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Background, TOR, Mission Composition, and Schedule

Khagrachari Hill District in Profile

Khagrachari Hill District has eight upazilas- Khagrachari Sadar, Manikchari, Laxmichari, Ramgrarh, Matiranga, Dighinala, Panchari and Mahalchari.

According to the 2001 census, the district's population totals some 5,18,460 with an almost 50 percent division between Tribal and Non-Tribal (Tribal- 2,69,904 Chakma: 1, 46045, Marma- 55,844, Tripura- 67,340)

Population density is estimated at 192 persons per sq. km while population growth stands at 1.8%.

The districts literacy rate is some 37%.

In the absence of any industrial sector development, the district's economy is dependent on agriculture and in particular paddy, wheat, maize, mustard, cotton, and sugarcane. A large number of tribals are engaged in "JUMM" cultivation, while non tribals are mainly cultivators and traders.

Genesis of the events that led to the violence of August 26th in Mahalchari.

On August 24th a Mahalchari Bengali businessman was kidnapped. In protest, on August 25th the traders of Mahalchari bazaar organized a protest meeting to demand the release of the kidnapped victim while also declaring a hartal for the next day.

While there are conflicting reports as to what turned the hartel protest into a violent attack against tribals what is clear is that over no more than a 7 hour period, mobs attacked nine villages, - Babupara, Lemuchari, Nua Para, Basanta Para, Kerenganala, Sawmill Para, Paharthali, Rameshu Karbari Para and Durpujyand Para - setting fire to homes, looting, destroying crops, and mills, stealing farm animals, and physically attacking and injuring tribals. During the violence 2 tribals including a child were killed and several injured and 5 Bengali settlers were also injured.

Emergency steps taken by the Government, the Local Administration, Community support groups and NGOs

In quick response the Government despatched, from the Disaster Management and Relief Ministry: 50 Metric Tons of Rice, 200 hundred tins of biscuits, and a cash allocation of 100,000 (one lakh) taka.

At the same time the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracks Affairs (MoCHTA) made available a grant of Taka 3,000,000 for housing reconstruction, and 70 MTs of rice and a cash grant of Taka 300,000. The District Administration response included, among others the provision of candles, packets of food, cooking oil, rice, biscuits, sarees, school books, medical attention to the injured, a mobile medical team, and the appointment of a "First Class Magistrate" to assist the UNO compile lists of those affected. The Hills District Council also responded most effectively.

In solidarity with the victims there was also an outpouring of support from community groups who organized the voluntary collection of money, while also sending much needed family utensils including, cooking pots, plates etc.

The NGO family, local and international, also responded with great dedication and of particular note was the support provided by ALO (education including the provision of school books) the Red Crescent (family kits) MSF Holland (medical including the provision of mosquito nets) and Gano Shasthya Kendra (relief items and non food assistance).

Notwithstanding this immediate and valuable humanitarian assistance, there was wide agreement that if further suffering was to be alleviated and family life restored, the UN agencies in Bangladesh would have to play their part in augmenting the actions that had already taken place.

The Assessment Mission.

On the 5th of September 2003, the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh wrote to the Honourable Deputy Minister, Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs, Government of Bangladesh to signal the UN families' willingness to activate a humanitarian response, provided the United Nations received assurances from the Government of Bangladesh that such humanitarian assistance would be welcomed.

While expressing concerns with regard to humanitarian needs and a willingness to respond, the Resident Coordinator also pointed out that while none of the United Nations agencies active in the CHT (i.e. UNDP, WFP and UNICEF) had funds set aside for humanitarian assistance, they did have certain mechanisms for mobilizing modest levels of resources.

In line with standard relief procedures the Resident Coordinator pointed out that the first step would be an urgent review of the humanitarian situation and needs on the ground –conducted by representatives of the Government and the appropriate local institutions along with UN humanitarian assistance specialists. (See Annex1)

On 23 September, the Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs, Bangladesh Secretariat, Dhaka advised that he had been directed to inform the Resident Coordinator that the Government had agreed in principle to receive humanitarian assistance relating to the villages affected by the unwanted incidents at Mahalchhari Upazilla of Khagrachari District.

Additionally the Deputy Secretary requested the Resident Coordinator to present a comprehensive proposal on how the UN intended to provide for the rehabilitation of the villages affected. (See Annex 2)

In reply to the Deputy Secretary, the Resident Coordinator, on 25 September wrote expressing his pleasure and that of the UN agencies in Bangladesh for the Government's agreement that the UN proceed. He presented for consideration, a draft proposal outlining the scope and nature of proposed actions to be undertaken. (See Annex 3)

In turn the draft proposal was reviewed, on 28 September, during a meeting held between the Deputy Minister, Secretary and Joint Secretary MoCHTA and senior staff of UNDP.

During this meeting a number of key points were agreed, including:

- That there should be no link, at this stage, between the emergency operation and the CHTDF/QIF project.

- MoCHTA would provide the overall coordination of the relief response.
- MoCHTA would send advise to the relevant CHT institutions (RC, HDC, DC) informing them, and seeking their full cooperation for the operation.
- UNDP would coordinate the assessment and follow up relief operations.
- The Ministry had no objection to the involvement of the NGOs, but with the understanding that UNDP and the other UN agencies would take responsibility for this.

Terms of Reference

It was also agreed during the 28th meeting that UNDP would develop Draft Terms of Reference for the mission.

These draft TOR were in turn considered during a meeting, chaired by UNDP with the UN agencies and the Joint Secretary of the Ministry of CHT Affairs (MoCHTA) on Tuesday the 30th of September.

Following a very positive and constructive review of the draft TOR, and to best optimise the effectiveness of all aspects of the mission, the following final TOR were agreed to:

The proposed humanitarian assistance will be carried out in **two stages**:

- The objective of the first phase – immediate response – would be to identify immediate needs of the victims, distribution of emergency food and medical supply for immediate survival of the victims, and distribution of cash and construction materials for reconstruction of burnt/ destroyed houses.
- The second stage will aim at mental and physical rehabilitation of the traumatized women and children of the affected areas, reconstruction of schools and temples, rehabilitation of marketing systems, and distribution of production materials such as seeds, tools, fishing nets etc.

A needs assessment mission would be carried out from 06 October to 11 October, 2003 comprising of representatives from MoCHTA, CHTRC, FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, and NGO partners.

The mission would be guided by the **principles** that:

- It is neutral and transparent,
- Assistance is provided solely on the basis of needs without discrimination as to ethnic origin, gender, political opinions or religion.

Objectives:

Based on a detailed assessment of needs, assistance will:

- Be provided in a timely and effective manner so as to alleviate further suffering and hardship,
- Support a medium term restoration of family and community livelihoods through productive activities,

Sectoral responsibilities:

To achieve the objectives of the assessment, and the effectiveness of the actual response programme, each participating agency including the GoB, the UN, and the NGOs, will concentrate on their respective mandates and comparative advantages as follows:

MoCHTA will provide a lead role in terms of policy support, ensure permission/concurrence of any GoB authority as needed, and ensure cooperation from all local authorities and officials.

FAO will provide advice on rehabilitation of agricultural production including immediate needs for replacement of lost stock, tools and materials.

UNDP will provide coordination of the needs assessment and follow up relief programme, and will facilitate budgetary support from various sources, and arrange NGO partnership to assess housing needs.

WFP will assess food needs, support the planning and management of an appropriate food intervention, and provide targeted food aid and facilitate logistical support.

UNICEF will assess women and children's needs, with a particular emphasis on protection, education, and psycho-social support for traumatized women and children, and will also assess water and sanitation.

WHO will review and address health needs and medical care, support to reported rape victims as appropriate, and counselling support and testing for STDs if requested by victims.

NGO(s) will provide assistance in terms of community outreach, targeting, distribution and services, through necessary personnel and material support.

The **SCOPE** of the needs assessment mission would be as follows:

1. The mission will confer and consult with all relevant authorities of the CHT.
2. The mission will assess the impact of the 26 August 2003 incident on the population and assess the needs of the affected population.
3. The mission will review the existing emergency response mechanisms both in terms of material and operational capabilities and appropriateness.
4. The mission will visit the affected localities and consult with all the local leaders, residents, and victims.

The mission will identify specific needs in the following areas:

- Food
- Health
- Water and Sanitation
- Housing
- Protection of Women and Children
- Agriculture
- Education and
- Economy.

5. The mission will quantify the response requirements and develop a response plan for immediate and medium term interventions, including mechanisms of distribution, targeted delivery, and implementation strategies.
6. The mission will recommend the cooperation needed from local authorities for smooth implementation of immediate and medium term interventions.
7. The mission will focus on a package of assistance that contributes to sustainable recovery.
8. The mission will carry out the above tasks in a consultative manner that further supports confidence building in the affected area.
9. The mission will prepare a Mission Report on the above and brief Government and UN system and NGOs accordingly.

JOINT NEEDS ASSESSMENT MISSION TEAM

The Government, the Regional Council, the UN agencies and Caritas assigned the following personnel to the mission.

Government of Bangladesh

Ministry of CHT Affairs

Name	Title
Mr. Muhammad Zulfikar Ali	Joint Secretary, MoCHTA

CHT Regional Council

Name	Title
Mr. Rupayan Dewan	Member, CHT Regional Council

UNDP

Name	Title
Mr. Vincent O'Reilly	Mission Team Leader
Prasenjit Chakma	Socio-Economic Specialist
Mr. Ratan Kumar Poddar	Housing Specialist (CARITAS)
Mr. Hla Thwai Mong Marma	Housing Specialist (CARITAS)

FAO

Name	Title
Mr. K.G. Pillai	Team Leader, BGD/99/007, FAO
Mr. Sudibya Kanti Khisa	National Consultant

UNICEF

Name	Title
Ms. Nargis Pervin	Asst. Proj. Officer, Child Protection Section
Dr. Indrani Chakma	Asst. Proj. Officer, H&N Section
Mr. Kamrul Alam	Asst. Proj. Officer, WES Section
Mr. Alamgir Bhuiya	Chief Chittagong Division
Mr. Qausar Hossain	UNICEF Project Coordinator, Khagrachari

WFP

Name	Title
Ms. Rehana Banoo	Manager, DEP Section
Mr. Kanchan Khisa	Program Officer, Rangamati

WHO

Name	Title
Dr. A. Mannan Bangali	NPO
Dr. Monira Parveen	National Consultant (Trg. Specialist, SBA)
Dr. Md. Abdul Halim	National Consultant, SBA
Mr. Azizur Rahman Chowdhury	National Consultant, Entomologist

Places visited during the mission.

The Mission was in the field in the CHT during the period of 6 to 11 October. The Mission succeeded in visiting all of the areas and villages considered critical to its work.

The **Schedule** was as follows: (Detailed Annex 4):

- 6 October. All mission members arrived in Rangamati for a meeting with the Regional Council and for final team planning and security briefings.
- 7 October. The mission met with the Khagrachari HDC, the District Commissioner and his Officials.
- 8 October. Mission met with the UNOs, the UP Chairman and Headmen of all nine affected villages.
- The mission carried out a detailed assessment in the Villages of Lemuchari, and Nvapara.
- 9 October: The mission assessed needs in the villages of Babupara, Ramesh Kabaripara, Pahartali and Sawmill Para.
- 10 October. The mission assessed needs in Basanta Karbari Para, Kerenganala and Durpujyanala Para, then proceeded to Rangamati for team meetings
- 11 October. Before returning to Dhaka, continued team meetings.

Check Lists / Questionnaires.

A very important set of actions, in the planning process, for the field work and interviews with individuals, families and communities was the excellent exchanges that took place initially within individual UN agencies and subsequently in working groups resulting in the development of "Check lists /Questionnaires.

The use of these checklists allowed for semi - structured interviews, i.e. the interviews were guided and topics predetermined with interviewers posing open- ended questions and probing topics as they arose.

Mission Objectives.

Before dealing with findings and recommendations from actual visits within the framework of the TOR it is worth recalling the two main objectives agreed to for the missions:

- Provide in a timely and effective manner assistance which alleviates further suffering and hardship,
- Support a medium term restoration of family and community livelihoods.