



Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance

DISASTER CASE REPORT

Agency for
International
Development

Washington D.C.
20523

BANGLADESH - Floods

Date: July, August, September 1987

Location: The Ganges and Jamuna river basins

No. Dead: 2,055

No. Affected: 29,700,000

Damage: At least \$330,000,000 in damage occurred to crops, property, and infrastructure; 34,162 head of cattle were lost.

The Disaster

The river banks of the Ganges and Jamuna crested after unusually high rainfalls, flooding up to one-third of Bangladesh's land area. The disaster began when continuous deluges in late July and early August soaked the northern part of the country. As soil erosion from deforestation had already led to silt clogging, rivers throughout Bangladesh swelled over into neighboring farms and villages. Fifty of the country's 65 districts and 17 municipalities reported flooding. Waters did not fall below the danger level until September 30.

By the early part of that month, the damage had been done. One million ha of cropland lay under water. Approximately 2,055 persons had died while another 30 million of the nation's 104 million were affected. Attacks of malaria and typhoid became widespread. The inundations destroyed 2.2 million MT of rice, 34,162 head of livestock, and almost all wheat and rice seed stock. About 771,570 houses and over 1,000 schools lay in ruins with another 1.5 million homes partially damaged.

Action Taken by the Government of Bangladesh (BDG) and Non-Governmental Organizations

Recalling action taken during the flood of 1974, the BDG Ministry of Relief and Rehabilitation and Ministry of Food began distributing government food stocks in August. Military helicopters and other

vehicles helped in a massive evacuation of survivors and in transporting supplies. To coordinate its appeal for outside aid, the BDG set up an inter-ministerial unit attached to the President's Secretariat as well as a flood relief fund for donations. Medical teams from the Ministry of Health fanned out with ORS packs for diarrhea victims. Mobilizing 12,000 volunteers, the Bangladesh Red Cross distributed food, clothing, and medicine while the Ministry of Agriculture put together a long-term \$4 million rehabilitation program. On September 20, the BDG announced increased taxation and lower government salaries to help pay for relief.

Assistance Provided by the United States Government

The Deputy Chief of Mission, John S. Brims, determined that the situation constituted a disaster, and, on August 18, provided \$25,000 to the flood relief fund. In addition, FFP supplied 90,000 MT of Title III rice to replenish government stocks.

At the BDG's request, the USG stepped in to assist flood-affected farmers with \$1.5 million worth of wheat seed. While the amount went to the BDG as a grant, OFDA arranged for commodity procurement and transport. USG efforts to procure the INIA-66 and PAVON F-76 seed types originally desired by Bangladesh officials proved fruitless. Although used by local farmers, these were considered "old" varieties and, as such, hardly available in the donor countries. OFDA then investigated other options acceptable to the BDG and came up with the SERIE-M82, a more recently bred, higher-grade alternative.

The seed's purchase was arranged by OFDA from Transcontinental IMEX, Inc., in Mexico. USG consulate officials from Hermosillo, Mexico, supervised loading of the commodity at the port of Guaymas. The ship (M.V. Wadal) left on October 3 for Sacramento, California, where it picked up the Title III rice donation on October 7 and arrived in Chittagong, Bangladesh on November 8 to unload in time for winter planting.

Summary of USG Assistance

Ambassador's authority: \$25,000 check to BDG Relief Fund.....	\$25,000
3,500 MT of wheat seed from Mexico.(shipping included).....	\$1,533,421
90,000 MT of FFP Title III rice.....	\$15,000,000
Total OFDA.....	\$1,558,421
Total FFP.....	\$15,000,000
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>\$16,558,421</u>

Assistance Provided by U.S. Voluntary Agencies

CRS - contributed \$50,000 to Caritas.

CWS - donated \$25,000 to the Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh.

FHI - gave \$40,000.

SCF/US - distributed emergency food rations and medicine to 12,000 affected people, valued at \$11,630.

TOTAL \$126,630

Assistance Provided by the International Community

International Organizations

Caritas Internationalis - donated \$1,121,500 from its appeal.

EEC - donated \$447,600 to the FRG Red Cross to buy relief materials and supplied 25,000 MT of food, valued at \$3,580,800.

LRCS - collected contributions from governments and member societies for \$510,650 to Bangladesh Red Cross.

UNDP - gave cash grant of \$50,000. UNDP Resident Representative coordinated international and U.N. agency donations.

UNDRO - at the request of the BDG, the UNDRO coordinator surveyed the disaster-affected areas and sent a team to assist the BDG and the UNDP resident representative in the assessment of damaged infrastructure and emergency needs. UNDRO also contributed \$25,000.

WCC - contributed \$50,000.

WFP - provided 21,345 MT of wheat (including Belgium's contribution) and 5,400 MT of rice.

WHO - donated water purification tablets, valued at \$8,500.

Governments

Austria - donated \$39,000.

Australia - provided \$3,200 to the BDG Relief Fund, \$107,900 to UNDRO, and \$71,800 to Australian non-governmental organizations providing assistance in Bangladesh.

Belgium - furnished 13,000 MT of wheat through WFP and donated \$79,260 for medical services and \$264,200 for Red Cross.

Canada - contributed \$151,500 for Health Care through LRCS; \$40,000 for relief supplies through Canadian Lutheran World Relief; \$227,300 for purchase of essential drugs; \$12,000 through World Vision Canada; and 35,000 MT of wheat through WFP.

Denmark - donated \$285,714 through the Danish Red Cross and \$285,714 through Danish Church Aid.

Finland - gave \$22,624 via the Finnish Free Mission.

Germany, Fed. Rep. - sent vehicles and rescue boats through the German Red Cross.

Hungary - furnished medical supplies worth \$11,500.

Iraq - dispatched 5 helicopters and contributed food, clothing, and medicine.

Ireland - donated \$108,540 to an Irish NGO.

Italy - sent 5,000 MT of rice through WFP.

Japan - shipped 50,000 MT of rice and 50,000 MT of wheat, and provided \$1,000,000 to WFP.

Korea, Rep. of - provided \$50,000 plus ambulances worth \$100,000.

Netherlands - gave \$975,610 worth of relief supplies plus 12,500 MT of rice through WFP.

Norway - contributed \$503,432 to a Norwegian non-governmental organization.

New Zealand - donated \$6,061 to the BDG Relief Fund and \$12,093 to the UNDRO appeal.

Pakistan - sent \$579,374.

Saudi Arabia - provided 25,000 MT of wheat through WFP and \$10,000,000 for emergency relief materials.

Sweden - supplied 30,000 MT of wheat through WFP.

Switzerland - gave \$20,000 worth of services to the UNDRO emergency assessment mission, \$60,000 to buy drugs and food, and \$137,031 for basic drugs and hospital services.

United Kingdom - donated \$47,695 to U.K. NGO Concern for food supplies and housing repair and \$10,000 to UNDRO.

Vatican - contributed \$10,000.

Yugoslavia - provided relief materials worth \$100,000.

Non-Governmental Organizations

ADRA/Australia - donated \$25,000.

Diakonisches Werk/German, Fed. Rep. - contributed \$432,400 to local church groups.

Help the Aged/U.K. - supplied \$49,110 for relief goods.

LWC - donated \$262,000.

Norwegian Church Aid - provided \$89,500 for agriculture.

Oxfam/U.K. - gave \$108,698 and seeds worth \$18,493.

Wolf and Wolf Co./the Netherlands - supplied 50 MT of potato seed.

YMCA/Switzerland - contributed \$10,000.

TOTAL \$22,110,799