

BANGLADESH: FLOODS

Revised appeal
no: 23/98R
10 September 1998

***THIS REVISED APPEAL SEEKS CHF
10,075,000 IN CASH, KIND AND SERVICES
TO ASSIST 1.5 - 2 MILLION
BENEFICIARIES WITH FOOD, SEEDS,
MEDICAL SERVICES AND CLOTHING
FOR 4 MONTHS***

Summary

Several countries in Asia are badly affected this year by devastating floods. The Federation response in each situation is determined by the interaction of a number of factors: the gravity of the disaster; the level of external support required by the respective National Society and its operational capacity; the availability of resources and the capacity of the government, and the role of other humanitarian organisations.

Bangladesh is in the grip of the worst and most prolonged floods in its recorded history. They began when monsoon rains triggered flash floods in the north in June. Torrential rains in July brought on further floods throughout the south-east. The situation has continuously worsened since mid-July, causing death, destruction and immense damage to life, property and assets, straining the entire economy.

The immediate outlook for Bangladesh is grim: it faces the threat of a large scale food deficit, and a danger of post flood epidemics due to poor sanitation and unsafe water; in addition, the floods have wiped out opportunities for employment and income for millions in this largely agricultural nation.

The Disaster

According to the latest government statistics, large areas in 51 of the country's 64 districts have been inundated, affecting more than 30 million people. At least 631 people have died. A large number of cattle have perished and standing crops including seedbeds on over 892,630 acres of agricultural land have been destroyed. The country faces a major food crisis with an estimated food deficit of more than 4 million MT. Reported diarrhoea cases stand at 169,100. With water stagnating for more than two months in most places and the virtual collapse of the sanitation and

drainage infrastructure, there is a very real risk of a disastrous health situation , especially after flood waters recede.

Over 7 million thatched houses, 14,000 km of roads, 4,000 km of embankments, 5,400 bridges and culverts and 1,500 educational institutions are reported to have been damaged, some beyond repair. Road links between the major cities and the capital have been cut for several weeks, creating pressure on the already threatened railway system. A major part of the capital city of Dhaka is knee deep in water and over 200,000 people have taken shelter in schools and community centres.

The Response so far

Government Action

The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) initially decided to cope with the flood situation with its own resources. It allocated a sum of Tk 31.4 million (US \$ 662,000) in cash, 67,562 MT. of rice, 233,000 pieces of clothing and other items to the flood victims. However, as the situation took a dramatic turn for the worse, the GoB on 26 August formally sought international assistance, amounting to 508.39 Million US \$ and 1.38 Million MT. of food.

The GoB has announced a one-year suspension of loan repayments by farmers. A post-flood agricultural credit programme valued at Taka 32.7 billion has been planned through the government banks and financial institutions. The GoB has also announced plans for constructing flood shelters in each of the 460 sub-districts of the country. A total of 3,473 medical teams have been deployed to provide medical aid to the flood-affected.

Bangladesh Red Crescent Society/Federation Action

The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) and the Federation have constantly monitored the development of the floods from the beginning. The Federation was the first agency to launch an International Appeal on 30 July. An amount of CHF 2,743,000 was sought to provide food rations to 100,000 (500,000 beneficiaries) of the most vulnerable families. When the Appeal was launched, 37 of the country's 64 districts were inundated, affecting 15 million people. The Appeal has been fully covered. This revised appeal for a total of CHF 10,075,000 reflects the expansion of the operation.

BDRCS has completed relief distributions involving 198.5 MT. of chira (flattened rice) and 39.70 MT. of ghur (molasses), through 38 BDRCS Units. This food has been distributed to 19,850 families (approx. 100,000 beneficiaries). Each food ration consisted of 10 kg of chira and 2 kg of gur per family.

Relief distributions, comprising of a per family ration of 30 kg rice and 5 kg lentils, started on 23 August. Truckloads of food items are being sent from the Central BDRCS warehouse to local warehouses in the districts. Despite widespread transport problems due to inundation and destruction of access roads, the BDRCS has been able to reach 33 districts and is distributing 822 MT. of rice and 137 MT. of lentils and an additional 200 MT. chira and 40 MT. gur.

22 of 60 BDRCS medical teams, each consisting of 1 physician, 1 paramedic, 1 local female volunteer and 1 youth volunteer, have been supplied with medicines and sent out to the affected areas. A further 20 teams will leave Dhaka immediately and more teams are being recruited.

Intensive coverage of the Red Crescent's relief operation was secured in the main international media. A regional information delegate assisted the Federation in launching the original appeal and a relief delegate and a short-term health delegate are currently assisting in relief and health services co-ordination.

Others

The United Nations launched a Flash Appeal in support of the Government of Bangladesh for relief to the flood victims on 5 September through UNDP, Dhaka. The budget amounted to US \$ 8,766,000 for emergency health care assistance, US \$ 108,350,000 for immediate and protracted food assistance, US \$ 25,000,000 for shelter, US \$ 10,000,000 for sanitation, US \$ 34,300,000 for education, US \$ 36,605,000 for agriculture totalling an amount of US \$ 223,021 million. The contributions as of 4 September, according to the UN Office for Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) stood at US \$ 104 million, channelled through different agencies including the Federation.

A number of national and international NGOs have been active in flood relief operations including medical services. Several private soup kitchens are being run in the cities. Response from the community has been considerable in terms of services and contributions.

Co-ordination •

The National Disaster Management Council, headed by the Prime Minister, is the supreme co-ordinating authority, while the Disaster Management Bureau of the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief is the lead agency responsible for overall co-ordination. The NGOs work independently and their relief operations are co-ordinated by their umbrella organisation, Association of Development Agencies in Bangladesh (ADAB). District level co-ordination is the responsibility of the Deputy Commissioner of each district. The BDRCS/Federation are in regular contact with these co-ordinating bodies.

The Intended Operation

Assessment of Needs •

Given the extent of the flooding, most affected areas are inaccessible and needs assessments in the field by either the Government or the BDRCS remain difficult. However, Red Crescent branches are reporting on needs to NHQ and both Federation delegates and BDRCS staff are making regular field visits to affected areas. Assessed needs reported by the GoB, NGOs and media are carefully reviewed and consolidated. The total population affected at present exceeds 30 million, and the number of people in need of urgent assistance exceeds 10 million.

Immediate Needs •

- emergency food rations
- medical assistance
- vegetable seeds
- sarees for women
- water containers
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Anticipated Later Needs •

The flood situation, already the longest in the history of the country, is likely to continue until the beginning of October. The stagnant water has caused havoc to crops, seedbeds and thatched houses and caused extensive damage to household items. Needs for food, medical assistance, housing, clothing, household items and rehabilitation in the affected areas will continue for some time. Education has been disrupted in the flooded areas. Several industries, including the export oriented ones, have been severely hit. The entire road infra-structure will continue to be in bad shape, adversely affecting the economy. Lack of work will add to the existing severe unemployment situation. Agricultural rehabilitation, reconstruction of housing and income generation for the poorest will be among the anticipated later needs.

Red Crescent Objectives •

- ◆ To stand by the people of Bangladesh during the worst flooding in their history and assist BDRCS to alleviate the sufferings of some of the worst affected victims
- ◆ To assist the most vulnerable flood affected people through the provision of emergency food rations, vegetable seeds, water containers and clothing
- ◆ To provide 450,000 people with medical services
- ◆ To further develop the operational capacity of the BDRCS NHQ and the district branches in disaster assistance planning and management
- ◆ To disseminate awareness of the Principles of the Movement and the BDRCS

Plan of Action

This revised Appeal is based on a Plan of Action prepared jointly by the BDRCS and the Federation.

1. Food distribution

Through the initial Appeal, the BDRCS and the Federation intend to provide 100,000 families with 30 kg rice and 5 kg lentils or with chira and gur (compressed rice and molasses).

Under the revised Appeal, they will provide 280,000 families (1,400,000 beneficiaries) with 20 Kg Rice and 4 Kg lentils per family. The whole food distribution is expected to be concluded within two months from the time that funds are made available for the operation. The distribution areas will be selected based on the prevailing flood situation at the time of distribution.

2. Vegetable Seed distribution

With most of the seed beds in the affected areas destroyed, the need for crop and vegetable seeds is enormous. It is intended to supply vegetable seeds to 100,000 families (500,000 beneficiaries) to supplement their family diet and income in the post flood situation. The choice of seed has been made in consultation with agricultural experts and potential beneficiaries. The distribution schedule will be prepared in due course with the participation of the local BDRCS units.

3. Medical services

One hundred mobile teams will work for a period of 30 days in the affected areas, focusing on respiratory infections, and waterborne gastro-intestinal and skin diseases. The teams will also monitor the nutritional status of vulnerable groups and provide special supplementary food. Children, pregnant mothers and the elderly are at serious risk and need urgent and special health assistance.

Each team is composed of a doctor, a paramedic, a BDRCS volunteer and a female support staff. The NHQ will give logistic, technical and administrative support. An estimated 450,000 people are expected to benefit from this programme.

4. Water Containers

Because of the contamination of tube wells and because people have to carry clean water to their homes, 50,000 families will be provided with plastic water containers.

5. Clothing

Due to the harmful effects of water and humidity, an urgent need for garments for the most affected women has been identified and 100,000 sarees will be distributed.

Procurement •

All procurement of goods is being done in Bangladesh. The Federation Delegation in Dhaka is responsible for all procurement, including transport from Dhaka to the districts, as well as for monitoring of quantities and quality control.

Duration of Operation •

Distribution of food has been going on since the end of July. Depending on the actual number and locations of the operational areas, state of communications and weather/flood conditions, a branch is likely to complete distribution within one month after receiving the relief goods. The complete distribution will take about two months, including the time required for procurement.

Mode of Distribution •

BDRCS will be responsible for organising the distributions at the central level. At the district level, branch volunteers will carry out distributions in the field with the back up and support of the NHQ through Field Co-ordinators assigned for this operation and BDRCS branch level officers. BDRCS branches will be responsible for local co-ordination with other organisations, briefing on the BDRCS Disaster Relief Field Manual requirements and local operational procedures.

Selection of Beneficiaries •

The selection of beneficiaries will be conducted by BDRCS following the criteria given in its Disaster Relief Field Manual. Copies of muster rolls, countersigned by the beneficiaries, will be provided to the NHQ and shared with the Delegation.

Warehousing •

Relief supplies will be delivered to the BDRCS's central warehouse in Dhaka, or, wherever possible, directly to the district branches. Local warehousing will be provided by the respective branches or local authorities.

Transportation •

BDRCS will use its own trucks and rented vehicles for transport of relief supplies from Dhaka to the field. Each branch will be provided with supplementary funds for local distribution.

Dissemination •

The distribution will be used by the BDRCS as an opportunity to disseminate Red Cross/Red Crescent principles and activities.

Visibility •

High visibility for the operation will be maintained through local media and the display of Red Crescent flags/banners/posters at the distribution sites. Aprons with the Red Crescent emblem will be worn by distributors and publication material will be produced to enhance dissemination and visibility. Adequate visibility for donors and the Federation will be ensured, including maintaining a high profile in international media.

Monitoring •

Financial, administrative and field monitoring will be carried out by BDRCS and the Delegation. Field visit opportunities for donor representatives will be provided.

Reporting •

BDRCS, with support from the Delegation, will prepare regular situation reports and a final narrative report within one month after the conclusion of the operation. The Federation will be responsible for producing a final financial report.

Disaster Preparedness Capacity Building of BDRCS Branches •

Given the limited capacity of those BDRCS branches in the affected areas which have not been part of the Community Based Disaster Preparedness Programme (CBDP) , there is an urgent need to upgrade disaster preparedness and institutional capacity through this relief operation in line with the concept of "relief to development". Funds budgeted for this purpose will be used for training as well as necessary equipment/facilities in conformity with the BDRCS CBDP PoA for 1998.

Capacity of the National Headquarters •

BDRCS has developed its operational capacity and organisational strength through a number of extensive Institutional Development and Disaster Relief and Preparedness programmes over the last few years, with limited external support. Its leadership, officers and volunteers have wide-ranging operational experience in disaster relief which has been demonstrated in previous successful emergency operations, but the need for continued capacity building through institutional development at NHQ level remains a high priority.

Present Capacity of the Federation in Bangladesh •

The Federation has a well established delegation with close and good relations with the BDRCS . It is made up of a Head of Delegation, a Disaster Preparedness Delegate, a Finance and Administration Delegate and a Relief Delegate. The Finance/Administration Delegate will be responsible for the logistics of this operation and the other members of the Delegation will provide appropriate support to the National Society . A short term medical relief delegate, already in country for a bilateral project, will be made available by the German Red Cross to provide support to the medical relief operation. The Delegation is supported by eleven qualified and experienced local staff.

Evaluation •

Considering the scale of the relief operation, an independent evaluation is planned.

Budget summary

See Annex 1 for details.

Conclusion

These record-breaking floods have affected more than 30 million people in 333 of 454 sub-districts in Bangladesh. New areas are affected daily, and millions are living in temporary shelter. Embankments in the country side are crumbling in many places, and breaches are threatening in the Dhaka city embankment . There is a very high probability of serious food shortages and disease, which will increase when the waters begin to recede. The bulk of the autumn rice crop has already been destroyed.

With the onset of the monsoon season and more rains inevitable, the forecasts are that water levels will continue to rise. The situation is by all accounts more serious than during the floods of 1954 and 1988 and is continuing to deteriorate. The Federation therefore urges donors to give strong support to this relief operation.

For additional information please contact Kentaro Nagazumi, Desk Officer for Bangladesh 41.22.730.42.73 or nagazumi@ifrc.org

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BUDGET SUMMARY
REVISED BUDGET - BANGLADESH
FLOODS

APPEAL No. 23/98
IN CHF

ANNEX 1

EMERGENCY RELIEF SUPPLIES

Non Food items

Plastic water containers (50.000 pieces x CHF 3)	150,000.00
Clothing (100.000 sarees x CHF 5)	500,000.00
Seeds (for 100.000 families)	200,000.00

Food items

Rice (8.000 MT x CHF 521)	4,168,000.00
Dal/Lentl (1.520 MT x CHF 1.135)	1,725,000.00
Chira/cooked food (200 MT x CHF 575)	115,000.00
Ghur/cooked food (40 MT x CHF 900)	36,000.00

Medical items

Basic drugs & medical equipment	361,500.00
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TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS 7,255,500.00

NEEDS IN CASH

Transport, storage & vehicle costs	450,000.00
Personnel (5 del. x 4 months)	200,000.00
Personnel (local staff working in 51 districts)	300,000.00
Training in districts (DPP)	200,000.00
Travel & communications (medical teams/flights)	250,000.00
Information (including Reg. Del costs)	75,000.00
Monitoring/Evaluation	115,000.00
Administrative, office & general expenses	55,000.00
BDRCS capacity building*	436,000.00
BDRCS Core costs*	538,000.00

*(Agreement BDRCS/PNS/Federation)

Secretariat operational support	200,500.00
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TOTAL NEEDS IN CASH 2,819,500.00

TOTAL APPEAL NEEDS 10,075,000.00

LESS CASH ON HAND (*see list of pledges*) 2,811,000.00 **0.00**

NET REQUEST CASH & KIND 7,264,000.00

NB: All procurement will be made locally

APPEAL No. 23/98

DONOR	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL----->					
AUSTRIAN - RC			30,000	18/08/98	
BRITISH - RC	20,000	GBP	49,632	28/08/98	
CANADIAN - RC	5,000	CAD	5,123	08/08/98	
DANISH - RC	300,000	DKK	66,270	05/08/98	
DANISH - RC/GOVT	1,500,000	DKK	331,350	01/09/98	
ECHO - FEDERATION	720,000	XEU	1,182,888	02/09/98	CONTRACT TO BE SIGNED
GERMAN - RC/GOVT	589,000	DEM	495,640	11/08/98	
ICELANDIC- RC	200,000	ISK	4,187	31/07/98	
JAPANESE - RC	10,000,000	JPY	107,760	13/08/98	
LIECHTENSTEIN			10,000	25/08/98	
REP. OF KOREA - RC			10,000	13/08/98	
NETHERLANDS - RC/GOVT	250,000	NLG	184,033		
SWEDEN - RC/GOVT	1,470,000	SEK	274,743	06/08/98	
AMERICAN - RC	10,000	USD	15,030	24/08/98	
AMERICAN - RC/AMERICAN EXPRESS	20,000	USD	30,000	01/09/98	
SUB TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH			2,796,656	CHF	

KIND AND SERVICES (INCL. PERSONNEL)

DONOR	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
NETHERLANDS - RC			15,000		
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES			15,000	CHF	