



Joint Bangladesh UN-DMT Situation Report Monsoon Floods 26th August 2004

General Situation

1. Multi-sector efforts continue to bring relief and to aid rehabilitation for flood affected people in the face of the current political and civil disturbances. Government efforts are now fully underway to support rehabilitation, particularly in the agricultural and banking sectors. Inputs to a further assessment report have been mapped out with partners of the Disaster Emergency Response group.

Flood Forecast and Assessment

2. Flood situation continues to improve across most areas. The Brahmaputra-Jamuna recorded falls at all but one station. The Ganges-Padma is below danger level but observed further rise at almost all points. 2 points remained above their danger level as of 25th August.

3. Almost all emergency flood shelters are now closed and flood-affected families are busy rebuilding their homes and livelihoods. Relief operations, including food and medical supplies, are continuing in many areas, while rehabilitation efforts are underway across flood-affected areas. The disinfection of tube-wells has been an urgent priority for government and aid agencies alike to ensure supplies of safe drinking water. Provision of seeds, seedlings and fertiliser are crucial to the reinvigoration of the agricultural sector, upon which the majority of country's poor are dependent.

Response

4. The security situation and subsequent nationwide strikes have provided an additional emergency for the government, diverting attention from the rehabilitation of flood affected Bangladeshi people and businesses. Nevertheless, repairs to rural infrastructure are underway, including roads, public buildings, and water and sanitation. The agriculture ministry has commenced free distribution of seeds and fertilisers amongst more than two and a half million flood-affected small and marginal farmers to help them cultivate a variety of crops. In addition, fresh guidelines have been enacted for banks to disburse new credit and reschedule outstanding loan to farmers for post-flood rehabilitation.

5. The World Bank has indicated that it will tackle long-term flood mitigation in its programme and new country assistance strategy. It also expressed its willingness to assist the government with financial support from the International Development Agency fund to cover its rehabilitation programme, requesting that the government expedite the preparation of its damage assessment report in collaboration with concerned Ministries.

6. UN agencies and their partners are busy implementing relief and rehabilitation activities in flood-affected areas. UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) reports that the UN Flash Appeal to solicit international assistance has received contributions of over USD28 million to date against the target of USD210 million for projects across nine sectors.

7. The Disaster Emergency Response (DER) Secretariat has worked with partners of its Assessment Team to map out its next multi-sector assessment. This will follow on from the 28th July assessment and is designed to meet the current information needs of DER Group Members, specifically those of the 7 Sectoral Working Groups, to enable their planning and programme implementation. It will also act as an advocacy tool to leverage further significant contributions to the ongoing relief and recovery programme.