

Severe Tropical Cyclone Nargis Myanmar

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Treating patients means curing the body, the disease, and the heart. Over the mountains and on dirt roads, TIMA deliver the most needed care and medicine to patients in the remote villages. They serve the victims with respect, sincerity and gratitude.

On May 2, 2008, cyclone Nargis landed Myanmar at nightfall devastating the country. According to the Burmese government's conservative estimate, there were up to 130,000 deaths or reported missing, over 10,000 people were badly wounded and 1.5 million people left homeless.

Saving the "Rice-farming Paradise"

Myanmar, formerly Burma, is a "Rice-farming Paradise" but the roads leading to the disaster areas were full of roadblocks. Tzu Chi emergency teams made up of volunteers and professionals from Taiwan, Malaysia and Thailand arrived at the disaster areas in Myanmar. Together, they held more than ten medical health fairs, providing medicines, food supplies, children stationery, fertilizers and seeds supplies to the victims.

Given the supply of seeds and fertilizers, villagers and farmers can return to their fields in the aftermath of the disaster.



Life Saving Technique

Health conditions after the disaster were basically poor, contributing to various kinds of skin diseases. Children malnourishment could be seen from their palms, rough and pale yellowish. Because of poverty, locals had little food supplement other than rice, their main staple with a little salt. Seventy percent of the people had anemia, high blood pressure and malnourishment. The most commonly prescribed medicine by Tzu Chi doctors were vitamins and folic acid tablets.

There was an elderly woman who passed out during her visit to the health fair. Her blood pressure was too low and her stomach was protruding. Vice Superintendent of Hualien Tzu Chi Hospital Dr. Wen-lin Hsu diagnosed her with a case of intestinal disease. Immediately, TIMA members helped the elderly woman with some warm water mixed with vitamins, syrup and salt. Some fanned with the cardboard paper cutout to provide much needed fresh air. The ionized drink and the human fan helped to revive the elderly woman. It was nerve wrecking given the lack of medical equipment necessary for proper diagnosis.