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## DREF operation update Bangladesh: Cold Wave

 International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

**DREF operation n° MDRBD012**  
**GLIDE n° CW-2013-000001-BGD**  
**Operation Update n°1**  
**7 January 2013**

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) is a source of un-earmarked money created by the Federation in 1985 to ensure that immediate financial support is available for Red Cross and Red Crescent emergency response. The DREF is a vital part of the International Federation's disaster response system and increases the ability of National Societies to respond to disasters.

A total of CHF 296,678 was allocated from IFRC DREF to support the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) to provide immediate assistance of 30,000 blankets distribution to 15,000 cold affected families across 21 districts. The DREF also supported additional 9,000 blankets as preparedness stock.

This operation is expected to be implemented for three months, and will therefore be completed by 3 April 2013. A Final Report will be made available three months after the end of the operation (by 3 July 2013). For more information, click [here](#).

Distribution has begun with 30,000 blankets mobilized from BDRCS/IFRC joint disaster preparedness stock and BDRCS own stock. Following a call for deployment, ten national disaster response team (NDRT) members were deployed on 5 January 2013 for a week to assist BDRCS concerned units in beneficiary selection and distribution. Process for replenishment of 30,000 blankets is in progress.

IFRC, on behalf of BDRCS, would like to extend gratitude to all donors and partners for their generous contributions. Details of the contributions to this DREF can be found on [www.ifrc.org/dref](http://www.ifrc.org/dref).

### The situation

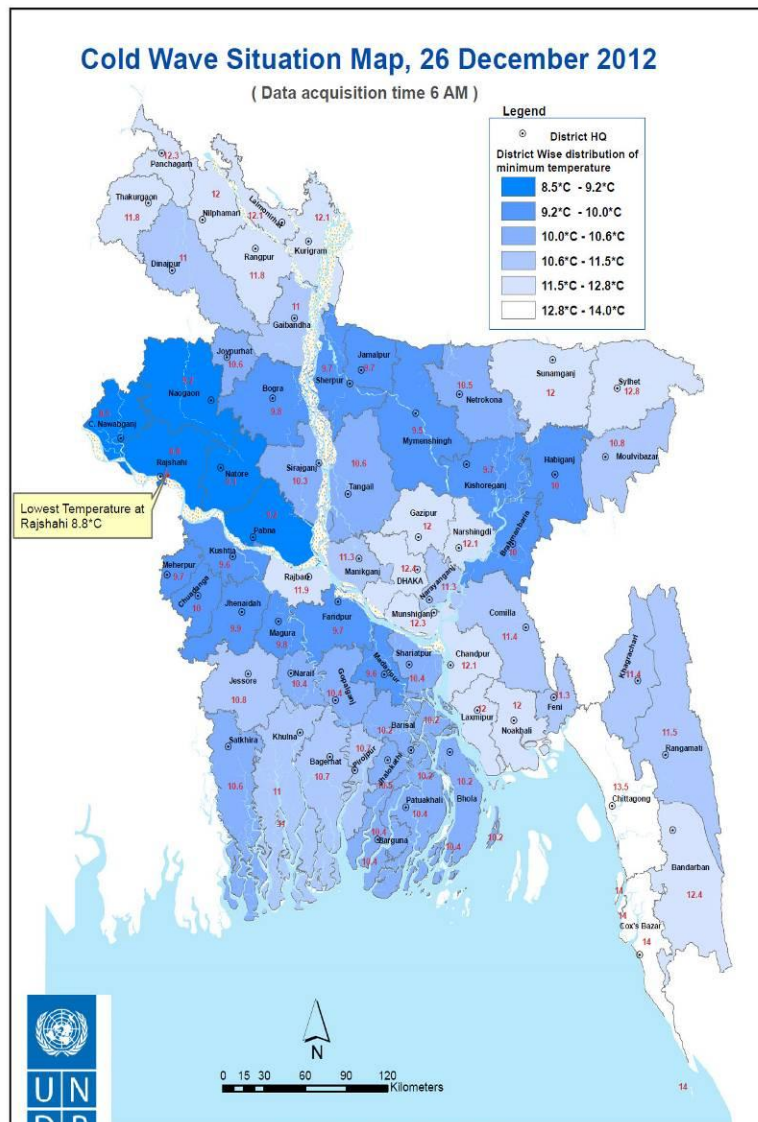
Bangladesh experienced cold weather (temperature dropped to 7°C - 9°C) since mid-December 2012, affecting the poor people in particular in 22 districts (Panchagarh, Thakurgaon, Dinajpur, Nilphamary, Lalmonirhat, Rangpur, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Bogra, Joypurhat, Naogaon, Nawabganj, Rajshahi, Natore, Sirajganj, Pabna, Mymensing in the north, Moulvibazar in the east and certain districts in the south, namely Kushtia, Jessore, Faridpur and Madaripur)<sup>1</sup>. The average temperature recorded in the cold affected area was between 16°C - 25°C during the December and January period. The cold wave struck the northern districts



Blankets being dispatched from BDRCS/IFRC joint disaster preparedness stock in the national headquarters' warehouse. **Photo:** BDRCS.

<sup>1</sup> Disaster Management Information Centre (DMIC), 26 December 2012.

of the sub-Himalayan regions of Bangladesh claiming more than 72 lives as per the assessment data of the BDRCS and local administration, mostly children due to hypothermia. Hospitals in the affected districts reported an increase in the number of admissions for cold weather-related illness, particularly children, women and the elderly. Poor and homeless people are more susceptible to the cold wave as they do not have the means to keep themselves warm.



Mapping of cold wave situation in Bangladesh. **Source:**BMD, 26 December 2012.

Furthermore, the cold wave has caused crop and other natural resource losses, which will have a longer term negative impact on Bangladesh's economy. Winter crop failures will result in greater poverty, poor dwellings, and seasonal unemployment (especially agricultural or farming sectors). According to the Disaster Management Information Centre (DMIC), the map (left) indicates the district wise distribution of minimum temperature on 26 December 2012. The lowest temperatures persist in regions of the north-west in the districts of Rajshahi, Naogaon, Nawabganj, Natore and Pabna while other districts in the north, east and south are also experiencing cold weather.

The movement of vehicle on roads and highways remain restricted as thick layers of fogs covered the air reducing the visibility. Due to this heavy fog, ferry services, port schedule and air traffic schedules are heavily disrupted. A large number of passengers are suffering extreme hardship, as trucks, buses and private cars remain stranded. Around 400 loaded trucks and 200 passenger buses were stranded on both sides of the river.

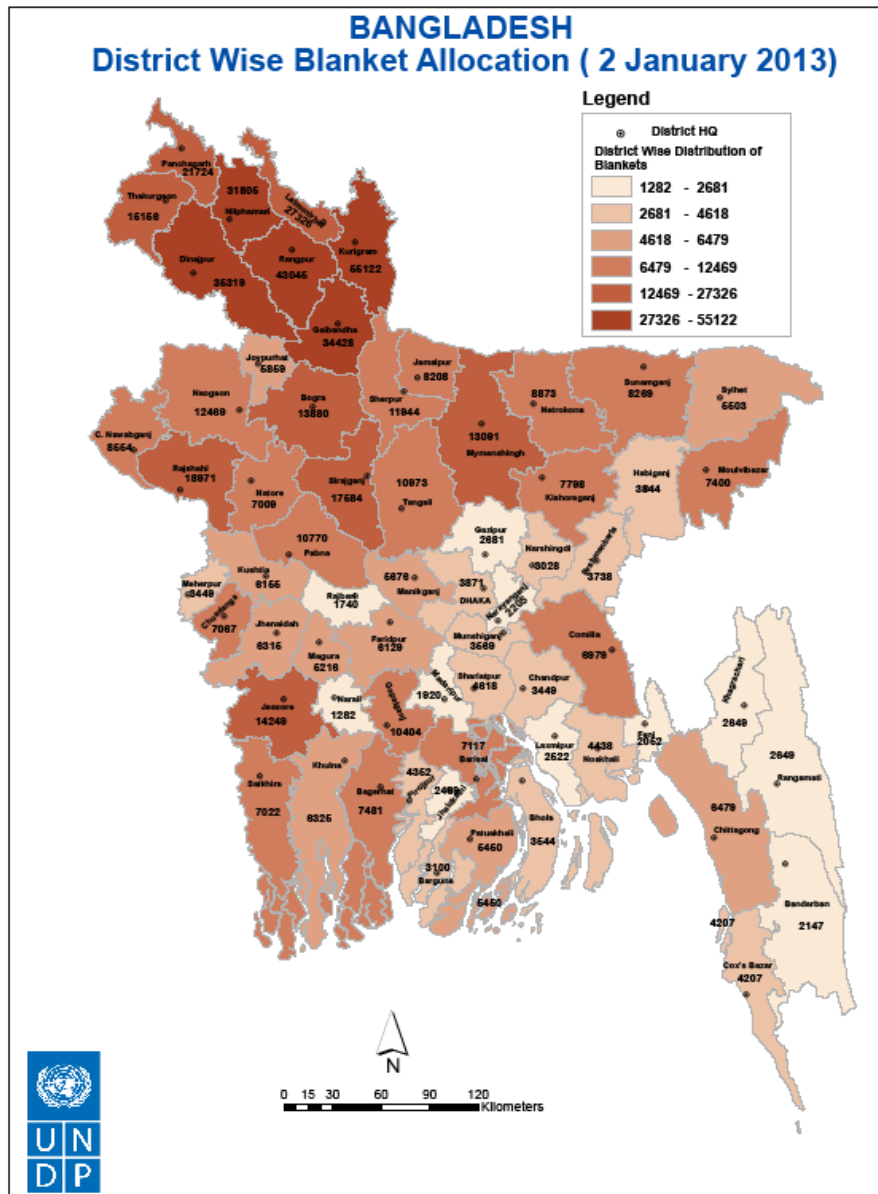
The government has allocated 30,900 blankets in 14 districts. However, the government assistance is inadequate to cover a large number of affected populations. In addition to the government distribution, several humanitarian organizations including university students, business community, local NGOs have responded to the cold wave with warm clothes in rural and urban poor.

## Coordination and partnerships

Coordination with Red Cross Red Crescent Movement partners has been established through set meetings on the subject for exploring possibilities of support to cold wave affected population. Discussions were held between BDRCS and Partner National Societies (PNSs) to divert allocation of necessary relief support to affected population at the earliest. A total of 20,000 blankets from BDRCS stock and 10,000 from the IFRC/BDRCS joint stock have been dispatched immediately as the impact intensified. The stock is to be replenished through DREF fund. The Red Cross Red Crescent Movement coordinated with other humanitarian agencies as Muslim Aid, Action Aid, UNDP and the European commission humanitarian aid (DG ECHO) to keep track on the updates to support affected population to avoid any duplication on the ground. Discussions were also held with Ministry of Food and Disaster Management in targeting geographic locations. BDRCS units of most affected districts in Rajshahi and Rangpur divisions, have maintained contact with district administrations for identifying remote locations uncovered by government or other organizations. BDRCS national headquarters have communicated with BMD to monitor the weather pattern changes. BDRCS is collecting situation updates from different agencies including the network for

information, response and preparedness activities on disaster (NIRAPAD). Since BDRCS/IFRC is active members of the Disaster Emergency Response (DER) group, information and operation updates will be shared with other humanitarian agencies and the national government in order to avoid any distribution overlap.

Humanitarian cluster on early recovery has been updating the 3W mapping to plot the gap and facilitate a coordinated response (refer to the map below).



Mapping of district wise blanket allocation in Bangladesh. **Source:** DDM blanket allocation matrix, 2 January 2013.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action

BDRCS and IFRC have been closely monitoring the situation. The BDRCS response department conducted an assessment on the situation through its units offices located in northern, eastern and north-eastern parts of the country. Discussions have been held between IFRC and DG ECHO on the current cold wave situation in the country as well as possible interventions. Based on BMD's forecast that there will be further deterioration of the cold wave, IFRC continues to have discussion with BDRCS for immediate response. A total of 20,000 blankets from BDRCS stock and 10,000 from the IFRC/BDRCS joint disaster preparedness (DP) stock have been dispatched immediately as the impact intensified. NDRT members have been deployed to assist local units in case of response operation. BDRCS request for possible response to cold wave situation in the country was discussed in the Movement partners' coordination meetings. BDRCS has

also discussed with PNS including British Red Cross, German Red Cross and Swiss Red Cross to coordinate geographical areas, package and beneficiaries in case of any response.

## Progress towards outcomes

Relief distributions (food and basic non-food items)
<b>Outcome:</b> 75,000 severely affected people or 15,000 families receive blankets (two blankets/family) in 21 districts.
<b>Output:</b> Families received blankets are better protected from the effect of cold wave
<b>Activities planned:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Door to door assessments.</li> <li>• Beneficiary registration.</li> <li>• Dispatch and transportation of blankets by BDRCS to the distribution sites.</li> <li>• Storage and distribution of blankets, especially at unit level.</li> <li>• Distribution of blankets by trained Red Crescent Youth volunteers.</li> <li>• Regular detailed monitoring and reporting of distribution of blankets.</li> <li>• Procurement and replenishment of 39,000 blankets through IFRC Asia Pacific Zone Logistic Unit.</li> </ul>

### Progress:

- A total of 20,000 blankets from BDRCS stock and 10,000 from the IFRC/BDRCS joint stock have been dispatched immediately as the impact of cold wave intensified.
- Distribution of blankets has started in three most affected districts of Panchagar, Thakurgaon and Dinajpur where blankets were dispatched by BDRCS as priority basis. Unit Level Officer (ULO) of BDRCS from Dinajpur district (RDRT trained) is coordinating the distribution for the time being and will hand over to the NDRT once they reached to those districts.
- Distribution of 30,000 blankets in 21 districts is expected to complete within the next seven days.
- BDRCS national headquarters is sourcing for additional support from potential local institutions like banks, garments factories, and mobile companies who have corporate social responsibility (CSR) wings by which they have provisions to support vulnerable people. More blankets are expected to come from these sectors.
- A call for NDRT deployment has been issued and ten NDRT members were identified for deployment in the northern affected districts. The NDRT member have reported to the respective district on 5 January 2013 to support the district units for beneficiary selection, distribution planning as well as coordinate with national headquarters to keep track with the mobilization of the relief items. In additional, the NDRT members are also responsible to coordinate with other organizations to avoid duplication and ensure minimize gaps.
- IFRC country office is in coordination with IFRC Asia Pacific Zone Logistic Unit for replenishment of 30,000 blankets as well as an additional of 9,000 blankets for preparedness stock.

**Table 1: Plan of Action for distribution of blankets and replenishment**

Activity	Time frame			Remarks
	Dec 2012	Jan 2013	Feb 2013	
Rapid assessment				
Mobilization of unit volunteers for selection of beneficiaries				
Dispatching of 30,000 blankets from BDRCS/IFRC stock				
Selection and registration of beneficiary families				
Mobilization of NDRT				
Distribution of beneficiary card				
Distribution of blankets				
Procurement of blankets for replenishment				
Reporting/updates				

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## Contact information

**For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:**

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## How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.



The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
  2. Enable healthy and safe living.
  3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.
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