

CAMBODIA: FLOODS

20 September 2000

appeal no. 22/2000

situation report no. 1; Revised budget

period covered: 13 - 19 September 2000

With increasing numbers of people affected by the floods in Cambodia, the Appeal budget has been revised with more emphasis on immediate emergency needs. Emergency household kits will be distributed to 10,000 of the most vulnerable families, and personal hygiene items will be distributed to 100,000 families. The population density in “safe” areas exacerbates the health, hygiene and sanitation risks which the communities face. In fact, only once waters recede will it be possible to assess the full scale of needs relating in particular to health, water and sanitation.

The context

Since early July, Cambodia has been hit by torrential downpours and localised monsoon thunderstorms that have produced twice the average seasonal rainfall covering the 795,000 square kilometres of the Mekong river watershed. The impact is devastating with conditions worsening each day, as the waters of all the major river systems continue to rise. Flood water from Laos, Vietnam and Thailand, exacerbated by Typhoon Wukong, is now flowing into the tributaries of the Mekong river, as well as into the numerous smaller rivers crossing the northern border provinces of Cambodia. The entire Mekong basin is subjected to prolonged flooding with additional rainfall immediately translating into further suffering for hundreds of thousands of Cambodians. With many weeks remaining before the traditional flooding season comes to an end, the current floods may well prove to be the most devastating for the past 30 years.

The exact number of people affected and land areas flooded can only be estimated. In almost all the impacted areas, communication is a significant problem with boats being the only means of transportation, as ox carts cannot negotiate the waters and swift currents.

Latest events

The following table illustrates the alarming water levels, as recorded at monitoring stations throughout the Mekong watershed.

Water level information as of 19 September 2000

Provincial Monitoring Station	Warning Level (metres)	Current Water Level	Compared to 18.9.00	Water level compared to this time 1999	Water level compared to this time 1998
Stung Treng - Mekong River	10.70	10.78	-0.32	+ 2.28	+ 2.15
Kratie - Mekong River	22.00	22.36	-0.18	+ 3.54	+ 4.25
Kampong Cham - Mekong River	15.20	15.89	-0.02	+ 2.61	+ 2.83
Phnom Penh - Bassac River	10.50	11.17	0.04	+ 1.84	+ 1.80
Kandal - Mekong River (Neak Lung)	7.50	8.10	0.03	+ 1.58	+ 0.48
Kandal - Mekong River (Koh Khel)	7.40	7.89	0.03	+ 0.87	+ 0.87
Tonle Sap - Prek Khdam	9.50	10.15	0.06	+ 1.90	+ 1.95

Source: Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology, Hydrology and River Works Department

Throughout the affected provinces there is a continuous movement of people to higher ground and safe areas. During July and early August, 17 such areas were identified. As the waters continue to rise many new safe areas are being sought, though they are often smaller and further afield than the original safe havens.

Summary of Affected Areas and People

Affected Areas				Affected People			
Province	District	Commune	Village	Families	Persons	Deaths	Evacuated Families
Stung Treng	5	29	63	4,719	29,129	1	
Kratie	4	37	179	11,232	56,347	5	6,274
Kampong Cham	11	74	229	50,297	275,368	31	3,742
Prey Veng	12	85	503	84,166	417,547	26	3,253
Takeo	6			9,142	39,382	7	837
Kampong Thom	7	34		12,058	46,455		
Siem Reap	4	18	113	3,435	16,843	1	
Koh Kong	5	8		665		1	
Odtar Mean Chey	1	4	18	706	3,250		
Svay Rieng	6	33	147	13,210	60,957	1	943
Kandal	10	64		70,053	302,290	22	14,695
Kampot	5	37	87	8,012	40,249		164
Preah Vihear	1			300	1,647		
Phnom Penh	4	16	52	17,046	68,681		1,199
Kampong Chhnang	5	20	81	8,216	44,826	2	
Ratanakiri	9	49	240	1,770	6,614		
Pursat	1	4	27	1,674	8,540		
				296,701	1,418,125	97	31,107

Source: National Committee for Disaster Management dated 17 September 2000

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Working in close co-operation with the Royal Government of Cambodia's National Committee on Disaster Management (NCDM), the lead agency for disaster response, the Cambodian Red Cross Society (CRC) is assisting in 11 provinces and in the Municipality of Phnom Penh.

To date, assistance in the form of food, clothing, shelter material and mosquito netting has been distributed to 24,989 families or 124,652 individuals. This is nearly 10% of the total affected population and includes 20,650 people who have evacuated to safe areas. Assistance also includes the distribution of household kits containing 21 items which were previously purchased with European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO) funding as a preparatory measure, and kits containing 10 items donated by Action Against Hunger (AAH). The Federation has released CHF 250,000 from the Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) in order to ensure immediate implementation of the operation.

As the severity of the flooding increases, CRC is continually assessing the need for further assistance to those most in need. Co-ordinating closely with NCDM, CRC will provide direct assistance in the form of food, shelter material, clothing and household kits to Cambodia's most needy and vulnerable people. In light of the increasing number of people directly affected by the floods, the appeal budget has been revised with more emphasis placed on immediate emergency needs. Emergency household kits will be distributed to 10,000 most vulnerable families (50,000 individuals), whilst personal hygiene items will be distributed to 100,000 families (500,000 individuals).

Concern is growing for both the short term and long term health needs of the population, particularly in relation to waterborne diseases. Discussions have begun with the Ministry of Health on the formation of health task forces, including water and sanitation experts, at national and provincial levels. These discussions also focus on national guidelines for public health interventions at community level. Initially, assistance will target those people seeking refuge in the safe areas. The population density in these areas exacerbates the health, hygiene and sanitation risks which the communities face. In fact, those reaching the safe areas are only a small proportion of those affected. Many people remain in their homes to provide security for their possessions and to protect their house against collapse by building up stilts in an attempt to protect the house from the fast flowing waters. Only once waters recede will it be possible to assess the full scale of needs relating to health, water and sanitation needs at village level.

Families eligible to receive Red Cross assistance fall into two categories. The first category is made up of those who have evacuated their homes to seek refuge on higher ground and have therefore lost most of their possessions and crops. The second category is composed of those who remain in villages and who have lost their home, household items and have sustained a serious loss of income, and finally those who are socially disadvantaged: the unaccompanied elderly, single female headed household, the chronically ill, the disabled.

Using geographical and meteorological data supplied by the government, the CRC has visited 76 of the most affected districts. In discussions with local officials and by direct observation, they identify the most affected villages, of which there are some 2,090 to date. The CRC has been in direct contact with the majority of the affected villages through its provincial Red Cross branch offices and active Red Cross Volunteer network. Once collected, the village level data is then taken back up to the commune level for discussion and verification with the local authorities.

The Red Cross branches, with the government Provincial Committees for Disaster Management (PCDM) are jointly assessing the constantly changing situation and collecting data on the needs and movement of the most vulnerable families. Access to many isolated villages is a major problem for adequate and timely data collection because of high water levels and damage to roads and bridges.

The Federation’s Disaster Preparedness Co-ordinator participated in two of the joint survey missions to Kandal and Prey Veng Provinces on 14-15 September and the Federation Head of Delegation took part in a mission to Kampong Cham, Kampong Chhnang and Kandal between 15 and 17 September.

Outstanding needs

Donors have expressed interest in the Appeal and a number of pledges have been announced.

The Cambodian Red Cross Society launched an appeal at local level, and has received the following contributions.

***Donations Received by Cambodian Red Cross
in response to local appeal***

Cash	In-kind	
USD 143,518	768.55 MT	Rice
	10,000 packs	Cold Tablets
	86 cartons	Instant Noodles
	5,580 packs	Instant Noodles
	120 cartons	Canned fish
	204 cartons	Mixed canned food
	5,760 packages	Dutchmill
	30 packages	Giffarine Talc powder
	30 packages	Giffarine Gel
	30 tubes	Insecticide gel
	430 pieces	Sarong
	1,100 pieces	Krama
	9,164 pieces	Assorted clothing

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

The Cambodian Red Cross, supported by the Federation, is working in close co-operation with the Royal Government of Cambodia through the government’s lead agency for emergency response, the National Committee on Disaster Management. By means of an MoU, the two institutions are collaborating in the ongoing efforts of assessing and addressing the emergency needs of the most vulnerable.

Two representatives from the Department for International Development (British government) arrived in Cambodia on 18 September for a one week assessment of the flood situation. They met with the Federation and CRC management for an update on the Red Cross response. They plan to take part in a field visit today with the CRC/Federation. The Head of Regional Delegation, Head of country Delegation and Disaster Preparedness Co-ordinator met with the OCHA and UN-DMT Co-ordinators on 18 September, and the need for disaster information gathering and dissemination systems were discussed.

The Head of Delegation, Health Co-ordinator and Programme Co-ordinator for the North-east met the Secretary of State for Health on 19 September to discuss national guidelines for public health short term response strategy. A Federation draft concept paper was shared with the MoH, and terms of reference for provincial public health task forces and provincial response field teams were discussed.

The Ministry of Health will stage a co-ordination meeting on the flood emergency today, to which the CRC/Federation have been invited, and which will address the issue of food security.

The Head of Regional Delegation and Head of Delegation have met representatives of various aid organisations present in Cambodia in order to update them on Red Cross activities and emergency response co-ordination. Action Against Hunger and MSF have expressed the desire to co-ordinate relief efforts with the Red Cross, primarily in their existing operational locations.

The Co-operation Committee for Cambodia (CCC) will distribute an information sheet on the floods to its members, advising them to channel any information on disaster response activities to the NCDM and CRC. Any offers of cash and kind assistance will be directed to the CRC and Federation. MEDICAM, the association of health organisations working in Cambodia, will be requested this week to co-ordinate a meeting to look at the immediate and longer term health and water/sanitation needs.

The Cambodian Daily, an English language daily newspaper published in Phnom Penh, will run a full page advertisement in order to generate cash and in-kind support for Red Cross in Cambodia.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

Conclusion

The full impact of the flood disaster has not been fully determined since poor communications and the vast areas of submerged land prevent an analysis of the extent of damage to property, infrastructure and agriculture. Sustained relief efforts will be needed until the flood water recedes, after which, well-targeted assistance for rehabilitation will be required and it is expected that activities to prevent the spread of disease will become a priority at village level.

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<u>BUDGET SUMMARY (REVISED)</u>	APPEAL No. 22/2000		
Cambodia floods			
TYPE	ORIGINAL	REVISED	VARIANCE
	BUDGET	BUDGET	
RELIEF NEEDS		IN CHF	
Shelter & constructions	219,400	829,600	610,200
Clothing & textiles	373,550	522,450	148,900
Food & seeds			
Water		86,700	86,700
Medical & first aid		10,540	10,540
Teaching materials			
Utensils & tools	192,250	405,100	212,850
Other relief supplies	445,750	637,950	192,200
TOTAL RELIEF NEEDS	1,230,950	2,492,340	
<u>CAPITAL EQUIPMENT</u>			
Vehicles	10,625	291,125	280,500
Computers	7,650	7,650	0
Telecom. equipment	10,200	10,200	0
<u>PROGRAMME SUPPORT</u>			
Programme management (automatic calculation)	109,720	273,080	163,360
Technical support (automatic calculation)	32,844	81,746	48,901
Professional services (automatic calculation)	36,424	90,655	54,231
TRANSPORT STORAGE & VEHICLE COSTS	44,540	226,950	182,410
<u>PERSONNEL</u>			
Expatriate staff	70,880	113,990	43,110
National staff	19,448	38,488	19,040
Personnel (support costs)			
<u>ADMINISTRATIVE & GENERAL SERVICES</u>			
Travel & related expenses	2,550	5,100	2,550
Information expenses	10,880	47,668	36,788
Administrative & general expenses	11,560	47,770	36,210
External workshops & seminars	28,900	323,068	294,168
TOTAL OPERATIONAL NEEDS	396,222	1,557,490	
TOTAL APPEAL CASH, KIND, SERVICES	1,627,172	4,049,830	
LESS AVAILABLE RESOURCES (-)			
NET REQUEST		4,049,830	