



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – May 1, 2009

One Year After Cyclone Nargis, FXB Cites Progress and Remaining Challenges in Myanmar

This weekend marks the one-year anniversary of Cyclone Nargis, which hit Myanmar on May 2, 2008. One of the worst natural disasters in the country's history, the cyclone left an estimated 150,000 people dead and thousands more missing and injured. Approximately one third of those killed were children and adolescents. FXB International was one of the first responders to the storm, providing survivors with critical provisions, including food, water, shelter, and healthcare.

The role of nongovernmental organizations like FXB was – and continues to be – vital to the relief and rebuilding efforts in Myanmar. Burmese military and government authorities have been criticized for their slow and ineffective response to the national disaster.

In the past year, FXB has worked around-the-clock to help stabilize the well-being of children, families, and communities in Yangon, Mon State, and Ayeyarwady through a number of relief and rebuilding initiatives. The results of FXB's initiatives to-date include:

- 300 toilets were installed, improving sanitation for 1,200 individuals
- 21 water pumps were installed and 29 polluted ponds were cleaned, providing clean water to over 50,000 individuals
- Food was distributed to 24,000 individuals
- 25 Child Friendly Spaces were established, providing 4,500 children with educational services
- 360 homes were rebuilt

For these efforts, FXB was cited by both the World Health Organization and the UN Office of Humanitarian Affairs for the significant role it played. FXB always maintains emphasis on producing sustainable solutions so individuals are better able to respond to survival challenges in the future.

Despite this progress, the country still faces a grave set of challenges. Long-term problems include agricultural damage, scarce food supplies, destroyed hospitals and schools, and a staggering number of newly vulnerable children in the aftermath of the storm. Over 1.5 million people are estimated to be currently homeless and in need of assistance.

About FXB International: FXB is an international nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting children and families hardest hit by poverty and AIDS. FXB began working in Myanmar in 1992 and currently operates several public health and socio-economic development programs there targeting vulnerable children and young women.

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