

# 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

## BANGLADESH: FLOODS

20 August 2004

The Federation's mission is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilising the power of humanity. It is the world's largest humanitarian organisation and its millions of volunteers are active in over 181 countries.

### In Brief

Appeal No. 15/2004; Operations Update no. 3; Period covered: 10-19 August 2004; Appeal coverage: 103.8%; ([click here to go directly to the attached Contributions List, also available on the website](#)).

#### Appeal history:

- Launched on 26 July 2004 for CHF 4,350,000 (USD 3,440,095 or EUR 2,844,997) for six months to assist one million beneficiaries.

Outstanding needs: NA

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: [Annual Appeal 01.56/2004](#)

#### Operational Summary:

The overall flood situation is slowly improving with floodwaters receding in almost all areas of the country. However, 25 percent of the country still remains affected by the floods. Expert says no fresh floods are likely in a week although monsoon rains sent some upstream rivers swelling.

Diarrhoea has spread in the flood-affected areas and as of 17 August more than 160,000 people have been affected with 75 diarrhoeal deaths recorded. The total death toll since the beginning of the flood has risen to 730. The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) has provided emergency assistance to more than 11,000 families from its limited resources. The early response to the appeal has been very encouraging with pledges and support for the appeal from all sectors of the local and international communities overwhelming.

Although the appeal is fully covered a review is currently being considered.

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All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct](#) and is committed to the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable. For support to or for further information concerning Federation programmes or operations in this or other countries, or for a full description of the national society profile, please access the Federation's website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

## Background

The monsoon arrived early and Bangladesh has been lashed by heavy rain since late June. Persistent and exceptionally heavy rainfall augmented by torrential river flows (coming in from Nepal, India and Bhutan) and accelerated snow and ice melts from the Himalayas, have contributed to severe flooding. Forty of Bangladesh's 64 districts have been affected. A total of 36 million people (over 25 percent of the population) have been affected by the disaster. As of 17 August, the official death toll stood at 730.

The overall flood situation is improving. Floodwaters are receding in almost all areas of the country, the major rivers continue to fall and floods continue to recede. However, 25 percent of the country remains affected by the floods. Experts say no fresh floods are likely in a week, although monsoon rains sent some upstream rivers swelling and there remains the possibility of a rise in floodwaters if the monsoon brings further rains in the coming weeks as predicted by the long-range weather forecast.

More than 1.4 million people are still living in makeshift shelters according to official records. After a month-long devastating flood, the victims are slowly returning from shelters, but many find they are facing a new battle for survival as they have no food and no cash in hand to rebuild shattered houses and to cultivate lands. The severe flood washed away everything they had, including houses, and many of them are now paupers.



*ECHO supported family kits distribution in Sirajganj on 17 August 2004*

Waterborne diseases like diarrhoea, typhoid and scabies are spreading rapidly, the official death toll from diarrhoea rose to 75 while the number of people affected by diarrhoea since 12 July has risen to 160,000. The problem is particularly severe in Dhaka.

The Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) reported on 18 August an improved flood situation for most of the country, including Dhaka. The Brahmaputra-Jamuna continued to fall at all points. The Ganges-Padma observed a rise at upstream while it receded slightly at downstream points. The rivers in the Meghna and in the South-Eastern Hill basin recorded a rise and fall. Out of the 86 monitoring stations, 23 points observed a rise in water levels, 39 points recorded a fall and remained steady, while there were no reports received from the remaining six monitoring stations. Among them, three points are flowing above danger level. However, a MET Department official said that the monsoon weather system changes frequently and it is very hard to predict rains, and future flooding depends on the strength of the monsoon.

## Operational developments

The BDRCS and the Federation delegation have continued to maintain daily contact with all BDRCS district branches in the flood-affected districts, particularly those targeted under this Appeal. The branches were instructed to mobilise members and volunteers, including CBDP squads, to be prepared for the current relief operation. The Emergency Flood Relief Control Room is operational and is coordinating and sharing information with the district units and other stakeholders.

The delegation also initiated the request for deployment of a relief coordinator, two relief delegates and a logistic delegate. One logistic delegate from New Zealand Red Cross and two-relief delegates from British Red Cross and Korean Red Cross arrived and commenced their work. A medical relief delegate from Swedish Red Cross arrived on 19 August and is supervising and coordinating the medical relief teams working in the flood-affected areas. After headquarters briefing, relief delegates left Dhaka for flood-affected areas accompanied by BDRCS relief coordinator to assist RC branches to identify the beneficiaries, seeing what additional support branches would need for this large operation and also supervising the distribution of the relief goods in a speedy and organised manner.

## Red Cross and Red Crescent action - objectives, progress, impact

Since the beginning of the flood season, BDRCS has distributed the following relief goods from its limited resources and buffer stocks to more than 11,000 families. Distributions are made among the most vulnerable people severely affected by the floods.

Family Kits	BP-5 Biscuits	Food Packets <sup>1</sup>	Second Hand Clothing	Oral Rehydration Solution (saline)	Water Purification Tablets	WFP Rice
5,500 family kits	1,673 cartons	5,800	600 pieces	58,990 packets	250,000	700 MT

As reported in Operations Update 2, following the emergency grant of EUR 1,350,340 (CHF 2,064,670) provided by the European Commission Humanitarian Office (ECHO) and various government contributions, the government of Australia, Belgium, Norway and Finland have also contributed much needed support to the floods operation. Procurement of food and non-food items is well underway. In addition, the sister national society's rapid response and local fund raising brought contributions from major banks in Dhaka – HSBC and Citicorp. There have also been contributions from the commercial sector, members of the public and expatriate community.

**Operation Objective: To meet the urgent needs of some one million unassisted and displaced beneficiaries severely affected by the ongoing monsoon season who are currently living in their flooded homes, river embankments, roadways and chars through the provision of basic food items, family kits, medical services and small-scale agricultural support during the rehabilitation phase.**

### Emergency Relief Phase

**Objective 1: 135,000 displaced and unassisted families to receive emergency complementary food ration for one month within the coming weeks.**

Through this appeal, the BDRCS and the Federation is assisting 135,000 of the most vulnerable displaced families by distributing emergency food supplies of 2,700 MT of rice (including the 700MT allocated by WFP/Government of Bangladesh), 675 MT of dhal (lentils) and 270 MT of cooking oil for an initial period of one month. Each affected family will receive a food ration consisting of: 20 kg of rice, 5 kg of dhal (lentils) and 2 litres of cooking oil.

### **Progress/Achievements**

Government delivery order for the release of received, and distribution of 700 MT of WFP-allocated rice by RC district units commenced on 8 August and will be completed within the next few days among the 35,000 families (each family will get 20 kg of rice), followed by the distribution of ECHO food component. Tendering process for the procurement of food items (funded by ECHO) is completed and approval received from the Geneva procurement department. An order has been placed for the purchase of 1,200 MT of rice, 300 MT of dhal (lentils) and 120 MT of cooking oil. Preparation of the detailed distribution plan for the ECHO-supported food item is under way as well as for the storage and smooth transportation of these items and will be completed in the next few days.

### **Impact:**

Initial distribution of 700 MT of rice among the most vulnerable families affected by the flood will provide them the necessary food supplies to meet their immediate requirement.

Four international Federation delegates are deployed to the field for operational support, monitoring and reporting.

<sup>1</sup> Food packet consisting 5 kg rice, 1 kg dhal, and 2 kg potato,

**Constraints:**

The price of food and non-food items have increased in the local market due to high demands, an increase in transportation costs and closed factories as a result of flooding. These increases will impact on cost of required food and may require a revised appeal budget.

**Objective 2: 50,000 flood-affected families to receive family kits and emergency BDRCS buffer stock replenished over a period of four months.**

Fifty thousand family kits will be distributed among the most affected vulnerable families (many of these beneficiaries are also expected to benefit from the food and non-food programmes).

**Progress/Achievements**

The purchase order for the 30,000 family kits (22,128 earmarked for ECHO programme) was issued after being approved by the Geneva logistics department. In the meantime, 1,000 ECHO family kits had been distributed in four places at Sirajganj on 17 August. The suppliers will deliver the first consignment of 5,000 family kits beginning Sunday, and thereafter 5,000 to 7,000 per week for immediate and phased in distribution.



*Beneficiaries leaving with ECHO family kits*

**Impact:**

Family kits have multiple impacts on the affected families – they provide the most necessary non-food items to help restore life to normality after the disaster, and they also provide valuable psychological support to families who have lost all their possessions.

**Constraint**

Supplier will deliver 5,000 to 7,000 family kits per week if there is no major electricity failure in Dhaka city. Some initial delays have been encountered regarding multi-colour printing of ECHO and JICA logos on the family kits bag.

**Objective 3: Provide basic medical services within the first two months of the operation to the flood-affected population, limiting possible outbreaks of waterborne diseases.**

A total of 198,000 people, many of them also beneficiaries of the food and non-food programs, are expected to benefit from this program.

**Progress/Achievements**

As the floodwaters start receding, the incidence of diarrhoea and waterborne diseases increased sharply. The BDRCS has deployed 10 medical teams on an emergency basis in the most affected areas of Dhaka city and adjoining localities for two weeks. In the last two weeks, the medical teams treated 10,943 people (3,511 male, 4,063 female and 3,369 children under five years old) suffering from diarrhoea, dysentery, skin and other waterborne disease.

Forty-four additional medical teams (32 supported by ECHO and 12 supported by JICA) are deployed and operational in the flood-affected areas since 13 August. Acquirement of medicine and medical equipment for the 44 teams were completed last week. Procurement of visibility items, such as banners, flags and aprons, for the medical team has also been done in the last week. Four additional teams will also be deployed in two other districts by 19 August.

Each medical team has been provided with the essential drugs and basic equipment (blood pressure machine, stethoscope, torch, hurricane lamp, some surgical instruments, etc.). Initial reports from the medical team indicate a heavy rush of patients in almost all the places and each team is treating more than 100 patients a day. Because of

the increased medical needs, additional medical supply have been secured and further distribution in the field is in progress.

**Impact:**

The service being provided by the deployed medical teams is contributing for the alleviation of the sufferings of the affected population. Distribution of oral rehydration solution (ORS) and water purification tablets among affected people is vital in trying to stem the spread of waterborne disease.

**Constraints:**

N/A

**Rehabilitation Phase**

**Objective 4: To be provided four months into the operation, agricultural inputs to the 30,000 affected families who have access to land.**

At the end of monsoon season, once water levels recede and the conditions are stabilised, the affected population can return to their homes and basic agricultural support will be provided. This will involve the provision of two types of seeds (paddy rice and vegetables) to allow the potential beneficiaries to plant crops at the suitable time of year. This component is very important, as the floods have destroyed 1,728,129 acres of crops and seedbeds while a further 1.2 million acres of arable land has been damaged.

**Progress/Achievements**

Contact has been made with the government seeds department in order to get technical advice for the types of seeds needed in the flood-affected areas. In this regard, a meeting is scheduled to take place next Sunday.

**Impact:**

N/A

**Constraints:**

N/A

**Federation Coordination**

The BDRCS and the Federation Bangladesh Delegation continuously liaise with the governmental, local and international organisations, UN agencies, NGOs and disaster forums. The BDRCS and Federation representatives are regularly attending the disaster emergency response (DER) group meetings in order to coordinate relief interventions among partners and avoid duplication of assistance. The BDRCS and Federation Bangladesh Delegation are also working closely with the Federation's South Asia regional delegation. Head of delegation regularly visits donor missions and UN agencies to update them on Federation/BDRCS activities.

Next week, the BDRCS/Federation will be holding a breakfast operational flood briefing in the flood operational centre to some 24 donor Ambassadors and High Commissioners. Many have already supported our Appeal. Editors of the three major newspapers will also be attending.

EC representative from Delhi, accompanied by head of delegation and BDRCS deputy Secretary General, visited Sirajganj on 17 August and witnessed the first distribution of ECHO family kits among the beneficiaries and the deployment of medical teams.

**National Society Capacity Building**

The BDRCS, with its extensive experience in responding to flood emergencies, has developed its operational capacity through a number of extensive disaster relief and preparedness programmes over the last few years. This relief operation will further strengthen the capacity of national society in order to implement the Four-year Disaster Management Strategy particularly for community-based disaster management (CBDM) programme for floods. The national society will hopefully continue to receive support for its long-term strategic development programs in the field of disaster preparedness and response.

**Communications – Advocacy and Public Information**

Wide international and national media interest in the floods and associated Red Cross/Red Crescent relief initiatives has been regularly covered by the national media. Head of delegation participated in a 30- minute talk show on NTV channel and aired on 17 August. The discussion focused on the flood preparedness and mitigation in Bangladesh and the RC's response to the current floods in the country. Local media coverage (in Bangla and English) has also been sustained in many national TV and radio stations and newspapers. The Australian High Commission issued a press release on 19 August highlighting their contribution to the Federation.

High visibility for the operation will be maintained through local media, HSBC Bank website (<http://www.hsbc.com.bd/bd/comm/flood.htm>) and international web links. Press releases on Red Cross/Red Crescent action will be issued on a regular basis for publication. Adequate visibility for donors and the Federation will be ensured, including maintaining a high profile in international media.

***[Contributions list below; click here to return to the title page.](#)***

# Bangladesh - floods

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 15/2004

## PLEDGES RECEIVED

20/08/2004

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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### CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->					TOTAL COVERAGE	
					4,350,000	103.8%
AUSTRALIAN - GOVT		50,000	AUD	43,575	06.08.04	
BANGLADESH - PRIVATE		2,000,000	BDT	42,000	28.07.04	
BANGLADESH - PRIVATE		13,000	BDT	273	29.07.04	
BANGLADESH - PRIVATE		400,000	BDT	8,400	01.08.04	
BANGLADESH - PRIVATE		50,000	BDT	1,050	01.08.04	
BRITISH - RC		75,000	GBP	171,450	29.07.04	RELIEF NEEDS (75%), OPERATION NEEDS (25%)
BRITISH - PRIVATE DONORS				42	09.08.04	
CANADIAN - GOVT/CIDA/IHA		193,000	CAD	181,034	03.08.04	
DANISH - GOVT				9,539	17.08.04	PROGRAMME SUPPORT
ECHO		1,350,340	EUR	2,064,670	04.08.04	
FINNISH - GOVT		176,000	EUR	269,104	10.08.04	
IRELAND - GOVT		75,000	EUR	114,675		
JAPANESE - RC		172,000	USD	217,494	06.08.04	
JAPANESE - GOVT		10,998,900	BDT	230,977	08.08.04	PURCHASE OF FAMILY KITS, MEDICINE, EXPENSES MEDICAL TEAMS
KUWAIT - RC		100,000	USD	126,450	16.08.4	50% FOOD, 50% MEDICINE
MONACO - RC		10,000	EUR	15,290	28.07.04	
NEW ZEALAND - GOVT		150,000	NZD	119,175	18.08.04	
NORWEGIAN - RC		31,612	NOK	5,769	18.08.04	PROGRAMME SUPPORT
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC		1,541,575	NOK	281,337	18.08.04	
SINGAPORE - RC/DEUTSCHE BK		35,000	SGD	25,312	05.08.04	
SWEDISH - GOVT		600,000	EUR	100,500	27.07.04	
SWISS- GOVT				250,000	29.07.04	
SWISS - RC				128,342	06.08.04	
TURKISH - RC		10,000	USD	12,645	13.08.04	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH				4,419,103	CHF	101.6%

### KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
NORWEGIAN - RC		530,652	NOK	96,844	18.08.04	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				96,844	CHF	2.2%

# Bangladesh - floods

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APPEAL No. 15/2004

## PLEDGES RECEIVED

20/08/2004

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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### ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SAUDI ARABIAN - RC		1,332,326	SAR	40,472	03.08.04	BILATERAL: TENTS, BLANKETS, CARPETS, FOOD, MEDICINES
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				40,472	CHF	