

# 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: MONSOON FLOODS

3 September 2002

*This Ops Update is intended for reporting on emergency appeals.*

*The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organization and its millions of volunteers are active in 178 countries. For more information: [www.ifrc.org](http://www.ifrc.org)*

*Appeal No. 24/2002*

*Launched on 14 August for CHF 2,934,000 (USD 1,988,000 or EUR 2,011,000) for six months for 200,000 beneficiaries.*

*Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) Allocated: CHF 180,000*

*Operations Update No. 1; Period covered: 14 August - 27 August; Next Update (No. 2) expected September 2002*

### IN BRIEF

*Appeal coverage: 32.9%*

*Related Appeals: India Gujarat Earthquake Recovery and Rehabilitation Appeal No. 20/01*

*Outstanding needs: CHF 1,969,780*

*Summary: The relief operation has started effectively, but further donor support in the form of cash and in-kind donations is required to enable the delivery of the planned assistance to the planned 200,000 beneficiaries.*

### Operational Developments w

India continues to reel from the severe effects of flash floods. Following the early onset of monsoon rains in mid-July which lashed the country, fresh areas in the past few weeks have been submerged due to breaches of embankments dams, and landslides in the states of Bihar, Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Uttranachal, and Madya Pradesh. More lives and been lost and thousands of people have fled their homes. Over the past two months, 654 people have died, 21 million people have been displaced, and over 400,000 houses destroyed in the eastern and northeastern states of India. Bihar and Assam remain the most stricken states. Damage to crops, public and private properties, and subsequently the livelihood of millions already living below the poverty line in these agricultural states of India, can be fully assessed only after the area begins to recover from the effects of the floods. The estimate of the crop damage in Bihar alone is already put at nearly four billion Indian rupees.



*Many displaced people are living in temporary shelters sharing a small space with their animals. There have been increasing reports of water- and vector-borne diseases in Assam and Bihar.*

The overall situation remains grim in Bihar. The toll in the recent spell of floods in the state mounted to 346. More than 15.4 million people have been affected in some 8,100 villages across 24 districts in the state over the past two months due to excessive rainwater in the catchment areas of Nepal swelling the major rivers and causing more than 31 breaches and extensive devastation. Although the water has receded in 60 per cent of the affected areas, including the now partially accessible Sitamarhi district, the situation continues to cause concern as the Kosi river continues to flow above the danger level in several areas exerting pressure on their embankments. With the water level of the Ganges River at Patna constantly rising since a week ago and some small rivers are fully flooded, south Bihar is under the severe threat of flooding.

After weeks of destruction caused by heavy downpours in Assam, the flood situation is gradually improving, though heavy rains in the past few days have inundated many parts of southern and eastern Assam. Since 18 August, surging floodwaters have breached three vital embankments in Lakhimpur district washing away nine persons and submerging more than a dozen villages. The situation also turned critical in Cachar and Karimganj with many villages under water. Over 5.7 million people have been affected in 6,560 villages spread over 22 districts. 41 people have died so far. Although flood waters have started receding in some areas of the state, the flood situation in Karbi Anglong district remains unchanged and Dhemaji district remains cut off. The latest reports indicate that the Brahmaputra river is still flowing above the danger mark at Hallakandi and with rising trends in Morigaon.



*A shipment of tarpaulins, polythene sheeting, emergency rations and clothing sent from the Indian Red Cross national headquarters will be distributed to 5,000 families.*

The authorities in Assam and Bihar continue relief measures in the affected districts including deployment of thousands of boats for rescue and relief work and distributing essential commodities such as polythene sheets, wheat, ready made food, match boxes, candles, kerosene oil, and in some areas halogen tablets and water facilities. Hundreds of health and veterinary centres remain operational. The inaccessibility to some stranded areas has however hampered relief efforts despite ongoing measures to restore the embankments and road links.

While nearly 1.6 million people have found shelter in the relief camps opened by the authorities in both states. Millions remain displaced and encamped atop roads and embankments. Others have returned to their water-logged houses following receded waters. The flood has damaged the standing crops and the means of livelihood of the affected population, mostly marginal farmers or agricultural daily wage earners. Food security has been a major concern. At the same time, with the unhygienic conditions in the temporary shelters, the non availability of safe drinking water and toilets in close proximity to stagnant water and animals, the flood stricken regions are facing the threat of diarrhoea and other water and vector-borne diseases which have been increasingly reported in both states. In Assam, diarrhoea has taken an epidemic form in the entire Golaghat district where the disease has claimed 36 lives (according to the district authority). The possible cases of Japanese encephalitis has also killed 100 out of 298 patients over the past month in Northern Assam. There have been reports of acute shortage of medicine and medical personnel in the water-logged communities.

Inter-ministerial central teams were sent to assess the gravity of the flood damage and need for relief and rehabilitation operations in Assam and Bihar last week. Four medical teams from the ministry of health have also been dispatched to advise state authorities on measures to prevent outbreak of epidemics.

A number of UN agencies, international NGOs such as MSF, Save the Children, Oxfam, World Vision and other local NGOs are currently providing relief and medical assistance to the affected populations in Assam and Bihar. Disaster preparedness and coordination system among the government and relief agencies at the state and district levels have been initiated in the two states.

**Red Cross and Red Crescent action w**

**Objectives, activities and results w**

**Operational Goal:** *to meet the urgent needs of 30,000 displaced families in the affected communities for food, shelter, family packs, medical services, to ensure improved quality of water and to prepare for longer-term needs through necessary capacity building and disaster mitigation initiatives over a period of six months.*

The Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) with the Federation's India Operations Centre is maintaining close contacts with the IRCS branches in the flood affected states. An international appeal was launched on 14 August seeking CHF 2,934,000, and CHF 180,000 was immediately released from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) to initiate the relief operation.

Phase I of the operation includes the immediate deployment of six mobile medical teams, one NEHK (new emergency health kit), one cholera kit, 20,000 mosquito nets and 200,000 water purification tablets from the IRCS warehouse to the worst hit areas in Bihar and Assam. Local procurement of food and non-food items of the family kits for 10,000 families have also been initiated. In addition, the Assam and Bihar branches are already in the process of selecting beneficiaries among the most vulnerable segments of the affected population in collaboration with the local authorities to avoid duplication of efforts and in accordance to the following criteria which the local branches have adhered to even in the initial relief operation:

- Families who have lost everything during the floods.
- Families who are living below poverty line.
- Families headed by women.
- Families with members rendered incapable of work due to serious illness or old age.

The second phase of the operation will be implemented as soon as more funding is secured.

### Shelter w

**Expected result:** *30,000 flood affected families to receive shelter materials within one to three months.*

In view of the severe flooding in Bihar, the IRCS has decided to proceed immediately with the procurement of 10,000 general purpose plastic sheets for the affected families. Procurement, is underway in compliance to the IRCS procurement manual developed from the Gujarat earthquake recovery and previous relief operations.



*Red Cross branches and volunteers are providing relief assistance to the flood victims whenever possible but local resources are exhausted.*

### Relief: distribution of food and basic non-food items w

**Expected result:** *30,000 flood affected families to receive basic food items and family kits over a period of three months.*

Procurement of food and non-food items for 10,000 families in Bihar is being initiated. Items will be purchased locally in the state while payments will be made in Delhi. The materials will be packed and distributed by the Red Cross volunteers of the IRCS state branch. Each selected family will receive 20 kg of chura (beaten rice), five kg of dal (pulses), two litres of cooking oil, one kg of salt and a family kit consisting of one dhoti, two sarees, one cotton blanket, one bed sheet, one set of cooking utensils, six candles, two match boxes and one HDPE (high density poly ethylene) bag for packing.

In Assam, following the dispatch of pre-positioned disaster preparedness stock for 10,000 families from the Guwahati warehouse on 19 August, 4,000 family packs, each consisting of one general purpose plastic sheet, one set of cooking utensils, 3.5 kg of BP5 (high protein biscuits) and two mosquito nets, have arrived last week at the IRCS district branches of Dhubri, Bilasipara, Morigaon, Dhemaji and Nalbari. Beneficiary lists are being prepared in collaboration with the revenue department and the distribution targeting 4000 families has already started in some districts. Details will be reported in the next operations update. Replenishment of this stock however depends on further donor support.

**Health and hygiene w**

**Expected Result:** *100,000 beneficiaries to receive basic health care through six mobile medical units or Red Cross health posts over a period of three months.*

The IRCS is in the process of selecting the most affected districts with the highest caseload of malarial and diarrhoeal cases and appropriate Red Cross health facility. One emergency kit, one cholera kit and 20,000 mosquito nets are being dispatched from the IRCS central warehouse in Delhi to Bihar.

In the initial stage of the flood operation, the IRCS's Assam state branch has deployed one mobile medical unit in Kamrup district catering for the health needs of the affected population. Immediately after the release of the DREF, additional MMUs have been mobilized and in place starting 23 August along with the necessary vehicles, medical equipment and medicines. Currently six MMUs have been deployed in the districts of Dhubri, Nalbari, Goalpara, Kamrup, Morigaon and Dhemaji and will be functional for a period of three months. Each MMU consists of a medical doctor, a pharmacist, two nurses, two Red Cross volunteers and one assistant.

**Water and sanitation: distribution of water purification tablets w**

**Expected Result:** *30,000 selected households to have improved quality of water over a period of one month.*

The IRCS dispatched two million water purification tablets on 27 August from the warehouse in Delhi to Bihar. 20,000 selected families will be given 100 water tablets per household and receive education about the use of the tablets by trained Red Cross volunteers.

**Coordination w**

The Federation's delegation in the India Operations Centre has been working closely with the IRCS in monitoring the situation and providing technical advice and support to initiate the relief operation. In the meantime, the logistics delegate, already engaged in the procurement and logistics process with the IRCS for the flood relief, is assuming the role of programme manager to oversee the relief operation with the IRCS counterpart at the national headquarters. The IRCS is also in the process of selecting experienced disaster management personnel from the state and district branches to act as field coordinators providing necessary advice and support to district branches throughout the course of relief operation.

The IRCS and the Federation have been maintaining regular contacts and sharing information with the government departments, UN organizations and other relief agencies.

**Advocacy/Public Information w**

The Red Cross flood relief operation has received good attention from the international and local media. The Federation regional information delegate has been providing support to the Federation India Operations Centre in communicating the launch of the appeal and the flood situation in India with the donor communities and media based in Delhi. Several interviews have been made on BBC, CNN, French International Radio and others. There has also been wide coverage in national and state newspapers about the Red Cross activities in the flood affected areas. An information and reporting officer has been locally recruited at the India Operations Center and will be joining in September.

**Outstanding needs w**

Further donor support in the form of cash and in-kind donations is required to enable the delivery of the planned assistance to the intended 200,000 beneficiaries.

*For further details please contact:*

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*All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.*

*This operation seeks to administer to the immediate requirements of the victims of this disaster. Subsequent operations to promote sustainable development or longer-term capacity building will require additional support, and these programmes are outlined on the Federation's website.*

*For further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>.*

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India - Monsoon floods						ANNEX 1
APPEAL No. 24/2002		PLEDGES RECEIVED			02.09.2002	
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
<b>CASH</b>						
REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->				<b>2'934'000</b>		<b>TOTAL COVERAGE 32.9%</b>
AUSTRALIAN - GOVT		100'000	AUD	81'130	27.08.2002	
BRITISH - RC		25'000	GBP	57'406	23.08.2002	
BRITISH - GOVT		150'000	GBP	344'430	23.08.2002	
DANISH - GOVT		3'155	USD	4'729	16.08.2002	
FINNISH - RC		60'000	EUR	88'188	19.08.2002	
JAPANESE - RC		99'400	USD	149'001	20.08.2002	
MONACO - RC		20'000	EUR	29'292	14.08.2002	
SWEDISH - GOVT		700'000	SEK	111'860	21.08.2002	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				866'036	CHF	29.5%
<b>KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)</b>						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
DANISH - GOVT		65'500	USD	98'184	16.08.2002	150 PCES PLASTIC ROLLS, 3'500 PCES PLASTIC SHEETING, TRANSPORT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				98'184	CHF	3.3%
<b>ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET</b>						
DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	