

NEPAL: FLOODS

24 March 1999

appeal no. 28/98

situation report no. 1 - Operation extended to 21st April 1999

period covered: 1 January - 15 February 1999

Nepal Red Cross Society Branches have completed distributions of household items and clothing to 10,000 families affected by last year's floods and landslides and the National Society is in the process of replacing relief stocks used up in the emergency phase of the operation.

The context

Exceptionally heavy rains in mid-1998 created serious flooding and landslides in 73 of Nepal's 75 districts. leaving 260 dead and some 10,000 families homeless. Nation-wide, 29,000 hectares of arable land were ruined.

The NRCS district branches with their staff and volunteers across the country have provided assistance to the most affected people. A Federation appeal was launched on 18 September, seeking CHF 525,000 in cash to provide assistance to 10,000 most vulnerable families. It also covered, in a second and third phase, the urgently needed restocking of emergency relief items, as well as systematic community disaster preparedness training.

Donor response to the appeal has been encouraging enabling the NRCS to complete the distribution to the targeted 10,000 families and begin replacement of emergency stocks.

Latest events

The severely hit Syangja District, where several villages and other infrastructures were destroyed in the floods and landslides, is slowly being reconstructed by the Government. The population in other affected areas have rebuilt their houses on their own and life is slowly returning to normal.

Thanks to timely action by local authorities and Red Cross Branches, waterborne diseases that could have developed into epidemics were contained.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Distribution

The NRCS has completed the distribution of relief items to the targeted 10,000 families. Details of the distribution, based on reports from the Branches, are as follows (formal reports from a few of the very remote District Branches are still pending, accounting for the 309 families not included in the table) :

Region	No. of Districts covered	Tarpaulin (pcs)	Kitchen set (set)	Blanket (pcs)	Ladies Sarees (pcs)	Male Dhoti (pcs)	Cloth (metres)	No. of Families
Eastern	15	1,982	1,033	1,169	6,835	1,652	51,476	3,752
Central	17	1,961	861	1,203	1,801	1,275	20,761	1,801
Western	15	866	615	780	3,739	2,030	28,010	3,739
Mid Western	14	0	18	38	55	24	577	55
Far Western	8	90	117	278	344	107	6,115	344
Total	69	4,899	2,644	3,468	12,774	5,088	106,939	9,691
Planned		9,500.00	10,500.00	2,000.00	3,000.00		120,000.00	

Procurement

As indicated above, the 2,000 pieces of tarpaulins and 2,500 sets of kitchen utensils procured in December have been distributed, procurement for stock replacement was initiated in February.

Training

Based on "Lessons learned" in the early days of the operation, the NRCS planned to conduct five workshops to enhance disaster management skills and coping mechanisms. One workshop was conducted with 23 participants in January, and another in the second week of February. The remaining three workshops are planned to be held in the near future.

Outstanding needs

Although response to the appeal has been sufficient to replace the Society's disaster stocks, the country's vulnerability to disaster and communications difficulties make disaster preparedness a permanent concern. Donors are reminded that the Emergency Appeal 1999 for Nepal seeks funds both for pre-positioning of supplies and the preparedness training of staff, volunteers and communities.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

The co-ordination between the NRCS and government authorities continues to be excellent.

A meeting was held with the EC Resident Consultant representative in Kathmandu at which the NRCS and the Federation Relief Co-ordinator briefed the representative on the progress of the operation.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

Conclusion

The rapid emergency response by the NRCS has greatly helped the most affected population to return to their villages and gradually return to a normal life. The ongoing procurement of relief items to replenish exhausted stocks will help the NRCS to re-establish its disaster preparedness capacity.

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