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#### Immediate Release

On May 3rd, 2008 Cyclone Nargis hit Rangoon, Irrawaddy, and Pegu divisions, and Karen and Mon State in Burma. It is estimated that 50,000 people have lost their lives and hundreds of thousands of people are now homeless.

In order to help those people to rebuild their lives the National Health and Education Committee, Burma Medical Association, Mae Tao Clinic and Back Pack Health Worker Team met on the 6<sup>th</sup> May 2008 and organized an *emergency assistance team* to respond to the needs of the affected communities.

All of the organizations have mobilized emergency funds to begin the response immediately and have committed to raising further support through fundraising efforts. A team will conduct rapid needs assessments, at the same time as distributing some basic needs. Following the initial assessment relief supplies will be provided by the assistance team in coordination with the affected communities. Support from external agencies will be needed for this effort.

The organizations are committed to addressing this terrible loss of land, homes and lives. It is a national disaster for the people of Burma and it is imperative to take action now. Through coordination and cooperation with the affected communities, and organizations from all sectors of society, emergency relief must be provided to try to alleviate some of the suffering and hardships that the people are currently facing.

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