



## PRESS RELEASE

### **New partnership to reach half a million people in Rakhine with humanitarian and development aid, UN**

*Nay Pyi Taw, 22 February 2018* Representatives of the Governments of Japan and Myanmar and seven United Nations agencies signed today agreements totaling US\$ 20 million to implement a number of humanitarian and development projects benefitting people of all communities in Rakhine State.

“This partnership demonstrates the commitment of the international community to help find and implement solutions to the situation in Rakhine State,” said Knut Ostby, the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator ad interim in Myanmar.

The seven agencies, IOM, UNDP, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNICEF, UN Women and WFP will provide a range of food and development assistance throughout Rakhine State. The participating agencies will integrate their activities – in line with the humanitarian-development-peace nexus – to achieve better results.

“Our immediate concern is provision of humanitarian aid to people in need – irrespective of their religion, ethnicity, gender or citizenship status,” added Knut Ostby. “At the same time, more than 40 percent of people in Rakhine live in poverty and we have to reach them with development assistance in order to set the State on the path to peace and inclusive growth.”

The Myanmar’s Minister of Social Welfare, Rehabilitation and Resettlement H.E. Mr. Win Myat Aye, Ambassador of Japan H.E. Mr. Tateshi Higuchi and representatives of the United Nations participated in the signing ceremony in Nay Pyi Taw.

“In synergy with UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR, UNDP, UN-Women and UNFPA jointly with IOM which all have different expertise, the projects aim to improve humanitarian and development situation in Rakhine State with the approach of the humanitarian-development nexus, which is strongly advocated by the Government of Japan,” said Ambassador Higuchi.

The UN projects aim to reach half a million beneficiaries over the next 12 months. The projects will cover:

- distribution of food, support for screening and treatment of severe acute malnutrition and feeding practices with emphasis on children;
- health services to vulnerable groups, such as pregnant women;



- assistance with rehabilitation of shelters;
- expanding access to drinking water and sanitation services;
- providing safe spaces for children;
- improving access to mental health and psychosocial support, particularly for survivors of gender-based violence;
- support for education activities;
- promoting inclusive and responsive service delivery;
- improving access to justice and rule of law;
- identifying livelihoods and peacebuilding opportunities; and
- creating employment opportunities, particularly for women.

“All our activities will support the implementation of national development goals and the Rakhine Advisory Commission’s recommendations,” said Knut Ostby. “As we will be carrying out our activities, we will be making sure that we observe international standards and principles.”

While the Government of Myanmar has opened up some access for the UN and its partners to some of the crisis affected areas in Rakhine State, humanitarian access remains restricted. The UN will continue to advocate for a meaningful and predictable access allowing distribution of humanitarian and development assistance for the benefit of all communities.

Additionally, the UN in Myanmar will continue to call for voluntary, safe, sustainable and dignified return of refugees to places of origin -- and UNHCR’s involvement in the repatriation process.

“With the recent crisis in mind, we need to be able to face peace, development and human rights challenges simultaneously. These projects will be important contribution both to addressing the immediate needs and a path to sustainable development for all communities in Rakhine State,” concluded Knut Ostby.

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### Media contacts

UNHCR: Paul Vrieze at +95(0)9 44803 4427 or [vrieze@unhcr.org](mailto:vrieze@unhcr.org)

UNFPA: Yenny Gamming at +95-1-542910-19 Ext. 149 or [gamming@unfpa.org](mailto:gamming@unfpa.org)

UNICEF: Alison Rhodes at +95 1 2305960-69 Ext. 1446 or [arhodes@unicef.org](mailto:arhodes@unicef.org)

WFP: Arsen Sahakyan at +95 12305971 Ext. 2420 or [arsen.sahakyan@wfp.org](mailto:arsen.sahakyan@wfp.org)

Office of the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator: Stanislav Saling at +95-942 651 9871 or [stanislav.saling@one.un.org](mailto:stanislav.saling@one.un.org)



## Background on UN agencies

Established in 1951, **IOM** is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration and works closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners. With 169-member states, a further 8 states holding observer status and offices in over 100 countries, IOM is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. IOM works to help ensure the orderly and humane management of migration, to promote international cooperation on migration issues, to assist in the search for practical solutions to migration problems and to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people. IOM established its operations in Myanmar in 2005, and Myanmar became IOM's member state in 2012.

On the ground in about 170 countries and territories, **UNDP** works to eradicate poverty while protecting the planet. We help countries develop strong policies, skills, partnerships and institutions so they can sustain their progress.

**UNFPA** works to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled.

**UNHCR**, the UN Refugee Agency, is mandated to provide humanitarian aid and protection to refugees, forcibly displaced communities and stateless people worldwide, and assist in their safe and voluntary repatriation, local integration or resettlement.

**UNICEF** has been working with the Government and the people of Myanmar since 1950. In partnership with the Government and the civil society, UNICEF's current focus of work aims at reducing child mortality, improving access and quality of education and protecting children from violence, abuse and exploitation.

**UN Women** is the UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide. UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to ensure that the standards are effectively implemented and truly benefit women and girls worldwide.

**WFP** is the world's largest humanitarian agency fighting hunger worldwide, delivering food assistance in emergencies and working with communities to improve nutrition and build resilience. Each year, WFP assists some 80 million people in around 80 countries.