



Responding to the Myanmar Earthquake Crisis: Relief work with a soul

"Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet My unfailing love for you will not be shaken..." — Isaiah 54:10

Overwhelmed and helplessness in such a dire situation

Our hearts are heavy, this disaster has shaken us deeply. The relief work feels slow—not because we are not trying, but because the need is just so overwhelming. At times, we have felt helpless, unsure where to begin. Every direction reveals more devastation, more pain, more cries for help. And yet, we press on, because the love of Christ compels us.

The catastrophe caused by the 7.8 magnitude earthquake near Mandalay is beyond comprehension. In a nation already ravaged by civil war and displacement, this disaster has shattered over 50,000 homes, wiping out some neighborhoods. Sagaing has borne the brunt, with 80% of its structures reduced to rubble, while Mandalay and Naypyidaw are struggling amidst staggering losses. The death toll continues to climb, with countless lives lost and many still unaccounted for.

Thousands have been forced into the open, clinging to survival under flimsy tarps amidst crumbled infrastructure. Despite the Myanmar Red Cross, China, and Singapore rushing aid, the scale of the devastation dwarfs these efforts. Entire villages remain marooned, cut off by insecurity and destroyed roads, leaving already vulnerable communities without hope or help.

The cry for support is deafening as exhausted and grief-stricken communities face relentless despair. This is not just a disaster—it is an unimaginable humanitarian crisis, demanding a global outpouring of compassion and resources to rebuild lives and offer a lifeline to those left in the shadows of ruin.

Our dedicated relief teams have been working tirelessly since the earthquake, providing food, supplies, and comfort to more than 530 families and 3,200 individuals in desperate need. Thanks to your overwhelming generosity, approximately SGD 40,000 (USD 29,000) has already been sent to support immediate relief efforts. However this figure is just a fraction of the overwhelming need.



Mourning in the midst of the most celebrated water festival...

In Myanmar, the Water Festival, typically a time of joy and reunion, turned somber this year. The earthquake, striking just days before, left thousands grieving and communities in ruins. Celebrations were canceled nationwide, and streets once alive with laughter fell silent in mourning.

As the Water Festival approached, the team members need to return homes to be with their families and churches for the festival. The teams ensured that those within their reach received enough rations to make it through the festival. The local Christian community in Mandalay, Sagaing and Naypyidaw will continue the relief work even though they have lesser work force during the festival.

A Pause in Relief, A Pursuit of Souls

▲fter weeks of relentless effort, the teams reached a point of physical and emotional exhaustion. Relief operations slowed—not due to disappearing needs, but because the workers needed time to recover, regroup, and seek guidance from God."

And when they returned to their churches, they did something very timely for the people of Myanmar: they gathered the children, the youth, those who are hurting.



"When the hands grow weary, the heart steps in."

Across different regions, local believers held **joint gospel gatherings**, bringing together children and young people from nearby communities. These were not merely "programs"—they were **holy spaces** where grieving hearts could be comforted, where questions could be voiced, and where hope could be gently restored.

Instead of celebration, there was **worship**. Instead of water games, there were **tears and prayers**. Instead of chaos, there was the **peace of God**.

One co-worker shared, ***"We couldn't celebrate. But we could still proclaim Christ. This was the best gift we could give our children this New Year—a reason to look up again."***



1. Holistic Response: Aid with a Soul

While we meet urgent needs—**food, water, shelter**—We offer more than food—we offer **healing**. People are not just hungry—they are forgotten, traumatized, and spiritually broken.

That's why our CNEC Relief team embraces a **personal and humanistic approach**. We do not merely hand out aid—we see the person behind the need.

"We walk into broken homes with open arms. We **listen to grief**, we **weep with the weary**, and we **lay hands on the sick and the shattered**, declaring peace in **Jesus' name**. We do

not serve with distant hands—we serve **heart to heart**"

Each family we meet receives their aid **personally**—not tossed from a truck, but delivered with eye contact, words of comfort, and a quiet prayer.

Every act of love will soften the hearts for the Gospel.

"They may forget our names but let them remember the name of Jesus."





2. The Strategy of the Good Shepherd: Targeted & Holistic approaches

With limited manpower and resources, they go where others may not. Like the Good Shepherd, they go after the one, the most vulnerable, the easily forgotten. We focus first on our ministry teams —places where we've already walked alongside families in discipleship and love.

Our approach is both **strategic** and **deeply personal**.

We don't just serve communities—we see **each individual**. Not just mouths to feed, but hearts to love, bless, and lift up in prayer.

“The Body of Christ must first heal its own wounds, then go and be salt and light to the community.”

3. On going phase of Relief: From Surviving to Restoring

During this sacred pause, our co-workers relief teams also took time to plan and prepare for the next phase of relief. We have four phases of relief work.

- **Phase One: Saving Lives**
Pulling survivors from rubble. Urgent search and rescue.
- **Phase Two: Emergency Relief**
Providing food, clean water, and shelter to families who lost everything.
- **Phase Three: Holistic Healing**
Offering trauma care, prayer, spiritual comfort, and emotional support. Many house churches have started to form in the process!
- **Phase Four: Physical reconstruction /Rebuilding**
The final step is long-term: repairing and rebuilding homes, schools, and churches. It's a slow process, but a vital one—laying the foundation for a renewed future.

We are still in the stage two and three while we are giving out food and water, we also hope to bring them care, love and Christ.

CNEC is pivoting toward **temporary shelters and solar-powered lighting**. As rebuilding proves nearly impossible in many areas—due to high costs, material shortages, and ongoing instability—These items may seem simple, but they are **lifelines**. However, the cost is significant, and our resources are stretched. We need more hands to give, more hearts to pray.

Every tent is a roof of mercy. Every light is a spark of hope.



▲As for the meeting the holistic needs, the teams are providing, prayer, counselling and setting up house churches for the people to come to find peace from our Lord Jesus Christ.

We do see that this is going to be a very long process as we are pursuing the fourth stage when we have to also help in the rebuilding Churches and student centers that were destroyed.



4. Beyond Relief:

Most Immediate Needs

●Our long-term vision is not just reconstruction—it is **revival**. As we rebuild homes and churches, we work with God to **bring faith** in these communities. We aim to:

- **Relief** for displaced families
- Restore **church buildings** as places of hope
- Support families with **livelihood tools** to regain economic stability

We see every fallen brick as a chance to **build something new for God's glory**. Where civil war and disaster have shattered lives, the love of Christ will **plant peace**.

You may not see the tears wiped away or the hands held—but **He sees**, and **He remembers**. And from the bottom of our hearts, **we thank you**.

Jesus walks among the ruins. And where His people go, His light follows.

In a season when Myanmar could not celebrate, **Jesus came near**—through His people, through your prayers, and through every act of love.

Though relief work paused for a moment, **the Spirit never stopped moving**. And your support never stopped being felt.

As we move into the next phase, we invite you to continue standing with us in this action of

aid with a soul !

With deep gratitude and hope,

Rev James Lai

CNEC Singapore

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