

July 18, 2008

Dear Friends,

Two months have passed since Cyclone Nargis hit Myanmar bringing such extensive devastation and human suffering. It's truly with a thankful heart that I write this update (even as so much more remains to be done). Thanks to your generous giving (which has doubled since the report a month ago), and the self-less and courageous efforts of our local partners in Myanmar - who are getting into places the foreign aid workers are still blocked from – many lives have been touched and new hope instilled. From the US, Canada and New Zealand over \$207,400; from the UK nearly £70,000 [including £30,000 from South Asian Development Partnership]; and from India & Nepal over Rs. 210,000 has been collected and distributed among three main field partners. Thankfully one of our partners was able to make the way for Samaritans Purse to begin flying supplies into Yangon, and then for the first USAID flight. I'll let them speak for themselves in the following brief updates:



From 'Timothy' – a young Burmese leader currently living across the border in Mizoram (India), who just returned from a month of intensive survey and relief work in Myanmar.

"Thank you [to all] who have given to help us help our people. In the affected areas where our workers live we could:

- 1. Help rebuild 11 houses fully gone*
- 2. Help rebuild 20 houses half gone*
- 3. Purchase tin roofing for the Children's Home; now they can sleep in the dry and [their] health is better*
- 4. Get School admission for about 50 Children*
- 5. Rice, Oil & Salt distribution to about 120 Houses (about 600 people)*
- 6. 12 Field Workers have been helped with 100,000 Kyats to help feed those around them who come to their houses every day, and also to help in the rebuilding of their houses.*

"Few hours back I am back from Laputta Township, Irrawaddy Division, which is the most cyclone affected area. I am so shocked to see the reality even after nearly six weeks from the cyclone. People are suffering very very much. Two full days I have visited tens of villages. I was just crying both from my heart and tears coming down from my eyes.

Most of the villages have lost everything plus two third of the population are now gone forever. In some areas, only tens of people are left now out of thousands.... Some local refugee young people went with me. They know the local places. So we could visit even interior parts... The government has done very little for the people, in very few areas, especially in comparison to the need... Yet, our people are very afraid to say that the government did nothing for them.... almost all the cultivation lands are gone.

More than two third of the animals used for cultivations are also now gone. The left ones are very thin and weak. By God's grace, with all funds that we still had we could provide rice, oil and salt for nearly 200 houses in 9 villages. Let us do more... But now our fund is no more."



From Myanmar Christian Coalition for Cyclone Relief (MCCCR) – a coalition of Myanmar church leaders and donor agencies to coordinate the relief efforts, and now officially recognized by the Myanmar government.

During June your contributions helped them to:

- Provide food for about 30,000 families
- Get over 1000 children to school, and rebuild 1 school
- Rebuild 415 houses
- Rebuild 3 churches, a monastery, and a nunnery
- Provide 3000 bags of paddy seed (each bag plants 1 acre)
- Do some medical work through medical volunteers

There are two special trainings being organized by MCCCR in July:

In the 2nd week, to deal with the soil contamination (salinity) problem.

In the 3rd week, a Trauma Counseling Seminar



From 'Aung & Charity' – well-respected Myanmar church leaders at the fore-front of the relief effort.

"The trips into the Delta gave me really joy to be able to help, although I am very sad for the suffering people. Some villages have received aid from government, UN organizations, NGOs. But the need is so great. We need hands to join in this overwhelming task. These people need not only the material things but also the relationships that show love, care, hope and encouragement for them in their trauma. And for this the Lord has called us and caused us to respond with urgency."

PLEASE READ Charity's account of her recent trip to Laputta, one of the worst affected areas.

My heartfelt thanks to each of you for your partnership in this relief effort,

**Dr Cindy Perry, Senior Consultant
Development Associates Int'l, Himalayan Region**