Bangladesh is not spared by the heavy monsoon rains and associated flooding that is occurring across South and South-East Asia, most notably in India, Nepal and Myanmar. Despite the delayed monsoon onset very, heavy rainfall occurred during the first half of July, especially during the second week. According to the Flood Forecast Warning Center (FFWC) report on 21 July 2019, all major rivers are in falling trend except the Padma river and the rivers around the Dhaka. The water level of Ganges-Padma is expected to rise in the next 48 hours. Flood situation in Tangail and Sirajganj districts may continue to improve, while the flood situation in Manikganj, Rajbari, Faridpur and Munshiganj districts may remain unchanged in next 24 hours. Today’s most affected districts are: Kurigram, Jamalpur, Gaibandha, Sirajganj, Sunamganj, Bogura and Bandarban.

So far, and compared to 2017 monsoon floods, the 2019 floods are not that widespread. However, they could have a greater intensity for fewer but highly impacted districts and the distress to the people and disruption created could be severe and last for a longer period of time. This is notably due to the fact that large sections of embankments were rapidly washed away upstream. That situation might lead to prolonged flooding and waterlogging issues in these districts with all the consequences it could have. Continuous monitoring of the situation is therefore required, notably in view of a likely new round of heavy rainfall in the next two weeks.

The monsoon floods in Cox’s Bazar are threatening the already precarious existence of the refugees. Hundreds of makeshift homes already collapsed after landslides which occurred on the muddy hillsides around the camps. About 4,000 families have been affected, many of whom have been moved to temporary shelters. Two young boys have drowned in the floods and several other children were injured.
2. Highlights:

Latest estimates from the National Disaster Response Coordination Centre (NDRCC) of Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) inform that 21\(^{1}\) districts across the country are affected by the monsoon floods and, that death toll 71 people so far (56 from drowning, 8 from snake-bite and 7 from Lightning). It is estimated that 5.3 million (5,302,698) people are directly affected, that 419,336 houses were damaged and, that estimated 287,513 people were displaced.

The Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) estimates affected farmlands in 28 districts as of 6-21 July 2019. It includes 43,239 hectares of aush fields, 15,608 hectares of aman fields, 13,436 hectares of aman seedbeds, and 13,313 hectares of land used for vegetable cultivation mainly in the northern districts. That situation affects both farmers and consumers. Prices of vegetables and crops soared due to the reduced supply.

In last 12 days (10 - 21 July 2016) National Health Emergency Operations Centre and Control Room of DGHS recorded a total of 7421 cases (2825 diarrhea cases, 987 ARI Cases (Acute Respiratory Infection – Pneumonia), 717 Skin diseases, 291 Eye Infections, 30 Snake bite cases, 15 near to drowning, 7 Lightning, 139 Injury cases and 2,410 other cases from 21 flood affected districts. They predict that communicable diseases like acute watery diarrhea, acute respiratory infections, skin disease and eye infections will continue increasing over time.

Floods and landslides damaged roads and vital infrastructure leaving hundreds of thousands stranded and without power and electricity (Gaibandha and Bandarban). According to NDRCC, 6,655 km of road was damaged and destroyed, 1,463 km embankment were either fully or partially destroyed. In addition, 308 bridges and culverts were damaged. Moreover, 203 education institutions are either damaged or are serving as emergency shelters and, 44,106 tube-wells were damaged.

Mid-July, the UN Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres expressed his sadness by the loss of life, displacement of people and destruction of property due to the heavy monsoonal rains and associated flooding across South and South-East Asia, most notably in India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Myanmar. He extended his condolences and solidarity to the families of the victims, to the Governments and people of the affected countries and wished those injured a speedy recovery. He also informed that the United Nations stands ready to work with the authorities in the affected countries as they respond to the humanitarian needs resulting from this ongoing monsoon season.

3. Affected population

While so far, national response interventions and preparedness efforts helped to prevent the number of deaths to reach the one of the 2017 devastating monsoon floods as well as to reduce infrastructures losses and damages, the level of distress of the affected population is high. It is mostly due to the loss

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\(^{1}\)Jamalpur, Kurigram, Chittagong, Gaibandha, Sylhet, Sirajganj, Cox’s Bazar, Tangail, Sunamganj, Bogura, Lalmonirhat, Netrakona, Sherpur, Maulvibazar, Bandarban, Khagrachari, Nilphamari, Brahmanbaria, Feni, Habiganj and Rangamati
of assets and livelihoods combined with the lack of access to still-functioning markets and to public services such as education and health. Highly vulnerable persons in displacement situations are severely impacted. Considering that the monsoon season is still at an early stage, a further deterioration of the situation is possible. Risks of landslides, flash floods, prolonged waterlogging situation are not excluded. There is a possibility of disease outbreak due to polluted waters and the disruption of the sanitation system. Would the situation deteriorate further, it will most likely extend and/or increase current displacement with the multi-sectoral risks associated with such situation (e.g. protection including cases of gender-based violence, hygiene, mental health, school drop-out) notably for children, women (including pregnant women and new mothers) as well as for people living with disabilities.

Indeed, families living in the same room or space regardless of their age, sex and gender identity which may intensify the further risk of abuse particularly during night times. The girls and women are afraid of being abused by their male neighbor staying together. Their menstrual hygiene practice is negatively impacted, and they are suffering with toilet facilities affected by flood. There is a long-term threat to children and young people’s physical and emotional development due to the extensive flood situation they faced which can result in emotional stresses. In some places children staying with their parents on water and have potentiality of drowning. Due to less lighting facilities children and young girls are at very risk of abuse. The children (girls and boys) are therefore at the risk of insecurity and injury as the place in the temporary shelter is not safe for them and parents are away. Due to existing gender inequalities and exclusion factors adolescent girls, children with disability, pregnant mothers and married girls are some of the most vulnerable.

Access to basic public services such as education and health is severely limited in the affected districts. Staff of public facilities have themselves difficulties to reach their work. The situation is particularly dire for pregnant women, new mothers and their babies who are in need of special health assistance.

The situation of already vulnerable districts such as Bandarban and Kurigram at IPC level 4 is highly preoccupying. If not addressed, the loss of livestock will have a severe impact. Insufficient arrangement to rescue of flood-trapped animals, to organize the transfer of animal feed and other valuables to safe places and the lack of veterinary care are some of the reasons which will lead to the further loss of livestock, the scarcity of animal feeds and fodder and losses of milk, meat and egg production. Bangladesh Office of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) predicts that severe flooding puts more than 4 million people at risk of food insecurity and disease

Below are some of the needs of the affected populations:

- Transportation assistance. Given the fact that most connected roads in affected districts are unusable, affected communities are using boats against the payment of a fare;
- Multi-sectoral assistance to the displaced (including nutritious food, cooked-meals, water and protection assistance) who are staying alongside roads, on embankments, or in schools or squatting with their neighbors and relatives whose homes are on higher-grounds;
- GBV prevention and assistance: An estimated 9,000 women of reproductive age are currently at risk of rape;
- Provision of emergency drugs and anti-snake venom, repair and decontamination of water points to prevent and/or to manage further disease outbreaks including the transmission of possible diseases from animal to human;
- Livelihood assistance (including agricultural inputs and saving/protecting the livestock) for those who lost their source of income and investments. and the re-building of sustainable communication infrastructure.
4. On-going response

An inter-ministerial coordination meeting chaired by the State Minister of Bangladesh’s Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) was held on 12 July 2019, with the participation of the relevant ministries, the Secretary General of BDRCS and the Director General of Armed Forces Division (AFD). The meeting has decided 23 decisions to improve preparedness, coordination, response and recovery efforts. The meeting instructed to strengthen local level coordination and information sharing.

The MoDMR allocated rice and cash to all 64 districts of the country through its regular response mechanism. In addition, they made additional allocations to the 21 affected districts. As of today, MoDMR allocated 23,450 MT GR rice, 8.74 million cash, 97,000 packet dry food and 8,000 tents.

The National Health Emergency Operations Centre and Control Room (Hot Line +88 01759 114488) of DGHS is monitoring the situation with the Civil Surgeons in the affected areas. 53 Medical Teams are working around the clock to manage the health situation and prevent its deterioration. DPHE is prepared for the distribution of purified drinking water and for the installation of new tube well and toilets where people are sheltered.

The Bangladesh’s Fourth Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP4) includes a provision for Education in Emergencies block funds whereas up to 300,000 BDT per school can be used for repair works in case school building is damaged or for arranging alternative options to continue education, including an option of hiring a boat (floating school).

Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) is collecting final reports from the districts where floodwater receded. Two districts Nilphamari and Rangpur already provided final agricultural damage reports. DAE is preparing Aman Seedbed to rehabilitate the agricultural activities through the district training centres. Similar activities and rehabilitation programmes will be undertaken for the other districts when the floodwater recedes. Department of Livestock Service (DLS) has done vaccination for 32,664 livestock and 150,670 poultry. DLS has provided treatment for 24,635 livestock and 94,588 poultry.

Chief of Army Staff General Aziz Ahmed said that members of the Bangladesh Armed Forces are ready to help the authorities in tackling the flood situation, if needed. In Gaibandha, Bangladesh Army is helping to the local administration to restore the collapsed embankment.

BDRC mobilized 675 volunteers to support affected communities. Teams of BDRCS volunteers are distributing food, clean drinkable water and hygiene kits. Tarpaulins and shelter toolkits are also provided as emergency shelter assistance to families whose homes were destroyed or damaged. IFRC allocated half a million Swiss francs from its Disaster Relief Emergency Fund to support BDRCS in its relief operations including cash assistance for 10,000 most affected families. WFP and the German Red Cross activated their Forecast-based Financing (FbF) early actions operations in Kurigram and Gaibandha on 14 July 2019 according to their agreed protocol with GoB. WFP has supported around 5,000 HHs/beneficiary with the package 4,500BDT per HHs coordinated with the local administration at Kurigram. German Red Cross through BDRCS supported around 910 HHs/beneficiary with the package 4,500BDT per HHs coordinated with the local administration at Kurigram and Gaibandha.
National NGO Friendship is notably assisting rescue operations with 14 boats. It activated its contingency plan and its boat rescue operation protocols. To date, it rescued 91 people, 245 cattle and 1.8 ton of rice. Two mobile boat charging stations are roaming the affected chars and fixed solar mobile phone charging stations were installed in six chars.

Start Fund Bangladesh has awarded £599,991 to MJSKS, Islamic Relief (with CARE & Solidarity, Concern Worldwide & ASOD), GUK and Christian Aid (with HelpAge & DAM) to respond to the northern floods at Gaibandha (Fulchari, Sundarganj), Jamalpur (Islampur, Malanda) and Kurigram (Chilmari, Nageswari, Rajibpur, Rowmari, Ulipur) to support 46,300 people with unconditional cash grants and hygiene items. Also, Start Fund Bangladesh has awarded £250,000 to Caritas Bangladesh (with Toymu Bandarban) and World Vision (with BNKS) to respond to the floods and landslides at Bandarban (Bandarban Sadar, Lama, Rowangchari, Ruma, Thanchi) to support 19,500 people with unconditional cash grants and hygiene items.

In line with its annual work plan 2019 and its monsoon floods contingency plan, the Humanitarian Coordination Task Team (HCTT) is continuously working with GoB and is monitoring the situation. An inter-cluster meeting took place on 18 July 2019 to assess the situation, the on-going response and the possible gaps where complementarity support from the international community would add value to the GoB-led response. A HCTT meeting will take place on 28 July 2019 at the MoDMR. Cluster meetings are organized by cluster co-lead Agencies and their cluster national technical government partner.

Health cluster meetings are convened at DGHS Conference room on regular interval for monitoring disease trend, causes of mortality and morbidity and possible solutions to overcome the health problems in disaster affected communities. Health cluster co-leads (DGHS and WHO) are organizing special meetings to strengthen preparedness and response efforts in Chattogram today, in Bandarban on 24 July 2019, in Sylhet on 29 July 2019 and, in Sunamganj on 31 July 2019. Prepositioned Inter-Agency Emergency Health kits (IEHK Kits), supplied by WHO, are being used to contain flood related health problems. WHO is procuring additional emergency drugs including 5,000 anti-snake venoms to supplement government health service efforts to flood affected communities. WHO Surveillance & Immunization Officers (SIMO) and Divisional Coordinators (DC) are providing support to District Civil Surgeon Offices in disease surveillance and coordination activities without hampering routine immunization activities.

Education cluster co-led by UNICEF and Save the Children met at the Directorate of Primary Education on 16 July 2019. Priority areas for education response were identified during the meeting and education cluster members were encouraged to closely coordinate field level response with relevant education authorities to ensure complementarity to the Government led response. Education cluster members agreed to support the Directorate of Primary Education in finding innovative solutions on quick and reliable data collection. As for information dissemination about availability of the Education in Emergencies block funds for government primary schools, education cluster members were encouraged to disseminate information through their field level presence. Education cluster members also agreed to support the DPE’s efforts in strengthening monitoring and evaluation of the EiE block fund usage.

UNICEF co-led child protection cluster continues to hold working groups meetings to monitor and provide updates on the impact of the current floods. Approximately 14 NGOs who are working on flood situation observation, response and awareness building activities attended the meeting. Members explored the potential risks of women and children and measures required to be taken such as; children issues in rapid assessment, providing menstrual hygiene supports for adolescents’ girls in temporary shelters, and re-engaging with stakeholders to strengthen awareness on drowning prevention during flood. Members further expressed concerns about the death of four children because of floods in Kurigram.
The UNFP co-led GBV Cluster with CARE’s support will conduct a Rapid Gender Assessment which is planned to be completed by 25 July 2019. It is expected to boost data collection and to facilitate sex-disaggregated analysis of the situation. Moreover, UNFPA is preparing to distribute dignity kits through partners in the affected areas.

UNICEF co-led WASH cluster in its prepositioned emergency items in stock, DPHE in Sylhet Division distributed 140,000 Water Purification Tablets and 366 Hygiene Kits till to date to the affected upazilas of all 4 districts. Terre des Hommes (TdH) has started distribution of safe drinking water from Dharla bridge to Jatapur union and adjacent areas and planned to distribute hygiene kits among affected community as earliest convenient. SKS Foundation distribution of safe drinking water on boating manner and installing tube-wells in flood shelters, installation of temporary sanitary latrines and conduction of health camps. About 6000 liters safe drinking water distributed among the flood affected people. 10 tube-wells installed in different places. Oxfam through its partners are distributing safe water through one Water Treatment Plant and installed 100 latrines and 20 tube wells in Gaibandha. BRAC is supporting WASH interventions benefitting 24,120 people in 20 worst affected Upazilas in nine districts.

UNDP co-leading the Early Recovery Cluster is collecting information from PIOs and DRROs through early recovery cluster colleagues together with the Department of Disaster Management (DDM) and, the MoDMR. Catholic Relief Services (CRS) committed $25,000 USD to Caritas Bangladesh to initiate complementary response activities to the SAPLING-led interventions in Bandarban once worst hit areas are made accessible again.

Members of the WFP and FAO co-led Food Security cluster are supporting the national response. WFP is going to distribute 193.9 MT of High Energy Biscuit covering 51,707 HH from 3 districts (Kurigram, Gaibandha and Jamalpur). BRAC provided 5,360 Households with food assistance. Save the Children will provide 2,400 households in Kurigram, Sirajganj, Moulvibazar and Sylhet districts with Food Security Cash grants. BRAC distributed more than 5000 Dry food packages and 50 package of fodder in of 20 worst affected Upazilas in 9 districts.

In response to the ongoing monsoon flood/flash flood and landslides, UNICEF is conducting C4D/CwC activities with the Shongjog platform in the flood-affected areas under Chattogram, Mymensingh, Rangpur, and Sylhet Divisions. Shongjog message library on flood (http://www.shongjog.org.bd/resources/i/?id=fc8921f5-56c2-4c64-829c-a23c39517ace) was shared with Bangladesh Betar, District Information Officers (DIOs), Deputy Directors Local Government (DDLGs), District Relief and Rehabilitation Officers (DRROs), and NGOs of the flood-affected districts who disseminated the messages at community level in collaboration with District, Upazila, and Union Parishad administrations. To foster Accountability to Affected Population (AAP) through community feedback collection, C4D Section through UNICEF Bangladesh U-Report system (https://bangladesh.ureport.in/poll/1084/) is conducting a rapid nationwide online poll on monsoon flood/flash flood reaching approximately 140,000 adolescent and youth users aged between 14 and 34 years. The poll results will be published on the U-Report Facebook page and dashboard.

In Cox’s Bazar, the Inter-Sector Coordination Group (ISCG) strengthened its ongoing preparedness and response mechanisms though existing partners working there in collaboration with the authorities.

Advocacy points (short term):

- For schools occupied as shelters, the management of the shelter should set up measures to safeguard education materials and WASH facilities;
- Access to education for children in the affected areas in schools or temporary learning spaces must be restored. Protection issues should be given high consideration; Schools and local education
authorities to monitor attendance of children especially from the vulnerable groups to prevent drop-out, child marriage and child labour;

- Protection measures taken in formal and informal shelter to prevent and/or to respond to protection concerns need to be known in order to ensure than do no harm principle is respected, in particular for women, children and those living with disabilities. Separate latrines for women to be installed at community level shelters and, availability of contraceptives for men and women both to protect them from unwanted pregnancy should be ensured;
- Engagement of concerned Government officials / field worker, CBOs working in the ground to prevent and protect women and girls from GBV. Specifically, to ensure awareness among affected community on potential forms of violence and how to report for such cases.
- Continuation of primary health care services to affected population including emergency obstetric and neonatal care services, immunization, mental health and psychosocial care support;
- Support for the repairment of latrines as soon as water goes down should be provided; special attention could be given to female-headed households;
- If still possible, DRR investments such as embankments, dams, dykes should be reinforced to ensure their effectiveness during the remaining of the monsoon season.
- Livestock services, feed, shelter, vaccination and veterinary services are required urgently, especially for northern districts as well as on farm and off farm livelihood restoration programmes;
- The emergency nutrition supplies (F75 and F100) stock at central level needs immediate replenishment. Nutrition specific interventions such as deworming and the provision of IFA tablets are required as well as nutrition sensitive interventions in addition to nutrition specific interventions.

Advocacy points (long term):

- Communities should be involved in DRR investments made in their area and informed of the risks associated to them. It will help them to be risk-informed vis-à-vis the suitability of their settlement and, encourage them to contribute to the maintenance and the functioning of these protection measures.
- A multi-sectoral approach to disaster risk reduction needed through developing national and local risk reduction plan consider climate change impacts.

Next update will be provided based on the evolving situation


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