

Young Voices, Big Impressions

Children's feedback on our post Nargis response



Save the Children

April 2009

This booklet is part of Save the Children's evaluation of the cyclone Nargis emergency response that will be shared with children and villagers who are beneficiaries of Save the Children's programmes to inform them about results of the evaluation.

This evaluation was designed to have children's participation as a critical component - because in the end - children are the main beneficiaries.

Andy Featherstone (Team Leader, consultant)
Kate Hart (Food & Livelihoods, BRCS)
Susan Thurstan (Nutrition, SC UK)
Salai Isaac (Civil Society, Thingaha)
Terry Durnian (Education, SC Sweden)
U Khin Maung Lwin (Accountability, CARE)
Dominique Porteaud (WASH, SC UK)
Dipendra Shahi (Health, MERLIN)
Brigitte Goby (Child Protection, EMDH)
Apple Chaimontree (Child Participation, consultant)

Save the Children in Myanmar
224/a Solomon Building
U Wisaya Road
Bahan Township
Yangon

Illustration, design, and layout: Apple Chaimontree

Acknowledgements

The evaluation team would like to thank the children and adults of the Ayeyarwaddy Delta who warmly welcomed us into their homes, showed us around their villages, fed us with delicious sweets, and whose comments made this booklet possible.

On behalf of the children, we would like to thank Dan Collison, Claire O’Kane and the Children’s Participation Inter-sector Working Group (Save the Children in Myanmar) who recognized the value of children’s participation in evaluations and laid the foundation for children to give their feedback and be part of the process. We also thank Aung Ko Thet, Aung Tun, Htoo Lwin and other facilitators who encouraged children’s expression and participation in the children’s workshops.

Glossary

CFS	Child Friendly Space
CTC	Community Therapeutic Care
IFE	Infant Feeding in Emergencies
NFI	Non-Food Items
WASH	Water, Sanitation, Hygiene Promotion
SCiM	Save the Children in Myanmar

Foreword

This booklet is part of the Evaluation of Save the Children in Myanmar's (SCiM) Response to Cyclone Nargis. It shares the thoughts and feedback from children on SCiM's work in their villages. The booklet serves as a means of informing participating children and adults about the evaluation results. It will also be shared with other children and community members where SCiM currently works. This booklet contributes to SCiM's accountability and is a testament to interviewees that their comments were in fact used and not deviated in any way.

Thoughts and comments from children were solicited through personal interviews at their homes as well as through two children's workshops. The techniques used to capture their opinions included the 'H' assessment and body mapping. The drawings in this booklet are child-friendly illustrations of the views of children as written in the adult-version of the evaluation report. Direct quotes are made anonymously in order to protect the child's identity and to prevent possible adverse impacts to the child.

On 2 May 2008,
Cyclone Nargis attacked Myanmar



9 months later ...



This booklet is about ...



Save the Children's support to villages attacked by cyclone Nargis in May 2008. This booklet shares information about different activities and support provided in Child Protection, Education, Nutrition, Health, WASH, Food, and Livelihood.



It is about **the communities** which have been receiving support from Save the Children. The booklet tells us about how communities, especially children see and understand Save the Children's work.



It is about **Save the Children's future programmes** in those communities to reduce the impact of disasters. The children and communities have also given recommendations to Save the Children on how to improve its work.

WASH:

Access to cleaner water

Support building and promote the use of sanitary facilities, such as, latrines

Educate the community how to keep themselves healthy

**Nutrition:**

Prevent children from death & illness because of malnutrition

Promote breastfeeding

Promote Community Therapeutic Care (CTC)

Promote how to feed babies properly

Health:

Reduce death & illness of children by providing health care

Food & Livelihood:

Provide food

Rebuild livelihood of community

**Education:**

Rebuild temporary schools and repair damaged schools

Support teachers and provide school kits for children

Improve quality of education in the long term

Child Protection:

Establish Child Friendly Spaces (CFS)

Register separated, unaccompanied and vulnerable children, undertake family tracing and reunification, and provide follow up support

Raise awareness on child protection issues

Shelter:

Provide household, hygiene, and shelter items

Provide tools to rebuild houses



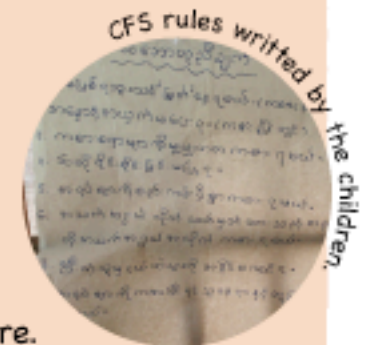
What children say about Child protection

Save the Children built Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) for us. We meet with other children here. Animators teach us games, songs, and poems. We learn a lot from them, such as how to be safe and healthy. We had never had a space like this to hang out with other children before. I love going to the CFS!



Most of the children have been to the CFS in their villages. Children said that they learned a lot from the CFS through songs, poems, stories and games, especially on how to keep themselves healthy and away from danger. They also learned that children have rights and should be protected from all harm – that parents and teachers should not hit children. Some said their parents and teachers stopped hitting them, while others said that their teachers still hit them as punishment. Most of the children felt that they were listened to, especially by the animators. In some villages children developed rules for the CFS with the animators. Older children also helped the animators look after younger children.

In December 2008, Save the Children handed over many of the CFS to the community. However, some villages were not able to continue running the programme with their own resources. For the CFSs that stopped running, children were not always informed or consulted about the closure.



I loved going to the CFS too, but one day the CFS in our village was shut down. We didn't know why and we really missed it. In some villages, there were children who never went to the CFS. They had to work to help their parents so they didn't have time to go.



What children say about WASH & Non-Food Items

Children said they liked the new latrines built by Save the Children, especially the ones that keep flies away. The new latrines come with instructions on how to keep them clean and washing their hands after using them. Even though the proportion of latrines per number of villagers met the standard, children said that they preferred one latrine per family. Sometimes the children get shouted at when using the latrine by the household member on whose land it was built.

Save the Children also helped villagers gain access to clean drinking water by building temporary rain water tanks, rehabilitating ponds, and building water pumps.



A child shows how to use the water pump.

Children also received and were told to use mosquito nets when they slept to prevent them from mosquito-borne diseases.

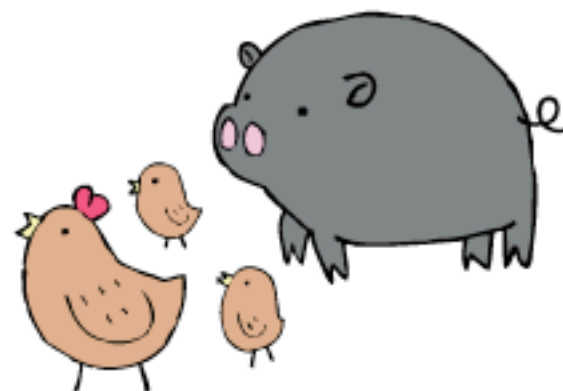
"There is no diarrhea case because of latrine construction. Those latrines are useful for every family. Before, we went for toilet on the bank of the river. Now we use fly-proof latrines ..."

a 14-year-old from Pyapon



What children say about Food & Livelihoods

We were very happy to receive food when there was nothing for us to eat. We were able to replace our work tools such as boats and fishing nets. Therefore, we could start working again. Some of us are raising animals that we received from Save the Children and hope to sell them to earn some money.



In some poor villages, children said their families used cash grants to get food and work tools (e.g. fishing nets) while in better-off villages, children said their families invested into small businesses such as grocery stores or boat rental. In general, children were happy with the livelihood support to their families.

Yet, some working children whose houses were seriously damaged said they needed to work harder to save money to repair their houses before the rainy season. Many of them still used tarpaulin sheets to cover the damaged parts of the houses.

Children said there were a few agencies distributing food after the cyclone, including Save the Children staff. There was enough food for everyone.

Save the Children consulted with the children before stopping food distribution.



A girl shows her new boat bought after Nargis

What children say about Nutrition & Health

Children said they were worried about babies whose mothers were away working, as they did not breastfeed their children. They also worried about babies who lost their mothers during Nargis. Similar to mothers and caretakers, children were aware and had knowledge about nutrition - especially on the best way to feed babies and young children. Some suggested that there should be a scale to regularly weigh babies in the village.

Nevertheless, there were still some malnourished pregnant women and mothers. However support and referrals were not always in place.

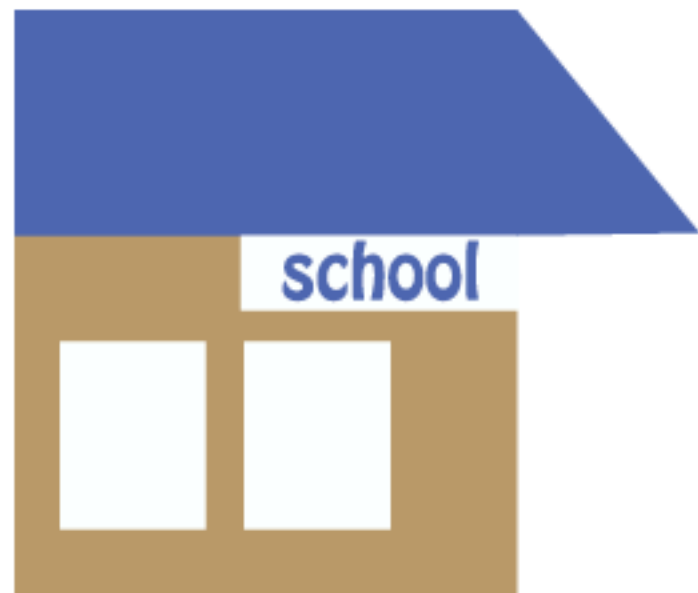


I like mothers who breastfeed their babies. I don't like to see mothers who go away and do not stay with their children and breastfeed them. Babies must be breastfed to be healthy.



What children say about Education

Our school was repaired. There were many people who helped us rebuild and refurnish our damaged school. We also helped out by drying wet books and cleaning classrooms and the school grounds. We received new school kits to go to school.



Children said their schools were either repaired or temporary schools were built not long after the cyclone attacked. They were happy to return to school quickly and many found that their new/repaired schools were bigger than the old ones. However, they did not think that the new/repaired schools could withstand another cyclone like Nargis.

They were also happy to receive school kits containing coloured pens, notebooks, books, school bags, and etc. In some villages, after Save the Children started to work with school teachers, children said their teachers were nicer to them and never hit children again. In one village, children said they were still hit by their teachers as punishment when they misbehaved.



This is what happens
in the villages now ...
(9 months after Nargis)



I breastfeed my baby so he will be healthy.

We received food from a lot of people.

We have clean water to drink from the water pump.



We know we have rights and should be protected from harm.

We have a place to meet our friends and learn new things.

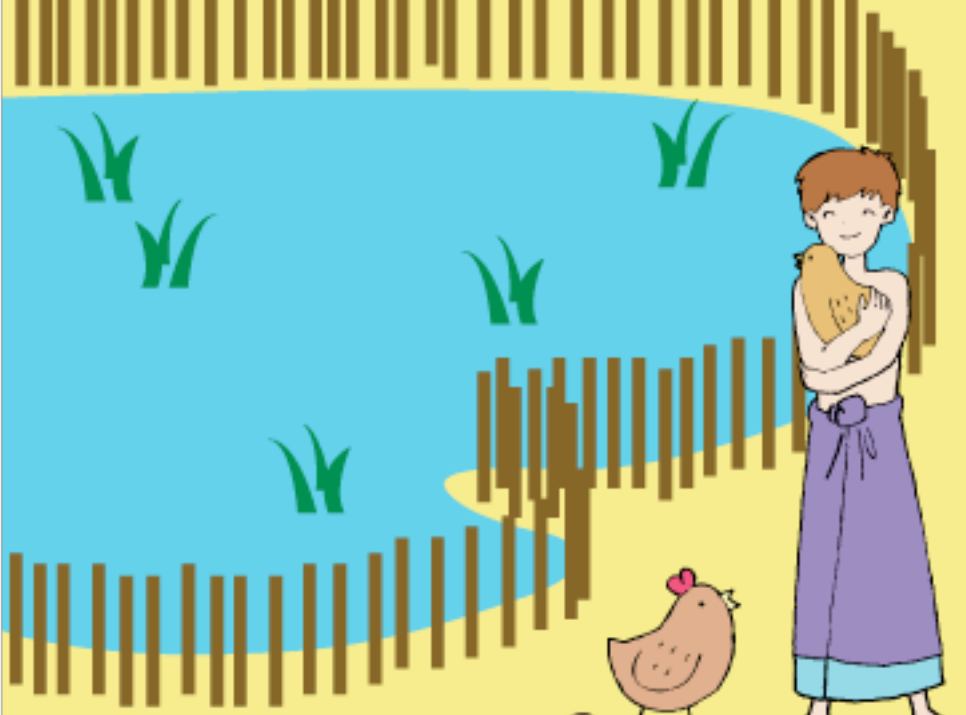


We have money to buy food.



I wash my hands before eating.





I received chickens and raised them along with my cousins' pigs.

I used the cash grant to buy a new boat. I can go fishing again.



Our natural pond is fenced to prevent animals from making the pond dirty.

Our school has been rebuilt and we received new school kits to use.

I received teacher training and I can teach and give more support to my students.



We have clean toilets to use.



Some villages have recovered, but others are still struggling, **so what's next?**

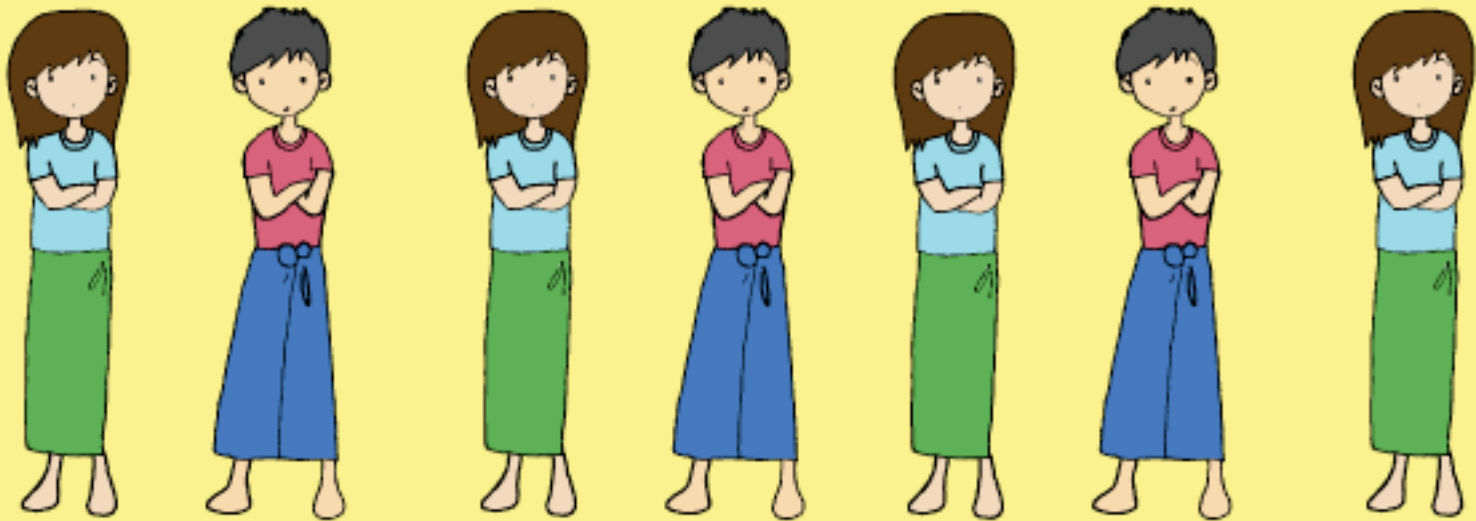
We need to find out who needs the most help and **continue to provide support** to them.

We need to **work together more** across sectors so that we better combine our efforts.

We need to make sure that **children and adults** in the community **are part of the solution** too.

We need to **learn from this experience and prepare** ourselves in case there is another disaster.





We have been working separately on different activities and have committees for each one of them. Instead, we should have one committee to work on all these areas, as all activities are related to children and families. The response will be better if we all work together.



continue to provide support

Even though many villages have recovered from the disaster, there are still some villages that have not recovered as much. Usually, they are poorer villages that are far and not easy to access. People still live in houses covered with tarpaulin sheets and conditions are not much different from when Nargis first attacked. People cannot work as much as before as there are fewer jobs available and they are still haunted by the memory of Nargis. Children and adults in these villages are more vulnerable and need more help from Save the Children than other villages.



children and adults are part of the solution



To enable villagers to take action and find solutions, children and adults need to be more involved in programmes, so they can learn how to help themselves. In addition, Save the Children should make sure that everyone - boys, girls, men, women, authorities, and villagers - is able to equally participate in all activities.

Children and villagers have received a lot of support from Save the Children. However, it is important that the children and villagers work together with Save the Children. But more importantly, children and villagers should start taking action on their own because villagers are in the best position to solve their own problems.



In case there is another disaster, we should make sure that we are prepared. We shall use lessons learned from Nargis to plan for future activities.

We need to look at how different activities help people in our villages to recover and what needs to be improved. We may need to find out what existing risks/dangers in our villages are, who is vulnerable and who needs the most help when disasters happen, how villagers can respond to the disaster together, and who can provide emergency support to our villages.

If we prepare well, we can prevent and reduce the impact of any disaster.



learn from
experience
and prepare