

SIDR Cyclone Bangladesh 2007



UN SIT REP # 6

Dhaka, Bangladesh 22th of November 2007

Situation

A super cyclonic storm (category 4) moved north through the Bay of Bengal and hit southern Bangladesh at 7:30 pm on 15 November with wind speed reaching 220 km/h. It continued northward causing extensive damage, especially to the country's southwestern districts.

More than 6.7 million people in 30 districts have been affected by the storm. Latest official reports indicate 2,997 killed, 34,508 injured and 1,724 unaccounted for. Material damage is severe, with 1.7 million acres of crops damaged, 2.5 million trees felled, 363,000 homes completely destroyed and another 816,000 partially. Over 460,000 livestock are confirmed killed. Damage to public building also widespread, with 1,355 educational institutions totally damaged and some 6,500 partially.

The 12 hardest hit districts are Bagerhat, Patuakhali, Barguna, Pirojpur, Barisal, Jhalkhati, Bhola, Mandaripur, Gopalganj, Shariatpur, Khulna and Satkhira.

Government of Bangladesh Response

The Chief Adviser has allocated USD 7.1 million for relief and house construction in 11 districts. Deputy Commissioners are procuring and collecting sufficient amount of dry food to face the current situation. So far, MoFDM has allocated 7,640 metric tons of rice, 14,979 tents, 18,000 blankets, 13,000 bundles of CI sheets, and 27,000 food bags. A special fund has allocated 211 million taka for house building grants across 20 districts.

The military continued to bring relief items to the affected people by planes, boats and helicopters. So far, about 300 tons of relief goods have been distributed by the Air Force.

MoFDM has established a Cyclone Coordination Cell and requested information updates from donors and recipient organisations on contributions and relief efforts.

The next meeting of the Disaster and Emergency Response group meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 27 November, 11:00 am. Coordination clusters are being organised. More information on coordination clusters and focal points can be found on the DER website (address below).

The Government welcomes assistance from the international community, as before, through the Bangladesh government.

UN Rapid Initial Assessment Report

UN assessment teams today presented an initial report produced in collaboration with the Government. The assessment covered nine districts visited between Saturday and Tuesday.

The team judged that immediate relief assistance should cover a minimum of 2-3 months and that extended relief might be necessary for some of the worst affected areas. Recovery and rehabilitation efforts should start soon after.

Food, shelter and cash represent the three highest priority areas for assistance. Sanitation and drinking water assistance are also badly needed. Medicines and medical supplies are needed in some areas, but there was general consensus that these needs are relatively lower. The restoration of communications and electricity supplies are high priorities, while communication has been restored in most areas the same is not true for electricity, and therefore this continues to be a major concern. Transportation services are also in need of support, both for land and water transport.

Damage to livelihoods is large, in particular the fisheries and agricultural sectors will need strong support. The expansion of safety nets for relief, and the early startup of public work schemes to generate employment and much needed household income, are key strategies for early recovery. Early recovery, longer term recovery, and rehabilitation should incorporate a strong element of sound planning with an emphasis on reducing the risks of future disasters.

The full report will be published on the DER website (address below).

International Response

UN Heads of Agencies visited the worst affected districts Monday, 19 November, to gain first hand knowledge of the situation. They met assessment and relief teams and confirmed that UN relief is reaching the farthest corners of the affected area. They also noted that material damage was severe, but varied between areas, and that there were indications of small-scale economic recovery.

In coordination with the Bangladesh Air Force, the UN is distributing 208 tons of high-energy biscuits to help 850,000 cyclone victims. 240,000 packets of water purifying powder are reaching 48,000 families. Shelter materials (thick polyesters) will be distributed to 18,000 households whose houses have been destroyed. Partners have started distribution of dry food (flattened rice and molasses) to 70,000 affected families from Sunday. Medical officers have been made available to assist Government response, including 4 for coordinating central response. 60,00 family kits, tube wells, 100,000 Jerry cans, USD 1.5 million for medicine, 92 tons of baby food, 100,000 blankets, 60,000 family kits, 60,000 childrens cloths, 50,000 plastic sheets will be procured and distributed. USD 50,000 has been made available for water and supplies and transportation. More relief will be made available following initial determination of needs.

UN agencies have received USD 14.7 million in support from CERF for food aid, water and sanitation, nutrition health and agriculture.

Relief assistance now totals USD 176 million. The following donors have pledged or committed to make relief contributions: Saudi Arabia (USD 100 million), CERF (USD 14.7 million), Kuwait (USD 10 million), European Commission (USD 9.6 million), Netherlands (USD 7.2 million), United Kingdom (USD 5.2 million), Canada (USD 3.4

million), Norway (USD 3.35 million), Australia (USD 2.8 million), Sweden (USD 2.7 million), United States (USD 2.1 million), Belgium (USD 2 million), Germany (USD 1.76 million), Italy (USD 1.6 million), Spain (USD 1.1 million), China (USD 1 million), India (USD 1 million), Libya (USD 1 million), Denmark (USD 950,000), France (USD 735,000), , Ireland (USD 721,000), Republic of Korea (USD 500,000), New Zealand (USD 378,000), Switzerland (USD 160,000), Czech Republic (USD 80,645), Estonia (USD 46,045).

Other donors include Islamic Relief (USD 8.2 million), OPEC Fund for International Development (USD 500,000), and Caritas Spain (USD 288,000).

In addition, the World Bank has offered to make up to USD 250 million available, depending on financing needs and what other donors will contribute.

Conclusion

The Government of Bangladesh, the UN, and other actors are taking action to aid the cyclone's victims, but the humanitarian situation remains dire. UN assessment teams report that food, shelter and cash are aid priorities, and that relief assistance must continue for at least 2-3 months. Water and sanitation assistance also deemed critical. Early recovery and rehabilitation should include a long-term risk reducing perspective.

For more information, please contact:

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LCG Disaster Emergency Response – Cyclone Updates

http://www.lcgbangladesh.org/derweb/cyclone_updates.php