

EMERGENCY APPEAL



International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
Fédération Internationale des Sociétés de la Croix-Rouge et du Croissant-Rouge
Federación Internacional de Sociedades de la Cruz Roja y de la Media Luna Roja
الاتحاد الدولي لجمعيات الصليب الأحمر والهلال الأحمر

BANGLADESH: FLOODS

Appeal 15/2004
26 July 2004

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilising the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organisation and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

In Brief

THIS EMERGENCY APPEAL SEEKS CHF 4,350,000 (USD 3,440,095 OR EUR 2,844,997) IN CASH, KIND, OR SERVICES TO ASSIST SOME 1,000,000 BENEFICIARIES FOR SIX MONTHS.

(click here to go directly to the attached Appeal budget)

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's [Annual Appeal](#).

The situation

The current and ongoing flood situation in the country is being described in some areas as the worst in 17 years. The overall situation is grave and further deterioration is expected.

Government statistics state 35 of the country's 64 districts covering more than half of Bangladesh has been seriously affected. Further districts are expected to be enveloped. The estimated number of affected people has risen to 22 million. They are in the northern, north-eastern, and central districts of Bangladesh. The official death toll at 25 July stood at 227.



Marooned char dwellers in Bogra district 20 July

Although the disaster situation has been gradually developing over the last four weeks, it has rapidly deteriorated during the past fortnight and will get worse.

The extensive flooding is due to a variety of contributing factors. In addition to heavy and early monsoon rains in Bangladesh, there has been the snow melt and rain run-off from the Himalayas and lesser ranges, and monsoon rain in neighbouring countries (Bhutan, Nepal, India) have swollen the massive Brahmaputra and Ganges river systems. Heavy localised rains have added to the cumulative effect, causing dramatic surface flooding. Another threat looms

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with the prediction of a high tide on 31 July in the Bay of Bengal, which would further limit the outflow of flood waters and make a critical situation even worse.

Flood victims have been marooned or displaced from their homes, being forced to take refuge in public buildings, road embankments, roadways and rooftops or whatever high ground they can scramble to. Many people are being forced to live in unhygienic conditions in temporary shelters while others are stranded in small hamlets surrounded by water. Flooding has now hit the capital Dhaka, forcing thousands of city residents to live on rooftops. About a third of Dhaka is submerged under floodwaters polluted with sewage and garbage, exposing people to serious health hazards.

Official reports state that almost 900,000 acres of crops and sown land have been destroyed while a further 1.2 million acres have been damaged. Tens of thousands of acres of paddy rice, and thousands of kilometers of roads and infrastructure have been damaged or disrupted.

Water levels are so high that boats have been afloat on airport runways. All international and domestic flights were suspended for four days at Sylhet airport, while the domestic airport in Saidpur was also shut down due to flooding.

A major portion of the Sylhet-Dhaka highway was washed away and road and rail links between Dhaka and Sylhet were severed. River waters have rolled over the Dhaka-Aricha and Dhaka-Chittagong highways threatening the capital's road links to the south and northeast. Government figures state that 2,122 km of embankments have been damaged. There has been severe disruption to road and rail links across the country.

The Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) expects the situation to remain critical for the coming weeks in Bangladesh's northern, northeastern and central areas, especially in the vast slum areas of Dhaka and the surrounding districts.

FFWC officials say the floods could assume cataclysmic dimensions if the water levels in the Brahmaputra, Ganges and Meghna continued to swell at the same time. Of particular concern remains the confluence of the rivers affecting Dhaka where the floodwaters are threatening sewerage and drainage systems.



Submerged houses in Sunamganj – 19 July

FFWC also reports that the country's central region flood situation is worsening. It warns by the end of the month 60 percent of Bangladesh may be affected.

Bangladesh is one of the most disaster-prone nations in the world. The location renders the country extremely vulnerable to the impact of floods, cyclones, tidal surges, tornados, and earthquakes. With around 80 percent of its 142 million people living in rural areas, Bangladesh is one of the most densely populated countries. It is also one of the poorest and as such, the severity of the impact of natural disasters impact is immense often exceeds the capacity of local coping mechanisms.

With more than 50 percent of the population (over 65 million) living below the poverty line, scarcity of food is a major issue throughout the affected districts. Widespread crop damage has already resulted in price hikes of basic foodstuffs, further hitting low income populations.

Safe drinking water is also becoming scarce with many water sources having being contaminated. Outbreaks of waterborne diseases such as diarrhoea, dysentery, and dengue fever have been reported in Dhaka city.

Figures on the impact of flood as per initial assessment of Ministry of Food and Disaster Management released on 24 July.

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Total districts affected	35
Area affected	20,163 km sq
Affected families	4,351,280
Affected population	22,492,960
Reported deaths	227
Livestock losses	4,092
Crops destroyed	889,722 acres
Crops damaged	1,211,014 acres
Houses destroyed	155,142
Houses damaged	1,972,691
Road network destroyed	6,081 km
Partial road damage	24,172 km
Bridges and culverts damaged	2,783
Embankment damaged	2,122 km
Schools destroyed	1,096
Schools damaged	10,540
Total number of shelters	2,284
Number of people in shelters	719,328



Flood affected households at Sarishabari, in Jamalpur districts, - 17 July

Government action /UN/International Organisations/Non-government Organisations

As of 24 July the Government had allocated 28,500 metric tons (MT) of rice, Taka 20.075 million (CHF 436,500) in cash grants, and Taka 4.7 million (CHF 102,200) for rehabilitation of houses and clothing for destitute families. The Government had earlier deployed the army to assist in relief and rescue operations and airdrops in some of the worst hit districts.

UN agencies, international organisations (IOs) and non-government organisations (NGOs) have officially activated the Disaster Management Team to determine the severity of the current situation and coordinate appropriate responses by the humanitarian community. World Food Program (WFP) has released 12.2 MT of high-energy biscuits to three-partner NGOs for distribution among the 36,800 beneficiaries at Kurigram, Nilphamari and Rangpur. Limited scale relief operations are being carried out throughout the country by various IOs/NGOs, providing mainly emergency food relief to the most vulnerable population in the most affected districts.

Red Cross / Red Crescent Action

The local Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) branches along with community-based disaster preparedness (CBDP) squad volunteers have been continuously assisting the affected people in shifting to safer ground. The national society has drawn on a large, well-trained pool of volunteers. Many of these volunteers have years of experience and have benefited from ongoing training programmes supported by long-term local and international partnerships.

In the past week, two joint multi-skilled Bangladesh Red Crescent Society/Federation assessment teams visited 14 severely affected districts in the northern, north eastern and central parts of Bangladesh. As recommended by the assessment teams, distribution has been organised, utilising available buffer stocks to 3,175 most affected families in nine districts. The distribution was made among the most vulnerable families who had completely lost their homes. Beneficiary lists were prepared by local Red Crescent branches following procedures outlined in the national society emergency relief manual. The distributions were carried out by Bangladesh Red Crescent CBDP squads and Red Crescent youth volunteers.

District branches are also providing limited emergency relief through local fundraising for immediate distribution among the affected population. It is difficult to provide exact figures of assisted beneficiaries as the numbers are increasing on a daily basis.

The Federation Head of Delegation and the Bangladesh Red Crescent Chairman carried out an assessment mission in the northern parts of Bangladesh on 20 July. Based on their findings and recommendation it was concluded that there is an urgent need for food, non-food items, and medical assistance in the 28 most affected districts.

Due to the worsening situation in Dhaka city, the Bangladesh Red Crescent will commence the distribution of food and non-food items on 27 July. Initial funds have been secured from two major banks - HSBC and Citicorp in Bangladesh, while other donations have been received from the public.

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The Bangladesh Red Crescent is in the process of distributing 700 MT of rice allocated by WFP and Government of Bangladesh (under a bilateral five-year memorandum of understanding) in 28 districts to 35,000 of the most vulnerable families. Each family will get 20 kg of rice. The delivery of rice is expected in the next few days.

The Bangladesh Red Crescent national headquarters and the Federation delegation have been maintaining close contact with all district branches in the flood affected districts. The national head quarters sent out an alert to all district branches at the beginning of July, calling on them to maintain close contact regarding the flood situation. Branches were instructed to alert members and volunteers to get ready for a possible relief operation and to inform national headquarters of their contingency plans.

The Bangladesh Red Crescent and Federation have established a specialist taskforce to further strengthen the operational activities of the national headquarters during the monsoon season with the emergency Flood Relief Control Room at headquarters and providing coordination and information sharing with district units and other stakeholders.

An Emergency Grant application for EUR 1.350.340 has already been submitted to ECHO by the International Federation Secretariat in close coordination with the Red Cross EU Office in Brussels.

The Needs

Immediate needs:

According to the assessments reports, basic emergency and immediate post-emergency needs of the affected population are as follows:

Emergency Relief Phase

1. Food

The floods have devastated large areas of crops and destroyed already meagre food supplies of many vulnerable people living below the poverty line. Food was mentioned as the top priority by most of the flood-affected population interviewed by the assessment teams and District's Branch staff and volunteers.

2. Family Kits

The rapid onset of the flooding has washed away many families' most basic items. The distribution of family kits will provide emergency assistance and give valuable psychological support to the most affected families in helping to try to return to normality.

3. Medical services/ water purification tablets

In the initial stage of the relief operation, several mobile medical teams will be operational in the affected districts to provide emergency medical services for two months in order to prevent/contain possible outbreaks of waterborne diseases among the affected population.

Flooding has contaminated a huge number of water sources and the provision of water purification tablets and oral rehydration solution along with health education is of utmost importance in order to prevent outbreaks of waterborne diseases in the affected districts.

The distribution will be organised through the mobile medical teams. The Bangladesh Red Crescent has requested the World Health Organisation to provide 500,000 water purification tablets for distribution in the affected areas.



Rehabilitation Phase

4. Agricultural input

Once water levels recede and the affected population is able to return to their homes, basic agricultural support will be needed. This would involve the provision of paddy rice and vegetable seeds to allow beneficiaries to plant crops in the next sowing season. This component is very important as the floods have damaged over 1.2 million acres and destroyed 889,722 acres of crops. This has left communities exceptionally vulnerable for the future. The floods not only have had

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an immediate impact, but mid-term effects must be addressed to allow communities to get back on their feet to prevent even more suffering.

Longer-term needs

Depending on the changing needs, additional districts may have to be added for the provision of assistance. As outlined earlier, the flood situation could get significantly worse and many more people may require assistance. Once flood waters recede the need for medical assistance, clothing and household items to help rehabilitate communities is anticipated.

Coordination

The BDRCS, as per its Statutes, works as an auxiliary to the Government, which has empowered the Society to work independently in the field of disaster management. However, co-operation and co-ordination with the different Ministries, in particular, with the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management, the Ministry of Health as well as the UN agencies and NGO's is also vital for both, the Federation and the BDRCS.

At all levels, from national to grassroots (i.e. national, district, sub-district, union and below), the BDRCS is represented on all disaster management committees which are the co-ordination cells. These organisations have the opportunity to play a productive role in national disaster preparedness planning, co-ordination and advocacy, in particular inter-ministerial forum which meets on an ad-hoc basic during the emergency situation.

The Federation and BDRCS are active members of the Disaster Forum, a network of NGOs and donor organisations active in disaster relief and preparedness. During the project period, IFRC/BDRCS will work in co-ordination with Disaster Forum and Disaster Emergency Response (DER) group jointly chaired by UN and the Disaster Management Bureau. Regular co-ordination meetings of DER group have been attended by BDRCS and Federation in order to share information and coordinate relief operations being carried out by various stakeholders in the country since the start of the monsoon season.

The BDRCS has also provided a representative for the DER assessment teams. Members of the DER continue to coordinate their action in order to avoid duplication of relief distribution. Given the continued flooding of some areas and the onset of rain in eastern India and the Himalayas, the members of DER group met on 21 July. At the meeting it was decided to activate DER "Operation Room" at the WFP office and to form and dispatch assessment teams to the flood-affected areas.

The BDRCS and Federation Bangladesh delegation are also working closely with Federation South Asia regional delegation (Delhi), OXFAM, Action Aid, WHO, WFP and other NGOs. During the last week coordination meetings were held regularly, with international donors, UN agencies, government relief agencies and other international and national organisations in order to discuss the current flooding situation and possible scenarios with regards to emergency assistance as deemed necessary. The BDRCS and Federation will continue to attend regular DER group coordination meetings.

The proposed operation

This emergency appeal will meet the urgent food, non-food and health needs of some 200,000 displaced families or 1,000,000 beneficiaries currently living on the river embankments, roadways and chars (river islands) for the period of six months, in at least 28 districts.

The experience of flood assistance operations in Bangladesh shows that it is essential to maintain a degree of flexibility in the geographical targeting of relief. While it is possible to specify which districts are in need of assistance at the moment, it is still possible that other districts might be affected later on. Donors should therefore allow the Federation and the BDRCS flexibility in directing assistance as the need arises.

Operation Objective: To meet the urgent needs of some 1,000,000 unassisted and displaced beneficiaries severely affected by the ongoing monsoon season who are currently living in their flooded homes, river embankments, roadways and chars through the provision of basic food items, family kits, medical services and small-scale agricultural support during the rehabilitation phase

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Emergency Relief Phase

Objective 1: 135,000 displaced and unassisted families to receive emergency complementary food ration for one month within the coming weeks.

Through this appeal, the BDRCS and the Federation intends to assist 135,000 of the most vulnerable displaced families by distributing emergency food supplies of 2,700 MT of rice (including the 700MT allocated by WFP/GOB), 675 MT of dhal (lentils) and 270 MT of cooking oil for an initial period of one month. Each affected family will receive a food ration consisting of: 20 kg of rice, 5kg of dhal (lentils) and 2 litres of cooking oil.

Activities:

- Identification of most vulnerable beneficiaries using the “BDRCS Disaster Relief Manual” with special emphasis on gender and disability issues.
- Local procurement of 2,000 MT of rice, 675 MT of dhal (lentils) and 270MT of cooking oil.
- Dispatch and transportation by BDRCS to the final destination.
- Assist the BDRCS to strengthen its management of warehouses and distribution structures especially at unit level
- Distribution by trained community-based disaster preparedness volunteers to pre-determined beneficiaries.
- Regular detailed reporting of the distribution.
- Ongoing monitoring and technical advice by the BDRCS headquarters and Federation.
- Assist the BDRCS in strengthening its human and material resource capacities in the 36 district branches and national headquarters as necessary for the operation.

Objective 2: 50,000 flood-affected families to receive family kits and emergency BDRCS buffer stock replenished over a period of four months

50,000 family kits will be distributed among the most affected vulnerable families (many of these beneficiaries are also expected to benefit from the food and non-food programmes).The family kits have multiple impacts on the affected families – they provide the most necessary non-food items to help restore life to normality after the disaster and they also provide valuable psychological support to families who have lost all their possessions.

Each family kit consists of:

- two aluminium cooking saucepans,
- plastic mugs and glasses,
- two aluminium plates and spoons,
- one plastic bucket (12-litre.),
- two bars of soap,
- six candles and 12 matchboxes,
- one saree for women,
- one lungi for men
- one piece of plastic sheeting (18x12 ft.)
- one reinforced 50 kg rice bag.

Activities:

- Local procurement of 50,000 family kits.
- Storage at BDRCS warehouse and transportation to the final destination.
- Distribution by trained community-based disaster preparedness volunteers to the predetermined beneficiaries.
- Regular detailed reporting of the distribution.
- Assist the BDRCS and Federation replenish buffer stocks that were used in initial relief efforts through local procurement of 15,000 family kits and 15,000 blankets.
- Ongoing monitoring and technical advice by the BDRCS and the Federation.
- Implement training as necessary for the operation.

Objective 3: Provide basic medical services within the first two months of the operation to the flood-affected population, limiting possible out breaks of waterborne diseases.

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A total of 198,000 people, many of them also beneficiaries of the food and non-food programs, are expected to benefit from this program.

Activities:

- 44 mobile medical teams to be deployed in each of the targeted districts to carry out preventive and curative health interventions..
- Each team comprise of a doctor, a paramedic and two Red Cross youth volunteers (one man and one woman).
- Procurement of basic drugs for treatment of waterborne and related diseases. BDRCS will purchase the medicines through WHO-nominated pharmaceuticals.
- Assist the BDRCS to provide logistic, technical and administrative support by upgrading the basic office and communication equipment of its relief department.
- The medical service, focusing on waterborne diseases in the disaster areas, will be conducted in parallel with the food /non-food distributions.
- Implement training as necessary for the operation.
- The beneficiary families supported by BDRCS with basic food and non-food items will also receive water purification tablets and health education on disease prevention. Each family will receive a supply of tablets for two months (i.e.10 tablets per family per day for two weeks).
- Apply for, collect and distribute initial two million water purification tablets from WHO.
- Storage by BDRCS and transportation of medicaments and water purification tablets to the final destination.

Rehabilitation Phase

Objective 4: *To provide four months into the operation, agricultural inputs to the 30'000 affected families who have access to land*

At the end of monsoon season, once water levels recede and the conditions are established so the affected population can return to their homes, basic agricultural support needs to be provided. This will involve the provision of two types of seeds (paddy rice and vegetable) to allow the potential beneficiaries to plant crops at the suitable time of year. This component is very important as the floods have destroyed 889,722 acres of crops and seed beds while a further 1.2 million acres of arable land has been damaged.

Activities

The same principle will apply as with the selection of beneficiaries for the family kits (many of them also beneficiaries of the food and non-food programmes). Beneficiaries will be identified through field surveys (in accordance with the BDRCS Disaster Relief Field Manual) carried out by Red Crescent volunteers at the shelter and road sites, embankments and other areas used as temporary accommodation by the affected population.

- Local procurement of 30,000 sets of agricultural seeds (vegetable/rice seeds).
- Storage by BDRCS and transportation to the final destination.
- Distribution by trained community-based disaster preparedness volunteers to the predetermined beneficiaries.
- Provide detailed reporting of the distribution.
- Ongoing monitoring and technical advice by the BDRCS and the Federation.
- Implement training as necessary for the operation.

Communications – Advocacy and Public information

High visibility for the operation will be maintained through local and international media, international web links and the issuing of press releases on a regular basis. Display of Red Crescent flags/banner/posters at the distribution sites and aprons with the Red Crescent emblem will be worn by distributors. All major items procured will have the Red Cross logo, indicating donors funding support.

Adequate visibility for donors and the Federation will be ensured, including maintaining a high profile in the international media. Photographs will be taken throughout the implementation of project, and submitted to donors upon completion of the project. The BDRCS produces a monthly newsletter, and a quarterly magazine which is financed by ICRC and distributed to all sister national societies, local diplomatic missions, government, UN agencies, NGOs and BDRCS field branches. In both these publications, the BDRCS will disseminate and report on donor-supported

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programmes. The communications unit at the South Asia regional delegation will also assist in ensuring high visibility of the operation.

Capacity of the National Society

The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society has 68 branches throughout the country with a membership of more than 350,000 people and 37,000 well-trained CBDP volunteers in flood-prone areas and 5,863 community volunteers in cyclone-prone areas of whom approximately one-third are women. The BDRCS with its extensive experience in responding to flood emergencies has developed its operational capacity through a number of extensive disaster relief and preparedness programmes over the last few years. Its leadership, officers and volunteers have wide-ranging operational experience in disaster relief which has been demonstrated in previous successful emergency operations and can rely on technical support from the Federation delegation in Bangladesh as well as other Federation resources.

The BDRCS disaster management policy and practice has evolved in response to significant events and circumstances. The level of volunteer engagement at community level is demonstrated by in the CBDP teams recently established in 35 BDRCS branches located in districts frequently subjected to floods, tropical storms and the impact of river erosion. The CBDP initiatives link awareness generation and skills training with mitigation interventions focused on community preparedness, first aid, public hygiene, access to safe drinking water and income generation.

In all these spheres, the Bangladesh Red Crescent initiatives complement (and frequently lead) the efforts of government departments and some NGOs. Nevertheless, there are no 'quick fix' solutions to community vulnerability. Its reduction requires long-term commitment and strategic planning of development activities focused on key disaster management issues related to prevention, preparedness and mitigation.

The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society will hopefully continue to receive support for its long-term strategic development programmes in the field of disaster preparedness and response and work in compliance with Ministry of Food and Disaster Management and the Disaster Management Bureau for years to come. In March 2004, the BDRCS finalised its new four-year disaster management strategy. The strategy is a major component of the national society's four-year development plan. Lessons learnt and experience obtained from this relief operation will further contribute to strengthening the capacity of the National Society in order to implement the four-year disaster management strategy particularly for community-based disaster management (CBDM) programme for floods.

Capacity of the Federation

The long- term presence of a Federation delegation staffed by experienced and competent delegates and local staff has added considerably to the capacity of the Federation Secretariat in Bangladesh. It has also promoted external funding support, knowledge sharing and skills transfer; and provided a consistent source of encouragement and solidarity for BDRCS staff and volunteers. The Federation delegation comprises of a Head of Delegation, organisational development delegate, DIPECHO project manager and national professional staff, who have been very closely monitoring the overall situation. One bilateral delegate (health) from the German Red Cross may assist in monitoring of the situation and coordination in the field. The Delegation will be strengthened with at least one relief delegate, one logistic delegate and two relief coordinators.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Federation and BDRCS will receive reports from the field and undertake visits on a regular and/or spot-check basis. This will help identify and, where possible, resolve any problems. Regular and ad hoc reports will provide necessary information on the progress of the operation, changes in the situation, and any problems, constraint, or unmet needs.

The responsibility for day-to-day monitoring of the operation will be with the BDRCS, primarily at the branch level which will utilise staff and volunteers specifically trained in monitoring under the CBDP programme. They will be closely supervised by the BDRCS relief department from the national headquarters. The affected districts will be regularly visited by the joint BDRCS/Federation monitoring teams. In addition there are some specific activities and indicators to monitor and evaluate the overall effectiveness of BDRCS/Federation flood relief activities:

- End-use monitoring through household level visits and interviews to be carried out by BDRCS volunteers.
- Monitoring and final evaluation activities providing information on the effectiveness of the programs.
- Clearly documented criteria as specified in the *"BDRCS Disaster Relief Field Manual"* regarding the selection of beneficiaries.
- Distribution of relief items monitored to ensure that targeting criteria is respected.

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- The situation in the field will be further evaluated through regular Federation Operational Updates.
- Conduct impact study (lessons learned workshop) and evaluation.

Budget summary

See Annex 1 for details.

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[Budget below; click here to return to the title page and contact information.](#)

BUDGET SUMMARY

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Bangladesh - floods

TYPE	VALUE
RELIEF NEEDS	IN CHF
Clothing & textiles	131,000
Food & seeds	1,854,000
Medical & first aid	62,000
Other relief supplies	980,000
TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS	3,027,000
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<u>CAPITAL EQUIPMENT</u>	
Vehicles	91,000
Computers & telecom. equipment	36,000
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>	
Programme support (6.5% of total)	283,000
<u>TRANSPORT STORAGE & VEHICLE COSTS</u>	
Warehouse & distribution	145,000
Transport & vehicle costs	80,000
<u>PERSONNEL</u>	
Expatriate staff	250,000
National staff	219,000
Workshops & training	11,000
<u>ADMINISTRATIVE & GENERAL SERVICES</u>	
Travel & related expenses	125,000
Information expenses	30,000
Administrative & general expenses	53,000
TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS	1,323,000
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TOTAL APPEAL CASH, KIND, SERVICES	4,350,000
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LESS AVAILABLE RESOURCES (-)	4,506,408
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NET REQUEST	