

Executive Summary

**Joint Government of Bangladesh/ United Nations Inter - Agency Needs
Assessment Mission Report
on
Mahalchari Upazila of
Khagrachari Hill District,
Bangladesh.**

October 2003

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This joint report has been prepared following a Government of Bangladesh/ United Nations assessment mission to Mahalchari Upazila of Khagrachari Hill District in 9 villages affected by violence that occurred on August 26th 2003.

The mission was composed of representatives of the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs, the Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council, FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, WHO, and the UNDP NGO partner agency Caritas.

The mission carried out its assessment to:

- Determine immediate and medium term needs.
- Determine how an interagency action might complement the response already made. by national, regional and local authorities.
- Arrange for follow up relief operations.

The team expresses its gratitude to;

- The Government of Bangladesh in the Ministry of Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs.
- The Chittagong Hill Tracts Regional Council.
- The Hill District Council- Khagrachari.
- The Khagrachari Deputy Commissioner and his officials.
- The Civil Surgeon.
- Members of the Law Enforcing Agencies.
- The UNO, UP Chairman, Headmen and Karbaris of the affected areas.
- The people of Lemuchari, Nua Para, Babu Para, Rameshu Karbari Para, Paharthali, Sawmill Para, Basanta Karbari Para, Kerenganala and Durpujyanal.

The team is particularly appreciative of:

- All of the support extended.
- Their assessment of the situation.
- Their perspective as to how the United Nations agencies should now proceed.

The report presented contains the results of the assessment mission carried out in the villages affected, some 5 weeks after the violence of the 26th including:

- Our recommendations for a coordinated immediate response, which will alleviate further suffering and hardship,
- Our recommendations for the medium term restoration of family and community livelihoods through productive activities.

The mission witnessed at first hand the comprehensive response of the GoB, and complements the Government for the timeliness of its actions in the midst of budgetary limitations.

The mission also wishes to record the early humanitarian actions taken by national and international Non Governmental Agencies. These were timely and critical to meet the most immediate emergency needs.

On the basis of the assessment the mission reached the following conclusions and recommendations.

Coordination and Resource Mobilization.

UNDP should continue to supervise and support substantially as well as operationally the UN humanitarian intervention and recovery programme required to support families in the 9 villages of Mahalchari Upazila of Khagrachari Hill District.

UNDP should mobilize immediate initial budgetary support of US\$ 128,800 to fund interventions which will alleviate further suffering.

UNDP should bring to the attention of the donor community through, a United Nations Mahalchari Appeal (see page 2) the need for additional financial support of US\$ 813,000 to fund, those unmet immediate and medium term needs that could not be supported from the funds available to the UN agencies. This includes;

Major Shortfalls: US\$ 546,800 mainly targeted to find a durable solution to housing, the replacement of non food household items, US\$100,000 to fund medium term restoration needs and US\$ 70,000 to fund operational management and coordination needs.

To alleviate further suffering the mission recommends.

Food Aid Assistance.

- 433 families should be provided with critical food aid assistance until the next harvest in June 2004. The mission in noting the rice allocation made by the GoB up to December 2003 recommends the immediate inclusion of pulses, vegetable oil, iodized salt, canned fish and the distribution of fortified biscuits to women and children.
- With the December phasing out of the government's rice support, the mission recommends that WFP, from December to June 2004, include rice in its food aid basket.

To provide important non commodity support, including storage, transport, and NGO related support, the mission recommends that UNDP approve a budget allocation of US\$ 16,800.

Health, including Reproductive Health.

- Of critical importance, has been the medical assistance provided from the fielding by the local civil surgeon's office of medical mobile outreach teams. However the work of these teams can not be sustained from an already over stretched and under staffed medical system in Khagrachari.
- In the absence of confidence to travel outside their villages to seek medical assistance, the mission recommends (up to February 2004) salary support, provision of essential drugs, logistical and other support be provided to maintain the services of 2 mobile medical teams.
- In the opinion of the mission the most critical health challenge faced by families is increased exposure to malaria. In order to minimize the case load and reduce transmission, the mission recommends that: a mass blood survey and the treatment of all fever cases be undertaken, and that 400 insecticide treated mosquito nets be provided.

To support these health interventions immediately, the mission recommends, that UNDP approve a budget of US\$25,000.

Housing and Non- Food household Items.

- As homes destroyed in all 9 villages do not fit a fixed design or the use of common construction material, the mission recommends the adoption of a cost effective **3 model design** approach as the fairest and most equitable policy approach for this programme.
- Based on actual on site surveyed measurements in all 9 villages, the mission recommends the acceptance of the proposal submitted by Caritas which would provide for the reconstruction of 276 homes: 30 Model 1 homes of 14 ft by 10 ft; 188 Model 2 homes of 20ft by 12ft, and 58 Model 3 homes of 25ft by 15 ft.
- The mission also recommends the proposal by Caritas for the repair of a further 27 homes that suffered structural damage. In each case the budget for essential repair works should not exceed US\$ 1,100 per home.

The total cost of house construction and repair has been budgeted at US\$ 494,800. To start the housing programme the mission, because of budget constraints, recommends to UNDP that they approve an allocation to Caritas of US\$ 28,000 to allow the construction of the first 30 homes proposed under Model 1.

- As a result of the burning or the looting of their homes, 433 families lost all of their household supplies including among others, cooking utensils, bedding, and clothes.
To enable, in an equitable and fair way, families to purchase replacements according to their own priority needs and clothes size (and also for purposes of efficiency and cost effectiveness) it is recommended that a **cash grant** of US\$ 170 (Taka 10,000) be made available to each family.

Despite, the urgency of these needs for household supplies, the mission is unable because of budget constraint's to identify at this time immediately available funding support. The mission does however urge UN DP to bring this intervention to the urgent attention of the donor community.

Agriculture.

- If families are to be best positioned to prepare for the next planting season the mission believes it is imperative that the 311 farming families most directly affected be provided with replacement seeds, fertilizers/pesticides, tools and implements, fodder and feed.

To provide this assistance the mission recommends that UNDP approve a budget of US\$ 59,000.

Medium term restoration of family and community livelihoods.

To achieve the objective of a medium term restoration of family and community livelihoods, the mission recommends that **UNDP develop a resource mobilization plan for US\$ 100,000 to support the following key interventions :**

- Provision of fruit tree saplings.
- Assistance to restore off farm employment by replacing destroyed rice husking machines, and rice mills.
- Provision of seeds for summer vegetable planting.
- Rebuilding cattle and poultry sheds.
- Replacing destroyed or looted fishing boats, nets and other essential equipment.
- Restocking stolen poultry and livestock.
- Replacing destroyed or looted irrigation pumps and piping.