

Impacts of the Tsunami on Fisheries, Aquaculture and Coastal Livelihoods^{1 2}

Myanmar

(As of 9th March 2005)

Affected areas

The southern coast of Myanmar was hit by the tsunami around four hours after the earthquake. Unlike the coasts of many other countries in the region where impacts were significant, the Myeik Archipelago reduced the tsunami's force, before it impacted the coast of Ayeyawaddy Division, Thanintharyi Division, Yangon Division and Rakhine State. On its way to the Ayeyawaddy coast, the wave had also severely hit the Andaman Islands (India). This probably explains the smaller scale of damage inflicted on the southern areas of Myanmar. The Myanmar coast is also characterized by its hilly geomorphology and shallow river delta.



Figure 1: Map of affected areas in southern Myanmar

On January 6th 2005, the Tsunami Assistance Coordination Group³ met to consolidate the findings of the different assessment and verification missions undertaken throughout the affected areas of Myanmar. The Coordination Group was set up at the onset of the disaster and chaired by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). The Group concluded that Myanmar has been largely spared from the destructive forces of the earthquake and subsequent tsunami, and that initial emergency needs have been met by the Government and by the aid community. More recent data on the impact of the tsunami on fisheries and aquaculture were presented at a regional workshop on tsunami rehabilitation⁴

¹ **Disclaimer:** This report has been jointly developed by staff from NACA, FAO, SEAFDEC and BOBP-IGO for internal use. Every possible effort has been made, considering the circumstances, to verify the information. The report is considered appropriate at the time of its preparation. It will be updated as appropriate in the light of further knowledge gained at subsequent stages of evolution of the situation. The Organizations concerned make no warranty, express or implied, as to the accuracy, reliability or content of the material, text and any graphics in this information product. FAO also declines all responsibility for updating the material and assumes no responsibility for errors and omissions in the material provided in the information product.

² Not all **sources of data** used in this report are known, but where they are, they have been duly attributed.

³ Coordination Group participants: IFRC, ICRC, MRCS, UNRC, UNDP, WFP, UNICEF, WHO, UNIC, UNHCR, MSF(CH), MSF(Holland), World Vision, CARE, SCF(UK), PSI, ZOA, ADRA.

⁴ CONSRN Regional Workshop on Rehabilitation of Fisheries and Aquaculture in Coastal Communities of tsunami affected countries in Asia (Bangkok 28th Feb-1st Mar 2005). Myanmar country report, Department of Fisheries, Myanmar.

Table 1: Government figures of tsunami impacts

State/Division	Dead	Injured	Homes destroyed	Homeless
Ayeyawaddy	31	41	517	2145
Tanintharyi	8	1	83	447
Rakhine	22	-	-	-
Yangon	-	-	1	-
Total	61	42	601	2592

The initial group's assessment of the scale of impact is in line with the Government's own findings. The Group confirmed a death toll of 60-80, and estimated the longer-term affected population at 10-15,000, of whom 5-7,000 were directly affected.

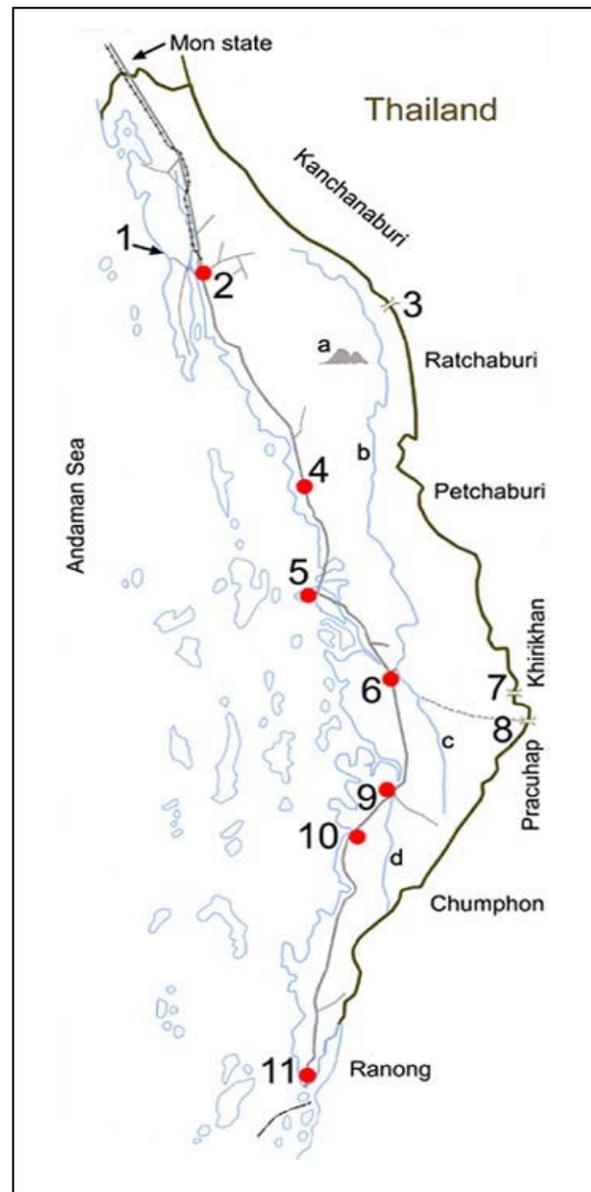
There is very little information relating to the impact on fishing communities in affected areas. Current reports indicate relatively little and mostly localized damage. Perhaps of greater concern are the losses of Myanmar citizens who were working as migrant labour in Thailand in aquaculture operations (shrimp farms and shrimp hatcheries) as well as on fishing vessels.

Figure 2: Map of Thaninthayi Division

- 1 = Maung Magan beach
- 2 = Dawei
- 3 = Amyar pass (to Thailand's Kanchanaburi province)
- 4 = Palaw
- 5 = Myeik
- 6 = Tanintharyi
- 7 = Kalama pass (to Thailand's Prachuap Khirikhan province)
- 8 = Mot pass
- 9 = Le-Nya
- 10 = Bok Pyin
- 11 = Kaw Thaug (border town)

- a = Myintmo Lakhat mountain (2073 meters)
- b = The Great Thaninthayi river
- c = The Little Thaninthayi river
- d = Le Nya river

Source: <http://www.asterism.info/states/1/map.html>



Fisheries impacts

Most or all of the 17 villages impacted by the tsunami were fishing villages. An FAO national consultant⁵ made an assessment of impacts on fisheries in January 2005, and concluded that in total 99 vessels were lost as a result of the tsunami (this figure has now risen to 131 with the government's latest report). The total costs of lost fishing vessels and gear was \$185,000. Other reports (SEAFDEC mission end of January) estimate that around 144 small vessels were lost/damaged, implying that financial impacts could be higher and around \$250,000.

In addition, some detailed data is now being to emerge for specific areas, as shown below:

- Pyinsalu Subtownship, about 40km south of Laputta in the Ayeyawaddy Division, was especially badly affected, with more than 900 fishermen impacted
- In the Tanintharyi Division (Southern Coast), inshore fishing vessel damage/loss is estimated at: 44 (10 from Aywar Gyi village, 1 from Kan Pon Mar Yan village, 30 from Aung Bar village and 3 from Thiri Myain Block in Kawthoung Township)
- In Kawthaung, Thanintharyi Division, there were 8 dead, 95 households damaged and 560 persons affected
- In Rakhine State (western Coast) the following impacts have been recorded: Yae Kyun village in Man Aung Township 2 fishers death; Kwan Aing village in Yan Byae Township 4 deaths during collecting mollusks on the beach; Zin Choung village in Kyauk Pyu Township 2 deaths during fishing.
- In Auegyi village, a loss of 10 boats has been reported⁶

Aquaculture

There was very little aquaculture practiced along the impacted coastline, but some very minor damage to seabass cage culture has been reported (SEAFDEC mission end of January). In Ayeyawaddy Division no serious adverse effects were found at Chaungtha and Ngwesaung popular resort beaches though there was minor damage to a turtle nesting beach and fish hatchery (and farm) which lost around 400 sea bass broodstock.

Impact and needs assessment

FAO is taking part in a series of assessments conducted by UN agencies. Two national consultants, one for agriculture and another for fisheries, have been recruited to participate in the UN Country Team joint assessment mission and to prepare a country profile for mid- and long-term donor assistance.

The Tsunami Assistance Coordination Group (January 6th 2005) concluded that future coordination and planning will be ensured by a small liaison group following up on a second assessment phase for mid- and longer-term needs and support. Initial assessments point to a longer-term impact on livelihoods and community coping mechanisms. The aid partners will ensure particular attention is paid to clean water sources, damage to soil and crops, destruction or damage to houses, fishing boats and nets. They will also pay attention to disease surveillance and response, and access to health care, education infrastructure and services, community services and communications, and the needs of particularly vulnerable groups within the affected population. The resources needed to cover replenishment costs of the initial response as well as the financial requirements for the mid- to

⁵ Dr. Sang Aung

⁶ Ago Borra (WHO Representative, RC a.i.), Carroll Long (UNICEF Representative), Akiko Suzuki (UNDP DRR) joint mission 14-15 January 2005

long-term recovery will be made available as soon as the second round of assessments are completed.

Government & international assistance programs

Myanmar did not request any aid or help from the international community for Tsunami victims. However it did receive voluntary contributions and donations. The State Peace and Development Council have formed a Committee for providing assistance to the victims and to distribute donated relief items.

Immediately after the incident the Government initiated relief action through the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and local authorities. The relief teams provided aid to victims including cash, rice, edible oil, clothes, blankets etc. To date the government has provided 25 corrugated iron sheets, 2 tons of timber and 2 bags of rice to each of the 601 households whose homes were destroyed.

Donations of cash and kind were also received and have been sent to the affected region (Table 2). A total of USD 200,000 worth of goods and cash has been received. The Department of Health provided medicine, pesticides, antibiotics and medical treatments and undertook preventive measures against outbreak of infectious diseases.

Table 2. Cash and in kind donations to received by the Government of Myanmar (to 28/01/05)

Item	Value
Myanmar currency	8.1294 million kyats
Foodstuff	1.14 million kyats
cloth & medicine	9.43 million kyats
house hold goods	0.96 million kyats
corrugated iron	4.44 million kyats (2000 sheets)

WFP has used boats to move food aid from its existing stocks in Yangon to areas impacted by the tsunami. The two boats carried beans and cooking oil to Kaw Thaug region in the south as well as the impacted area of the Irrawaddy Delta, where the aid is distributed by WFP's partner ADRA. Rice, which is relatively inexpensive compared to the other commodities, will be purchased locally. Food distribution to 80 families through WFP's partner World Vision has been taking place in the Kaw Thaug area. WFP will give food aid to a total of 15,000 tsunami-affected people. (WFP 13th January, www.reliefweb.int).

Key information resources

- Reliefweb – <http://reliefweb.int>
- <http://www.fao.org/countryprofiles/index.asp?lang=en&paia=2&iso3=MMR>

References

- UN agency reports