

# 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: POST MONSOON TORNADOS**

12 November 2001

*Information Bulletin N° 2*

*Disaster relief emergency fund (DREF) Allocated: CHF 80,000*

*This Information Bulletin is for information only. A DREF allocation of CHF 80,000 has been made. The Federation is not seeking any funding or other assistance from donors for this operations at this time.*

### ***The Situation***

Again the vulnerable people of Bangladesh have been hit with a disaster. In the late evening on 5th October, several post monsoon tornados with winds of over 150 kph swept through the most isolated and underdeveloped districts of northern Bangladesh killing more than 12 people, including three children, and seriously injuring over 450 people. The most affected districts were Lalmonirhat, Nilphamari, Rangpur and Gaibandha.

In Lalmonirhat and Rangpur district over 5,000 families were affected. Immediately after the disaster, as the majority of houses were razed to the ground, several hundreds of families had no other choice but to set up their homes in the open. The most fortunate found temporary shelter in the local school buildings (50-100 families) for a few days. Many trees were uprooted during the tornado's five-minute devastation. Vulnerability has been heightened due to the fact that the tornados blew away food stocks that families have preserved since the last rice harvest in May. The next harvest season is at the end of November.

In the affected districts the government had distributed limited food supplies and small cash allowances (approx. CHF 3) to families in need and ensured adequate medical attention. Limited relief assistance was provided by some local and international agencies such as Care, Concern, Proshika and Lions Club.

On 7th October Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) officially requested the Federation to provide support for emergency relief assistance for the most affected areas. A two-day joint BDRCS/IFRC field assessment conducted a survey in the most affected districts of Lalmonirhat and Nilphamari and, consequently a plan of action was jointly prepared.

### ***Red Cross/Red Crescent Action***

The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) through frequent contact with its district units, despite poor communication, established a day-to-day information sharing system monitoring situation in the field. The BDRCS Lalmonirhat Unit responded immediately after using their Disaster Emergency Funds. It procured and distributed relief assistance to 320 families. The Ghaibanda Unit of the BDRCS assisted the tornado victims

with first aid treatment carried out by their community based disaster preparedness CDBP squad members and community volunteers including transportation of seriously injured patients to the nearest referral hospital.

The Federation delegation and BDRCS, working closely with local authorities, immediately after identification of the most urgent needs of the affected population, started relief assistance in accordance to the proposed plan of action. The most urgent needs were: food, shelter, cooking utensils and clothing.

The BDRCS and Federation objectives were:

- To deliver assistance to the following target areas with most urgent assistance needs: Lalmonirhat and Nilpamari districts.
- To immediately assist 1,500 families in the two affected districts by providing food, emergency shelter material (plastic sheeting), family kits and used clothing.
- Completion of the relief operation within two weeks.

#### *Implementation*

Using the successful experience gained during the pre-monsoon tornado relief assistance in May this year, the post monsoon tornado relief operation was implemented by the BDRCS Relief Department through its district Units and with the full participation of the Red Crescent volunteers (Executive Committee Members, Squad Teams, Life and Youth members) and Unit Level Officers in full accordance with the distribution schedules.

#### *Beneficiary Selection*

Beneficiaries were selected in accordance to the BDRCS's Disaster Relief Manual, through field visits by Red Crescent volunteers. During the selection process the Units considered the most vulnerable categories those who have lost all their life belongings and were unable to recover without external assistance. These beneficiaries consisted primarily of the most affected families forced to set up their homes in the open, left without basic life supporting accessories such as roof over their heads, clothing, cooking facilities, hygienic items etc.

Once the selection was completed, the responsible Red Crescent officer/volunteer issued a ration card to the family head or his/her representative. The card included some basic information about beneficiaries and distribution details (name of family head, issued date, distribution date, time and place, items to be distributed).

#### *Procurement and distribution*

The procurement of relief items was organized by the Federation and the inspection of goods was accomplished with the BDRCS Relief Department. All relief items were delivered to the BDRCS warehouse in Dhaka from where they were further dispatched by the BDRCS trucks to targeted districts. Some buffer stocks (family kits) supplied by DFID were utilized for this operation. All distribution points were provided with banners, a Red Cross and Red Crescent flag, chair-table, master roll (for original beneficiary lists), a stamp pad for thumb impressions. BDRCS Relief Department and the Federation delegation monitored the distribution process in both districts of Lalmonirhat and Nilphamari

Distribution table of relief items - Breakdown by Districts

District/Unit	Upazilla	No.of families	Family Kits *	Rice (MT)	Dal (MT)	Clothing (pcs)
Lalmonirhat	Kaligonj	352	352	7.04	1.41	352
	Adipmari	548	548	10.96	2.19	548
Nilphamari	Magura	400	400	8	1.6	400
	Chandakhama	200	200	4	0.8	200
<b>TOTAL:</b>		<b>1'500</b>	<b>1'500</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1'500</b>

Each of 1,500 families received a family kit, 20 kg of rice and 4 kg of dal and some second hand clothing.

\* Family kits are consisted of:

- Two aluminum cooking saucepans with lead,
- One plastic mug and two glasses,
- Two aluminum plates and spoons,
- One plastic bucket (12 lit)

- Two bars of soap
- Six candles and 12 matchboxes
- One saree for women
- One lungee for men and
- One piece of plastic sheeting (18x12 ft)

## *Assessment of the Operation*

After implementation of a similar relief operation in May 2001, once more, BDRCS has implemented the operation successfully by achieving the initially planned objectives, providing emergency relief items to 1,500 families in the two districts most affected by the tornados, in a very efficient and timely manner.

The operation has a multiple impact resulting in:

- Further improvement of BDRCS disaster response capacities,
- Delivering the planned assistance in accordance to the schedule (the whole operation completed within two weeks).
- Further improvement of the image and visibility of BDRCS

For a full description of the National Society profile, see [www.ifrc.org](http://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.*

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