WHO NEWSWIRE

Myanmar – Health Concerns in Rakhine State

Who are the Rohingya?
The Rohingya, a Muslim ethnic group of around 1 million people, live primarily in Myanmar’s western Rakhine State. After decades of discriminatory government policies, the Rohingya are now often described as one of the most persecuted minorities in the world. In 1982, the government stripped them of citizenship, leaving them stateless and vulnerable to abuse. In addition, approximately 10 percent of the Rohingya population is currently detained in camps for displaced persons, where they lack adequate access to health care, education, and employment.

Health Crisis in Rohingya Community

Restrictions on freedom of movement for Rohingya in the camps also exacerbate problems such as lack of access to adequate health care. The government forced Doctors Without Borders (MSF) to halt work in Rakhine State in February 2014. While the group was allowed to resume basic health services in early 2015, the availability of adequate care is still limited.

For many years, malnutrition and maternal and primary health care needs have been particularly acute in the community, while gaps in official health care services have been more pronounced in areas where Rohingya live. Where MSF has been able to run mobile clinics, the most common diseases we see are skin infections, worms, chronic coughing, diarrhea, and respiratory tract infections. Shelters are frequently inadequate, leaving people exposed, and there are rarely enough blankets to go around. Severe malnutrition is also present, particularly among children in many of the camps.

Since October 2013, MSF has conducted more than 10,000 medical consultations through mobile teams in some of these areas, but the medical needs are far from covered.

Access to Clinics/Hospital by Gender

Comparison of Reported Access to Healthcare Between Muslim IDPs and Muslim Villages

https://drive.google.com/file/d/0Bwd1WXitJ5PHeXBGVmx0bjZSUlk/view