

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

INDIA: FLOODS

3 December 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. 16/2004; Operations Update no. 7; Period covered: 26 October – 22 November, 2004; Appeal coverage: 67.3%; ([click here to go directly to the attached Contributions List, also available on the website.](#))

Appeal history: Launched on 27 July 2004 for CHF 2,982,000 (USD 2,352,706 or EUR 1,929,189) for 10 months to assist 250,000 beneficiaries.

Outstanding needs: CHF 975,298 (USD 851,188 or EUR 645,868)

Related Emergency or Annual Appeals: [Annual Appeal 01.57/2004](#)

Operational Summary: In Bihar, all 30,000 relief item family packs (food and non food) are in place. After packaging, the family packs are being pre-positioned with the district branches and distribution is ongoing in the targeted districts. So far, 15,000 family packs have been distributed. The remaining distribution of family packs is likely to be completed by November 30. The state branch has completed the assessment, procurement, and beneficiary identification process.

In Assam, the relief assistance to the flood-affected population through provision of family packs has been restricted to 10,000 families instead of 20,000 as originally planned in the Request for Assistance due to funds received and an improved situation. Further funding of this Request for Assistance will assist in the procurement of the remaining 10,000 family packs to be added to disaster preparedness stocks. To date, 6,800 family packs have been distributed, covering 13 districts. The remaining distribution will be completed by the end of November.

With the available funding, the Indian Red Cross Society (IRCS) will meet the emergency needs of 40,000 families as well as initiating the mitigation activities and replenishment of disaster preparedness stocks of non-food items used during the initial flood response in the affected states.

As outlined in Operations Update 6, the mobile medical unit component under 'health, hygiene and water sanitation' for Assam has been cancelled following a review by IRCS. It was initially postponed due to civil disturbances and inaccessibility due to the flooding. Following this, it was found that the health situation had improved and the mobile medical units were not required. The funds allocated to this aspect of the programme will be redirected for procurement of additional family packs.

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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[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

The northern states of Assam and Bihar were affected the worst by severe flooding which commenced in mid-June. Over 33 million people were affected in these two states with more than 900 killed in the disaster. At the height of the flooding, approximately 1.3 million people were forced to take refuge in relief camps while many others fled to temporary accommodation.

Over half of Bihar's districts were inundated by flood waters while all 27 districts of Assam were affected. Many districts were cut off for several days and there has been significant damage to infrastructure such as roads and bridges. A United Nations Development Program (UNDP) assessment states about 60 percent of crops have been destroyed, affecting 1.2 million farming families. The total crop area affected is 1.15 million hectares. Nearly 600,000 dwellings have been damaged or destroyed.

The situation in both Assam and Bihar continues to improve with no further heavy rainfalls since August, apart from the Goalpara district in Assam (see below). In Assam, all districts and sub-divisional headquarters are accessible to the IRCS Assam state branch. The security situation in Assam has stabilised following a series of bomb explosions and civil disturbances in the latter half of August.

The monsoon season has come to an end and further flooding is highly unlikely. The last serious rainfall was on October 5, causing flash floods in the Goalpara district of Assam, which caused widespread damage in 182 villages, affecting 100,000 people. The IRCS Goalpara district branch and Red Cross volunteers in the area provided relief and rescue to the flood-affected communities.

The post-flood situation is still extremely difficult and challenging for the affected populations with homes destroyed or unlivable, crops damaged and destroyed, and the loss of basic necessities.

A participatory action learning (PAL) team of four members comprising of one external team leader, one staff member from the Federation-India Delegation, an IRCS national headquarters (NHQ) staff member and a state branch disaster management coordinator (also a member of the national disaster response team (NDRT)) visited the flood-affected areas of Bihar and Assam in October. This was to conduct a real-time PAL study of the ongoing IRCS flood relief operation. Utilising a wide range of information-gathering techniques such as interviews, workshops and focus groups, the team talked with IRCS NHQ, state and district branches leadership, volunteers and staff. The team held meetings with diverse groups of people in 19 different communities of the flood-affected districts in both states. The PAL team also met with state and district officials and representatives from agencies and non-government organisations (NGOs) involved in the emergency flood operations in the two states. In addition, lesson learned workshops were carried out at the state and national levels in which over 100 people from IRCS HQ, state and district branches participated.

Operational developments

The distribution of emergency relief items is ongoing and nearing completion. All items required for the family packs in Assam and Bihar have now been procured and distribution is ongoing. It is expected all distribution will be completed by November 30, approximately four-and-a-half months since the launch of the Request for Assistance. The distribution as at November 22 can be summarised as follows:

Type of assistance	Target for Bihar	Distribution to date Bihar	Target Assam	Distribution to date Assam	Total distribution (%)
Non-food family packs (40,000)	30,000	15,000	10,000 ¹	6,800	54.5%
Food family packs (30,000)	30,000	15,000	n/a	n/a	50%
Shelter (40,000)	30,000	20,400	10,000	6,800	68%

All the 30,000 family pack relief items (food and non-food items) are in place in Bihar. The family packs have been packed and pre-positioned with the district branches and distribution is ongoing in the targeted districts of Bihar. To date, 15,000 family packs have been distributed. There were delays during the reporting period due to the late arrival of mosquito nets, while the holiday season caused some disruptions. It is expected that distribution of all family packs (food and non-food items) will be completed by the end of November.

As outlined in previous operations updates, there was no need to utilise funds under the Request for Assistance for medical supplies for the Red Cross health clinics in Bihar. The state branch mobilised local resources and raised enough funds and received in-kind donations to meet the medicine requirements. This involved the Bihar state branch raising CHF 171,485 in cash and mobilising medicines worth CHF 75,000 from medical associations and pharmacies. Over 300,000 people have received some form of assistance from the various Red Cross branches in Bihar.

The Danish Red Cross had made a contribution of CHF 144,706 for the procurement of family packs (under an agreement with IRCS). The national society has procured 4,150 family packs with these funds and these have been distributed in the districts of East Champaran and West Champaran in Bihar. This distribution is of part of the ongoing IRCS flood relief operation targeting 30,000 families in the state. The distribution covered 76 villages and assisted 2,480 families in West Champaran and 1,670 families in East Champaran.

As outlined in Operations Update 6, IRCS had received 10 Zodiac boats from USAID, donated by the American Red Cross, for relief and rescue operations. Five of these boats have been kept in Bihar while the remaining five were sent to the Salt Lake warehouse, Kolkata, to improve disaster preparedness capacity.

In Assam, the relief assistance to the flood-affected population through provision of family packs has been reduced to 10,000 families from 20,000 as originally planned in the Request for Assistance. The distribution process of the 10,000 family packs has been ongoing since September 24 and to date 6,800 packs have been distributed. The remaining distribution will be completed by November 30. If funding is received for the remaining 10,000 family packs, these will be added to disaster preparedness stocks. As outlined in Operations Update 6, as a result of the flash flooding in Goalpara district in early October, the Assam state branch relief committee revised the number of districts covered under the current flood relief operation, increasing these from 12 to 18 (out of 27) districts.

As reported in Operations Update 6, following a review of the flood situation in Assam, IRCS NHQ decided the planned medical intervention in the form of mobile medical units (MMU) was not relevant in the current scenario.

With the available funding, IRCS will meet the emergency needs of 40,000 families as well as initiating the mitigation activities and replenishing its disaster preparedness (DP) stock of non-food items used in the initial flood response activities in the two affected states.

The India delegation disaster management (DM) delegate and the IRCS joint secretary visited the Bihar state branch on November 24 and 25 to follow-up on the floods operation.

The Federation secretariat in Geneva has continued to mobilise international resources for assistance. The India delegation is supporting IRCS in the current floods operation. NHQ continues to liaise with state branches regarding all issues related to the operation.

¹ Target reduced from 20,000 to 10,000

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

Operation Goal: to meet the urgent needs of the 40,000² worst-affected families in Assam and Bihar for food, shelter, family packs and medical services, to ensure improved quality of water over a period of four months and prepare to meet the longer-term needs through necessary capacity building and disaster mitigation initiatives over a further period of six months after the emergency phase.

Emergency relief (food and basic non-food items)

Objective: 30,000 flood-affected families to receive supplementary food items and non-food family packs in Bihar over a period of one and a half months. A total of 10,000³ flood-affected families to receive non-food family kits in Assam over a period of one and a half months and providing 40,000⁴ flood-affected families with shelter material during the emergency phase. This would benefit approximately 200,000⁵ persons in the 18 most-affected districts of Assam and the nine most-affected districts of Bihar.

This objective is a combination of the emergency relief objectives as originally outlined in the Request for Assistance and Operations Updates 1-5.

Basic food to each family in Bihar: 20 kg of beaten rice, 5 kg pulses, 2 kg jaggery (sugar cane product) and family kits each consisting of a kitchen set (20 pieces), 1 bucket, 1 dhoti (men's clothing), 1 saree (women's clothing), 1 cotton blanket, 1 towel, 1 bed sheet, 2 mosquito nets (single bed), 6 candles, 2 match boxes, 2 high density polythene (HDPE) bag for packing.

The family kits to be distributed in Assam consists of a kitchen set (20 pieces), one bucket, one dhoti (men's clothing), one sari (women's clothing), one cotton blanket, one towel, one bed sheet, two mosquito nets (single bed).

Progress/Achievements

Shelter for 40,000 families in states of Bihar (30,000) and Assam (10,000)

To date, 27,200 families have received tarpaulin sheets. During the reporting period, a further 4850 families received sheets, bringing the total to 20,400. In Assam, a further 800 sheets were distributed during this reporting period, bringing the total to 6,800. The remaining distribution in both states of Assam and Bihar will be completed by the end of November.

Food and non-food items to be distributed in Bihar

All relief items for the 30,000 family packs (non-food items) and 30,000 (food items) are in place in Bihar. Distribution is ongoing and to date 15,000 family packs have been distributed (which includes 4,150 family packs as part of the Danish Red Cross contribution.) The distribution is expected to be completed by the end of November.

Non food items to be distributed in Assam

In Assam, the relief assistance to the flood-affected population through provision of family packs has been restricted to 10,000 families instead of the previously planned 20,000. This has been due to funding constraints and a marked improvement in the situation. Should funding for the remaining 10,000 family packs be received, these will be added to DP stocks.

To date, a total of 6,800 family packs have been distributed. Distribution is expected to be completed by the end of November.

² Reduced from 50,000 due to the reduction in the Assam distribution.

³ Reduced from original 20,000.

⁴ Reduced from 50,000 due to change in Assam distribution

⁵ Reduced from 250,000 due to change in Assam distribution.

Impact

The shelter material distributed under the 1,000 family packs and 4,400 tarpaulins early in the operation assisted beneficiaries who were in dire need. The non-food family packs have long-term usage / impact items such as kitchen utensils, mosquito nets, clothes, tarpaulin sheets and cotton blankets.

Constraints

In this reporting period, the distribution had been further delayed in Bihar due to delay in the arrival of mosquito nets. The numerous holidays during the festive season also caused delays in distribution.

There have been a variety of other constraints over the life of the operation, including the need to re-tender for food items due to price hikes in Bihar and a truck drivers' strike (which delayed packaging materials).

Health, Hygiene and Water Sanitation**Objective: 50,000 flood-affected families to receive preventive and curative health services through mobile and static health clinics for a period of four months.**

It is proposed to run six MMUs in Assam for a period of four months in the worst-affected districts. In Bihar, the existing Red Cross clinics/material and child health care centre capacity will be strengthened through emergency medical supplies.

Progress/Achievements

As outlined in earlier Operations Updates, the Bihar state branch raised CHF 171,485 in cash and mobilised medicines worth CHF 75,000 from the medical association and various pharmacies, which resulted in the funding from the Request for Assistance not being used for the activity of procuring medical supplies. Instead, these funds are being utilised for the procurement of non-food family packs.

Impact

Over 300,000 people have received medical assistance in Bihar.

Constraints

As outlined in earlier Operations Updates, inaccessibility due to flooding followed by a period of security deterioration, delayed the deployment of MMUs in Assam. Once these impediments ceased, a review by IRCS saw an improved health situation which no longer needed MMUs and this activity was cancelled.

Disaster Mitigation and Capacity Building

The process for this activity would only commence once the water has receded and the ground has dried for the construction to take place.

Objective 1: One flood platform with five raised tube wells and five raised latrines to be constructed at a selected site in a flood-prone area of Assam over a period of six months after the emergency phase.

A flood platform will be constructed on a secure site above the flood water level with overhead shelter for humans and cattle, with five hand-tube wells and five toilet blocks.

Progress/Achievements

The disaster mitigation activity of constructing a flood platform in Assam will be initiated after the emergency phase is over, i.e. November 30.

Impact: N/A

Constraints: N/A

Objective 2: Thirty raised tube wells to be constructed in the most-affected districts of Bihar.

Raised tube wells to be constructed on secure sites above the flood water level to provide safe drinking water to the community.

Progress/Achievements

This activity will be initiated after the emergency phase is over (November 30). The process of identification of high raised areas in Bihar will begin shortly.

Impact: N/A

Constraints: N/A

Objective 3: Disaster response capacity of IRCS in flood-prone areas to be further improved through lessons learned and documentation.

The capacity building aspects for the IRCS state branches of Assam and Bihar are already addressed through the India DM programme as two of the targeted states. However, lessons learned exercises and documentation of good practice will be undertaken post relief operations. The outcome will be widely disseminated and incorporated into future planning.

This exercise and the software component of the mitigation activities will be covered under the ongoing DM programme for 2004 as planned.

Progress/Achievements

A PAL team of four members comprising of one external team leader, one staff member from the Federation-India delegation, an IRCS NHQ staff member and a state branch DM coordinator-cum-NDRT member visited the flood-affected areas of Bihar and Assam to conduct a real-time PAL study of the ongoing IRCS flood relief operation. Utilising a wide range of information-gathering techniques such as interviews, workshops and focus groups, the team talked with IRCS NHQ, state and district branches leadership, volunteers and staff, held meetings with diverse groups of people in 19 different communities of the flood-affected districts in both states. The PAL team also met with state and district officials and representatives from agencies and NGOs involved in the emergency flood operations in the two states.

The main objectives of the study are to assess the extent to which previous investments in DP have increased IRCS and community capacity to respond and cope with disasters, to capture lessons learned and to develop recommendations for development of future community level DP programmes with integrated branch development component to reduce vulnerability. The study will also gather material suitable for external promotion and fund-raising, and to feed best practises to the broader stakeholders.

The draft report has been submitted and approved by the IRCS Secretary General and will be shared by IRCS once finalised.

Impact

Lessons learned workshops were carried out at state and national levels in which over 100 people from IRCS HQ, state and district branches participated. The outcome of this exercise will help the IRCS NHQ, state and district branches to respond more quickly and efficiently to disasters.

Constraints : none

Federation Coordination

The DM team at the India delegation and national society briefed the partner national societies on the progress in the distribution of the relief goods at the sectoral meetings held on September 30 and October 1. The national society will continue with specific sectors of intervention and objectives established in appeals, for example water and sanitation, relief distribution of food and basic non-food items, shelter, etc.

National Society Capacity Building

IRCS is focused on developing its DP and DM, organisational training and development, and administrative structures. With more than 654 branches and over 12 million members, it is one of the largest humanitarian organisations in the country, with IRCS now being perceived as a leading humanitarian agency in India by many stakeholders. The national society has committed leadership, a dedicated DM department, an established DM

centre, mobile disaster units, a fully equipped NDRT, DP stock, cyclone shelters, and staff and volunteers trained in DM.

The Bihar state branch possesses a strong and committed volunteer force trained in first aid, with volunteers enjoying a good rapport and reputation with the public. This group can be quickly mobilised for relief operations. The main branch activities are health care, relief, first aid training, and junior Red Cross/Red Cross youth activities. Health care is provided by 10 primary health care centres run by voluntary doctors on a regular basis. The state branch has 35 staff, with more than 98,000 members and 5,000 volunteers.

As outlined in Operations Update 2, a training session for 67 flood-relief volunteers from targeted districts in Bihar was conducted by IRCS and Federation personnel. Since 2000, a total of 360 Assam branch volunteers have been trained under the Federation-assisted community-based first aid (CBFA) programme.

A British Department for International Development (DFID)-funded disaster reduction programme has been operating in Assam since 2001. This involves the pre-positioning of disaster preparedness stock for 10,000 families, training of volunteers and development of mitigation activities in two districts. This activity has placed the Assam branch in a much better position of preparedness to respond quickly to any flood situation. The branch and local NGOs are experienced in responding to floods but are increasingly looking to preparedness and mitigation responses in addition to flood relief.

The floods operation gave IRCS an opportunity to deploy NDRT for assessment. The team comprised of NDRT trained members from Bihar as well as other state branches. The team leader from the assessment team has been nominated by IRCS to facilitate the formation of NDRT in Sri Lanka upon the request of the Sri Lanka Red Cross.

The Bihar state branch DM coordinator attended a DM coordinators planning meeting hosted by NHQ to discuss plans for the 2004-2005 year.

Communications – Advocacy and Public Information

There has been extensive local media coverage of operations in Bihar, both in local newspapers and national television. There has also been local coverage of activities in Assam.

IRCS continues to contribute to SPHERE interagency exchange of information.

As outlined in Operations Update 6, the IRCS information focal point has been associated with PAL members of IRCS. He travelled to Assam, Bihar and Orissa along with other team members and wrote two articles on the situation and how the national society has helped the vulnerable during this flood operation.

IRCS flags and banners are displayed at distribution centres in Assam and Bihar.

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

India - floods

ANNEX 1

REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE No. 16/2004

PLEDGES RECEIVED

01/12/2004

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
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CASH

REQUESTED IN APPEAL CHF ----->	2,982,000	TOTAL COVERAGE 67.3%			
AMERICAN - GOVT/USAID	150,000	USD	189,675	23.08.04	PURCHASE OF SUPPLIES, TRANSPORTATION
AUSTRIAN - RC	35,000	EUR	53,935	30.07.04	
BELGIAN - RC	220,000	EUR	339,020	03.09.04	NON-FOOD ITEMS (7000 FAMILY PACKS), FIELD ADMINISTRATION COSTS
BRITISH - RC	25,000	GBP	57,150	29.07.04	RELIEF NEEDS (75%), OPERATION NEEDS (25%)
BRITISH - RC	24,510	GBP	56,030	23.08.04	RELIEF NEEDS (75%), OPERATION NEEDS (25%)
CANADIAN - RC	25,000	CAD	23,450	03.08.04	
CANADIAN - GOVT/CIDA/IHA	250,000	CAD	234,500	03.08.04	
CHINA - HONG KONG - RC	132,376	HKD	21,418	30.07.04	PROCUREMENT OF FOOD ITEMS F/1500 FAMILIES FOR 1.5MONTHS
DANISH - GOVT	334,992	INR	9,313	28.10.04	
FINNISH - RC	200,000	EUR	305,800	10.08.04	
IRISH - RC	60,086	EUR	93,284	04.10.04	
IRISH - GOVT	75,000	EUR	114,675	28.07.04	
JAPANESE - RC	114,700	USD	145,035	06.08.04	
MONACO - RC	3,000	EUR	4,658	12.10.04	
PRIVATE DONORS			683	16.09.04	
SPANISH - RC	30,000	EUR	45,870	11.08.04	
SWEDISH GOVT/RC	1,000,000	SEK	167,500	28.07.04	
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN CASH			1,861,996	CHF	62.4%

KIND AND SERVICES (INCLUDING PERSONNEL)

DONOR	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	UNIT	VALUE CHF	DATE	COMMENT
DANISH - GOVT		5,205,256	INR	144,706	28.10.04	4'150 FAMILY PACKS, TRANSPORT/INSURANCE
SUB/TOTAL RECEIVED IN KIND/SERVICES				144,706	CHF	4.9%

ADDITIONAL TO APPEAL BUDGET

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