

**Myanmar****Bangkok, 13 September 2017****SITUATION**

During the night of Friday the 25 August 2017, the state of Rakhine in Myanmar, was attacked by armed groups. The Arakhine Rohingya Salvation Army (ARSA) claimed responsibility for the attacks in three northern townships of Rakhine. The Government has officially declared ARSA a terrorist organization which gives the state authorities wide powers of arrest and detention of those suspected of belonging to ARSA. Military operations ensued immediately and have continue to date in townships of Maungdaw, Buthidaung and Rathedaung which have been declared Military Operations areas. The UN and INGOs and the diplomatic missions have all made statements condemning the violent attacks and expressing sympathy for all those affected by the violence. According to the latest displacement figures 300,000 conflict affected people have fled to Bangladesh. Unknown numbers remain displaced in Northern Rakhine, where humanitarian assistance can not reach at this time. Additionally, 27,000 have moved to Central Rakhine. The violent conflict has impacted the whole state but most especially vulnerable communities including women and children. It is important to note the there is a huge psychosocial fear factors and nationalistic sentiments and anti UN and INGO narratives that are drastically affecting ongoing humanitarian intervention. Many humanitarian and development activities remain suspended, as local staff are intimidated and access is denied by the government. The existing IDP camps in Central Rakhine are severely affected by the lack of services.

NEEDS

The conflict has put the Rakhine state in a state of crisis. The conflict affected persons find themselves in a desperate situation, with many unmet vital humanitarian needs such as access to all of lifes necessities as they have been displaced by the armed conflict, including, access to food, safe shelter, basic non-food items, safe drinking water, as well as sanitation, hygiene, livelihood activities, protection and adequate nutrition. There is a pressing necessity to provide immediate assistance to minimize loss of life and to ensure that the needs of the most vulnerable are covered first.

STAKEHOLDERS

The following national and international entities are present and doing their best to respond to the crisis:

- National government is contributing to the conflict through military action and they are providing aid to displaced people
- UN Agencies have made advocacy statements and are negotiating for humanitarian access
- NGOs have suspended some activities due to limited access
- Red Cross Red Crescent Movement has been asked to provide aid by the government but have limited capacity, restricted access and is advocating for access for all stakeholders
- Military Is engaged in ongoing military operations in Northern Rakhine, humanitarian support
- National NGOs have more access but few are operating in N. Rakhine
- Civil society groups have more access but few are operational in N. Rakhine
- Faith based groups: Muslims (highly affected, little power and restricted movement, fleeing to Bangladesh) , Buddhists (actively involved in supporting Rakhine communities, mix of moderates and nationalist, these groups are not accepting international aid at this time), Christians (a minority caught in the middle but with some capacity to assist if resources are available)
- All communities in N. Rakhine are in a war zone. Communities in Central Rakhine are host to 120,000 Muslim IDPs from previous displacements and 27,000 recently displaced non-Muslim IDPs. More than 300,000 Muslims have fled across the border to Bangladesh
- Affected communities: the communities in N. Rakhine are severely affected by the ongoing violence. They have little or no capacity to respond to humanitarian needs

The emergency response is currently being coordinated by Government and UN. To ensure that the humanitarian response is well coordinated and complementary, the ACT forum will take part in

meetings with all relevant sector stakeholders (UN, INGOs, LNGOs, Civil Society and Government) and establish an open line of communication with crisis affected persons and communities to ensure a humanitarian response based on participation and feedback.

ACT Alliance

ACT Alliance has been working in Rakhine since LWF started humanitarian work in 2012. Christian Aid is also working in the Rakhine state through local organizations. Both are now planning to help people affected by the conflict. ACT Alliance works in areas affected by the conflict, and is assessing the impact of the conflict to better understand the needs and vulnerabilities. In addition, ACT Alliance is currently monitoring the situation and is preparing a rapid needs assessment to have an in-depth context analysis and better understanding of existing vulnerabilities depending on access to the affected areas.

In collaboration with relevant stakeholders, the ACT Myanmar forum has identified a gap in humanitarian aid and has resolved that if funded, it will have the capacity to properly bridge the identified gap. The ACT forum is planning on submitting a funding proposal to provide humanitarian aid to ensure that the conflict affected persons' basic needs are met with regards to shelter, food, NFIs/cash, WASH, protection and livelihood.

ACT Alliance is ready to respond, providing humanitarian aid to targeted conflict affected households in the coming months. Furthermore, ACT Alliance will engage in advocacy on the national and international level to ensure that the voices of those affected by the conflict are amplified.

Any funding indication or pledge should be communicated to the Head of Finance and Administration, Line Hempel (Line.Hempel@actalliance.org)

For further information please contact:

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