Bangladesh: Flood
Final report early action

The Forecast based Action by the DREF allocated CHF 234,803 to implement early actions to reduce and mitigate the impact of Flood in Bangladesh. The early actions to be conducted have been pre-agreed with the National Society and are described in the Early Action Protocol.

A. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Summary of the Early Action Protocol (EAP)

Bangladesh is well known as a land of rivers. The country is prone to flooding as it is located on the Brahmaputra River Delta, also known as the Ganges Delta, and the many distributaries flowing into the Bay of Bengal. There are over 230 rivers and tributaries across the country. Being part of such a basin and being less than 5 meters above mean sea level, Bangladesh faces the cumulative effects of floods due to water flashing from nearby hills, the accumulation of the inflow of water from upstream catchments and locally heavy rainfall enhanced by drainage congestion. The country faces river flooding and riverbank erosion almost every year. With the effect of global warming and climate change, Bangladesh is in the list of the 10 worst affected countries in the world. Recurrence of severe river flooding has also increased with the change of global climate. The climate change causes frequent severe river flooding, which is affecting not only the lives and livelihoods but also obstructing economic growth of the country. Floods have the greatest impact on people who are living in low-lying areas, living below the poverty line, living in fragile houses and have a high number of dependent family members to care for. The people who live on the Char land (river island) and on the Brahmaputra-Jamuna river basin are the most vulnerable to river flooding and bank erosion. According to the World Bank, extreme poverty rates are higher in the districts of the Brahmaputra-Jamuna basin.¹

On 25 June 2020, BDRCS decided to start taking measures for preparing EAP implementation as the pre-activation trigger was reached. The Global Flood Awareness System (GloFAS) forecast on 24 June suggested that on 2 July, the water level at the Bahadurabad station will cross a once in a ten-year return period (115 000 m³/s) and remain consistent for three days. This corresponds to an impact forecast that 3.7 million population or/ and about 1 million households will be affected. This forecasted flood depth was then combined with a vulnerability map, to estimate the percentage of houses that could be at risk of getting impacted in each union. Vulnerability map was prepared by BDRCS/GRC FbF team considering socio economic condition, topography and infrastructure of houses of the possible flood affected areas

All unions with more than 25 per cent of houses at risk were placed on a ‘priority’ list and the top-ranking unions were selected for early actions. The final activation trigger was reached on 28 June 2020 with the five-day deterministic forecast of the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) of the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB). When the FFWC’s five-days deterministic forecast showed that the water level at Bahadurabad point will cross 20.35m – Forecast based Financing (FbF) threshold, BDRCS with support from IFRC, German Red Cross (GRC) and other Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre (RCCC) partners fully activated the second stage implementation of the EAP. As defined in the EAP, the BDRCS targeted 3,300 most vulnerable households from three districts. Eight most impacted unions Kulkandi, Belgachi and Chukaibari unions in Jamalpur District, Hatia, Chilmari and Ramna unions in Kurigram District and Kamarjani and Kapashia unions of Gaibandha district were covered by the EAP and 500 additional beneficiaries from two more unions named Erendabari and Mollarchar under Gaibandha district were covered by Swiss Red Cross (SRC) - funding with technical and implementation support from BDRCS/GRC FbF team.

The planned intervention aimed to reduce human suffering and losses by providing cash assistance, evacuation support and first aid support ahead of the flood peak. As per the EAP, BDRCS targeted 3,300 households through Forecast based Action (FbA) by the DREF and additional 500 households through SRC-funding. However, 11 beneficiaries of FbA by the DREF did not receive their cash assistance within EAP implementation time duration and as per the FbA by the DREF cash modalities, BPO returned the money back to BDRCS which was reimbursed to FbA by the DREF fund. Boat evacuation support was provided in a small scale, because of the COVID-19 situation and also considering the limited time for implementing the EAP. In 3 districts, 12 boats (8 in Gaibandha, 2 in Jamalpur and 2 in Kurigram) were used to support evacuation whereas there was opportunity to hire more boats, but due to short lead time and the ongoing pandemic situation the number was limited. During the EAP implementation BDRCS evacuated 350 people with their moveable asset and livestock in the EAP implementation area. Further, people were reluctant to relocate until their houses were submerged and by that time FbF could no longer offer the evacuation support in the community.
B. OPERATIONAL STRATEGY

Overall objective

The overall objective was to: (i) Provide support for boat evacuation of people, livestock, moveable assets, (ii) distribute multi-purpose cash grant (MPCG) of BDT 4,500 (CHF 50) and (iii) provide basic first aid service for injuries and sickness. BDRCS aimed to support 3,300 households with multipurpose cash grants and provide first aid and evacuation as per the need of the affected communities. The operation intended to assist the vulnerable households residing in the high-risk areas for early action to ensure their preparedness for potential flood that could harm their lives and livelihoods.

Summary of EAP implementation

Host National Society

Ahead of the flood season, the FbF technical team prepared a flood forecast monitoring log sheet and monitoring report format. The technical team monitored the flood situation since 1 June 2020 from Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) of Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) and Global Flood Awareness System (GloFAS). According to GloFAS 30-days probabilistic forecast and FFWC 10-days probabilistic forecast, the pre-activation trigger was supposed to reach on 24 June, but the forecast did not show that the water level would remain for at least three days above the FbF impact level. On 25 June, the criteria for pre-activation reached and the activation committee meeting was held at the BDRCS NHQ, where the activation committee decided to activate the EAP for monsoon flood 2020. As for the pre-activation of the flood EAP, BDRCS coordinated with the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), Department of Disaster Management (DDM), district and sub-district administrations, local government, IFRC and Red Cross Red Crescent Participating National Societies (PNSs), World Food Programme (WFP), Bangladesh Post Office (BPO) and FbF working group to implement the flood EAP in an exceptionally challenging environment due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation.

Once the EAP activation committee decided the pre-activation, the implementation process started through communication with relevant units/branches. BDRCS announced precaution to its Unit/Branch Executive Committee members, volunteers, Unit Level Officers (ULOs) for necessary preparedness including coordination with local administration, local Post Office and suppliers from the very beginning of the rising trend of water level in the upstream. BDRCS NHQ communicated with BPO to keep them informed about the situation and their readiness for cash distribution if any trigger point was reached this year. BDRCS NHQ also instructed 11 Unit Offices to keep close coordination with local government and local Post Office for cash distribution readiness. At the same time, BDRCS and GRC deployed staff and National Disaster Response Team (NDRT) volunteers in three districts (Jamalpur, Kurigram and Gaibandha) identifying the union level impact-based forecast. FbF team deployed in the units started EAP and Open Data Kit (ODK) orientation2, beneficiary data collection and evacuation immediately after the deployment to prepare for the cash distribution after activation. Based on the deterministic forecast of the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) of Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) the second trigger i.e., the Activation trigger was reached on 28 June 2020 and BDRCS Activation Committee meeting was held on the same day to confirm the activation of the flood EAP. BDRCS Units were well prepared for the season and after the activation instruction from BDRCS NHQ, the concerned ULOs started all the activities to implement the EAP.

This forecast was combined with an exposure map, to estimate the per cent of houses that were at risk of destruction in each union. All unions with greater than 25 per cent of houses at risk were placed on a “priority” list. The unions on the priority list were then put in order according to the vulnerability index. The EAP was implemented in 8 unions from 3 districts, starting with the most vulnerable on the priority list and proceeding down in order of vulnerability. As planned in the EAP, BDRCS acted for 3 districts to reach 3,300 households. BDRCS also made some adaptations to early actions by providing some additional support like masks, sanitizers etc. as part of the preparation to implement during COVID-19 situation.

After the pre-activation of the EAP on 25 June 2020, BDRCS NHQ deployed 1 NHQ staff and 12 NDRT team members for the preparation of the implementation of the early actions on 26 June. This process was initiated through orienting 112 Red Crescent Youth (RCY) volunteers (93 male and 19 female) on EAP and ODK data collection then conducting a beneficiary selection survey in the most vulnerable 8 unions from 3 districts (Kulkandi, Belgachi and Chuakabari unions in Jamalpur District, Hatia, Chilmari and Ramna unions in Kurigram District and Kamarjan and Kapashia unions of Gaibandha District). Orientations on evacuation support and for cash distribution were provided to the volunteers. Beneficiary selection survey were conducted from 27 to 29 June 2020. Boat evacuation support was also provided.

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2 Open Data Kit (ODK) is a free, open-source suite of tools that allows data collection using Android mobile devices and data submission to an online server, even without an Internet connection or mobile carrier service at the time of data collection.
simultaneously from 28 June to 1 July after reaching the activation trigger. Unconditional cash grant was completed from 1 July to 4 July in all three districts. A total of 3,289 households (HHs), each received BDT 4,500 whereas the targeted HHs were 3,300. 11 beneficiaries didn’t reach the distribution point during the disbursement and BDRCS Unit could not reach them through mobile phones due to network problem and also many of the beneficiaries could not charge their mobile as there was no electricity in many areas during the flood. Lesson learnt workshop was completed on 5 July in all three districts. Deployed staff and NDRT came back to the NHQ on 6 July.

BDRCS successfully implemented the flood EAP in three flood prone districts simultaneously. It is the first time BDRCS activated the flood EAP with FbA by the DREF funding and this despite being in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic which added additional challenges like travelling for data collection, ensuring social distancing while cash disbursement and boat evacuation etc. to implementing the early actions.

Some of the major achievements of flood EAP implementation:

- Successfully implemented flood EAP during COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown situation in three most vulnerable districts.
- Provided unconditional cash grant to 3,289 households (total 15,781 people) of BDT 4,500 to each household.
- Boat evacuation support were provided to 70 households (approximately 350 people) with their moveable assets and livestock.
- Basic First Aid support were provided to 150 people.
- Reached 278 PWD in 269 households through cash assistance within the total 3,289 households.
- Overcoming the time constraints of implementing FbF early actions in a shorter lead time of eight days and made it possible to implement the whole early action activities within eight days.
- Active involvement of RC Unit Executive Committee members in implementing the EAP.
- Timely mobilization of RC Units to begin implementing Early Actions as per agreed EAP and activation.
- Successful coordination between BDRCS, local government, BPO and FbF working group in implementing the early actions.
- Efforts like ensuring social distance during disbursement and evacuation, providing mask and hand washing support, awareness on Covid-19 etc. were made to ensure the COVID-19 preventive measures among the people during cash distribution to reduce the related challenges as much as possible.

BDRCS unit was successful enough to involve local government to reach areas which are not accessible. The following table shows the details of the operation where BDRCS implemented.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Upazila (Sub-district)</th>
<th>Union</th>
<th>Number of Beneficiary (to be reached)</th>
<th>Cash Received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jamalpur</td>
<td>Islampur</td>
<td>Kulkandi</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Belgacha</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dewanganj</td>
<td>Chukaibari</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurigram</td>
<td>Ulipur</td>
<td>Hatia</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chilmari</td>
<td>Chilmari</td>
<td>468</td>
<td>468</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Ramna</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>466</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaibandha</td>
<td>Gaibandha Sadar</td>
<td>Kamarjani</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundorganj</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kapashia</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of beneficiaries</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>3,300</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,289</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Red Cross Red Crescent Movement**

The EAP was jointly developed by IFRC, GRC and Climate Centre, and they continued to provide expertise and support during the operation. The activation was pulled together with the technical support from GRC, RCCC and IFRC. SRC supported 500 more families with cash support along with the EAP in SRC’s project area where impact threshold crossed 25 per cent. GRC supported BDRCS to activate the EAP and deployed staff for the smooth implementation of the EAP.

**German Red Cross**

With more than 30 years of presence in Bangladesh and its global FbF experience, the German Red Cross is a strong technical partner for BDRCS and supported the development and implementation of the EAP from the beginning. GRC provided substantial HR and technical support to ensure that BDRCS is in a position to leverage the strategic advantages of FbF. In close collaboration with BDRCS’ DRM department, GRC facilitated partnerships and alliances within the Red Cross Red Crescent movement along with other humanitarian and governmental partners such as the World Food Programme or the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR), Department of Disaster Management and local government. Given that they are involved with FbF projects in other countries in the region, GRC Bangladesh ensures that regional linkages are established and maintained for horizontal learning and broader policy alignment. For developing the EAP to implement it on ground, GRC provided overall coordination support through its FbF project staff at HQ, Dhaka and field level.

Key activities and support by GRC for EAP implementation:

- **Developing flood EAP:** GRC provided all necessary technical and other support to develop and finalize the Flood EAP
- **Monitoring support:** GRC staff developed and maintained the flood monitoring log with support of RCCC Advisor to monitor floods update during the season. Also, the team provided support with monitoring EAP implementation and maintained monitoring data for the implementation.
- **Technical support on EAP activation and impact based forecasting:** GRC provided all technical support along with FbF technical team to decide on EAP activation by supporting on analyzing the flood data received from GloFAS and FFWC and identifying intervention area through developing impact based forecast mapping
- **Data collection and finalizing:** GRC provided the whole support on developing ODK questionnaire, maintaining ODK database, sorting and finalizing beneficiary data based on pre-identified criteria's and developing final beneficiary data for all implementing units, BDRCS NHQ and BPO.
- **Implementation of flood EAP:** After reaching the pre-activation trigger, GRC deployed three staff in three districts to support BDRCS units to implement EAP and maintaining overall coordination among BDRCS NHQ and unit. GRC staff provided orientation to 112 RCY volunteers in 3 districts on EAP and ODK data collection. During data collection and implementing EAP, GRC provided all monitoring and technical support for the implementation.
• **Logistics support:** GRC also provided logistics support like the device for data collection and transports for monitoring and implementation of flood EAP.

• **Coordination:** The officials deployed to three units also maintained coordination with local government and BPO with support from respective units. During disbursement, GRC provided all coordination support in communication with BDRCS and BPO for number change and resending message.

• **Lesson learned and reporting:** After the implementation, GRC support BDRCS unit in conducting lesson learned workshop and compiling the learnings from all three districts. GRC also provided necessary support to draft and finalize reports related to EAP implementation.

When the trigger reached, GRC provided required technical and implementation support to BDRCS to activate the Flood EAP and implement the early actions in the affected districts. GRC deployed FbF staff from Dhaka to the field for helping BDRCS to implement the EAP. They also provided technical and implementation support to Swiss Red Cross in implementing flood EAP in two additional unions in Gaibandha districts.

**Red Cross Red Crescent Climate Centre**
The RCCC supports BDRCS, GRC, BMD, FFWC and other Movement and non-Movement partners to anticipate changes in climate-related risks and provides technical support to the FbF project by analyzing climate data for improved early action triggers. Technical guidance is available at both HQ level for policy and strategy matters, as well as at country level via a technical advisor. In addition, the RCCC fosters the exchange of climate scientists at the regional and global level also through its strong linkage with academic institutions. The RCCC was instrumental in developing the trigger for floods and consulted for its assessment when trigger conditions are reached. The RCCC Technical Adviser based in Dhaka together with FFWC and BDRCS monitored the forecasts and trigger conditions. The RCCC technical adviser helped in activating the trigger based on the forecasts from GloFAS and FFWC. The EAP was implemented in coordination with the RCCC technical adviser.

**International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies**
As the umbrella organization, IFRC is involved in the broader strategic discussions of the FbF implementation and facilitates close cooperation within the Red Cross Red Crescent movement as well as with other humanitarian and governmental partners. Linkages with other ongoing humanitarian programmes and initiatives are established to ensure horizontal learning and avoid duplication of efforts. Ahead of an EAP activation, IFRC was involved in preparatory steps such as the coordination and orientation of BDRCS Unit Offices and the implementation of the EAP. In addition, IFRC coordinated the FbA by the DREF to ensure that funds are available for the activation. During the implementation of the EAP, IFRC provided support and guidance for the procurement, financial and PMER processes at Dhaka level. Due to COVID-19 situation, IFRC did not deploy any staff in field level. All the monitoring and coordination were carried out virtually.

**American Red Cross**
As a strategic partner of BDRCS, the American Red Cross has actively supported the FbF approach, especially in terms of research for quick beneficiary selection and cash distribution modalities. Through its ongoing projects, AmCross has continuously strengthened BDRCS’ implementation capacity and can quickly mobilize BDRCS volunteers and resources if necessary. In the Agreement of Cooperation between WFP, GRC, and SRC, the American Red Cross signed as a witness, highlighting its technical support to the FbF work in Bangladesh.

**Swiss Red Cross**
The Swiss Red Cross has actively contributed to BDRCS’ efforts to implement FbF for floods. SRC is implementing FbF activities as part of its DRM programming in Gaibandha District and will support BDRCS during an EAP activation in Gaibandha. SRC continues to strengthen relationships with local level government counterparts and community-based disaster management systems in order to implement FbF quicker and more efficiently. SRC-BDRCS signed agreements with Union Parishads and Upazila (sub-district) Parishad of Fulchari in Gaibandha to strengthen the capacity of UDMCs and Upazila Disaster Management Committee (UzDMC) on disaster risk management. The Swiss Red Cross is a party in the Agreement of Cooperation between WFP, GRC, and SRC that highlights the will to collaborate more closely on FbF and the flood EAP. During the activation of the flood EAP, Swiss Red Cross supported additional 500 households with cash grant under the flood EAP in SRC’s project area where household asset damage projection were more than 25 percent.

**Overview of non-RCRC actors in country**

**Government of Bangladesh’s Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief and Department of Disaster Management (DDM)**
Through its extensive humanitarian programming, BDRCS has already set up an excellent collaboration mechanism with the Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief (MoDMR) and the Department of Disaster Management which is strengthened through the advocacy for the FbF approach. In turn, MoDMR and DDM supports BDRCS’ EAP by granting access to government data on vulnerability and by discussing best approaches to implement early actions in a logistically
feasible way. BDRCS collaborated with MoDMR & DDM through HCTT as co-led by the MoDMR, met and communicated on time to be ready to complement GoB-led response efforts for monsoon flood 2020. The Needs Assessment Working Group (NAWG) led by DDM coordinated a rapid joint assessment of the situation in collaboration with the BDRCS and other national authorities and partners with presence in the most impacted areas.

Bangladesh Post Office
Under the government’s Ministry of Post and Telecommunication, the Bangladesh Post Office (BPO) provides Electronic Money Transfer Services (EMTS) via its wide network of post offices. It provides nationwide coverage and extensive experience in money transfers which make the BPO a reliable partner for the EAP’s early action of cash distribution. BPO provided continuous support in implementing the flood EAP by providing its EMTS service to BDRCS at the field level within a very short time.

Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre
Under the Bangladesh Water Development Board (BWDB) the Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) is situated to monitor and forecast the water level of 54 stations in Bangladesh. Along the Jamuna river basin, there are six FFWC stations. For this EAP, the five-day deterministic forecast and the flood depth map provided by FFWC was used as per described in the EAP summary. The priority analysis was performed based on the 5-days deterministic forecasts raster provided by the FFWC.

World Food Programme
The World Food Programme is implementing the FbF approach for floods and has been part of a technical working group together with BDRCS and GRC to jointly advance the research on beneficiary selection and impact analysis as well as to align the FbF strategy with government counterparts. Evolving from the technical working group, an ‘Agreement of Cooperation’ was signed among WFP, GRC, and SRC, with BDRCS, AmCross, and IFRC as witnesses. The agreement outlines the parties’ will to collaborate more closely on FbF and the early action implementation of the EAP. WFP as a strategic partner especially for advocacy purposes at the national and regional level and supported BDRCS in the EAP implementation by activating in its pre-identified area in Kurigram, Jamalpur and Gaibandha districts. WFP used the same trigger methodology as BDRCS/GRC which allowed for a coordinated implementation of early actions. WFP pre-activated flood SOP on 4 July 2020 and activated on 11 July 2020. With support from the local NGO, WFP completed cash distribution within 14 July 2020. WFP supported 54 unions in Kurigram district, 21 unions in Jamalpur district, 29 unions in Gaibandha district, 5 unions in Bogura district and 24 unions in Sirajganj district. As BDRCS completed cash distribution WFP coordinated with BDRCS to avoid beneficiary duplication.

Timeline of the EAP

![Figure 2: Timeline of flood EAP activation and implementation](image)

How the EAP reduced the impact on the population: The early actions
BDRCS with support from GRC implemented pre-agreed early actions in three Jamuna floodplain districts to reduce the impact on the population. Those early actions were:

- Distribution of unconditional cash assistance to the most vulnerable people.
- Provision of basic first aid.
- Boat evacuation of people with available local boats along with their movable assets and livestock to a safer place.

The early actions were selected to provide an incentive to people to evacuate out of the flood risk areas and thereby effectively reducing or avoiding the immediate impact ahead of the flood peak like loss of life, loss of asset, loss of
livestock’s and injuries. Through evacuation support BDRCS unit evacuated 70 households along with their house, moveable assets, livestock and small business outlets which enabled them to protect their lives and assets from the flood and reduce the risk of life and asset loss. 150 people received first aid which supported them to further reduce their medical expenditure. Almost 87 per cent beneficiaries were planning to buy food for their immediate consumption using the cash assistance they received which will reduce their vulnerability and will ensure food security during flood. More than one fourth of the people who received cash were also planning to spend money on any emergency health care including medicine to reduce their health-related risk. Around 14.7 per cent mentioned about hiring labor to shift their houses to a safer place and around 11 per cent had the plan to reinforce house and raising the plinth of the house. This ensured that early action was successful in meeting the basic needs of the local people, who are going to suffer during the coming flood and reduced the impact on the population by supporting them on their planned activities.

**Usefulness of actions in case of non-occurring event**

There is stop mechanism envisaged in this EAP. It may be pre-activated but not activated if the FFWC 5-days deterministic forecast do not fulfil the trigger activation criteria. Beneficiary data may be collected but they might not necessarily receive the cash assistance. The RCY volunteers make it clear to the beneficiaries during the data collection that they might not receive the money if the flood forecast does not fulfil the FbF trigger criteria. In this case the event did occur, so the question is not applicable.

**Operational support services**

**Human Resources**

After the activation of pre-activation trigger BDRCS oriented 112 volunteers on EAP and ODK of the respective Units. Later, additional 43 volunteers were oriented on evacuation, Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA) and cash disbursement to manage the boat evacuation and disbursement. Due to COVID-19 pandemic situation, the number of volunteers were limited in all three districts where EAP was activated. As the command chain was already coordinated and the relevant actors were sensitized of their own duties in the protocol, the project implementation went smoothly. 

**Logistics and supply chain**

Local procurement of logistics items for cash disbursement management was done before the date of disbursement by the BDRCS Units in accordance with the operation’s requirements, and aligned to IFRC’s procurement standards, processes and procedures. Logistics for the bank transfers to the units via national banks on 29 June, 2020, as the banking system was already in use due to previous operations. The FbA by DREF covered the bank fees related to these transfers.

**Information Technology**

The BDRCS utilized existing capacity to facilitate the collection, collation, analysis and dissemination of relevant multisector data and information so as to support evidence-based decision making that can contribute to an effective humanitarian intervention.

**Communications and Information**

Project information was shared via social media, BDRCS website and national broadcasting to ensure transparency and accountability. News include following –

- [https://youtu.be/RCfQbui0Dtc](https://youtu.be/RCfQbui0Dtc)

**Community Engagement and Accountability (CEA)**

BDRCS has trained RCY volunteers on community engagement and accountability (CEA). BDRCS opened a central coordination centre with the support from trained RCY volunteers as well as the RC Unit (Branch) Offices also opened 24 hours hotline where a RCY volunteer was present and received 26 calls from FbA DREF implementation areas during the implementation. The Unit offices hung the list of the beneficiaries list at least one day ahead of the distribution and placed BDRCS hotline number if there is any objection regarding the beneficiary selection. During beneficiary selection survey and boat evacuation support all RCY volunteers used face masks and maintained physical/social distances. On the day of distribution RCY volunteers disseminated COVID-19 safety measures and maintained physical/social
distances. Complain box and hotline number were placed on the distribution centre for knowing the perception or complain (if any) from the community. All the local governments were aware and was present during the distribution.

Security
To ensure security of the beneficiaries, unconditional cash grants were distributed according to the IFRC Minimum Standards for Protection, Gender, Inclusion (e.g. in daylight, in presence of local community and local government and etc.). Also, complaint mechanisms including hotline and complaint box were put in place to register beneficiary complaints such as fraud and safety issues. Distributions were held under monitoring and coordination by Unit Level Officer and volunteers while local emergency officers provided security service.

Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting (PMER)
BDRCS deployed NDRT along with FbF staff from NHQ in response to the early actions. Local Unit Disaster Response Team (UDRT) members were deployed to project target areas to monitor the implementation and evaluate the impact of the project. Due to travel restriction, there were no IFRC staff present on site monitoring. In the post activation phase of the flood EAP implementation, BDRCS/GRC organized lesson learned workshops in all 3 districts where BDRCS implemented the EAP.

Administration and Finance
IFRC provided the necessary operational support for review, validation of budgets, bank transfers, and technical assistance to National Societies on procedures for justification of expenditures, including the review and validation of invoices. BDRCS has been supported for many years by IFRC and is accustomed to these financial procedures. The IFRC finance and administration team provided support to the operation as requested by the BDRCS and the IFRC programme manager and budget holder.

Challenges and lessons learned
The lessons learned exercise was facilitated by the FbF team (from BDRCS and GRC) in consultation with BDRCS Unit Offices and Unit EC members. The exercise used face to face meeting and consultation in three districts (Kurigram, Jamalpur and Gaibandha) where the flood EAP was implemented and captured the learning throughout the EAP implementation starting from pre-activation to completing the implementation. A standard checklist was maintained to ensure consistency and coherence in information collection. COVID-19 precautions were maintained during the lessons learned workshop.

The learnings from the flood EAP were captured in few broader heads and are described below.

Forecast Trigger and Impact of Early Action
FFWC five days deterministic flood forecast on 30 June 2020 showed the peak will be on 4 July (Figure 3), but on the 2 July the forecasted water level was already receding at Bahadurabad. Hence, the 1st peak already happened from 30 June to 2 July (Figure 3). FFWC five days deterministic forecast has 30 per cent false alarm ratio (FAR) which indicates not reaching the trigger and the flood 2020 reached 5cm below the trigger activation threshold.
Most of the time, the forecast of FFWC is overshooting. The analysis from the flood 2020 FFWC forecast showed excellent match with the observed when the lead time was less than equal to 48 hours. But for 72, 96, and 120 hours lead time, forecast showed 15, 35, and 40cm errors as shown in Figure 4.

![WL variation wrt Lead time](image_url)

**Figure 4**: FFWC 5 days forecast error in the meter for observed for different lead times

The lessons from trigger are as follow:

1. Lead time for pre-activation was only 8 days instead of 10 days. Hence, the FbF team had 3 days preparation time instead of 5 days.
2. Different models showed different prediction for activation of trigger - FFWC showed it will cross the threshold while GloFAS showed likely to recede flow below 1 in a 5-year return period.
3. FFWC five days forecast on 27 June 2020 showed water level at Bahadurabad likely to cross the threshold on 1 July, but water level reached near the threshold on 30 June. Besides, BDRCS decided on 28 June to activate. Hence, time to act before floods reached its peak was only two days.
4. In 2020, flood forecast showed the error in water level was well within the limits (15cm) for three days lead time but for five days it was more than 30cm.
5. The flood 2020 reached 5cm below the activation threshold.
6. The intervention priority ranked unions from the trigger model found good agreement with field data. FFWC extended its support to FbF technical team even when the website was not working.

**Coordination, Management and Financing**

1. The overall coordination at NHQ and Unit level was quite systematic along with the coordination of local government, administration and Post Office.
2. Second trigger for cash distribution was activated on 28 June 2020 but IFRC transferred the cash to BDRCS bank account on 2 July. Which is five days after the activation of FbA by the DREF. The cash was deposited to BDRCS bank account on 6 July (almost 10 days after the activation) where all activities were completed within 4 July. This created extra pressure for BDRCS to arrange large amount of fund for the EAP.
3. The funding mechanism needs to be faster and good enough to ensure all early actions on time both for the Unit and BPO.
4. Need to find a quicker fund management system in collaboration with BDRCS, IFRC, and others relevant PNSs in country.

**Selection of Early Actions**

1. The selection of early actions e.g., cash grant, evacuation support with hired boats and first aid were relevant considering the need and situation according to implementing Units (branches) and the beneficiaries were also satisfied with the early actions taken by FbF based on the findings of the exit survey (details on learning from exit survey part).
2. Inclusion of early actions related to COVID-19 (Including provision of face mask to all beneficiaries, hand sanitization at the entrance, social distances and safety messages) was highly appreciated among all stakeholders e.g., local government, BDRCS Unit and community people considering the timely initiative to deal with pandemic situation.
Evacuation and First Aid Support

1. The evacuation support provided by BDRCS Unit as an early action was highly appreciated by the community people, local administration and local government. Most of the people who were stuck in their houses along with their livestock and movable assets moved to a safer place along with those. This support was provided in areas of all three districts where more people could avail the support from BDRCS while they were suffering.
2. Unavailability of local boats to rent in order to evacuate along with livestock and household assets was a major concern for local people. In such cases, BDRCS evacuation support played an important role and reached affected people.
3. As people get stuck and keep living in the flood, they are more prone for casualty and while moving with assets sometimes they suffer from minor injury. Also, while waiting in the distribution booth many of the beneficiaries feel sick and needed first aid assistance to recover. BDRCS First Aid trained volunteers supported people with minor injury and it was proved to be an effective early action.
4. In some areas people were not interested to evacuate themselves as the flood water was still not at peak and the local people were expecting the water to recede. People were confused about whether to leave or not as there were possibilities that their house and assets might get robbed and they might lose their belongings. People were more willing to move after observing the flood situation and when the water level was near its peak.

Beneficiary Data Collection and Finalization

1. The orientation on the questionnaire before beneficiary data collection proved quite effective in reducing errors in data collection and clearing the confusion regarding the questionnaire.
2. Political pressure and local community leaders’ pressure was common while collecting data, but that did not have much impact on the final beneficiary data as the beneficiaries had to fulfill some criteria and needed to have a certain score to be on the final list.
3. Some Units did not have enough PPE and other visibility items to ensure the safety and visibility of BDRCS RCY volunteers which might put them at risk as they needed to move in very remote and char areas surrounded with river and flood water.
4. ODK data collection ensured that the data was safe and there was less risk of losing data and data manipulation.
5. It was challenging to collect data for the volunteers as some of the devices were old and there were no power banks or backup for charging.

Procurement and logistics preparation

1. Logistics preparation was not challenging but the Covid-19 situation added some challenges to ensure the procurement of items due to lockdown situation.
2. Venue preparation for distribution was completed one day ahead of the distribution ensuring physical/social distancing and hand washing/ sanitizing point for all the beneficiaries.

Beneficiary Communication and Accountability

1. Finalized beneficiaries list was hanged in the community and other common places to ensure the accountability and validating the list with the community. BDRCS hotline number was also shared with the list for any complaint and feedback regarding the list.
2. BDRCS standard CEA procedure was followed during the distribution and beneficiaries received BDRCS hotline number to inform any issue, which was quite useful as BDRCS CEA team received 26 calls during the cash distribution and none of them were for complaints. Those calls were for feedback, information and service request.

Cash Distribution

1. Distribution points were organized as close as possible to the community which allowed beneficiaries to collect the assistance within 2-3 hours and were well appreciated by them, however, for some areas which were the char, the arrangement had to be in the mainland due to rising water in the chars and beneficiaries had to cross the river to collect the assistance. A timely forecast and arrangement could be ensured to reach the beneficiary before the water start rising.
2. It was quite challenging to control the crowd with social distancing as the COVID-19 awareness among local people were very poor and, in many cases, people were desperate to ensure that they are receiving the cash at the earliest.
3. An outer sitting arrangement for the waiting beneficiaries and inside school arrangement of distribution proved efficient in crowd management and quick distribution.
4. The presence of local authority and security forces ensured the safety of post office and also the beneficiaries felt safe with the money.
COVID-19 Related Learning
1. COVID-19 situation added additional challenges in cash distribution as the Unit had to identify a wider and more spacious area near the community where the distribution could be arranged with social distancing. In some areas the Unit had to choose a farther place leaving a close one to ensure more space.
2. Local people were not much aware of COVID-19 situation and it was challenging to ensure wearing mask, hand washing and social distancing among people, especially when it came to the cash distribution (see also above, no 2).
3. Due to lockdown situation all shops were closed earlier which created challenges in arranging procurement and logistics.
4. Mobilizing volunteers travelling to community for beneficiary data collection were more challenging compared to earlier as the team had to ensure their safety from COVID-19 and also in some cases that slowed down the data collection process from regular time.
5. Some Units did not have enough PPE and other visibility items to ensure the safety and visibility of BDRCS RCY volunteers which might put them at risk as they need to move in very remote and char areas surrounded with river and flood water.

Learning from Exit Survey
1. 1/4 of the beneficiaries received their cash assistance within an hour and whereas 23.38 per cent had to wait more than three hours to receive the assistance. Which proved the efficient arrangement of BDRCS Unit for the cash grant. Rest of the 52 per cent beneficiary received the assistance between one to three hours.
2. Beneficiary selection process was well accepted as beneficiaries were either highly satisfied (50.16 per cent) or satisfied (49.84 per cent) with the process of beneficiary selection.
3. From the exit survey it was found that 52.36 per cent beneficiaries were highly satisfied and rest were satisfied with the distribution arrangement done by respective BDRCS Unit and only 0.21 per cent of the beneficiaries had not decided regarding the distribution arrangement.
4. Almost 87 per cent beneficiaries were planning to buy food for their immediate consumption using the cash assistance. The second highest priority was health care including medicine and treatment and more than one fourth of the beneficiaries mentioned about it. Around 14.7 per cent mentioned about hiring labor to shift their houses to a safer place and around 11 per cent had the plan to reinforce house and raising the plinth. This ensured that early action was worthy to meet the basic needs of the local people suffering in a flood.

Recommendation
1. Units, Volunteers, EC committee, local and government stakeholders need frequent orientation and refresher trainings to ensure the understanding of FbF concept and EAP for the better implementation.
2. BDRCS needs to organize some orientation for external stakeholders including BPO to minimize knowledge gap and speedup the overall process of implementation.
3. There is a requirement to buy new mobile phones and power banks to ensure uninterrupted data collection. The NHQ needed to ensure enough power banks along with quality devices.
4. A full-fledged data collection practical session before starting data collection is recommended to ensure less error in data.
5. More evacuation and boat support were recommended by the community as there was need but the local people and leaders suggested for evacuation support just before the flood peak so that they do not need to move early which will reduce their fear to lose whatever they have and at the same time more people will be able to move.
6. Some Units were proposing for a seed fund to continue early action activities in the community on time. BDRCS could later reimburse the fund from FbA by the DREF fund as it is being practiced in coastal areas for cyclone EAP implementation.
7. Funding mechanism in country need to be faster as this year, fund deposited almost 10 days later of the activation of the EAP.
8. Need to continue the evacuation support till the flood peak as people are not willing to move to shelter till the inundation begins.
9. For the activation of first stage trigger needs to include RIMES-FFWC joint forecasts for 15 days which is available and is using some key stakeholders. BDRCS will need to have 15-days for better implementing the flood EAP.
10. Need to find out a quicker fund management system in collaboration with BDRCS, IFRC, and others relevant PNSs in country.
Livelihoods and basic needs
People reached: 3,289 households
Male: 26.97% (890 beneficiaries)
Female: 72.91% (2,406 beneficiaries)
Other: 0.12% (4 beneficiaries)

Outcome 1: Communities in very high-risk areas have better resources to reduce livestock mortality
Output 1.1: The National Society strengthens the security of the livelihoods of the vulnerable population through activities to protect their sources of income and agricultural capital

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators: Number of households have better resources to reduce the risk of losing their livelihoods</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of households have better resources to reduce the risk of losing their livelihoods</td>
<td>3,300</td>
<td>3,289</td>
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</table>

P&B Output Code | Activities planned
---|---
**Readiness Phase**
AP081 | Conduct household assessment

**Early Action**
AP081 | Finalization of beneficiary list
AP081 | Distribution of unconditional cash assistance

**Narrative description of achievements**

**Household assessment**
As described in the EAP, after the pre-activation of the EAP, BDRCS deployed NDRT, staff. Local Unit offices deployed RCY volunteers to conduct household’s assessment for the selection of beneficiaries. On 25 June 2020, pre-activation trigger reached according to the GloFAS forecast. BDRCS conducted household’s assessment within three days of the pre-activation.

**Finalization of beneficiary list**
As soon as the surveys were finished, the FbF technical team cleaned the data, checked for duplication and performed scoring analysis of all the assessed household’s data.
Distribution of unconditional cash assistance

BDRCS organized cash distribution from 1 to 2 July 2020 in Jamalpur, 2 to 3 July in Gaibandha and 3 to 4 July in Kurigram. In Gaibandha and Kurigram 100 per cent of beneficiaries received the cash grant whereas in Jamalpur, 11 beneficiaries were unreachable during the cash distribution. The COVID-19 situation added some challenges in the distribution as people gathered in a pre-decided and communicated place to collect their cash assistance from BDRCS through BPO. BPO brought their people and money to the community for the disbursement. As people were gathered and there was lack of awareness among the local people, BDRCS Unit and RCY volunteers had a tough time to manage the crowd to ensure social distancing during cash distribution. However, the outer sitting arrangement for waiting and inside school distribution point helped to make the process manageable and faster.

Based on the exit survey conducted at distribution points, about 87 per cent beneficiaries were planning to utilize the cash assistance for immediate consumption such as food items. More than one fourth of beneficiaries intended to use the cash for health care including medicine and treatment. About 14.7 per cent beneficiaries planned to hire labour to shift their houses to a safer place and 11 per cent had planned to reinforce house and raising the plinth. The actual cash utilization findings will be reflected in PDM result and evaluation scheduled in January 2021.

Health
People reached: 150 people
Male: N/A
Female: N/A

Outcome 1: Vulnerable people's health and dignity are improved through increased access to appropriate first aid services.

Output 1.1: Communities are supported by BDRCS to effectively respond to first aid needs during an emergency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators:</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of people received first aid services</td>
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<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P&B Output Code

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities planned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Early action phase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**AP022 Provide first aid support to people during distribution and evacuation**

**Narrative description of achievements**

BDRCS provided first aid support to local people during the cash disbursement. Also, the first aid support was given to local people while providing evacuation support in all three districts. A total of 150 people received this support from BDRCS during the evacuation between 28 June to 1 July 2020 and during the cash disbursement on 1 July to 4 July. All the people who seek assistance for first aid was provided the support during EAP implementation.
Disaster Risk Reduction
People reached: 350 people
Male: 50%
Female: 50%

Outcome 1: Communities in high risk areas are prepared for and able to respond to disaster
Output 1.1: Communities take active steps to strengthen their preparedness for timely and effective response to disasters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators:</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Actual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of people evacuated along with their household assets and livestock</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

P&B Output Code | Activities planned |
--- | --- |
AP001 | Evacuation of the people along with livestock and assets using boats |

Narrative description of achievements

During the implementation of the EAP, BDRCS also provided evacuation support to local people through providing hired boats on 28 June, 30 June, and 1 July 2020 in all three districts. Through this intervention, BDRCS covered additional vulnerable areas where people were not provided cash assistance for their early action. In all three districts, people moved along with their livestock and household assets. In some areas people even moved their house, shops and other belongings to a new place.

As this is the first time the Unit organized boats for evacuation it was a new experience for them and was not well organized from well ahead. Also, due to COVID-19 situation it was challenging to arrange boats and ensuring the social distance while evacuating and moving their assets. To maintain social distance in the boat while evacuation, BDRCS had to allow only 30 to 40 per cent of the boat capacity. BDRCS Units provided evacuation support which is in very remote char areas and it took long for the boats to cross the river to reach people, support them in carrying their belongings and assets in the boat and evacuating them to their desired places. In some cases, where people moved their houses, the boat can only provide only one or two trips throughout the day, which reduced the number of beneficiaries but it was worth providing as those people were in significant need and they did not have the capacity to do it by themselves.
# Strengthen National Society

## Outcome 1: National Society capacity building and organizational development objectives are facilitated to ensure that National Societies have the necessary legal, ethical and financial foundations, systems and structures, competences and capacities to plan and perform

### Output 1.1: The National Society has effective and motivated Branch Disaster Response Team members and volunteers at local level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P&amp;B Output Code</th>
<th>Activities planned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AP040</td>
<td>Orientation of the volunteers and staff on Early Action Protocol</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Early action phase</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP040</td>
<td>Orientation of the volunteers and staff on beneficiary’s data collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP040</td>
<td>Orientation for volunteers on cash distribution and evacuation support with boat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Narrative description of achievements

**Orientation of volunteers and staff on EAP**

BDRCs oriented 112 RCY volunteers along with 12 NDRT members and 3 ULOs on EAP during early action implementation in 3 districts. Later on, additional 43 volunteers were also oriented on EAP to implement early actions on ground.

**Orientation of the volunteers and staff on beneficiary’s data collection**

A total of 112 RCY volunteers along with 12 NDRT members and 3 ULOs were oriented on beneficiary data collection during early action implementation in 3 districts. They have collected beneficiary data from 27 to 29 June 2020 for cash distribution.

**Orientation for volunteers on cash distribution and evacuation support with boat**

A total of 112 volunteers were oriented on cash distribution and additional 43 volunteers were oriented on evacuation, CEA and beneficiary communication for implementation of CEA during disbursement and evacuation support through providing boats in the local community.

## Outcome 2: Effective and coordinated international disaster response is ensured

### Output 2.1: The National Society has strong collaboration with the stakeholders and ensure readiness of stakeholders for possible operation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>P&amp;B Output Code</th>
<th>Activities planned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AP056</td>
<td>Coordination with relevant stakeholders and attend meeting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Narrative description of achievements

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Public
Outcome 3: The IFRC secretariat, together with National Societies uses their unique position to influence decisions at local, national and international levels that affect the most vulnerable.

Output 3.1: The National Society produces high-quality research and evaluation that informs advocacy, resource mobilization and programming.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Early action phase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AP056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AP055</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Narrative description of achievements**

**Organize lesson learnt workshop**
After the successful implementation of flood EAP in Jamalpur, Gaibandha and Kurigram, FbF team organized lesson learnt workshop with respective RC Units in presence of all involved RCY volunteers, NDRT members, ULOs and EC members. 155 RCY volunteers, 12 NDRT members and unit staff participated in 3 lesson learnt workshop in three districts.

**Conduct post distribution monitoring**
The trained RCY volunteers with the leading of FbF team conducted the exit survey to identify the feedback of beneficiary on the arrangement of distribution and identifying their level of satisfaction regarding the beneficiary selection process, information and distribution. Approximately 24 per cent of the total beneficiary were surveyed to identify and monitor the EAP implementation in three districts.
D. Financial report

The Forecast based Action by the DREF allocated CHF 234,803 to implement early actions to reduce and mitigate the impact of monsoon flood in flood prone districts of Bangladesh. The total expenditure recorded by end of operation was CHF 182,617 (77.77 per cent spent of budget). The balance funds will be returned to the EAP FbA by the DREF pool. For further details on expenditure, please refer to attached final financial report. [click here]

For further information, specifically related to this operation please contact:

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**For Performance and Accountability support (planning, monitoring, evaluation and reporting enquiries)**
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How we work

All IFRC 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 Humanitarian 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.
FBAF Early Actions

FINAL FINANCIAL REPORT

MDRBD025 - Bangladesh - Floods / EAP2019BD02

I. Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening Balance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Funds &amp; Other Income</td>
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<tr>
<td>FBAF Allocations</td>
<td>234,803</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenditure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Closing Balance</td>
<td>52,186</td>
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</table>

II. Expenditure by area of focus / strategies for implementation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AOF1 - Disaster risk reduction</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>AOF2 - Shelter</td>
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<td>AOF3 - Livelihoods and basic needs</td>
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<td>AOF4 - Health</td>
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<td>AOF5 - Water, sanitation and hygiene</td>
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<td>AOF6 - Protection, Gender &amp; Inclusion</td>
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<td>AOF7 - Migration</td>
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<td>SF11 - Strengthen National Societies</td>
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<td>SF12 - Effective international disaster management</td>
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<td>55,271</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF13 - Influence others as leading strategic partners</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>SF14 - Ensure a strong IFRC</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategy for implementation Total</td>
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<td>179,532</td>
<td>55,271</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>234,803</td>
<td>182,617</td>
<td>52,187</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## III. Expenditure by budget category & group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relief items, Construction, Supplies</td>
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<td>Medical &amp; First Aid</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other Supplies &amp; Services</td>
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<td>Shared Office and Services Costs</td>
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<td>Contributions &amp; Transfers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Programme &amp; Services Support Recover</td>
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<td>3,185</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grand Total</td>
<td>234,803</td>
<td>182,617</td>
<td>52,187</td>
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</table>