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## **UN agencies begin aid assessment in wake of deadly quake in Myanmar**



Damage to the road in Tarlay Sub-Township

25 March 2011 – United Nations aid agencies have begun assessing the humanitarian needs in eastern Myanmar, where a major earthquake has killed dozens of people and destroyed or damaged hundreds of buildings, including hospitals, homes and monasteries.

The quake, which measured 6.8 on the Richter scale, had its epicentre in Shan state, close to the border with Laos and Thailand, and struck just before 8:30 p.m. local time yesterday. The official [death toll](#) has reached 73 and is expected to climb further.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs ([OCHA](#)) [reported](#) that at least six aftershocks have been reported since the initial quake and the risk of landslides is considered high.

A preliminary joint assessment by the UN Children’s Fund ([UNICEF](#)) and the Myanmar Red Cross Society in the hardest hit area has found that at least 400 houses were damaged or affected, while one rural hospital has also been damaged.

UNICEF is dispatching emergency health kits and first aid kits to Tachileik township, close to the epicentre, and is also preparing to send water purification items if needed.

Both UNICEF and the UN World Health Organization ([WHO](#)) have deployed staff members to the area to assist local authorities, while the UN High Commissioner for Refugees ([UNHCR](#)), the UN Development Programme ([UNDP](#)) and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime ([UNODC](#)) have all confirmed they either have emergency materials or staff on standby if local authorities request them.

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