

November 2008 MCG Newsletter

Last Updated Monday, 17 November 2008

Greetings from the Myanmar Charity Group.

We are very grateful for your help since the human, ecological, and economic catastrophes brought by Cyclone Nargis. Not only were coastal and delta areas devastated, but all of the country was affected, in human and material terms. From scenes of death, destruction and despair, the people of Myanmar have responded with amazing resilience, hope, and hard work. The Myanmar Charity Group has traveled to the most remote locations, by bus, car and boat to evaluate losses and survey the situation. All of our efforts are absolutely on a volunteer basis; no part of a contribution goes to "overhead" or "administrative" costs. Whatever a person who can afford to give — that is exactly what the people in need get — and we appreciate your feedback on our efforts. Where it is feasible, we work with other NGOs to extend and improve our efforts. Our priorities are food, shelter, medicine, education, and micro-financing of grass-roots business ventures. For example, we are even more determined to help people plant fruit trees and reclaim rice fields than we are to distribute cases of fruit and bags of rice in a time of crisis.

The Aung Chan Thar School Project in Maw Gyun is a great example of the ability to work with local resources to build a school that will provide a clean and safe atmosphere for students and teachers. Follow the progress on this recent construction project on our website. All over the countryside, teachers have come to teach the children, in return for food and other supplies. "Bartering for knowledge" is workable, and it works. We will continue to identify and then implement such creative and cost-effective solutions.

Recovery is not the task of months, but of years. Needs will continue to exceed supplies for some time to come, but careful evaluation, planning, and development of human and natural resources is the best investment that can be made, in a place where people who were poor and disadvantaged in so many ways before Nargis arrived have suffered so grievously and lost so much since, and still have not given up hope for the future of their children, and their society.

It costs so little to provide so much. A large mosquito net, which will prevent dengue fever, hemorrhagic fever in children, and malaria, costs \$10; so does a plastic sheet large enough to cover a roof, and keep a family dry. An entire family shelter, including traditional materials, tools, and labor, costs \$180.

We are grateful that you continue to visit us here, to see what is being accomplished, and where we are headed.

Give a little! Help a lot!

MyanmarCharityGroup.org