

# 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: TROPICAL STORMS / 8 June 2001** **TORNADOS**

*Information Bulletin N° 2 (Final)*

*DREF Allocated: CHF 43,000 (adjusted from CHF 39,000)*

### ***The Situation***

Severe tropical storms and tornados lashed Bangladesh in late April and continued during the month of May 2001. During the first two weeks of May, 43 people had been killed, 150 fishermen went missing and thousands of people were injured. Huts, schools, standing crops and fruit and timber trees were also extensively damaged.

On 11 May a severe tornado with winds of over 100 kph hit the north-eastern part of Bangladesh causing 12 deaths, more than 200 injured and extensive material damages of housing, educational and electrical facilities. The most affected districts in the south-west and north-east of Bangladesh were: Mymensingh, Netrokona, Tangail, Noagon, Muolovi Bazar, Chuadanga, Jhinaidah, Gaibandha, Patuakhali, Gopalgonj, Rangpur and Noakhali.

On 14 May the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS) requested the Federation to provide support for emergency relief assistance for the most affected areas, and a plan of action was jointly prepared.

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

The BDRCS responded immediately by establishing a Control Room at its national headquarters, liaising with units and the Government, providing rescue and evacuation assistance, first aid services and distributing limited emergency relief (5 kg of chira and 1 kg of guhr / per family) to 200 families in each of the affected districts from the BDRCS' Disaster Emergency Funds.



The Government's local administration organized a number of camps in all of the affected districts utilizing the educational institutions to provide temporary shelter to the victims whose homes were totally damaged.

CHF 39,000 was allocated from the Federation's Disaster Relief Emergency Fund (DREF) for immediate emergency assistance (later adjusted to CHF 43,000 to include programme support costs). The British Red Cross subsequently covered CHF 25,000 out of this DREF allocation. Contributions for the remaining CHF 18,000 are required in order to ensure that the DREF maintains adequate resources for future emergencies.

The Federation delegation worked very closely with the BDRCS and local authorities in order to identify the most urgent needs of the affected population, and to deliver the appropriate assistance in a timely manner.

The BDRCS and Federation objectives were:

- To immediately assist 2,000 families (10,000 persons) in the 10 most affected district by providing emergency relief items (rice, saree, lungi, soap and candles).
- Completion of the relief operation within two weeks.
- Delivering assistance to the following target areas with the most urgent assistance needs: Mymensingh, Netrokona, Tangail, Noakhali, Gopalganj, Pautakhali, Baibandha, Rangpur, Muolovi Bazar and Naogaon.

#### *Implementation*

The 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 (ULOs), in full accordance with the distribution schedule.

#### *Beneficiary Selection*

During the beneficiary identification process it became apparent that there were some districts initially not included in the original plan of action that were in greater need of assistance than those originally targeted. Adjustments were made accordingly and the following districts were additionally included in the distribution process: Jamalpur, Gazipur, Bagerhat and Hobigonj and districts of Bainandha and Rangjur were excluded as less affected.

Beneficiaries were selected in accordance to the BDRCS's Disaster Relief Manual, through door-to-door visits by Red Crescent volunteers. During the selection process the Units considered the most vulnerable categories those unable to cope/recover and whose situations could not be alleviated without external assistance. These beneficiaries consisted primarily of the elderly, sick and handicapped, separated/divorced, or widowed.

After selection 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, issue date, distribution date, time and place, and 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 to targeted districts. Following the distribution schedule, BDRCS officers received allocated goods through Challan and transported the items to the distribution spots using all available transportation means (trucks, country boats, rickshaws, vans). All distribution points were provided with banners, a Red Cross and Red Crescent flag, chair-table, master roll (for original beneficiary lists), and stamp pad for thumb impressions. Local media covered the event in some of the districts.

Distribution table of relief items - Breakdown by Districts

Unit / District	No of Families	Rice (kg)	Saree (pc)	Lungee (pc)	Soap (pc)	Candle (pc)
Mymensingh	200	4,000	200	200	200	400
Netrokona	200	4,000	200	200	200	400
Jalalpur	200	4,000	200	200	200	400
Tangail	100	2,000	100	100	100	200
Gazipur	100	2,000	100	100	100	200
Gopalganj	200	4,000	200	200	200	400
Bagerhat	200	4,000	200	200	200	400
Patuakhali	200	4,000	200	200	200	400
Noakhali	200	4,000	200	200	200	400
Moulavibazar	100	2,000	100	100	100	200
Gaibanghar	200	4,000	200	200	200	400
Hobigonj	100	2,000	100	100	100	200
Total	2,000	40,000 kg	2,000 pc	2,000 pc	2,000 pc	4,000 pc

Each family received a family parcel (2 weeks ration) consisted of :

- 20 kg of rice.
- 1 saree
- 1 lungi (clothing for men).

- 1 soap.
- 2 candles.

A joint Federation and BDRCS visit was organized in the third week of May. Federation Head of Delegation in Bangladesh and the Deputy Secretary General BDRCS visited some of the most affected districts in the Southwest.

## ***Assessment of the Operation***

This operation had a very positive impact, resulting in:

- Delivering the planned assistance to the intended beneficiaries in timely manner (10 days).
- Through continuous needs assessment by BDRCS volunteers, the operation was expanded to two additional districts that were in great need of relief assistance.
- Improving the image and visibility of BDRCS.
- Energizing the volunteer base by engaging volunteers through out the relief operation, specifically as the monsoon season has now arrived. The next five months is a critical period in natural disasters in Bangladesh.

The BDRCS implemented the relief operation successfully by achieving the initially planned objectives, providing basic relief items to 2,000 families in the 12 districts most affected by the tropical storms and tornados. The operation also enhanced the image of the Red Crescent for its timely implementation, thereby giving the BDRCS further motivation and confidence to implement any future relief operations through its district Units and its experienced staff and volunteers throughout the country.

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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