

CAMBODIA: FLOODS

29 June 2001

appeal no. 22/2000

situation report no. 7 (two-month programme extension to 12 August 2001)

period covered: 1 February - 12 June 2001

Distributions of emergency relief supplies, preventive health measures targeting malaria and dengue fever control, the repair of water points in 8 provinces and the reinforcement of human resources have all been carried out in accordance with the appeal objectives. Only the construction of water points and latrines in 45 safe areas in 8 provinces has not yet been completed; a further two months are required. The programme is therefore being extended until 12 August. Funding shortages prevented the achievement of another objective, the training of Cambodian Red Cross Youth and volunteers.

The context

Severe floods affected Cambodia over a four month period during 2000, causing extensive damage in 22 provinces and affecting an estimated 25% of the total population. The widespread flooding resulted in the destruction of transportation and communication networks, health centres and schools. An estimated 318,000 homes were destroyed, and the loss of livestock, tools and other household items has deprived many families of the means of ensuring their livelihoods. Extensive destruction of crops and irrigation systems has further weakened the ability of rural families to survive. This will undoubtedly lead to food shortages following the next harvest season.

The flood waters have slowly receded but some lowland areas remain seriously affected. All displaced populations have returned to their villages, and rehabilitation efforts are now under way to address the priority issues of essential infrastructure development.

The international donor community has assisted Cambodia with USD \$161 million in repair and rehabilitation aid. This is primarily aimed at repairs to roads, bridges and irrigation networks. The

magnitude of the flooding, the worst in 70 years, has left a devastating impact in hundreds of communes and thousands of communities where recovery is still under way.

Latest events

The United Nations conducted a two-day workshop on 27-28 March entitled “The United Nations Response to the Year 2000 Floods in Cambodia”. Participants included Provincial Governors, UN, IOs and NGOs involved in the flood response. Four working groups discussed information /co-ordination / communication; grassroots public awareness for local flood mitigation; training needs and activities; the need for and advantages of enhanced strategic alliances.

The National Committee of Disaster Management (NCDM), in partnership with the Federation and Cambodian Red Cross (CRC), assessed NCDM capacity and capability to develop a five year strategic institutional development plan and priorities for a NCDM two year work plan.

The NCDM held a two day workshop 3-4 April to review capacity and capability assessment findings and recommendations for priority actions to better prepare NCDM to respond to future emergencies. The participants included provincial governors, senior officials from NCDM and member ministries, representatives from NGOs and IOs, as well as the CRC and Federation.

Five main areas were identified for priority action by the Royal Government of Cambodia:

- An approved and operational national Disaster Management Policy and Guidelines.
- A written Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response Plan at national and provincial levels.
- Initiation of the NCDM Disaster Management Information System, particularly the ability to gather information damage and needs and report these in a timely and efficient manner.
- The development and approval of a National Disaster Awareness and community based Disaster Preparedness Programme.
- The development and approval of a National Disaster Management Strategy that identifies risks and vulnerabilities in various sectors and a long term plan and sustainable actions in disaster preparedness, prevention and mitigation.

The findings of the NCDM Capacity and Capability Assessment, Five Year Institutional Development Strategy and Two Year Work plan were endorsed by the RGC. They were included in the official government request for funding at the Annual Consultative Group Meeting held in Tokyo 12-13 June.

Red Cross/Red Crescent action

Following the CRC’s one day “lessons learned” workshop in December 2000, the Federation delegation conducted a one day lessons learned workshop on 12 February “*to provide the Federation delegates and local staff a forum to reflect on and share how the experience of Flood 2000 affected them as a delegation. In particular, on planning, co-ordination within the delegation, co-ordination with CRC and approaches/strategies used*”.

The Federation and CRC then conducted a joint one day lessons learned workshop on 10 April. This involved CRC headquarters senior management and technical staff, Presidents of selected provincial Red Cross branches, Federation delegates, programme staff and observers. The main objective of the day was “*to discuss the lessons learned of the Flood 2000 and identify areas for improvement with short and medium term actions*”.

Six main areas of improvement were identified:

- Improve data collection and sharing of information, particularly on assessment of needs.
- Enhance the involvement of Provincial Red Cross organisations (PRC) in developing a disaster management plan. Expand RCV membership, give appropriate training for PRC and RCVs, particularly in community based disaster preparedness (CBDP) and community based flood mitigation project (CBFMP). Strengthen skills of human resources at various levels.
- A “Master Plan/Disaster Preparedness Action Plan” must be developed and adequately supported by resources including personnel, volunteers, materials, funds, communication and information systems and means of transportation.
- Improve co-ordination between CRC and relevant government Ministries. Review CRC-NCDM MoU and improve its contents based on lessons learned. Formalise MoU between CRC and Ministry of Health. Improve operational linkages between PRC and PCDM.
- Support building “safe areas” in communities prone to disasters through regular projects.
- Advocate for the improvement of knowledge and skills of NCDM/PCDM in performing their mandated roles.

Progress on the objectives defined in the Federation emergency appeal is as follows:

1. Emergency Relief

Objective 1: Continue to provide immediate assistance to flood victims with further distributions of emergency food, clothing, soap, plastic sheets (shelter material), ORS and some 5,00 household kits

Distributions during this reporting period:

Province	Plastic Sheet	Soap powder	Soap bar	10L Water Container
B.M. Chey		41		
Kg. Cham	1,300	2,220	10,800	
Kg. Chhnang	1,050			
Kg. Speu	650	650	5,200	
Kg. Thom	750			
Kampot	750	1,753		549
Kandal	1,820	4,036	14,560	
Phnom Penh		683	63	
Prey Veng	1,130	1,130	9,040	
Pursat	750	750	6,000	
Svay Rieng	720	3,599	5,760	
Takeo	642	3,998	5,136	

2. Water and Sanitation

Objective 2: Minimise the risk of the wide-scale spread of infectious diseases, particularly diarrhoea and vector borne disease, by giving health education, supplying soap and ORS and improving hygiene and sanitation facilities in safe areas for both short and long term benefits.

The co-operative approach of the Ministry of Rural Development, the Cambodian Red Cross and other agencies to rehabilitating flood affected community wells in the provinces continued with provincial departments of rural development and provincial Red Cross branches focusing their activities in eight target provinces: Svay Rieng, Prey Veng, Kampong Cham, Kampong Thom, Takeo, Kandal, Kampong Chhnang, and Pursat.

Objective 2.1: To assist the Provincial Health Department maximise access to safe drinking water through a co-ordinated approach with other agencies.

An information matrix continually updates the water sanitation activities of all organisations involved. While the data shows that large numbers of water points are being rehabilitated, there are insufficient resources to cover all the water points assessed as damaged.

Objective 2.2: *To support the Provincial Department of Rural Development (PDRD) in improving sanitation in temporary safe areas.*

A three-day training programme for RCVs was developed for “Hygiene and Sanitation Management of Safe Areas” in order to reduce vulnerability of flood affected communities (both flooded and displaced people). Specific topics included:

- understanding water-related issues
- recognising poor hygiene and sanitation conditions and behaviour, understanding the need for change and how to bring it about
- hygiene message communication
- village mobilisation to improve hygiene and sanitation conditions

PDRD and Red Cross volunteers have conducted hygiene awareness on sanitation, incorporated in the hygiene awareness sessions organised as part of the water points rehabilitation (*see 2.3 below*).

Objective 2.3: *To assist the PDRD undertake the rehabilitation and repair of affected water points, in a co-ordinated approach with other agencies.*

Teams from Provincial Red Cross bodies and the Department of Rural Development (DRD) have completed the planned repair/rehabilitation of damaged water points in eight provinces. Assessments carried out indicated approximately 8,000 damaged water points in eight provinces. The completed repairs are benefiting over 150,000 people, and more than 74,000 people also received hygiene messages as part of this process.

Provinces	Planned Repair	Number of water points repaired	Number of Hygiene Awareness sessions conducted
Svay Rieng	281	78	-
Kandal	145	214	60
Kg Cham	120	20	-
Kg Chhnang	310	92	-
Kg Thom	90	-	-
Pursat	290	44	44
Prey Veng	160	306	114
Takeo	240	162	162
Total this period	N/A	916	380
Cumulative Total	1,636	2,363	1,412

Objective 2.4: *To assist the PDRD to develop permanent water and sanitation facilities in key safe areas.*

Joint assessments in 8 provinces of potential safe areas were conducted by PRC and PDRD. Water points and latrines in 45 safe areas were then identified by a team from the Federation, CRC, MRD and PRC officers. While the construction of some latrines and water points has been completed, some are still under construction. All works should be completed by 12 August 2001. This will necessitate a two month extension to the overall operation.

Objective 2.4: To assist CRC in producing latrine posters for key safe areas to make community people understand how to use latrines properly.

A poster was designed by the Ministry of Rural Development, in partnership with CRC/Federation, teaching communities how to use latrines properly. Some 3,000 posters are being printed for distribution to all safe areas.

3. Health

Objective 3: *Assist with the provision of clean water and, in co-operation with the Ministry of Health, through the Red Cross volunteers and Red Cross youth network, provide mosquito nets and insecticide, Vitamin A/ORS, de-worming tablets and health education.*

The CRC signed an MoU with the Ministry of Health's National Malaria Centre on 9 March for health activities including two clean up campaigns on 20 April and 15 June.

The Federation signed an MoU with the National Malaria Centre on 26 March 2001 for the distribution of Temephos 1% sand granules in 15 provinces (38 districts) with the aim of reaching all water jars of the target group, an estimated 3,500,000 Cambodians at the highest risk of dengue haemorrhagic fever. The distribution, entitled "Operation Mosquito Blitz", was carried out between 23 April and 6 May.

The health situation in the affected provinces remains stable with no reported flood-related epidemics.

Malaria Prevention and Treatment

A further 750,000 units of artensunate were handed over to the National Malaria Centre on 9 April, bring the total delivered to 1 million units.

Intestinal Parasite (deworming) Campaign

A consignment of 1 million units of mebendazole was cleared from Customs and handed over to the Ministry of Health on 6 February. This will supplement existing stocks for the national schools deworming programme in primary schools in Kratie, Stung Treng, Kampot, Takeo, Kampong Cham, Svay Rieng, Kampong Speu and Phnom Penh.

4. Capacity building efforts

4.1 Water Sanitation and Emergency Health Delegates and other staff

Objective 4: *Improve the CRC's implementation and monitoring capacity through the recruitment of a water and sanitation delegate, a health-in-emergency monitoring officer (HEMO) and other essential staff.*

Both the Federation Emergency Health Delegate and Water and Sanitation Delegate completed their missions in March and April respectively. The CRC's HEMO continued his function of analysing data from the monitoring of health-related floods activities.

4.2 Red Cross Volunteers

Objective 5: *Strengthen or establish networks of Red Cross volunteer leaders and Red Cross volunteers in the affected areas by training a total of 200 new volunteers in four provinces (Koh Kong, Preah Vihear, Stung Treng and Svay Rieng), and by giving refresher training to 2,000 existing volunteers and Ministry of health field workers in hygiene and use of ORS; and disseminate health, hygiene and preparedness information.*

Nothing has been done since funds are insufficient to implement this activity.

4.3 Red Cross Youth

Objective 6: *Strengthen or establish a network of Red Cross youth in four affected provinces by training 52 new Red Cross youth advisers and 1,200 Red Cross youth members in 24 schools in four provinces (Odtar Mean Chey, Stung Treng, Svay Rieng, Koh Kong).*

Nothing has been done since funds are insufficient to implement this activity.

Outstanding needs

The original objectives of establishing and strengthening networks of RCVs and RCY in four provinces have not been implemented due to insufficient funds.

All activities, with the exception of those relating to water sanitation, have been completed. To enable the water sanitation component of the Appeal to be fully implemented, an extension of two months is required.

External relations - Government/UN/NGOs/Media

The *Flood Core Group*, comprising the NCDM, CRC, UN-DMT and the Federation, and the *Emergency Response Group* did not meet during this period.

External relations primarily focused on the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Rural Development (for water/sanitation), National Malaria Centre (for abate distribution) and non-governmental partners.

Media coverage of Red Cross actions is continuing during the post-flood phase, though not as intensively as at the beginning of the year.

Contributions

See Annex 1 for details.

Conclusion

The implementation of most planned activities has been completed. Only water sanitation activities are outstanding. **The operation will therefore be extended for a further two months.**

The recent lessons learned in the various forums have provided the government, UN, Red Cross and IO/NGO communities with the opportunity to reflect on the experiences of the past year and to propose ways of preparing for emergencies in the future.

Flooding is an annual event in Cambodia. It is essential for agriculture and fisheries. In moderation, it contributes to economic prosperity and political stability that benefits all. When flooding is excessive, as happens periodically, the devastation and its impact on development is a serious setback, further impoverishing marginalised and vulnerable populations. Full recovery for individual families and communities takes years, since they lose income, possessions and housing and have to make sacrifices just to survive. This calamity constitutes a major obstacle to breaking the cycle of poverty and disease among the most needy.

It is imperative that a comprehensive plan supported by the RGC and the international community be adopted to better prepare for, and even prevent, such disasters in the future. Without such strategies,

disasters of this magnitude will continually recur and their cumulative effect on the population will further exacerbate existing social and economic problems. National level disaster management is the only viable alternative to periodic flooding and other disasters in Cambodia. Preparedness, prevention and mitigation are proven methods of ensuring the long term viability of developmental initiatives for sustained growth.

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