



**After the storm: recovery, resilience reinforced**  
**Final evaluation of the Cyclone Nargis operation, 2008-2011**

This report presents the results of an evaluation of the Cyclone Nargis Operation of the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), 2008 - 2011.

All greenhouse gas emissions of 1,800 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e caused by the flights for this evaluation have been offset by Banyaneer.

Dedicated to the volunteers of Myanmar Red Cross,  
whose relentless efforts continue to make humanitarian work a reality.

**© International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Geneva, 2011**

Copies of all or part of this study may be made for noncommercial use, providing the source is acknowledged. The IFRC would appreciate receiving details of its use. Requests for commercial reproduction should be directed to the IFRC at [secretariat@ifrc.org](mailto:secretariat@ifrc.org).

The opinions and recommendations expressed in this study do not necessarily represent the official policy of the IFRC or of individual National Societies. The designations and maps used do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the International Federation or National Societies concerning the legal status of a territory or of its authorities. All photos used in this study are copyright of the IFRC except for those on pages 14, 21 and 23, who are copyright of MRCS.

Cover photo: IFRC

P.O. Box 372  
CH-1211 Geneva 19  
Switzerland  
Telephone: +41 22 730 4222  
Telefax: +41 22 733 0395  
E-mail: [secretariat@ifrc.org](mailto:secretariat@ifrc.org)  
Website: <http://www.ifrc.org>

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Executive summary</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>1. Overview: Cyclone Nargis operation</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Evaluation objectives and methodology</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. Relevance and appropriateness</b>	<b>9</b>
3.1 Delivery of community needs	10
3.2 Complementarity	10
3.3 Unanticipated consequences	11
<b>4. Quality</b>	<b>12</b>
4.1 Shelter	13
4.2 Livelihood	13
4.3 Health and PSP	14
4.4 Water and sanitation	15
<b>5. Effectiveness</b>	<b>16</b>
5.1 Target delivery	17
5.2 Adaptability	17
5.3 Participative planning and monitoring	17
5.4 Management effectiveness	18
5.5 Coordination effectiveness	19
5.6 Gender and DRR mainstreaming	19
5.7 Evaluation responsiveness	20
<b>6. Efficiency</b>	<b>21</b>
6.1 Adequacy of assigned resources	22
6.2 Smoothness of the operation	22
<b>7. Impact</b>	<b>24</b>
7.1 Impact on communities	25
7.2 Impact on the Myanmar Red Cross	26
<b>8. Accountability to beneficiaries</b>	<b>28</b>
8.1 Effectiveness of feedback channels	29
8.2 Responsiveness to community feedback	29

<b>9. Sustainability and connectedness</b>	<b>30</b>
9.1 Sustainable planning	31
9.2 Sustainability of results	32
9.3 Cross-sectoral integration	33
9.4 Connectedness to Myanmar Red Cross focal areas	33
9.5 Adequacy of the transition strategy	33
<b>10. Conclusion</b>	<b>35</b>
10.1 Lessons learnt	36
10.2 Recommendations	38
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>40</b>
A. Community survey results	41
B. Community survey questionnaire	45
C. Literature	47
D. Interview partners	48
E. Overview of previous reviews	49
F. Progress against objectives	50

# ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ASEAN</b>	Association of South-East Asian Nations
<b>CBHFA</b>	Community-based health and first aid in action
<b>CFW</b>	Cash for work
<b>CHF</b>	Swiss Franc
<b>CNO</b>	Cyclone Nargis operation
<b>DP</b>	Disaster preparedness
<b>DRM</b>	Disaster risk management
<b>DRR</b>	Disaster risk reduction
<b>ERU</b>	Emergency response unit
<b>GIS</b>	Geographical information system
<b>GoUM</b>	Government of the Union of Myanmar
<b>HCT</b>	Humanitarian Country Team
<b>IASC</b>	Inter-agency standing committee
<b>IFRC</b>	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
<b>IO</b>	International organization
<b>KAP</b>	Knowledge, attitude and practice
<b>MMK</b>	Myanmar Kyat
<b>Mio</b>	Million
<b>MRCS</b>	Myanmar Red Cross Society
<b>NGO</b>	Non-governmental organization
<b>PHAST</b>	Participatory hygiene and sanitation transformation
<b>PNS</b>	Participating National Society
<b>PONJA</b>	Post-Nargis Joint Assessment
<b>PONREPP</b>	Post-Nargis Recovery and Preparedness Plan
<b>PSP</b>	Psycho-social support
<b>SBDRM</b>	School-based disaster risk management
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for the social sciences
<b>TCG</b>	Tripartite Core Group
<b>ToR</b>	Terms of reference
<b>VCA</b>	Vulnerability and capacity assessment
<b>VTA</b>	Village tract assessment
<b>VTRC</b>	Village Tract Recovery Committee
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Program
<b>UNICEF</b>	United Nations Children's Fund
<b>UN OCHA</b>	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
<b>USD</b>	US Dollar
<b>2iC</b>	Second-in-command (leader of the township Red Cross brigade and highest-ranking volunteer of an MRCS branch)



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cyclone Nargis operation implemented by the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) between 2008 and 2011 successfully contributed to the recovery of communities across 13 townships that had been severely affected by the disaster that occurred on May 2nd and 3rd, 2008. As this report shows, MRCS and IFRC managed to provide relief and recovery against substantial challenges - difficult access for international staff, initial weaknesses of MRCS, and the sheer scale of destruction. The experience of the operation and instrumental support of the IFRC have led to a significantly more capable MRCS. As the operation has wound down, the present and future challenge is for MRCS to sustain its recent capacity gains and to grow further - in order to serve vulnerable communities even better in future.

Based on the review of earlier reports and programme documents, qualitative research, and a community survey, this final evaluation analyses the operation along seven criteria and provides key lessons learnt and recommendations. "After the storm" sets out by setting the context - describing the immense destruction caused and the response operation that ensued. To be able to deliver relief and recovery programmes effectively, the Cyclone Nargis operation saw the establishment of nine operational hubs that became its cornerstone. Through close collaboration with township branches and IFRC field offices, and leadership and support from MRCS headquarters and IFRC, the operation delivered programmes in shelter, livelihood, health, PSP, and water/sanitation. With a volume of CHF 68.5 Mio, the operation assisted some 100,000 households to cope, rebound and regain their livelihoods.

The delivered programmes were generally found to have been relevant and appropriate: community-based assessments, a strong involvement of beneficiaries in implementation and effective feedback meant that the assistance provided was kept in line with the most urgent needs of communities. MRCS/IFRC efforts complemented efforts of other humanitarian actors, with whom effective coordination mechanisms had been maintained throughout the operation. In spite of the restrictive access to international staff and a three-month period during which most international staff were banned, the operation managed to continue without major interruptions.

The quality of most delivered products was adequate - where quality problems were identified (e.g. early road construction, ferro-cement tanks), adequate actions were implemented to rectify these issues. While international standards such as SPHERE played a minor role in day-to-day operations, quality assurance and monitoring was generally effective. In some cases however, in particular in the water/sanitation sector and to a lesser extent in construction, limitations in available human resources led to imperfect or delayed identification of quality issues.

By and large, the Cyclone Nargis operation proved to be effective: most of the set targets were reached - by late May 2011, roughly three quarters of targets had been fulfilled to at least 80%. The nine hubs that had been set up as the operational cornerstone proved to be hugely effective and are seen as the most viable option for the operation's management, given that IFRC sub-delegations were not feasible and that the scale of the operation was grossly in excess of the capacity of existing

township branches. However, the establishment of hubs brings about challenges to the relation with township branches and overall sustainability - in future, they should thus be only established in after very large-scale disasters. For small and medium-sized response operations, the reinforcement of township branches is preferable. In the Cyclone Nargis operation, issues such as latent conflicts between branches and hubs were carefully managed, and a smooth transition of responsibilities facilitated.

The operation has created a significant impact on both the target communities and MRCS. Generally, communities are seen to be healthier, better off and better prepared for future hazards than they would have been without the support of MRCS and IFRC. While solid and positive impact-related data exist only for the health sector, a wide range of indications justify the assessment of a positive trend due to the overall operation. For instance, 89% of survey respondents express that the operation has had a great or very great positive influence on their economic situation. 86% say that they feel better prepared for future disasters.

MRCS has experienced several significant improvements in capacity and procedures. New departments were established, assets added, procedures introduced, and volunteers trained. IFRC has provided instrumental advice towards these immense gains. The immediate task for MRCS is to retain volunteers and knowledge and to sustain its capacity gains.

Accountability to beneficiaries came as a new concept to MRCS but has been fully embraced; deliberate efforts were made to provide this accountability to communities. However, the letterbox system introduced as a feedback channel was little used, and community meetings and volunteers were the most effective channels. Having identified this crucial role of volunteers, MRCS should aim to sensitize them further for their role as a go-between of community and MRCS management.

Throughout the operation, conscientious efforts were made to facilitate sustainability: the close involvement of communities and the requirement of financial or in-kind contributions of beneficiaries are seen as crucial in having facilitated a strong sense of ownership. Low-tech solutions have been chosen that can be maintained by beneficiaries (maintenance committees have been established), and most survey respondents express that they feel confident in maintaining their new assets. MRCS has Red Cross posts and a large number of well-trained and experienced volunteers and enjoys a positive image in target communities. The closure of hubs and the transition of responsibilities to township branches appears to have proceeded smoothly.

Thus, there exists a sound basis for achievements to be sustained. However, much will depend on the MRCS headquarters' future efforts to provide continued support and guidance to its branches. If it can provide this support, if it upgrades its volunteer management to retain the many well-trained volunteers, and if it can capitalize on its improved image through fundraising, the legacy of the Cyclone Nargis operation will be tremendous and may be seen as a step towards MRCS's expressed goal of approaching the characteristics of a well-functioning national society.

For more detailed notes on lessons learnt and recommendations, refer to pages 45-48. The numbers behind each lesson learnt are cross-references to paragraphs with corresponding findings.

## Key lessons learnt

- A. Restricting the focus of the operation to an ambitious yet achievable scope is crucial.**  
[→29-30]
- B. Providing assistance holistically to communities is likely to have greater impact than wide and sparse delivery to individual households.**  
[→31, 80, 101-102]
- C. Myanmar Red Cross is well-positioned to deliver livelihood and water/sanitation programmes that create an impact.**  
[→45-47, 52-55, 99]
- D. VTRCs are generally effective bodies in participatory planning, organizing of community affairs, and building of resilience.**  
[→61-62, 73, 101, 114-120]
- E. A high degree of participatory planning and implementation facilitates local ownership and sustainability.**  
[→114-135]
- F. Volunteers are the most effective intermediary between communities and MRCS management.**  
[→62, 103, 107-120]
- G. Hubs are an effective instrument for the management of large-scale operations, especially when local branch capacities are weak.**  
[→63-66]
- H. Having adequate organizational structures and procedures ready is essential for timely and effective emergency response and recovery operations.**  
[→54, 85-87]
- I. Integration between sectors and respective departments facilitates efficiency and effectiveness in planning and implementing an operation.**  
[→90, 107, 136-139]



## Key recommendations

### 1. Focus.

- 1.1 Focus on the stringent implementation of the MRCS Strategic Plan 2011-2015 to raise organisational capacity. Review implementation at least annually.
- 1.2 After future disasters, align the scope and volume of the MRCS response with the organisational capacity in the affected area.

### 2. Sustain.

- 2.1 Systematically record and share the experiences gained in the Nargis operation.
- 2.2 Sustain the trained volunteers and their knowledge and retain the expertise of former hub staff.
- 2.3 Encourage and support VTRCs to continue their role in community development.

### 3. Open up.

- 3.1 Share your plans and achievements regularly with all relevant government units.
- 3.2 Consider opening up to collaboration with other actors.
- 3.3 Aim to attract funding of corporations and business associations.

### 4. Build further.

- 4.1 Improve volunteer management further.
- 4.2 Further integrate the work of MRCS departments.
- 4.3 Further improve vertical communication and support to branches.
- 4.4 Develop disaster response capacities further.

# INTRODUCTION



More than three years have passed since Cyclone Nargis made landfall in Myanmar, bringing immense destruction, death and tragedy to the people that lived on its path.

More than three years have passed during which families and communities struggled to cope with their loss, to rebuild their homes, to recover their livelihoods.

More than three years have passed during which the Red Cross assisted them in their efforts, delivering swift relief and large-scale support for recovery.

This report <sup>1</sup> evaluates this assistance provided through the Cyclone Nargis operation (CNO) of the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). “After the storm” analyses how target communities were able to recover and, in its course, become more resilient towards future hazards. This positive description is not to say that the operation was void of problems - in fact, many substantial challenges had the potential to hamper its effectiveness and impact. But these challenges were largely identified and addressed - leading this report to conclude that the Cyclone Nargis operation was well-managed and successful in delivering what was most urgently needed.

The analysis is based on four types of sources: the key operational documents (proposals, activity plans, monitoring reports, programme updates); external reviews such as the PNS review and the mid-term review; qualitative research tools such as key informant interviews, focus group discussions and transect walks; and a quantitative community survey amongst 232 affected villagers.

With the relief phase extensively analyzed by previous reviews, the core focus of this report rests on the recovery phase. While the report considers the achievements and challenges of all sectors, its main structure follows the criteria set in the terms of reference for this evaluation. Note that the paragraphs in chapters 1-9 are numbered to allow for cross-referencing between lessons learnt and respective findings.

The first two chapters set the context, describing the damage caused by Cyclone Nargis, the overall response efforts, the structure and aims of the Cyclone Nargis operation (chapter 1), and the objectives and methodology of this evaluation.

Chapters 3-9 analyze the operation against the seven research criteria. Chapter three looks at the extent to which the operation’s targets and methods were relevant and appropriate. Chapter four focusses on the actual quality of products delivered by the shelter, livelihood, health and water/sanitation programmes, and issues related to quality assurance. The effectiveness of the operation is in the spotlight of chapter five, which analyzes various aspects such as target delivery, management set-up, and coordination. Chapter six follows with a view to efficiency - adequacy of assigned resources and the overall smoothness of the operation.

What difference did the operation make? Chapter seven answers this question by looking at the impact on target communities and organizational capacities of MRCS. Chapter eight follows with a view to the operation’s accountability to beneficiaries - a concept that was new to MRCS but that was taken up whole-heartedly. The analysis concludes with a chapter on the various aspects of sustainability.

What can MRCS and IFRC learn from their experience in the Cyclone Nargis operation? Which aspects should be repeated, strengthened, or avoided? The final chapter ten compiles a list of key lessons learnt and provides recommendations for future emergency operations and further strengthening of MRCS.

---

1. The evaluation was conducted in June and July 2011 and included a field trip to five townships in Ayeyarwady Division. The team consisted of Floyd Barnaby (International consultant, Kuala Lumpur), Phyo Wai Kyaw (national consultant, Yangon) and was supported by several drivers and interpreters. M. Fitri Rahmadana (Medan) provided the analysis of the community survey results. Additional research and report-writing was contributed by Patrick Bolte (Adelaide).



# 1. OVERVIEW: **CYCLONE NARGIS OPERATION**



- 1 Being a country exposed to floods, storms, landslides, earthquakes and cyclones, Myanmar has had to learn to live with these hazards throughout its history. But what struck the country on May 2nd 2008 turned out to be more damaging and deadly than anything in living memory.

### Cyclone Nargis

- 2 Having developed in the central Bay of Bengal three days earlier, Cyclone Nargis reached its peak strength of up to 215 km/h as it made landfall on May 2nd, 2008 in the Ayeyarwady Division. Moving in northeasterly direction, it subsequently also hit neighbouring Yangon Division, Bago Division and Mon State before it eventually subsided.
- 3 The cyclone's toll was catastrophic: Overall, 84,500 people were reported dead, 53,800 missing, and 19,300 injured. Out of the 7.35 Mio people in the 37 affected townships across the Ayeyarwady and Yangon Divisions, some 2.4 Mio were estimated to have been severely affected. An estimated 800,000 people were displaced. The Ayeyarwady Delta, known as the country's rice bowl, saw tremendous damage to its paddy fields - here, the effects of extreme wind had been compounded by a 3.7m tidal wave.
- 4 The FAO estimated that 63% of Myanmar's paddy fields had been impacted upon. Nargis hit as paddy farmers had been at the last stage of the dry season harvest, which accounts for 25% of annual production. The cyclone also caused widespread destruction of homes and infrastructure, including roads, jetties, water and sanitation systems, fuel supplies and electricity networks. A large number of water sources were contaminated and food stocks damaged or destroyed. Overall, it was estimated that Nargis caused USD 4 billion in economic losses (TCG 2008:19).

### The overall response

- 5 The Government of the Union of Myanmar (GoUM) took the lead in coordinating national efforts in establishing an Emergency Committee. National efforts were supported by the IASC country team, which co-ordinated the set-up of eleven clusters (IFRC convened the emergency shelter cluster). The initial assessment and response was hampered by difficult access: The physical terrain of the worst-hit areas - mostly sea with small inhabited islands - made the identification of people in need and the effective delivery of assistance challenging. In addition, the government was hesitant to grant access to international aid workers.
- 6 A key development was the establishment of the Humanitarian Task Force of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to lead and facilitate international efforts. On the ground, this task force was supported by the Tripartite Core Group (TCG), which consisted of GoUM, ASEAN and the United Nations (UN). This ASEAN-led mechanism provided a forum to foster cooperation and resolve issues affecting the efficient delivery of aid (Kauffmann/Krueger 2010:21).
- 7 Most of the life-saving activities were carried out by local actors prior to the arrival of international agencies. Myanmar Red Cross, monks, local businesses and organizations also raised funds and delivered aid to the affected areas.
- 8 The international community issued a flash appeal in mid-May 2008, which was revised to almost USD 482 Mio for the first year. Under the umbrella of the TCG, a Post-Nargis Joint Assessment (PONJA) was conducted, on the basis of which a three-year Post-Nargis Recovery and Preparedness Plan (PONREPP) was crafted in December 2008 to cover the transition from emergency relief to recovery needs.

## The MRCS/IFRC response

- 9 Around 300 MRCS volunteers - most of whom were themselves affected by the Cyclone - initiated first aid and provided support to displaced communities shortly after the cyclone had passed.
- 10 Two days later, IFRC allocated CHF 200,000 from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF). On May 6th, a preliminary emergency appeal of CHF 6.3 Mio was launched, followed by an emergency appeal on May 16th over CHF 52.9 Mio to assist 100,000 households over 36 months. This appeal was revised in July 2008 to CHF 73.9 Mio and down to CHF 68.5 Mio in March 2011. The appeal was fully covered.
- 11 Utilizing emergency stock pre-positioned in Myanmar, the relief operation was swift to deliver items desperately needed. Over the six months of the relief phase, the operation provided assistance to 100,000 households in relief, shelter, psychosocial support, and water and sanitation. More than 280,000 households received non-food items from the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement. MRCS engineers and contracted companies operated eleven water treatment plants, producing 107,000 liters per day for 35,000 beneficiaries. At the height of the operation, more than 2,000 MRCS volunteers were involved in the delivery of assistance. Nine operational hubs were set up to manage the response across 13 of the most affected townships.
- 12 Following comprehensive village tract assessments that utilized capacities of Red Cross volunteers and newly established Village Tract Recovery Committees (VTRC), in late 2008 a plan of action was crafted for the recovery phase. Modified several times, this plan sensibly focussed on community-based work rather than large-scale construction (i.e. of cyclone shelters that had been requested by GoUM). Recovery henceforth concentrated on four main sectors: shelter, livelihood, health, and water/sanitation, with PSP playing an ancillary role.
- 13 By May 2011, roughly three quarters of all targets had been fulfilled by at least eighty percent. 14,200 houses, 25 schools, 20 health stations and 100 Red Cross posts had been built and 225 community buildings rehabilitated. The livelihood sector, which had started with cash-for-work activities, evolved to a fully-fledged programme that supported the rebounding of more than 35,000 households through productive asset recovery, agricultural and small business support.
- 14 Health education directly reached out to more than 160,000 beneficiaries, while hygiene promotion was conducted amongst nearly 200,000 students and community members. 4,500 health volunteers were trained, and 24,000 mosquito nets distributed in an effort to reduce prevalence of malaria. 70,000 community members participated in PSP activities.
- 15 The water and sanitation sector achieved the construction of almost 37,000 latrines, 1,200 water tanks, 134 ponds and 350 wells. 490 ponds and 500 wells were also rehabilitated.
- 16 As the Cyclone Nargis operation winds down, hubs have been closed, and assets and responsibilities transferred to township branches. A comprehensive transition plan was followed through to facilitate that a stronger MRCS can continue serving communities throughout Myanmar.



## 2. EVALUATION **OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY**



## Objectives

- 17 The purpose of a final evaluation is two-fold: to deliver accountability to donors by identifying and/or verifying a programme's achievements, and to identify lessons learnt based on the programme's experience. This identification enables the replication of what went well and the modification of what did not.
- 18 This evaluation of the IFRC/MRCS response to Cyclone Nargis follows a series of reviews that have been conducted over the past three years (See appendix E). While it builds on the wealth of information contained in these reports, it goes beyond a mere synthesis of existing material: It reviews progress against objectives and looks at the actual impact the Cyclone Nargis operation has had.
- 19 The evaluation's main concern is with the recovery phase of the operation, during which around 72% of all funds were spent. The terms of reference (ToR) stipulate three key objectives of the evaluation:
1. To examine the extent to which the operation has and is achieving its goal, objectives and expected results related to the PoA from October 2008 and in the Nargis Recovery Programme Agreement 001 October 2009 and revision 002 March 2011.
  2. To assess key achievements, challenges and areas of success, as well as areas for improvement within the operation and make recommendations to replicate or improve and inform future programming. These recommendations must be realistic within the context of MRCS and the Federation's constitution and modus operandi.
  3. To identify lessons learnt and good practices for sharing - such lessons should be institutionalised for replication.
- 20 Seven evaluation criteria are set in the ToR, the research framework for this evaluation supplements them with 26 sub-criteria and guiding questions (see figure 1).

**Figure 1: Evaluation criteria, sub-criteria and guiding questions**

Criteria	Sub-criteria	Guiding question
<b>1 Relevance and appropriateness</b>	1.1 Delivery on community needs	To what extent did activities deliver the communities' most urgent needs?
	1.2 Complementarity	To what extent were activities in line or complementary to the priorities of other actors?
	1.3 Unanticipated consequences	To what extent were unanticipated consequences observed?
<b>2 Quality</b>	2.1 Actual product quality	Were delivered products (hardware and software) of suitable and appropriate quality?
	2.2 Standard compliance	Did implementation follow IFRC and other international standards?
	2.3 Quality assurance strategy	What was the programme's overall strategy for quality assurance and good practice?
	2.4 Actual quality assurance	To what extent was this strategy followed through?
	2.5 Problem-solving	In how far were identified quality issues rectified?
<b>3 Effectiveness</b>	3.1 Target delivery	To what extent have set targets and objectives been reached?
	3.2 Adaptability	To what degree was the CNO responsive to changing needs?
	3.3 Participative planning, monitoring	To what extent were communities involved in planning and monitoring?
	3.4 Management effectiveness	How effective was the overall management set-up?
	3.5 Coordination effectiveness	How effective was the coordination with other actors (internal/external)?
	3.6 Gender and DRR mainstreaming	To what extent was DRR and gender mainstreamed into the operation?
	3.7 Evaluation responsiveness	In how far were weaknesses identified by previous reviews tackled?
<b>4 Efficiency</b>	4.1 Adequacy of assigned resources	To what extent was the allocation of resources to the operation adequate?
	4.2 Operational smoothness	To what extent was the operation smooth?
<b>5 Impact</b>	5.1 Impact on communities	In which way has the CNO altered the living conditions of target communities?
	5.2 Impact on MRCS	In which way has the CNO altered the capacity of MRCS?
<b>6 Accountability to beneficiaries</b>	6.1 Effectiveness of feedback channels	To what extent was actual community feedback received?
	6.2 Responsiveness to feedback	In what way was community feedback addressed?
<b>7 Sustainability and connectedness</b>	7.1 Sustainable planning	To what extent was long-term sustainability considered during planning?
	7.2 Sustainability of results	To what extent can results be judged as sustainable?
	7.3 Cross-sectoral integration	In what way were different sectors mutually integrated?
	7.4 Connectedness to MRCS focal areas	To what extent did the programme build on MRCS focal areas (CBHFA and CBDRM)?
	7.5 Adequacy of IFRC transition strategy	In how far can the transition strategy be seen as adequate?

## Methodology

- 21 The evaluation progressed over four partially overlapping stages: preparation, data-gathering, data analysis, and report-writing. During the first stage, background data, programme documents and previous reports were reviewed. The information contained in these reports was used in two ways: first, it was collated and structured in line with the seven evaluation criteria in order to allow it to be fed into respective report chapters. Second, it informed the development of the research framework. At its core, this framework consists of the criteria, sub-criteria and guiding questions. To operationalize it, a matrix of questions was prepared to facilitate semi-structured interviews with key informants.
- 22 To uncover the view from beneficiaries - especially important to reveal information on relevance, community impact and accountability to beneficiaries - a community survey was also prepared (see appendices A and B). Overall, the research design represents a mixed-method approach, consisting both of qualitative (document review, key informant interviews, transect walks, active learning groups) and quantitative (community survey) tools.
- 23 Data-gathering was carried out first through interviews at the IFRC Asia-Pacific Zone office in Kuala Lumpur (June 10th - 17th 2011) and then through visits to Myanmar and the Cyclone-affected areas (June 20th to 27th and July 10th to 27th 2011) (for a list of interview partners and focus group discussions, see appendix D). Despite heavy rainfall and flooding, Floyd Barnaby and Phoy Wai Kyaw managed to visit five townships in Ayeyarwady division.
- 24 Aside from conducting focus group discussions at hubs and townships, they also interviewed 232 villagers, using the community survey questionnaire. Sampling was done randomly in target communities - due to time and accessibility constraints, the comprehensive use of control groups was not feasible. A mere longitudinal comparison had to be therefore deployed to assess impact. Raw data from the community survey were analyzed with the use of SPSS.
- 25 The team interviewed IFRC staff, MRCS representatives and government officers, following the respective questionnaires prepared previously. Towards the end of the time in-country, the team presented and discussed preliminary findings in a lessons learnt workshop in Yangon. For the evaluation, the workshop served to verify preliminary findings and gain additional information. For MRCS and IFRC, it provided an additional opportunity to identify and review lessons learnt.
- 26 Information from interviews and focus group discussions were recorded in interview result forms, who served as an additional basis for report-writing. This report has been reviewed by the evaluation team and several IFRC and and MRCS staff - their comments have been incorporated into this final version.



# 3. RELEVANCE AND APPROPRIATENESS



27 To what extent were the processes and targeted deliverables relevant to communities and appropriate to the local context? This chapter analyzes whether the Cyclone Nargis operation delivered what was villagers most urgently needed (part 3.1), the degree to which MRCS/IFRC efforts were complementary to those of the government and other agencies, and unanticipated consequences encountered (3.3).

### 3.1 Delivery of community needs

28 In the immediate aftermath to Cyclone Nargis, destruction in the worst-hit areas was so vast that many households had lost everything. Based on its knowledge of the area, MRCS and IFRC began delivering the relief items that had been pre-positioned in Yangon. While few adequate assessments were conducted at this very early stage<sup>2</sup>, most of this assistance came timely and was extremely relevant to communities' needs (Featherstone/Shetliffe 2009: 22). Amongst the survey respondents that received relief items, most said that it met their needs. 81% responded that it came in sufficient quantity.

29 For the recovery phase, MRCS conducted thorough village tract assessments through newly-established Village Tract Recovery Committees (VTRC) - information on community needs thus informed further programming. MRCS also took the results of PONJA into account, which had been facilitated by the TCG. It is worth noting that needs were so vast that MRCS initially aimed for maximum coverage of its operation - against this understandable instinct, it is seen as a wise decision to limit the focus to 100,000 households - thereby facilitating realistic targets and greater impact. Throughout implementation, participative monitoring through VTRCs and Red Cross volunteers (see part 5.3) and dedicated feedback channels (see part 8.1) ensured that assistance remained in line with community needs.

30 Beneficiary selection criteria had initially been issued by MRCS headquarters and were revised after consultation with VTRCs and hubs. Public knowledge of these criteria was wide (81% of respondents), and almost all community members who were familiar with the selection process thought it had been fair (98% of respondents). However, many needs remained unmet - two thirds of respondents say they knew unsupported households that should have received assistance.

31 The majority of survey respondents say that the assistance provided by MRCS had covered their households' most urgent needs fully (48%) or to a great extent (41%). Similarly, the needs of target communities appear to have overwhelmingly met, with respondents claiming that these had been covered fully (44%) or to a great extent (45%; for the overall results of the community survey, see appendix A).

### 3.2 Complementarity

32 With the exception of the very early relief phase, during which some overlaps occurred, the assistance provided by MRCS and IFRC throughout the Cyclone Nargis operation was complementary to the efforts of the government and other agencies.

33 During the relief phase, MRCS and IFRC participated in the cluster system and could therefore bring its programming in line with others (IFRC also convened the shelter cluster, see part 5.5). While most clusters were dominated by international agencies and government plans remained on their fringe, MRCS was able to obtain more information directly through government channels. Aside from facilitating mutual agreement on the target areas, clusters and technical working groups also led to joint implementation standards.

2. MRCS conducted initial assessments, but had to rely mainly on unexperienced staff and volunteers. Meanwhile, delegates of PNS and IFRC (including the FACT team) were unable to obtain travel authorisation for the first three weeks after Cyclone Nargis had struck.

- 34 During the recovery phase, MRCS and IFRC contributed to country meetings facilitated by the TCG and sectoral and local inter-agency meetings to avoid overlaps (see 5.5).

### 3.3 Unanticipated consequences

- 35 During the relief phase, the fact that many recipients of relief packages shared the items amongst other community members came unanticipated for many delegates. The strong local culture of sharing goods, especially in times of crisis, was the background of this process. The sharing of relief items overcame distribution discrepancies and made them more acceptable to entire communities.
- 36 None of the persons interviewed for this evaluation reported any unanticipated consequences of the MRCS/IFRC operation during the recovery phase, and neither were any such consequences identified through other means. Asked specifically about negative consequences, 91% of survey respondents said there had been none.<sup>3</sup>
- 37 Delegates welcomed the fact that in spite of the restrictive access to international organizations and their staff, the operation worked out well. The limited number of international players facilitated good coordination. Given that many IFRC delegates had to stay out of the country for extended periods, delegates were impressed to see how well the operation could continue - thanks to the strong engagement of MRCS staff and a concerted effort of all involved.

---

3. The few respondents that specified these negative consequences expressed that the operation had contributed to local inflation, and that higher prices had made the recovery more difficult for those that did not receive support from MRCS/IFRC.



# 4. QUALITY



- 38 Looking at the achievements of the Cyclone Nargis operation requires close analysis of quantity and quality of its results, as well as due process. This chapter does its part by focussing on the final quality of its results and underlying issues such as standard compliance, quality assurance and problem-solving.
- 39 Before turning to specific analysis of the individual sectors, general observations are due that apply to all sectors. By and large, the quality of delivered hardware and training modules is seen as appropriate. MRCS and IFRC made a conscientious attempt to ensure high quality. Where inferior quality was identified, rectifications usually followed swiftly. As training levels of hub staff, volunteers and VTRC members were raised over time, the number of quality-related issues decreased.
- 40 International standards such as SPHERE were taken into account throughout planning, however, they were little known in the field. The OD delegate had introduced SPHERE to MRCS prior to Nargis, and IFRC committed itself to translate the new SPHERE handbook into Myanmar as part of its efforts within the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT)<sup>4</sup>. Expected for completion in November 2011, HCT members plan to disseminate the handbook more widely through a series of workshops.
- 41 Similarly to SPHERE, while the vulnerability and capacity assessment (VCA) toolkit was not directly utilized, it influenced the village tract assessments conducted in 2008. These assessments were generally shown to be effective and of high quality.

#### 4.1 Shelter

- 42 In spite of the substantial challenges encountered by the shelter sector, the quality of houses, schools and health stations it delivered was found to be appropriate. Several design weaknesses identified by earlier reports have since been rectified. Houses were painted with oil to make them more durable, and cross-bracing was introduced as a standard in 2010 to make them more storm-resistant.<sup>5</sup> It is worth noting that the light construction method using bamboo is effective and in line with local building practices - they are however unlikely to withstand strong cyclones comparable to the force of Nargis. Schools and health centers are more stable and can serve as cyclone shelters.
- 43 Procurement for construction was largely de-centralized, and local companies were contracted as much as possible. Hold points were set at which quality was checked by shelter technicians. Supplied materials were inspected by logisticians and rejected if quality was found to be inferior. In some cases, the lack of qualified manpower meant that construction oversight could not be provided as much as it would have been desirable.
- 44 While local carpenters were trained and beneficiaries advised on how to construct houses, more guidance should have been provided early on. Initially, villagers often used available funding to maximize the size of their houses rather than paying attention to their quality. When the government decided to halt cash grants for shelter construction, the operation was swift to adapt, and provided shopping lists for construction items, which were then procured by MRCS.<sup>6</sup>
4. The HCT was established in 2010 and involves UN agencies, the Red Cross Movement and NGOs. It aims to facilitate information-sharing, common planning, and strategic decision-making.
5. While a considerable share of houses had included cross-bracing from early on, its importance was re-emphasized in 2010. Most houses built earlier that did not comply with the standards were retrofitted.
6. The benefit of the shopping list approach was that it gave beneficiaries flexibility to select the items they needed. The disadvantage was that demands were often so varied that it made quality procurement difficult. This was overcome by providing a list of technically sound items.

#### 4.2 Livelihood

- 45 Although MRCS had no experience in implementing livelihood programmes prior to the Cyclone Nargis operation, it managed to produce high-quality results for more





Health education session delivered by an MRCS volunteer.

than 35,000 direct beneficiaries. The programme started in October 2008 with cash-for-work (CFW) activities such as the repair of roads, bridges and jetties, reinforcement of river embankments and tree plantation, and expanded to recovery of productive assets (e.g. livestock, fishing boats), agricultural and business support, and a revolving fund for women. While the quality of initial results had been subject to a learning-by-doing approach, the livelihood sector managed to mend these problems and developed a sound quality assurance system.

- <sup>46</sup> Following the mid-term review, MRCS took beneficiaries to upgrade the quality of roads that had already been deteriorated, providing higher durability and showing why quality matters. To ensure the quality of livestock (chicken, ducks, pigs) and the use of fertilizers, MRCS sought the advice of veterinarians and agricultural experts. For the construction of fishing boats, quality of five initial boats were thoroughly checked before full construction was approved. Survival rates of trees (both to serve as wind-breakers and for fruit production) had initially been a low 45-70%; after an identification of underlying reasons, planting patterns and modalities were reviewed, leading to survival rates above 90% in 2010 (MRCS 2011: 33f).
- <sup>47</sup> This report agrees with previous reviews that seeking more external expertise from the outset could have led to higher-quality outcomes during the early recovery period. At the same time, it is recognized that MRCS and communities have learned from earlier mistakes and thereby gained a valuable experience worth maintaining.

### 4.3 Health and PSP

- <sup>48</sup> With health having been a core area of MRCS for a long time, experience in this sector, especially community-based first aid (CBFA), abounded. Throughout the Nargis operation, more Red Cross volunteers were trained (2,730 in total) and additional skills provided. Compared to the pre-Nargis CBFA, the programme became more comprehensive, aiming at the prevention of communicable diseases, hygiene promotion and capacity-building, and more community-centered.
- <sup>49</sup> MRCS had some minor pre-Nargis experience in psycho-social support programmes (PSP), and 25 volunteers were deployed to affected areas shortly after Cyclone Nargis

had struck. From this basis, PSP was transformed into a fully-fledged programme closely linked to livelihood and health.

- 50 As comparatively high impact and satisfaction of villagers show, the training courses, information campaigns and tools were of high quality (see chapter 7.1). Many behavioural changes have been induced as a result, and health conditions have improved - at the same time, unmet needs persist and will require sustained action.
- 51 Quality of the health programme was ensured by effectively utilizing MRCS's internal resources as well as those of the health department and village health committees. The 20 rural health stations and 100 Red Cross posts provide a basis for continuation of further health promotion and care.

#### 4.4 Water and sanitation

- 52 After a successful launch of water and sanitation activities during the relief as well as early recovery periods, this sector faced challenges in quality, monitoring and reporting over an extended period of time due to the absence of the water/sanitation delegate and insufficient human resources. Following the mid-term review, most problems were ameliorated, and the focus shifted from household tanks back to community assets. Although MRCS had little technical expertise in providing hardware solutions, it refrained from outsourcing this component to more experienced agencies.
- 53 Over time, ferro-cement tanks that had cracked were fixed, and manuals were provided to maintenance committees to prevent further cracks. Community ponds without fencing were retrofitted with fences to prevent animals from entering. The quality of wells and most of the 166 latrines constructed at schools and Red Cross posts was generally found to be appropriate.
- 54 30,100 households (25% less than targeted) received pans and pipes to construct household latrines - beneficiaries were specifically trained and shown the construction process through 2,000 demonstration latrines. Due to inadequate coaching and monitoring, quality of the household latrines varied substantially. If MRCS wishes to repeat hardware construction in future operations, efforts should be increased to provide adequate manpower and skills in this regard.
- 55 The quality of the newly-established Watsan Emergency Response Unit (ERU) is seen as high (both training skills of volunteers and hardware) - this ERU significantly enhances MRCS's response capacity for future disasters. The ERU has already been deployed successfully during the Cyclone Giri and Shan State earthquake operations.



# 5. EFFECTIVENESS





- 56 There are seven aspects that are analyzed to assess the overall effectiveness of the Cyclone Nargis operation: the extent to which the operation reached its targets (part 5.1), the degree to which it was able to adapt to changing circumstances (5.2), the level of community participation in planning and monitoring (5.3), effectiveness of the management set-up and coordination (5.4 and 5.5), the extent to which gender issues and disaster risk reduction were mainstreamed into the operation (5.6), and the extent to which the operation took up the recommendations of previous reviews (5.7).

### 5.1 Target delivery

- 57 The most direct way to look at effectiveness is the extent to which set targets were reached. As the May 2011 progress report shows, roughly three quarters of targets have been fulfilled to at least eighty percent (see appendix F). Considering the vast volume of the operation and the initially limited capacity of MRCS (especially in sectors in which it held no prior experience), this represents a respectable achievement.
- 58 Performance varied between sectors and over time. The water and sanitation sector in particular experienced substantial challenges. While it had shown sound target delivery, monitoring and reporting up until late 2009 - when the sector was led by the MRCS water/sanitation coordinator and supported by a Watsan ERU delegate - it fell behind targets after the departure of the MRCS coordinator. Outsourcing of parts of the programme to local NGOs with sector-specific expertise had been considered, but was eventually decided against by MRCS. Meanwhile, the livelihood programme stands out as a new area for MRCS in which it produced laudable results.
- 59 According to the Head of Operations, the strong performance of most programmes was chiefly due to experienced delegates and staff as well as well-trained volunteers. Effective reporting and swift problem-solving kept programmes largely on track. In fields where the Red Cross had little experience, it should become more open to learn from other organizations.

### 5.2 Adaptability

- 60 As there was reportedly little change in needs over the timeframe of the Cyclone Nargis operation, the question as to how adaptable the operation has been hardly bears relevance. However, it is noted that most programmes maintained flexibility to community-specific concerns. For instance, construction materials were adapted to suit the requirements of specific localities. Adaptability related to findings and recommendations of previous reviews is assessed below in part 5.7.

### 5.3 Participative planning and monitoring

- 61 Considerable efforts were taken throughout the operation to involve target communities in planning and monitoring. The early establishment of village tract recovery committees (VTRC) was a pivotal step in this regard. While performance and degree of independence from local authorities varied significantly amongst the VTRCs, all of them contributed to initial village tract assessments and arranged community meetings in which needs and assistance were discussed. VTRCs were well-known throughout villages (92% of survey respondents were familiar with them), and community meetings appear to have enjoyed wide participation (63% of respondents say they regularly took part in meetings). Although the actual planning



process was top-down in nature, it incorporated the information acquired amongst communities. In general, VTRCs helped to establish a participative culture.

62 Monitoring was largely done through the local MRCS structures - including volunteers (who are themselves members of the community they serve), 2iCs and hub staff. Formal channels for direct community feedback such as a letterbox system existed, however, these were rarely used, leaving the Red Cross volunteers as the chief go-betweens of community and MRCS (See also part 8.1). With the benefit of hindsight, some VTRC members and volunteers could have been given better training for their role in monitoring.

## 5.4 Management effectiveness

63 The cornerstones of the operation's management were the nine MRCS hubs specifically set up for Cyclone Nargis-affected areas in Ayeyarwady and Yangon divisions. In a way, hubs were the logical solution to a dilemma faced at the outset: with IFRC sub-delegations being unfeasible due to the restrictive access to international staff, and with the prospect of an operation so huge that assigning leading management roles to township branches would have plainly overwhelmed their capacities, the hubs were born.

64 Staffed with around 40 employees for administration, finance, logistics, and the various sectors, hubs were effectively extensions of the MRCS headquarters built into the field. After initial difficulties to set them up (more than 300 qualified staff had to be recruited), hubs became immensely effective in running the operation - the high target delivery rate is testimony to this.

65 Certainly, the hub model is not always the first choice, as it does not come without side-effects: relations between newly-created hubs and indigenous township branches need to be carefully managed and bear obvious conflict potential. In several cases during the Nargis operation, tensions over responsibilities erupted, but could be managed through coordinated meetings. Furthermore, the hub model poses a potential challenge to sustainability, as resources and skills need to be carefully handed over to branches as the operation subsides (see part 9.5). During Cyclone Giri, MRCS decided against the use of hubs, citing stern opposition from local branches.

66 While pros and cons thus need to be carefully weighed, it is evident that in the case of Nargis, the choice of hubs was by far the best - if not the only feasible - management model. This is even more so the case given that its side-effects were well-managed throughout the Cyclone Nargis operation.

67 With hubs as the operation's cornerstone, essential back-up was provided by both MRCS headquarters and IFRC. The managerial effectiveness of the headquarters grew tremendously over time, with new departments and procedures established and monitoring capacity enhanced (see part 7.2). Both MRCS operational management and IFRC field offices played an integral part in communication with hub offices, advising them on implementation, monitoring and evaluation and general follow-up

68 IFRC provided instrumental advice in the overall capacity-building process through its in-country delegates and staff in field offices and in Yangon, and with back-up from the Regional Office in Bangkok and the Asia-Pacific Zone office in Kuala Lumpur. Critically, IFRC helped establish a sound monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system, building on earlier work conducted by Danish Red Cross. M&E officers were deployed in hubs, and consolidated monthly reports were produced. Combined with the several

external reviews the operation commissioned, these helped to identify bottlenecks and other challenges timely.

### 5.5 Coordination effectiveness

- 69 Coordination amongst the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement was very close, facilitated by the fact that few partner national societies (PNS) operated bilaterally. During the early days after the emergency, Movement partners acted as one team - Danish Red Cross supported reporting, French Red Cross the assessment, and ICRC water and sanitation, dead body management and the restoring of family links. With minor exceptions, Movement collaboration remained close and coherent throughout relief and recovery phases.
- 70 MRCS and IFRC participated in the general Nargis response meetings facilitated by the TCG and significantly contributed to the sectoral inter-agency groups (clusters during the relief phase, recovery groups during the recovery phase) - standards jointly developed by these groups were followed throughout the operation. At international meetings organized by the TCG for ASEAN-based organizations, Thai Red Cross represented the Movement in consultation with MRCS and IFRC.
- 71 During the relief phase, IFRC assumed its regular role as the cluster coordinator for emergency shelter. Both an external review of its performance in this role (commissioned by IFRC) and an evaluation of the overall cluster approach in Myanmar (commissioned by the UN) rate the IFRC-led coordination as one of the strongest clusters, citing strong leadership, genuine commitment and the clear separation between IFRC's roles in operation and cluster coordination (Alexander 2009: 12f; Kauffmann/Krueger 2010: 68).
- 72 Facilitated in part by the comparatively small number of international actors, overall coordination between actors is seen as having been very effective, preventing a duplication of efforts and the oversight of communities in need. IFRC and MRCS contributed information to the Post-Nargis Joint Assessment (PONJA, see TCG 2008) and insights to the development of the Post-Nargis Recovery and Preparedness Plan (PONREPP, see TCG 2009). Despite sound coordination, it is worth noting though that overall assistance remained far behind the immense needs of affected communities.

### 5.6 Gender and DRR mainstreaming

- 73 Deliberate efforts were made to mainstream gender-related issues into the operation. In the set-up of VTRCs, MRCS encouraged equal gender representation and made the participation of at least two women in these bodies (of 10-12 members) compulsory. While this minimum requirement was fulfilled in practice, VTRCs remained largely dominated by men.
- 74 Amongst beneficiaries, a greater gender balance was achieved: As single female-headed households were specifically targeted, many programmes even saw predominantly women amongst their beneficiaries. Most training courses were attended roughly equally by men and women.
- 75 Over the course of the operation, disaster risk reduction became increasingly integrated into planning and implementation. From 2010 onwards, more resilient construction techniques were set as standards, and MRCS trained carpenters to

facilitate consistent standard compliance. These standards are now widely accepted amongst communities. There were several activities reducing disaster risks from early on, such as the reinforcement of river embankments to prevent saltwater intrusion or tree plantation for wind-breaking. Early warning systems were introduced, and many communities developed disaster preparedness plans. DRR training was also provided to teachers and students through the school-based disaster risk management programme (SBDRM).

- 76 A more comprehensive approach, centered around community resilience profiles and village preparedness plans, was introduced from late 2009 onwards.<sup>7</sup> With sound indicators across all sectors, these resilience profiles are seen as a useful tool towards achieving a greater impact.
- 77 Especially given the eagerness of communities to better prepare themselves - following the devastation they had experienced after Nargis - DRR could have been even more effectively mainstreamed into the overall operation early on. In future recovery operations, more comprehensive DRR mainstreaming should thus be aimed for.

## 5.7 Evaluation responsiveness

- 78 Throughout the Cyclone Nargis operation, several reviews - either comprehensive or sector-specific in nature - were commissioned by MRCS and IFRC (see appendix E). Amongst these reports, the PNS review (conducted by IFRC, British, Netherlands, and Japanese Red Cross in late 2009; see MRCS 2009c) and the mid-term-review of April 2010 (see Tracey et al. 2010) stand out for their breadth of analysis and recommendations.
- 79 Interim reviews are not self-serving undertakings but have the purpose of instigating improvements to challenges identified. So to what extent did the Cyclone Nargis operation take the recommendations on board? In how far did these reviews have an effect?
- 80 Generally, the operation's management paid due attention to recommendations and implemented what was seen as feasible. Some of the reviews' suggestions had already been considered and were followed through swiftly - such as the addition of cross-bracing and better inter-sectoral integration. The livelihood programme also re-focused its coverage area, delivering more comprehensive packages to a reduced number of communities, as suggested by the mid-term review (MRCS 2011: 5). A wide array of adaptations were made, and the plan of action revised.
- 81 However, some recommendations were either seen as unfeasible or undesirable. The fully-fledged re-programming exercise to move from a household-centered to a community-centered approach devised by the mid-term review was widely regarded as unrealistic. The outsourcing of activities (especially of the hardware component of the water and sanitation programme) was not favoured by MRCS.
- 82 On balance, the Cyclone Nargis operation showed a high level of responsiveness to reviews' findings and recommendations.

7. The community resilience profile had been prepared as a guiding tool for community planning, monitoring and reporting from early 2009.

# 6. EFFICIENCY





- 83 The bare fact that most of the targets of the Cyclone Nargis operation were reached, as shown in the previous chapter, is a laudable achievement. Were targets reached because of an inherent operational efficiency or in spite of structural inefficiencies? This chapter analyzes this question by first looking at the adequacy of assigned resources and then at the overall smoothness of the operation.

## 6.1 Adequacy of assigned resources

- 84 As far as funding was concerned, resources were adequate and never posed problems - in fact, while several other agencies such as the UN experienced shortfalls to their funding, the IFRC appeal was fully covered. The fact that the appeal volume was downsized by more than CHF 5 Mio to 68.5 Mio shows that more than enough money was available to reach operational targets.
- 85 Regarding human resources, the picture varied over time: At the beginning of the operation, problems had been faced to recruit suitable delegates and local staff. As one IFRC manager explains, the IFRC should have been faster in recruitment - in combination with the difficulties in obtaining visa for international staff, this led to a belated arrival of delegates in the field. The great need for local staff had also overwhelmed the recruitment capacity of MRCS.
- 86 Over time, the situation improved remarkably: Experienced and professional delegates were deployed to Myanmar, and turnover was considerably low - a factor that is widely regarded as a critical issue for the success of the operation. MRCS also grew with the challenge, raised the profile of the HR department, standardized recruitment procedures, introduced job descriptions, and managed to recruit the high-quality personnel it required to staff its nine hubs.
- 87 As far as assigned material resources are concerned, these were generally found to be adequate. However, occasional problems were encountered due to shortages of boats and vehicles; as a market analysis showed that vehicles were comparatively expensive and hard to come by, the decision was made to hire them or outsource transport of goods. An initial lack of communication equipment - causing inefficiencies for monitoring and reporting in particular - was also ameliorated, as most branches and many operators were equipped with phones.

## 6.2 Smoothness of the operation

- 88 In spite of two externally-induced obstacles, several technical and structural challenges, and the initial problems in recruiting suitable staff, the Cyclone Nargis operation progressed remarkably smoothly.
- 89 The government decision to halt shelter cash grants necessitated some re-programming - but while delays ensued, MRCS and IFRC were swift to respond and adapt, keeping these delays at a minimum. The government's decree to ban all international Cyclone Nargis staff over a three-month period, during which the national election was held, posed a further obstacle. IFRC and MRCS staff responded with a "concerted effort" (Interview Head of Operations): Delegates communicated from Bangkok with their sectoral counterparts at the hubs, enabling an uninterrupted implementation of activities. When problems were encountered, these were resolved through the IFRC country delegation<sup>8</sup> and MRCS headquarters staff. A key factor for the successful continuation is seen in the close and long-standing working relationships delegates and hub staff had developed by this time in late 2010. The fact

8. Given their different type of visa, delegates of the IFRC country team and the CNO Head of Operations were entitled to remain in country during the election.

that MRCS staff continued to manage the operation successfully in the absence of delegates also appears to have contributed to greater self-confidence on their behalf, fully realizing their potential to achieve operational goals.

- 90 Aside from these two external challenges, the Cyclone Nargis operation encountered some internal inefficiencies. The biggest issue in this regard is the relatively low level of inter-sectoral integration: Especially in the early recovery phase, sectors pursued their targets as “stand-alone” activities (MRCS 2009c: 44), causing inefficiencies such as duplication of efforts and missed opportunities for enhanced impact. To a moderate extent, mutual integration was however achieved throughout 2010 and 2011 (see also part 9.3).
- 91 Some hold-ups were experienced due in procurement processes and funds transfers, especially at the beginning of the operation. Given the vast requirements and the little experience and standardization MRCS had at this time, this is not surprising. With significant structural and procedural improvements to its procurement, most problems have since subsided.
- 92 On occasion, the operation also saw delays caused by the fact that many processes required the approval of the MRCS President - at times, large numbers of decisions overburdened the capacity of his office for timely response. In future large-scale operations, MRCS should therefore review to what extent decision-making can be delegated downwards.
- 93 One efficiency-enabling factor was identified in the good collaboration with local government units: Once the overall plan of action had been approved by the National Natural Disaster Management Central Committee (under the office of the Prime Minister), this approval and request for support to MRCS was sent to all local government units - henceforth, these provided valuable support to the operation.
- 94 Summarizing the efficiency of the Cyclone Nargis operation, it is seen as considerably high. Responses to external challenges were timely and effective, and to a large extent, the operation has been able to address or overcome internal hindrances to efficiency.



# 7. IMPACT





- 95 The analysis of impact addresses the question: what difference did the Cyclone Nargis operation make? More specifically, what final welfare outcomes did it achieve for the Cyclone-affected communities and for the capacity of Myanmar Red Cross? Impact analysis looks for changes in outcomes that are directly attributable to a programme, in this case the Cyclone Nargis operation. This requires counter-factual analysis - a comparison between what happened and what would have happened in the absence of the intervention (White 2006:2). Such a comparison can be conducted either longitudinally (pre- versus post-intervention), horizontally (target versus control group), or through a combination of both dimensions (quasi-experimental design). A quasi-experimental design clearly produces greatest validity - however, it should be noted that due to time constraints of this study, mere longitudinal comparisons were deployed.
- 96 The impact on communities can be summarized as healthier, better off and better prepared. Due to the community-based health and first aid programme, hygiene promotion and investments in clean water and sanitation, the prevalence of many common diseases has decreased. Due to the several measures implemented under the livelihood programme, many households are better off than they would have been without this support. And due to stronger houses, community-based disaster risk reduction and preparedness, and a significantly increased capacity of MRCS, communities are better prepared for the onslaught of future hazards.

## 7.1 Impact on communities

- 97 The impact of the Cyclone Nargis operation on health conditions has been formidably researched and documented through a baseline survey (December 2008), a mid-term evaluation (December 2009) and an impact study (March 2011) amongst 780 community members across all 13 townships in which MRCS implemented health-related activities (8.1% of the 96,200 people involved; see Shwe Oh 2011). The study revealed that knowledge about the transmission of diseases and hygienic practices had increased, while the prevalence of most diseases had fallen between baseline and impact studies. For instance, knowledge of Malaria transmission had grown from 35.6 to 68%, while prevalence had decreased from 3.7 to 1.4% and even 3.2 to 0.4% for children under five years of age. Knowledge of tuberculosis transmission had grown from 48.3 to 77.2%, of dengue fever transmission from 56.8 to 89.2, and of HIV from 84.1 to 92.1%. Prevalence of Tuberculosis fell significantly from 19.6 to 5.1%, while that of dengue fever and diarrhoea declined only slightly.
- 98 The health study also observed more common use of rubber boots (to prevent snake bites) and more widespread knowledge of first aid. Hygienic practices (such as safe water storage, boiling water, washing hands before meals and after defecation, and use of flush latrines) have become more common - however, such standards remain far from universal. Despite having achieved a substantial impact on health conditions, there is more to be done to create an even greater impact towards the reduction of the most common diseases such as diarrhoea.
- 99 The impact on livelihoods has not been as meticulously analyzed, and due to a lack of capacity, IFRC and MRCS had to abandon plans for such a study on the impact on the more than 35,000 livelihood programme beneficiaries. The lack of comprehensive data notwithstanding, observations show a clear positive trend of the overall Cyclone Nargis operation: While the cash-for-work component helped to fill the gap of lost income especially in the initial post-Nargis period, the Red Cross-supported recovery of productive assets like fishing boats or livestock enabled many hard-hit families to

regain their economic productivity faster and more completely than they would otherwise have been able to. The community survey conducted as part of this evaluation shows that most respondents have been able to approximate their pre-Nargis income-level (49.1%) or to exceed it (22.4%). Of all respondents, 58% attribute a positive influence of the MRCS operation on their income - 36% even see a great or very great influence (see appendix A).

- 100 The overall impact of the Cyclone Nargis operation on livelihoods is not limited to the actual livelihood programme, as the overall injection of funds into the local economy is almost certain to have played an additional role. Having been one of the key budget-holders amongst humanitarian actors, IFRC and MRCS amplified this effect through its de-centralized approach to procurement - this is likely to have resulted in sustained and additional employment for laborers at a time when many businesses were damaged and had to lay off workers. Inflation, which often compounds large-scale reconstruction efforts and affects the poorest most severely, appears to have been moderate. 91% of survey respondents say that the MRCS operation has not had any negative impact on their households and communities, and only very few expressed that the operation had somewhat contributed to price hikes.
- 101 By deploying many community-based instruments such as the Village Tract Recovery Committees, the operation is also seen to have fostered social capital, as communities are well-enabled to organize themselves and to work together for the common good. Interviewees state that as a result of the operation, communities have become more self-reliant.
- 102 The increased level of community organization is an element towards greater disaster preparedness and resilience: with early warning systems established, storm-resistant schools and health centers built, many community members made aware of ways to reduce risks, and disaster preparedness plans available in many communities, a future cyclone of similar strength to Nargis is likely to cause less damage to lives and livelihoods. 86% of survey respondents state that they feel better prepared for disasters now than they were prior to Nargis.
- 103 As MRCS and its volunteers have played an instrumental role in the recovery of Cyclone-affected villagers, its image has improved significantly: An impressive 95% of survey respondents say that their view of MRCS had changed to the better. As MRCS capacity has grown in general - as will be shown in the next part - it is its improved presence on the ground in particular, with volunteers, posts and ongoing campaigns for health, hygiene and preparedness, that makes it an integral part of future disaster preparedness in the communities.

## 7.2 Impact on Myanmar Red Cross

- 104 There is little dispute amongst interviewees and previous studies that the Cyclone Nargis operation has had a profound impact on MRCS, as it has grown in size, quality and experience.
- 105 Whereas a 2007 needs assessment of MRCS noted a “general lack of systems and consistency with regard to planning, monitoring and evaluation, and reporting” (Duly/McEnroy 2007:5), interviewees in this evaluation stated unanimously that things had improved: not only has reporting quality, coherence and frequency gone up after training conducted by IFRC, skills for planning, monitoring and evaluation have also been built to up to advanced levels. Many reports and monitoring activities go beyond a mere description of activities and look at the actual impact that has been created through those activities.

- 106 As the MRCS President admits: “Prior to Nargis, we had never thought of downward accountability.” As a result of the Nargis experiences, the Society now focussed much more on the perspective of beneficiaries in planning and reporting.
- 107 MRCS now has an array of new guidelines in finance, logistics, and human resources that have contributed to a professionalization of its work. New departments have been set up for organizational development and logistics, and the human resources department has been strengthened. Inter-departmental co-ordination, the lack of which had been lamented in 2007, has been enhanced. For instance, the procurement needs of all departments are now processed by the logistics department. All staff recruitment is facilitated by the HR department, while the OD department has established a volunteer database.<sup>9</sup> In the name of greater coherence, MRCS should strive to continue and further raise inter-departmental collaboration. It should also aim to further improve its volunteer management system.
- 108 Regarding assets, MRCS has established a new Watsan ERU that is said to be amongst the best in South-East Asia (Interview Watsan Delegate). It has a GIS unit that may prove an invaluable asset in future disasters, and is building a new warehouse in Than Lynn to increase storage capacity of emergency goods. As the IFRC-supported Nargis operation winds down, many vehicles, equipment and buildings have been handed over, usually to township branches. The 100 newly-built Red Cross posts provide a home for community meetings and Red Cross activities - its electrification through solar panels even enables nightly gatherings and deems them attractive to students, for whom they are often the only place to study at night.
- 109 Arguably the greatest impact the Cyclone Nargis operation has brought to MRCS is the experience of managing what has been by far its largest operation to date. Not only has this experience triggered the many organizational enhancements described above, it has also brought about a professionalization in the sectors in which it already had considerable pre-Nargis knowledge - CBFA and CBDRM - , as well as the entry into the foray of new sectors such as livelihood, shelter, water/sanitation and PSP. Volunteers and staff have gained skills and confidence in implementing these activities and earned the trust and recognition of the communities they serve.
- 110 In order to avoid a slow decline of image, deterioration of assets, and loss of volunteers and experience, MRCS now faces the task of retaining and maintaining its wealth of resources. As its Strategic Plan 2011-2015 aims for MRCS to approach the characteristics of a well-functioning national society, the Society will need to incorporate a more proactive volunteer management, increase its efforts in income generation, provide more substantial support to branches, and ensure that the knowledge gained in the Cyclone Nargis operation is maintained and shared with branches outside the operational area.
- 111 A concrete step already taken towards the retaining of experiences concerns the transition of responsibilities from the nine hubs in Ayeyarwady and Yangon (which were exclusively established for the Cyclone Nargis operation) to nearby township branches. Although the usually externally-recruited hub staff and the long-time branch members initially had conflicts with each other over each one’s turf, this transition appears to have gone smoothly.
- 112 The impact of the Cyclone Nargis operation on MRCS became most visible in the aftermaths of Cyclone Giri and the earthquake in Shan state, where lessons learnt were put into practice: compared to earlier operations, the set-up of contingency plans, standard operating procedures and improved inter-departmental planning is seen as having facilitated a more timely and effective response.

9. Currently, the volunteer database is only used for volunteer insurance purposes - however, MRCS plans to use it for rapid deployment and retainment in future.



# 8. ACCOUNTABILITY TO BENEFICIARIES





- 113 As described in the previous chapter, accountability to beneficiaries had played no role in pre-Nargis MRCS activities - it was IFRC who brought it into the Nargis operation in its early days. A deliberate approach was thus introduced to generate accountability - but how effective was it? This chapter looks at the various feedback channels (8.1) and then analyzes how MRCS responded to that feedback (8.2).

## 8.1 Effectiveness of feedback channels

- 114 Community members had the chance to provide feedback and raise their concerns through a number of channels. They could participate in village meetings to discuss the assistance being provided, talk to the VTRC representatives or the Red Cross volunteers, submit written feedback through letterboxes that had been set up in most village tracts next to Red Cross notification boards, or call key MRCS people, including the MRCS President (phone numbers were publicized).
- 115 According to the community survey, almost all respondents took part in village gatherings - 63% state that they participated regularly. These meetings have been by far the most effective feedback channel. 92% of respondents were aware of the VTRCs, and many discussed their concerns with VTRC representatives.
- 116 A mere 38% of respondents shared their concerns through other channels - 29% did so through Red Cross volunteers. Only a very small number of people chose the more formal ways of the letterbox system (4%) or calling the MRCS President. The merit of the letterbox system is contested: while the mid-term review describes it as culturally inappropriate and ineffective (Tracey et al. 2010: 23), interviewees for this evaluation say that it highlighted to communities MRCS's willingness to listen. They also provided an avenue for more delicate concerns that could not be appropriately raised in public meetings. The President received many calls and messages concerning beneficiary selection - given that needs were far greater than available assistance, this may come as no surprise.<sup>10</sup>
- 117 MRCS took great lengths explaining processes and activities to villagers through meetings, billboards and notification boards. The fact that 81% of respondents are familiar with beneficiary selection criteria must be seen as tribute to this work.

## 8.2 Responsiveness to community feedback

- 118 It appears that MRCS took all of the concerns raised seriously and responded to all valid concerns swiftly - either by further explaining why a certain path was taken or by modifying plans to accommodate expressed grievances. Out of all survey respondents that had provided feedback through Red Cross volunteers or formal channels, 84% stated that their concerns had been subsequently addressed fully or to a great extent.
- 119 Hub offices and MRCS headquarters paid due attention to formal concerns. They usually shared issues with VTRCs and when serious complaints were received, at times activities in question were halted, claims investigated, and activities modified to make them more appropriate.

10. Although most respondents were familiar with selection criteria and thought that these were fair, two thirds knew households that in their view should have received assistance but did not.

- 120 Overall accountability to beneficiaries is thus seen as adequate, and the systems established for the Cyclone Nargis operation should be maintained and set up in other areas of Myanmar. Given that Red Cross volunteers are one of the most crucial go-betweens between communities and higher levels within MRCS, their sensibility for this role should be expanded.

# 9. SUSTAINABILITY AND CONNECTEDNESS





- 121 The sustainability of an intervention largely depends on local actors' willingness and capacity to continue running or maintaining it. Neither willingness nor capacity is a fixed given. Willingness can be maximized by meaningfully involving target groups from early on, by developing activities that address beneficiaries' most urgent needs, and by creating incentives for a high sense of ownership, for instance by requiring financial or in-kind contributions. The local actors' capacity - skills and know-how as well as material and financial resources can similarly built up to an extent. However, any sustainable programme must be adapted to local ground conditions and will not overburden local communities. Connectedness to existing capacities and institutional settings plays another vital role.
- 122 So how did the Cyclone Nargis operation fare with regard to sustainability and connectedness? This chapter begins with a look at sustainable planning (9.1), proceeds with actual sustainability of its results (9.2), cross-sectoral integration and connectedness to MRCS's focal areas in CBHFA and CBDRM (9.3 and 9.4) and finishes with an analysis of IFRC's exit strategy (9.5).

## 9.1 Sustainable planning

- 123 Most of the programming for the recovery phase started off with sustainability in mind, in other cases, activities were retrofitted over time to increase their level of sustainability. To begin with, the thoroughness of assessments conducted with and amongst communities led to activities that were actually demanded. The continuous and deep involvement of villagers through VTRCs, as Red Cross volunteers or otherwise active participants further facilitated a sense of ownership. In particular, the requirement of in-kind or financial contributions is seen as a deliberate and positive effort to make people see activities as investments on which they want to see a return - rather than regard themselves as passive recipients or goods brought to them from outside. Overall, programme and activity plans were thus devised in a way that fostered the willingness of communities to run (and continue) activities.
- 124 Concerning their capacity, it is noted positively that by and large, IFRC and MRCS refrained from instilling high-tech solutions that would be too costly or too difficult for villagers to maintain after the termination of external support. Where new technology was introduced, VTRCs established maintenance committees that were trained to acquire necessary know-how - these committees then prepared maintenance plans to ensure the durability and functionality of assets. Laminated manuals for repairs of water-tanks and other assets were also provided.
- 125 On a broader scale, 2iCs, other branch staff and volunteers were adequately trained to plan, implement and sustain activities. As far as skills are concerned, there are few gaps that would prevent continuity, although refresher courses are yet to be fully institutionalized. Having Red Cross posts built and hub assets hand-overs to township branches also means that structures, and for a limited time material resources, will be available.
- 126 The greatest concern to sustainability regards funding: although the issue of unsustainably high per diem rates for volunteers that plagues many other operations could largely be avoided after Nargis - a fact that renders activities in CBHFA and CBDRM as inexpensive - money will still be needed to run them in future. While some income-generating activities were conducted throughout the operation, it appears that more attention should have been paid to the financial aspects of sustainability early on. The pilot project of a revolving fund established in 2011 under the livelihood programme is laudable in that it aims to carry on some livelihood activities, but fails to redress the financial challenge for MRCS in villages and townships.

- 127 Before coming to discuss the actual sustainability of results created through the Cyclone Nargis operation, it is worth to take a look at the chances of continued activities. Here, the outlook varies between programmes: The CBHFA and CBDRM programmes were strapped onto the saddle of existing experience. The volunteers that run these programmes are not only well-trained and experienced, but also enthusiastic about the work they do, encouraged by positive results and community feedback. Continuation of these programmes is almost certain, although the level of engagement is likely to decrease once external support ceases.
- 128 At the other end of the spectrum is construction - i.e. shelter and the hardware components of water/sanitation and livelihood: As most targets have been met and the substantial funding ceases to flow, the work is finished - and so are these programmes. Nothing is wrong with that; it was not envisioned to build up construction as one of the MRCS focal areas. Having said that, it makes sense to increase efforts aiming to retain and share the knowledge gained in this field with volunteers in other areas of the country.
- 129 On the sustainability spectrum, those activities that were new to MRCS and that are chiefly concerned with software sit somewhere in the middle: PSP, water/sanitation (software), and livelihood (software). In their regard it is too early to say whether these activities will be continued; their sustainability will largely depend on the dedication of respective volunteers and staff and the decision by MRCS headquarters to support or not support these programmes. Needs still exist, and even if MRCS may find it difficult to set up programmes in regions other than those affected by Cyclone Nargis, a continuation here bears merit, as it would help to sustain the positive image MRCS has gained.
- 130 Overall, 87% of survey respondents are confident or very confident that training activities will be continued even without external support.

## 9.2 Sustainability of results

- 131 Looking at the sustainability of actual results, one needs to differentiate between hardware (e.g. buildings, tanks, jetties) and software (skills, behavioural changes).
- 132 On the hardware side, sustainability is a result of product quality and maintenance skills. As shown in chapter 4, overall product quality is relatively high - for instance, the painting of bamboo houses with oil enhanced their durability, while the (belated) introduction of cross-bracing means they will be more able to withstand storms. Initial problems with water tanks have been rectified. Some of the early CFW projects such as road construction had initially produced low quality results, but have since been upgraded to facilitate greater durability.
- 133 Most beneficiaries were adequately trained to look after technical assets, and with maintenance committees established and manuals available, their sustainability has been facilitated. However, if large or technically complicated repairs become necessary, the associated costs will make their maintenance difficult. A particular case in this context are the solar panels installed on the Red Cross posts. The community survey shows that of all assets received by respondents, most are either fully functional (78%) or have only minor defects (18%). 95% of respondents claim they have the resources and knowledge to maintain their assets in a functional state.
- 134 Concerning software, the newly acquired skills and knowledge in hygiene, health, agriculture and disaster preparedness are likely to remain with the communities to some extent, especially if they are used on a routine basis.



- 135 However, out of the 150 survey respondents that underwent some form of training, 97% say that training needs to be continued to fully sustain these skills. Most say that such a continuation is likely (42%) or very likely (45%).

### 9.3 Cross-sectoral integration

- 136 While the recovery operation had been planned and designed in a coherent manner, actual implementation followed a sector-based approach that saw little integration (MRCS 2009c: 44, Tracey et al. 2010: 30). Following the mid-term review in early 2010, moderate success was achieved in belatedly mutually integrating some of the sectors.
- 137 The low level of integration caused inefficiencies and valuable opportunities being missed. For instance, DRR principles for cross-bracing and rainwater harvesting were not standardized in initial shelter designs. As each sector identified and addressed its respective needs, aiming at larger coverage, the operation resulted in being thinly spread across the entire target area of 161 village tracts (Tracey et al. 2010: 31). Although the Cyclone Nargis operation was not fully re-designed along the lines proposed in the mid-term review, the latter phases did focus on smaller areas, providing them with more comprehensive packages to increase impact (MRCS 2011:5).
- 138 While a sector-based focus remained at the core of the operation, some integration between shelter and livelihood, sanitation and health, and PSP and livelihood was facilitated. In the later stage of the operation, the improved functionality of the GIS unit and a holistic approach to reporting also brought about a more integrated and comprehensive information management.
- 139 For future operations, a holistic community-centered focus as suggested in the mid-term review should be attempted, as this is likely to create an even higher impact on target communities.

### 9.4 Connectedness to MRCS focal areas

- 140 The health activities conducted as part of the Cyclone Nargis operation were deliberately built around CBFA, one of MRCS's long-standing focal area. Additional, new activities were added through training volunteers further and learning by doing - a process that reportedly went surprisingly smoothly. In a similar way, CBDRM was taken as a core around which new activities were added - for instance school-based DRR components.
- 141 Other programmes such as livelihood and shelter had little connection to focal areas, partially as a result of the low level of inter-sectoral integration described above. Water and sanitation, an area in which MRCS had little experience prior to Nargis, was taken on as a new core MRCS activity.

### 9.5 Adequacy of the transition strategy

- 142 Any large-scale post-disaster operation that involves a large influx of international assistance must be wound down in a co-ordinated and comprehensive manner in order to not endanger the standing and capacity of the host national society. In the case of the Cyclone Nargis operation, this need was exacerbated by the fact that with the hubs, a separate structure had been created beneath township branches.

- <sup>143</sup> Both IFRC and MRCS were aware of this need and began planning for a transition strategy as early as 2008. In December 2010, a formal plan came into effect that entailed the successive downsizing of hubs and eventual closure by July 2011. At the same time, responsibilities and assets were progressively handed over to township branches.
- <sup>144</sup> Interviewed hub managers, 2iCs and other MRCS and IFRC staff describe this process had gone down smoothly. Against the backdrop of initial hesitance of some township branches to work with the newly-created hubs and significant conflict potential, the continuous investment in training and equipping branches has paid off - most branches feel ready to take over the full responsibilities and return to their normal roles. Having successfully avoided antagonisms between branches and hubs from materializing was thus a crucial part of a smooth IFRC exit. To a considerable extent, this success is due to careful and conscientious support of IFRC field officers and the fact that both hub managers and 2iCs were invited to attend the monthly operational meetings in Yangon. The fact that MRCS-managed hubs had been created - rather than IFRC sub-delegations - also means that MRCS headquarters was always fully involved or aware of key management decisions, a positive factor for continuity. Finally, the fact that IFRC will remain in Myanmar after the closure of the Cyclone Nargis operation represents an opportunity to jointly follow up on technical issues that may occur in future.
- <sup>145</sup> While it remains to be seen to what extent branches and volunteers will utilize the assets and experiences they have gained, the well-planned and implemented transition strategy is seen as highly adequate, as it enabled the continuity of key activities.

# 10. CONCLUSION



As the analysis along the given criteria has shown throughout previous chapters, the Cyclone Nargis operation has been successful at helping to rebuild the lives and livelihoods of the affected population it served. It leaves villagers healthier and better off than they would have been without support. Crucially, the operation has increased the communities' level of resilience.

How did they do it? MRCS and IFRC got much right in the first place. Where things were headed the wrong way, problems were identified and rectified to achieve better outcomes. Sound internal monitoring and reporting as well as the regular use of external reviews helped in this process.

While recognizing the humanitarian desire to assist as many of the 2.4 Mio people affected by Cyclone Nargis, the operation made the difficult but sensible choice to focus on 100,000 of the most severely hit households - realizing capacity constraints, it thereby kept targets realistic and impact on communities comparatively high. Rather than being overwhelmed by the insurmountable workload, MRCS grew with the challenge: Its capacity, experience and degree of professionalism has improved tremendously. Its reputation amongst communities, the government and other organizations has developed accordingly.

What can be learned from the experience of the operation? A great lot, as the minutes of several lessons learnt workshops indicate (for instance, see MRCS 2011a). While listing all the technical insights would exceed the volume of this chapter, some key strategic issues are presented in part 10.1.

Having learned lessons is one thing, acting upon them another. The final part 10.2 thus presents a set of recommendations for the future work of MRCS and IFRC, both for regular planning and future emergency operations.

## 10.1 Lessons learnt

### A. Restricting the focus of the operation to an ambitious yet achievable scope is crucial.

Less is more: where humanitarian needs grossly exceed organizational capacities, it is wise to align target volumes and geographical coverage with these realities - as was done in the Cyclone Nargis operation. Not only does this make targets more realistic, it also avoids overwhelming the organization. The best way to respond to large-scale disasters more comprehensively is by developing organizational capacity further.

[→29-30]

### B. Providing assistance holistically to communities is likely to have greater impact than wide and sparse delivery to individual households.

Rather than creating envy of people left out, potentially straining intra-communal relations, and generating a low level of acceptance, the focus on community assets helps all. A holistic approach is more likely to reinforce social capital.

[→31, 80, 101-102]

### C. Myanmar Red Cross is well-positioned to deliver livelihood and water/sanitation programmes that create an impact.

Following the immense destruction of productive assets and loss of income, MRCS addressed some of the most urgent needs and has sped up the rebounding of vulnerable villagers. The great success it has achieved, the expertise it has gained,



the low cost of some of the interventions, and great need for an improvement of basic livelihood - not only in the Nargis-affected areas - all combine to a great opportunity for MRCS to continue and expand its role in livelihood. Recently deployed tools such as the revolving fund for women may be utilized more widely. Enhancing the economic basis of villagers will reduce their vulnerability. A continued role for water and sanitation is also desirable, given expertise, low cost and need.

[→45-47, 52-55, 99]

**D. VTRCs are generally effective bodies in participatory planning, organizing of community affairs, and building of resilience.**

Most VTRCs have proved to be effective entities for community organization. A higher representation of women however is desirable to better identify and address their specific needs.

[→61-62,73,101,114-120]

**E. A high degree of participatory planning and implementation facilitates local ownership and sustainability.**

As shown successfully throughout the operation, the meaningful involvement of communities in assessment, planning, beneficiary selection and monitoring has brought about a high sense of ownership, one of the key ingredients of sustainability. The communities' in-kind and financial contributions also enhanced their ownership. Rather than the fast and top-down decision-making typical for a relief phase, a bottom-up approach is most appropriate for recovery and development.

[→114-135]

**F. Volunteers are the most effective intermediary between communities and MRCS management.**

Both the community survey and key informant interviews revealed that communal meetings and Red Cross volunteers are by far the most effective feedback channel. Given this finding, volunteers should be further sensitized to this role.

[→62, 103, 107-120]

**G. Hubs are an effective instrument for the management of large-scale operations, especially when local branch capacities are weak.**

Hubs have served the Cyclone Nargis operation well and were the most effective feasible option. The model should be re-applied in those future operations in which targets grossly exceed the capacity of township branches. However, a careful management of relations between hub and branch and a sound transition plan are indispensable.

[→63-66]

**H. Having adequate organizational structures and procedures ready is essential for timely and effective emergency response and recovery operations.**

MRCS's lack or inadequacy of important organizational structures (logistics, human resources) and standard operating procedures at the outset of the Cyclone Nargis operation meant that more time was needed to upscale and effectively deliver programmes. As organizational capacity improved over time, so did the efficiency

and effectiveness. It is thus important to maintain or even improve existing capacities to ensure swift launches of future operations.

[→54, 85-87]

**I. Integration between sectors and respective departments facilitates efficiency and effectiveness in planning and implementing an operation.**

Integration of sectors, in particular where activities are closely related to each other (e.g water/sanitation and health), can produce efficiency gains, reduce wastage and enhance impact. Especially for the recovery phase, a comprehensive, community need-centered approach as suggested in the mid-term review is a favourable option for future operations. The close collaboration between respective MRCS departments should accompany such a process.

[→90, 107, 136-139]

## 10.2 Recommendations

### 1. FOCUS.

**1.1 Focus on a stringent implementation of the MRCS Strategic Plan 2011-2015 to raise organisational capacity. Review implementation at least annually.**

The strategic plan provides a clear vision as to where MRCS would like to be in 2015. MRCS leadership should ensure that the plan is followed through - a strong organization is essential for providing regular community services and assisting disaster-affected communities effectively.

**1.2 After future disasters, align the scope and volume of the MRCS response with the organizational capacities in the affected area.**

A realistic focus on assisting a number of disaster-affected communities that can be comprehensively served by MRCS is crucial - it avoids raised but unmet expectations and an organizational over-stretch.

### 2. SUSTAIN.

**2.1 Systematically record and share the experiences gained in the Nargis operation.**

While many of the technical lessons learnt have already been recorded, these should be shared widely throughout MRCS and the IFRC - only then can these experiences be put to good use in future operations.

**2.2 Sustain the trained volunteers and their knowledge and retain the expertise of former hub staff.**

Volunteers are the Red Cross' greatest asset - but with many of them trained and experienced and the Nargis operation closed, there is a danger that with a reduction in activities, some may lose interest. It is therefore imperative to keep them playing the ball - conduct regular refresher courses and engage them meaningfully. Also aim to fully capture the expertise of former hub staff, who may become volunteers or be recruited again for future operations.

**2.3 Encourage and support VTRCs to continue their role in community development.**

Established as entities for the post-Nargis recovery, most VTRCs have proved to be effective in representing community needs. With the recovery phase finished, they have fulfilled their purpose - yet, VTRCs should be encouraged and supported to continue an active role in community development: they may help to maintain assets, address needs that have not been met fully, and provide a community

anchor for continued MRCS activities. In future response operations, the tool of VTRCs should be replicated.

### **3. OPEN UP.**

#### **3.1 Share your plans and achievements regularly with relevant government units.**

Maintaining close relations with key government departments facilitates better emergency coordination and enhances chances of obtaining their support. MRCS headquarters should therefore liaise regularly with national agencies and encourage and support branches to do likewise on the township level.

#### **3.2 Consider opening up to collaboration with other actors.**

Having participated in meetings of clusters, the IASC and HCT, MRCS is aware of the benefits that inter-agency collaboration can bring. Alliances and exchange of experiences makes particular sense in areas where MRCS sees gaps of expertise. MRCS should strive to continue, expand and deepen its relations to other humanitarian actors and aim to learn from their expertise.

#### **3.3 Aim to attract funding of corporations and business associations.**

MRCS may benefit from trying to develop its fundraising further - a particular opportunity is through launching corporate partnerships, both to sustain regular activities and to acquire additional funds for emergency operations. As MRCS aims to raise 40% of its funding directly, such partnerships may prove pivotal. IFRC should provide advice on the development of corporate partnerships. The improved image MRCS has gained throughout the Cyclone Nargis operation may provide a fertile base for such corporate fundraising.

### **4. BUILD FURTHER.**

#### **4.1 Improve volunteer management even further.**

Having a large number of volunteers and a functioning database represents an excellent foundation to build on. Aside from ensuring that the many trained volunteers in the area of the Nargis operation are retained, volunteer management should be enhanced in such a way that it allows for the rapid mobilization of volunteers for future disaster response operations. As an upgrade of volunteer management is most urgent in the Nargis operational area (to avoid losing volunteers), efforts should begin here and be successively transferred to other states and divisions of Myanmar.

#### **4.2 Further integrate the work of MRCS departments.**

The OD department shall review as to how planning and day-to-day work of departments can be further integrated and streamlined.

#### **4.3 Further improve vertical communication and support to branches.**

As the hubs and their provision of a close link between headquarters and branches have ceased to exist, MRCS headquarters needs to ensure that adequate levels of support continue to be provided to branches. The regular reporting and feedback established through the Cyclone Nargis operation should be upheld, and MRCS should strive to enhance communication with and support to branches in other areas of the country.

#### **4.4 Develop the disaster response capacities further.**

In addition to existing capacity gains, response capabilities of branches, state/division chapters and the headquarters may be further enhanced, for instance through national or chapter disaster response teams.



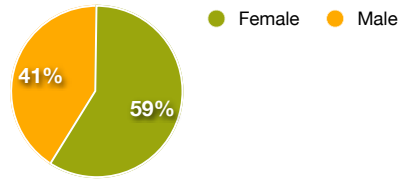
# APPENDIX



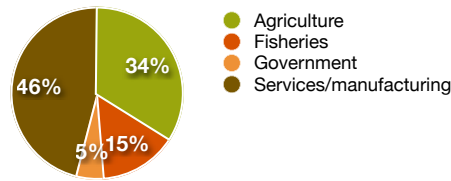
# A. COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

## Background of respondents

**Gender of respondents** [N=232]

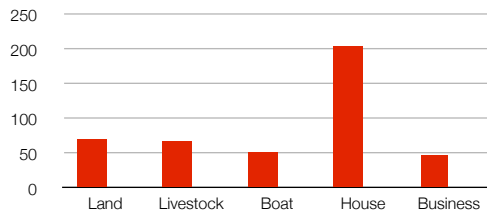


**Pre-Nargis main source of income** [N=232]



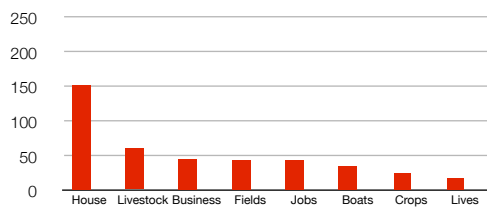
**Pre-Nargis asset ownership**

[N=232, multiple answers]



**Impact of Cyclone Nargis experienced on:**

[N=232, multiple answers]



**Relief assistance** [N=232]

Out of the 232 respondents, 224 have received relief assistance in the first six months. The main provider of this relief was either the government (10.7%), other agencies/NGOs (28.6%) or MRCS (60.7%, 136 respondents). Of these 136 respondents, 81% said that the assistance provided came in sufficient quantity, and almost all stated that it came sufficient quality (99%).

**Recovery: material assistance** [N=232]

Out of the 232 respondents, 202 have received material assistance during the recovery phase, a third of which from multiple agencies. In 141 cases, MRCS was the main provider. Most of the

respondents did not answer questions about quality and adequacy of material assistance - the few that did showed to be content in regards to both criteria.

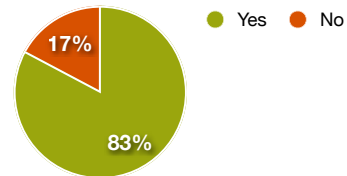
**Recovery: training and skills** [N=232]

Amongst the 232 respondents, 150 have participated in some type of training - MRCS was the main provider of courses and skills development (86%). Two fifths of those trained by the MRCS also received training by other agencies. Out of the few that chose to rate the quality of training, more than 75% gave high or very high marks.

## Participation and accountability

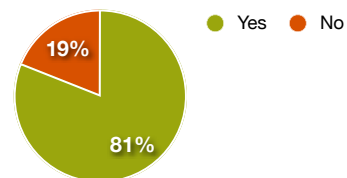
**Needs assessment** [N=232]

[Question 22] After Cyclone Nargis, were you asked by MRCS about your situation and your needs?



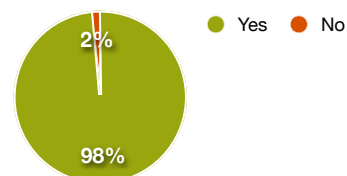
**Knowledge of selection criteria** [N=232]

[Q23] Do you know the reason why certain households received material/financial assistance and others not?

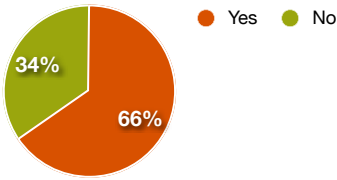


**Fairness of selection process** [N=188]

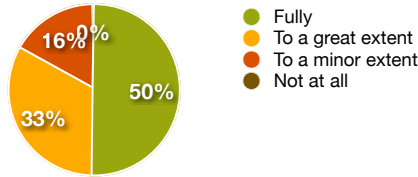
[Q24] Do you think the selection process was fair?



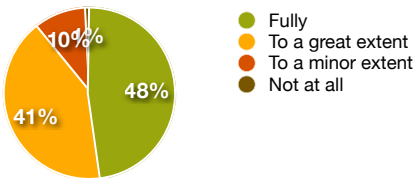
**Un-assisted households in need** [N=232]  
 [Q25] Do you know households who in your opinion should have received assistance but didn't?



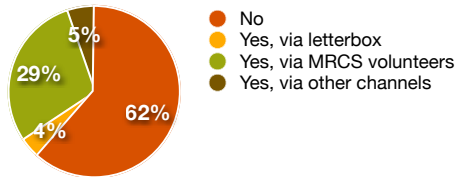
**Coverage of community concerns** [N=232]  
 [Q33] To what extent do you feel were the concerns of your village addressed?



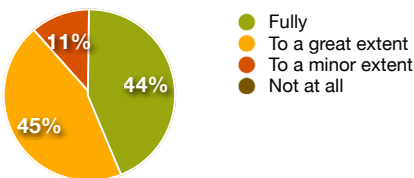
**Assistance coverage of household needs** [N=225]  
 [Q27] If your household received any assistance from MRCS, to what extent did it meet your household's most urgent needs?



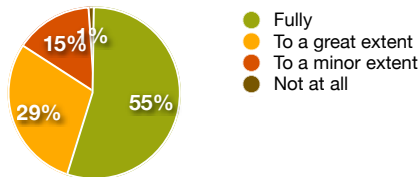
**Provision of feedback** [N=232]  
 [Q34] Aside from discussions with the village representative, did you provide feedback to MRCS?



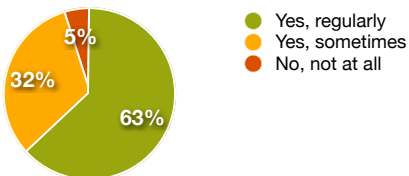
**Assistance coverage of community needs** [N=230]  
 [Q28] If your community received any assistance from MRCS, to what extent did it meet your community's most urgent needs?



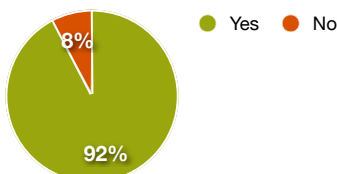
**Responsiveness to feedback** [N=89]  
 [Q35] To what extent do you feel that the concerns you have raised were addressed?



**Degree of participation** [N=231]  
 [Q29] Throughout the provision of assistance, did you participate in village meetings at which this assistance was discussed?



**Knowledge of the Village Tract Recovery Committee (VTRC)** [N=231]  
 [Q30] Do you know about the Village Tract Recovery Committee?

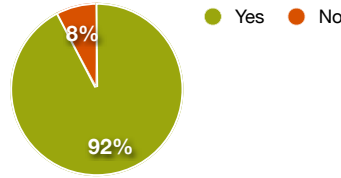




### Present conditions and impact

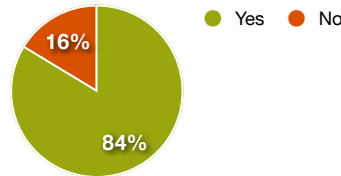
#### Coverage of DP information [N=232]

[Q36] Have you received any information as to how your household and your community can better prepare itself for the impact of future disasters?



#### Concrete steps taken based on received DP information [N=214]

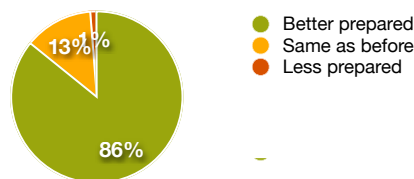
[Q37] After receiving this information, did your household take any concrete steps to improve preparedness?



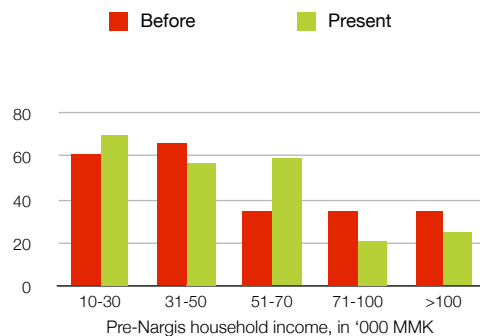
Those respondents that took concrete steps cited strengthening their houses/cross-bracing and household preparedness plans as the two key steps taken.

#### Comparison of perceived disaster preparedness, pre-Nargis and present [N=214]

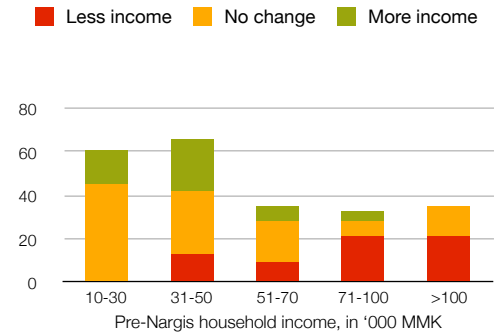
[Q38] Compared to the time before Cyclone Nargis, how prepared do you feel for future disasters?



#### Comparison of household income pre-Nargis and present [N=232] [Q6, 39]



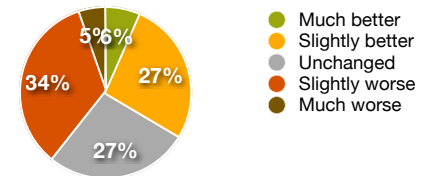
#### Change of household's economic income against pre-Nargis baseline (1) [N=232]



Note that due to the small size of the control group, no differentiation was made between MRCS beneficiaries and control group.

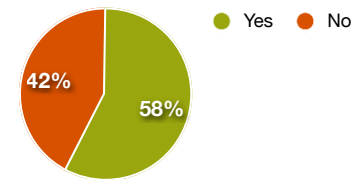
#### Change of household's economic income against pre-Nargis baseline (2) [N=232]

[Q40] Compared to the time before Nargis, how would you describe your economic situation?



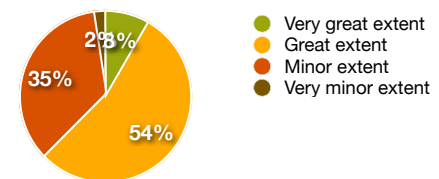
#### Influence of MRCS assistance on households' economic situation [N=232]

[Q41] Has the operation of MRCS had any positive influence on your economic situation?



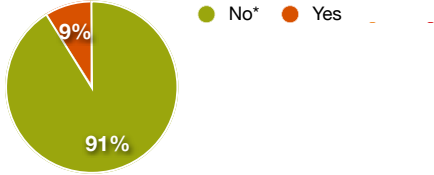
#### Extent of that influence [N=134]

[Q42] To what extent did the MRCS operation influence your current economic situation?



**Negative consequences of the MRCS operation** [N=134]

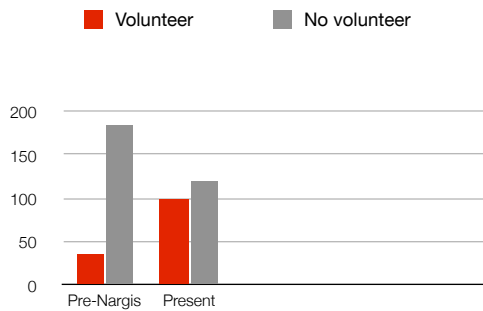
[Q43] Has the operation of MRCS had any negative influences on your household or the community?



\* The few respondents that specified these negative consequences expressed that the operation had contributed to local inflation, and that higher prices had made the recovery more difficult for those that did not receive support from MRCS/IFRC.

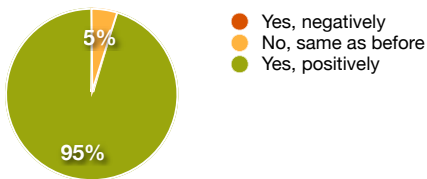
**Volunteers** [N=134]

[Q7,48] Before Cyclone Nargis, was any of your household members a volunteer with MRCS?/Is one of your household members a volunteer of MRCS now?



**Changes in the view of MRCS** [N=232]

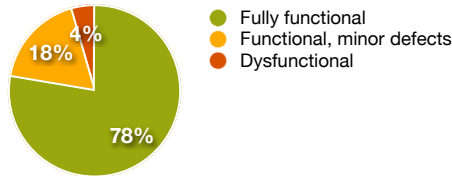
[Q49] Has your view of MRCS altered in any way compared to the time before Cyclone Nargis?



**Sustainability**

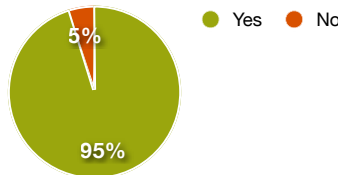
**Present condition of material assistance assets** [N=202]

[Q44] If you received any material goods or buildings, what is its present condition?



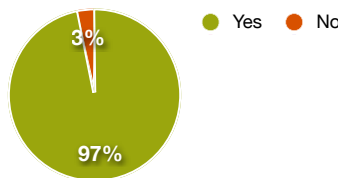
**Ability to maintain material assistance assets** [N=202]

[Q45] Do you have the ability (knowledge and resources) to maintain it in a functional state?



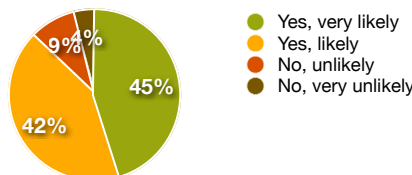
**Need of further training to sustain acquired skills** [N=150]

[Q46] If you took part in any training activities, do you think that these activities need to be continued in order to sustain the skills?



**Perceived sustainability of training programmes** [N=150]

[Q47] Do you think that these activities will continue to be implemented without support from outside the village?



# B. SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

## COMMUNITY SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

FINAL EVALUATION OF THE MRCS/IFRC CYCLONE NARGIS OPERATION

Date: \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / 2011

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview number: \_\_\_\_\_

Township: \_\_\_\_\_

Village tract: \_\_\_\_\_

Village: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Questions marked with a ★ allow for multiple answers

**1. What is the gender of the respondent?**

- a) Female  b) Male

**PART A | PRE-NARGIS CONDITIONS**

**2. How many members did your household have before Nargis?**

- 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  >7

**3. Before Cyclone Nargis, how many household members contributed to the household income?**

- 1  2  3  4  5  6  7  >7

**4. Before Cyclone Nargis, what was the main source of household income?**

- a) Agriculture: Paddy farming
- b) Agriculture: crops/vegetable
- c) Agriculture: livestock and animal products
- d) Fishing
- e) Public service income
- f) Non-agricultural private sector employee income
- g) Non-agricultural business income
- h) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**★ 5. Before Cyclone Nargis, did your household own:**

- a) Agricultural land?
- b) Livestock?
- c) A fishing boat?
- d) A house?
- e) A business?

**6. Before Cyclone Nargis, what was the estimated combined monthly income of your household?**

- 10-30 USD  31-50  51-70  71-100  >100

**7. Before Cyclone Nargis, was any of the household members a volunteer of the Myanmar Red Cross?**

- a) Yes  b) No

**PART B | IMMEDIATE POST-NARGIS CONDITIONS AND RELIEF**

**★ 8. In which ways did Cyclone Nargis affect your household?**

- a) House destroyed
- b) House damaged
- c) Lost crops/vegetables
- d) Fields/paddies affected by saltwater intrusion
- e) Lost livestock
- f) Fishing boat destroyed/severely damaged
- g) Household members that contributed to household income died (number: ) or became disabled (number: )
- h) Other household members died (number: ) or became disabled (number: )
- i) Business destroyed/severely damaged
- j) Household members lost jobs
- k) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Has your household received any direct assistance in the first six months after Cyclone Nargis?**

- a) Yes  b) No  ( → go to question 14)

**10. Who was the main provider of this assistance?**

- a) Myanmar Red Cross
- b) The government
- c) Other agencies (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**11. What types of assistance has your household received?**

- a) Emergency shelter
- b) Food
- c) Non-food items

**12. Was this assistance of sufficient quantity?**

- a) Yes
- b) No (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

**13. Was this assistance of sufficient quality?**

- a) Yes
- b) No (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

**PART C | RECOVERY ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING**

**14. Has your household received any direct material or financial assistance since October 2008?**

- a) Yes  b) No  ( → go to question 18)

**15. Who was the main provider of this assistance?**

- a) Myanmar Red Cross
- b) The government
- c) Other agencies (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**16. Aside from assistance referred to in question 15, has your household received direct assistance from other providers?**

- a) No
- b) Yes (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**★ 17. What types of assistance has your household received?**

	How would you rate the quality?				How would you rate the adequacy?			
	Ver	Lo	Ave	Hig	Ver	Lo	Ave	Hig
	y	w	rag	h	y	w	rag	h
a) House	low			high	low			high
b) Water tank/system								
c) Latrines								
d) Seeds								
e) Productive equipment								
f) Financial assistance								
g) Other (specify)								

**18. Has your household received any training since October 2008?**

- a) Yes  b) No  ( → go to question 22)

**19. Who was the main provider of this training?**

- a) Myanmar Red Cross
- b) The government
- c) Other agencies (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**20. Aside from assistance referred to in question 19, has your household received direct assistance from other providers?**

- a) No
- b) Yes (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_



★ 21. What types of training has your household received?	How would you rate the quality?				How would you rate the adequacy?				
	Very low	Low	Average	High	Very low	Low	Average	High	Very high
a) Health									
b) Hygiene									
c) Disaster preparedness									
d) PSP									
e) Livelihood: Agriculture									
f) Livelihood: other									
g) Other (specify)									

**PART D | PARTICIPATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

- 22. After Cyclone Nargis, were you asked by Myanmar Red Cross about your situation and your needs?**  
a) Yes  b) No
- 23. Do you know the reason why certain households received material/ financial assistance from Myanmar Red Cross and others not?**  
a) Yes  b) No  (→ go to question 25)
- 24. Do you think the selection process was fair?**  
a) Yes  b) No
- 25. Do you know households who in your opinion should have received assistance but didn't?**  
a) Yes  b) No
- 26. Did your household or your community (or both) receive any assistance from Myanmar Red Cross?**  
a) Yes  b) No  (→ go to question 30)
- 27. If your household received any assistance from Myanmar Red Cross, to what extent did it meet your household's most urgent needs?**  
a) N/A  b) Fully  c) To a great extent   
d) To a minor extent  e) Not at all
- 28. If your community received any assistance from Myanmar Red Cross, to what extent did it meet your community's most urgent needs?**  
a) N/A  b) Fully  c) To a great extent   
d) To a minor extent  e) Not at all
- 29. Throughout the provision of assistance, did you participate in village meetings that discussed this assistance?**  
a) No, not at all   
b) Yes, sometimes   
c) Yes, regularly
- 30. Do you know about the Village Tract Committee (VTC)?**  
a) Yes  b) No  (→ go to question 33)
- 31. Do you know who represents your village at the VTC?**  
a) N/A  (no village representative exists)  
b) Yes  c) No  (→ go to question 33)
- 32. Did you discuss assistance with your village representative?**  
a) Yes, regularly   
b) Yes, sometimes   
c) No
- 33. To what extent do you feel were the concerns of your village addressed?**  
a) Fully  b) To a great extent   
c) To a minor extent  d) Not at all
- 34. Aside from discussions with the village representative, did you provide feedback to Myanmar Red Cross?**  
a) No (→ go to question 35)   
b) Yes, through the letterbox system   
c) Yes, through Myanmar Red Cross volunteers   
c) Yes, through other channels

- 35. To what extent do you feel that the concerns you have raised were addressed?**  
a) Fully  b) To a great extent   
c) To a minor extent  d) Not at all

**PART E | PRESENT CONDITIONS AND IMPACT**

- 36. Have you received any information as to how your household and your community can better prepare itself on the impact of future disasters?**  
a) Yes  b) No  (→ go to question 38)
- 37. After receiving this information, did your household take any concrete steps to improve preparedness?**  
a) No   
b) Yes (describe) \_\_\_\_\_
- 38. Compared to the time before Cyclone Nargis, how prepared do you feel for future disasters?**  
a) Better prepared   
b) Same as before   
c) Less prepared
- 39. What is the current estimated combined monthly income of your household?**  
10-30 USD  31-50  51-70  71-100  >100
- 40. Compared to the time before Cyclone Nargis, how would you describe the present economic situation of your household?**  
a) Much better than before   
b) Slightly better than before   
c) Same as before   
d) Slightly worse than before   
e) Much worse than before
- 41. Has the operation of Myanmar Red Cross any positive influence on your current economic situation?**  
a) Yes  b) No  (→ go to question 44)
- 42. To what extent did the Myanmar Red Cross operation influence your current economic situation?**  
a) To a very great extent  b) To a great extent   
c) To a minor extent  d) To a very minor extent
- 43. Has the operation of Myanmar Red Cross had any negative consequences on your household or the community?**  
a) No   
b) Yes (describe) \_\_\_\_\_
- 44. If you received any material goods or buildings, what is its present condition?**  
a) N/A  b) Fully functional   
c) Functional, minor defects  d) Dysfunctional
- 45. Do you have the ability (knowledge and resources) to maintain it in a functional state?**  
a) Yes  b) No
- 46. If you took part in any training activities, do you think that these activities need to be continued in order to sustain the skills?**  
a) Yes  b) No
- 47. Do you think that these activities will continue to be implemented without support from outside the village tract?**  
a) Yes, very likely  b) Yes, likely   
c) No, unlikely  b) No, very unlikely
- 48. Is one of your household members a volunteer of Myanmar RC?**  
a) Yes  b) No
- 49. Has your view of Myanmar Red Cross altered in any way compared to the time before Cyclone Nargis?**  
a) Yes, negatively   
b) No   
c) Yes, positively

----- Thank you for your participation in this survey! -----

## C. LITERATURE

- Alexander, J.** (2009): Emergency Shelter cluster review. Cyclone Nargis, Myanmar.
- ASEAN** (2009): A bridge to recovery: ASEAN's response to Cyclone Nargis. Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat
- ASEAN** (2010): Post Nargis needs assessment. ASEAN's pioneering response. Jakarta: ASEAN Secretariat.
- Duly, R., A. McEnroy** (2007): Needs assessment of planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER) in Myanmar Red Cross. IFRC Myanmar Delegation.
- Handby, B., T. Lyshöy-Landiech** (2008): Report on ONS visit to Myanmar for sectoral review of response to Cyclone Nargis, September 6-15, 2008.
- Featherstone, A., J. Shetliffe** (2009): Review of the RCRC Movement response to Cyclone Nargis.
- IFRC** (2008): Magway Community-based health project. Mid-term review, October-November 2008.
- IFRC** (2009): Report on KAP survey concerning community-based health and first aid in Cyclone Nargis-affected areas.
- IFRC** (2009a): Myanmar: Cyclone Nargis. First Year Report. Operations Update No. 25
- IFRC** (2010): Myanmar: Cyclone Nargis. Second Year Report. Operations Update No. 28
- IFRC** (2011): Myanmar: Cyclone Nargis. Third Year Report. Operations Update No. 31
- IFRC/MRCS** (2009): Cooperation Agreement between the Myanmar Red Cross Society and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. March 2009.
- Kauffmann, D., S. Krueger** (2010): IASC Cluster approach evaluation, 2nd phase. Country study, April 2010: Myanmar, Paris/Berlin: URD/GPPI.
- MMRD Research Services** (2009): Shelter kit survey. Final Report - Myanmar 2008.
- MRCS** (2008): A review on the implementation of community based first aid (CBFA) by Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) March-October 2008.
- MRCS** (2009): Myanmar: Cyclone Nargis Operation. Cash-for-work (CFW) program. Project progress report, May 2009.
- MRCS** (2009a): Report on community level agriculture trainings, December 2009. Report by Win Pe and U Than Maung.
- MRCS** (2009b): Restoring the lives and livelihoods of communities affected by Cyclone Nargis. Project completion report, agriculture support program, December 2009.
- MRCS** (2009c): Nargis review. Shelter and livelihood recovery programmes with regard to the effectiveness of accountability and recovery frameworks and community participation achieved, December 2009.
- MRCS** (2011): Rebuilding the lives and livelihoods of communities affected by Cyclone Nargis. Livelihoods Programme Report 2010.
- MRCS** (2011a): Report of the Lessons Learnt Workshop on Cyclone Nargis Operation Management (July 2011).
- Phone S.** (2009): Branch development programme - the review report.

**Shwe Oh** (2011): Cyclone Nargis Operation (Ayeyarwady and Yangon divisions) - impact study report, May 2011.

**TCG** (2008): Post-Nargis Joint Assessment.

**TCG** (2009): Post-Nargis Recovery and Preparedness Plan.

**Tracey, R. et al.** (2010): Mid-term review of the Cyclone Nargis Operation (May 2008 - April 2011).

**Turner, R. et al.** (2008): Inter-agency real-time evaluation of the response to Cyclone Nargis.

**UNDP** (2009): Community-driven recovery: Cyclone Nargis one year on.

**White, H.** (2006): Impact evaluation - the experience of the Independent Evaluation Group of the World bank.

**Win, A.U., M. Fisher** (2009): Disaster management review. Final report, April 2009.

## D. LIST OF PERSONS INTERVIEWED

No	Person	Organization	Location	Function
1	Prof. Dr. Tha Hla Shwe	MRCS	Yangon	President
2	U Maung Maung Khin	MRCS	Yangon	Head, DM Division
3	Dr. Hpone Myint	MRCS	Yangon	Operations Manager
4	Dr. Tun Myint	MRCS	Yangon	Executive Committee member
5	Alasdair Gordon-Gibson	IFRC	Yangon	Head of Operations, Cyclone Nargis
6	Gregg McDonald	IFRC	Kuala Lumpur	Shelter Coordinator, AP Zone
7	Heikki Väättämoinen	IFRC	Kuala Lumpur	Operations Coordinator, AP Zone
8	Nigel Ede	IFRC	Kuala Lumpur	Early Recovery Coordinator, AP Zone
9	Felix de Vries	IFRC	Kuala Lumpur	Shelter Delegate, AP Zone
10	John Gwynn	IFRC	Kuala Lumpur	OD Delegate, AP Zone
11	Bernd Schell	IFRC	Yangon	Head of Delegation
12	Hasan Hamou	IFRC	Yangon	Watsan Delegate
13	Sumitha Martin	IFRC	Yangon	Reporting Delegate
14	Sanjeev Kumar Kafley	IFRC	Yangon	DM Delegate
15	Dharmin Thacker	IFRC	Yangon	Logistics Delegate
16	Gurudatta Shirodkar	IFRC	Yangon	Livelihood Delegate
17	Hamid Gour	IFRC	Yangon	Field Delegate /Acting Head of Operations
18	Srinivasa Popuri	UN Habitat	Yangon	Country Programme Manager, Myanmar
19	Myat Thu Ra	MRCS	Dedaye	Hub Manager (also 6 volunteers)
20	Than Hla Aung	MRCS	Kunyangon	Hub Manager (also 6 volunteers)
21	Myat Thu Rein	MRCS	Bogale	Reporting officer (also 10 volunteers)
22	U Aye Set	MRCS	Pyaypon	Hub Manager (also 8 volunteers)
23	Daw San San Maw	MRCS	Labutta	Hub Manager (also 8 volunteers)
24	U Maung Maung Myint	MRCS	Labutta	2iC, township branch

In addition, several VTRC members from the village tracts of Ma Yan West, Sue Ka Latt, Taw Chike and Shan Kan, as well as representatives from several local government units were interviewed.



## E. LIST OF PREVIOUS REVIEWS

Year	Month	Title	Author(s)	Sectoral focus								
				Shelter	Livelihood	CBHFA	PSP	Watsan	CBDRM	Cap-build.		
2007	May	Needs assessment of planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting (PMER) in Myanmar Red Cross	Ryan Duly, Andy McElroy									●
2008	April	Disaster Management Review (by U Aung Win and Martin Fisher, April 2009)	U Aung Win, Martin Fisher							●		●
	September	Report on PNS visit to Myanmar for Sectoral Review of Response to Cyclone Nargis	Bob Handby, Theresia Lyshöj-Landiech					●				
	November	Magway Community-Based Healthcare Project. Mid-term review	?			●						
	November	Survey of Community Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) on Basic Health, Nargis Operation	MRCS, IFRC			●						
2009		KAP Survey Report 2009	?									
	January	Review of the RCRC Movement response to Cyclone Nargis	Andy Featherstone, Jo Shetcliffe	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	January	Post-Relief Distribution Monitoring Report (internal report)	IFRC									
	February	Shelter kit survey	MMRD research	●								
	February	Progress report "Cyclone Nargis Operation in 2008" Community Based Health & First Aid (CBHFA) programme	MRCS, IFRC			●						
	March	Branch development programme. The Review Report	Dr Phone Saing									●
	April	Emergency Shelter Cluster Review: Cyclone Nargis, Myanmar	Jessica Alexander	●								
	May	Cash-for-Work (CFW) Programme - Project Progress Report	MRCS, IFRC		●							
	November	Mid-term Review: Myanmar First Aid & Safety / Community-Based First Aid Programme				●	●					
	December	Report on community-level agriculture training	Dr Win Pe, U Than Maung		●							
	December	Nargis review: Shelter and livelihoods recovery programmes with regards to the effectiveness of accountability and recovery frameworks and the community participation achieved	BRC, JRC, NLRC, IFRC	●	●							
	December	Restoring the lives and livelihoods of communities affected by Cyclone Nargis. Project completion report, Agriculture Support Programme	MRCS, IFRC		●							
2010	March	Mid-term review of the Cyclone Nargis Operation	Richard Tracey, Malcolm Simmons, Patrick Muller, Aung Ko Ko, Tin Tin Kyaw, Khin Maung Oo	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	July	Report on Community-Level Agriculture Training	Dr Win Pe, U Than Maung, U Aung Thaung, U Khin Maung		●							
2011	January	Phase 1 Household Shelter Beneficiary Data Base Report (draft)		●								
	May	Impact study on health programme (Nargis Operation)				●						

## F. PROGRESS AGAINST OBJECTIVES\*

Program	Indicator	Planned Activity	Target	Unit	Implementation Period	Completed	On-going	% complete
Shelter	% of vulnerable households with storm resistant shelter	Construct HH Shelter Phase I	7,610	Shelters	05.2009 - 12.2009	7,610	0	100.00
		Construct HH Shelter Phase II	8,766	Shelters	01.2010 - 03.2011	6,591	1,255	75.19
		<i>Construct HH Shelter Phase III</i>		<i>Shelters</i>	<i>On hold</i>			
	% of people having access to safe havens	Construct RC Posts Phase I	100	RC Posts	07.2009 - 03.2011	100	2	100.00
		<i>Construct RC Posts Phase II</i>		<i>RC Posts</i>	<i>On hold</i>			
		Construct Schools	25	Schools	10.2009 - 08.2010	25	0	100.00
		<i>Construct multi-purpose shelters</i>		<i>Com. shelter</i>	<i>On hold</i>			
		Construct Rural Health Sub-Centres Ph. I	10	Health centre	11.2009 - 07.2010	10	0	100.00
Construct Rural Health Sub-Centres Ph. II	10	Health centre	08.2010 - 12.2010	10	1	100.00		
Repair community buildings	225	Com building	07.2009 - 03.2011	225	0	100.00		
Livelihood	# of households using markets for provision of households needs	Implement CFW project	9,000	Beneficiaries	10.2008 - 12.2010	7,444	0	82.71
	# of households that have increased use of community assets	In-kind LH Asset Recovery	4,000	Beneficiaries	05.2009 - 09.2009	3,994	0	99.85
		a) Fertilizers and cash support for monsoon paddy 2009						
		b) Agriculture (summer paddy 2010, vegetables, crops)	2,374	Beneficiaries	12.2009 - 07.2010	2,374	0	100.00
		c) Livestock (prigs, ducks, chicken)	2,529	Beneficiaries	12.2009 - 12.2010	2,529	0	100.00
		d) Small business	1,214	Beneficiaries	02.2010 - 02.2011	1,214	0	100.00
		e) Fishery (boats, nets, fishing gear)	4,528	Beneficiaries	03.2010 - 03.2011	4,528	0	100.00
	f) Fertilizers and cash support for monsoon paddy 2010	4,721	Beneficiaries	07.2010 - 08.2010	4,714	0	99.85	
# of Village tracts covered with plantation program	Community Plantation - Phase I	43	Projects (VTs)	07.2009 - 09.2009	43	0	100.00	
	Community Plantation - Phase II	15	Projects (VTs)	06.2010 - 09.2010	15	0	100.00	
# of vulnerable households supported with Revolving Fund in women groups	Community level revolving fund for women groups	130	Beneficiaries	04.2011 - 07.2011	130	0	100.00	
Health	% of targeted households practice health prevention and promotion	Conduct KAP survey	4	Surveys	2008 - 2011	2	0	50.00
		Health education sessions	200,000	Persons	2008 - 2011	160,014	0	80.01
		School hygiene promotion activities	116,334	Persons	2008 - 2011	127,410	0	109.52
		CBFA ToT trainers trained	300	Persons	2008 - 2009	300	0	100.00
		Community volunteers trained	5,000	Persons	2008 - 2011	4,358	0	87.16
		Observe TB cases by Red Cross community volunteers	7,000	Cases	2009 - 2011	6,925	0	98.93
		Hygiene promotion activities	100,000	Persons	2008 - 2011	71,993	0	71.99
		Distribute TB care kits for TB cases	7,000	Kits	2009 - 2011	4,900	0	70.00
		Distribute TB sputum containers f TB cases	35,000	Cups	2009 - 2011	20,000	0	57.14
		Distribute mosquito nets for pregnant women & children under 5 years old	35,000	Nets	2009 - 2011	24,216	0	69.19
		Distribute IEC materials to community	100,000	Sets	2009 - 2011	93,215	0	93.22
		# of VT health committees plan for prevention of local major com. dis.	Community Health Committees participate in health action planing	161	Committees	2009 - 2010	161	0
	PSP	Increase community based resources available to provide basic PSP services to affected people	PSP ToT trainers trained	194	Persons	2008 - 2009	194	0
PSP multiplier trained			543	Persons	2008 - 2009	543	0	100.00
Integrated training with CBFA and DM			300	Persons	2010 - 2011	30	0	10.00
Community activities			100,000	Persons	2009 - 2011	70,363	0	70.36
Communities have restored their coping strategies		Distribution of PSP community Kits	668	Kits	2008 - 2010	668	0	100.00
		Distribution of PSP recreation Kits	667	Kits	2008 - 2010	667	0	100.00
Watsan	# of households with access to sustainable safe water	Gal 200 RWCT	850	Tanks	2009 - 2011	533	0	62.71
		Gal 100/200/400 fiber tank	350	Tanks	2009 - 2011	373	0	106.57
		Gal 5,000 RWCT	260	Tanks	2009 - 2011	240	0	92.31
		Earthen pond rehabilitation	400	Ponds	2009 - 2011	389	0	97.25
		Pond Cleaning	100	Ponds	2009 - 2011	100	0	100.00
		New tube well & shallow well	250	Wells	2009 - 2011	216	0	86.40
		New pond	150	Ponds	2009 - 2011	134	0	89.33
		Renovation of tube well & well	400	Wells	2009 - 2011	499	0	124.75
		Workshops a) PHAST training b) Ferro cement tank training	15	Workshops	2009 - 2011	13	0	86.67
	% of beneficiaries using latrines	Pan & pipe distribution	40,000	P&P	2009 - 2011	30,137	0	75.34
		Latrine demonstration	2,000	Demo	2009 - 2011	1,813	0	90.65
		Full package distribution	8,000	Packages	2009 - 2011	4,644	0	58.05
		Red cross post latrine	100	Latrines	2009 - 2011	97	0	97.00
		School Latrine	100	Latrines	2009 - 2011	69	0	69.00

\* as of May 30th, 2011

**Evaluation team**

Mr Floyd Barnaby	International consultant, Banyaneer
Mr Phyto Wai Kyaw	National consultant
Mr Patrick Bolte	Report author, Banyaneer
Mr M. Fitri Rahmadana	Data analyst, Banyaneer

**Acknowledgements**

The evaluators wish to express their gratitude to all interview partners for their openness, to the visited township branches and communities for their hospitality, and to all the members of the MRCS Board and headquarters staff and members of the Federation Delegation for their feedback on preliminary findings. We would also like to thank the IFRC Field Officers Mr San Lwin, Mr Tin Oo, and Mr Than Shwe for finding the time to join us throughout the entire field trip and providing valuable insights, assisting in the translation as well as in the administration of the community survey. The IFRC team of Delegates and Officers in Yangon is thanked for the arrangement of all local travels as well as requested interview appointments, and the provision of key documents. A special thanks to all Township RC Branch Officials and Hub managers, their staff, and RC volunteers for their kind assistance in facilitating the beneficiary survey. Finally, we would like to thank the drivers for taking us to these locations safely.

The report author can be contacted at: [pbolte@banyaneer.com](mailto:pbolte@banyaneer.com)



# The Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement

**Humanity** / The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, born of a desire to bring assistance without discrimination to the wounded on the battlefield, endeavours, in its international and national capacity, to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found. Its purpose is to protect life and health and to ensure respect for the human being. It promotes mutual understanding, friendship, co-operation and lasting peace amongst all peoples.

**Impartiality** / It makes no discrimination as to nationality, race, religious beliefs, class or political opinions. It endeavours to relieve the suffering of individuals, being guided solely by their needs, and to give priority to the most urgent cases of distress.

**Neutrality** / In order to enjoy the confidence of all, the Movement may not take sides in hostilities or engage at any time in controversies of a political, racial, religious or ideological nature.

**Independence** / The Movement is independent. The National Societies, while auxiliaries in the humanitarian services of their governments and subject to the laws of their respective countries, must always maintain their autonomy so that they may be able at all times to act in accordance with the principles of the Movement.

**Voluntary service** / It is a voluntary relief movement not prompted in any manner by desire for gain.

**Unity** / There can be only one Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in any one country. It must be open to all. It must carry on its humanitarian work throughout its territory.

**Universality** / The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, in which all societies have equal status and share equal responsibilities and duties in helping each other, is worldwide.



For more information on the Cyclone Nargis operation in Myanmar, please contact:

**Myanmar Red Cross Society**

Prof. Dr. Tha Hla Shwe

President

Tel.: +95 1 383 681 (Yangon)

+95 67 419 014 (Naypyidaw)

E-mail: [president@myanmarredcross.org.mm](mailto:president@myanmarredcross.org.mm)

**International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**

Myanmar Delegation

Mr. Bernd Schell

Head of Delegation

Tel.: +95 1 383 682

E-mail: [ifrcmm01@redcross.org.mm](mailto:ifrcmm01@redcross.org.mm)

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies promotes the humanitarian activities of National Societies among vulnerable people.

By coordinating international disaster relief and encouraging development support it seeks to prevent and alleviate human suffering.

The International Federation, the National Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross together constitute the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

