

OPERATIONS UPDATE



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

INDIA: FLOODS

Date: 12 August 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

Appeal No. 16/2004; Operations Update no. 2; Period covered: 5-11 August, 2004; Appeal coverage: 19.6 %; ([click here to go directly to the attached Contributions List, also available on the website](#)).

Appeal history:

- Launched on 27 July 2004 for CHF 2,982,000(USD 2,293,846 or EUR 1,988,000) for 10 months to assist 250,000 beneficiaries.

Outstanding needs : CHF 2,398,836 (USD 1,917,688 or EUR 1,555,877)

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: [Annual Appeal 01.57/2004](#)

Operational Summary: Assessment, procurement and beneficiary identification processes are being finalised and the operation is still on track to meet projected distribution timeframes.

As outlined in Operations Update 1, initial emergency relief activities (including those predating the request for assistance) have been sustained from disaster preparedness stocks and Indian Red Cross human resources, including a large, trained volunteer base.

The good response to the request for assistance to date means procurement processes have been able to proceed as planned. However partners are still urged to contribute to this request for assistance so the stated objectives can proceed fully to assist the quarter of a million of the most vulnerable people affected by the floods.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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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>

Background

The two most severely affected states have been Assam and Bihar which have endured the effects of severe flooding for approaching six weeks.

Over 33 million people have been affected and the official death toll in the two states stood at 932 on 11 August.

Twenty of Bihar's 38 districts have been flooded, affecting 21 million people. A further 100,000 people in the past seven days have sought shelter in 949 relief camps, bringing the total number in these camps to 1.3 million.

Railway lines and the road network in Bihar are severely damaged. The worst affected districts are Darbhanga, Madhubani, Sitamarhi, East Champaran, Samastipur and Muzaffarpur. Some districts are still cut off; meaning transportation of essential commodities is still not possible. People in these districts are either having to rely on the relief camps run by the district administration or survive as well as they can camped on road verges and near railway lines.

All 27 districts of Assam have been affected. They were deluged by heavy rains which commenced in early June whilst the Brahmaputra River and its tributaries overflowed at many points. This situation was further aggravated by the release of water from Bhutan, landslides and sudden changes in the course of rivers. Millions of people are homeless and there has been widespread loss of life and damage to property, crops and essential infrastructure.

Over 12 million people have been affected in Assam. A UNDP assessment states about 60 percent of crops have been destroyed affecting 1.2 million farming families. The total crop area affected is 1.15 million hectares. Nearly 600,000 dwellings have been damaged or destroyed.

However according to latest UNDP reports, the flood situation is improving in both Assam and Bihar. There has been less rainfall in the states and adjoining areas in the past week. According to the latest Central Water Commission report on 10 August, most of the rivers in Assam were flowing below danger levels, except the Brahmaputra which was still above the danger mark in Dibrugarh. Whilst there is some relief with flood waters receding, there are increasing health problems from waterborne diseases and related conditions. People are reluctant to return to their local areas due to their housing either having been destroyed or made unlivable by mud and silt deposits. There is an acute, pungent smell of rotten crops and vegetation in the areas where the water has receded.

There has been further flooding in the past fortnight in the states of Gujarat, Maharashtra and the Punjab and the union territories of Daman and Diu. There are varying reports of deaths with figures of over 180. The Indian government has put residents in the state of Himachal Pradesh on alert due to a flooding threat over the border in the Tibet Autonomous Region of China. Landslides have created an artificial lake being fed by the Pareechu River which may overflow into Himachal Pradesh.

Operational developments

Whilst no distribution has occurred under the objectives outlined in this request for assistance, good progress has been made in positioning relief stock, procurement and beneficiary identification processes.

The procurement process of tarpaulins for the shelter objective should be completed by the beginning of next week. Twenty thousand tarpaulins from disaster preparedness stock have arrived in the past week in Assam and Bihar. Similarly, consignments of non-food family packs from preparedness stocks have arrived in Bihar and Assam (10,000 each) in the past week.

There may be a slight delay of up to a week in the procurement process of food items for distribution in Bihar. This is due to extreme price hikes in that state and the Purchase Committee may re-tender centrally. However, despite this possible delay, the food distribution is still on track to be completed within the stated timeframe.

The procurement process for medical kits for the health, hygiene and water sanitation operation in Assam is continuing and the due date for receiving quotes is 16 August.



Stringent quality control is carried out by the IRCs on items for family packs

To assist communication activities and reporting flows, the national society has recruited a floods operation information focal point who is due to commence duties next week.

A total of 67 volunteers from various districts in Bihar have received training in flood relief operations in the past week, covering a wide range of topics.

The Federation Secretariat in Geneva has continued to mobilise international resources for assistance. The India Delegation is supporting the Indian Red Cross in finalising details of the operation and working out distribution strategies. National headquarters is liaising with state branches regarding all issues related to the operation. State branches are mobilising local human resources along with generating local resources in cash and kind. The Bihar state branch has been particularly effective, raising CHF 128,000 in cash and mobilising medicines worth CHF 70,000 from the Medical Association and various pharmacies.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action - objectives, progress, impact

Operation Goal: to meet the urgent needs of the 50,000 worst affected families in Assam and Bihar for food, shelter, family packs and medical services, to ensure improved quality of water over a period of four months and prepare to meet the longer-term needs through necessary capacity building and disaster mitigation initiatives over a further period of six months after the emergency phase.

Emergency relief (food and basic non-food items)

Shelter: Objective: 50,000 flood-affected families to receive shelter materials within one and a half months.

The Indian Red Cross and the Federation intend to distribute general purpose plastic sheets (5 x 4 m each) as temporary shelter material for 50,000 families (approximately 250,000 persons) in the 12 most affected districts of Assam and the nine most affected districts in Bihar.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

Twenty thousand tarpaulins dispatched on 22 July to Assam and Bihar by rail arrived in the past week. These are from disaster preparedness stock maintained by the national society at regional warehouses in Kolkata. These items form part of the current 'request for assistance' to enable the Indian Red Cross to maintain disaster preparedness stocks.

The purchase order for the remaining 30,000 tarpaulins (and other non-food items) is due to be placed on 16 August. The standard procurement process has been followed. A joint committee from the Indian Red Cross and Federation opened the quotations and signed the received samples on 7 August.

Impact:

N/A

Constraints:

N/A

Relief: distribution of basic food and non-food items

Objective 1: 30,000 flood affected families to receive supplementary food items and family packs in Bihar over a period of one and a half months.

Basic food to each family: 20 kg of beaten rice, 5 kg pulses, 2 kg jaggery (sugar cane product) and family packs, each consisting of a kitchen set (20 pieces), 1 bucket, 1 dhoti (men's clothing), 1 saree (women's clothing), 1 cotton blanket, 1 towel, 1 bed sheet, 2 mosquito nets (single bed), 6 candles, 2 match boxes, 2 HDPE (high density polythene bag for packing).

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

A consignment of 10,000 (non-food) family packs has arrived in Bihar in the past week at Patna. These family packs had been mobilised from pre-positioned disaster preparedness stock at Salt Lake - Kolkata and Bahadurgarh regional warehouses. Each family pack consisted of the following items:

1. 1 kitchen set consisting of 20 pieces of utensils
2. 1 plastic bucket
3. 2 bed sheets
4. 1 towel
5. 1 cotton blanket
6. 2 sarees (female clothing)
7. 1 dhoti (male clothing)

State branches are continuing beneficiary identification according to the criteria specified in the request for assistance. The non-food family packs will be distributed along with the food basket. As outlined in Operations Update 1, NHQ issued guidelines to the Bihar state branch covering; procurement of high density polythene bags; transportation, storage, packing and handling of relief items; distribution of relief items; budgeting guidelines; reporting guidelines; and methods of financial accounting. In addition to the guidelines, the communication included the following :

1. A plan of action on the proposed operation giving details about the objectives of the operation, areas of operations, and items to be distributed in a family package.
2. Identifying monitoring and evaluation methodology.
3. Measures to be taken up for advocacy and public information.

The procurement process of food items for 30,000 families is underway at the Bihar state branch in consultation with NHQ. It was decided by NHQ to purchase food items locally in the state because:

1. Food items being perishable it is best to procure locally.
2. The required food items would be available locally and the content of the food package is based on local traditions/diet.
3. Prices were expected to be lower, and there would be significant savings in transportation costs.

As outlined under 'constraints' there have been price hikes in Bihar which may lead to food items being purchased out-of-state.

The list of suppliers was decided by the state branch on the basis of past flood operation experience and confirmed by NHQ. Suppliers have submitted quotations and food samples. However, these prices are higher than usual (see 'constraints' below) and are being considered by the purchase committee which consists of representatives from the Indian Red Cross and Federation delegation.

The procurement process for the other non-food items (excluding tarpaulins) has also been initiated and is detailed under the shelter objective as the process for shelter material and other non-food items is same.

The Bihar state branch has been successful in obtaining a complimentary warehouse facility in Patna.

Impact:

N/A

Constraints:

There have been extreme price hikes for food in Bihar. The Food Suppliers Union has uniformly increased prices by five-to-seven rupees per kilo. This would have a considerable impact on the budget. The Federation Logistics Officer and Assistant Director Relief (IRCS) are currently surveying the local markets in Bihar along with markets in Delhi, conducting a comparative analysis on prices of food baskets. This price hike may delay the procurement process for approximately a week. The purchase committee may decide on re-tendering out-of-state.

Objective 2: 20,000 flood-affected families to receive family packs in Assam over a period of one and a half months.

The family pack to be distributed consists of a kitchen set (20 pieces), one bucket, one dhoti (men's clothing), one saree (women's clothing), one cotton blanket, one towel, one bed sheet, two mosquito nets (single bed).

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

A consignment of 10,000 (non-food) family packs (contents outlined under objective 1) dispatched to Assam on 22 July, has now reached the state capital of Guwahati. As with the Bihar consignment, these packs came from disaster preparedness stock pre-positioned in regional warehouses in Kolkata. The distribution of the family packs will commence as soon as the packing of the 10,000 family packs is completed using HDPE bags. The state branch is in the process of identifying packers for the consignment and this should be completed by the end of this week.

The state branch is in the process of identifying beneficiaries in accordance with selection criteria mentioned in the request for assistance. The state branch will organise logistics and administrative issues such as printing of distribution cards and identification of distribution points with the help of district branches. NHQ issued guidelines etc. to the Assam state branch which are the same as those to the Bihar state branch outlined under Objective 1 above.

Impact:

N/A

Constraints:

N/A

Health, Hygiene and Water Sanitation**Objective: 50,000 flood-affected families to receive preventive and curative health services through mobile and static health clinics for a period of four months.**

It is proposed to run six MMUs in Assam for a period of four months in the worst affected districts. In Bihar, the existing Red Cross clinics/maternal and child health care centre capacity will be strengthened through emergency medical supplies.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

The request for quotations to potential suppliers for medical kits for the MMU's in Assam has been forwarded and the due date for receiving quotes is 16 August.

Potential suppliers were identified with the advice of the World Health Organisation and the Federation Secretariat in Geneva.

The Bihar state branch has mobilised locally-produced medicines worth CHF 70,000 from the Medical Association and various pharmacies. This is helping meet initial needs, but as further funds are received for the 'request for assistance' these will be utilised for procuring medical kits in Bihar.

The Assam and Bihar state branches have been given guidelines by NHQ on the respective health actions to be undertaken. NHQ issued guidelines to the Assam state branch on the proposed mobile medical units. These cover their purpose, usage, sustainability, time frame, selection of beneficiaries, transportation, storage, handling and implementation of the units.

Impact:

N/A

Constraints:

N/A

Disaster Mitigation and Capacity Building

The process for this activity would only commence once the water has receded and the ground has dried allowing for the construction to occur.

Objective 1: One flood platform with five raised tube wells and five raised latrines to be constructed at a selected site in a flood-prone area of Assam over a period of six months after the emergency phase.

A flood platform will be constructed on a secure site above the flood water level with overhead shelter for humans and cattle, with five hand tube wells and five toilet blocks.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

N/A

Impact:

N/A

Constraints:

N/A

Objective 2: Thirty raised tube wells to be constructed in the most affected districts of Bihar.

Raised tube wells to be constructed on secure sites above the flood water level providing safe drinking water to the community.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

N/A

Impact:

N/A

Constraints:

N/A

Objective 3: Disaster response capacity of the Indian Red Cross in flood-prone areas to be further improved through lessons learned and documentation.

The capacity building aspects for the IRCS state branches of Assam and Bihar are already addressed through the India disaster management programme as two of the targeted states. However, lessons learned exercises and documentation of good practice will be undertaken post relief operations. The outcome will be widely disseminated and incorporated into future planning.

This exercise and the software component of the mitigation activities would be covered under the ongoing disaster management programme for 2004 as planned.

Progress/Achievements (activities implemented within this objective)

N/A

Impact:

N/A

Constraints:

N/A

Federation Coordination

The disaster management team at the India delegation and the national society has collectively briefed partner national societies.

As outlined in Operations Update 1, the Indian Red Cross facilitated a USAID visit to affected areas in Bihar and Assam for an overview of the situation; for observing the Red Cross response and to meet the relevant government authorities. The Federation disaster management delegate and an Indian Red Cross representative met the Resident Commissioner of Bihar along with other organisations such as UNICEF, WHO, WFP, UNDP, MSF, CARE and Oxfam.

The Indian Red Cross continues to attend all UNDP coordinated meetings being held for the current flood situation at the national and state level.

The task force comprising of representatives from disaster management, health, logistics, information and reporting, and finance from the India delegation and the national society meet daily to review the situation.

Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement -- Principles and initiatives

N/A

National Society Capacity Building

The Indian Red Cross is focused on developing its disaster preparedness and management, organisational training and development, and administrative structures. With more than 654 branches and over 12 million members, it is one of the largest humanitarian organisations in the country.

The Indian Red Cross is now being perceived as a leading humanitarian agency in India by many stakeholders. The national society has committed leadership, a dedicated DM department, an established Disaster Management Centre (DMC), Mobile Disaster Units (MDU), a fully equipped national disaster response team, disaster preparedness stock, cyclone shelters and staff and volunteers trained in disaster management.

The Bihar state branch possesses a strong and committed volunteer force trained in first aid. Volunteers enjoy a good rapport and reputation with the public. This group can be quickly mobilised for relief operations. The main branch activities are health care, relief, first aid training and Junior Red Cross/Youth Red Cross activities. The health care is provided by 10 primary health care centers run by voluntary doctors on a regular basis. The state branch has 35 staff, more than 98,000 members and 5,000 volunteers.



Training of flood volunteers in Bihar

A training session for 67 flood-relief volunteers from targeted districts in Bihar was conducted in the past week by Indian Red Cross and Federation personnel. Topics included an introduction to the RCRC movement, targeting and relief distribution techniques, education on the disaster management cycle and documentation necessary during the distribution such as beneficiary lists, ration cards and statistics of materials to be distributed.

Since 2000, a total of 360 Assam branch volunteers have been trained under the Federation-assisted community-based first aid (CBFA). A DFID-funded disaster reduction programme has been operating in Assam since 2001. This involves the pre-positioning of disaster preparedness stock for 10,000 families, training of volunteers and development of mitigation activities in two districts. This activity has placed the Assam branch in a much better position of preparedness to respond quickly to any flood situation. The branch and local NGOs are experienced in responding to floods but are increasingly looking to preparedness and mitigation responses in addition to flood relief.

Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

International and national media interest in the floods and associated Red Cross/Red Crescent relief initiatives has remained steady. Senior leadership at the national society has conducted further interviews with national and international press. The Federation's South Asia Regional Delegation also continues to field media calls relating to the flood situation in India along with Nepal and Bangladesh. It is also proactive in updating media etc. on the latest flood situation.

[Contributions list below; click here to return to the title page.](#)

India - floods

ANNEX 1

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE No. 16/2004

PLEDGES RECEIVED

10/08/2004

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->					2,982,000		TOTAL COVERAGE
							19.6%
AUSTRIAN - RC		35,000	EUR	53,935	30.07.04		
BRITISH - RC		25,000	GBP	57,150	29.07.04	RELIEF NEEDS (75%), OPERATION NEEDS (25%)	
CANADIAN - RC		25,000	CAD	23,450	03.08.04		
HONG KONG - RC		132,376	HKD	21,418	30.07.04	PROCUREMENT OF FOOD ITEMS F/1500 FAMILIES FOR 1.5MONTHS	
IRISH - GOVT		75,000	EUR	114,675	28.07.04		
JAPANESE - RC		114,700	USD	145,035	06.08.04		
SWEDISH GOVT/RC		1,000,000	SEK	167,500	28.07.04		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				583,164	CHF		19.6%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				0	CHF	0.0%

ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	