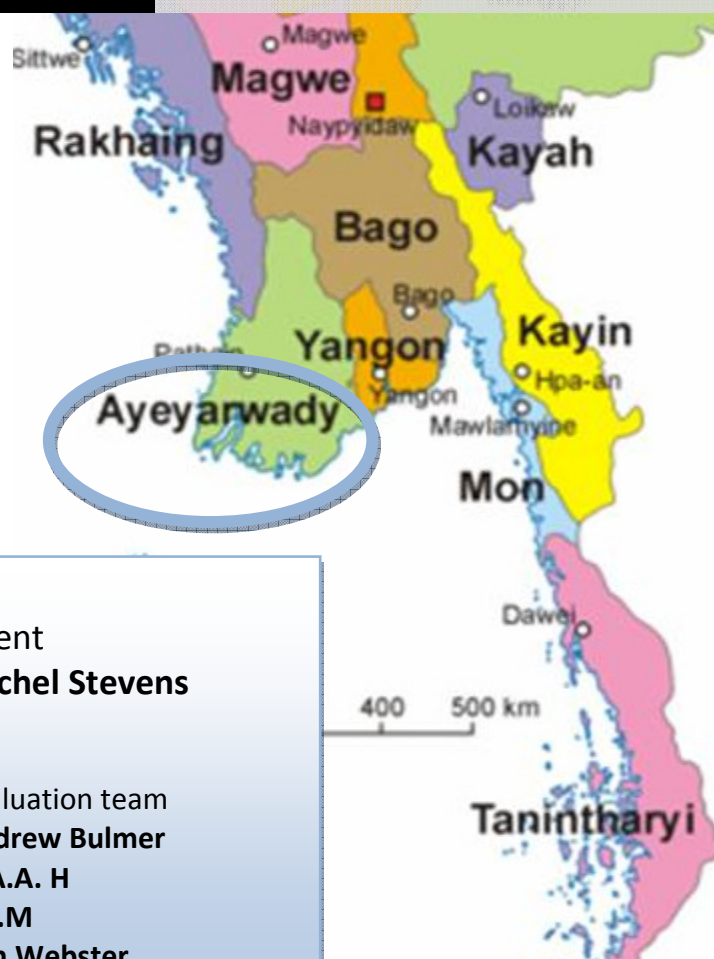


**Cyclone
Nargis,
Myanmar**

Evaluation Report

February 2010



Client
Rachel Stevens

Evaluation team
Andrew Bulmer
N.A.A. H
S.T.M
Ben Webster

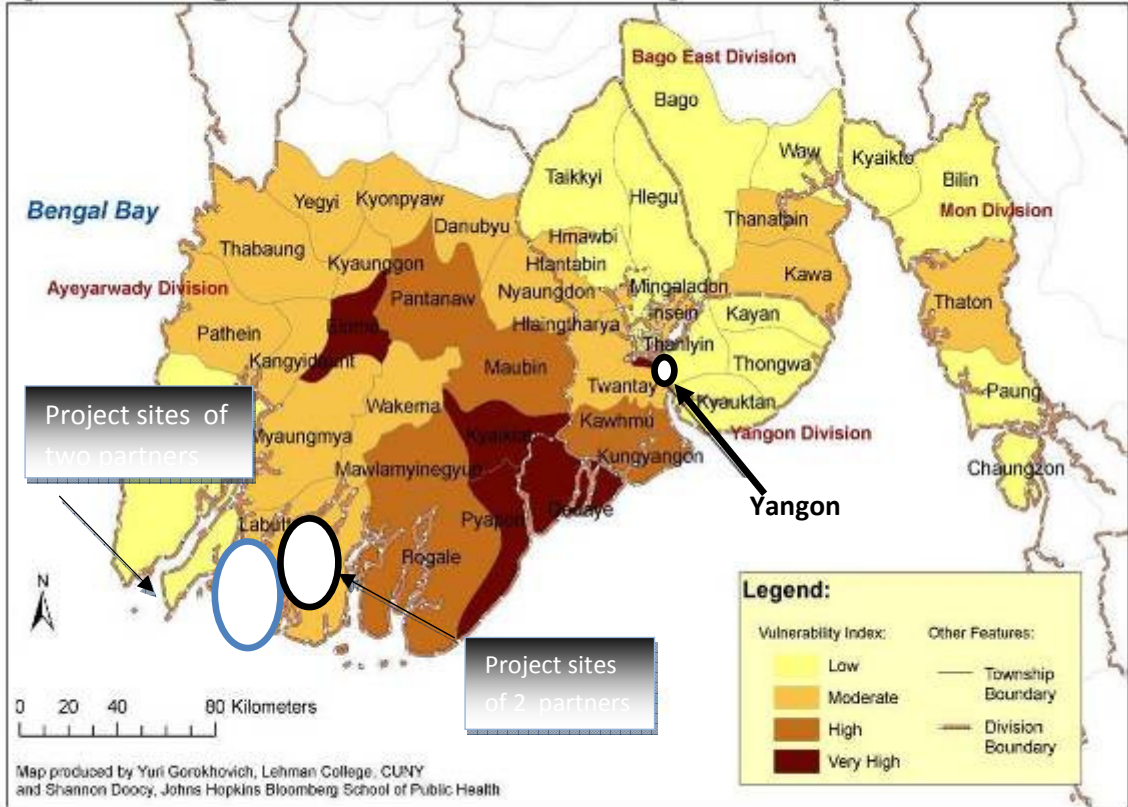
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Map

Cyclone Nargis: Most Affected Areas by % of Population and Area



Abbreviations

| | |
|-------|---|
| ASEAN | Association of Southeast Asian Nations |
| ALWG | Accountability and Learning Working Group |
| CBDRM | Community-Based Disaster Risk Management |
| CBA | Capacity Building Adviser |
| CD | Country Director |
| CLTS | Community-Led Total Sanitation |
| COG | Crisis Operations Group |
| CR | Country Representative |
| DEC | Disasters Emergency Committee |
| DMD | Disaster Management Director |
| DMO | Disaster Management Officer |
| DMT | Disaster Management Team |
| DMU | Disaster Management Unit |
| DRR | Disaster Risk Reduction |
| DRRO | Disaster Risk Reduction Officer |
| GoUM | Government of the Union of Myanmar |
| HAP | Humanitarian Accountability Partnership |
| HI | Handicap International |
| IPO | International Projects Officer |
| INGO | International Non-Government Organization |
| M&E | Monitoring and Evaluation |
| MoU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| PADR | Participatory Assessment of Disaster Risk |
| PPSO | Partner Programme Support Officer |
| RCCC | Red Cross Code of Conduct |
| SPDC | State Peace and Development Council |
| TCG | Tripartite Core Group |
| UN | The United Nations |
| VDC | Village Development Committee |

Tearfund Partners :

Due to the particular sensitivities of the Myanmar context, Tearfund's partner are not specifically named; the description given below is an overview of the five partners Tearfund has worked with in response to Cyclone Nargis.

P1 INGO, based in US, with regional office for Asia in Bangkok, and country office for Myanmar in Yangon; longstanding partner of Tearfund in Myanmar and Asia generally; receiving the majority of appeal funds

P2 INGO, based in the UK, but with country office for Myanmar in Yangon; focus on disability issues; new partner for Tearfund as a result of Cyclone Nargis

P3 Local Church partner; largest grouping of national denominational organization; new partner for Tearfund as a result of Cyclone Nargis, and receiving the largest allocation of funds to local partner

P4 Local Church partner; a smaller grouping of national denominational organization; new partner for Tearfund as a result of Cyclone Nargis

P5 Local Church partner; national denominational organization; longstanding partner of Tearfund in Myanmar.

Acknowledgements

The evaluation team would like to thank all the staff of Tearfund's partners in Myanmar, as well as the beneficiaries who met to share their thoughts with us. We know that we occupied their valuable time and hope that this study was worth their efforts. Our particular thanks go to N.A.A.H, Partner Programme Support Officer and Rachel Stevens, Disaster Management Officer, for the many practical matters they dealt with that allowed us to carry out this assignment. Likewise, we trust that this reads as an encouragement to them for what they have achieved together.

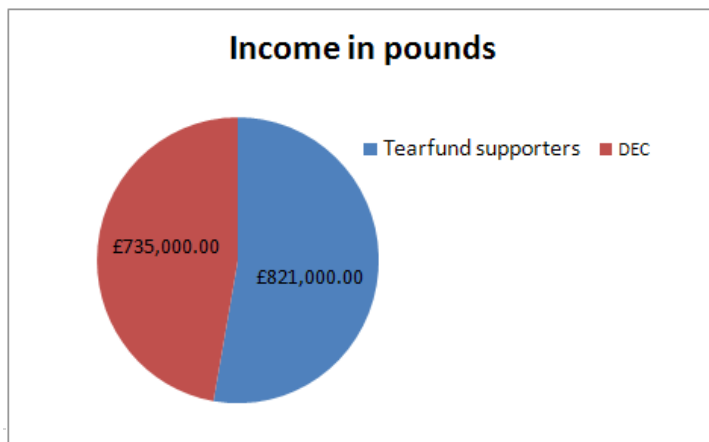
1.0. Executive summary

The focus of this evaluation is on the effectiveness of **Tearfund's support for partners** in achieving the goal of its strategy in Myanmar. It is not an evaluation of partners' work. At the same time an assessment of what was achieved on the ground has to be done. This evaluation provides evidence of the effectiveness or otherwise of Tearfund's support in terms of its impact on beneficiaries and partners.

The strategy goal was:

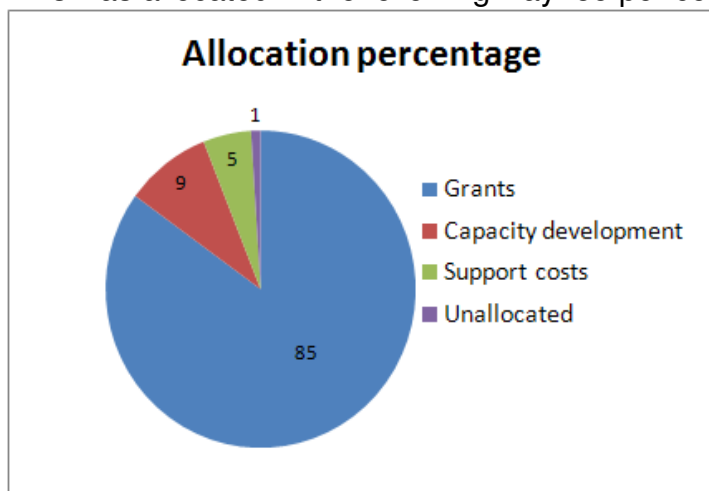
'the recovery of the cyclone-affected communities within southern Myanmar by 2011 with the purpose of supporting partners to address the immediate crisis and the recovery needs of people affected by Cyclone Nargis and assist in rebuilding of communities that are more resilient to disasters.'

Tearfund worked with two types of organisations to achieve this: INGOs and churches, totalling five agencies in all.



A sum of £1,556,000 was raised (£821,000 from supporters [53 per cent] and £735,000 from the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC) [47 per cent]).

This was allocated in the following way: 85 per cent in grants, five per cent in capacity development and nine per cent in support costs. As of September 2009, one percent remains unallocated. Two additional posts were created to manage the response: a DMO based in the UK and a PPSO based in Myanmar. An alliance was also formed with Tear Netherlands, although it financed its partners directly. However, Tear Netherlands gave Tearfund UK support to carry out some monitoring functions on its behalf.



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1.1. Findings

Over the 21 months of activity to date, the five partners have achieved a great deal. The most successful **outputs** have been the houses. A total of 529 have been built, in addition to houses built for those with disabilities. WASH activities (including the construction of latrines, ponds, wells and a water purification plant), livelihood restoration (including the provision of boats, fishing nets, pigs, rice mills and rice banks), disaster risk reduction (DRR) training and a disability resource centre, all worked well. The less successful activities have been the provision of chickens, agricultural inputs, revolving loans and trauma counselling. The reasons for these activities being less successful include salination of the fields and delay in being able to purchase and therefore distribute inputs.

The key **stakeholders**, namely the beneficiaries in all the communities the team visited, were happy with project work that was carried out. This was an impressive finding, even taking into account the fact that in Myanmar people are not encouraged to complain. There was some small reservations expressed in one project sites visited, but these were shared with gratefulness too. The staff of all organisations developed new skills and experiences. Those from P1 and P2 were more skilled and better supported. However, staff in P1 were uncertain about the length of ongoing contracts. This is also the case with Nargis-related appointments within P3 and P4. In addition, the roles and responsibilities of these church appointees were not clear. They were also required to fit project work around their ongoing church responsibilities. Senior management in all the partners went through many trials in matching the needs of the people with the values and capacities of their organisations. Their relationship with Tearfund is also a robust one and was much valued. The areas of greatest challenge for P3 and P4 were completing the Tearfund partnership agreements, proposal writing and issues around impartiality; the greatest challenge for P1 and P2 related more to issues around scale-up and proposal writing.

Tearfund's quality assurance standards were delivered in the main, although there was much discussion and soul-searching on the issue of impartiality in relation to P3 and P4. Eventually, P3 agreed to a project to build 20 houses for Buddhist and Hindu beneficiaries. The project was a success. The team found little evidence of downward accountability in its formal sense, but it was clear that people made their opinions known through field workers or village leaders, for example through feedback on the house design. P2's advocacy work was impressive and had an impact at national level. However, there were no examples of other partners engaging in advocacy at this level. Women were encouraged to work on committees and their views were being taken into account. P1 made efforts to 'hear' from children and to plan for their needs. Others did not. Conflict was not an issue in the communities. The people themselves resolved any tensions that arose because of the allocation of resources. The local environment was not being threatened by any project activities and local resources were being used. The DRR activities were very encouraging, equipping people to face the uncertainties of the future and building their confidence.

The **impact** as a result of the strategy was that people in communities were more self-confident than before, having worked with field staff to deliver practical benefits to themselves and their neighbours. 'Our eyes have been opened,' was a comment echoed by a number of beneficiaries. 'We are closer together than before,' was another comment. In the more exposed areas of the delta, this was the case in a practical sense too. Now, new houses are built in settlements whereas before people lived in isolated plots. A pastor said that the cyclone had brought his people closer to God and to one another. In the aftermath of the storm, the church had sheltered and fed people and had been repaid with kindness since. There has also been a proliferation of committees to maintain community activities. In the communities where there were DRR activities, people now have a greater sense of confidence about dealing with an unpredictable future. New ideas and new faces have entered their communities. Before Cyclone Nargis, only two international agencies worked in the delta area; at the height of the response, there were around 30 active in the area. The cyclone opened up 'political space' that allowed the people to respond spontaneously to the needs of their neighbours.

However, despite all these achievements, the consensus is that people have not yet recovered the standard of life they experienced before Nargis. This is due to factors beyond the control of the partners and Tearfund's appeal strategy. Destroyed mangrove forests, depleted fish stocks, and an increase in the rat population were given as the main reasons for this. The salination of fields and the death of wealthier landowners have also reduced employment opportunities for farmworkers.

1.2. Lessons learned

Initial response

The response was good. However, in the early stages:

(1) There were difficulties accessing and disseminating information about the scale of the disaster.

The lesson learned from this was the need to update Tearfund's emergency response procedures, including the use of out-of-hours teleconferences to agree a response and a system for the Church and supporter relations group at Tearfund to get appropriate information to supporters as soon as possible.

(2) There were also difficult choices to be made about which organisations to partner with because none had Disaster Management (DM) capacity.

The lesson learned from this was the need to have a decision-making flow chart which allows greater objectivity on how Tearfund should best respond to any emergency, in light of the scale of need and coverage, presence and capacity of partners.

(3) There were no guidelines or checklists to hand to partners to help them organise their disaster response.

The lesson learned from this was the need to create a Disaster Management Unit (DMU) with a specific remit to support partner-led disaster management responses.

Disaster management team secondments

The immediate availability of the International Projects Officer (IPO) and her expertise was much valued. However, it turned out that Tearfund's major partner was desperately short of expertise in key areas of its operations. This was primarily in management support for the programme coordinator and in finance.

The lesson learned from this is that if Tearfund is going to invest significant resources in a partner (73 per cent of its grant budget in the case of P1), it should identify in dialogue with that partner the key areas where expertise is required. If that cannot be supplied by the partner itself, DMT should second personnel with that expertise to the organisation.

Building the capacity of church partners

The regional team made the right decision to support P3 and P4, despite their lack of experience and capacity in DM. There is a network of local churches in the disaster-affected area. They responded spontaneously after the disaster and with more professionalism later with Tearfund's support.

However, there were distinct challenges faced in working with them in contrast to working with an INGO.

The lessons learned from this experience of partnering with churches in DM have been:

(1) The process of assessing potential church partners leading to a formal agreement needs to be adapted to take into account their distinct organisational culture, which is not that of an INGO.

(2) An ongoing 'accompanying' presence of a Partner Programme Support Officer (PPSO) was invaluable in building up the confidence and capacity of church personnel.

(3) Only with a great deal of effort could church personnel come close to reaching the proposal and report writing standards required by Tearfund. This was a draining process for them.

Capacity development

The quality of capacity development training was generally high. It was also the right strategy to emphasise this in the light of low partner capacity in DM.

However, despite genuine efforts in this area, the results were not as efficient or effective as hoped for.

The lessons learned when reviewing the capacity development programme were:

- (1) There was overlap and a lack of coordination in the provision of training by donors (despite Tearfund's attempts to avert this).
- (2) Trainees were not targeted by line managers to learn specific skills.
- (3) Trainees were not made accountable for what they learned by line managers when they returned to their work situations.

Choice of partners

The decision to partner with two new local church bodies (P3 and P4) longer term, instead of the national body (P5), was the right one. The decision, even though unconventional, to partner with P2 was strategic and had impact at a national level. The decision to invest in P1 to deliver the majority of Tearfund's DM interventions turned out to be the right one, given the lack of choice open to Tearfund.

However, in each case, there was an element of risk and adaptation was required.

The lessons learned from this choice of five partners to deliver the strategy were:

- (1) The importance of investing time and money in building the capacity of local churches through their structures. This is because that investment will have a long-term impact since it builds on existing structures, namely the local church. These churches will remain and will continue to have ongoing links with their conventions for further input and training.
- (2) The importance of respecting the strategic intention of P2 which wanted to respond to the disaster, but in its own way. This challenged a number of assumptions associated with a DM response.
- (3) If Tearfund is forced, through limited choice, to invest most of its money in one partner to deliver the DM response, it is important to identify areas where the partner lacks expertise and then supply the partner with people to carry out those tasks.

Impartiality

It was the right decision to challenge P3 to work with beneficiaries outside of its people/faith group in one of its programme areas, thus abiding by the Red Cross Code of Conduct (RCCC) and with Tearfund supporters' wishes.

However, the challenge was deeper and more complex than was first apparent

The lesson learned from this was:

- (1) The need to apply a 'good practice' principle in full knowledge of the context and to anticipate its implications.

1.3. Was the strategy efficient?

The evaluation team has judged that the appeals strategy was efficient (apart from the training dimension). Tearfund achieved this by focusing a large portion of grant money

and time on one INGO partner (P1), who delivered the required outputs. It was a strategy that was to some extent forced upon Tearfund because of the lack of other agencies through which it could work. It was also a strategy with risk, given that much depended on one agency. However, given those two factors, it proved to be an efficient channeling of resources. The capacity development inputs through training, however, could have been more focused and accountable and therefore been more efficient.

1.4. Was the strategy effective?

The team has also judged that the appeals strategy was effective. The decision to forge links with new church partners (P3 and P4) was right despite a clash of organisational cultures, and limited outputs. It was a decision also in line with Tearfund's long term HIAF objectives for the country. The appeals strategy states that it would 'support partners to address the immediate crisis...' This immediate response was carried out most effectively through the informal network of churches in the disaster area. It was therefore the right strategy to build on these existing resources and capacities and to make them more effective for future responses.

The strategy also states that it will 'assist in rebuilding of communities that are more resilient to disasters'. The range of outputs outlined in this report describes what has been achieved in this area. Each collective activity has helped to rebuild communities, physically, socially and spiritually. The quality of work has been good, as the beneficiaries have testified.

2.0. Background

Cyclone Nargis struck Myanmar overnight on 2–3 May, 2008, hitting the Ayeyarwady Division and passing into Yangon Division before reaching the former capital, Yangon. With a wind speed of up to 190 km/hr, the damage was most severe in the Ayeyarwady Delta region, where the effects of the extreme winds were compounded by storm surges which were reportedly more than five metres high in some areas. It was reported that some 2.4 million people were severely affected by the cyclone, 1.4 million of them being in the delta region. Official figures reported 77,738 people dead, with 55,917 missing. Yangon was also badly affected, with an estimated 680,000 people living in severely affected areas.¹ Cyclone Nargis was the worst natural disaster in the recorded history of Myanmar and the world's third deadliest storm ever recorded.

Prior to Cyclone Nargis, Tearfund had a part-time country representative (CR) based in the UK with plans to recruit a capacity building adviser (CBA) to be based in Myanmar. It had two partners and a £200,000 annual budget for its work in Myanmar. In response to Cyclone Nargis, Tearfund received £821,000 from supporters and £735,000 through the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC). Tearfund's Disaster management team (DMT) also provided support, primarily through its IPO. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was also signed with Tear Netherlands, who provided a contribution to help cover the DMO's monitoring responsibilities.

¹ OCHA Sit Rep 16, 20/05/08

Immediately after the cyclone, Tearfund appointed a Disaster Management Officer (DMO) in the UK to manage the appeal and, in October 2008, a PPSO was recruited in Myanmar to support church partners. The DMO function was carried out immediately, as the person who was eventually to fill the position had just come to the end of a previous contract. The DMO reported to the CR; both were based in the UK. The DMO managed the PPSO. Although the DMO had a number of partners in common with the CR, the DMO only worked with them on Nargis-related projects. By November 2008, the Myanmar team had scaled up from being just one part-time person to four full-time positions.

By September 2008, four months after the cyclone, Tearfund had increased its partnership portfolio from two to five: two were INGOs and three were church groups. Eighty-five per cent of the budget was allocated to grants, nine per cent was allocated to the operational support costs, and five per cent was allocated to capacity development, which included training and consultancies. One per cent is currently unallocated.

3.0. Methodology

This evaluation looks at Tearfund's response to Cyclone Nargis, drawing on the perspectives of key stakeholders, and provides findings, lessons learned and recommendations for six perspectives of evaluation – impact, stakeholder, outputs, process, resource and organisational capacity – known to have affected the outworking of the appeal strategy. The terms of reference for the evaluation provided an opportunity to visit the project areas and interview beneficiaries, project staff, senior management of INGOs, churches and Tearfund personnel. The evaluation team was made up of four people, two from the UK and two from Myanmar. Its work included eight site visits and 27 sets of interviews.

The purpose of the evaluation is to assess the extent to which Tearfund was able to implement its appeal strategy for Cyclone Nargis. The focus is on Tearfund's role in supporting partners in implementing the strategy. To gain evidence for this, it was important to visit partners' project areas as well.

The methodology included:

- review and analysis of relevant documentation, including strategy documents, partner proposals and reports, evaluations, staff and consultants' visit reports
- interviews based on the questions outlined in the terms of reference
- semi-structured interviews with beneficiaries, church pastors and project staff in the field
- semi-structured interviews, both face-to-face and by telephone, with Tearfund staff, senior management in INGOs and church leaders

The list of all the interviewees is in the Appendix.

In conclusion, the team reported back its initial findings to those who participated in the interviews and who were able to attend the debrief session in Yangon.

A draft report was circulated to key stakeholders within Tearfund before being finalised by the evaluation team leader.

4.0. Context analysis

The cyclone hit a country that has been ruled by a military junta known as the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) since 1962. Myanmar has a population of 54 million, made up of many ethnic groups, the largest being the Burman. More than 90 per cent of the population is Buddhist. About 2 million are Christian, of whom the largest denomination is Baptist. The country has significant natural resources, with fertile land, teak forests, oil and precious stones. Despite this natural wealth, its HDI rating is 138 out of 182.

When the cyclone struck, the Government of the Union of Myanmar (GoUM) placed restrictions on international agencies, delaying and limiting the number of agencies involved in the response. Eventually, after international pressure, a special meeting of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) foreign ministers was held on 19 May and on 25 May an ASEAN-UN International Pledging Conference led to an agreement to form the Tripartite Core Group (TCG) to 'act as an ASEAN-led mechanism to facilitate trust, confidence and cooperation between Myanmar and the international community in the urgent humanitarian relief and recovery work after Cyclone Nargis hit Myanmar'. The TCG is comprised of the government of Myanmar (as chair), ASEAN and the United Nations (UN), and has played an important role in facilitating the humanitarian response to the cyclone. It has helped to streamline government interactions and decision-making down to a single focal point.

The UK's DEC launched an appeal, through which Tearfund received £735,000. Tearfund supporters provided an additional £821,000. Tearfund's CR for Myanmar was able to visit the country on 20 May, 2008 (having had a visa in place before the cyclone struck), to assess the situation. Since then, six Tearfund staff/consultants have visited to provide training and consultancy services. The DMO, put in position in May 2008, has visited six times and spent 116 days carrying out monitoring and other support-related activities. A PPSO was recruited and started work from October 2008; her role was specifically to support church partners. Immediately after the cyclone, grants were forwarded to two existing partners (P1 and P5). New partnerships were established with five further organizations, although in the event grants were only given to three of them.

Approximately 73 per cent of the grant money, the majority of DEC's contribution, was channeled through one INGO partner (P1), eight per cent through another INGO partner (P2), and 15 per cent through the three churches (P3, P4 and P5). Four per cent is currently unallocated.

There are two important contextual challenges in Myanmar:

- (1) Prior to the cyclone, only two INGOs were working in the delta area – neither were Tearfund partners. They were present as a result of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami. Only a handful of INGOs are registered to work in Myanmar and so the organisational infrastructure to mount a response to the cyclone was minimal. No agencies had any in-country DM experience. Most operations had to start from scratch: from recruiting people to training and equipping them. Because of this, there were limited channels through which donors could channel their funds. This became even more limited within the context of the Christian church, and many church organisations found themselves being completely overwhelmed by offers of funding from new donors.
- (2) It is important to understand the specific dilemmas facing churches as they have responded to this disaster. Churches in Myanmar are registered with the Ministry of Religious Affairs, rather than the Ministry for Social Welfare. As such, they are permitted to engage in religious activities within their own communities. As with all groups in the early stages of the response, the churches reached out spontaneously to people in need and felt comfortable doing so. Later on, however, when plans became more formal and positions had to be communicated to other stakeholders the old caution returned, especially when the church was challenged to care for others and not just for its own community.

An MoU was entered into with Tear Netherlands in order to formalise the cooperation between the two agencies in relation to the cyclone response. The purpose of the MoU was to enhance the monitoring and coordination of relief and rehabilitation activities on the ground.

5.0. Findings

5.1. Impact perspectives

This section identifies the most significant changes which took place as a result of the cyclone, some (but not all) of which can be attributed to Tearfund through its partners. Innovative approaches to programme delivery are also highlighted.

5.1.1. Changes

Environment and people

The most obvious change that took place was to the environment, including loss of ‘community’ in its widest sense. Family members and neighbours were killed, houses and trees torn down and wildlife destroyed. The mangrove swamps are even more depleted than they were before. Fields were salinated, making agricultural land less productive. Water sources were also polluted and damaged. Fishing boats and nets were destroyed and fish stocks have declined. The rat population, on the other hand, has increased because of an absence of predators and because they breed so fast, leading to destruction of crops.

Yet, out of this devastation, many admirable characteristics of the human spirit have shone through. Acts of compassion were spontaneous. ‘I had nearly 30 neighbours take refuge in my house before it also collapsed,’ said one Church leader in Bogale. People

from all ethnic and religious groups set up temporary shelters in his church compound for many months afterwards. They expressed their thanks later by contributing to and helping build the church tower that had fallen during the storm. This was also the experience of the pastor in Pawein in Bogale township. More than 300 people, again from all backgrounds, took shelter in the church and were cared for as best as possible by its members.

On a practical level, that togetherness seems to be borne out in numerous other ways. For instance, P3 was encouraged to develop a second phase of building new houses to reach out to people outside of their faith/ethnic group. As we visited the village, the pastor held the hand of an old friend who was a Buddhist; as youngsters, they had played football together. The old man and his wife explained how their daughter had been a beneficiary of one of these houses. The parents were moved by this act of compassion by the partner, so in turn they decided to give their family pond outside their house to the community from which to draw drinking water. However, in the process, the elderly couple would have to lose their threshing area beside the pond. So the community found them other land on which to do their threshing in thanks for their gift. One act of service was followed by another.

P1 focused its work on the more exposed coastal areas of Labutta. For the shelter construction, this has meant people leaving their isolated plots and moving into a central location, with houses constructed in a straight line parallel to the road or river. They have forged new relationships through many activities to rebuild their community. Examples include: community-owned rice banks and rice mills; piglet distribution, which requires the cash equivalent of one offspring to be returned to a central fund; collective efforts to clean up ponds, re-build wells through CFW; repaying the value of livelihood assets to a common fund. There are more community committees in place to manage these activities and women are taking an active role. The most significant changes in attitude and behaviour have centered around sanitation and DRR activities. People have changed their behavior with the use of latrines. They have also analysed their vulnerabilities, formed committees, drawn up maps and have disaster preparedness plans. Where this has happened, there is more confidence about the future. However, despite all these positive changes, the consensus is that life has still not reached its pre-Nargis level.

INGOs and churches

This is not necessarily the case for the staff working in the INGO community. Before the cyclone, there were only a handful of agencies working in the delta area. At the height of the cyclone response, there were at least 30 in Bogale township and at least 15 in Labutta township. Income levels for these staff members have increased and they now have greater opportunities to learn new skills. Working with expatriates and being exposed to ideas from outside have broadened their horizons markedly. In-country organisations themselves have been challenged to the core, because none had any experience of managing a disaster response, let alone anything on this scale. P1 increased its staffing by 50 per cent and its income trebled within six months of the

disaster. Its donors went from five to 24. P2 moved into a new geographical area and expanded its programme but felt the pressure to deliver a DM programme against its wishes. The churches had to deal with an influx of people, new ideas, money and information which they were not prepared for. Over a period of time, each organisation has adjusted to match its capacity and values with the needs of beneficiaries and the expectation of donors, none of which was easy.

Country

Cyclone Nargis struck when there was a downturn in the world economy. However, this disaster turned the world's attention to the country and increased the level of resources flowing into it. The NGO economy grew markets and service industries in Bogale and Labutta where agencies made their bases.

5.1.2. Innovation

In one sense, every programme was innovative in the Myanmar context, as none of the partners had done anything like this before. However, a couple of initiatives stand out:

1. **Trauma counselling.** Although not directly funded by Tearfund, one organization was spurred into producing a training resource on trauma healing. P3 implemented a programme in the delta based on this resource, resulting in other church groups elsewhere asking them to deliver it in long-standing conflict zones elsewhere in the country where, some say, there is even more need for it.
2. **Impartiality.** P3's Phase Two housing project is the first of its kind – where they have worked with people of another faith/ethnic group. This project has challenged an entrenched assumption within the churches in Myanmar that the church only serves its own people. There are very good reasons for this, namely there is also great need in the Christian community. However, although the experience has been challenging and still raises many questions, the project was successfully carried out.

5.2. Stakeholder perspectives

5.2.1 Introduction

This section looks at stakeholder perspectives on the appeal and projects. The key stakeholders from Tearfund's perspective are its partner organisations. Through its support for them and their field workers, Tearfund also engaged with beneficiaries, another key stakeholder group. All those perspectives will be assessed here.

There were two types of organisation which Tearfund partnered with in response to Cyclone Nargis: the INGO and the church. These have very different purposes, structures, visions, organisational cultures and sets of competencies. Yet, the devastation caused by the cyclone offered them the opportunity to partner with Tearfund in a way that contrasted with previous experiences. This time, it was in the face of a crisis.

In the first instance, Tearfund approached four INGOs, all registered to work in the country. One took an initial interest and partnership documents were completed and signed. However, as time progressed, the organization found itself well supported with

funds from its own supporter base. The administration also took the view that Tearfund's reporting standards were high and would require too much of their time to complete. A second organisation, which specialises in conflict resolution and trauma counselling, also declined Tearfund's offer of financial support for their work with churches, after a number of approaches. The reason the CEO gave was that they were 'not hungry enough' to write a proposal that would meet Tearfund's high standards. They also saw their strength as supporting partners in organisational development/capacity building and trauma healing workshops, rather than directly implementing a disaster response programme.

Two INGOs did partner with Tearfund, one was an existing partner, and the other was new to Tearfund in Myanmar. After some initial hesitation, P1 responded by carrying out a conventional relief-orientated programme. A new unit was set up and reported to their regional office in Bangkok, rather than to the country office in Yangon.

P2, on the other hand, resisted attempts to reshape itself. Instead, it continued to focus on people with disabilities but extended its geographical reach to the affected communities. It continued to use the same approaches it applies elsewhere in Myanmar.

Only P5 of the three church partners was a Tearfund partner prior to the cyclone. It is a national body made up of ethnic and regional groupings. At their invitation, partnerships were established directly with two of the ethnic groupings, of which P3 had greater capacity than P4. In total, therefore, Tearfund partnered with five organisations in response to Cyclone Nargis, two INGOs and three churches.

The issues and perspectives faced by both types of organisation and their beneficiaries differed and so they will be analysed separately.

5.2.2. INGOs

Beneficiaries

The overall reaction from beneficiaries in all the sites visited with both INGO partners was one of appreciation for the work being done. No one voiced a complaint, even though there were opportunities for beneficiaries to do so when partner staff were not present. This positive response is due to the quality of work undertaken. This is the foremost reason and is indisputable. However, it is also important to note that Myanmar culture is a deferential one. People are not encouraged to voice complaints and are not generally consulted in any decision-making. This positive appreciation was also voiced in the context of there being little or no previous input from outside agencies before Cyclone Nargis. Even in the wake of the tsunami in December 2004, only two INGOs worked in the delta area. That said, the consistency of positive beneficiary feedback from all the sites visited was heartening.

This was the case even when limited resources had to be distributed among people of equally pressing need. People set out their own selection criteria. Widows, landless

people and child-headed households were prioritised. Provisions were distributed to the most vulnerable in these groups first. Then lots were cast to decide who would receive the remaining assistance. This was the common pattern, with people accepting decisions made on their behalf.

The changes in behaviour and attitudes in communities where the main partner worked are encouraging. 'Our eyes have been opened,' said one beneficiary. 'We now work more closely together.' People have congregated in settlements as a result of the cyclone. Their new houses are in a straight line (parallel to either a road or river as per the GoUM's decree), thus avoiding the isolation which was a feature of the past. There is a sense that this new community is more proactive, even though, in this particular area, community-based disaster risk management (CBDRM) training is still to be carried out. In other villages here this training was carried out and a DMC formed as a result, people's confidence about managing their future is greater. The DMCs generally have 20 members and are split into five member groups, with each assigned different tasks: early warning, information, administration, emergency and evacuation groups. They have been equipped with a radio, loudspeaker and first aid kits. They are determined not to rely on the INGO for the future. As one person said, 'We are now responsible to write our own history.' CBDRM has been carried out in four of the five communities that were visited. This training has built on the many other cooperative activities that people are engaged in. It is, however, the activity that best prepares them for the uncertainties of the future and is therefore a key input to changing attitudes. In one community, people consider themselves to be 'wiser' now and, interestingly, more able to manage the INGO relationship in the future.

Beneficiaries, however, were not sure how long P1 was going to stay in their communities. Nor were they really clear about who the organisation was, what it stood for and the amount of resources set aside for their particular community.

In P2's project site visited, the beneficiary group is made up of two groups: those who attend the Disability Resource Centre (DRC) in town and those whom it serves in the communities. The DRC serves about 15 clients at present, which is down from 45. The reason for this reduction is twofold. One is financial, namely the organization having to scale down its services in the light of reduced funding. However, the more important reason is a strategic move to raise awareness of disability in the communities in the delta area. People of all ages and types of disability attend the DRC. The clients, though not so able to voice their thoughts, were obviously well cared for. The aim of staff and volunteers alike is to assist them to become as integrated into their communities as possible. The evaluation team did not have time to visit an outreach sub-centre and therefore cannot report on changes in attitudes and behaviour of beneficiaries in these communities. However, from reports received and judging by its reputation alone, its work is impressive.

Staff

There are more staff employed by INGOs on Nargis-related projects than staff working with the churches. The INGO staff are better resourced, given more opportunities for training and are focused on carrying out specific tasks. In the main, they come from outside the delta and are drawn from a wider pool of people (ie different ethnic and faith groups). Therefore, along with receiving more attractive remuneration, they are more qualified and skilled to carry out projects than their church counterparts. The projects they manage are on a larger scale and of a higher quality. The staff of INGOs as a stakeholder group in relation to Nargis arguably have gained as much as the beneficiaries. Prior to the disaster, there were few opportunities to be employed by an INGO. Now, they earn good money and are continually learning new skills, both on the job and through specific trainings. Their behaviour and attitudes have definitely changed, although staff are uncertain about their future beyond April 2010. Part of the downside of this opportunity is the absence of longer-term job security. However, the many things that they have learned can be carried forward into the future, even though their remuneration packages may not.

Senior management

Cyclone Nargis created huge challenges for successive CDs and senior managers in P1. There was an initial hesitation within the country office to respond operationally, with the CD preferring to manage the response by partnering with contacts in local churches. However, under mounting pressure to spend increasing sums of money becoming available at headquarters in the USA, an operational unit was formed to implement the Cyclone programme. This unit was directly responsible to P1's area office in Bangkok. Identifying the reasons for this decision are beyond the brief of this evaluation. However, there was a significant scale-up of personnel in the country, from 200 to 300 in the six months after the cyclone, with DM budgets increasing to three times that of the development work. It is interesting to note that, although both partners have been classed as INGOs, each organisation now only has one expat staff involved in its cyclone work – either the country director (P1) or the programme coordinator (P2).

Relationships with Tearfund have been good, but also robust. P1 appreciated Tearfund's commitment to its work, which has been shown by the DMO making frequent visits to the sites. This has meant that Tearfund personnel ask informed questions and are also known by people working on the ground. Tearfund was not categorised along with other donors. Instead, 'we are partners working together,' was the CD's comment.

At the same time, Tearfund has required much of its partners. Since most of Tearfund's grant allocation to P1 comes through the DEC, proposal and report writing have had to be of a high quality. The best way to get answers to questions, therefore, has been for Tearfund to go direct to the programme coordinator based in Labutta. This route is still taken, even though for the last four months their cyclone programme has come under the authority of the Myanmar CD. Now that the CD is becoming more familiar with the role, she should become the link person between Tearfund and the programme.

For P2, the challenges were no less significant but different in nature. Instead of rapidly adapting structures and projects to meet the needs of a new set of beneficiaries and donors, the leadership maintained its position that it would work only with disability issues in the affected areas by delivering the same programmes and by recruiting new staff who would be on the same salaries as elsewhere in the country. 'The most difficult thing for us was to hold on to our deeply held values: who we are and why we do things the way we do it,' said the CD. It took time for Tearfund to understand that they were not going to 'tick all the DEC's boxes'. The CD felt the demands changed once the DMO saw the work on the ground. Also, the pressure eased up considerably when their projects were funded by Tearfund supporter income, rather than DEC appeal funds.

5.2.3. Church

Beneficiaries

The reaction from all the beneficiaries in the church communities visited was one of appreciation for the work being done. No one voiced any complaint, even though there were opportunities for beneficiaries to do so when staff were not present. This was despite the fact that the quality of work was not as good as that carried out by the INGOs. However, tangible achievements such as building houses, working together on clearing ponds, being given income-earning opportunities with the introduction of livestock and meeting together to plan prevention measures for the future, have all helped build their confidence about the future. 'We have a better and more secure house; before it was thatched and had to be re-roofed every year. Now they are stronger and we have more security,' was the comment from a man in Bogale township.

With one project exception, both church partners have only assisted their own ethnic/faith group. Although the quality of work may not have been as high as in INGO communities, there have been other noteworthy benefits from a beneficiary perspective in that they were assisted by their own church group:

1. Assistance arrived more quickly in the early stages of the crisis. 'The church knew where its people were and was in a position to assist immediately, without the need to have government permission to do so,' said one person. One church leader from Bogale, was wading through the mud and rubble the very next morning, gathering six boats and 16 people from a local village, and was rescuing people in isolated areas in the delta.
2. The church beneficiaries also know that they belong to a wider network of people who will not exit their community. This instilled an added sense of security and an opportunity for continued learning. 'We have got to know the association staff better and we are thankful,' said a beneficiary. This network is not just Myanmar-based: one Church leader made a six-week visit to Singapore and Malaysia to account for funds sent by churches there.
3. Despite their loss and the spiritual trauma experienced as a result of the cyclone, they could express their sense of solidarity by rebuilding church premises with help from outside.

In one village, following on from a first phase of house construction which targeted just one particular ethnic/faith group, P3 expanded the work to include 15 Buddhist and five Hindu families, to build houses, install latrines and clean out a pond for drinking water purposes. The 20 families from Phase Two were all satisfied with their houses. It was the first time that they had come into a working relationship with the church. 'There is now a better relationship between Buddhist, Hindu and Christian than before. There is more sharing between the groups. If something needs doing, everyone comes together. The Hindus will help with bricks for the monastery; the Christians will join in digging the pond and the school,' said the village head man. When talking about their relationship with the two field workers from the Association, villagers commented that 'they are like family'. The Christian community from Phase One, when asked about their relationship with their non-Christian neighbours, said, 'There are only small disputes with us now, but not big ones as before! We have all shared the same suffering!'

Staff

The main characteristics of the church-based staff, compared with their INGO counterparts, are that they are from the same ethnic and religious group as the communities where they work. So, along with language and identity, they also share the same organisational culture. Church calendars and procedures are known, the Church's structure and hierarchy understood. The field worker's face may be unfamiliar to the community but that is the extent of any sense of unfamiliarity. INGO staff members, on the other hand, are part of something totally new to beneficiaries. This novelty also exists when church-based field staff work with non-Christian beneficiaries. 'For me, apart from Sunday when we go to church, God gives us every day to do as we wish,' said the field worker in one village. It took him time to understand the many rituals that the Buddhist carpenters go through when building a house: the spirits they need to worship, the auspicious days on which to work or not, the arrangements in which tools and materials need to be kept. He admitted to being nervous about saying or doing something that might offend the Buddhist and Hindu beneficiaries.

However, the church-based staff, especially those supervising isolated projects in Labutta township, were less well supported than their INGO counterparts. This has resulted in delays of inputs and targets not being met. In one village, the request came from the community that the field coordinators should visit more than once every few months. There was even a request for a telephone to help better communication. There are few 'project' staff and their roles and job descriptions are not clear. They also have to carry on church activities in parallel with project activities. For instance, the project coordinator for P4 was also the pastor of their group's largest church in Yangon. They have certainly learned many new skills, both on the job and through training. This has given them increased self-confidence. The project coordinator for P3 stated that now she can write a project proposal for Tearfund, completing one for any other agency will be easy. This was in large measure possible because of the support given by Tearfund's PPSO to church-based staff.

Church leadership

The Church officers found the process of signing of a Tearfund partner agreement taxing. These comments from the leader of P4 highlight the clash in organisational cultures between Church partners and Tearfund. 'It took a lot of our time. There were many, many questions, some of which I could not answer. The question: why do you do this in this way? Why? All I could answer is that we do it this way because we are a church and we just do it this way! There were many questions about doctrine and belief. It was a new experience for us. It was too much!'

The process was challenging but it highlighted for him some very different core priorities between his organisation and Tearfund. 'We are a church, not an NGO. They must not try to make us like an NGO. NGOs have faith in strategies: we have faith in God. Strategies provide them with money: God through miracles provides us with the money we need. If we become like an NGO, we will decline in our faith.' Also: 'NGOs spend time with paper: we spend time with people. We are very busy people who have to go and meet people everywhere.'

The Church officers also said that the audit process was demanding. However, those staff members negotiating on its behalf had worked in an NGO and so it was not such a surprise or such an ordeal for them.

In both cases, a Grant Agreement and Partnership Covenant were signed. The officers agreed that they had learned much, as had their staff.

5.2.4. Conclusion

Beneficiaries of both organisation types, INGO and church, were happy with the project work that was carried out in their communities, although some reservations were expressed among those in one partner's area. The staff of all organisations developed new skills and experiences. Those from the INGOs were more skilled and better supported. However, in the case of staff employed by P1, the length of their ongoing employment was uncertain. Church staff had ongoing 'employment' security but their roles and responsibilities were not clear. They were also required to fit in this project work around their usual church responsibilities. Senior management from all stakeholders went through many trials in matching needs with the values and capacities of their organisations. Their relationship with Tearfund was valued and was also robust. The areas of greatest challenge for church partners were partnership agreements, proposal writing and issues around impartiality; for the INGOs, the issues centered more on scale-up and proposal writing.

5.3. Output perspectives

5.3.1. Introduction

This section looks at the actual things built, purchased and produced, and assesses whether or not they were of an appropriate quality. Given that the logistical context is an important factor in determining the quality of outputs, access details are given below. The headquarters of Tearfund's five partner organisations are in Yangon.



River transport to the sites

However, they have field offices in the delta. They are isolated locations and difficult to access, especially in the rainy season. Beyond the main towns, all transport is by boat.

In light of the above, the following is an assessment based on how partners have met Tearfund's quality standards, completion times, keeping to budget and works being valued by the beneficiaries themselves.

5.3.2. Successful Shelter and latrines

A total of 530 houses have been built. P2 has also built custom-made houses for people with disabilities. Only one was seen by the evaluation team. It was well built and much



A house and side kitchen built

valued by its owner. Apart from work in one village, which was delayed by six weeks because the government saw mill was closed, all the houses were built to schedule and on budget. P1 produced the original design which was taken and adapted by P3.

The houses are raised on stilts, two foot above ground. The stilts are embedded in concrete two foot under the ground. The floor and the walls are made of bamboo thatch but in some cases the beneficiaries

have replaced the

bamboo floor with wood from their old houses. There is a partition for a sleeping area. The roof is made of iron sheeting with gutters that lead rainwater to a large ceramic water container. The roofing is reinforced with bracing. In P3's Phase Two, the house design was altered following discussions with beneficiaries; an additional but smaller shelter was built on the side of the house, which became the kitchen. In P3's communities, the houses were scattered throughout the existing settlements. In P1 communities, they were built in rows on land allocated to the beneficiaries. Local carpenters were employed to build the houses, whilst the beneficiary provided the labour and fed the workers. The materials were provided by the project. All the

beneficiaries we spoke to were happy with their new houses. One resident commented, 'My new house may not be able to resist another cyclone, but at least it has a better chance than the old one!'

Latrines were also built in P3's Phase Two. The pan and pipes were given to the households. Construction work and digging the pit were the responsibility of the beneficiary. All 20 had been built at the time of the evaluation. P1 has been working on hygiene and sanitation in the majority of its project sites. They have been employing the 'community-led total sanitation' (CLTS) approach, which seeks to eradicate open defecation through engendering feelings of shame and disgust amongst the community, without necessarily providing any inputs for latrine construction, save for design options. This strategy has proved very effective in the Myanmar context and many communities have constructed latrines made of locally available materials. Below is the story of one beneficiary from Labutta:



A latrine in Labutta township

Daw T.M's husband is a fisherman, aged 28 years, and they have three children – two boys (nine and four-and-a-half) and a girl (18 months). Previously they had a latrine but it wasn't a fly-proof one; her husband didn't like to use the non-fly-proof latrine, so he would find his own space outside. He is very shy and quiet.

When they married, his wife was very used to having a toilet and the three children also used the toilet. Her husband was happy to build the latrine for the family. Daw T.M told her husband that other people had stopped practising open defecation. Even if he was the only one to practise open defecation, it could still affect everyone in the community. She told her husband that their children could suffer because of his poor hygiene practice and he has now started to use the latrine. Although other organisations had come before and stressed the importance of using latrines, P1 took its time in explaining the benefits



The water purification plant

Water purification plant

A sophisticated reverse-osmosis water purification plant has been built in one village in Labutta township, under the supervision of P1. Water is taken from a borehole drilled down

to 65m and passed through a series of filters. The plant now provides clean water to the community, and a neighbouring one. It also produces enough water which can be sold to surrounding communities during the dry season to generate income and cover running costs. The village development committee envisages taking responsibility for the plant when P1's support subsides, although P1 is in discussions with a local NGO regarding oversight of the plant and is training three maintenance staff. In addition, there have been many health-related activities linked to this, such as creating rubbish sites for the community. The women have been involved in these initiatives and are taking lead roles in some of them.



Drinkable water from the purification plant

DRR training

P1, as part of its DRR-focused work, has helped to establish community-based disaster risk management committees (CBDRM), which are usually a sub-committee of the village development committee (VDC) and are responsible for managing the community's preparedness and response in case of future disasters. This generally involves allocating roles and responsibilities to community members, including early warning systems, information gathering and sharing, stockpiling of emergency supplies and equipment, assistance provided to vulnerable households and running

community drills on what to do in the event of another cyclone or similar disaster. Much progress can be seen in terms of community organisation and the work has increased confidence and reassurance as to what to do in the case of future disaster.

Disability Resource Centre

From the centre in Bogale, 15 people with disability are given physiotherapy at present and they and their families are instructed how to care for themselves in the community. Also, outreach teams from the centre mobilise communities in remote areas. This involves raising the awareness of people about the difficulties facing those with disability, making access possible and introducing livelihood opportunities. They are also taken through a plan in case of another emergency.

Boats and fishing nets

P1 and P4 were involved in promoting livelihoods by distributing fishing nets, boats and crab traps. This intervention was appropriate, given the high dependence on fishing as a local livelihood. Fish stocks have been depleted by the cyclone, which has negatively

impacted the income of fishermen. This will hopefully improve over the coming years. Fishing boat specification was standardised across communities, something which was generally accepted. Only one type of fishing net was distributed, despite three different types being required for different seasons. Some fishermen had adapted the nets provided to suit the current season. Some beneficiaries shared crab traps between families to increase their impact.



Pig rearing in Labutta township.

Pigs

P4 distributed pigs as part of its livelihoods intervention. These were seen as a good investment as, once fully grown, pigs may give a return of up to 100,000 Kyat at market. Their litters usually produce between six and ten piglets – another good return. The project requires recipients to donate one piglet back to the central fund after their first litter. Pictured left is a beneficiary of the pig distribution in Labutta township.



A rice bank in Labutta

Rice mill and rice bank

P1 was responsible for establishing rice mills, rice banks or threshing machines in five of the communities visited. Again, these were very appropriate interventions, given the local reliance on rice as a

staple crop. The concept of community-run rice banks was familiar to the beneficiaries and therefore achieved good ownership. The rice banks built were reasonably robust and involved local labour. One suggestion to come out of the monitoring reports is that they could also be enhanced to become an evaluation centre. The machinery provided at the mills was procured in region and therefore spare parts were available locally.

Ponds

Open ponds are used to provide communities with drinking water. However, as a result of the cyclone, these were both damaged and polluted. P1 has helped to rehabilitate ponds in a number of communities. These are successful in the wet season but often run dry once the rains stop. Thus, larger-scale rainwater harvesting needs to be maximised wherever possible. The partner has partially addressed this by constructing ferro-cement tanks, which are located next to larger community structures such as schools

5.3.3. Less successful

Chickens

Chicken distributions proved problematic for both partners involved (P1 and P4). The transportation of chickens from other regions with little time for acclimatisation caused an outbreak of Newcastle disease. This killed almost 100 per cent of the chickens P1 was distributing and infected a few of the existing chickens in local communities. Because of a lack of coordination between P1 and P4, P4 failed to learn from the mistakes of P1 and other NGOs and again lost a high proportion of the chickens being distributed due to disease.

Farming

Two partners supported farmers with seed, fertiliser and tool distributions, and one also rehabilitated irrigation systems and supported livestock recovery initiatives. Although livelihood support for farmers was another appropriate intervention for the area, an increasing rodent population and salinated fields have reduced productivity. Desalination initiatives are reclaiming farmland gradually, but it will take time before all farmland is productive again. The growing rodent population is a large-scale problem that the government and local communities are trying to tackle. Because rat predators were largely wiped out by the cyclone and because rats breed so rapidly, their population has soared, with devastating implications for crops.

Revolving loans

Revolving funds are a good way of fostering both community ownership and project sustainability. They ensure that livelihood beneficiaries pay back into the community some of the benefits they have received so that others can profit in similar ways. The community can decide how the funds are to be used and are not restricted to any particular sector. However, P4's project staff set a high payback rate and not all potential beneficiaries felt confident to be able to repay the required amount. So some particular livelihood targets have not been met by the partner; in other cases P4 has been pleased with the community's commitment to adhere to the terms set. Unfortunately, because distribution of many of the livelihood inputs was delayed, the deadline for paying back is unlikely to be met. Small shop owners have been unable to recover as much income as they had hoped, thus the pay-back scheme is already behind schedule. P1 has managed the scheme slightly more successfully than the church partner, and communities view the revolving fund as a means of securing capital beyond their current capabilities. The only perceived disadvantage is that the fund is open to all, thus the comparative advantage is reduced. Also, the amounts available

mean that their recipients still cannot compete with more affluent community members who will still be able to dominate trade.

Leadership training and trauma counselling

There was little evidence or awareness of any leadership training that had been undertaken by P4 who had been planning to do so. According to reports, leadership workshops had taken place in Yangon, with facilitation from two resource persons from a local NGO. However, none of the community members questioned had any awareness of leadership training that had been undertaken, so it is difficult to consider this output achieved. Trauma counselling has also not yet been carried out by P4, although as time passes, the relevance of this intervention with regard to Nargis fades. However, these will be useful skills in assisting communities to cope in future.

5.3.4. Conclusion

Over the 21 months of activity up to this evaluation, the most successful outputs have been the houses, WASH-related activities (including the installation of latrines, ponds, wells and a water purification plant), the distribution of livelihood assets such as boats, fishing nets, livestock, rice mills and rice banks, disaster risk reduction (DRR) training and disability resource centres.

The less successful activities have been the distribution of chickens, agricultural inputs, revolving loans and training committee members on leadership/trauma counselling. The outbreak of disease in the chickens could have been prevented if lessons had been learned from other agencies that had experienced the same issue.

5.4. Process perspectives

5.4.1. Introduction

This section looks at the process leading to the outputs mentioned in the previous section. It assesses them in the light Tearfund's quality assurance standards, and evaluates whether or not there has been an appropriate balance between long-term and short-term investments in INGO and church partnerships. It also assesses the level of beneficiary participation in delivering the outputs and the degree of coordination with other agencies working on the ground.

5.4.2. Tearfund's quality assurance standards

Numerous standards and guidelines have been drawn up outlining approaches to be taken by NGOs responding to disasters. Tearfund has tried to streamline all of these into one over-arching document, which outlines 12 quality standards which, if followed, will ensure in turn that other standards are met.

Being an INGO, P1 attempted to adhere to internationally accepted guidelines such as Red Cross Code of Conduct (RCCC) and SPHERE. The church partners, on the other hand, were initially unaware of these or Tearfund's guidelines. However, Tearfund's existing church partner (P5) was introduced to them through a visit from Tearfund's IPO in June 2008, and the 2 new church partners (P3, P4) were subsequently introduced to

them through the course of the response. In summary, the findings on each standard is as follows:

STANDARD 1: Values

In the case of the church, the beneficiaries knew what the project staff stood for. However, the beneficiaries of P1's projects were unclear as to the partner's values. On the other hand, the staff of P1 and P2 were clear about what their respective organisations stood for. In each case, they had been given orientation to the organisation's values and procedures at the time of their induction.

STANDARD 2: Impartiality and targeting

P2 focused on people with disability. That was its mandate from the start. P1 worked with people of greatest need regardless of race and religion. The church partners, however, served their own constituents. Tearfund, among others, challenged them on this and as a result P3 implemented a project with Buddhist and Hindu beneficiaries in Phase Two. The project coordinator was a pastor from the village. She said that it was a very different experience to work outside their ethnic/faith group and that at first it was difficult to engage in this project. Another issue which Tearfund highlighted to its church partners was the fact that the funds had been given by people in the UK to reach **all** members of a community, not just the Christians, and therefore Tearfund had a responsibility also to ensure this happened.

STANDARD 3: Accountability

The evaluation team did not see any formal mechanisms in place to show that there was 'downward accountability'. For instance, the people did not know how much money had been allocated to their community by the partners, nor were there suggestion and/or complaint boxes in view. However, it was repeatedly said that feedback was given through informal channels such as local representatives or in discussions with project staff. P1 has undertaken an Accountability Self Assessment and is seeking to implement learning it has received through the Accountability and Learning Working Group (ALWG) in Yangon. There is buy-in to the Humanitarian Accountability Partnership (HAP) guidelines at field level, but it has yet to be institutionalised within the organization. Leaders from the church partners have also had an introductory workshop to HAP, facilitated by Tearfund's PPSO.

STANDARD 4: Disaster Risk

It has been encouraging to see all five partners keen to engage with DRR. They all participated in a four-day workshop introducing them to Tearfund's PADR, and they all attended an exposure visit to see Tearfund's partner DRR work in Bangladesh. DRR has been a main feature of P1's work in phase two and has produced encouraging results. Four out of the five communities visited had had CBDRM training. In one village for instance they say that although it is impossible to avoid another disaster completely, they can be prepared. So they have had rehearsals every six weeks and now feel better prepared. One of the church communities have had CBDRM training but through

another agency, and there are plans for the other church communities to receive training in 2010.

STANDARD 5: Technical Quality

Generally a high standard was achieved. See Outputs perspective.

STANDARD 6 : Children

In the initial relief phase, P1 did child-focused work, building child-friendly spaces, writing and publishing a book for children as part of its psycho-social response. However, other partners made no specific attempt to engage with children. However, it was noticeable that the reconstruction of damaged school buildings, as well as building new ones, was high on people's agenda.

STANDARD 7: Gender

There were specific attempts by two partners to include women on committees. This was evident, for example, in one village with the disaster management committee and in another where women played a leading role in health matters.

STANDARD 8: HIV

There was no specific work done on HIV.

STANDARD 9: Conflict

There was no evidence that conflict levels rose as a result of resources coming into the community. When decisions had to be made on the allocation of resources, they were decided upon by VDCs. Where there was equal need and not enough resources to go around, decisions were made by VDCs and similar civic bodies, or they were decided upon by a ballot as is customary. See also Standard 2 (above) regarding deep-seated conflicts in the communities.

STANDARD 10: Environment

Materials to build the houses, namely wood and bamboo, were brought in from the near locality. The roof sheeting came from Yangon, as did the pans and pipes for the latrines. The ceramic water containers were produced locally. Although there had been significant environmental damage as a result of the cyclone, there was no evidence to suggest that project inputs depleted it further.

STANDARD 11: Sustainability

P2's strategic move has been to ensure that communities own a response to disability in their localities and therefore is focused on being more sustainable. P1's work also is geared towards being sustainable, with a strong emphasis on DRR. With livelihood assets now being distributed on a pay-back basis, it is expected that these particular initiatives will become sustainable.

STANDARD 12: Advocacy

P2 has championed the cause of those with disability in the cyclone-affected area and beyond. It has established an influential relationship with the Department of Social Welfare. This constructive engagement with the authorities has resulted in them producing pamphlets for the Ministry on an Emergency Plan of Action for Persons with Disability. Strong relationships with ministry officials have been established over this time. The other partners have not engaged with the authorities on advocacy issues at this same level. Their project work, however, does bring them into contact with networks that engage with GoUM.

5.4.3. Design strategy

Exit

P1 does not have an exit strategy from the delta programme. Staff and even senior management were not able to give a clear picture of their commitments to the communities in the future at the time of the evaluation. P2 plans to stay in the Nargis-affected zone and widen the area of its community-based work. The two church groups are in a different position to the INGOs. Unlike them, the churches are part of the community itself and so their long-term infrastructure presence will remain, although their project-specific work in response to Cyclone Nargis will finish at the end of 2010. This does raise a serious question about the future of those at the field level who have been working in the projects. They have learned much over this period and these experiences can easily be lost. Much depends on the Church partners' long term strategy for this area and in turn whether or not Tearfund wants to support them in their plans.

Capacity versus funding support

It was acknowledged at the beginning of the appeal that special attention would need to be given to capacity support as Tearfund's partner organisations in Myanmar had not responded to a disaster on this scale before. The percentages spent to date on grants to partners when compared with capacity support is 95 per cent compared with five per cent. In relation to the overall budget, the figures come out at 85 per cent for grants, 4.5 per cent for capacity building/training and consultancies, and 10.5 per cent on support and administrative costs.

Project coordination

P1 joined in the NGO forums and cluster meetings in Yangon and Labutta, and also took time to work with local NGOs in a capacity building role. They have had close cooperation with ActionAid and Myanmar Red Cross Society for its CBDRM work. They were also active players in the Accountability and Learning Working Group (ALWG) in Yangon.

Because they do not engage in social work from the GoUM's perspective, the Church partners were both reluctant to take part in open forums that might question their role. With encouragement from the PPSO, however, they did take part in the ALWG, which was a DFID-funded initiative. P2 coordinated with another INGO in dividing their work up into different areas. They shared expertise on occasion, and also training, and on the

INGO's exit from the area in January 2010, P2 received some of its equipment; they are also linking up with ActionAid.

5.4.4. Conclusion

Tearfund's quality assurance standards were delivered in the main, although there was much discussion and soul-searching on the issue of impartiality in relation to church partners. One project to build 20 houses with Buddhist and Hindu beneficiaries was a success. The team found little evidence of downward accountability in its formal sense, but people made their opinions known through field workers or village leaders. The house design was altered as the result of a similar process. P2's advocacy work was impressive and had consequences at a national level, but there were no examples of others engaging in advocacy at this level. Women were being encouraged to work on committees and their views were being taken into account. However, there was no particular attempt to 'hear' from children. Conflict was not an issue; the communities themselves resolved any tensions brought about through the allocation of resources. The local environment was not being threatened by any project activities and local resources were being used. The DRR activities were very encouraging, equipping people to face the uncertainties of the future and building their confidence. P1 however was uncertain about its own future as it did not have a clear exit strategy. P2 plans to remain; the churches will do so anyway. Capacity support was targeted to equip low capacity partners with DM skills, with the PPSO's post being key to supporting the churches. Coordination among partners and other agencies was not a strong feature of the strategy implementation.

5.5. Resource perspectives

5.5.1. Introduction

This section looks at the inputs that were made available to resource the strategy response. In particular, assessments will be made on the number and quality of staff appointed, implications of scale-up and in particular on the structures and processes created within Tearfund to manage the response.

Tear Netherlands

Tearfund UK and Tear Netherlands drew up a MoU. The purpose was to transfer monitoring and evaluation functions to Tearfund UK and ensure strategy decisions were shared between the two organisations. It was also intended to reduce the reporting demands on the partners. This arrangement was reviewed in June 2009. A review carried out on the effectiveness of the MoU found that, although Tearfund UK did not monitor the specific project activities that Tear Netherlands funded, the latter did receive reports on entire project activities and outputs and was happy with this output. In regard to sharing strategy planning, this did not happen as both organisations had written up their strategies before the MoU was signed and Tear Netherlands has yet to review its document. In effect, the involvement of Tear Netherlands in Myanmar has been limited, as funds collected for Cyclone Nargis were limited.

5.5.2. Scale-up

5.5.2.1. Partners

The magnitude of the disaster posed challenges for all decision-makers and each of Tearfund's partners chose to take a different course of action. P1 responded by adding 100 more staff, an increase of 50 per cent in six months. Its income trebled from \$800,000 to \$2,500,000 annually and the number of donors rose from five to 24. Many of those donors were new to the organisation. This meant establishing new relationships and procedures and clarifying expectations. In addition, it had to learn new skills, methodologies and introduce new systems to serve a new beneficiary group. The new Cyclone response unit and programme was initially managed from its Asia area office in Bangkok. On the other hand, P2 expanded into the Nargis area but without any change to structure or project content. The two church partners assigned new people to the task and adjusted their structures but not in a major way. P3 added a project officer and an assistant project officer to its staff; the project was run by the Nargis Team; its local association seconded three of its project staff to the work. P4 created the posts of programme manager and programme officer and employed three field coordinators and nine field volunteers. However, all these appointments were from within the church and did not require lengthy recruitment processes.

What went well

INGO partners felt well supported by Tearfund and the DMO. The areas noted were:

- the trust that came from sharing the same core values
- in the case of P1, immediate support for concept notes was given at the beginning of the crisis
- a constant source of encouragement, including visits to the programme to understand better the situation on the ground
- good questions and sharing on site visits
- active sharing of a wide range of high-quality resource materials (*Roots* etc) and policy guidelines
- understanding the constraints the organisation was working within. In particular, with P1, allowing for delays in submitting proposals and reports, especially financial reports. Also, prolonging the relief stage of the support
- a willingness to carry out practical tasks on behalf of the partner

Church partners also felt well supported by Tearfund and by the PPSO. The areas identified were:

- previous working relationships
- understanding church and Myanmar culture and also the language(s)
- patience and a listening ear
- specific assistance in the areas that partners needed most, namely proposal writing
- encouraging partners to learn from the INGO community
- training that was offered
- being a channel of ideas and information between Tearfund and partners

Challenges and lessons learned

TEARFUND'S P1 PARTNER

It is important to note that despite taking on such a large response, the partner is not itself a large organisation. In their HQ in the States, there is a relief director; she is the only person in headquarters with a DM background. Besides offering technical advice worldwide, she has other responsibilities, such as submitting proposals for US government funding. In an organisation with 1,000 employees worldwide, there was no human resources director at that time. Both these facts indicate that recruiting expertise to meet a disaster emergency would be difficult. Their Area Office released its regional programmes manager, who had previous experience of managing the organisation's tsunami response in Sri Lanka and Thailand; she became the Cyclone programme coordinator. The organisation was in need of people with senior management experience to support the programme coordinator who worked from two bases, one in Myanmar and the other in Bangkok. While in Bangkok, she also carried other regional desk responsibilities. From the first day of the crisis, they needed a finance person who could set up systems appropriate to a DM response and not a development one. Having such a person would have saved months of work revising spreadsheet formats and the figures in them.

Lessons learned

- It cannot be assumed that the organization is in a position to carry out a full-scale DM response.

TEARFUND'S P2 PARTNER

Although starting work in a new area involved some of the same personnel and logistical upheavals as outlined above, the partner was challenged more in the area of its organisational values. This was in the face of opportunities as well as pressures to do things differently within an emergency context. They had developed a successful model in meeting the needs of people with disability. It was tried, tested and successful. It took the opportunity that Nargis presented to widen its reach into the delta area but resisted the push to alter its mode of operation.

5.5.2.2. Tearfund

Tearfund appointed a DMO in the UK to manage the appeal funds and a PPSO in Myanmar to support church partners. The DMO function was carried out almost immediately as the person who was eventually to fill the position was coming to the end of a previous DMO contract. When Tearfund decided to establish direct partnerships with the two church partners it became clear that those relationships could not be managed successfully from the UK. Another DEC member had appointed a local person in Myanmar to support its partners in managing their response to the cyclone. The DMO saw this model, was impressed by it and, in October 2008, six months after the cyclone, appointed a person to the PPSO position. The DMO reported to the country representative (CR) and, although she eventually shared a number of the same partners as the CR, she only worked with them on Nargis-related projects. The DMO managed the PPSO. As a result, by October 2008, the Tearfund Myanmar team had

scaled up from being one part-time CR to four full-time staff: CBA and PPSO based in Myanmar, CR and DMO based in the UK.

What went well

The creation of the DMO and PPSO posts to support the appeal was effective. This was the result of a number of factors:

1. The CR, who had oversight of the initial stages of the response before going on maternity leave, had worked in Myanmar in a previous organisation. She had managed four major Tearfund partner-led disaster responses in Asia prior to this one. Also, by chance, the CR had arranged to visit Myanmar before the cyclone hit, so already had a visa in place. She had this opportunity to get a good understanding of the situation facing partners early on.
2. In addition to this, the head of region had been the desk officer for Myanmar in previous years and so had an indepth knowledge of partners and their response capacities.
3. The DMO not only started work almost immediately, but like the CR she had worked with partners in their response to the Asia tsunami. She had also partnered with P1 previously in Asia, which turned out to be Tearfund's major partner during Nargis.
4. The international project officer (IPO) from DMT went to Myanmar in June 2008 to carry out disaster management training with P5.
5. The PPSO had indepth knowledge of the churches in Myanmar, as well as their project management capacities, having been a member of P5 in a previous appointment. Her support role for church partners was invaluable.
6. The PPSO shared an office with the CBA and that mutual support was important.
7. All the above was enhanced by good inter-personal relationships among all members of the Myanmar team and between the Asia team and DMT.

Challenges and lessons learned

Country representative

1. Early on in the response, a decision had to be made about whether or not Tearfund should carry out an operational response. The regional team resisted this suggestion; DMT wanted it to be considered as a serious option. In the event, there was no operational response, and in retrospect both the regional team and the disaster management director (DMD) felt that this was the correct judgment. This was in the light of the level of appeal funds available, the difficulties in registering as an NGO in-country and also the restrictions put on foreign nationals working in the country by the GoUM

Lessons learned

- As a result of this experience, the DMD put in place a decision-making flow chart which seeks to allow more objectivity on how Tearfund should best respond to any emergency, in light of the scale of need and the coverage, presence and capacity of partners.
2. The CR asked DMT for guidelines which she could pass on to partners to help them organise their disaster response. At that stage, no such guidelines were available. The CR went to Myanmar with her own improvised checklist.

Lessons learned

- Since then, not only have such materials been produced, the DMD has created a Disaster Management Unit (DMU) with a specific remit to support partner-led disaster management responses.
- It is important to ensure that regional team members understand the remit, responsibilities and opportunities offered by the DMU.

Disaster management officer

1. In the initial stages, it was difficult to get a clear picture of the extent of the damage caused by Nargis. This was due in part to partners' headquarters in Yangon being damaged and their communication systems disrupted. Also, many of their staff had suffered personal losses. The reluctance for the GoUM to inform the outside world did not help either. It meant that the regional team had to contact individuals in Thailand and ask them to relay information back to the UK. This lack of information was frustrating for the regional team but it was also felt by the Church and supporter relations team, particularly over the first weekend after the cyclone when churches in the UK were meeting.

Lessons learned

- As a result of this experience, the DMD updated Tearfund's emergency response procedures, including the need for out-of-hours teleconferences to agree a response and a system for the Church and supporter relations team to get information to supporters within hours of the event.
2. This lack of information remained an issue at a later stage too when money began to flow in to Tearfund and project proposals were being presented to a Project Approval Meeting. It was also one of the reasons why the DMO felt unable to write a tightly descriptive appeal strategy. The other reason was uncertainty about who Tearfund's long-term partners would be.
 3. The process of establishing Partnership Agreements with the new church partners was not an easy one. The partners' perspective has been described earlier, in the section 'Stakeholder perspectives'. Tearfund's perspective also needs outlining. The DMO sent a consultant to assess the governance and financial management risks to Tearfund of working with P5, but the terms of reference were changed to focus on completing the partnership documentation with P3 and P4. In short, the conclusion was that both prospective partners were high-risk, were not conforming to the Red Cross Code of Conduct (RCCC) and that grant capacity was small. The consultant acknowledged that the assessment was limited because of time, language barriers and coming to terms with a fundamentally different organisational culture.

Lessons learned

- This dialogue was a legitimate one. However, if Tearfund has a strategic intention of working through local churches in disaster response, it needs to find individuals or organisations who can translate the essence of INGO concerns on financial management to the leaders of the national church. They need to emerge from these discussions with answers to two questions: how

are you going to account for the money we want to give you? How can we help you do that? The CR will use her judgment of governance, doctrine and partnership issues; the DMO will consider issues of programme capacity and scale-up.

4. The DMO also had to ensure that proposals from all partners met Tearfund's standards but, more particularly, those proposals that were going to draw on DEC funds. To reach these necessary standards put significant pressure on both the DMO and on partners. Questions went back and forwards, which caused frustration. The challenge that the DMO faced with P2 was that it was not willing to write out a disaster-orientated proposal as it decided it was not going to deliver one. This left the DMO unable to answer some of the questions on the DEC proposal format. For P3 and P4 it was simply a question of learning the skill of proposal writing to a higher standard and translating that into a log frame. P3's programme officer said that now she had satisfied Tearfund's requirements, it would be easy for her to attain any other organisation's standards!

Lessons learned

- If Tearfund has a strategic intention of working through local churches in disaster response, it must make it clear to DMOs what standards are acceptable from church partners. It should also make it clear what capacity support is required for them on the ground to make up for questions that remain unanswered.
5. As has been mentioned before, the fact that the churches were not impartial with their assistance was of particular concern to the DMO. It was shared with the DMD on his monitoring visit to Myanmar in January 2009. As a result, he commissioned a paper through Tearfund's church and development advisor that would outline some biblical principles on the impartial distribution of resources. The theologian's response was that 'the notion of blessing materially those outside the covenant community is found in the biblical texts but only as an overflowing of the life of the covenant community where in vision and occasionally in practice there is widespread prosperity and generosity to the poor and afflicted'. In short, the position of the churches in Myanmar to support their own first is biblical, according to the theologian. However, so too is being generous to others once they have received blessings themselves. Tearfund is still in dialogue with the theologian on this issue.

Lessons learned

- Again, this is a complex issue, particularly in the Myanmar context. It would be good now that the work in P3's Phase Two is nearly over, to draw out learning points with P3 and to set out guidelines that fit their context and which can be used by Tearfund and other INGOs in Myanmar in the future.

Other challenges facing the DMO included:

6. There was no automatic access to updated income figures. These are only given on request to the Finance department.

7. There was the inconvenience of having to budget on IBIS which is on an annual cycle and not on a three-year appeal cycle.
8. She was surprised to find other departments drawing down money from the Nargis budget without her being informed beforehand.

Partner programme support officer

1. The PPSO was recruited to support church partners in developing good project proposals, to assist them in developing relevant skills and to monitor work on the ground. She also carried out a logistical function for Tearfund personnel who visited Myanmar and she acted as a sounding board on many issues relating to partners and to the country. The most challenging part of her work was mediating between the project proposal demands of Tearfund and the delivery capacities of its partners. As described already, this was a demanding task, with partners often venting their frustrations with Tearfund upon her.

Lessons learned

It would have been better had the PPSO been in on the start of a proposal write-up, rather than making alterations to it once it was written. In this way, the structure of the proposal would have had been more sound and alterations made to it easier as questions arose.

2. Because the churches used existing staff to carry out Nargis-related projects, the staff were expected to continue to carry out their existing functions within the church, albeit at reduced levels of activity. It led to them being overworked. This was compounded by an absence of a clear job description and line management accountability, which meant that there were often cases of miscommunication within the partner organisations. This led to conflict situations and staff losing their motivation. The PPSO spent a great deal of time filling in these communication gaps and encouraging staff in their work.

Lesson learned

One of the key features that the PPSO learned on joining Tearfund was the importance of having a clear role as outlined in the job description, as well as knowing to whom she was accountable. She also understood how important it was to have personal objectives and to be appraised regularly on them. These processes do not exist in the partners she is supporting.

3. Encouraging P3 and its local association to engage with different ethnic groups in phase two was a challenging experience, knowing as the PPSO did the full context in which they were being asked to apply this principle of impartiality. She accompanied the leadership in the design of the proposal and in its implementation.

Lessons learned

The experience turned out to be a good one for all parties. There were new learning opportunities for P3 staff which they can apply in other situations. However the field staff were cautious as they carried out this work. They would have approached it with more confidence had they undergone training around good practice in conflict avoidance and resolution prior to this assignment.

The other challenges facing the PPSO included:

4. She had to deal with male pastors who were set in their ways and she needed to challenge them with new ideas.
5. She had to train partner staff from scratch.
6. While she knew the root causes of and the solutions to problems faced by staff in the church organisations, she was unable to resolve these issues.

5.5.3. Conclusion

Partners' scale-up processes were difficult and yet different for each organisation. For some, the issue was the sheer scale of the task; for others, it was more a debate about organisational values. On the other hand, for Tearfund the resources needed to manage the new situation fell into place relatively easily; a DMO and PPSO were put in place and worked effectively together. There were initial difficulties in obtaining accurate information from the disaster zone, as well as in deciding to what extent DMT should be involved. However, for both those issues procedures have been put in place to resolve them more speedily in the future. In addition, there is now a DM unit within Tearfund to assist regional teams in supporting partner-led disaster responses.

5.6. Organisational capacity perspectives

The main capacity development input to church partners was given through the PPSO. This has been continuous since October 2008. It involved accompaniment in the areas of proposal and report writing, skills training and networking. There was also an informal dimension to this support which was no less important, namely being a channel of ideas and information between the DMO and partners. This capacity support input was appropriate and necessary to achieve the outputs required of church partners. Without it one objective of the appeal strategy, namely the active participation of the church partners in a response, would not have been delivered. See 'Resource perspectives' for the challenges.

5.6.1. Capacity development trainings

Because of the low capacity of partners in disaster management, assessment and training needed to be done in order to deliver the strategy. In total, six Tearfund sponsored personnel visited Myanmar over an 18-month period; five conducted trainings and one assessed the governance and financial capacities of church partners.

| Date | Position | Training | Partners targeted |
|------------------|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| 16–28 June, 2008 | International Projects Officer | Sphere, HAP, RCC, Tearfund quality assurance standards | P5 |
| 4–23 Aug, 2008 | consultant | Governance and financial management | P3, P4, P5 |
| 15–20 Sept, 2008 | Head of DMU | Principles of conduct working with the local | All partners |

| | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------------|--|--------------|
| | | church and others | |
| 21–31 Jan, 2009 | Disaster Management Director | Assessment and project design | P3, P4, P5 |
| 27–30 Jan, 2009 | Disaster Risk Reduction Officers | Participatory Assessment of Disaster Risk (PADR) | All partners |
| 2–6 Feb, 2009 | | Visit to Bangladesh | |

In the first months after the cyclone, the assignments were flexible. The IPO's task was to work with P5 to write up project proposals. However, questions arose during the visit as to whether or not P5 was the right organisation to have as a long-term partner in this disaster, due to its distance from the actual implementers. As a result, the assignment moved towards introducing partners to quality assurance standards. The experience of the consultant was similar. His terms of reference changed mid-assignment when he was asked to explore, among other things, the possibility of Tearfund partnering with two new church organisations, P3 and P4. The visit by the Head of DMU was suggested at short notice. Because it was not planned thoroughly in advance, the outputs could have been more productive. The visit of the DMD, however, was well researched and the training topics identified by the church partners. This was also the case with the PADR training.

PADR Training

The PADR training consisted of two parts. The first was a four-day workshop in Yangon. Twenty three participants from six partner organisations attended. The second half was a study trip to Bangladesh for 10 of those participants. The PPSO assisted in organising the visit and the party was hosted by HEED Bangladesh and Koinonia, two of Tearfund's experienced disaster management partners in the country. They visited DRR projects, saw cyclone shelters and road works, and talked with staff and Disaster Management Committee (DMC) members in the communities.

5.6.2. Other opportunities

The PPSO accompanied church partners to the ALWG in Yangon. This met about once every two weeks and was attended by approximately ten staff from the INGO community. P3 and P4 in particular were reluctant to attend. They felt exposed to people who had different areas of expertise and agendas. Where the PPSO persisted, some individuals did continue to attend and gradually learned new things from the discussions.

Training was offered by competing numbers of international bodies on a wide variety of topics as a result of Cyclone Nargis. Tearfund encouraged partners to attend those that were relevant to their needs.

5.6.3. Conclusion

Among the Tearfund trainings, two were most valued by those interviewed: the assessment and project design and the PADR ones. The former because the training agenda was clarified well beforehand and met partners' needs. The second because it offered a practical skill to the participants which was reinforced by seeing what had been achieved in communities in another country that faced similar problems.

However, on the whole, too much training was offered by too many international agencies and donors, with little coordination taking place among them. In many ways there was 'training overload'. The selection of individuals was often arbitrary, with the busiest people often attending reluctantly. There was little time given to targeting participants in the early stages. Also, there is a culture among the churches especially that everyone should be given a chance to attend trainings. There is a wish not to offend any particular ethnic and language group by excluding them. And lastly there was little follow-up on individuals who received the training. This was both by the sponsors of the training as well as by line-managers who had chosen staff to attend. Few were called to account for what they had learned, nor were they expected to share their learning with others when back in the workplace.

6. Specific actionable and prioritised recommendations (SAPRs)

An overview of the SAPRs is as follows:

1. **The initial set-up.** It is recommended to have the DMO in-country for up to a three month period following up on the strategic directions set out by the CR.
2. **Building the capacity of church partners.** It is recommended that in-country expertise be used to assess the financial accountability of potential church partners and that there is a more church- sensitive approach to forming a partnership agreement with them. It is also recommended that an in-country capacity building person be assigned specifically to support church partners.
3. **Regional and DM teams.** A number of initiatives have already come from the DMD as a result of DMT's engagement with the regional team in response to this crisis. These are: (1) an update on procedures to communicate information to Church and supporter relations in the aftermath of a disaster (2) a flow chart to help regional teams decide which agencies to partner with in a crisis (3) the creation of the DMU to support partner-led disaster responses (4) a paper commissioned on the biblical principles of impartiality.
4. **P1** It is recommended that the DMD have discussions with P1 on its commitment to responding to large scale disasters and to issue a statement that can guide Tearfund country level staff as to what they can expect P1's commitment will be.

5. **Reliance on one partner.** It is recommended that Tearfund partners with more than one agency capable of delivering a response on a large scale. This is even though there may be few to choose from.
6. **Capacity development.** It is recommended that capacity development of partners be more coordinated among training providers. It is also recommended that trainees are made more accountable for what they have learned during trainings.
7. **Impartiality.** It is recommended that the DMD draws up guidelines drawn from biblical principles on the issues of impartiality.

6.1. Initial set-up

Lessons learned. The evaluation team found that the mobilisation of resources was put together well at the UK end of the response. It recognises the specific difficulties encountered in accessing information and placing people in Myanmar. In an ideal situation it offers the following sequence of actions for Tearfund to follow in a partner-led response where the CR is based in the UK and where an operational response is restricted.

Specific Actionable Recommendations:

1. Follow the DM guidelines set out to relay information to key stakeholders immediately after the disaster, including the Church and supporter relations team.
2. Arrange for the CR to visit the affected region as soon after the disaster as possible to outline a strategy and to identify partners to work with.
3. Appoint a project support person, in the first instance the IPO, to assist the regional team in the UK, immediately followed by the speedy appointment of a DMO for the length of the appeal.
4. Liaise with the DMU for support regarding partner-led, and specifically church-led, disaster response issues.
5. Commit the DMO to stay in the affected country for approximately three months to follow up on the strategy and decisions made by the CR or for as long as it is necessary, given the funds available and if visas allow.
6. Recall the DMO to the UK to replace the IPO.
7. The DMO should leave the country when partnerships are firmed up and the programme focus and capacity support priorities have been agreed.
8. In the case of a heavy reliance on churches as partners, the speedy recruitment of a PPSO role is important.
9. Consider the placement of a finance person with partners, especially where the response is going to involve significant resources and DEC funds will be used.

6.2. Building the capacity of church partners

Lessons learned. It is evident that the national church structures in Myanmar had no experience of responding to a disaster of this nature and scale. However, their local churches are scattered throughout the disaster area and were used successfully as bases from which immediate relief and subsequent rehabilitation projects were launched. Tearfund's engagement with these structures to support them in this role was

taxing for both parties, although in the end very worthwhile. The evaluation team offers the following guidelines to help make this process more productive.

Specific Actionable Recommendations:

1. The CR identifies the range of possible church partners that can adhere to Tearfund's values and doctrine in the initial visit.
2. The CR identifies an individual or an organisation from the country that can translate the essence of INGO concerns on financial management to leaders of the national church structures in their church context. The output should be: a report on how the church partner is going to account for money and ways that Tearfund can help develop systems and capacity to ensure that this happens.
3. The DMO arrives with the authority to work through to a partnership agreement and decide programme matters.
4. The PPSO role is filled as soon as possible or carried out by national or expatriate trainers until recruitment.
5. DMD makes it clear to the DMO and to the PPSO the standard of project proposals that is acceptable from church partners with limited capacity.
6. Tearfund supporter income (rather than DEC or institutional funds) is used to support church projects.

6.3. Regional and DM teams

Lesson learned. There were discussions between these two teams in the early stages as to whether or not Tearfund should be operational in Myanmar. However, because of the constraints on international personnel entering and working in the country, the registration process required for NGOs and the low level of funds available, it was agreed that the Nargis response would be partner-led. This engagement with DMT and with the DMD in particular has resulted in a number of positive initiatives which should not be forgotten. As a result of Nargis, the DMD has:

1. updated Tearfund's emergency response procedures, including the need for out-of-hours teleconferences to agree a response and a system for the Church and supporter relations team to get information to supporters within hours of the event
2. put in place a decision-making flow chart which seeks to allow more objectivity on how Tearfund should best respond to an emergency, in light of the scale of need and the coverage, presence and capacity of partners
3. created the DMU with a specific remit to support partner-led disaster management responses
4. commissioned a paper on biblical principles on impartiality.

Specific Actionable Recommendations:

1. The regional team should understand clearly what the DMU offers in terms of support in relation to partners in a disaster response.
2. In the light of partners' capacity, for instance that of P1, the regional team should ask DMT to consider secondment to INGO partners of people with relevant expertise, especially in the area of finance where large sums of money are involved.

6.4. P1

Lesson learned. P1 has been a Tearfund partner for many years. It has an operational presence in many countries in Asia and therefore it becomes an immediate point of reference for Tearfund when a disaster strikes. In the initial stages and latterly also, Tearfund has been unclear about the commitment P1 has to responding to large-scale disasters. Clarity on this matter at a strategic level needs to be sought.

Specific Actionable Recommendations:

1. The DMD should discuss this matter with P1 headquarters in USA, and should aim to arrive at a set of commonly agreed statements that can guide regional and country-level staff as they engage with one another during the emergency.

6.5. Reliance on one major partner

Lessons learned. Seventy-nine per cent of the Nargis appeal grant money was channelled through one organisation. The advantage was that the DMO could concentrate effort and resources in one area. However, at the same time the risk was high, if for some reason there had been a breakdown in the relationship or the partner had not delivered. Tearfund's other potential INGO partner to deliver on this scale, One organization shied away from accepting Tearfund money because, among other reasons, it felt the reporting standards were too demanding.

Specific Actionable Recommendations:

1. Aim for at least two partners who can deliver a large-scale DM response and make adjustments to proposal and reporting requirements to facilitate this, at least at the initial stages of the partnership.

6.6. Capacity development

Lessons learned. There was a strong emphasis given to capacity development through training events, due to the low capacity of partners in DM. Although generally the inputs were of a high quality, coordination, targeting and follow-up were lacking, despite the DMO's attempts to coordinate with other donors working with P5.

Specific Actionable Recommendations:

1. Contact should be made with Tearfund partners' other donors to find out what trainings they plan to offer. Where possible duplication should be avoided and referral to other donors' trainings suggested if they are relevant to the partners' needs.
2. Make an assessment of partners' capacity development needs with them and identify specific individuals within the organisations who require specific training to carry out a specific task.
3. Emphasise the importance of applying the training back in the organisation and stress that this should be overseen by the line-manager who has selected the individuals for the training.
4. The training organisers should also offer appropriate follow-up, mentoring or refresher trainings when requested.

Also, the role of the PPSO has been much appreciated by both the DMO and by church partners. It has provided an accompaniment presence for key individuals engaged in

the disaster response. The role is a means by which Tearfund communicates its priorities and partners voice their constraints, but with a human face! The churches' disaster response work would not have happened without this role in place. However, there is a danger with the post coming to an end in April 2010, a year before the completion of the appeal strategy, that important work thereafter will not be supported.

Specific Actionable Recommendations:

1. In future, recruit a PPSO for the length of the strategy.
2. Ask P1 to support P3 and P4 in its DRR and leadership training programme in the absence of the PPSO.

6.7. Impartiality

Lesson learned. Although encouraging P3 to work with other ethnic communities in the rehabilitation phase of the programme was a challenge for all parties, the work has been successful and it provided everyone with confidence to apply this approach elsewhere, for instance in possible CCMP work later on. However, theologically and in terms of Tearfund's Operating Principles, the matter of impartiality for church groups engaging in disaster response is still not clear.

Specific Actionable Recommendations:

1. The DMD should set guidelines for working with churches on the issue of impartiality in the light of the conclusions drawn up in the theologian's paper.

6.0. Conclusions

6.1. Was the appeal strategy efficient?

This section will look at the resource allocation within the appeal response and it will assess to what extent that allocation was efficient in bringing about the expected quality standards in the outputs. In short, it will compare the resource perspectives with the process perspectives.

Prior to Cyclone Nargis, the resources available to the Myanmar HIAF consisted of one staff post, the CR, with plans to recruit a CBA. It had two partners, P1 and P5, and a £200,000 annual budget. As a response to Cyclone Nargis, Tearfund received £821,000 from supporters and £735,000 through the DEC. Tearfund's DMT also provided support, primarily through its IPO. An MoU was signed with Tear Netherlands, which provided a contribution to help cover the DMO's monitoring responsibilities.

(1) Eighty-five per cent of the appeal budget went towards funding partners' work through grants. The pool of partners to which this was distributed expanded from two to five; three of the five were church partners, which received 11 per cent of the grants and two were INGOs that received 89 per cent of the grant figure. One partner accounted for 79 per cent of that 89 per cent.

(2) Approximately 11 per cent was allocated to support costs, including the two additional posts in the Myanmar team, the DMO and the PPSO.

(3) Approximately four per cent was allocated to capacity development, which included training and consultancy costs.

In conclusion, the most significant allocation, 65 per cent of £1,520,000 was allocated to one partner (P1). So it is important to look at this decision first.

The scale, scope and quality of P1's outputs are impressive (see 'Output perspectives'). However, the question remains: was it an efficient channel through which to deliver 79 per cent of Tearfund's grant funding? As it turned out, it was. It not only achieved quality outputs but it also allowed the DMO to focus much of her attention on one partnership and support it fully (see 'Resource perspectives'). At the same time, this strategy contained a high level of risk. This is best understood when looking at P1's starting point. (1) It had no relief experience or competencies prior to Cyclone Nargis (although there was expertise available in the Asia area office). (2) It had no structure in the country to deliver a programme and, in the initial stages, no will to deliver it. (3) P1 chose a remote and inaccessible location to work in. (4) The organisation is small and does not have an international personnel recruiting function. (5) As was discovered later, it did not have an appropriate finance system in place. However, it won through because the competencies of the programme coordinator who was drafted in to manage the response and the strength of the team she built up over the initial months. Yet, this came at great personal sacrifice.

It should also be noted that the long-term presence of P1 in the delta region is uncertain. It wants to remain, but this is subject to finding funds to support development work in the future.

Tearfund could have made this investment of 79 per cent of its grant allocation more efficient if it had supported P1 with expertise in key areas where the organisation was lacking. This was in senior management and financial systems support. P1 would have achieved more with less difficulty if this had been the case.

The investment in P2, at eight per cent of the grant funding, has gone into building up the organisation for the longer term, as well as into supporting high-quality project work for the duration of the appeal. Apart from negotiations around proposal writing, which took time and involved some element of attrition, this was an efficient use of resources.

For the three churches that received 12 per cent of grant funding, the quality of work was not as high as the INGOs', apart from the shelters built by P3. In that sense, it was right to invest less in them. The energies put into developing their project work were borne by the support costs of PPSO. The investment in this post was the most efficient way of moving forward this part of the strategy. Although these advances may not be visibly apparent, the competencies developed over that time will remain in the churches' structures and, unlike P1's, will not be lost. It is worth noting that another long-term P3 donor commented that it had seen P3's confidence grow significantly over the past year as a result of its partnership with Tearfund.

The resources set aside for training were not used as efficiently as they could have been. Although not underestimating the quality of the training given to people, it could

have been more targeted to meet specific needs of specific people in the workplace, who should have been held more accountable for applying what they had been taught.

6.2. Was the appeal strategy effective?

This section will consider the resource allocation and will assess to what extent that allocation was effective, namely: did it result in having a proportionate impact? Impact will be seen in terms of a change in people's attitudes and behaviour affecting the physical, social and spiritual environments. The resource allocations have been outlined in the previous section. Impact has also been described in the sections headed 'Impact perspectives' and 'Stakeholder perspectives'.

In the first analysis, impact can be assessed by how partners perceived and received Tearfund's resource inputs. Partners were uplifted by words of encouragement, prayer support, the accompaniment mode that both the DMO and PPSO adopted and the deep knowledge of the projects that the DMO and PPSO displayed. Astute questions on site visits were sources of learning and challenge; box-ticking questions on proposals were sources of discouragement. Empathy and professionalism, especially speed of response, were most valued. These had a positive impact on key people in Tearfund's partner organisations who delivered the response. The source of this encouragement was also fostered by the good working relationships in the Tearfund team itself.

However, the question remains whether or not this encouragement and professionalism were given to the right organisations. Did Tearfund choose wisely in order to deliver its appeals strategy? In one sense, the answer is that there were few options to choose from. Given that Tearfund's Myanmar HIAF strategy is to focus on the church, it was right to risk working with the low-capacity churches, although it was acknowledged that the outputs would be fewer and of lower quality. In terms of the potential for sustained impact, this was the right strategy. The churches will always be there; their congregations still inhabit vulnerable areas and a response capacity at some point in the future will be required to support them. There have been programme achievements and relationships and confidence have been built. How effective this choice will be, however, remains in doubt. This is because the programme still has one year to run and much will depend on how Tearfund can make up for the loss of the PPSO after April 2010. The planned DRR programme will provide the church partners and their communities with practical measures to tackle the future. The effectiveness of the programme to date will be enhanced if this is done well.

Of the INGOs, the choice of P2, though unconventional, was again the right one. The decision to transfer its proven model to the delta area, bringing with it new opportunities to influence GoUM at the highest level in their field, was wisely taken. Those with disabilities, although not traditionally a Tearfund priority group, become even more vulnerable when support systems around them collapse. The investment in the expansion of a development delivery model into a disaster zone will mean that the outputs are more likely to endure.

The wisdom of the choice of P1 has been covered in the previous section. Again, it was a risk, but the right one to take. Its programme was tailored to meet the needs of the most vulnerable people in the most vulnerable areas at different stages in the recovery cycle. As such it did meet the requirements of the appeals strategy.

There was a possibility of there being two more INGO partnerships, but those did not materialise. Spreading the risk taken with P1 would have been the more cautious route to follow, but not necessarily the more effective one in hindsight.