

Information bulletin n°1 Glide n° FL-2014-000117-BGD	Date of issue: 27 August 2014
Date of disaster: 27 August 2014	Point of contact: 1. Md. Belal Hossain, Director, Disaster Response, BDRCS 2. Andreas Weissenberg, Operations Coordinator, AP Zone
Host National Societies: Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS)	

This bulletin is being issued for further information following the DMIS input as well as setting the basis for a DREF request to fund continued humanitarian assistance required in the coming days. It reflects the current situation and response, and the immediate intervention that is required for the affected population. The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS), with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), has principally decided to make a DREF request to provide and scale up assistance to the population affected by the disaster.

The situation

Since the 3rd week of the August 2014, the water level of the three river basins (Brahmaputra, Ganges and Meghna) has been increasing. As a result, the north and north-eastern part of Bangladesh is experiencing flooding. The situation is expected to deteriorate as rainfalls in the affected and neighboring areas continue. According to the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) of Bangladesh, among the 83 monitored water level stations, water levels at 19 monitored river stations are flowing above their respective danger marks (<http://www.ffwc.gov.bd/>). Heavy rain in the main river basins of Bangladesh as well as in the upstream catchments of India has triggered this flooding in the adjoining districts of the rivers which are flowing above the danger level. At the same time, Bhola, one of the coastal districts on south central part of the country, is also experiencing tidal flooding.

The collated figures from different government sources at district level¹ estimated around 700,000 people have been marooned under 10 districts (Kurigram, Gaibandha, Lalmonirhat, Sirajganj, Bogra, Rangpur, Jamalpur, Nilphamari, Bhola and Sherpur) and 816,459 people affected due to the heavy rain induced flooding. The immediate needs of the affected people are food and safe drinking water. Most of them have taken shelter on the embankments (around 20,000 people), high grounds, roads and flood shelter.



(Above) Flood situation in Charfassan Upazilla in Bola
(Below) Flood situation in Islampur Upazilla in Jamalpur
Photo by BDRCS.

¹ Form -D, DRRO, DMIC

Reports² are being received about the significant damage of livelihoods, crops, shelter, water and sanitation and other infrastructures including roads, embankments and health facilities.

The situation is worsening rapidly in many areas as the number of rivers with water flowing over the danger level has increased significantly over the last week from 13 to 19. New areas are also being engulfed, including Sylhet and Sunamganj in the north-west and districts in the central region, while the situation is also deteriorating in the southern districts of Feni and Chittagong. The districts of Munshiganj, Netrokona and Tangail are also facing similar danger. Heavy rain continues in many parts of the country and FFWC's water level projection up to 29 August shows that the concerned rivers will continue to be on the rising trend.

Red Cross and Red Crescent action



(Above) Orientation of JNA is being held for the BDRCS team at Kurigram district. (Below) BDRCS team collecting information from the affected people in Jamalpur district. Photo by BDRCS.

Bangladesh Red Crescent Society

BDRCS, along with its branches in the affected districts, is monitoring closely the overall flood situation. Information is being collected by the branch offices from the local Red Crescent volunteers and government officials. This information is then shared with BDRCS National Headquarters, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), ICRC and Partner National Societies (PNSs).

BDRCS's local units have mobilized their volunteers to provide search and rescue and first aid services to the affected people.

BDRCS has taken part in the Joint Need Assessment (JNA) in Bhola district organized by the Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT). Four members of the National Disaster Response Team (NDRT) have been deployed as of 22 August to Kurigram, Lalmonirhat, Sirajganj and Jamalpur districts to assist in the phase one JNA in the north-west region proposed by the HCTT. The remaining NDRT members are on stand-by for rapid deployment if needed. BDRCS, along with IFRC, will lead the assessment in three sub-districts; while taking part in the assessment with other agencies in 20 sub-districts (under the four identified districts). BDRCS is providing orientation venue and other facilities at Kurigram and Lalmonirhat districts.

BDRCS has mobilized resources and allocated BDT 10,000,000 (approx. CHF 116,000) for ten districts

(Kurigram, Nilphamari, Rangpur, Sirajganj, Bogra, Gaibandha, Lalmonirhat, Jamalpur, Sherpur and Bhola) for distribution of dry and cooked food to the affected people. Furthermore, BDT 1,000,000 (approx. CHF 11,600) has been mobilized for response in Sunamganj district as the situation worsened considerably.

In consideration of the acute scarcity of safe drinking water among the affected population in the north-west region, BDRCS is planning to mobilize water treatment plants at strategic locations along with deploying the National Disaster Water and Sanitation Relief Teams (NDWRTs), while other water treatment kits are being prepositioned for utilization.

² BDRCS District Units, Wall Street Journal 25.08.2014 (<http://online.wsj.com/articles/flooding-in-bangladesh-leaves-nearly-half-a-million-people-homeless-1408969241>)

BDRCS, with support from IFRC, has also updated its disaster preparedness stock which consists of tarpaulins, tents, plastic rolls, cooking pots and utensils, ORS, water purification tablets, clothes, jerry cans, hygiene kits, etc. and ready to deliver to the affected areas if the need arises.

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

IFRC has been supporting BDRCS with the initial mobilization of funds and personnel, as well as in preparing situation reports and providing technical inputs for a coordinated relief operation. IFRC is part of the JNA Core Team for the north-west assessment. IFRC is also participating in different coordination meetings, including HCTT and the Disaster Emergency Response (DER) of Local Consultative Group (LCG). IFRC is coordinating with the Shelter Cluster co-lead UNDP in compiling shelter and non-food item (NFI) contingency stock to prepare for the upcoming response. In addition IFRC is participating actively in the WASH Cluster and Information Management Working Group. IFRC is closely monitoring the situation together with the BDRCS and actively coordinating with all in-country PNSs.

Other humanitarian actors

HCTT has conducted a JNA in Bhola district and has activated phase one JNA. The assessment will take place in nine north and north eastern districts (Kurigram, Gaibandha, Lalmonirhat, Sirajganj, Bogra, Rangpur, Jamalpur, Nilphamari and Sherpur). The report will be shared with all concerned stakeholders in early September.

The Government of Bangladesh has provided immediate assistance to 27,000 households with 1,112 MTs of rice and 1,761,000 in 16 affected districts. The United Nation's World Food Programme (WFP) has distributed 21 MTs of high energy biscuits.

Needs, gaps and challenges

According to the information received from the BDRCS branch units and various government sources, the imminent needs are food, safe drinking water, emergency shelter and livelihoods.

Food stocks and household items were damaged by flood waters, leaving some families fully dependent on relief support. Many have been surviving on the little dry food that they were able to take with them like puffed rice, flattened rice, etc. While government has allocated more than 1,000 MTs of rice, the quantities provided are insufficient to meet the huge food needs of the affected population. In addition to this, there is no provision of cooking facilities in the absence of proper cooking pots and utensils.

Food will continue to be a major issue in the longer term as damaged crops are not replaced with newly planted seeds. Hectares of Aman seedbed and ready-to-harvest Aush paddy fields have been inundated for days, thus destroying the main food source. Farmers have also lost their seed stock for future crops. The daily labourers dependent on agricultural work are currently without jobs as farmers are unable to provide them with work. The biggest concern for the farmers is that if they are not able to plant rice within the coming three weeks, they will lose all cultivation prospects for the year. In addition to crops, huge loss of livestock has also been reported in the government figures.

A large number of hand tube-wells are estimated to have been contaminated by flood waters, forcing the affected population to seek alternative water sources. Shortage of safe drinking water is a pressing concern and in some cases, the affected communities are resorting to the contaminated and polluted water from nearby water bodies. Inadequate sanitation facilities have caused many to openly defecate, hence contaminating pond waters and increasing the risks of spread of water-borne illness.



A tube-well under water in Monpur Upazilla in Bhola.
Photo by BDRCS.

Although the government has not released a Form –D³ with the official figures of damaged houses, reports from the media and BDRCS’s field teams have indicated that people are taking shelter on roadsides and in temporary locations. The living condition is poor and likely to worsen rapidly in many areas as the rain continues and flood level increases. Even when the flood water recedes and the families return home, the condition of their houses are expected to require major repair or complete reconstruction. The plinths of the houses which are traditionally built of mud are most likely to have been washed away by the floods and will need to be rebuilt.

There was no report of any major health issues in the affected area after the floods; however with the shortage of safe drinking water and proper sanitation facilities, the risk of diarrhoea and other water-borne diseases remain high. The government health facilities, even when functioning, are hard to reach for the affected communities who are marooned by standing water. Many educational institutes including primary schools and high schools have also been temporarily shut down due to the flood waters.

In view of the needs, BDRCS needs to go for a more comprehensive response. After this initial response, BDRCS will design its response depending upon the outcomes of the phase one JNA and the needs and gaps highlighted there. However, there are certain imminent needs that require immediate intervention along with the continuation of access to food for marginalized people. These include the need for safe drinking water and emergency shelter for the displaced population. Also of high importance is the distribution of varieties of crop seeds or cash injection considering the timeframe for plantation in order to yield any harvest.

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1. Click [here](#) to the map

³ Official data collection template

2. Click [here](#) to return to the title page

How we work

All IFRC assistance seeks to adhere to the Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) in Disaster Relief and the Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response (Sphere) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

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.

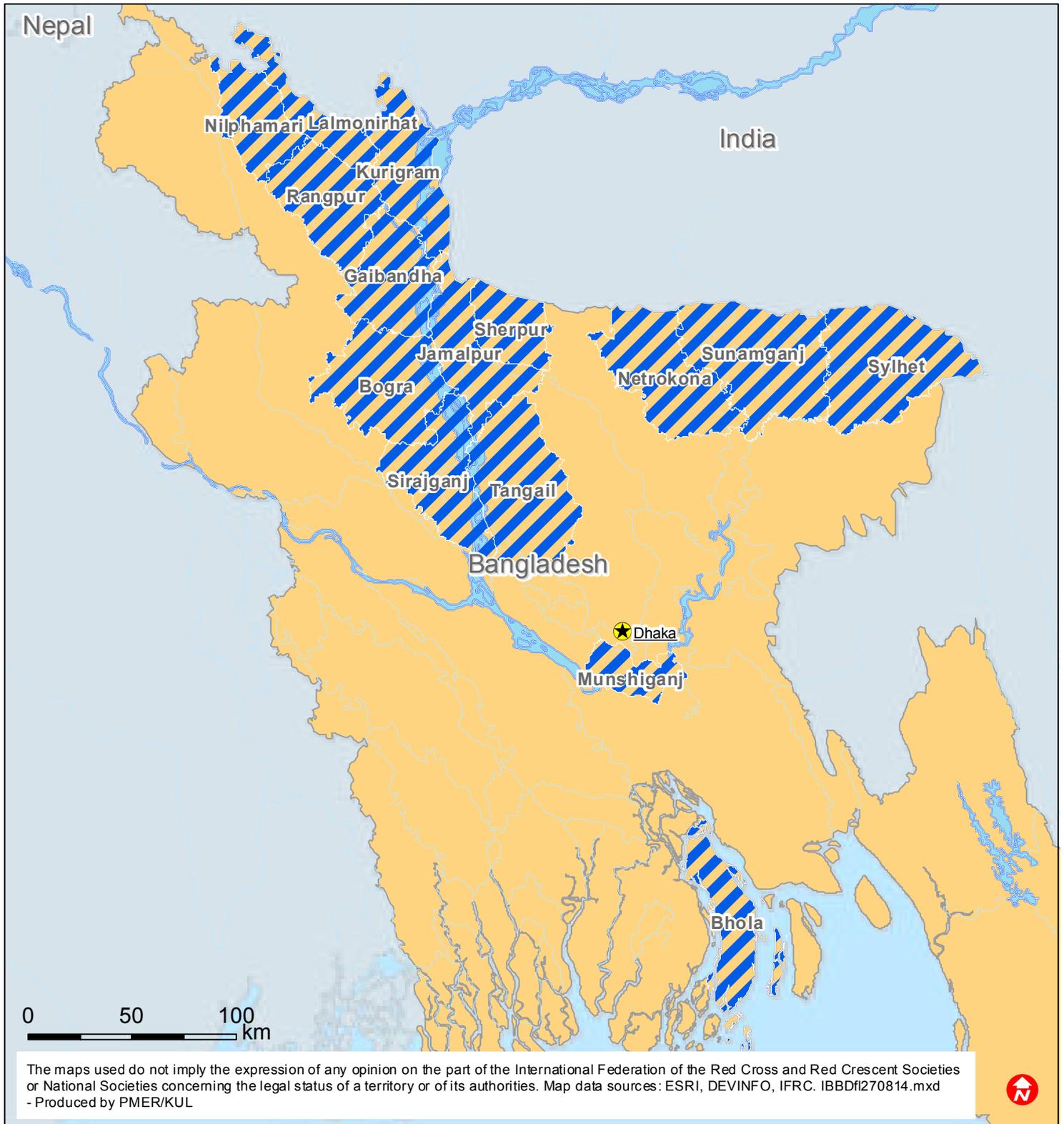


The IFRC's work is guided by Strategy 2020 which puts forward three strategic aims:

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.



Bangladesh: Floods



- Affected districts
- Rivers