediate action.
Capacity Building	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Facilitated various training on humanitarian accountability, field coordination, community-based disaster risk management, logical framework, global positioning system, report writing, among others with close collaboration with humanitarian agencies 2. Produced leaflets on agriculture-related issues.
Event Management	<p>In close collaboration with humanitarian agencies, facilitated and organised events such as World Humanitarian Day, International DRR day, World Elderly Day, 20th Anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Day and United Nations Day celebration.</p>
Data Collection and Dissemination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collected, updated and consolidated data for 3W Monthly update, which can be used as primary source of data to produce maps and reports. 2. Made available various sectoral maps, Periodic Review reports, ASEAN booklets, PONREPP books, Prioritised Action Plan and Working Group reports to 30 humanitarian agencies and local authorities, including at the district and township level. 3. Produced, updated and circulated monthly contact list of all stakeholders which included Government departments, offices and all agencies present in each township. 4. Produced and disseminated Labutta Inter-agencies Calendar 2010.



Special Envoy of Secretary-General of ASEAN for post-Nargis Recovery Dr William Sabandar (right) and Senior Advisor for Coordination, Institution Building & Partnership Said Faisal discuss critical needs by sectors during their humanitarian coordination visit to Bogale, December 2009. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

The FRWG became the main forum at the township level for agencies involved in recovery work to:

- Discuss matters related to implementation, including coordinating with others involved in the post-Nargis effort.
- Identify emerging needs, gaps and duplication.
- Participate in and, thus, influence recovery related policy and programme dialogue both at the township level, and initiated at the Yangon level;
- Identify needs and opportunities for capacity building of TCC members/staff;
- Identify common matters of concern and channel them through a coherent and dedicated structure that ties implementing agencies, Government and donors together

at both the township and Yangon level.

- Promote complementarities amongst partners.
- Participate in a continuous process to build trust and comfort between Township authorities and partners.

As the involvement of local NGOs and local authorities was at the core, FRWG meetings were conducted in Myanmar language with English translation. 🇲🇲



MUSEUM

Handwritten text on a large sheet of paper, likely a list or report, written in blue ink.



Villagers in Pyapon gather during the humanitarian visit of Special Envoy of Secretary-General of ASEAN to Post-Nargis Recovery Dr William Sabandar. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

RHO Yangon Key Achievements

Support to Periodic Review	Coordinated and facilitated data collection for all Periodic Reviews.
Capacity Building, Advocacy and Awareness	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provided technical support in drafting of Disaster Management Plan for Twantay Township. 2. 3,000 copies of agricultural pamphlet distributed to farmers, community leaders, and local Government agencies, in Yangon Division, since April 2010. The project was carried out with Myanmar Agricultural Service (MAS). 3. Organised workshop for development of fishery sector, jointly organised with Myanmar Fishery Federation (Twantay), with participation from various organisations. 4. Organised training on construction of safe shelter for local artisans jointly with UN-HABITAT Kungyangon. 5. Organised awareness events on Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Gender-Based Violence. 6. Advocated the issue of 848 families of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) in Kungyangon Township, which resulted in the granting of land use permission for three relocation sites and shelter assistance for 431 families.



Chapter Three

Needs Assessment, Planning and Monitoring

A swift and resolute response to calls from the international community for a credible, multi-sectoral assessment helped build trust during the post-Nargis effort.

ASEAN-ERAT, supported by UNDAC, conducted the initial assessment. A comprehensive review, the PONJA, followed to determine the magnitude of the damage as well as its impact on the affected population and their immediate, medium and long-term needs. Later on, the PONJA informed the PONREPP, which guided the recovery effort. The TCG conducted Periodic Reviews and Social Impact Monitoring to monitor the progress of humanitarian assistance in the field and to identify areas where it had fallen short of its objectives.

Since such a high premium is placed on transparency and accountability in post-disaster efforts, the AHTF also established the Recovery Information and Accountability System (RIAS) to provide the Myanmar Government, donors

and implementing partners with comprehensive up-to-date information on the status of projects that received funding.

ASEAN-Emergency Rapid Assessment Team (ERAT)

The primary objective of the ASEAN-ERAT mission was to gather and analyse assessment findings and, through consultations with senior Government officials, provide recommendations on support for the Government. The mission ran from 9 to 18 May 2008.

In line with the provisions under the AADMER, the ACDM organised, constituted and deployed for the first time its ASEAN-ERAT.

The team consisted of experts with specific knowledge in humanitarian coordination, water and sanitation, health, logistics and food. In addition, members of the UNDAC team served as resource persons.

*PR III enumerators use GPS equipment to identify their location.
Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office*

Key Findings of the ASEAN-ERAT

1. **Access:** The overarching concern for the international community, including other ASEAN Member States, was accessing the affected areas to provide assistance. The risk existed of a second wave of deaths due to disease and nutritional deficiency if relief was not effectively coordinated between the international community and the Government.
2. **Logistics:** The Government allowed international flights carrying aid into Myanmar. However, maintaining an efficient and effective logistics pipeline to the affected areas, particularly the Ayeyarwady delta where road access is limited, was highly challenging and required specialised equipment and personnel.
3. **Shelters:** Providing shelter and resettlement for the affected population was one of several priorities identified as many people³ were living in cramped tents and temporary shelters with inadequate sanitation facilities. The onset of heavy monsoon rains in the following weeks compounded the pre-existing problems of overcrowding, poor hygiene and the potential spread of disease.
4. **Water:** Provision of water was paramount. Reports suggested that large numbers⁴ of people did not have access to clean drinking water and adequate sanitation. The need for high volume water purification systems in temporary settlements was urgent as was the need for expertise in setting them up and training national staff to manage and maintain them.



5. **Health:** Diarrhoea was a common health complaint in the affected population while stagnant water, a result of the flooding, increased the risks of malaria and dengue haemorrhagic fever. There was a need for ongoing and continuous health surveillance particularly since many of the survivors⁵ in the remote areas of the Delta reportedly did not have adequate access to health care. The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimated that at least 60 per cent of health infrastructure in the Delta were either destroyed or damaged.
6. **Food Security:** As the monsoon drew closer, the need to plant rice in the Ayeyarwady Delta was critical. The Agriculture Ministry undertook a thorough evaluation and determined that replanting must be carried out as soon as possible if a harvest was to be achieved. In order to do this, rapid mobilisation of funds, equipment and saline-resistant seeds was needed along with the resettlement of farmers. Failure to do so would compromise future food security thereby resulting in the need for food aid.
7. **Education:** The return of children to school was vital to their post-disaster psychological recovery. Data from the Ministry of Education revealed that 75 per cent of schools were destroyed or damaged in the affected areas. The strategic plan of the Education Working Group in Myanmar highlighted that temporary schools should be established in the immediate future before longer-term construction could begin.



The images on this and the following page were captured by the ASEAN-ERAT during its mission in the Delta. Photos by AHTF Coordinating Office

The key recommendation from ERAT was to immediately establish a “Humanitarian Coalition for the Victims of Cyclone Nargis” to coordinate and facilitate the ongoing relief, recovery and future reconstruction efforts. As a result of the recommendation, ASEAN took the lead in bridging the humanitarian gap between the Nargis-affected population and the international humanitarian community. The report was accepted by the Foreign Ministers of ASEAN, who called for the establishment of an ASEAN-led coordinating mechanism and the AHTF. The AHTF later established the TCG.

Following the release of the team’s findings and its recommendations, the international humanitarian community was permitted access to the Delta to provide immediate,

medium- and long-term activities in response to Cyclone Nargis. The response addressed needs ranging from food, nutrition, health, shelter, water and sanitation, logistics, education, early recovery, agriculture and protection.

The first deployment of the ERAT team demonstrated the value of using the AADMER as the guide in future humanitarian crises. Since Nargis, ACDM has continued to build up the ERAT team.

Challenges

The ERAT faced many challenges during its missions, though by far the greatest was managing high expectations. The ERAT was expected to come up with an initial assessment report for

Recommendations of the ASEAN-ERAT

The ASEAN-ERAT recommended the following affirmative actions:

1. A Coalition immediately should be established to coordinate and facilitate the ongoing relief and recovery as well as future reconstruction efforts. The Coalition should include ASEAN (including the Government of Myanmar), neighbouring countries of Myanmar, the UN and other international organisations.
2. The Coalition would act as a coordinating platform for relief and recovery strategies that could be expanded to involve key partners to enhance coordination and information sharing.
3. The Coalition establish a mechanism, in partnership with the Government of Myanmar, to ensure the required access to implement urgent relief and recovery programmes in Cyclone-affected areas.
4. The implementation of the Coalition should commence with the establishment of a task force comprising representatives from ASEAN Secretariat, the Government of Myanmar, UNOCHA and key international organisations.
5. Experienced assessment teams, in partnership with the Government of Myanmar, would complete further detailed assessments and analyses of the situation in the entire affected area.
6. The Coalition, along with the Government of Myanmar, would develop a plan of action and subsequent activities to meet its goals in line with assessments from the field, with a particular focus on priority needs.
7. Disaster risk reduction strategies should be incorporated into planning to ensure a policy of ‘build back better’ would be employed in relation to schools, hospitals, other public buildings and housing.
8. The capacity of the Government and people of Myanmar should be enhanced through this partnership and training in well-established mechanisms such as the ACDM, UNDAC, International Search and Rescue Advisory Group and the Environmental Emergencies Network.



Secretary-General of ASEAN Dr Surin Pitsuwan addresses the ASEAN Roundtable for PONJA, witnessed by Dr Noeleen Heyzer, Under Secretary-General of the UN, Executive Secretary UNESCAP and U Kyaw Thu, TCG Chair on 24 June 2008 in Yangon. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

presentation to the Special Foreign Ministers Meeting on 19 May. As ERAT was the first official and international assessment on the Cyclone, the team faced considerable political pressure from ASEAN Member States as well as the international community.

In its report, the ERAT indicated that the assessments would have been more reflective of the realities on the ground had the team been permitted to conduct assessments in all of its chosen disaster-affected areas. For this reason, ERAT suggested the completion of "further detailed assessments and analyses of the current situation in the entire affected area." This recommendation was later followed up with the PONJA.

Post-Nargis Joint Assessment (PONJA)

At the ASEAN-UN International Pledging Conference that took place in Yangon on 25 May 2008, donors made two major demands: i) full and unfettered access for relief workers; and,

ii) preparation of an objective and credible needs assessment to determine the scale of the impact of the Cyclone and requirements for both immediate humanitarian assistance needs and medium- to longer-term recovery. This became the responsibility of the TCG, which responded by commissioning the PONJA on 31 May 2008.

The PONJA was designed as a comprehensive assessment that would provide baseline data for the formulation of humanitarian and recovery programmes during early recovery but also be useful in medium- and longer-term recovery and disaster risk management. It aimed to assess: i) the existing vulnerabilities and needs of the population living in the most affected areas; ii) the damage to assets in all Nargis-affected areas; and, iii) the estimated loss of income incurred by affected households and the Myanmar economy until assets and livelihoods could be restored to pre-Cyclone levels.

Specifically, the assessment identified relief and early recovery priorities for intervention in the immediate aftermath



Children are back in school for their first education season after Cyclone Nargis. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

of the Cyclone. Information was gathered across a range of sectors/clusters from a range of communities across the affected areas.

Methodology

The PONJA was a unique combination of two different approaches to needs assessment – the Village Tract Assessment (VTA) and the Damage and Loss Assessment (DALA). PONJA was the first of its kind in the world and has been used by others as a model for conducting joint assessment. It involved a range of stakeholders, including the Government.

Communities were assessed using a household survey and various participatory approach tools, including transect walks, key interviews and focus group discussions.

The assessment tool combined key questionnaires from nine clusters: health, food and nutrition, protection of women and children, water and sanitation, agriculture, early recovery, temporary settlements, education, and emergency shelters. The questionnaires were developed through the cluster system and evaluated in the pilot survey.

Two hundred and fifty enumerators carried out the PONJA assessment. They visited 291 villages across 30 townships over 10 days in early June 2008.

Challenges

Although the PONJA was lauded as one of the TCG's major achievements, several challenges emerged throughout the process. The main policy issues included: i) the lack of standby technical expertise to support the conception, planning and implementation of assessments; and, ii) assessment instruments were geared more for the global level and tended to be too complex and drawn out, with far too much expected for the purposes of the post-Nargis assessment. Therefore, it was necessary to simplify the process in the interest of producing a workable, timely assessment that could be analysed and fed into appeal, programme and funding decision-making in real time.⁶

Key Findings of PONJA

The preliminary findings of the PONJA were presented at an ASEAN Roundtable in Yangon on 24 June, 2008 and fed into a revised UN Flash Appeal, launched in New York on 10 July, requesting US\$477 million. On 21 July 2008, on the occasion of the 41st ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in Singapore, ASEAN and the UN jointly released the final PONJA report.

Key findings of the PONJA report included:

1. More than half of the households living in the most affected townships lost all food stocks during the Cyclone with 55 per cent of households having one day of food stocks or less. (Food security and the risk of acute malnourishment was therefore of high concern);
2. More than half of households reported that they were able to source food from local markets, but this did not preclude their dependence on humanitarian assistance;
3. More than 65 per cent of households surveyed reported health problems among household members during early June 2008. Among the most commonly reported diseases were cold, fever and diarrhoea. Injuries sustained during the Cyclone were surprisingly low at 8 per cent but 23 per cent of households reported mental problems following the Cyclone (with variations across townships from as low as 6 to as high as 51 per cent);
4. An estimated 50 to 60 per cent of public schools, including monastic ones, were destroyed or damaged. In addition to physical and mental trauma suffered by children, the use of schools as emergency sites (if not damaged) further strained limited educational resources;
5. Challenges for vulnerable groups in the aftermath of the Cyclone were also severe. Problems included: i) the loss of documentation and essential papers, making it difficult for people to secure the assistance needed to restart their livelihoods; ii) an inflow of predominantly male migrant workers into the Delta, which exacerbated a gender imbalance created by the Cyclone and further increased vulnerabilities for women; and, iii) a potential push into high-risk occupations in search of income.

The Post-Nargis Recovery and Preparedness Plan (PONREPP)

As immediate humanitarian needs were met, early recovery efforts gradually shifted into medium-term recovery and the rebuilding of lives and livelihoods in a sustainable manner. It was upon this backdrop that the PONREPP provided a framework for assistance for the international community to consolidate progress and promote durable recovery in the affected areas complementary to the Government's reconstruction plan.

The PONREPP, which was released by the TCG, outlines a three-year recovery plan from 2009 through 2011 carrying a projected cost of US\$690 million. It encourages a community-based, people-centred approach to promote productive, healthy and protected lives whilst also strengthening aid coordination, management and tracking to promote maximum aid effectiveness. The PONREPP was officially launched on 9 February 2009 in Bangkok.

The PONREPP considers the affected communities both as beneficiaries of assistance and as key implementers at the centre of the recovery process. Hence the basic criteria for assessing and improving assistance processes and systems are: (i) the difference that target beneficiaries see in terms of amount, suitability, effectiveness, and timeliness of assistance; and, (ii) greater cost efficiency.

The PONREPP details the destruction and damage caused by Cyclone Nargis, the Government reconstruction plans under the NDPCC and the recovery plan to promote healthy lives, productive lives and protected lives. The plan addresses operational programmes across eight sectors: Education; Environment; Disaster Risk Reduction; Livelihoods; Health; Protection; Shelter; and, WASH. The plan presents a medium-term recovery strategy building on an analysis of core challenges as well as the key recovery objectives. The PONREPP also outlines an implementation architecture for the recovery plan that built on what worked well in the emergency and recovery phase and took into account other mechanisms relevant to the recovery effort.

Periodic Reviews

Following the PONJA, the TCG commissioned a series of interim assessments, referred to as Periodic Reviews, to gauge the status of relief and recovery and evolving needs of the Cyclone-affected population. The goal for the Periodic Review was to generate quantitative data that humanitarian actors could use in strategic planning and in targetting assistance, thereby accelerating recovery. The comprehensive geographic and multi-sector coverage of the Periodic Reviews represented a pioneering approach to post-disaster needs assessment and monitoring.

Each Periodic Review covered the same geographical area as the PONJA (30 townships).

The Periodic Review process was highly collaborative. Operating under the auspices of the TCG, it involved all members of the TCG, ASEAN, the UN and the Government as well as members of the local and international humanitarian community active in the Cyclone-affected area. Over the course of the Periodic Reviews I, II, III, and IV, a significant amount of data was gathered and several manuals were developed. AHTF Coordinating Office, with the support of its partners such as Merlin, was the leading TCG component in the initiation and delivery of the Period Review processes.

Data generated during the four reviews was stored and analysed using multiple software and programming languages, such as: Access Database, STATA, SPSS, R and SQL Server. During analysis, data were aggregated according to geographic region (township, less and most affected areas) and demographic group (men, women, landless and elderly).

The Periodic Review recommended that caution be exercised when analysing data with a small sample size. Although findings drawn from a small sample size may be indicative, the margin of error is greater. To determine the margin of error in each case, the Periodic Review recommended consulting a statistician.



Periodic Review III enumerators interview villagers. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

Methodology

Inclusiveness, cooperation, consultation and transparency with stakeholders were fundamental components of the preparation and production process of the PRs. PR teams consulted closely with representatives from the Delta recovery working groups throughout the PR process. These consultations covered the creation and review of the survey design, selection of indicators, setting of thresholds where appropriate, and analysis of data.

The PR I benefitted from the lessons learned in the PONJA, and the VTA indicators and analysis methods were further refined for PR I. Periodic Reviews II, III and IV undertook a lessons learned process from the preceding PR to review methodology and questions and make any necessary changes. These reviews and changes were designed to improve the quality of data and to reflect the stage of the response in each new round of household assessments. Viewed as a series, the PR survey instrument gradually shifted emphasis from emergency needs to medium-term recovery requirements.

Challenges

The first Periodic Review assessed the humanitarian relief and early recovery efforts in Nargis-affected areas. It complemented the PONJA and provided objective and credible data nearly six months after the Cyclone. The implementation of Periodic Review I at the hub level was facilitated by the ASEAN hub coordinators based in four locations—Yangon, Labutta, Pyapon and Bogale.

The hubs faced several challenges in implementing the assessment, including difficulties with logistics, time frame, review of the questionnaires, translation and participation and consultation with multiple partners. Survey teams suggested several improvements to the questionnaire that included terminology, scope and design. They also recommended expanding upon the technical explanation of a number of the indicators; further development of interpersonal skills; and, improving the depth of analysis and presentation of the data for Periodic Review II, III and IV.

Key Findings of Periodic Review I

Indicators for the health sector revealed encouraging results for access to health care and outreach into communities but raised concerns about the state of the health system. Food aid had reached every surveyed community along the path of the Cyclone. However, food insecurity persisted in the southwest and around Yangon and food consumption was poor across the west, which may be a chronic issue rather than a temporary problem brought on by the Cyclone. Across the survey area, the majority of households were using an improved (safe) water source, or treating their water effectively, with the exception of a small area south of Yangon. But increased dependence on surface water and the salinisation of ponds caused by the storm surge increased the risk of water shortages during the dry season. Livelihoods were disrupted across the affected area due to the storm's adverse impact on fishing, livestock rearing and agriculture. The Review concluded that recovery would take several years owing to the nature of the losses suffered and the breadth of need.

*Periodic Review enumerators reach far and isolated areas.
Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office*



Key findings of Periodic Review II

Periodic Review II confirmed that aid that had reached Cyclone-affected people had helped them build back their lives. However, more effort was needed to 'build back better', especially in the shelter and livelihoods sectors. Although 87 per cent of households reported returning to their pre-Cyclone homes, 74 per cent of all respondents cited adequate shelter as one of their most pressing needs and 90 per cent of respondents said they would not feel safe in their shelter were

another cyclone to strike. Data from the livelihoods sector revealed a high unemployment rate among casual labourers, of whom 90 per cent previously had been employed in the agriculture sector. Ninety per cent of birth deliveries were done unsafely at home rather than at health care facilities. Seventy-six per cent of the households were using unimproved water resources. While 32 per cent of the surveyed households cited crop items or input as a pressing need, only 7 per cent of the households reported receiving crop-related relief items.

A PR II emunerator conducts a nutrition assessment. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office





PR enumerators sample and map households. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

Key findings of Periodic Review III

Overall, progress was evident in the areas of health and sanitation. Fewer localities had high percentages of malnourished children and findings suggested a decreasing reliance on food aid for household food consumption. However, options for income earning appeared to have shrunk. Although boats had been provided through external assistance, livelihood related boat ownership was still far below pre-Nargis levels in key coastal areas. The Review found that more children, both boys and girls, were attending school. However, the enrollment of young people, particularly of those aged 11–15 years, lagged behind that of primary school-aged children. The finding suggested a need for measures that

address household costs associated with sending children to school. Such measures must address both direct costs to the household and opportunity costs associated with schooling children who are perceived as physically ready to contribute to household labour. Distributed assistance had fallen short of addressing livelihood needs, as expressed by households in the most affected areas and had done nothing to address livelihood needs in the less affected areas. The Review concluded that the recovery period would continue as long as livelihood related needs remained unaddressed, creating the potential for a second crisis from further loss of livelihood (including loss of land to lenders, chronic under-employment and economic stagnation). Overall the PR III showed continuing progress in



One of the villagers from Delta holds up produce from her plantation in May 2010. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

key elements of relief and recovery, including water, sanitation, the health and nutrition of young children, food availability and food consumption.

Key findings of Periodic Review IV

By May 2010, the physical health of the people living in the Cyclone-affected areas had stabilised. Compared to the first PR, household heads were more likely to have access to health facilities and to indicate that facilities needed medications and trained health personnel. Generally, the ability of households to access safe drinking water, during both the rainy and dry seasons, had improved. More households were treating their drinking water and their capacity to store water had improved compared to previous PRs. But the Cyclone-related destruction of sources of livelihood was still adversely affecting communities, their capacity to generate incomes and sustain their families. Households who relied on agriculture had not yet achieved the level of asset ownership they had prior to the Cyclone. Nearly two thirds of households reported that their dwellings were fully repaired but the homes remained highly vulnerable to storms. Three quarters of dwellings lacked adequate foundations and nearly all walls and rooves were not adequately reinforced, contributing to weak storm preparedness scores in many of the most vulnerable areas. School attendance was on an upward trend among children aged 10 and above, but was down slightly for those aged 5–10 compared to earlier PRs. Cyclone damage to family homes continued to influence the likelihood of children attending school, particularly among younger children.

Overall, progress was uneven across sectors and across geographic areas impacted by the Cyclone. Although the situation had stabilised in many respects, conditions were worse than they were prior to the Cyclone. Recovery was the strongest in the health sector, specifically in maternal and child health, and related recovery efforts appeared ready to transition into longer-term development. However, water and sanitation interventions had yet to reach households in need

A PR II emunerator conducts a shelter assessment with the help of the community. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office





and the potential for water-borne disease remained. Food security remained a goal rather than a reality in at least a quarter of households that reported they lacked enough food during the seven days prior to the assessment. Maintaining momentum in improvements in health depends on the capacity of households to meet basic needs for food, clean water and shelter. Improvements in household-driven development would require increased efforts in recovering livelihoods and building back housing better. Families whose homes were totally destroyed were among those in greatest need. Single-parent and female-headed households, the disabled, elderly widows and other elderly people who do not belong to a household with a person of working age also remain in great need. Those among these vulnerable groups who lost their home during the Cyclone require a particular focus.

Social Impacts Monitoring (SIM)

In addition to the Periodic Review—a results monitoring approach that primarily used quantitative survey methods—the TCG also approved a community monitoring assessment, known as the SIM. It was designed to complement the ongoing quantitative Periodic Review assessment work, which measured progress against recovery indicators in a wider set of affected villages. AHTF Coordinating Office, with the support of the World Bank and local

partners, was the leading TCG component in the initiation and delivery of the SIM.

Methodology

The Post-Nargis SIM was carried out to deepen the understanding of how the needs and priorities of Cyclone Nargis-affected communities evolved. It consisted of three rounds of field work in the same 40 villages approximately six, 12 and 24 months after the Cyclone struck the Ayeyarwady Delta, using focused group discussions, key informant and conversational interviews, and participant observations. Its key findings were as follows:

Aid effectiveness

During the months after Nargis, emergency aid primarily in the form of food, shelter, household goods and farming inputs reached the villages studied. Over time, aid providers shifted to community infrastructure with a particular focus during the second year on water and sanitation, and relatively greater emphasis on farming inputs. This aid has been greatly appreciated by the communities. On the whole, however, villagers have seen aid levels drop continuously and consider assistance to restart their livelihoods particularly insufficient and in many instances also inadequate. Oftentimes, there is a clear disjuncture between aid and the needs expressed by the villagers, who consider working capital and affordable credit as their greatest priority. Such dissonance is in part a reflection of the lack of participatory planning by most aid providers throughout the post-Nargis period.

Socioeconomic impacts

Nargis dealt the Delta economy, which is predominately based on agriculture, an enormous blow, breaking the traditional “borrow-harvest-repay” cycle. Yields which were low after Nargis because of salt water intrusion and lack of capital to pay for labour and other inputs have remained depressed because of second wave impacts from crop diseases and rat infestation. Higher input costs, a decrease in production



Children do their homework in May 2010. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

and lower paddy prices have led to a reduction in the demand for labour as well as an increasing inability to repay debts and consequently the loss of land use rights for many farmers. In many instances, however, fishermen have fared worse since in addition to losing boats and fishing gear during Nargis, they also received the least livelihoods assistance in the villages studied. In response to the severe financial duress, households have been employing an expanding range of coping strategies to increase their income (for example, through changing occupations) and/or reduce their expenditure (such as by reducing the number of meals per day). Better-executed and more appropriate aid as well as increased assistance would be required to improve the long-term recovery prospects of the Delta economy.

Social impacts

The social impacts monitoring has highlighted the resilience and important role of community level institutions in the post-Nargis recovery period. Social relations within and between villages have remained strong in most of the areas studied: villagers help those who are considered the poorest among them, they willingly contribute their labour to infrastructure projects financed by aid providers, and they cooperate to build infrastructure that serves more than one community. Throughout the post-Nargis period there is little evidence of local conflict, crime or violence though in some cases, disputes over aid delivery have created conflicts at the village level. Both formal and informal village leaders have organised their communities, facilitated the provision of aid, and participated in the distribution of aid. At the same time, widows and female-headed households feel the double burden of performing their domestic duties and earning a living with assistance to these and other poor and vulnerable groups noticeably decreasing in the second year after Nargis.

Recovery Information and Accountability System (RIAS)

Following the Post-Nargis and Regional Partnership Conference, the RIAS was set up by the AHTF Coordinating Office to provide the Myanmar Government, donors and implementing partners with comprehensive up-to-date information on the delivery and the status of projects that received funding.

The Delivery Unit collected data through regular follow-ups about updated aid delivery with donors, implementing partners and sectors. Based on information provided from donors, the Delivery Unit approached individual implementing partners for details about project activities, locations and project deliverables, including future plans, progress on existing projects and completed activities. The Delivery Unit gathered GPS coordination points, photos and the status of implementation from the project sites. The Delivery Unit used the data to produce a PROTRAC, project tracking system, and a monthly Post-Nargis Assistance Conference /Column (PONAC) delivery update.

The RIAS was initially developed to monitor progress resulting from the PONAC, but the system could also be used to monitor the implementation of the PONREPP as a whole as well as that of Government projects. The updates help the Government of Myanmar in the allocation of resources as well as pinpoint the most under-funded sectors that require further coordination of aid. Donors could also use the data to gauge the status of their pledges versus the amount of funds released. 🇲🇲



Chapter Four

ASEAN Volunteers Programme

Bringing ASEAN Closer to the People

“ASEAN is an Association of Southeast Asian Nations. There are 10 members, including Myanmar. Ten members of ASEAN are like 10 fingers. One finger is nothing. You can’t do anything with that. But with all 10 fingers, you can handle everything.”

– U Saw Lwin, Beneficiary, Saluseik village

The spirit that propelled communities from all over the ASEAN community to devote their time, energy and resources to assisting survivors of Cyclone Nargis is the same spirit that is the cornerstone of the ASEAN Volunteers Programme. Through the programme, Member States are represented at the grassroots level as one community bound by a common purpose.

Funded through the ASEAN Cooperation Fund (by Timor-Leste and Norway), the six projects mobilised 40 volunteers from the ASEAN Member States of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand between 2008 and 2010. The volunteers worked closely with five civil society partners to implement the projects.

Volunteers assisted in carrying out three Community Based Early Recovery Projects (CBER) in

Bogale, Kungyangon and Pyapon townships from 2008 to 2009. Building from the lessons learned and good practices of those projects, the volunteers carried out PONREPP projects in Kungyangon/ Kawhmu, Labutta and Pyapon townships from 2009 to 2010.

ASEAN volunteers helped support efforts to address the early recovery needs of the most under-assisted communities and increase their capacities to be more resilient to disasters. They worked closely with implementing partners to promote the ASEAN community spirit, assisting in needs assessments and training, documenting lessons learned and good practices and mobilising communities through consultation community meetings.

*ASEAN volunteers
together with fisher
folks in Labutta.
Photo by AHTF
Coordinating Office*



Spheres of Action

The ASEAN Volunteers Programme brought together citizens from ASEAN Member States to support the implementation of community-led livelihood and disaster risk reduction initiatives. The programme in Myanmar had two main components: volunteer administration and project management as illustrated below.

The volunteer administration component supported ongoing recovery efforts through partnerships with line ministries, community-based organisations and civil society in the spirit of the ASEAN Charter, which envisions a “people-oriented ASEAN in which all sectors of society are encouraged to participate in, and benefit from, the process of ASEAN integration and communitation building”. The volunteers aimed to foster a sense of “shared commitment and collective responsibility in enhancing regional peace, security and prosperity.”

The project management component was endorsed by the TCG, which supports the PONREPP and ASEAN’s Framework Action Plan for Rural Development and Poverty Eradication (2004–2010) placing emphasis on “promoting the development of progressive, prosperous and self-reliant rural communities towards creating a caring society” among the ASEAN Member States.

The projects were implemented in the three main spheres:

Livelihoods

Investments in agricultural and fishery inputs were designed to boost agricultural and fishery productivity and increase the

supply of food available to subsistence farmers and fisher folks. Cash grants were provided to selected beneficiaries through an inclusive community-driven process of wealth ranking, livelihood asset ownerships and employment classification.

Initiatives considered the impact of disasters on livelihoods, particularly those in the informal sector and youth, and aimed to stimulate the economies of local communities by providing daily employment opportunities that respected internationally accepted labour practices. Innovative mechanisms were encouraged that yielded sustainable income generation to reduce underlying risks and vulnerabilities. Examples included community infrastructures and action-oriented researchers focused on women-headed households.

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Initiatives were focused on improving household and community facilities and access to safe water and sanitation and raising family hygiene awareness and practices.

Disaster Risk Reduction

Greater priority was given to projects that demonstrated adherence to the priorities of the Hyogo-Framework for Action (HFA), ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER), ASEAN Charter and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) Blueprint.



Delivering on a promise

ASEAN is delivering on a promise under the Charter “to promote a people-oriented ASEAN in which all sectors of society are encouraged to participate in and benefit from the process of ASEAN integration and community building” through the ASEAN Volunteers Programme. Member States are represented at the grassroots level as one community bound by a common purpose, helping communities to help themselves.



ASEAN volunteers in and beyond numbers

Livelihoods

- 6 two-wheel tractors, 6 trailers and 6 huller rice mills provided
- 1,110 acres of paddy field prepared, 11 power tillers and 255 gallons of diesel distributed
- 370 baskets of paddy seeds and 1,905 bags of fertiliser distributed to 489 farmers
- 253 farmers trained in the usage of modern seed storage techniques
- 478 beneficiaries provided with seeds for home gardening
- 250 vaccinations for piglets distributed with 32 kg of feed, vitamin tonic and mineral supplements
- 443 livestock vaccinated
- 352 boats distributed
- 86 nets and 427 fishing net repair kit provided to fisherfolks
- 12 medium-scale bridges constructed
- 6 small-scale roads built and/or repaired
- 36 self-help groups with a total of 566 members
- 1,700 people participated in formulating community-based livelihood plans
- 150 people trained in fisheries, home-gardening and livestock
- 3,721 vulnerable households provided with cash grants for livelihood assistance and asset replacement

Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

- 229 houses provided with concrete water container (capacity of 900 litres) with hand pump and rain water harvesting system
- 100 people trained on construction of rain water harvesting system
- 226 latrines built
- 250 households trained on good hygiene practices
- 33 wells renovated and 4 reservoirs built
- 4 artesian wells constructed
- 9 drinking water ponds renovated and fenced

Disaster Risk Reduction and Mitigation Measures

- 15 Disaster Management Committees set up and disaster risk management plans developed
- 90 task forces involving 452 members set up on first-aid, search and rescue and early warning systems
- 320 participants trained in “build-back-better approach” on safeguarding community assets
- 3 multi-purpose shelters constructed
- 1 school and 1 monastery building strengthened
- Approximately 64,500 mangroves planted





Villagers in Pyapon meet to discuss a bridge construction project. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

“We never dreamed that our bridge would be wooden with a concrete foundation. It did not only connect two villages, but also gave us a link to our families and our livelihoods. I will always remember the faces and smiles of the ASEAN volunteers; they are engraved in my heart and I think of them every time I use and see the bridge...”

—Daw Thein Myintt –
Beneficiary, Tha Leik Chaung Village

Commitments into Actions

Under the programme, the volunteers were deployed in different projects based on their community experience and skills. The accompanying matrices include a more detailed description of each project.

Pioneering volunteerism in Kungyangon

Between August and November 2008, a Community Based Early Recovery (CBER) pilot project was carried out in Seik Gyi Village, Kungyangon Township to restore livelihoods and rebuild damaged infrastructures. Activities included: i) replacing destroyed boats and relaunching betel leaf cultivation (the principal source of income prior to Cyclone Nargis); and, ii) repairing the monastery and wells. The project capitalised on active community participation and sought to “build back better.”

The project represents a significant achievement for ASEAN as it was initiated and implemented directly by six ASEAN volunteers from Myanmar and Thailand. In the spirit of

“bringing ASEAN closer to the people” the volunteers worked closely with the community to create a robust participatory dynamic approach, improve upon an existing community communication mechanism and nurture meaningful cultural exchange.

Rebuilding small-plots farms in Pyapon

The distribution of agricultural inputs as well as prioritization and subsequent construction of small-scale infrastructure helped stimulate agricultural productivity and incomes in six communities of Tha Leik Gyi village tract in Pyapon Township. The efforts spurred early livelihood recovery for small-plot farmers and landless households. The project was implemented between December 2008 and April 2009 by International Development Enterprise – Myanmar (IDE/M) together with ASEAN Volunteers from Cambodia, the Philippines and Myanmar.



Former Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Dr SOEUNG Rathchavy (centre), together with TCG Senior Members, cut the ribbon to inaugurate a reconstructed bridge in Bogale, 1 May 2009. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

Promoting ASEAN Community Building

The ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Blueprint recommends building disaster-resilient nations and safer communities by strengthening community-based disaster preparedness and response through: promotion of public participation in programmes related to disaster risk reduction and emergency response; implementation of public awareness and education programmes; promotion of indigenous knowledge and practices; sharing of best practices and lessons learned; and promotion of sustainable livelihood options through socio-economic development activities to minimise disaster risks and enhance community-coping capacities.

“Usually commercial fishermen like me are often overlooked by aid agencies because we are not the most vulnerable people in the village. The truth is that after Nargis, we are as poor as everyone else in the village after losing all our assets. I am very happy and grateful to receive this boat. I never imagined that I would be able own a boat again, let alone build it myself. I will treasure the experience and knowledge learned from taking part in the boat constructions and maintenance.”

—U Hla Win – Beneficiary, Saluseik village

A community-led approach buoyed by the formation of informal village committees and engagement of villagers was critical to strengthening community solidarity towards sustainability.

Strengthening resilience in Bogale

Improving community resilience to future disasters by raising community awareness through the development of disaster preparedness and mitigation initiatives was the goal of a Community-Based Disaster Risk Management (CBDRM) project. It was implemented between January and August 2009 in five villages in Hay Man Village Tract, Bogale Township.

Six ASEAN volunteers from four countries— Cambodia, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand—worked hand-in-hand with Mingalar Myanmar and villagers to foster community engagement in all CBDRM activities, from planning to implementation. Communities were encouraged to plant mangroves and in doing so were made aware of the importance of environmental protection as a disaster mitigation activity. A livelihood-based activity also was conducted in targeted villages to support the most vulnerable families.

Strengthening and Restoring Livelihood Capacities in Pyapon

Through a process of local capacity building, the project aimed to meet the needs of landless labourers, small-scale fisher folk, households with large numbers of dependants, female-headed households, older people and the disabled who tend to be disproportionately affected by natural disasters and struggle the hardest to recover. ActionAid-Myanmar (AAM) and Aung Yadanar Social Association (ASA), along with the ASEAN volunteers, carried out the project in 13 villages in the village tracts of Let Pan Pin, Day Da Lu, Ka Ni and Tin Pu Lwe



Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, Dato' Misran Karmain (centre) together with TCG Members inspect the yields from a project funded rice-mill in Kungyangon on 28 June 2010. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

in Pyapon Township. It focused on replacing and protecting livelihood assets of the poorest households while building resilient communities using participatory rural appraisal tools to strengthen family and community capacity to reduce disaster risks.

Six volunteers from Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia and Myanmar supported ASA cluster leaders and village volunteers in the facilitation and implementation of project activities. The volunteers played a crucial role in facilitating beneficiary selection, task force formation, community consultation for

mitigation measures and in building the capacities of the field level team. The team also carried out a research project that aimed to improve understanding about the impact of disasters on the livelihoods of women and provide strategies to ensure livelihoods are better protected in the event of disasters.

Restoring Livelihood Opportunities through Community Building in Kawhmu and Kungyangon

The objective of the project was to foster collective and cooperative ownership through the provision of livelihood support to under-assisted communities affected by Cyclone

“I am thankful to ASEAN and BDA for building the bridge and renovating the road in our village. When we have good roads and mode of transportation becomes more accessible, our living situation will improve. The project also provided the villagers with power tillers and rice mills that are very useful for the farmers to restore their livelihoods. With the inputs provided to us, I am confident that if all the villagers work hard together we will enjoy the benefits of our labour.”

—U Zaw Win – Village Head Weigyiaungmingalar Village

Nargis. It was implemented by Border Areas Development Association (BDA) with ASEAN volunteers in Thongwa, Paygone, Tawkayan and Yaitain village tracts of Kungyangon Township as well as the Nyaungbinthar and Pyamut village tracts of Kawhmu Township. Livelihood packages were provided in the three sectors of agriculture, fishery and livestock breeding. The target beneficiaries were casual labourers as they are the most vulnerable group and account for about half of the village population.

Seven ASEAN volunteers from Cambodia, Myanmar, Singapore and Thailand were deployed to assist the local implementing partner, BDA. The volunteers conducted needs assessments at the village and facilitated the election of village committees. The volunteers were instrumental in supervising the construction of infrastructure as well as project monitoring and evaluation in the villages. They also carried out capacity building activities; namely, first aid training, conversational English lessons and management training for the village committees.

Supporting Safer and Productive Communities in Labutta

Seven volunteers from Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Malaysia and Myanmar supported the implementation of the project. The volunteers worked together with the Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED) and the village in facilitating CBDRM planning through the formation and training of CBDRM committees.

An ASEAN volunteer facilitates Disaster Risk Reduction Training in Pyapon. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office







The project included multi-level interventions in the livelihoods (agriculture and fisheries), WASH and DRR sectors. The project was carried out in 25 villages from nine village tracts of Labutta Township and Middle Island — Gant Eik, Sin Chay Yar, Sa Lu Seik, Kant Ba Lar, Thin Gan Gyi, Thone Gwa, A Htet Pyun, Kone Tan and Zee Phyu Seik. It was primarily intended to build the capacity of communities in Labutta Township to prepare for and respond to disasters while strengthening coping mechanisms in the face of adversity.

Lessons Learned

Community involvement is essential to conduct proper needs assessment.

Together with the implementing partners, the ASEAN volunteers were instrumental in providing opportunities to villagers to express their immediate needs for accurate early recovery assessment. The ASEAN volunteers gathered household information from the Village Nargis Committees and established clustered occupational group meetings to assess and analyse the needs of villagers.

Villagers as the project implementers encourage ownership.

ASEAN volunteers facilitated ongoing community meetings that gave villagers the opportunity to brainstorm how to share responsibilities and assign tasks for projects based on existing capacities. The meetings provided a perfect venue for project participants to report on their progress and address concerns. During the consultations, the villagers were encouraged to make decisions, with support from volunteers, about the design of the projects, including the steps necessary to carry them out and sequencing of activities.

Feedback mechanisms foster a sense of solidarity.

To ensure a credible evaluation process for community-based projects, ASEAN volunteers trained villagers on how to conduct

interviews and focus group discussions. The presence of ASEAN volunteers in the community allowed for continuous monitoring and feedback as well as prompt problem solving.

Living in the community enhances knowledge and cultural exchange.

The volunteers lived among the villagers, creating opportunities for a unique knowledge and cultural exchange. By living in proximity to the beneficiaries of the projects, volunteers not only heard about the needs and concerns of the community, they experienced them firsthand.

Accountability and transparency improve coordination while building trust and confidence.

ASEAN volunteers and implementing partners were involved in developing and distributing project information documents both in English and the local language, which were used to track beneficiaries and activities as well as solicit feedback. Community accountability banners were erected detailing the total cost, target completion dates, construction supplies and contact details for each activity. Such materials helped villagers, local authorities and humanitarian agencies stay informed about activities.

Civil society partnerships are essential to project success.

Implementing partners contributed not only their expertise in livelihoods development but also their local wisdom. They had considerable experience working the villages and were able to pass on valuable feedback on the approaches and practices that had worked well for them in the communities. 🇲🇲

Community Based Early Recovery Projects ASEAN VOLUNTEERS PROGRAMME 2008-2009

Title	TCG Pilot Project Seik Gyi Village Community-based Early Recovery Project	TCG Pilot Project Tha Leik Gyi Village Tract: Rebuilding Small Farm Livelihoods During the Dry Season	TCG Pilot Project Hayman Village Tract Community-based Disaster Risk Management
Target villages	Seik Gyi village, Myat Lay Yone Village, Naung Wine Village and Kyun Chaung Village Tawkhayan West Village Tract, Kungyangon Township	Tha Leik Gyi Village Tract (Tha Leik Kalay Village, Tha Leik Gyi Village, Mae Nyo village, Tha Leik Chaung Village, Tha Leik too Myaung, Poe Swar), Pyapon Township	Hay Man Village Tract (Tha Htay Gone village, Kyone Lout Thit Village, Kyone Lout Gyi Village, Nga Man Chaung village, Pa Tat/ Kan Su Village), Bogale Township
Period	August–Nov 2008	December 2008–April 2009	Phase I: January–May 2009 Phase II: June–August 2009
Partner		International Development Enterprises Myanmar	Mingalar Myanmar
Budget	US\$ 138,725	US\$ 193,731	US\$ 199,040
Target Direct Beneficiaries	288 households in three villages	995 households in six villages	448 households in five villages
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Restore the livelihood of Seik Gyi community through “Build Back Better” (BBB) methodology and process. 2) Repair community’s micro–infrastructure. 3) Set up a pilot project to share knowledge and experience with other communities (villages, townships, divisions and Tripartite Core Group (TCG). 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Improve household food security and reduce dependency on food aid. 2) Provide rural households with significant income gains. 3) Create season–long wage employment for landless households. 4) Improve agricultural production in the Village Tract. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Raise Disaster Risk Management (DRM) awareness. 2) Gather data and develop initial DRM action plan. 3) Facilitate village community discussions on the need to improve community assets. 4) Planting mangrove with expert advice and meeting and planning with the community. 5) Provide livelihood support packages to 65% of the community and provide wage employment in building village infrastructure with community engagement.
Title	TCG Pilot Project Seik Gyi Village Community-based Early Recovery Project	TCG Pilot Project Tha Leik Gyi Village Tract: Rebuilding Small Farm Livelihoods During the Dry Season	TCG Pilot Project Hayman Village Tract Community-based Disaster Risk Management
Approach	Build Back Better as part of a Community-based Early Recovery Approach.	A community–led approach with community participation and feedback through periodic needs assessment and progress monitoring surveys with close collaboration with ASEAN Hub team.	Community–focused approach by discussing and planning with the community to support needs and beneficiary identification while providing Disaster Risk Management training and expert assistance for mangrove plantation.

Outputs/ Outcomes	<p>1) 4.5 month break even point period; at least monthly US\$40–50 income every 15 days up to US\$200 per month/ household with addition of chemicals to prevent disease and fertilizer provided to households over 3–month project period.</p> <p>2) 34 fishing boats with providing drift for Seik Gyi village and extended support to build 29 fishing boats and 31 drift nets for Mayt Lay Yon Village.</p> <p>3) Monastery hall as a shelter, monastery walkway entrance and stupa hall were reconstructed. Renovation of Ordination Hall (Some renovation costs were covered by individual donors).</p> <p>4) Three new toilets built and two MSP drinking water tanks installed within the monastery compound in Seik Gyi Village and three toilets built in Kyun Chaung Village.</p> <p>5) 33 wells renovated and two reservoir tanks built (supported by a local company).</p> <p>6) Betel Leave Lesson Learnt Document drafted.</p> <p>7) DRM workshops, an initial preparedness plan and 25 ducks provided by Mingalar Myanmar as a partner of this project.</p>	<p>1) 1,100 acres of paddy were prepared, 11 hand power tillers and 255 gallons of diesel provided to villagers.</p> <p>2) Distributed 1,152 fertilizer bags to 472 rice paddy farmers covering 944 acres of paddy. About 103,840 baskets (2,160 metric tons) of rice paddy worth approximately US\$224,672 of total income for the whole village tract or US\$476 per household.</p> <p>3) Provided vegetable seed packets to 170 vegetable growers or about US\$34,000 of total income generated for the village tract or approximately US\$200 per household. (Value estimated by villagers at the rate of 1,000Kyats=1 US\$.)</p> <p>4) Construction/renovation of small-scale infrastructure: i) improved roads in Tha Leik Gyi and Tha Leik Kalay, Mae Nyo; ii) repaired footbridges in Tha Leik Chaung, Tha Leik Too Myaung and Poe Swa; and, iii) improved village's main farm-to-market road.</p>	<p>1) Community awareness raised and DRM action plan produced through 2–day CBDRM awareness workshop and second 4–day awareness workshops conducted in all villages. 500 villagers were trained.</p> <p>2) 436 households received livelihood support of animals, sewing machines, small scale trading, gardening and farm tools, fishing boats and gears and carpenter tools.</p> <p>3) 7 bridges, three jetties and five water ponds, village roads, gas fire, electricity, telephone, community centres, and village roads have been built or improved. Jobs and wages created for villagers.</p> <p>4) Nearly 58,000 mangrove plants planted and support plan produced. Mangrove plantation and preservation with community engagement.</p>
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Post-Nargis Preparedness and Recovery Projects ASEAN VOLUNTEERS PROGRAMME 2009-2010

Title	Restoring Livelihood Opportunities through Community Building in Kungyangon and Kawhmu townships	Supporting Safer and Productive Communities in Labutta township	Strengthening and Restoring Livelihood Capacities in Pyapon township
Target Villages	Yaytain, Paygone, Ywartharyar and Wègyiaungmingalar in Kungyangon Township Nyaungbinthar and Pyamut in Kawhmu Township	Five village tracts of Labutta Township: Gant Eik, Sin Chay Yar, Sa Lu Seik, Kant Ba Lar, and Thin Gan Gyi. Four village tracts located on Middle Island: Thone Gwa VT, A Htet Pyun VT, Kone Tan VT and Zee Phyu Seik VT	15 village communities in four village tracts of Let Pan Pin; DayDa Lau; Ka Ni and Tin Pu Lwe Village in Pyapon Township.
Period	16 Nov 2009 – 15 June 2010	16 Nov 2009 – 15 June 2010	16 Nov 2009 – 15 June 2010
Partner/s	Border Areas Development Association (BDA)	Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED)	ActionAid International – Myanmar (AAM) with Local Implementing Partner – Aung Yadanar Social Association (ASA)
Budget	US\$ 109,280	US\$ 337,996	US\$ 167,688
Target Direct Beneficiaries	1,396 households in six village communities	3,322 households in 25 villages.	1,562 households in 15 village communities
Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To increase farming crops / output through the use of farming equipment. 2) To restore fisheries production through replacement of boats and fishing equipment 3) To provide a permanent means of livelihood for casual laborers 4) To increase livelihood opportunities through employment opportunities associated with community infrastructure projects 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Communities are engaged and empowered to manage and reduce disaster related risks 2) Fisheries production restored and sustainability of fishing resources improved 3) The affected population has access to adequate safe water for drinking, cooking and personal and domestic hygiene, and to equitable and adequate sanitation 4) Farming communities' crops sustainably restored and improved, and productive capacity strengthened by replacing livestock, building livestock management capacity, and protecting existing livestock. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To reinstate livelihoods by enabling villagers to replace assets through access to sustainable, affordable financial capital. 2) To build resilient communities through the implementation of disaster preparedness and mitigation measures. 3) To strengthen local capacity through training local NGO partner staff, Village Youth Volunteers, Livelihood Self Help Groups and village Disaster Management Committees. 4) To study the impact of disasters on women, particularly in relation to food security, income sources/livelihood options and coping mechanisms in order to better understand and address their specific strengths, vulnerabilities and needs
Approach	The project approach is centred on provision of livelihood support to under-assisted communities to serve as community assets to foster collective and cooperative ownership. These assets are used by the farmers and fishermen who will be supervised by the their respective Village Supervision Committees (VSC). The members of VSCs are mainly chosen by the communities and are envisaged as mechanisms for community solidarity and sustainability.	An integrated strategy, combining livelihoods support, disaster risk reduction and support to improve access to safe water and sanitation. It is based on four main components, each one contributing to the achievement of one or several of the targets set in the Post-Nargis Recovery and Preparedness Plan (PONREPP).	Replace and protect livelihoods assets of the poorest households and build resilient communities using a community based approach which will strengthen family and community capacity and reduce disaster risk.

Title	Restoring Livelihood Opportunities through Community Building in Kungyangon and Kawhmu townships	Supporting Safer and Productive Communities in Labutta township	Strengthening and Restoring Livelihood Capacities in Pyapon township
Outputs/ Outcomes	1) Six rice mills, six two-wheel tractors and six trailers distributed for communal usage. 2) 12 boats (with engine) distributed. 3) Construction of two bridges. 4) One school drinking concrete tank 4,000 gallons completed. 5) Brick path and dyke built in two villages. 6) Renovation and/or fencing for seven drinking water ponds. 7) Construction and/or renovation of six village access roads. 8) Four Artesian wells constructed.	1) Disaster Management Committee (DMC) set up and Disaster Risk Management (DRM) plans developed for 15 villages. 2) 209 community members representing 10–15% of households from 15 villages trained in emergency health response and search & rescue techniques. 3) One first aid kit distributed for each of the 25 villages. 4) 320 beneficiaries from 19 villages trained on build-back-better techniques to make building structures more resilient to environmental shocks. 5) Students in 13 schools trained to raise awareness on disaster, importance of DRR in schools and evacuation plans for school children.	1) 566 most vulnerable households from 13 villages provided with individual interest-free grants amounting to 100 US\$ each to replace livelihood assets. 2) 2,279 vulnerable groups provided with loans with a nominal interest of 2% and repayment of the capital would depend on the group to which the grant is handed over. 3) A total of 1,794 community members participated in Participatory Vulnerability Analysis (PVA) exercise to help communities understand and analyse their vulnerabilities related to their livelihoods. 4) Setting up of self-help groups (SHG) for beneficiaries. In total, 36 SHG with 566 members were formed in the 15 communities.
Outputs/ Outcomes	9) 440 most vulnerable people provided with a cash grant of 30,000 kyat each to purchase livestock or other livelihood assets. 10) Organized training in agriculture for the farmers of six villages attended by 160 farmers. 11) Organized First Aid Training for 45 trainers.	6) 300 small boats handed over to beneficiaries. 7) Six commercial boats with 28 HP engine distributed to a total of 18 beneficiaries. 8) 83 beneficiaries trained on boat construction. 9) 86 nets distributed to small boat beneficiaries. 10) Fishing net repair kit distributed to 427 beneficiaries. 11) Fishermen from 15 villages trained in better practices for boat maintenance. 12) 229 houses constructed with concrete water container with hand pump (storage capacity 900 litres) and rain water harvesting system. 13) 226 latrines built and 250 households trained in good hygiene practices. 14) 16 farmers given cash grants of 24,000 kyat to employ casual labours for transplanting. 15) 370 baskets (21 kg each) of paddy seeds and 753 bags (50 kg each) distributed to 16 farmers. 16) 253 farmers from 5 villages took part in demonstration plots established to introduce the usage of modern seed storage techniques. 17) 250 vaccinated piglets distributed and each recipient supplied with 32 kg of feed, vitamin tonic and mineral supplement.	5) A total of 308 beneficiaries who were primarily women were selected for seeds disbursement. 6) 1700 people participated in the preparation of community livelihood plans. 7) Task forces involving 452 members' set-up in all 15 villages. The task forces formed were; i) search and rescue; ii) first aid; iii) early warning system; and iv) village disaster management committee (VDMC). 8) 443 livestock vaccinated involving 109 households in 13 villages. 9) Approximately 6,500 mangroves replanted as natural barriers to reduce risks of hazards and to improve the bio-diversity. 10) Three multi-purpose shelters constructed. 11) Three bridges constructed. 12) One village school and one community hall renovated and strengthened. 13) Construction of one village access road. 14) IEC materials reprinted and distributed to raise awareness on disaster preparedness in all 15 villages 15) 150 people trained in fisheries, home-gardening and livestock. 16) Four drinking water ponds constructed and village community trained in safe hygiene practices.



Chapter Five

Contributions from ASEAN Member States to the Post-Nargis Effort

In the wake of Cyclone Nargis, ASEAN Member States were among the first to offer aid to Myanmar. In fact, a Thai military transport plane carrying nine metric tonnes (MT) of food and medical supplies on 6 May 2008 was reportedly the first cargo of aid to touch down in Myanmar after the Cyclone. On the same day, Singapore contributed medical supplies, drinking water, water purifying tablets, tents, groundsheets, blankets, sleeping bags and food. Meanwhile, the Singapore Government provided funding for logistical support at Yangon International Airport that proved vital in the distribution of relief supplies. Indonesian relief began arriving 7 May 2008 with a letter from President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono conveying his condolences and vowing solidarity. On 9 May, two Hercules planes arrived carrying 22,395 MT of relief aid contributed by the Indonesian Government. To date, ASEAN Member States have provided more

than US\$40 million in cash and in-kind assistance. Below is a description of the aid provided by each ASEAN Member States.

Contributions from ASEAN Member States*

Brunei Darussalam

Brunei Darussalam has provided US\$1.3 million in cash and emergency supplies such as drinking water, food, emergency shelter and medicine. Of that sum, the Embassy of Brunei Darussalam in Myanmar distributed US\$58,000 to the TCG and US\$145,693 to the Myanmar Business Coalition on AIDS (MBCA).

The TCG used the funds to build 55 homes and an artesian well in Seik Gyi Village as well as a suspension bridge and electrical infrastructure in Kyun Chung Village.

Villagers from Seik Gyi carry a boat donated by ASEAN Member States. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

**The information provided in this chapter was contributed by the embassies of respective Member States in Yangon at the request of the AHTF Coordinating Office. Details for countries that did not respond to the request were obtained from the financial tracking system.*

Post-Nargis support from ASEAN Member States

ASEAN Member States	Total funds committed/ contributed (USD*)
Brunei Darussalam	1,303,693
Cambodia	310,000
Indonesia	1,800,000*
Lao PDR	120,000
Malaysia	1,160,772*
Philippines	350,000
Singapore	5,634,900*
Thailand	29,713,688*
Viet Nam	300,000
TOTAL	40,693,053

* Cash and in-kind contribution

The MBCA used the funds to carry out an ambitious plan in Kwin Gyi village that resulted in the construction of 41 solar-powered single-family homes that have at least two interior lights. The plan also included the creation of a solar-powered community water system capable of distributing water to 20 receiving points and ground tanks in the village, improvements to community infrastructure such as roads, bridges and a jetty, the erection of 17 community lights, the planting of trees and the provision of 18 fishing boats with nets. Cash donations helped 45 families recover their livelihoods. Brunei Darussalam also supported the deployment of two volunteers to Myanmar to join the ASEAN Volunteers Programme.

Cambodia

Cambodia donated US\$310,000 in cash to the Government. The provision of cash was made through the Embassy of Cambodia in Myanmar.

Indonesia

Indonesia was one of the first countries to provide humanitarian assistance to Myanmar following the Cyclone. Aid weighing 22,395 MT was transported on two Hercules planes that arrived at Yangon International Airport on 9 May 2008. It was accompanied by an Indonesian delegation that included officials from the ministries of Public Social Welfare Coordination and Foreign Affairs, the National Coordinating Board for Disaster Management (Bakornas) and National Armed Forces of Indonesia. The aid included 27 sacks of clothing, 150 sacks of biscuits, 10,000 blankets, 50,000 sarongs, 10 tents, 292 bags of medicine, 744 sacks of food and 4,000 bags of instant noodles.

A few weeks later, on 2 June 2008, a team of 30 medical professionals from Indonesia, carrying 7 MT of medication, medical supplies and operational tools, arrived in Myanmar to help survivors of Cyclone Nargis in Kawhmu Township.

The medical team administered basic and specialised medical care to survivors from a field hospital and mobile clinic. The team's professionals also treated mental health problems and provided advice on nutrition, hygiene and safe water practices. Several of the team's members were dispatched to hospitals around the Cyclone-affected region.

During the recovery phase, Indonesia donated US\$1 million to build a 38-bed hospital-cum-cyclone shelter in Pyinsalu Township.

Lao People's Democratic Republic

Lao PDR provided US\$120,000 worth of aid, including 2.5 MT of food aid and 1.3 MT of clothing and drinking water for the Cyclone survivors. In addition, Lao PDR dispatched a 23-person medical team to provide health care support following Nargis.

Malaysia

Malaysia contributed US\$1.16 million worth of aid on two C130 Royal Malaysian Air Force aircrafts. Humanitarian supplies consisted of blankets, clothing, dry food, medicine, tents and water purification tablets.



Prime Minister of the Union of Myanmar General Thein Sein (centre) meets with Indonesian medical team. Photo courtesy of Indonesian Embassy

The Philippines

The Philippines provided US\$300,000 of aid, which it transported along with a 30-member medical team, from the Philippines to Myanmar in a C130 aircraft and contributed US\$50,000 to the ASEAN Cooperation Fund for Disaster Assistance. The Philippines also covered the costs associated for one member of the UNDAC and four representatives of the ASEAN-ERAT.

Singapore

The Singapore Government donated US\$3.5 million to the post-Nargis relief and recovery effort. The assistance began

in June 2008, when Singapore provided funding for aviation ground handling equipment at Yangon International Airport that was used in the distribution of relief supplies.

In September 2008, Singapore supported crop replanting activities in five designated townships: Dedaye, Ngapudaw, Labutta, Mawlamyinegyun and Kyaiklat.

The next month, five Singaporean psychologists conducted a workshop on disaster mental health issues attended by 35 Myanmar officials.

In November 2008, Singapore donated 1,000 wooden fishing boats and nets through implementing partner, Mingalar Myanmar.

*A deep tube well in Dedaye was a contribution from Singapore.
Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office*



Singapore supported the reconstruction of Kayin Chaung Hospital, a 16-bed facility that was inaugurated by Senior Minister Goh Chok Tong in June 2009 and later paid a stipend and accommodation costs for Singapore Civil Defence Forces (SCDF) training courses.

In close collaboration with Mingalar Myanmar, Singapore provided the funds for the installation of 70 tube wells in the Cyclone-affected area.

Singapore partnered with Save the Children to provide materials for Education and Cyclone Shelters in a project that is expected to wrap up by October 2010 and supported the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) in the rehabilitation of 1,000 homes in the Cyclone-affected region.

With the Myanmar Business Coalition on AIDS, Singapore helped pay for the construction of 34 solar-powered single family homes that each contain at least two interior lights, a solar-powered community water system capable of distributing water to 20 receiving points and ground tanks in the village, improvements to community infrastructure such as roads, bridges and a jetty and the repair of a village office and preschool.

Through its support of the Man Fut Tong Welfare Society, Singapore helped reconstruct the Sutaung Pyae Parahita Orphanage, a primary school and middle school and also provided furniture for the facilities.

Meanwhile, the Singapore Red Cross (SRC), as a private contribution, has contributed US\$900,000 in cash to INGOs, LNGOs and Myanmar Government departments. Among the projects funded was a Serge Pun Association (SPA) Environmentally Sustainable Pilot Project that included the construction of 125 wooden houses,



A station hospital in Pyapon was built with funds from Thailand. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

community centre/cyclone shelter, village school, clinic, solar panel power station, water trestle and solar energy pump as well as improvements to village infrastructure such as village roads, bridges and a jetty.

SRC helped construct a school/shelter, two teacher quarters and a village clinic that it equipped with medical equipment, furniture and well through a partnership with Myanmar Engineering Society (MES) and has partnered with the Mahakaruna Buddhist Society and Ministry of Religious Affair to construct two teacher quarters, a single storey school, a tube well, a ground tank and a water tower.

SRC coordinated with the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) to build three schools/cyclone shelters and Accel International &

Basic Education Department to build a school in Setsan Village. Meanwhile, SRC is in negotiations with the Myanmar Ministry of Health, Singapore Embassy, Man Fut Tong Welfare Society and Singapore Anglican Church in Singapore to construct two clinics (also referred to as station hospitals), a cyclone shelter, an orphanage and 250 houses.

Singapore Ambassador to Myanmar, Robert Chua, was designated an ASEAN member to the TCG from end of May to mid July 2008.

Thailand

Thailand contributed an estimated US\$29.7 million to relief and recovery efforts. As mentioned earlier, Thailand was the first country in the world to render assistance to Myanmar



Thailand's former Ambassador to Myanmar and then Senior ASEAN member to the TCG Mr Bansarn Bunnang (right) and Chairman of the TCG and Chairman of the Civil Service Selection and Training Board U Kyaw Thu (centre) deliver aid to Cyclone Nargis survivors. Photo courtesy of Thai Embassy.

following Cyclone Nargis, which was transported on a C-130 aircraft on 6 May 2008. Relief supplies from Thailand continued to flow to Myanmar as the emphasis shifted from relief to recovery and rehabilitation.

Relief supplies provided to Myanmar in 2008 included food, medicine and medical supplies, drinking water, survival kits, plastic sheets, roofing materials, water purifier, generators, diesel, satellite telephones, boats, tillers, fertiliser, agricultural and fishing equipment.

Thailand offered its Don Muang Airport to be a staging area, where relief supplies from other countries could be channelled through to Myanmar and, all told, 26 cargoes of relief from all over the world were transported on C-130 aircraft from Thailand and from other countries.

Thailand was also the first country to dispatch a medical team to Myanmar at the end of May 2008, providing two medical teams; both under the patronage of the H.R.H. Crown Prince Maha Vajiralongkorn.



HRH Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn of the Kingdom of Thailand encourages one of the blood donors during her visit to Myanmar in March 2010. Photo courtesy of Thai Embassy

Thailand covered some of the repair of the Museum of Drug Elimination and National Museum in Yangon, which were damaged by the Cyclone.

Thailand contributed cash, equipment and materials towards the set up and operation of the TCG and AHTF Coordinating Office in Yangon.

Thailand also supported the TCG Pilot Project in Seik Gyi Village by helping to renovate the monastery in Seik Gyi and reconstruct schools in Nyang Wai Village.

In March 2009, Thailand supported the reconstruction of a monastery in Nyaung Wai while the Royal Thai Armed Forces helped build a school/cyclone shelter in Kadonkani Village, Bogale Township and agricultural and livelihood training were provided in the village under the name of H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn. On 10 April 2009, Thailand donated agricultural equipment to Myanmar.

The Thai Red Cross Society, under the patronage of H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn, contributed funds for the



renovation of the National Blood Centre in Yangon, covered the cost of medical equipment for the centre and provided training on the use of the equipment.

The Thai Red Cross Society also helped construct a rural health centre in Taman Village and 16-bed hospital in Daw Nyein Village, Pyapon Township and further donations provided by the people of Thailand through the Thai Red Cross Society will be used to purchase medical equipment for the hospital.

The Royal Thai Embassy in Yangon donated computers and related equipment to a primary school in Bahan Township in Yangon. Through the coordination of the Thailand Incentive and Convention Association (TICA), Thailand has provided training in the field of disaster management and meteorological programmes and will continue to provide meteorological-related equipment and training in the future.

The Thai-Myanmar Association of Friendship, Thai Foreign Ministry and the people of Thailand also contributed privately to relief and recovery efforts as have the Association of Thai Businesspeople in Myanmar, Thai Community in the United Kingdom and Thai Community in Myanmar.

Former Thailand Ambassador to Myanmar, Bansarn Bunnag, was designated an ASEAN member to the TCG from mid July 2008 to December 2009.

Viet Nam

Viet Nam provided US\$300,000 for the humanitarian assistance to survivors of the Cyclone. A 15-person medical mission was sent to the Myanmar Government to augment search and retrieval efforts as well as to provide medical and humanitarian services. Medicine was sent as part of the mission. Viet Nam Ambassador to Myanmar, Mr Chu Cong Phung, served as a member of the TCG from January to July 2010. 🇻🇳

Senior ASEAN member to the TCG and Ambassador of Viet Nam to Myanmar Mr Chu Cong Phung (centre), Deputy Minister of Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement U Kyaw Myint (right) and Special Envoy of Secretary General of ASEAN for Post-Nargis Recovery, Dr William Sabandar (left) at the third Recovery Forum. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office



Chapter Six

Mobilising Resources, Delivering Results

Prioritising the PONREPP

A consensus was reached at the sixth AHTF meeting about the need to review and monitor deliverables of the PONREPP.

In response to calls from ASEAN Ministers, the TCG and its partners prioritised the PONREPP and its accompanying Action Plan to the end of July 2010. If adequately resourced, the Action Plan is expected to substantially meet outstanding humanitarian needs.

The Action Plan covers needs related to shelter, livelihoods, WASH, education and health, along with cross-cutting issues associated with DRR and the environment. The Action Plan was the result of extensive discussions with and analysis by sector working groups, which prioritised needs in the five sectors at exercises held in Yangon and in Cyclone-affected areas of the Delta in August and September 2009.

Based on the exercises, the TCG issued the PONREPP Prioritised Action Plan. The cost of the Action Plan was pegged at US\$103,560,000, as detailed in the accompanying table.

To deliver the Prioritised Action Plan, additional resources would have to be mobilised. At the time it was finalised, the funds that had been raised fell well short of the US\$103,560,000 required to carry out the Action Plan. Some of the funding allocations had moved from the 'planned' to the 'committed' stage by the time of the Post-Nargis and Regional Partnership Conference. Early estimates suggested only about 20 per cent to 40 per cent of the US\$103 million sought would be made available.

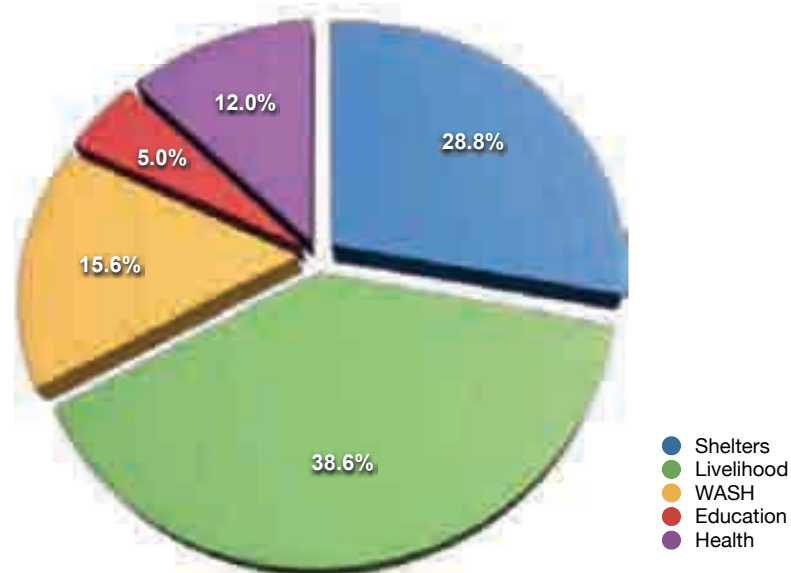
ASEAN Post-Nargis and Regional Partnership Conference

The idea to launch a pledging conference was presented by the AHTF Coordinating Office at the 38th TCG Meeting on 25 September 2009. At the

*Post-Nargis
and Regional
Partnership
Conference, 25
November 2009.
Photo by AHTF
Coordinating
Office*

PONREPP Prioritised Action Plan Focuses on Five Sectors 13 Township Coverage with Estimated Budget of US\$103,560,000

SECTOR	Budget (USD)
Shelter	29,800,000
Livelihood	40,000,000
WASH	16,160,000
Education	5,170,000
Health	12,430,000



meeting, the TCG proposed that ASEAN lead the pledging conference to mobilise resources for the PONREPP Prioritized Action Plan.

On 25 November 2009, ASEAN held the Post-Nargis and Regional Partnership Conference with the support of the post-Nargis humanitarian community at the United Nations Conference Centre (UNCC) in Bangkok. The primary aim of the conference was to raise funds to address the critical needs for the continuing reconstruction in Cyclone-affected areas; to take stock of the first 18 months of the post-Nargis relief and recovery effort; and, to share lessons learned from post-Nargis experiences. More than 160 participants attended the conference, including representatives of ASEAN Member States, heads of diplomatic missions, UN agencies and national and international NGOs.

The donor community promised tremendous support for the post-Nargis recovery effort and approximately US\$88 million—over 85 per cent of the US\$103 million appeal—was mobilised at the conference. Pledges were made from Australia, Denmark, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, the Netherlands, the European Commission, Singapore, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and the United States, amongst others.

The Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr Surin Pitsuwan, in his capacity as the Humanitarian Coordinator for ASEAN and as Chair of the AHTF co-chaired the conference with Dr Noeleen Heyzer, Under Secretary-General of the UN and Executive Secretary of the UNESCAP.



(From Right to Left) Secretary-General of ASEAN Dr Surin Pitsuwan, Under Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCAP Dr Noeleen Heyzer, Special Envoy of Secretary-General of ASEAN to Post-Nargis Recovery Dr William Sabandar, and UN Resident / Humanitarian Coordinator also UN representative to the TCG Mr Bishow Parajuli, at PONAC, 25 November, 2009. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

Delivering Results

Together with the TCG, ASEAN continued its coordination effort and took measures aimed at ensuring transparency and good governance in the implementation of international assistance to address the critical needs of Nargis-affected communities. Following the Post-Nargis and Regional Partnership Conference, the Coordinating Office of AHTF established a Delivery Unit. It was headed by a monitoring and evaluation officer and supported by four data analysts.

The Delivery Unit tracked the delivery of pledges resulting from the ASEAN Post-Nargis and Partnership Conference and had three main objectives to: (i) follow up with donors to track the delivery of pledges; (ii) monitor the delivery of projects of trust fund and implementing partners; and, (iii) communicate the overall delivery of assistance to stakeholders. The Delivery Unit had seven main functions:

1. Track pledges from donors
Identify funding status, sector allocation, disbursements and delivery channels for each donor;



Representatives from ASEAN Member States, ASEAN Secretariat, and the international community at the Post-Nargis and Regional Partnership Conference, 25 November, 2009. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

2. Monitor project activities of implementing partners
Monitor implementation progress (outputs/deliverables) of each implementing partner;
 3. Track projects in the field
Monitor progress of projects in the field, provide updates on the status of implementation and identify specific locations for each project;
 4. Develop Recovery Information and Accountability System (RIAS) database
Develop an information database that provided detailed information, from funding status to project delivery;
 5. Issue monthly delivery update to stakeholders
 6. Synchronise with existing tracking system
Work closely with existing available resources to synchronise and complement information and data;
 7. Provide analysis for actions
Provide regular or situational updates and analysis on the progress of delivery for high-level decisions and actions.
- Following the Post-Nargis and Regional Partnership Conference, a monthly update entitled the PONAC was launched to provide information to stakeholders on the delivery of pledges made by donors at the conference. ASEAN stepped up its effort to follow up with donors with a view



Representatives from other countries at PONAC, 25 November, 2009. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

to turning pledges into commitments. The Delivery Unit established regular communication with donors to update them about the status of aid delivery.

During the first week of March 2010, the first PONAC Delivery Update was issued to capture progress three months after the Conference. The figures presented by PONAC were based on information provided by donors, implementing partners and relevant agencies. As of 28 February 2010, the total amount pledged had increased to US\$91.83 million with US\$31.35 million allocated for livelihoods, US\$19.48 million for education, US\$11.91 million for health, US\$6.48 million for WASH. Shelter remained the most under-funded sector, receiving only US\$0.25 million or less than 1 per cent of the needs followed by WASH, which received 40 per cent. Livelihoods received 78 per cent, health received 95 per cent and education received full support. As of 28 February 2010, US\$38.57 million or 42 per cent of the total pledged had been released by donors either to trust fund or implementing partners.

The work of the Delivery Unit was coordinated closely with Recovery Hub Offices and the Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU). The Delivery Unit team received GIS training from MIMU to capture progress on the ground through regular field visits to the sites of registered projects while the Recovery Hub Office provided support as required during the activities in the field.

The Delivery Unit tracked funding pledged to deliverable outputs in the field through its Project Tracking (PROTRAC) system. The Delivery Unit PROTRAC team conducted scheduled visits to each project location to gather data on the progress of the registered projects. The field team also identified GPS coordinate points the location of each specific project to link with Google Earth® Maps and geographic information and took photographs of each project regularly to track progress and for documentation purposes. The PROTRAC team submitted a report at the end of each month by inputting data into a project tracking template. The information was consolidated, processed and stored in a RIAS database.

RIAS was a database that contained detailed, up-to-date information about everything from funding status to project delivery. RIAS contained all information from funding to project delivery based on information received from donors, trust funds, implementing partners and the project tracking system. RIAS was designed to provide information about funds pledged and released by sectors, the status of funds released by donors, the status of funds released to implementing partners, the status of funds released to trust funds, a summary of achievements, donor profiles, trust fund profiles, implementing partner profiles and other information as deemed necessary. RIAS also linked GPS coordinate points of each project with Google Earth mapping system.

At the conclusion of the AHTF mandate, the Delivery Unit endeavoured to transfer knowledge to the Government through the transfer of data and information systems as well as on-the-job training. Such efforts aimed to ensure the sustainability of monitoring systems and deliverables.

Seven months after the conference: More than 90 per cent pledged and almost 80 per cent released

With generous contributions from donors, as of the end of June 2010, the total amount pledged had increased to US\$97.5 million or more than 90 per cent of the US\$103.5 million requested at the conference for the Prioritised Action Plan. Out of the total pledged, almost 80 per cent or US\$76.06 million had been released by donors to implementing partners and trust funds. Out of 14 donors that pledged at the conference, almost two thirds had released between 80 and 100 per cent of the amount they had pledged.

As of the end of June 2010, out of US\$76.06 million released by donors, US\$48.79 million or 64 per cent had been released to implementing partners and US\$27.27 million or 36 per cent had been released to trust funds. Of the total funds released to implementing partners, about 40 per cent or US\$18.77

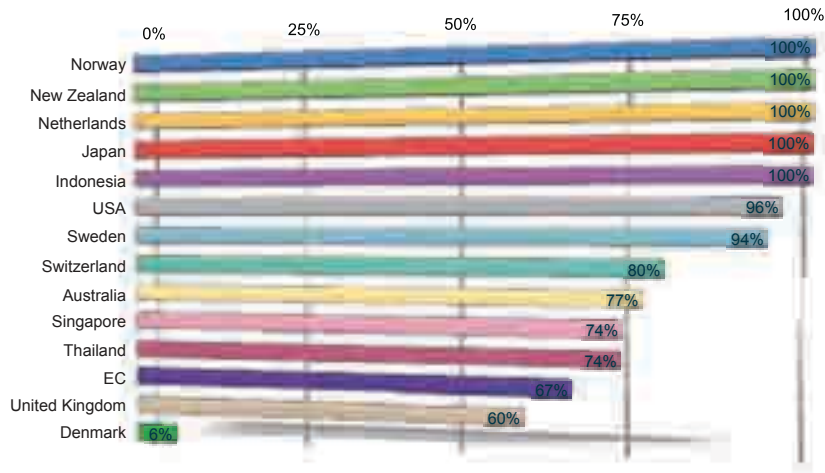
Status of Funds Released by Donors

Country	Pledged (USD Million)	Released (USD Million)	Remaining Balance (USD Million)
Australia	13.89	10.70	3.19
Denmark	3.60	0.20	3.40
EC	21.00	14.00	7.00
Indonesia	1.00	1.00	0.00
Japan	6.70	6.70	0.00
Netherlands	2.49	2.49	0.00
New Zealand	0.25	0.25	0.00
Norway	10.81	10.81	0.00
Singapore	5.00	3.70	1.30
Sweden	4.11	3.86	0.25
Switzerland	5.00	4.00	1.00
Thailand	3.71	2.74	0.97
United Kingdom	9.94	6.01	3.93
USA	10.00	9.60	0.40
Estimated Total	97.50	76.06	21.44

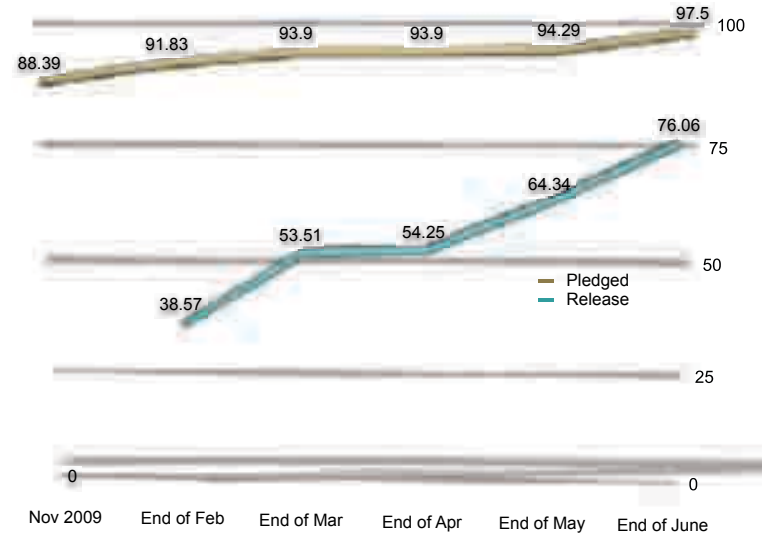
million was released to INGOs, 22 per cent or US\$10.91 million released to UN agencies, 19 per cent or US\$9.67 million released to the Government, 16 per cent or US\$8.09 million had been implemented directly by donors. (However, these figures were likely to change once all the funds are released to implementing partners.) Three trust funds received funding from the conference. The Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund (LIFT) received US\$23.3 million, Health PONREPP received US\$3.09 million and World Bank GFDRR received US\$0.88 million.

Out of the total amount pledged, US\$35.02 was million allocated for livelihoods, US\$21.18 million for education, US\$12.60 million for health, and US\$6.71 million for WASH. Shelter remained the most under-funded sector, receiving only US\$3.35 million or 11 per cent of the total called for by the Prioritised Action Plan. WASH received about 41 per cent, livelihoods received more than 87 per cent, while health and

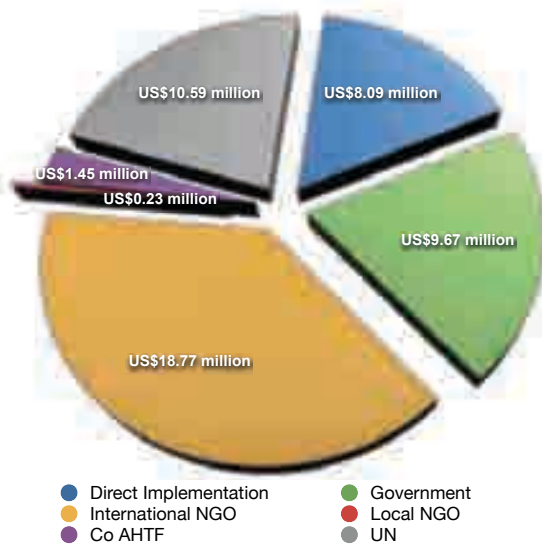
Percentage of Release upon Pledged



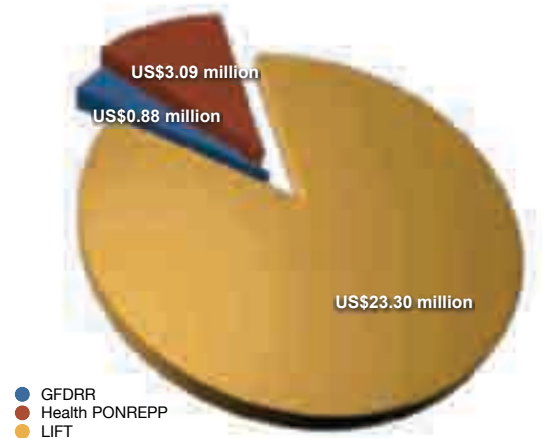
Progress of Funds Pledged and Released over Periods (in US\$ million)



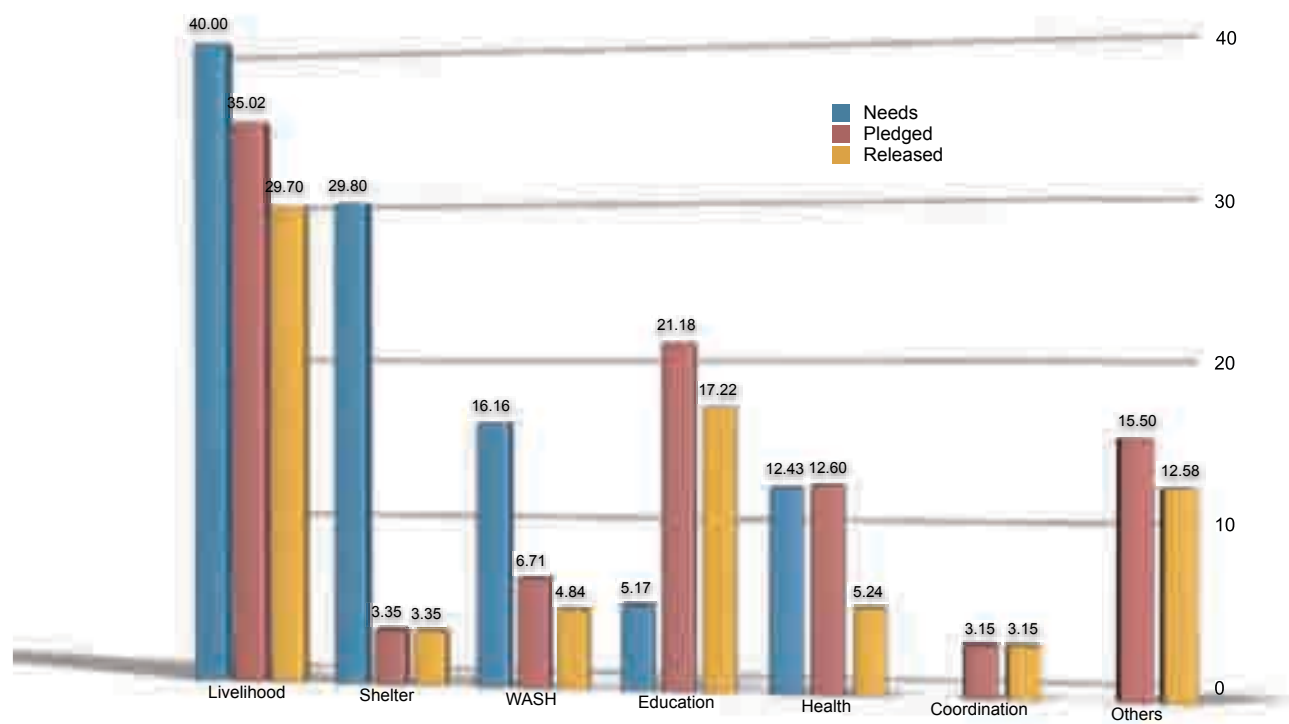
Funds Released to Implementing Partners



Status of Funds Released to Trust Fund



Pledged and Released by Sectors (in US\$ million)



Needs: Amount of funds needed to support each sector as stated in Prioritised Action Plan.

Released: Amount of funds that has already been disbursed from donors to trust fund or implementing partners.

Remaining Balance: Amount of funds that have not been released by donors

Pledged: Amount of funds promised by donors to support Prioritized Action Plan.

Other or Not Allocated: Funds that have not been allocated to any specific sector or already allocated to cross sectors

education received full support. US\$3.15 million was allocated for coordination and the remaining US\$15.50 million either had not yet been allocated or had been allocated to cross sectors such as DRR activities.

At the field level, implementation activities were under way. Under livelihood sectors, for example, GRET had distributed more than 12 metric tonnes (MT) of fertiliser and almost 5,000 livestock. IDE provided 1,800 MT of fertiliser and more than 800 MT of food, UNDP provided more than 25,000 bamboo plants, fruit trees and roadside trees, and established 80,000 nurseries. Under the shelter sector, IOM had built 1,020 shelters

while in WASH sectors, CARE for example, had constructed 12 community water ponds, Merlin has distributed water to 32 villages, Oxfam had built more than 500 household latrines and renovated 13 village water ponds, Save the Children had distributed portable water to 16 villages, World Vision renovated 37 ponds and distributed 6,000 water storage containers. In addition, the Embassy of Japan had constructed 20 schools and SDC had built three schools. 🇲🇲



(1)Nursery project in Myar Thar Wa village funded by Denmark, implemented by GRET. (2) Rain water collection tank in Boe Kone village funded by Australia and implemented by Save the Children. (3) Selected project site for shelter reconstruction in Pyi Taw Tar village. UN Habitat will replace this shelters with newly constructed shelters funded by New Zealand. (4) School-cum-cyclone shelter in Aung Hlaing village funded by Switzerland Government, implemented by SDC. (5) Hospital-cum-shelter at Pyin Sa Lu town funded by the Government of Indonesia through the Government of the Union of Myanmar . (6) School construction in Kyait Latt town funded and implemented by The Government of Japan. (7) Hospital construction in Daw Nyein village funded by the Royal Thai Government implemented by Thai Red Cross. (8) New Shelter at Chaung Twin village funded by the Government of Singapore, implemented by IOM.



Chapter Seven

Operationalising the ASEAN Humanitarian Task Force

Following the establishment of the AHTF at the Special Meeting of ASEAN Foreign Ministers on 19 May 2008 in Singapore, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, as the Chair of AHTF, proposed the immediate establishment of an office in Yangon in view of the need for ASEAN to be fully engaged in coordinating the ASEAN-led mechanism for survivors of Cyclone Nargis. The establishment of the AHTF Coordinating Office represented a watershed in ASEAN's history because it was the first field office to be set up and operate outside of the ASEAN Secretariat in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The primary objectives of the AHTF Coordinating Office were to: (i) provide coordinating support to the AHTF; (ii) strengthen the TCG coordination structure; (iii) facilitate credible assessment, planning and monitoring; (iv) secure donor support for the recovery process; (v) bring the ASEAN recovery programmes closer to the people; (vi) coordinate

recovery efforts with the Government's development strategy; and, (vii) document and institutionalise the post-Nargis experiences into regional mechanisms under the AADMER.

Opening a field office, with limited resources, posed an unfamiliar and unprecedented challenge. The AHTF Coordinating Office managed to overcome obstacles and was operational until the end of the AHTF mandate in July 2010. Over the two years it existed, the Coordinating Office supported several key achievements in the post-Nargis effort, namely: the establishment of TCG and its coordination structure, including the RCC, RF and Recovery Hub Offices; the launch of the PONJA, PONREPP and PONREPP Prioritised Action Plan; the carrying out of Periodic Reviews and Social Impact Monitoring; mobilising resources through the Post-Nargis and Regional Partnership Conference; and, documenting and institutionalising good practices into AADMER.

Children from Aung Chan Thar Village, Bogale in May 2010. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office



TCG Members discuss the conduct of the Post-Nargis Joint Assessment. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

Much more than bricks and mortar out of which it was constructed, the office was a tangible demonstration of ASEAN's ability to respond to a natural disaster in one of its Member States and its dynamic capacity to meet the emergency needs of a Member State in a sustained and successful manner.

Operational Framework

The Coordinating Office's operational framework was characterised by two distinct phases. Phase one focused on managing relief and early recovery immediately after the disaster while phase two focused on managing momentum during recovery.

Managing Critical Time: Relief and Early Recovery

The two immediate challenges in facilitating assistance coming into Myanmar during this period were: (i) operationalising the ASEAN-led coordinating mechanism; and, (ii) producing credible assessment, planning and monitoring. Failure to overcome these two immediate challenges could have impeded the effective distribution and utilisation of international assistance for the survivors of Cyclone Nargis.

(i) Operationalisation of the coordinating mechanism

One of the most significant operational challenges for the Coordinating Office was setting up and operationalising the mechanism for the ASEAN-led coordination to facilitate the effective distribution and utilisation of incoming international



Staff welcoming a monk at the Office Blessing Ceremony, 5 December 2009. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

assistance for the survivors of Cyclone Nargis. The objective was to put in place an effective coordination mechanism that ensured robust participation from the Government and international community. This objective was achieved by:

1. A Yangon-based TCG comprising representatives from ASEAN, the Government of Myanmar, as Chair of the TCG, and the UN.
2. Establishing field-based hub offices as the TCG's coordinating forum at the field level, working closely with the Government, UN and humanitarian agencies.
3. Establishing a Yangon-based RCC as the operational arm of TCG in management of recovery coordination.

The Coordinating Office's tasks were:

1. To obtain support from ASEAN, Government and international community for the establishment of the above agreed coordination mechanisms.
2. To facilitate coordination at the TCG and field levels.
3. To create channels of communication allowing ASEAN, the Government and international community to discuss issues and challenges in the pursuit of solutions.

(ii) Facilitating credible assessment, planning and monitoring

Following the ASEAN-UN Pledging Conference, there was a tremendous need to have a comprehensive assessment of the situation on the ground. A sound planning document as well as monitoring reports were also required to optimise the effectiveness of aid delivery. This was achieved by the issuance of:

1. PONJA
2. PONREPP
3. Periodic Review I and II
4. Social Impact Monitoring I and II



The tasks of the Coordinating Office were:

1. To provide coordination for the assessment, planning and monitoring exercise, and facilitate convergence of relevant parties;
2. To identify and analyse each party's interests and engage them in regular coordination meetings;
3. To ensure credibility of the assessment and monitoring exercise by working together with competent agencies and organisations to provide technical inputs to the exercise.

Managing Momentum: Recovery Phase

The AHTF Coordinating Office played dual roles in ensuring that the ASEAN-led coordinating mechanism facilitated the effective distribution and utilisation of incoming international

assistance for the survivors of Cyclone Nargis. These dual and intertwining roles included institutional networking; and, strengthening operational coordination.

Institutional Networking

At the institutional networking level, the objective was to create an institutional environment conducive to facilitating the effective distribution and utilisation of incoming international assistance for the survivors of Cyclone Nargis. This was achieved by:

1. maintaining momentum, raising awareness and facilitating wide organisational support for the post-Nargis relief and recovery effort.
2. maintaining communication and promoting understanding with high-level Myanmar officials on the important role the Government had in the success of the post-Nargis recovery effort.



Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of ASEAN to Post-Nargis Recovery Dr William Sabandar (third right) gave a remark before a Minute of Silence in commemoration of Nargis-affected people at Coordinating Office for ASEAN Humanitarian Task Force on 3 May, 2010. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

The AHTF institutional networking team developed close ties with all stakeholders, from the international community to the Government of Myanmar. The tasks of the AHTF institutional networking team were to:

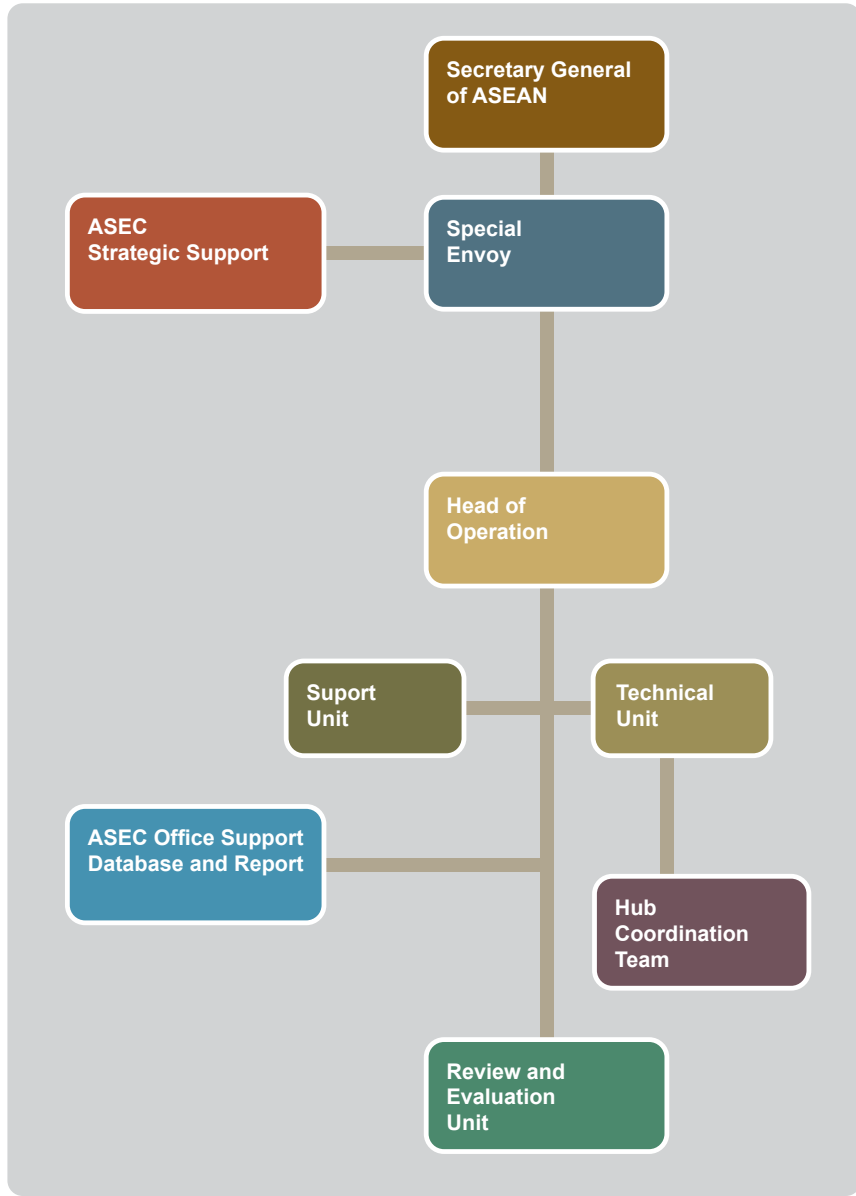
1. identify institutional issues related to post-Nargis recovery.
2. brainstorm strategies to promote the recovery process with donors, international stakeholders, UN agencies, I/NGOs and Government of Myanmar.
3. maintain linkages with ASEAN Member States, AHTF and TCG members.
4. maintain close communication with the Government.
5. advocate problem-solving at the country level.
6. prepare reports and lessons learned from the post-Nargis operation for distribution to the wider international development network.

Strengthening Operational Coordination

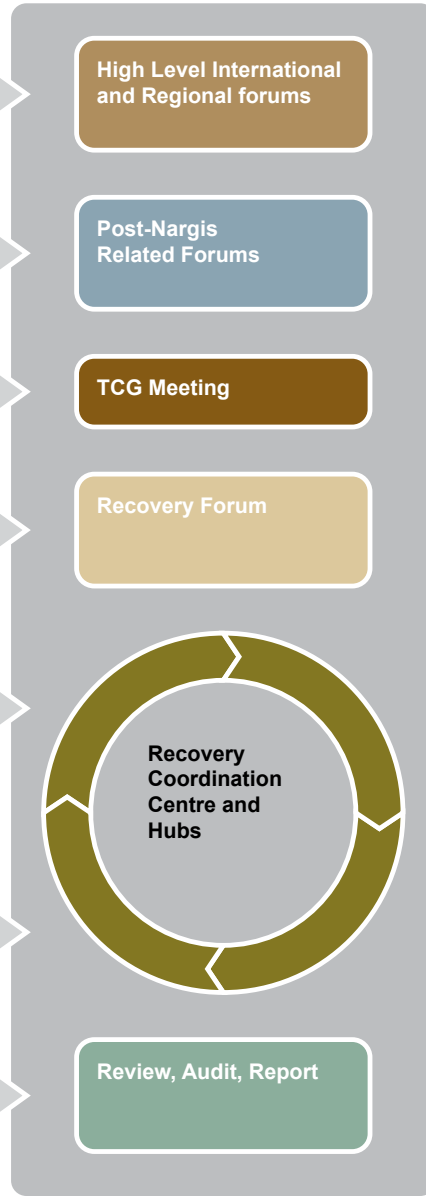
At the operational coordination level, the objective was to create an effective institutional arrangement for the implementation of recovery efforts, from policy development to programme implementation at the hub level. This was done by:

1. strengthening and facilitating coordination at the TCG level.
2. promoting the Recovery Forum, which enabled all stakeholders to contribute in strategic dialogue with regard to the implementation of the recovery process.
3. strengthening operation of the RCC, including budget facilitation and hub coordination, when required.
4. facilitating of funding for the recovery process.

Structure of AHTF Engagement



Post-Nargis Recovery Coordination





Mr Dhannan Sunoto, Director of the Cross-Sectoral Cooperation Directorate of ASEAN Secretariat meets AHTF Partners in Yangon. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

5. facilitating the Periodic Reviews, SIM audit and report on the recovery effort.
6. effective operation of RCC and Recovery Hubs.

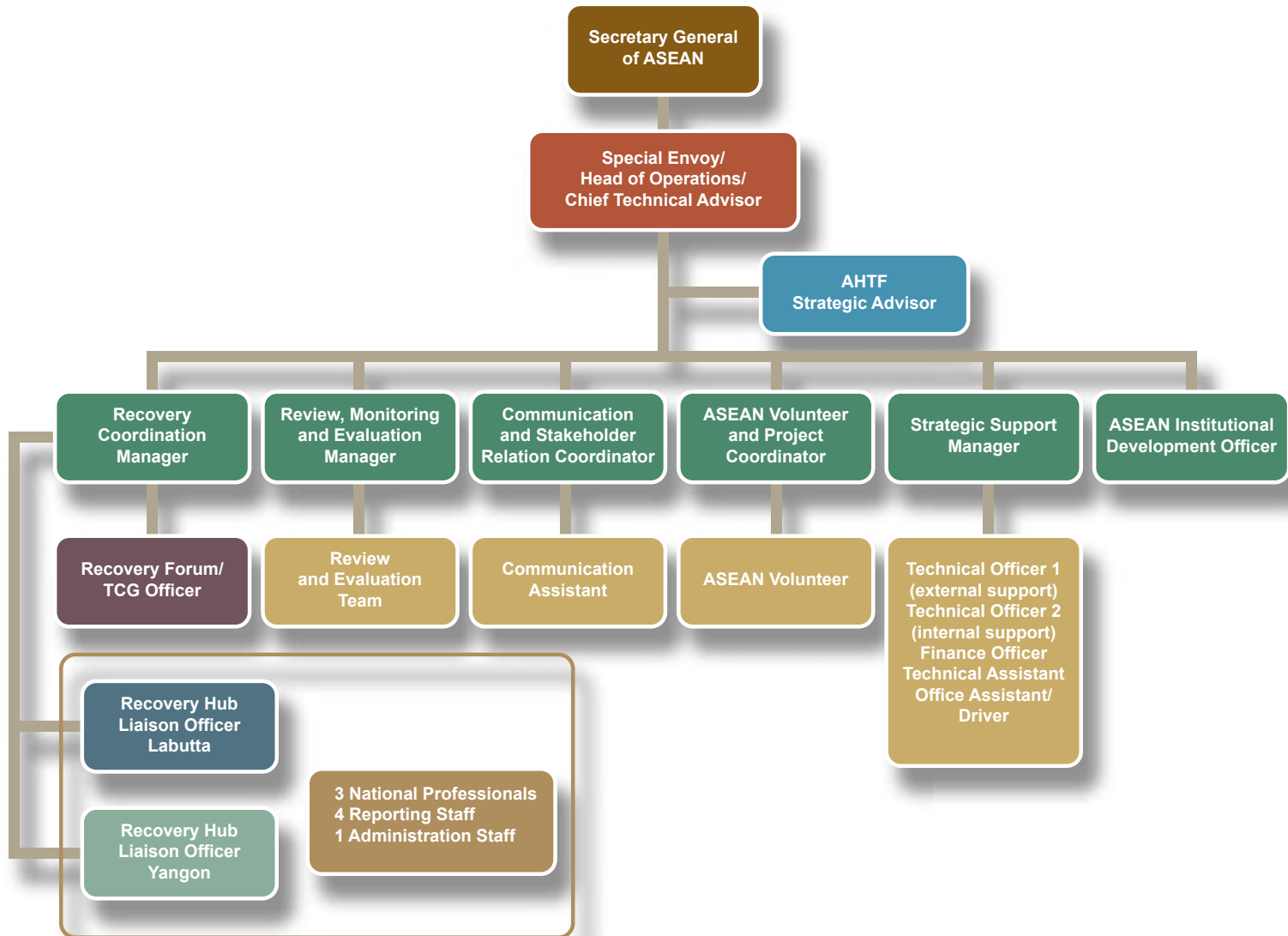
Based on the strategy laid above, the structure of the AHTF Coordinating Office was divided into two main elements: (i) divisions to support institutional networking; and, (ii) those to support operational coordination.

Organisational Structure

Ms Adelina Kamal, ASEAN Secretariat's Head of Environment, Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance Division, was first tasked with setting up, leading and managing the day-

to-day operations of the Coordinating Office of the AHTF in Yangon. Supported by the ASEAN Secretariat, she played a key leadership role in launching ASEAN's post-Nargis response in Myanmar, including leading the ASEAN-ERAT, coordinating the PONJA implementation, rolling out the plans for the conduct of Periodic Review, SIM and PONREPP and working directly with the Secretary-General of ASEAN in articulating details and practicalities of the ASEAN-led coordinating mechanism, which included the TCG, The Advisory Group and the AHTF Coordinating Office.

On 25 June 2008, the Secretary-General of ASEAN appointed Dr Anish Kumar Roy, then the Director of the Bureau for Resources Development at the ASEAN Secretariat, as Special



Representative in Yangon to liaise and coordinate with high-level officials from the Government, ASEAN Member States and the international humanitarian community in Myanmar. Dr Roy and Ms Kamal took turn in managing the AHTF Coordinating Office and in serving as TCG members until the arrival of Dr William Sabandar.

In the first few months of its operation, the ASEAN Secretariat deployed its staff on a rotational basis to operate the Coordinating Office and sustain the AHTF and TCG operations in the field. This was necessary since the setting up of the office was done in an emergency situation. Partners, such as UNDP, World Bank and the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre (ADPC) provided additional experts and staff to help strengthen the operations of the Coordinating Office. For future disasters, ASEAN may need to consider having a surge capacity in the form of a pool of experts and trained staff that can be deployed quickly in the event of a large-scale disaster.

Following the decision of ASEAN Foreign Ministers in February 2009 (which later was approved by the ASEAN Leaders during the ASEAN Summit in March 2009) to extend the mandate of ASEAN-led coordination mechanism to July 2010, the Secretary-General of ASEAN decided to seek for additional support from the Member States to increase the profile and benefits of the AHTF operation in Myanmar. After a series of consultations and negotiations with the Government of Indonesia, Dr Surin appointed Dr William Sabandar, the former Director of post-tsunami recovery of Nias Islands (BRR) in Indonesia as the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of ASEAN for the AHTF Coordinating Office. In addition to this role, Dr Sabandar was named the Head of Operations and ASEAN Chief Technical Advisor for post-Nargis recovery. Dr Sabandar commenced his duties in Yangon on 1 May 2009.

As the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr Sabandar's main task was to represent the Secretary-General in communication with the Government of Myanmar, the

international community and other humanitarian community engaged in the post-Nargis recovery. As the Head of Operations and ASEAN Chief Technical Advisor, he was responsible for leading the daily operation of the Coordinating Office in Yangon. ASEAN Secretariat's Cross-Sectoral Cooperation Directorate under the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Department of the ASEAN Secretariat provided strategic support to the Coordinating Office.

The Coordinating Office was set up in May 2008 at the Chatrium Hotel. The expansion of the ASEAN post-Nargis operation necessitated the relocation of the office in December 2010 to No. 79 Taw Win Road in Dagon Township, Yangon. The cost-effective move enhanced functionality because resources could be pooled and there was enough space to accommodate all staff members to work in the same office.

The organisational structure of the AHTF Coordinating Office evolved as circumstances warranted to meet the changing needs of the post-Nargis relief and recovery effort and to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of ASEAN's response. At the end of its operation, the Coordinating Office consisted of the Head of Operations and was supported by seven operational units:

1. Strategic Support Unit
2. Technical Unit that includes Recovery Coordination Centre and Hub Coordination Team
3. Review and Evaluation Unit
4. ASEAN Volunteers and Project Management Unit
5. Communication and Stakeholder Relations Unit
6. Strategic Advisory Unit
7. Institutional Development Unit

Citizens of Myanmar made up the majority of the staff of the Coordinating Office and residents of ASEAN Member States filled several staff positions.

Funding Sources

Name of Funds	Donors
ASEAN Cooperation fund	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. ASEAN staff and Friends 2. Asian Development Bank 3. Nippon Foundation 4. The Government of the Philippines 5. The Government of Timor Leste 6. Private Sector 7. Individual donors
ASEAN Development Fund	ASEAN Member States
ASEAN World Bank Humanitarian Fund	Sweden, Norway, Australia
ASEAN Australia Humanitarian Project	Australia
ASEAN Norwegian Humanitarian Account	Norway
ASEAN World Bank Humanitarian Fund (2 Phase)	Sweden
ASEAN Australia Humanitarian Project (2 Phase)	Australia

Funding Sources

The ASEAN-led coordinating mechanism was funded through several sources; namely, the ASEAN Cooperation Fund; ASEAN Development Fund; ASEAN–Australia Humanitarian Project (Phase I, II); ASEAN–World Bank Humanitarian Fund (Phase I, II); and ASEAN–Norwegian Humanitarian Account.

Closing Office and Handover

While, many international agencies supported extending the AHTF until December 2011, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers

confirmed their decision in Da Nang, Viet Nam on 13 January 2010 that the mandate of AHTF would end by July 2010.

This decision signalled the end of the AHTF operation, necessitating the closure of the AHTF Coordinating Office, which proved as challenging as opening it since running an operation like the ASEAN-led coordination mechanism is akin to flying a plane in that the most critical time is take-off and landing. Preparations to close down the office began in February 2010.

1. Actions leading up to the AHTF completion in

July 2010. The AHTF Coordinating Office marked the successful completion of the AHTF in July 2010 with the following actions:

- a. Systematic handover of the coordination function of the AHTF to the MoSWRR, the Ministry designated to be in-charge of the post-Nargis coordination after July 2010;
- b. Completion of aid monitoring of the delivery of the Post-Nargis and Regional Partnership Conference commitments;
- c. Completion of the ASEAN Volunteers' projects;
- d. Completion of the Periodic Review IV and Social Impact Monitoring (SIM) III;
- e. Joint visit of the ASEAN Chair, the Secretary-General of ASEAN and the Under Secretary-General of the United Nations Myanmar to report to the Prime Minister of Myanmar and to mark the completion of the TCG mandate;
- f. Agenda of the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting (AMM) in Ha Noi on 19–20 July 2010 included concluding the mandate of AHTF and TCG.

2. Office liquidation completed by 31 July 2010, included but was not limited to:

- a. Resolving of financial matters including remaining balance, payments, settlement of outstanding issues related to rights and liabilities of the AHTF Coordinating Office;
- b. Liaising with relevant Ministries to resolve issues if any;
- c. Return/transfer of AHTF assets to donor designated recipients and/or ASEAN Secretariat;
- d. Handover of documents to ASEAN Secretariat, and,
- e. Audit.

Since the 42nd ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in July 2009 in Phuket recommended that ASEAN “document and use the good practices from post-Nargis operations to strengthen

the implementation of the ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response (AADMER)”, the ASEAN Secretariat would continue to supervise the documentation and institutionalisation process until October 2010, including:

1. Completion of the project on support to Myanmar in the implementation of AADMER and Myanmar Action Plan in Disaster Risk Reduction (MAPDRR) in collaboration with the Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre;
2. Finalisation of the post-Nargis lessons learned and knowledge management to contribute to AADMER; and,
3. Convening of Lessons Learned Conference to disseminate post-Nargis knowledge and good practices to ASEAN Member States.







ASEAN Humanitarian Task Force Coordinating Office Staff with the Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN Dato' Misran Karmain during his visit to Yangon and the Ayeyarwady Delta, 28 June 2010. Photo by Khin Zaw, AHTF Coordinating Office

Chapter Eight

Lessons Learnt for ASEAN from the Post-Nargis Experience

Cyclone Nargis occurred on the eve of the birth of the ASEAN Charter, a critical juncture in the association's journey towards realising an ASEAN community by 2015. The ASEAN Charter, signed by the ASEAN Leaders on 20 November 2007, entered into force seven months after the Cyclone, on 15 December 2008. ASEAN's response to the disaster provided an opportunity for ASEAN to work towards achieving the goals of the ASEAN Charter—in bringing ASEAN closer to the people, in promoting a people-centred ASEAN, and in enhancing the well-being and livelihoods of the people of ASEAN. The AADMER is the regional disaster management framework for disaster risk reduction, preparedness, response and recovery that was put in place after the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami. ASEAN Foreign Ministers signed the document in July 2005 and

ASEAN Member States were in the process of ratifying AADMER when Cyclone Nargis struck on 2 and 3 May 2008. The agreement entered into force on 24 December 2009 and since then it has been legally-binding in Member States. ASEAN activated the Standard Operating Procedure for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations (SASOP) to provide emergency relief, situational updates, around-the-clock monitoring, and recommendations for action following the Cyclone. ASEAN's response to Cyclone Nargis was fully in line with the spirit and purpose of AADMER. The end of the ASEAN-led post-Nargis coordination is a good opportunity to reflect upon the best practices that could be incorporated into AADMER as lessons and tools for implementation.

One of the villagers who participates in a Community Mass Meeting at Kinwon Village, Pyapon. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office





One of PR II Emunerator conducts nutrition assessment. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

Government Leadership at the Highest Level is Key to Successful Disaster Response

Robust, high-level Government leadership is critical to the success of any disaster response, but especially in the case of large-scale disasters. The Government of Myanmar demonstrated strong leadership throughout the post-Nargis response, providing ASEAN, the UN and international partners with a powerful national counterpart to coordinate the delivery

of effective humanitarian and recovery assistance to affected communities.

National Disaster Response Agency

Myanmar's high-level natural disaster coordinating body, the NDPCC, was established in 2005 in accordance with the priorities of the Hyogo Framework for Action, with the specific objectives to: a) prevent or mitigate loss of human lives; b) prevent or mitigate losses in settlement and property of the

people; and, c) prevent or mitigate losses in State property. The Prime Minister of Myanmar chairs the NDPCC. The Vice Chair is Secretary 1 of the State Peace and Development Council and the Secretary of NDPCC is the Minister of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement. The NDPCC consists of 37 members, including ministers, chairpersons of State/Division Peace and Development Councils, and the mayors of Yangon and Mandalay as well as 10 sub-committees, including search and rescue, emergency communications, emergency shelter, health, and transport. Each sub-committee is chaired by a minister, who is entrusted with the implementation of policy in accordance with NDPCC guidelines. Myanmar also has State/Division, District/Township and Village Tract-level Disaster Preparedness Committees.

A key strength of the NDPCC, compared to other disaster management agencies in the ASEAN region, is that it is positioned at the highest-level of government. When Cyclone Nargis struck, the Government of Myanmar was able to respond swiftly because the high-level committee provided the level of leadership and coordination required. The response was rapid, with the NDPCC convening an emergency meeting on 3 May 2008 at 8:30 am at the Office of the Prime Minister in Nay Pyi Taw and assigning duties to the Central Committee and Sub-committees. Later that day, the Prime Minister, as Chair of the NDPCC, together with Commanders-in-Chief of the Air Force and Navy and Cabinet Ministers moved to Yangon to carry out, coordinate and supervise rescue and relief measures, and a Central Management Committee office was opened at Yangon Command.

Robust Government leadership continued following the decision of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers to establish the ASEAN-led coordinating mechanism for the post-Nargis response. Deputy Foreign Minister U Kyaw Thu was appointed Chair of the TCG, which provided an operational umbrella to facilitate and lead the post-Nargis effort. Two other high-ranking members of the Government also were also

appointed as members of the TCG. As TCG Chair, Deputy Foreign Minister U Kyaw Thu, later he was appointed as the Chairman of Civil Service Selection and Training Board, also chaired Recovery Forums, which were convened on three occasions to deliberate strategies and establish priorities for the post-Nargis recovery effort. Following the decision of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers at the conclusion of the AHTF and TCG mandate in July 2010, the Government assigned the MoSWRR as the ministry to be in charge of the post-Nargis recovery effort.

In sum, strong Government leadership helps ensure continuity throughout the recovery process and the smooth transition from one phase to another, from relief to early recovery, early- to medium-term recovery, and eventually to long-term development.

ASEAN-led Coordinating Mechanism on the Ground

At the Special Meeting of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers in Singapore on 19 May 2008, the ASEAN Foreign Ministers agreed to establish an ASEAN-led coordinating mechanism to facilitate the effective distribution and utilisation of incoming international assistance. To operationalise this mechanism, the Foreign Ministers set up the ASEAN Humanitarian Task Force for the Victims of Cyclone Nargis (AHTF) chaired by the Secretary-General of ASEAN. The launch of the AHTF was quickly followed by the establishment of a Yangon-based TCG, which managed the day-to-day operations of the coordinated effort.

The TCG was instrumental to the recovery effort, providing an operational umbrella to facilitate and lead the relief and recovery effort. Made up of nine members, with equal representation from the ASEAN, Myanmar Government and the UN, the TCG was carefully crafted as a smaller entity with the flexibility and agility to carry out the ASEAN-led coordination mandate on the ground through the swift resolution of challenges and elimination of obstacles that impeded progress.

Decisions made at the meetings were either implemented immediately or subsequently tabled at higher-level meetings within the ASEAN framework such as meetings of ASEAN Foreign Ministers.

The TCG was effective in fostering closer ties between the Government of Myanmar and the international humanitarian community (represented by the UN). Cooperating together, through the TCG, to support Nargis-affected communities, inspired trust and confidence. The success of the TCG demonstrated ASEAN's capacity, as a regional organisation, to serve as a bridge between the host Government and the international humanitarian community; and a nexus for the transfer of knowledge as well as local and regional expertise. The decision to launch the coordinating mechanism shortly after the disaster proved strategically important as well high-level policy was quickly translated into operational action in the field.

Testing AADMER in a Real-Life Post-Disaster Scenario

Cyclone Nargis provided an opportunity for ASEAN to challenge its collective response to a major disaster within the region. It marked the first time that the AADMER was activated and tested in a real-life post-disaster situation. ASEAN's leading role in coordinating the post-Nargis recovery effort in Myanmar will provide valuable inputs, lessons learned as well as tools and mechanisms to be further adapted and utilised in the ongoing implementation of AADMER.

ASEAN's post-Nargis experiences underline the need not only for Member States to be prepared for disaster but also to possess the knowledge and skills to respond. Methods and tools for assessing needs, damage and loss, community-based monitoring systems, aid tracking systems, and all the other tools and mechanisms required for post-disaster relief

A farmer from the Ayeyarwaddy Delta prepares paddy seeds for cultivation in May 2010. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

and recovery efforts ought to be readily available prior to disasters. Training for assessment teams should be conducted on a periodic basis and their capacity needs enhanced and supported so that they can be easily dispatched when the need arises. All the inputs, lessons learned, tools and mechanisms generated from post-Nargis humanitarian operations will be well-documented, developed and fully utilised to implement the AADMER, inform establishment of the AHA Centre, to be based in Jakarta, and support the Secretary-General of ASEAN in his new role as the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Coordinator.

Coordination at all Levels

The ASEAN-led coordination mechanism was managed at the national level under the auspices of the TCG with the collaboration of ASEAN, the Government of Myanmar and the UN. The TCG was instrumental to the recovery effort, providing an operational umbrella to facilitate and lead the relief and recovery effort. Made up of nine members, with equal representation from the ASEAN, Myanmar Government and the UN, the TCG was carefully crafted as a smaller entity with the flexibility and agility to carry out the ASEAN-led coordination mandate on the ground through the swift resolution of challenges and elimination of obstacles that impeded progress.

Decisions made at the meetings were either implemented immediately or subsequently tabled at higher-level meetings within the ASEAN framework such as meetings of ASEAN Foreign Ministers. As part of the TCG, ASEAN, the Government of Myanmar and the UN jointly managed the RCC in Yangon and coordination hub offices located in Bogale, Labutta, Pyapon and Yangon. The RCC, which had direct links and reporting lines to all of the townships implementing recovery activities, also served as a secretariat for the TCG, the RF and three Yangon Recovery Working Groups.





An elderly woman and his grandson from Taung Gone Village, Konyangone in June 2010. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office

The presence of Recovery Hub Offices in the field enabled the TCG to continue to oversee progress on the ground, allowing the TCG to work closely with local Government bodies. This promoted meaningful interaction on substantive recovery matters between the local Government and the international aid community at both the township and national levels. The hub offices were indispensable in providing strategic direction and also served as a conduit for the flow of information from the field to the national level, which created a space for issues to be discussed and problems to be solved quickly.

Through the efforts of hub offices, information that was shared was more comprehensive and timely, enhancing the coordination efforts of townships and Yangon. The streamlined (both vertically and horizontally) coordination framework allowed policy and technical matters relevant to recovery to be discussed and resolved. The hub offices also provided capacity building support to Government counterparts, particularly at the township level, where most decisions and discussions of direct relevance and importance to communities take place. This type of field coordination is very unique and may need to

be adapted, depending on local resilience and receptiveness to the international humanitarian system. Within the Nargis context, this coordination mechanism allowed ASEAN to function as an effective and trusted bridge between the host Government and the international humanitarian community, from the national level all the way down to the field.

To guide recovery efforts, the TCG developed the PONREPP, complementing the Government of Myanmar's reconstruction and rehabilitation plan. It outlines a three-year recovery strategy for the Nargis-affected areas. The PONREPP became fully operational with the establishment of the recovery architecture that included a RF, an ASEAN-UN unified RCC and Recovery Hub Offices. Following the extension of the TCG's mandate to July 2010, ASEAN and the UN worked diligently to maximise humanitarian activities in the Nargis-affected areas through the development of a PONREPP Prioritised Action Plan.

Pragmatic and Responsive Management Emphasising Function over Structure

The decision of ASEAN Foreign Ministers to establish the AHTF to facilitate the flow of international assistance to Myanmar, followed by the immediate creation of a field coordinating office in Yangon, helped ASEAN respond quickly and effectively to those in need. Keys to this were: (i) the leadership of the ASEAN Foreign Ministries and the Secretary-General of ASEAN who conveyed a sense of urgency in all aspects and phases of the operation; and, (ii) the commitment, professionalism and passion of the people in the organisation, who worked tirelessly to realise the ASEAN's objective to be on the ground helping the survivors of Cyclone Nargis.

The operating approach of the AHTF Coordinating Office, which stressed function over structure, helped the office respond flexibly and swiftly to the needs of the relief and recovery efforts. Working in a less bureaucratic environment that was oriented towards meeting the needs of the post-Nargis effort helped accelerate progress in achieving critical objectives.

Monitoring the Needs at All Stages

Effective assessment and monitoring is vital to guiding the coordination and implementation of aid programmes and ensuring that relief and recovery efforts reflect the needs of the affected community. The PONJA exercise, in addition to being the first post-disaster assessment led by a regional organisation, was also the first assessment ever to attempt to provide an integrated and sequenced approach to humanitarian needs, encompassing relief as well as early-, medium- and long-term recovery needs. The PONJA provided baseline information for review, monitoring and evaluation of relief and recovery efforts and incorporated DRR in its recommendations.

Periodic Reviews and Social Impact Monitoring were conducted to monitor humanitarian needs on the ground; assess the progress of recovery; evaluate the progress made according to indicators for health, education, livelihood, shelter and others; and, assess the socio-economic progress and the impact of aid on relief and recovery activities. The perception both of needs and progress by those affected by the disaster should be integral to monitoring. The affected population must be active participants in surveys and results must be grounded in meaningful consultation. These initiatives were part of wider efforts to ensure that the post disaster relief and recovery programmes were people-centred and focus squarely on the needs of the affected communities.

Managing Trust: From Efficient Mobilisation of Funds to Effective Implementation

The concerted effort of the AHTF, with the support of the international humanitarian community, to accelerate and monitor the implementation of PONAC pledges is an example of how "trust" was managed through the post-Nargis recovery effort. Through their pledges (95 percent of which were delivered by July 2010), donors demonstrated their

Deputy Secretary-General of ASEAN for ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, Dato' Misran Karmain inspects a rice-mill in Waigy Village, Kuyangone before handing it over to the community on 28th June 2010. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office



commitment not only to the overall post-Nargis effort, but also to accelerating the implementation of activities aimed at addressing the critical needs of Cyclone survivors. The process of managing funds through PONAC is indicative of the high level of confidence and trust the international community had in ASEAN to carry out the post-Nargis coordinating mission in Myanmar.

But it is not enough to monitor the funds at the pledges/commitment level. The flow of funds to implementing partners and, thus, to beneficiaries also ought to be tracked. A comprehensive and transparent aid tracking system is crucial to monitor aid pledges and disbursements from all sources. A good aid tracking system should deliver comprehensive financial information about humanitarian and recovery activities while strengthening the accountability of the implementing agencies. A comprehensive system of aid tracking helps build and maintain the trust of donors.

The system implemented for the post-Nargis operation is made up of several inter-connected parts, performing complementary functions that provide a detailed overview of the recovery progress. In particular, the RIAS, which tracks aid from PONAC donors and implementing partners, strengthened the efficiency and transparency of flows of aid.

ASEAN Volunteers Bring ASEAN Closer to the People

Through its AHTF Coordinating Office, ASEAN deployed 40 ASEAN volunteers from seven ASEAN Member States, including Myanmar, to implement six community-based early recovery projects in Nargis-affected areas. Most of the projects were implemented in partnership with local and international NGOs based in Myanmar. The ASEAN Volunteers Programme (AVP) underscores ASEAN's commitment

to strengthening the involvement of civil society, as active partners in bringing ASEAN closer to its people. The AVP in Myanmar yielded positive results, delivering humanitarian activities, rebuilding community livelihoods and strengthening community resilience. The programme promoted cultural and knowledge exchange among the volunteers and the communities where they worked; increased awareness about ASEAN; and, fostered capacity building among the ASEAN volunteers, villagers and the implementing partners.

The good practices and lessons learned from the AVP in Myanmar should serve as a benchmark for regional replication and the programme ought to be expanded through the creation of a roster of qualified ASEAN volunteers with specific skills and expertise that could be mobilised quickly in the event of a disaster in an ASEAN country. ASEAN volunteers in Myanmar served as young ASEAN Ambassadors at the community level, champions for DRR as well as agents of change and early recovery. This project could be replicated in other ASEAN disaster-affected areas.

Hand Over Responsibly

The end of the ASEAN-led post-Nargis coordination mandate does not signify the end of recovery efforts in Cyclone-affected communities; rather, the TCG has handed over responsibility for the recovery effort to the Government of Myanmar's MoSWRR. It is important that post-disaster efforts were handed over to a credible and capable authority that will coordinate the national recovery process towards the achievement of PONREPP objectives.

The two-year post-Nargis effort should be regarded as a springboard to address wider development since the recovery of Nargis-affected areas is complicated by a myriad of cross-cutting development issues. ASEAN must ensure it continues to cooperate with Myanmar in achieving its long-term development goals.

While the goal is for a seamless transition that maintains the momentum and effectiveness of humanitarian aid delivery, caution must be exercised to ensure that the Government's recovery and reconstruction plan is aligned appropriately with the PONREPP, which is oriented towards securing assistance from the donor community. Medium- and long-term recovery plans must have broad-based support from all stakeholders, affirm plainly-stated objectives; ensure that DRR is well integrated into the development planning process; and, be established and implemented in a timely fashion.

Transition from relief to recovery is rarely, if ever, a linear, straightforward process. The challenge, therefore, is to always be cognisant of the fact that whilst many will have embarked on a road to recovery, some outstanding humanitarian needs will persist well into the recovery period.

Disaster Risk Reduction Policies and Practices Produce More Reliant Communities

The aftermath of disasters like Cyclone Nargis in Myanmar provided an entry point to integrate DRR into relief and recovery programmes. Several studies have concluded that investing in DRR initiatives is more cost-effective than conducting post-disaster activities. DRR also is valuable because it encompasses a multi-hazard risk reduction approach to ensure sustainable development. The PONREPP identified five outcomes of implementing DRR in Nargis-affected areas, namely: enhanced engagement by communities in DRR measures; improved capacity to disseminate and act on early warning; strengthened locally-adapted mitigation measures in vulnerable areas; integration of disaster mitigation into current recovery and reconstruction efforts; and, improved preparedness, mitigation policies and response mechanisms among national and local institutions.

The focus on DRR in Nargis operations has spawned other successes, including the development of the Myanmar Action Plan on Disaster Risk Reduction 2009-2015 (MAPDRR) and the DRR working group; a regional Disaster Risk Management workshop; the incorporation of DRR elements in all ASEAN volunteer projects; capacity building training for Government officials and NGO workers; the development of township DRR plans; partnerships with various agencies with DRR expertise; and a public DRR campaign. Incorporating DRR in the post-Nargis humanitarian operation demonstrates ASEAN's full commitment to strengthening and mainstreaming DRR initiatives to create a disaster-resilient region, which is part of ASEAN's effort to build an ASEAN community by 2015. ASEAN should "strike the iron while it is hot" by working with partners to realise the concept of building back better, and promote DRR into the daily lives of the affected population so that they may better protect themselves in the event of future disasters.

Cyclone Nargis provided an opportunity for ASEAN to challenge its collective response to a major disaster within the region. It marked the first time that the AADMER was activated and tested in a real post-disaster situation. ASEAN's leading role in coordinating the post-Nargis recovery effort in Myanmar will provide valuable inputs, lessons learned as well as tools and mechanisms to be further adapted and utilised in the ongoing implementation of AADMER.

Coordination of Post-Nargis Recovery Programmes with the Government's Longer-term Development Strategy

ASEAN's regional mechanism provides not only wider but also in-depth understanding on the development context in terms of history, social and cultural endowment, geographical characteristics, and economic institutions of areas hit by the disaster. Therefore, the recovery plan and approach can more appropriately define "build back better" principles in the



Villagers from Kinwon Village, Pyapon repair their households. Photos by AHTF Coordinating Office

post-disaster recovery process that will suit the local context. Build back better approaches in the recovery process should not be developed in isolation from the country's or region's development context. It should be seen as a process of incorporating DRR into the existing development policy and programme of the affected country, which is shaped by its institutional context.

Having the facilitation role of regional bodies in the recovery programme will enable better involvement of and support from neighbouring countries while making use of their expertise and resources. For example, post-Nargis recovery in Myanmar can benefit from the recovery experience of tsunami-affected areas in Indonesia and Thailand. ASEAN has learned to shape

cooperation and partnership into schemes that are unique to its own characteristics and as such ASEAN is well positioned to effectively facilitate the exchange of knowledge, experience and expertise on DRR among countries in the region.

ASEAN's Post-Nargis Partnership: a Model for Future Collaboration

ASEAN made use of its active engagement and presence in Myanmar to establish and promote collaboration at all levels, with a myriad of partners. It was the first time for ASEAN to work closely with the UN at the operational level. From having no history of operational ties, ASEAN and the UN were able to coordinate, within a short period of time, a joint humanitarian





A Small Shop Owner from Saluseik Village, Labutta in February 2010. Photo by AHTF Coordinating Office.

response to one of the worst natural disasters in decades. Appreciating the magnitude of this success and building on it should be central to any future ASEAN–UN agenda. ASEAN has also been working closely with international financial institutions, International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and local and international NGOs.

The World Bank, in particular, supported the TCG’s efforts through ASEAN and provided technical assistance directly to ASEAN, as the Bank has no presence in Myanmar. The working arrangement, a regional organisation–led humanitarian effort, supporting the host Government, working closely with the UN, international financial institutions, and local and international NGOs, was innovative and unique.

ASEAN also actively partnered with civil society, including local and international NGOs, in project implementation as well as in helping bring ASEAN closer to its people. Such partnerships set the stage for further interaction and knowledge–sharing between ASEAN and civil society. ASEAN’s experience working closely with a variety of partners and humanitarian actors will inform ASEAN’s future approach and engagement in the area of disaster management, humanitarian assistance and beyond.

Conclusion

Cyclone Nargis provided an opportunity for ASEAN to challenge its collective response to a major disaster in a Member State. It was the first time that that AADMER was activated and tested in a real post–disaster situation providing valuable inputs, lessons learned as well as tools and mechanisms to be further adapted and utilised. The experiences helped ASEAN better understand the nature of humanitarian architecture after a major–scale disaster and how DRR initiatives can mitigate the impact of a disaster.

ASEAN’s post–Nargis experience also was an opportunity to strengthen partnerships with the Government of Myanmar, civil society, the international humanitarian community and their

associated networks. It was the first time for ASEAN to work so closely with the UN at the operational level in the coordination of a joint humanitarian effort in response to one of the worst natural disasters to strike the region in decades.

ASEAN’s experience working closely with a variety of partners and humanitarian actors will inform ASEAN’s future approaches to disaster management and humanitarian assistance.

Cyclone Nargis underscores the need not only for ASEAN to be prepared for disasters, but also that the association has the capacity and know–how to respond to them. All of the inputs, lessons learned, tools and mechanisms that resulted from ASEAN’s post–Nargis humanitarian operations should be documented, fine–tuned, if necessary, and used in the implementation of AADMER. They also will inform the establishment and operation of the AHA Centre, and will support the Secretary–General of ASEAN in his new role as the ASEAN Humanitarian Assistance Coordinator. The AHA Centre, to be established in Jakarta, Indonesia and the ASEAN Secretariat, should also be the repository of the good practices and lessons learnt.

Finally, the template that ASEAN established to lead the humanitarian effort following Cyclone Nargis with support from the Government of a Member State and working in concert with the UN and international and national NGOs was unique and innovative. As the ASEAN community intensifies its effort to enhance regional cooperation and integration, the lessons from the Nargis experience may help advance the goal of building an ASEAN community by 2015. 🇲🇻



Notes

1. The PONJA used an exchange rate of US\$1 = K1100.
2. Negotiating humanitarian access to cyclone-affected areas of Myanmar: A Review, Julie Belanger and Richard Horsey, Humanitarian Practice Network, December 2008.
3. The PONJA later found that approximately 380,529 people were sheltered in 419 relief camps in 29 townships in Yangon and Ayeyarwady Divisions at the height of the relief effort in mid-May)
4. See pages 104–108 of the PONJA for more about how the cyclone affected access to safe drinking water.
5. See pages 174–175 of the PONJA for more about how the cyclone affected the health of survivors.
6. Yves-Kim Creac'h and Lilianne Fan in "ASEAN's role in the Cyclone Nargis response: implications, lessons and opportunities" published in the Humanitarian Exchange, December 2008, Number 41, <http://www.odihpn.org/report.asp?id=2978>

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

AADMER	ASEAN Agreement on Disaster Management and Emergency Response	IDRL	International Disaster Response Laws and Regulations
AAM	ActionAid – Myanmar	INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
ACDM	ASEAN Committee on Disaster Management	IOM	International Organisation for Migration
ACF	ASEAN Cooperation Fund	LIFT	Livelihoods and Food Security Trust Fund
ACTED	Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development	MAPDRR	Myanmar Action Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction
ADB	Asian Development Bank	MAS	Myanmar Agricultural Services
ADF	ASEAN Development Fund	MBCA	Myanmar Business Coalition on AIDS
ADPC	Asian Disaster Preparedness Centre	MES	Myanmar Engineering Society
AHA	ASEAN Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management centre	MIMU	Myanmar Information Management Unit
AHTF	ASEAN Humanitarian Task Force for the Victims of Cyclone Nargis	MoSWRR	Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement
AMM	ASEAN Ministerial Meeting	MRCS	Myanmar Red Cross Society
ASA	Aung Yadanar Social Association	MT	Metric Tonn
ASCC	ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community	NDPCC	National Disaster Preparedness Central Committee
ASEC	ASEAN Secretariat	NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations	PONAC	Post-Nargis and Regional Partnership Conference
AVP	ASEAN Volunteers Programme	PONAC	Post-Nargis Assistance Conference/Column
BBB	Build Back Better	PONJA	Post-Nargis Joint Assessment
BDA	Border Areas Development Association	PONREPP	Post-Nargis Recovery and Preparedness Plan
BRR	Bureau for Recovery and Reconstruction Agency	PR	Periodic Review
CBER	Community-Based Early Recovery	PROTRAC	Project Tracking
CBDRM	Community-Based Disaster Risk Management	PVA	Participatory Vulnerability Assessment
DALA	Damage and Loss Assessment	RCC	Recovery Coordination Centre
DMC	Disaster Management Committee	RF	Recovery Forum
DPDC	District Peace and Development Council	RH	Recovery Hub
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction	RHO	Recovery Hub Office
DRM/R	Disaster Risk Management/Reduction	RIAS	Recovery Information and Accountability System
ERAT	Emergency Rapid Assessment Team	SASOP	Standard Operating Procedure for Regional Standby Arrangements and Coordination of Joint Disaster Relief and Emergency Response Operations
FRWGs	Field Recovery Working Groups	SCDF	Singapore Civil Defence Forces
HFA	Hyogo-Framework for Action	SHG	Self-help Groups
IDE/M	International Development Enterprise – Myanmar	SIM	Social Impacts Monitoring
IDP	Internally Displaced People		

SPA	Serge Pun Association
SRC	Singapore Red Cross
TCC	Township Coordination Committee
TCG	Tripartite Core Group
TDPC	Township Disaster Preparedness Committee
TICA	Thailand Incentive and Convention Association
UN	United Nations
UNCC	United Nations Conference Centre
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination
UN-HABITAT	United Nations Human Settlements Programme
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian affairs
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
VDMC	Village Disaster Management Committee
VSC	Village Supervision Committees
VTA	Village Tract Assessment
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organisation
YRWGs	Yangon Recovery Working Groups

Government refers to the Government of the Union of Myanmar



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