

INFORMATION BULLETIN



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: Monsoon Flooding

18 July 2002

Information Bulletin N° 2

This Information Bulletin is for information only. The Federation is not seeking any funding or other assistance from donors for this operation at this time. Donors are encouraged to support the Bangladesh appeal (01.26/02) for 2002, replacement of DP stocks.

The Situation

The flood situation in different areas in the country continues to deteriorate, though at slower pace, as water levels of major rivers continue to register further increases. According to the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC), all major rivers including Brahmaputra, Jamuna, Padma, Meghna, Surma and Mohananda registered increasing levels, but remained below the danger level (except Surma - flowing 25 cm above danger level). In addition to incessant rainfall, a number of gates of dams of flood affected Indian rivers have been opened to flush out rising water causing inundation/flash floods of vast areas in the south-western, northern and north-eastern districts of Bangladesh.

As the number of people searching for refuge in safer places (i.e. high lands etc.) is fluctuating, no reliable numbers of the affected population are available. Likewise, reliable information on actual damages caused by monsoon flooding is unavailable. According to local media there are reports about damaged road communications, damaged crops, sporadic outbreaks of diarrhoea, schools closed, hundreds of thousands of affected, yet, no official reports from any of the government agencies or any other agencies has substantiated those claims. The situation is certainly getting more difficult. However, at present, it is still considered to be within the coping mechanism of local population and authorities.



Flash floods occurred again during this year's monsoon season in Bangladesh

Most of agencies involved with emergency relief (i.e. Oxfam, Care, WFP, etc.) are of the same opinion that the current situation is a difficult one, although not yet to be taken as serious emergency situation requiring external assistance.

The Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MDMR), has alerted all relevant government agencies and officials at local operational levels to take all measures as per the Standing Orders on Disaster and it

has pre-positioned 50 tonnes of rice per district under the authority of the Deputy Commissioner for the purpose of initial response to any emergency situation.

Red Cross/Red Crescent Action

In addition to regular contact with its branches, the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) together with the Federation continues to closely monitor the situation, share information and coordinate with the Disaster Emergency Group members (UN, government, IO/NGOs and others). At present, BDRCS and the Federation's country delegation are making all necessary preparations/contingency planning for possible emergency situation that might emerge in many parts of the country if heavy rainfall continues along with onrush of waters from across the border of India.

In addition the BDRCS procured 6 mt of food items in order to provide limited relief assistance to most affected families in nine districts of: Noakhali, Rangpur, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Jamalpur, Jessore, Khulna, Satkhira and Mymensing. In addition, 200 relief packets consisted of second hand clothing, a blanket etc., from BDRCS's own stocks, were also allocated for distribution. On 14 July, all relief items were sent to the concerned units for further distribution. The total number of assisted families is 2000 (approx. 10,000 beneficiaries).

The coming eight weeks will remain critical in Bangladesh, as the situation could change overnight with extensive monsoon rainfall in the region (in and around Bangladesh).

BDRCS/Federation will continue to closely monitor the situation and if the time comes, would be prepared to act immediately in order to assist the most vulnerable. At present, the BDRCS and the Federation delegation in Bangladesh remain on high alert.

Regular updates on the changing situation will continue to be provided.

For a full description of the National Society profile, see www.ifrc.org

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All International Federation Operations seek to adhere to the Code of Conduct and are committed to the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (SPHERE Project) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

For support to or for further information concerning Federation operations in this or other countries, please access the Federation website at <http://www.ifrc.org>

For longer-term programmes, please refer to the Federation's Annual Appeal for (01.26/2002).