

# 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

## NEPAL: 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. 17/2004; Operations Update no. 3; Period covered: 11 - 18 August, 2004; Appeal coverage: 62.7%;** ([click here to go directly to the attached Contributions List, also available on the website](#)).

#### Appeal history:

- Launched on 27 July 2004 for CHF 2,767,360 (USD 2,193,457 or EUR 1,802,246) for **six** months to assist 180,000 beneficiaries.

**Outstanding needs: CHF 1, 031, 943 (USD 828, 626 or EUR 671, 356)**

**Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: [Annual Appeal 01.58/2004](#)**

**Operational Summary:** The Nepal Red Cross has to date distributed 22,000 family packages. At the same time more relief items have been transported to districts and regional warehouses. Supplies for a further 16,000 family packages are starting to be delivered to the central warehouse or directly to one of the regional warehouse in the Terai area. Food has also been distributed to needy families. Many beneficiaries have, in their contact with the Red Cross, requested support for rehabilitation. Their concern is how to re-start their lives without having any extra resources and having lost their homes. However, the appeal response to date is not enough to cover the rehabilitation activities included in the plan of action. More funding is therefore required. The response so far makes it possible to cover the immediate relief needs. The in-country resource mobilisation is continuing. There has been quite a good response from local missions and local international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) in addition to the international contributions. The Maoists commenced a 'blockade' on Kathmandu valley beginning 18 August. During the first blockade, all vehicles have stayed off the roads leading to the capital. This will most probably impact the transport of relief supplies to the districts and therefore the implementation of the relief operation.

The Federation and Nepal Red Cross have used a cash transfer system for many years and pledge-based reporting will therefore be provided directly by the national society.

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

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- Federation Office, Kathmandu, Karin Hakansson-Furga, Federation Representative, [ifrcnp01@ifrc.org](mailto:ifrcnp01@ifrc.org), phone: 977 1 42 85 843, fax: 977 1 42 86 048.
- ICRC Delegation, Kathmandu: Nicolas Bachman, Communication Delegate, [Kathmandu.kat@icrc.org](mailto:Kathmandu.kat@icrc.org), phone 977 1 44 82 285, fax: 977 1 448 29 37.
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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

Heavy rains which began in early July resulted in widespread flooding and landslides, affecting thousands of people in eastern and central regions of the country.

A total of 800,000 people have been affected by the disaster, with 185 killed. Floods hit 25 of Nepal's 75 districts.

Many families were forced to evacuate with parts of southern Nepal submerged for over two weeks. Numerous landslides in the hilly region swept houses away and more than 37,000 families were initially displaced. Whilst people are returning to their homes, many are still sheltering in schools and camped on roadsides, etc. Large areas of cultivated land and newly planted rice were washed away. Up to 68,000 houses have been destroyed or damaged and many schools have been damaged. Infrastructure such as bridges and roads has been severely affected.

The weather has been markedly better for over two weeks now with no further heavy rains. Flood waters continue to recede and the area inundated is diminishing. However the threat of waterborne diseases and diarrhoea remain major threats.

While the weather has improved, Nepal is now entering its *actual* monsoon season. With such heavy pre-monsoon rains, the affected areas are now very vulnerable to flash flooding should there be significant downpours.

Many of those affected are in remote, mountainous areas. One village, two days walk from the branch HQ, was visited by a Nepal Red Cross team which found 34 houses had been destroyed while all agricultural land had been ruined. Affected families have been forced to live with relatives or shelter in schools or temporary refuge. Whilst community members are helping those affected, these people are exceptionally poor and have no extra resources. Red Cross-supplied family packages have been a help, but a major need for the future is assistance with rehabilitation.

## Operational developments

Chairs and secretaries of branches in affected districts are meeting this week with the Nepal Red Cross Society chairman and management team. They are evaluating the operation to date and taking decisions about future priorities. Volunteers and staff in affected districts continue to be involved with distribution of family packages supplied from NHQ and food items raised locally. More than 22,000 family packages have now been distributed since the start of the emergency. Some district teams are also visiting remote villages that had previously been cut off by the floods and/or landslides.

In one of the mountainous districts the villages most affected by the disaster are located in Maoist-controlled areas; two days walk from the district headquarters. The Nepal Red Cross has been able to conduct assessment and distribution without any problems in this area. The Maoists have informed the Red Cross team that they are welcome to the affected areas so long as they are kept informed.

NHQ is continuing to produce regular reports on the number of affected people based on information from branches. With Red Cross volunteers able to access most of the affected communities, the national society has a reasonably clear picture of the current situation. There is regular contact with UN agencies, the Home Ministry and other organisations active in the DP Net.

The Maoists commenced an indefinite 'blockade' on Kathmandu valley from 18 August. All vehicles stayed off the roads leading to the capital on the first day of the blockade yesterday. This development may severely affect the transport of relief supplies to the districts and thereby the timetable for the remaining elements of the relief operation. Some of the goods can be delivered directly from suppliers to regional warehouses and districts outside the valley. However, some supplies need to be sent from Kathmandu. Discussions regarding possible solutions are being held with the ICRC.

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

**Operation goal: To meet urgent needs of 180,000 beneficiaries of 30,000 vulnerable displaced and flood-affected families through the provision of food and family packages as well as to assist 15,000 families in the rehabilitation phase with seeds and 400 families with construction material.**

### **Emergency relief**

**Objective: To assist 1,000 flood-affected families with food items for one month, to be distributed before the end of August.**

Many of the affected districts are raising funds and in-kind food for distribution to the most vulnerable in their region. However this not possible in some of the poorer districts which have limited Red Cross capacity. This food assistance will therefore be directed to the neediest families in districts lacking resources. The targeted beneficiaries will receive the full ration of food (SPHERE standard 2100 calories), which is the same approach being used by other organisations.

Each beneficiary family will receive a monthly ration of 73.8 kg rice, 10.8 kg pulse, 4.5 kg vegetable oil, 3.6 kg sugar and 1.35 kg salt.

### **Progress/Achievements**

District branches have been able to supports thousands of families with food aid during the early stages of the operation. Districts have raised more than CHF 68,000 in kind or cash which has been used for food aid. Only a few districts are now reporting the need for assisting specific groups with food. This week food will be purchased locally in these targeted districts using funding from the Appeal. Procuring locally helps support the local economy and avoids transport problems. The transport issue is a vital one particularly for the hilly districts, many of which have damaged or destroyed roads.

The Nepal Red Cross food distribution approach (a small-scale, targeted operation) is backed up by findings in an assessment by the World Food Programme. The assessment concludes that just over a month after the onset of the disaster, there is no major need for large food distributions. The assessment team points out that in the Terai area farmers started replanting rice as soon as the water receded. This has created employment opportunities for manual labourers.

### **Impact:**

Food assistance provided by Nepal Red Cross district branches directly after the floods and landslides met an urgent and immediate need. The branch's ability to respond clearly shows the value and need for local preparedness and response capacity. The additional support through this Appeal is only supplementary to the significant immediate response achieved by branches. The beneficiaries of this additional food assistance are now being identified.

**Constraints:** N/A

**Objective: To assist 30, 000 flood-affected families with family relief packages during the first month of the operation, including replenishment of already distributed family packages. From within these targeted beneficiaries, 15,000 families will also be provided with additional plastic sheeting for protection of goods, food and clothing.**

Each family package contains a kitchen set, a plastic bucket and jug, female sari, male dhoti, printed cloth, blanket and tarpaulin. In addition to the material worth of these packages they also have a high psychological value, reinforcing to beneficiaries that they have not been forgotten and that the Red Cross cares for their welfare.

### **Progress/Achievements**

Since the beginning of the operation the Nepal Red Cross has distributed 22,003 packages of relief materials to needy families, of which 3,369 packages were distributed in the last week. Several NGOs have donated more than 2,000 family packages in-kind, complying with Nepal Red Cross standards, to a value of more than CHF 140,000. UNICEF has also announced that it will contribute with in-kind supplies, including 1,400 family packages and water purification liquid, to a value of CHF 73, 000.

Suppliers have started to deliver relief materials to the Nepal Red Cross' warehouses for an additional 16,000 packs. The society has been transporting materials from its stocks to branches utilising Nepal Red Cross trucks and locally-hired vehicles where necessary.

**Impact:**

More than 22, 000 families of the intended 30,000 have benefited from the distribution of these packs. They have given displaced families the ability to cook food and boil water, helping prevent disease and improve nutrition. Basic clothing needs have also been met. To receive a relief package is also important recognition of the suffering and needs a family have. It shows that the Red Cross cares for people that have been forced from their homes and lost their belongings.

**Constraints:**

There will be some delay in delivering all supplies needed to complete the packages. Nepal Red Cross demand is outstripping suppliers stocks. It will take time for suppliers to procure or produce the goods to complete the orders. This means the target will not be met within the first month of the operation as planned and may take until early September. The impact of the Maoist blockade could also impact on the distribution.

Supplies for approximately 5,000 family packages are expected in the coming week. Transportation to branches will continue as the supplies are received, depending on the blockade situation.

**Objective: To deliver water purification liquid to 15,000 families within the first month of the operation. To mobilise volunteers for cleaning up and sanitation activities.**

The Nepal Red Cross has not yet built up capacity in the area of emergency health. The society will distribute water purification liquid to ensure that people can use safe drinking water. It will also mobilise youth, community-based first aid and other volunteers for clean-up activities. Local communities will also be encouraged to join in.

**Progress/Achievements**

To date, the central warehouse has received 2,500 bottles of water purification liquid. These were immediately transported to three of the most affected districts – Sarlahi, Mahottari and Dhanusha – for distribution. Further delivery is planned for this week.

Youth and first aid volunteer groups are visiting village development committees, the most grass roots level administration in the national society, assisting with clean up and other community activities.

**Impact:** N/A

**Constraints:**

Since some of the water purification liquid distribution is part of the family package distribution, there may be a slight delay into early September to complete the objective (see previous constraint).

**Rehabilitation**

**Objective: To assist 30,000 families with vegetable seeds to be used in kitchen gardens for supplementary food and cash income.**

Each family will receive vegetable seeds for beans, chili and other local vegetables. This intervention draws on positive experiences of kitchen garden programmes in the Nepal Red Cross operation for Bhutanese refugees.

**Progress/Achievements**

No progress due to no funding for this part of the plan of action. It is emerging that rehabilitation activities such as this will be particularly crucial in assisting beneficiaries.

**Impact:** N/A

**Constraints:** Funding.

**Objective: To assist 400 of the most vulnerable displaced families with local construction material and technical expertise for rebuilding their houses.**

Families that have lost their homes due to the floods that are regarded as especially vulnerable considering factors such as the lack of an extend family network and large female-headed households will be targeted.

Each family will receive construction material and a Red Cross employed expert will give advice regarding the construction under the supervision of the NHQ construction engineer. Communities will be mobilised to assist with the construction, which is a tradition in many of the villages in Nepal.

**Progress/Achievements**

No progress due to insufficient funds. Assessments/feedback from beneficiaries has highlighted the strong need for assistance for rehabilitation of houses.

**Impact:** N/A

**Constraints :** Funding

**Capacity Building**

**Objective: Disaster response capacity and disaster preparedness programmes will be further enhanced and developed based on lessons learned from this flood operation.**

**Progress/Achievements:** N/A

**Impact:** N/A

**Constraints:** N/A

**Federation Coordination**

The Nepal Red Cross has been the only humanitarian organisation appointed to the government task force assessing the flood damage. The planned assessment by the taskforce for the Ministry of Home Affairs has yet to take place. Based on the assessment, the Ministry will decide whether to launch an international appeal for assistance. The focus of the government and the task force has been on rehabilitation and the mitigation measures.

In coordination with the Federation, the national society is continuing to liaise with other organisations and UN agencies. Many local organisations are channelling their assistance through the Nepal Red Cross.

The Appeal has been shared with all major embassies and local agencies. Two embassies have made direct contributions while others have informed their governments with several responding generously to the appeal. The Nepal Red Cross is also approaching the commercial sector in Nepal for assistance for the operation.

**National Society Capacity Building**

A team from NHQ including the national society chairman has been visiting highly affected districts. A meeting of chairs and secretaries of district chapters from affected districts is being held at Janakpur in the south of the country. The meeting will review the relief operation and focus on future actions.

Branches in all affected districts mobilised volunteers and members to participate in the flood response. Youth, community first aid and disaster trained volunteers have been especially active. District committees and secretaries have coordinated operations with district level disaster committees and kept in close contact with the authorities and other organisations.

The Society has two 3.5 tonne trucks and a number of other vehicles. These trucks are being used to deliver supplies in various locations. More than 27 warehouses/depots in various strategic locations have also been essential in the current operation. Well defined procurement procedures, relief operation guidelines and experienced, motivated staff as well as the society's own relief fund are strengths of the society.

The Nepal Red Cross has implemented community-based disaster preparedness (CBDP) programmes in 13 of the 25 currently affected districts. Communities involved in this programme have mobilised their volunteers for rescue and relief activities. Community-based first aid programmes have been implemented in five of the branches. The

first aid volunteers have also participated in the response to the flooding, such as raising local resources for food aid. These volunteers have been involved in their own districts during the initial phase of the operation and will continue to be active throughout the various phases.

**Communications – Advocacy and Public Information**

National media continue to utilise information provided by the national society. As planned, the communication unit arranged for a group of journalists to visit affected regions and witness Nepal Red Cross assistance. The journalists were accompanied by a member of the information team.

The Nepal Red Cross is constantly gathering information from the field via its extensive branch network to access all necessary information regarding the appeal and the operation updates.

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

# Nepal - floods

ANNEX 1

APPEAL No. 17/2004

## PLEDGES RECEIVED

20/08/2004

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

REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->	2,769,000		TOTAL COVERAGE		
			62.7%		
AUSTRIAN - RC	35,000	EUR	53,935	30.07.04	
BRITISH - RC	25,000	GBP	57,150	29.07.04	RELIEF NEEDS (75%), OPERATION NEEDS (25%)
BRITISH - GOVT/DFID	98,040	GBP	224,119	29.07.04	RELIEF ITEMS, OPERATIONAL NEEDS
CANADIAN - RC	25,000	CAD	23,450	03.08.04	
CANADIAN - GOVT/CIDA/IHA	250,000	CAD	234,500	03.08.04	
FINNISH - RC	100,000	EUR	152,900	10.08.04	
KOREA, REP. - RC			30,000	27.07.04	
JAPANESE - RC	106,500	USD	134,669	06.08.04	
NORWEGIAN - GOVT/RC	2,157,497	NOK	393,743	11.08.04	
SWEDISH - GOVT/RC	1,000,000	SEK	167,500	28.07.04	
SWISS - RC			53,476	06.08.04	
UNITED STATES - EMBASSY	50,000	USD	63,225	30.07.04	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH			1,588,667	CHF	57.4%

### KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
DENMARK, GOVT	UTENSILS	3,000		146,750	18/08/2004	3,000 KITCHEN UTENSILS
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				146,750	CHF	5.3%

### ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED				0	CHF	