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Information bulletin

Bangladesh: Cox's Bazar Floods

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

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This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS), with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), is monitoring the situation and expects a worsening situation once further details are available on the flooding situation in the country.

Summary: Following the flash floods during the third week of July in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh has experienced torrential rains coupled with the monsoon depression in the Bay of Bengal. According to sources from the local administration and the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) local unit, some coastal, hilly, Brahmaputra and Ganges basin districts are the worst affected with approximately 400,000 people taking refuge in temporary shelters or safer places. Significant reports of damage to people's lives, livelihood, income, crops and food security has been received. According to the situation report of the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management dated 18 August, the monsoon flood is affecting over 313,000 families (approximately 1.56 million individuals).



Bangladesh Red Crescent Society volunteers distributing food and non-food items in Cox's Bazar. **Photo:** BDRCS.

The districts of Satkhira and Jessore are the worst affected areas and there are indicative reports that around 190,000 families have been affected and 20,000 houses have completely collapsed in 548 villages of seven *upazila* (sub-districts) of Satkhira and Jessore districts, which need external assistance to repair/rebuild.

The BDRCS/International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has done rapid assessments and is also engaged in further detailed assessments. BDRCS has reported that they may need external support to provide assistance to around 5,000 most vulnerable families with both emergency food and non-food items and also to address early recovery needs.

BDRCS is also planning to launch a national appeal to mobilize funds for the flood-affected people. IFRC is working with BDRCS to determine the extent of their operation and if additional resources are required to meet the needs of the population, which may involve the launching of an emergency appeal in the coming days. BDRCS and IFRC Bangladesh country office is monitoring the situation and is updating all Movement partners in Bangladesh regarding the flood scenario. Some international non-governmental organizations, including Action Aid, Christian Aid, Muslim Aid and Oxfam, are likely to launch a response with emergency food and non-food items and emergency shelter support. In-country humanitarian agencies are in touch with ECHO and Consortium of British Humanitarian Aid Agency (CBHA) for funding support to operate response activities.

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The situation



Flood-affected people in Suvashini village have taken temporary shelter on the side of the road at Laxsmanpur area, Tetulia union, Tala upazila. **Photo:** BDRCS

During the second and third weeks of July 2011, a considerable number of districts in Bangladesh were flooded, with Cox's Bazar being the most badly affected. Seasonal floods were compounded by factors such as heavier rainfall, increase of tidal water level due to the depression in the Bay of Bengal, and overflow of water from areas upstream (the hills of India and Myanmar). In the initial period, around 300,000 people in Cox's Bazar district were reported to be marooned as the flood situation deteriorated. Many people were moved to cyclone shelters and school buildings while some have sought refuge on the main roads with their families and livestock as rainwater entered their houses. To date, ten lives have been lost due to the floods in Cox's Bazar.

The BDRCS Cox's Bazar unit has responded immediately through their volunteer network, going for rescue, evacuation and distributing emergency sheltering materials (tarpaulin) and jerry cans.

On 27 July, CHF 262,770 was allocated from the IFRC Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF)

to support BDRCS in delivering immediate assistance to some 25,000 beneficiaries affected by floods in Cox's Bazar. Through the DREF, immediate support was given to 1,000 families in the form of cash grants (BDT 500 (CHF 5.41)) and emergency food ration which consists of the following:

ITEM	QUANTITY
Rice	5 kg
Dhal	3 kg
Oil	2 litre
Salt	1 kg
Sugar	1 kg
Shuji	0.5 kg

In addition, 8,500 jerry cans have been provided and tarpaulins distributed to 3,000 families. A total of 5,000 families will receive a hygiene parcel (two pieces of body soap and two pieces of laundry soap), and hygiene promotion leaflets. A one-time supplementary standard food ration pack will be distributed to the same 5,000 families by the end of August.

A joint BDRCS/IFRC team from national headquarters was sent to Cox's Bazar to monitor and assess the situation for better gauging of the affected areas and beneficiaries. This team worked closely with the BDRCS Cox's Bazar unit to facilitate the beneficiary registration, finalization and to implement the distribution plan.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action

BDRCS/IFRC has already complete the first phase of distribution for 1,000 families on 5 August 2011. The break down of the beneficiaries according to geographical area is given below. The second phase of the food distribution and hygiene promotion is expected to be completed by 27 August, before the Eid festival.

Upazila	No. of assisted families	Items per family	Planned assistance for No. of families	Remarks
Shadar	300	Rice 5 kg; dhal 3 kg; oil 2 litres; salt 1 kg; sugar 1 kg; shuji ½ kg; tarpaulin 1 piece; jerry can 1 piece; bathing soap 2 pieces; laundry soap 1 piece; washing powder ½ kg.	1,300	Planned assistance includes the previously assisted families. In this case, these families will receive only the food items, not the non-food items.
Ramu	400		1,600	
Chakaria	300		1,400	
Teknaf	0		500	
Ukhia	0		200	
Total	1,000		5,000	

RESPONSE GAPS

BDRCS has involved the volunteers to do a door-to-door assessment. Through this assessment, BDRCS has registered 6,835 families that need support. Assessments in Teknaf is ongoing. Out of the total registered 6,835 families, 5,000 will be supported on a priority basis through the food and non-food packages mentioned above. The remaining registered affected households will be supported based on the availability of funds.

Table: BDRCS/IFRC assessment, assistance figure and gaps

Upazila	Registered fully and partially damage houses	Assisted and planned no. of families	Gaps (no. of families not assisted)
Ramu	2,677	1,600	1,077
Shadar	1,718	1,300	418
Chakaria	1,960	1,400	560
Teknaf	Assessment on going	500	-
Ukhia	480	200	280
Total	6,835	5,000	2,335

BDRCS/IFRC also took part in a joint assessment study with four non-governmental organizations (Muslim Aid UK, Solidarites, ACF and World Food Programme) to ascertain if there are other priority long-term needs that need to be addressed. The assessment report is being compiled and finalized. BDRCS has also shared the gaps with other non-governmental organizations who are working in the area so that support can go to those families.

SELECTION OF TARGET GROUP

The BDRCS Cox's Bazar district unit volunteers are involved in the selection of beneficiaries or target groups. Affected geographical locations have been identified in coordination with the government and BDRCS life members from the Union level. In the identified affected areas, volunteers were sent to register the affected families. They were guided through a simple survey from pre-training sessions on the target families criteria as well as on some process to make the registration interactive. The registered families were then segregated into two category based on the set criteria. The categories are as follows:

- **Category A:** The most affected and vulnerable families who will receive emergency food and cash, tarpaulins, jerry cans, hygiene kits and supplementary food. The number of families is 1,000. These are the families who were living near the rivers, whose homes were washed away due to the flood and river erosion. Their houses were completely destroyed and crops/vegetables lost. From the surveillance conducted, these families will need emergency as well as some continuous external support.
- **Category B:** The second grade of vulnerable families who will receive supplementary food, tarpaulins, jerry cans and hygiene kits. The number of families is 4,000. These are the families who were living around the river (not so close) and in and around the hill's slopes. Their houses were also fully damaged but which they have somehow managed to partially rebuild but the living condition remains bleak. Their crops have been damaged, and source of livelihood lost. Hence, they remain helpless and will not be able to manage food and shelter rebuild options in the coming days.

Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

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1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
 2. Enable healthy and safe living.
 3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.
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