

Source: United Nations Office for the Coordination of  
Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)  
Date: 18 Nov 2007

## **Bangladesh: Cyclone Sidr OCHA Situation Report No. 3**

This situation report is based on information received from the Bangladesh Disaster Management Information Centre, the UN Resident Coordinator's Office Bangladesh, the Disaster Emergency Response Group (DER), UN Agencies, UN OCHA Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) and media sources.

### **I. Situation in Bangladesh**

1. Cyclone Sidr (Category IV) hit Bangladesh on the evening of 15 November. The cyclone, originating from a depression over the Bay of Bengal on 11 November, hit offshore islands at 1830 hours and made landfall across the southern coast from Cox's Bazaar toward the Satkhira districts at 2030 hours local time. Heavy rains were experienced throughout the country, including the capital Dhaka. The first area hit by Cyclone Sidr was Hiron Point and part of the mangrove forest Sundarbans in Bagerhat and Dublar Char Island in Barguna. According to the Bangladesh Meteorological Department, Cyclone Sidr had a radius of 500 kilometres with the eye of the storm 74 kilometres wide and wind speeds reaching between 220-240 kilometres per hour. The storm caused extensive damage, in particular in the south-western districts, as it moved north into central Bangladesh and was downgraded to a Category II tropical storm. The weather is currently calm.

2. Official reports indicate that the initial death toll is 2,027 people, with 1,451 injured and 454 missing. These figures are expected to increase significantly as the need assessments are completed and will be reported on 19 November. Reports indicate that over 27 million people from 25 districts were affected by the severe cyclonic storms. The 12 hardest hit districts were Bagerhat, Patuakhali, Barguna, Pirojpur, Barisal, Jhalkhati, Bhola, Mandaripur, Gopalganj, Shariatpur, Khulna and Satkhira. Many structures have been damaged or destroyed, damage to crops is extensive and roads are damaged or blocked by debris. The cyclone caused severe reduction in power production, resulting in a near countrywide blackout for over 36 hours, further disruptions to telecommunications and water supply.

3. Preliminary assessments indicate that emergency needs should be concentrated on non-food items, food aid, nutrition, water and sanitation, shelter and disease surveillance. The longer term perspective calls for rehabilitation of livelihood, infrastructure, health and educational services and increased shelter capacity.

### **II. National Response in Bangladesh**

4. To date, the Chief Adviser has allocated 100 million taka for relief and house construction in eleven districts. The Deputy Commissioners are procuring and collecting sufficient amount of dry food to respond to the current situation. The Ministry of Food and Disaster Management (MoFDM) has allocated 4,000 metric tonnes of rice, 5,000 tents, 17,000 blankets and 30 million taka as gratuitous relief grants, to date. A special fund was established allocating 350 million taka for housing construction grants. 13,000 bundles of corrugated iron sheets are ready for immediate distribution. The Bangladesh Armed Forces Division deployed several aircrafts and a number of helicopters. Six Bangladesh Navy ships are conducting rescue, evacuation, relief and reconnaissance operations in the worst storm affected areas. Several central control rooms of different GoB agencies at national, district and upazila levels have been active round the clock since the first cyclone warning was issued. 732 medical teams are working in the affected areas.

5. The Government of Bangladesh (GoB) early warning and preparedness systems were activated prior to the cyclone hitting landfall, which had a significant mitigating effect in this emergency. Disaster preparedness measures included the evacuation of approximately 3.2 million people from along the coastline of 15 districts to safe places. Alarms were raised and relief and rescue items were stockpiled.

6. The Government of Bangladesh called an immediate meeting of the Disaster and Emergency Response group (DER) on 15 November, consisting of representatives from the GoB, United Nations, Donors, national and international NGOs. The GoB emphasized that the humanitarian community should coordinate closely with central and local Bangladesh authorities. A follow up meeting was held on 18 November, where many donors pledged support to the GoB. The next DER meeting will be held on 22 November.

### **III. International Response in Bangladesh**

7. The UN Country Team, IFRC, and NGOs, including Save the Children, World Vision International, CARE, Caritas, OXFAM, Islamic Relief, ACT, Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA), Muslim Aid, and Plan, provided support to the Government of Bangladesh through extensive emergency response precautions,

including mobilizing in-country staff and pre-positioned relief stocks across southern Bangladesh.

8. Under the coordination of the DER, a United Nations team of 12 experts left Dhaka to assist with assessment in affected areas. The United Nations is distributing 208 tonnes of high-energy biscuits to assist an estimated 850,000 cyclone affected people. 240,000 packets of water purifying powder are reaching 48,000 families. Shelter materials (thick polyesters) will also be distributed to 18,000 households whose houses were destroyed by the storms. Partners will start distribution of dry food (flattened rice and molasses) to 70,000 affected families from 18 November. Medical officers are available to assist the GoB response, including four to assist in coordinating the central response. USD 50,000 was made available for water and supplies and transportation. More relief will be made available following initial determination of needs.

9. The United Nations Disaster Management Team (UN DMT) met on 16 November to coordinate response and assessment and take early stock of the situation. A mission from UN OCHA Regional Office arrived in Dhaka on 17 November to assist with the Central Emergency Relief Fund (CERF) process and support the UN RC with coordination. UN Heads of Agencies go on mission to the worst affected districts to assess the extent of damage on 19 November.

10. IFRC launched a preliminary emergency appeal on 16 November for US\$ 3.5 million in cash, kind, or services to support the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society to assist 235,000 beneficiaries for a period of 9 months.

11. Several donors, including the European Union, Germany, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland United Kingdom, United States of America, have pledged to assist the affected population of Bangladesh. More detailed information is expected to be provided on 19 November.

12. This situation report, together with further information regarding on-going emergencies, is also available on the Reliefweb: <http://www.reliefweb.int>.

**MAP:** Bangladesh: Tropical Cyclone SIDR - Situation Map

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