

INDIA: FLOODS

30 November,
2000

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situation report no. 5
period covered: 10 October - 10 November*

Timely donor support has enabled the Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS), with Federation support, to respond swiftly and effectively to those affected by the floods. A recent assessment which indicated little need to distribute large quantities of food since normal food-provision services have already been re-established throughout all the flood-affected areas; therefore a revised budget has been prepared and is attached to this situation report.

The context

Over 30 million people have been affected by the floods in north and north eastern India between the months of July and September 2000. In the north-eastern state of Assam, there were initial reports of flooding in late July. The situation worsened dramatically at the beginning of August when flash floods resulting from heavy rains in the Himalayas swept south, causing breaches in the embankments along many parts of the Brahmaputra river and its tributaries, inundating the surrounding area. The combined death due to floods, landslides and torrential rains in India, Bangladesh and Buthan stands at over 1,500.

The situation in the state of West Bengal became critical in September when heavy monsoon rains caused a second wave of floods that swept across a vast and densely populated area. Local authorities state that over 17 million people were forced to flee their homes. The floods have claimed 1,266 lives, and around 74,000 heads of cattle have perished.

The northern state of Bihar was also severely affected by another disastrous wave of floods in September. Three consecutive flood waves hit a total of 31 districts and claimed 163 lives. Official figures confirm that, to date, 6,9 million people have been affected.

In addition to Assam, West Bengal and Bihar, the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Marahastra have also experienced extensive flooding caused by the seasonal monsoon rains. As the waters started receding, many people are now attempting to return to their homes. However, hundreds of villages in the flood-affected regions are still submerged and millions of people who have lost their homes are now living in makeshift shelters.

Latest events

The flooding situation in West Bengal has improved considerably over the past month and millions of people are now returning to their homes. However, stagnant waters have submerged several villages, mainly in the districts of Murshidabad, Nadia and North 24 Parganas. According to the local media, the wire fences separating North 24 Parganas and Nadia in India from Kusthia, Khulna and Jessore in Bangladesh are still under deep water a month after floods hit the area. The state of West Bengal is now bearing the consequences of the high economic losses estimated at over one billion USD, including damage to infrastructure and housing and crops and livestock losses. Reactive measures to the floods are now focusing mainly on the rehabilitation of damaged houses, assistance to the affected-population left homeless - mainly with the provision of shelter-related items and medicines - and agricultural regeneration.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

The IRCS and the International Federation have revised the plan of action for the floods operation, and a budget revision has been prepared based on recent assessments which confirmed that there is no need to distribute large quantities of food since normal food-provision services have already been re-established throughout all flood-affected areas. Access to safe water, also a primary concern during the emergency phase, is no longer a problem as water sources have already being restored. Therefore water purification tablets, provided in large scales during the emergency phase by the authorities and aid agencies operating in India, are no longer needed at this stage. On the other hand, the IRCS state branches have indicated that there is an acute need for blankets and clothing due to the arrival of winter. Both items will now also be provided under the ongoing assistance programme. Distributions of an emergency ration of rice, tarpaulins, kitchen sets and medicines are already underway. Meanwhile, the procurement and transportation of all remaining items are progressing according to plan. However, the decision to carry out two rounds of distributions was taken to avoid any further delays in the operation. All distributions are scheduled to be completed by January 2001.

Number of beneficiaries per state according to the newly revised plan of action:

Assam	West Bengal	Bihar	TOTAL
14,000 families	9,000 families	10,000 families	33,000 families

According to the revised plan of action, each family will be receiving: 20 kg of rice, one tarpaulin, one kitchen set including a bucket, one mosquito net, three blankets and two pieces of garments. The plan also includes an important health component, aiming at providing basic health care and public health training to flood-affected districts in Assam and West Bengal, as well as a strong capacity building initiative, still at the planning stage.

Logistics: All procedures have been completed for the purchase of rice, kitchen sets, tarpaulins and mosquito nets. The first consignments have already reached Calcutta and more relief goods are in the pipeline from New Delhi. Meanwhile, the tendering process has started for the procurement of 99,000 blankets and 66,000 garments. These items will be purchase locally in Assam, West Bengal and Bihar. This committee on contracts is responsible for all procurement done in India for the floods operation, ensuring that Federation standards are applied accordingly throughout the entire process. Quotations were also received and being considered for the local procurement of basic medicines in the state of Bihar and for the purchase of two four-wheel drive vehicles, one for West Bengal and one for Assam. In addition, the 10 New Health Emergency Kits, funded by ECHO and German Red Cross, were

received in early October, cleared from customs and dispatched to the flood-affected districts in Assam and West Bengal where they are already in use.

Relief: The selection of beneficiaries has been completed and relief distributions have started in West Bengal and are expected to start in Assam and Bihar shortly. At present, the Federation has one relief delegate based in Assam and another relief delegate co-ordinating the operation in West Bengal and Bihar. The delegates continue to provide crucial support to the IRCS state branches to plan and carry out distributions and to procure additional items locally, namely blankets and garments.

Health: According to the findings of a joint assessment team from the IRCS and the International Federation which has visited the affected regions in August, flood victims are in acute need of basic health care. There is a crucial need to procure and distribute medicines, to train health staff, and to provide logistical support to medical teams so that they can reach remote communities affected by the floods.

Therefore, the International Federation and the IRCS are implementing a broad health project based on the recommendations made by the assessment team. This basic health care and public health training project, already in full swing in the states of Assam and West Bengal, will be sustainable in the long-term, address the needs of the most vulnerable, strengthen local capacities, be community based and complementary to ongoing relief programmes. The goal of this project is to alleviate the suffering of the flood-affected population by providing easy and affordable access to basic health care and to train community caregivers on public health issues.

A total of six mobile medical teams comprising one doctor, two nurses, one pharmacist, one trained paramedical staff and four volunteers have been recruited and trained over the last couple of weeks in Assam. These teams are now operating in the districts of Dhubri, Nalbari, Darrang, Kamrup, Marigaon and Dhemaji. Their main tasks include running basic health clinics with essential medicine; providing preventive health care including vaccinations, ante natal care and under-five clinic; disseminating information on important health-related issues such as prevention of diseases and surveying and reporting on the main health needs of the assisted communities. In the state of Assam, all health activities are planned for a period of three to six months. Meanwhile, in the state of West Bengal, a total of 24 medical teams have been deployed to provide immediate relief health care to flood-affected communities in the districts of Murshidabad, Nadia, North 24 Parganas and Birbhum. The composition of the West Bengal medical teams and duration of the operation vary according to the needs and capacity of the IRCS district branches. However, the maximum duration for the operation of these medical teams in West Bengal will be limited to two months, with activities being similar to those undertaken by the teams in Assam.

Finally, the project also has a strong training component aiming at training 300 community health workers and traditional midwives on public health topics and skills such as first aid, mother and child care, reproductive health, nutrition, infectious diseases and disasters. A total of five courses will be organised during the six months of the programme's implementation. Each training course will have a duration of two weeks and will be attended by 60 participants. Preparations are already underway for the first training, tentatively scheduled for mid-December.

Capacity Building: The unique geo-climatic conditions of the Indian subcontinent place this country among the most vulnerable to disasters in the world. As the severity of flooding increases over the coming years, disaster preparedness and capacity building are the only practical ways to minimise the loss of life and morbidity in a timely and cost-effective manner. There is an overwhelming consensus amongst the IRCS and the Federation that measures must be taken now, taking advantage of the momentum created by the recent floods and of existing financial and human resources already mobilised for the ongoing relief operation, to put more emphasis on preparedness and capacity building rather than on relatively ineffective and costly reactive responses. The Floods Team has just prepared a concept sheet to be shared with the secretariat and potential donors outlining some practical

interventions, still at planning stage, envisaged to enhance the IRCS emergency response capacity. Actions should concentrate on the construction of flood and cyclone shelters, warehouse rehabilitation and warehousing management, pre-stocking of relief supplies in main disaster-prone areas and disaster preparedness and response management.

Outstanding needs

No further funding is required for this appeal.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details of the contributions and the revised budget.

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This and other reports on Federation operations are available on the Federation's website: <http://www.ifrc.org>

<u>BUDGET SUMMARY (REVISED)</u>		APPEAL No. 19/200	ANNEX 1
India Floods - Revision N° 2			
TYPE	<u>Initial Budget</u>	<u>Revised budget 1</u>	<u>Revised budget 2</u>
RELIEF NEEDS		IN CHF	
Tarpaulins: 35,000		297,500	264,000
Blankets			808,500
Mosquito nets: 80,000		400,000	231,000
Food items: 7,200 mts	3,400,000		
Rice: 4,000 mts		1,652,000	272,580
Dahl: 800 mts		904,000	
Cooking oil: 190.000 l		285,000	
Health (Medical supplies/mobile clinics) - sanitation	250,000	543,500	175,845
Kitchen sets: 35,000		525,000	495,000
Non food items	900,000		
Other relief supplies		70,000	
TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS	4,550,000	4,677,000	2,246,925
<u>CAPITAL EQUIPMENT</u>			
Vehicles: field vehicles	60,000	60,000	40,000
Computers, telecom. equipment	40,000	40,000	47,799
Office furniture & equipment	10,000	10,000	10,000
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>			
Programme management	404,580	402,508	239,387
Technical support	121,110	120,490	71,660
Professional services	134,310	133,622	79,470
<u>TRANSPORT STORAGE & VEHICLE COSTS</u>	220,000	200,000	155,831
<u>PERSONNEL</u>			
Expatriate staff	200,000	143,650	188,200
National staff	120,000	90,000	153,710
Personnel (support) / Training fees	40,000		32,175
<u>ADMINISTRATIVE & GENERAL SERVICES</u>			
Travel & related expenses	10,000	25,000	35,000
Information expenses	10,000	9,000	9,000
Administrative & general expenses, assessments/eva	80,000	58,000	171,000
TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS	1,450,000	1,292,270	1,233,232
TOTAL APPEAL CASH, KIND, SERVICE	6,000,000	5,969,270	3,480,157
LESS AVAILABLE RESOURCES (-)		(1,659,027)	3,930,675
NET REQUEST		4,310,243	(450,518)

India Floods						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 19/2000		PLEDGES RECEIVED				11/30/00
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
CASH						TOTAL COVERAGE
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				3,480,157		112.9%
AMERICAN - PRIVATE		20	USD	34	22.08.00	
AUSTRALIAN - RC		11,613	AUD	11,594	02.10.00	
BRITISH - RC		50,000	GBP	126,000	11.08.00	PURCHASE, TRANSPORT & DISTRIBUTION OF RICE
BRITISH GOVT/RC - DFID		245,098	GBP	617,646	11.08.00	
CANADIAN - GOVT/RC		99,000	CAD	111,118	11.08.00	
DANISH - RC		250,000	DKK	52,650	21.08.00	
DANISH - RC		950,000	DKK	200,070	14.08.00	
DANISH - RC		231,250	DKK	48,285	29.09.00	
ECHO		755,000	EUR	1,153,489	26.10.00	EC/IND/210/2000/01001
FINNISH - RC		84,094	EUR	132,162	11.08.00	
FINNISH - RC		33,637	EUR	52,383	27.09.00	
FINNISH - GOVT		134,550	EUR	205,565	17.11.00	
GERMAN - GOVT		300,000	DEM	234,330	02.10.00	15'800 KITCHEN SETS, 3 NEW EMERGENCY HEALTH KITS, INCL. TRANSPORT
ICELANDIC - RC		200,000	ISK	4,456	11.08.00	
IRANIAN - RC		30,000	USD	51,375	23.09.00	
JAPANESE - RC				150,000	14.08.00	
JAPANESE - RC				148,000	02.10.00	
KOREA, REPUBLIC OF - RC				30,000	28.08.00	
LIECHTENSTEIN				50,000	02.10.00	
MONACO - RC		40,000	FRF	9,316	11.08.00	
NETHERLANDS - GOVT		400,000	NLG	277,277	09.10.00	SUPPLIES AND TRANSPORT
NETHERLANDS - RC				30,000	09.10.00	
SPANISH - RC		5,000,000	ESP	47,225	18.08.00	SPANISH DEL. MEMBER OF FACT TEAM
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC		750,000	SEK	140,775	11.08.00	
SWEDISH - RC		250,000	SEK	46,925	11.08.00	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				3,930,675	CHF	112.9%
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	
THE FOLLOWING PROJECTS ARE LINKED TO THIS APPEAL:						