

In focus: Forgotten crisis - Myanmar

Conflict between government forces and non-state armed groups has affected Myanmar for over 50 years. More than 640,000 people are displaced and a further 480,000 people are thought to be seeking refuge elsewhere.^{3,4} The Kachin conflict in Myanmar was the top forgotten crisis on the FCA index in both 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. Myanmar is the most frequently occurring country on the index, appearing every year since 2003-2004.

Myanmar is also highly prone to natural hazards, including floods, landslides, cyclones, storm surges, earthquakes, forest fires and drought. It is top of UN OCHA's list of at-risk countries in the Asia-Pacific regions, with projections that it is likely to experience a medium to large-scale natural disaster approximately every two years.⁵

In 2014, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement (ICRC) included Myanmar in its list of top

six under-funded operations, with a funding gap of around US\$20 million.⁶ As at end July 2014, the UN-coordinated appeal for Kachin and Rakhine States was 43% funded, leaving a funding gap of almost US\$109 million.⁷

Humanitarian funding to Myanmar has fluctuated over recent years. Between 2004 and 2007, it increased slowly year on year but remained low according to the FCA funding indicator, with only US\$57 million received in 2007 from all donors, and US\$12m from EU institutions. The EU institutions, which use the FCA index as a key tool for ranking and prioritising emergencies, have been the top donor to Myanmar for the last five years.

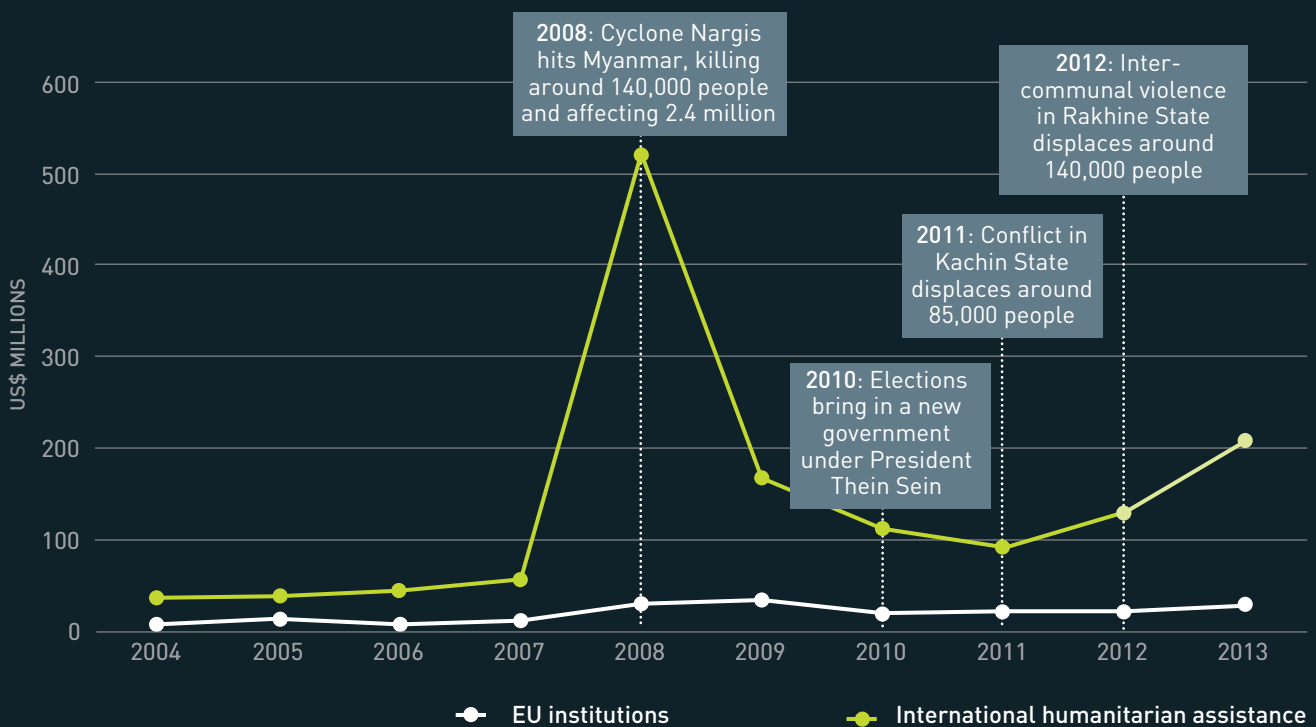
In 2008, funding from all donors peaked dramatically when Cyclone Nargis made landfall in the Ayeyarwady and Yangon Divisions, killing around 140,000 people and devastating the lives and livelihoods of an estimated 2.4 million. The UN's

initial humanitarian appeal was 96% funded within two months of the emergency, and the revised appeal for over US\$477 million received contributions of US\$349 million (73% of requirements). Including contributions outside of the UN appeal, humanitarian assistance to Myanmar in 2008 reached a record high of US\$522 million.

From 2009 to 2011 there was a significant decrease in humanitarian assistance to the country, though not to pre-Cyclone Nargis levels. 2012 saw a 41% (US\$38 million) increase to US\$130 million and, in 2013, a total of US\$205 million was received, predominantly as contributions to the two separate UN-coordinated appeals for Rakhine and Kachin States, which were 81% and 52% funded respectively. Despite these increased levels, the funding shortfall remains significant.

FIGURE 4.9

Humanitarian assistance to Myanmar



Source: Development Initiatives based on the ECHO FCA index, OECD DAC data for 2004 to 2012 and UN OCHA FTS data for 2013