

# Information bulletin



International Federation  
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## Bangladesh: Flash Flood

Information bulletin n° 1  
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28 June, 2010

This bulletin is being issued for information only, and reflects the current situation and details available at this time. The Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS), with the support of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), has undertaken a rapid needs assessment and is determining if external assistance will be required. BDRCS is therefore not seeking funding or other kinds of assistance from donors at this point of time.

[<click here to view the map of the affected area, or here for detailed contact information>](#)



The village of Juri, in the Molavibazar Districts is inundated by flood water. Photo credit: IFRC

### The Situation

The north eastern and northern districts including Sylhet, Moulavibazar, Sunamganj, Habiganj, Netrokona, Kurigram, Gaibandha, Lalmonirhat of Bangladesh have been inundated due to heavy downpour and the rush of flood water from upstream: Namely, from Assam and Meghalaya in India over the last two of weeks.

Following a report from the Bangladesh "Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre" (FFWC) issued on 24 June 2010, the Kushiyara river at Amalshid, Sheola and Sherpur; and the Surma river at Kanaighat, Sylhet and Sunamganj were flowing at very dangerous levels for the last month.

As a result, tens of thousands of people from different upazillas in the Sylhet district are stuck in waterlogged areas. Also, all the rivers in the Sylhet region have water levels that are at dangerously high; and is at a situation where the rivers could overflow at any time. Roads linking of some upazillas with district headquarters have been suspended as flood waters submerged roads at several points. These areas are known as the Haor (big water body) Basin, covering an area of approximately 20,022 square kilometres. Many people in the Sylhet district have been suffering for one month.

In Fenchuganj upazilla, a sub district in Sylhet, more than 55,000 people have been affected because of floods. More than 32 educational institutions were closed down as those went under water. Other educational institutes, that were not affected were used as flood shelter centres. Many flood affected people took refuge in those schools.

In Beanibazar upazilla, many villages have been inundated after the flood protection embankments collapsed due to heavy rainfall. In three unions of the Bishwanath upazilla almost all villages were flooded, affecting 15,000 people. In the Balagonj upazilla more than 30,000 people's houses and cropland were inundated by flood water.

In different places road communications have been disrupted as bridges have collapsed from the heavy rainfall and flash floods. An important road linkage between the Sherpur district and the Nalitabari upazila has been disrupted when a bridge collapsed in Sherpur. Many villages were submerged with flood water in the Sherpur districts. Heavy rainfall has damaged about 300 metres of the Chellakhali flood protection dam.

Rising water levels from the rivers: Someshwary, Dhanu and Ubdakhali, placed the Netrokona district and its surrounding areas in a very precarious situation that may be affected by heavy floods. Torrential downpour during the last few days caused water from the hills to pick up speed as they flowed down toward three upazillas of the Netrokona district. More than 60 villages were flooded affecting 75,000 people. A seven kilometre stretch from Durgapur to the Gawkandia link road was submerged under about five feet of water.

A significant number of families have been suffering from a food crisis as almost all the low lying areas of the Jagannathpur upazilla, in the Sunamganj district has been under water for the last month .

A long term water logging problem became apparent in 24 unions of the Kulaura, Borolekha and Juri upazilla in the Moulvibazar districts. Since flood water has washed away all of their standing crops, farmers from this district are forced to sell their domestic animals at low prices so as they are able to buy food items.

On 28 June 2010, FFWC reported that the prevailing flood situation in the Sylhet, Sunamganj, Netrokona and Moulvi Bazar districts is likely to deteriorate as moderately heavy to heavy rainfall is expected in that region in the next 24 hours.

FFWC also says, the major river system, the Brahmaputra-Jamuna shows a rising trend while the Ganges-Padma shows a falling trend. Both river systems are reported to be flowing below danger levels. However, all districts are observing the rivers closely at all times.

As per the report of a national daily newspaper, published on 24 June, people of low-lying areas in Kurigram district are facing difficulties from the floods. Many areas: Nageshwari, Bhurungamari, Rowmari, Rajibpur, Chilmari and Ulippur upazillas in Kurigram were flooded affecting more than 9,000 families. Boats have become the only means of transport as all the dry lands are now under water.

In the Lalmonirhat district, at least 5,000 families in 35 villages under four upazillas are facing difficulties on account of floods. The water development board reported that the Teesta river has crossed the danger mark while the river Dharla was flowing only one centimetre below danger point. At least 200 meters of the Teesta flood control dyke in the Sunderganj upazilla collapsed on 23 June due to a powerful rush of water coming from upstream areas which contributed to the increasing water level of the Teesta river. Many villagers from the affected area took shelter by roadside as villages are at knee deep water levels.

In the Gaibandha district a large part of the dyke at Nizamkha has collapsed and cracked. These cracks developed at many other points due to three days of continuous heavy rainfall. The people from the villages of Nizamkha, Chachia Mirganj, Tarapur and Khorda are extremely worried as water levels on the Teesta river is now almost touching the danger mark; which could result in flooding.

As of 28 June 2010 the FFWC monitored water levels at 73 stations, of which 47 recorded rising water levels; and 19 recorded falling water levels across the country. Water levels from six stations are precariously above the danger mark.

Local government authorities from respective affected districts have opened flood shelter centres where affected families are taking refuge. Medical teams are providing health services to the affected people. 31 tonnes of rice and BDT 60, 000 (CHF 923) has already been distributed. Another 50 tonnes of rice, and BDT 200, 000 (CHF 3,077) has been allocated for the affected people of the Fenchuganj upazilla. 350 sarees and 20 lungis have already been distributed to people who were affected while another 70 tonnes of rice and BDT 200, 000 (CHF 3,077) have been allocated for the affected people in the Bianibazar upazilla. In addition to this, rice, potato and cash grants have already been distributed and allocated for people who have been affected in some places.

Flood and disaster management minister Dr Abdur Razzaque visited the affected areas in Fenchuganj, Balaganj, Osmaninagar and Biswanath upazilas in Sylhet and Kamolganj upazilla in Moulvibazar on 23 June, 2010.

Considering the prevailing flood situation, BDRCS and IFRC's country office have already conducted an emergency assessment in Sylhet and Moulavibazar districts. The team found that many areas in these two districts have been flooded for the last month. Heavy rainfall upstream and inland has triggered this flood and caused severe damage to crops, livestock, fisheries and properties which in turn has triggered floods that have affected and are still affecting people.

People have taken shelter in schools, colleges, and flood centers and facing scarcity of food and water. But the number of people who have taken shelter is less in number when compared to the total affected population. Most of those who were affected are continuing to live in their inundated home due to a lack of space in flood shelters. People also remain in their houses as they felt insecure leaving their assets and their livestock. The price of regular household commodities have risen sharply and people are forced to purchase goods which are necessities at high prices.

People are expected to face food shortage due to the loss of their main crop, of Boro rice, to the floods. Again, if the monsoon season causes another flood then people will not be able to cultivate the upcoming crop. The prices of daily necessities are also rising every day which is an extra burden for them. In addition, the affected people are anxious for their children to continue their studies as their education has been disrupted by the flood.

Some international non-governmental organizations (INGOs), those who are already working in the affected areas are planning to provide assistance to affected people in the Sunamganj, Netrokona, Sylhet, Moulavibazar and Kishorganj districts.

## **Red Cross and Red Crescent action**

BDRCS has been monitoring the flood situation. BDRCS's headquarters has been receiving updates and information from district units on a regular basis.

BDRCS also took part in a multi-agency meeting called by the UN to look at health, water and sanitation needs of the affected people.

BDRCS and IFRC jointly conducted an assessment in Sylhet and Moulavibazar from 24 till 25 June, 2010. The assessment reports are currently being finalized. The Moulavibazar unit volunteers are trying to raise funds locally to assist the flood affected people; whereas, the Sylhet branch has provided support to 108 affected families already. On 26 June, some affected households at the Fenchuhganj upazilla were provided with a 4 kg package rice; five sachets of oral rehydration saline; and ten water purification tablets.

BDRCS headquarters is in close contact with the relevant department from the Ministry of Food and Disaster Management. Red Crescent volunteers trained in search and rescue; and first aid and emergency response are being kept on stand-by to respond to emergencies.

The IFRC has also been closely monitoring the situation. As per the decision made in the meeting held on 23 June, IFRC provided necessary support to BDRCS for conducting the assessment.

The IFRC's DM team is in close contact with the Disaster Emergency Response (DER) group members so as there is an exchange information and updates.

## How we work

All International Federation assistance seeks to adhere to the [Code of Conduct for the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and Non-Governmental Organizations \(NGO's\) in Disaster Relief](#) and the [Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Disaster Response \(Sphere\)](#) in delivering assistance to the most vulnerable.

The IFRC's vision is to inspire, encourage, facilitate and promote at all times all forms of humanitarian activities by National Societies, with a view to preventing and alleviating human suffering, and thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of human dignity and peace in the world.

The IFRC's work is guided by [Strategy 2020](#) which puts forward three strategic aims:

1. Save lives, protect livelihoods, and strengthen recovery from disaster and crises.
2. Enable healthy and safe living.
3. Promote social inclusion and a culture of non-violence and peace.

## Contact information

For further information specifically related to this operation please contact:

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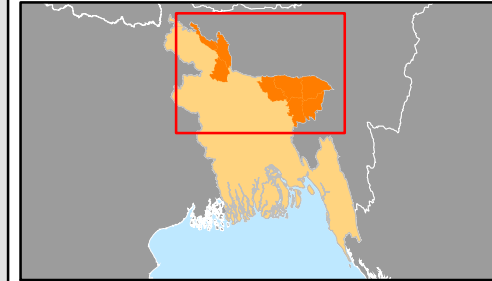
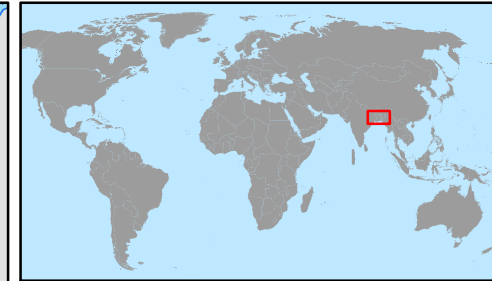
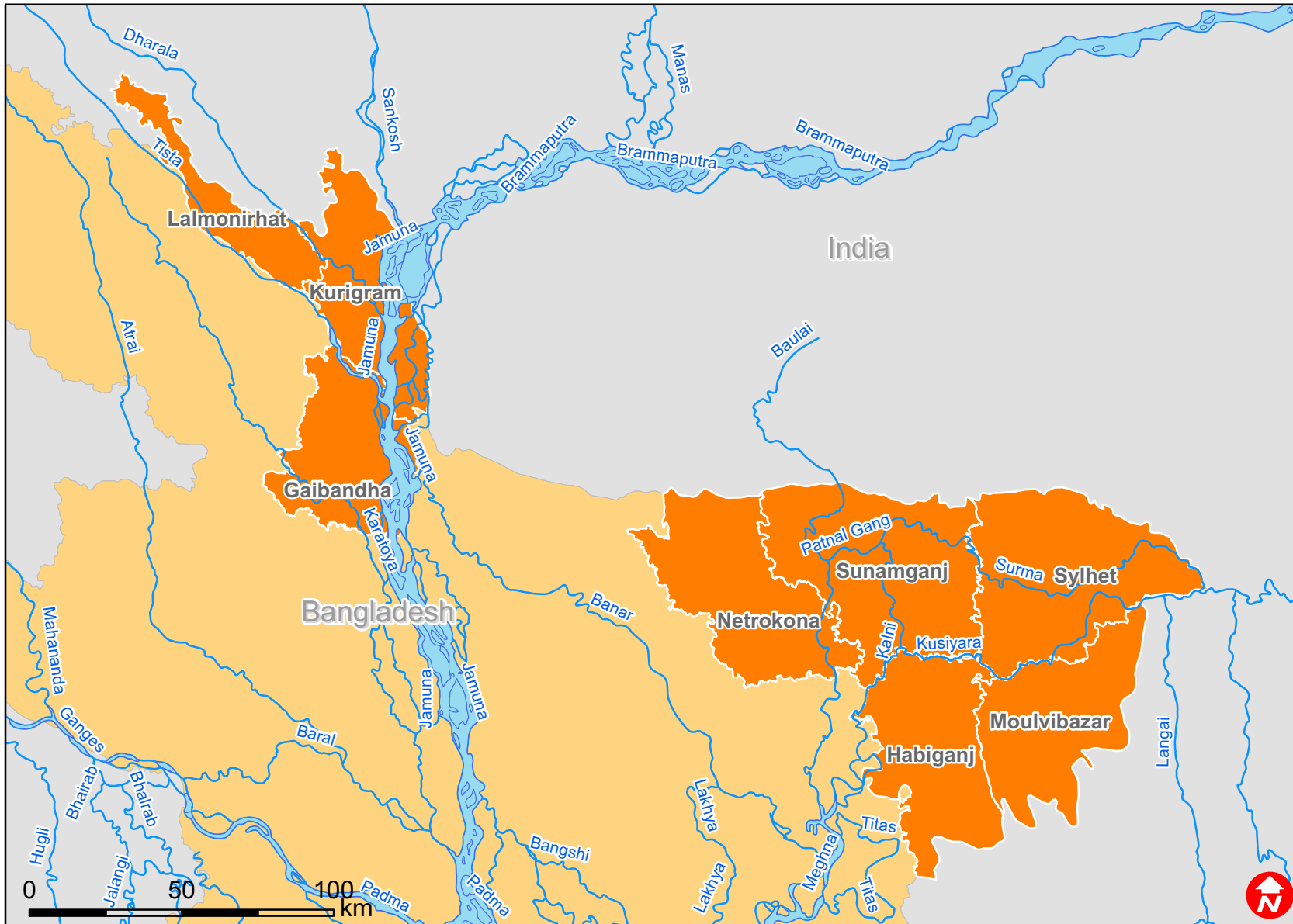
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[<map below; click here to return to the title page or contact information](#)



# Bangladesh: Floods



 Affected districts