Flood Assessment: A study on the Kulkandi community under CBDRR programme

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Introduction

Since the second week of August 2014, heavy rains in the main river basins and upstream catchments of India, along with continuous rainfall in northwest and north-eastern parts of Bangladesh have caused flooding in low-lying districts. In the following week, with the continuation of heavy rainfalls and many rivers flowing above danger level, the number of districts hit by flood increased as fresh areas went under water. Government and non-government organization brought attention to the seriousness of flooding in those districts clustered around the north-west (Jamalpur, Lalmonirhat, Kurigram, Nilphamari, Rangpur, Gaibandha, Bogra, Sirajganj, Sherpur) and Sunamganj, Sylhet and Netrokona in the Northeast of the country.

Kulkandi Union is the most vulnerable and flood prone area at Islampur Upazila under Jamalpur District and Kulkandi is the most vulnerable village of this union. Every year, the people of this area have continuously been affected by severe monsoon floods as the Jamuna River received huge amount of rain water from the upper basin and upstream catchment of India. In August 2014, water of the River Jamuna increased rapidly and inundated the Kulkandi village of Jamalpur District resulted the sufferings of community people including 399 households under Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR) programme. Given that the impacts of extreme flood, it is necessary to understand the overall flood situation its impact to address people’s needs to provide services.

Objectives of the Study

- To assess the flood situation, live and livelihoods of the affected community under CBDRR programme
- To identify the HHs under the programme are in vulnerable condition
- To identify the immediate needs of the HHs to be supported by the programme
- To assess the role of project staff and volunteer in humanitarian assistance during this period
Figure 1: Kulkandi community under Kulkandi Union of Islampur Upazila, Jamalpur
Methodology

Both qualitative and quantitative studies based on a single case study were carried out during the assessment period of 7 - 8 September 2014. This study used the data sources: qualitative interviews e.g. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with CDMC and affected community people. Throughout these studies, semi structured interview with two key informant was carried out to validate and complement of the information. Besides, various situation reports include DMIC and FFWC and newspaper publications and government records were also considered as secondary sources. Statistics related with climate and weather, demography and census were especially consulted.

Figure 2: Methodology followed for the Study
Findings

Flood situation

According to the community people, the western part of the village started facing the challenge of flood water sweeping from the Jamuna River since 16 August 2014 which crossed the danger level within next three days. Compare to the western part of the village, low lying area locally called the piling area situated in the eastern side of the village had the flood water when waters slowly crept up the piling. The area Majhipara immediately flooded while Athiamari, Sarderpara and Miapara, the western part of the area, gradually received unwanted flood water from Jamuna River and made the community panicked. The level of water had been increasing gradually since the 16 August 2014 and peaked at 6 feet in next 10 days which remain constant for another 4 days. Afterward water receded gradually from the homestead level and finally the community sighed of relief from the flood water on 04 September 2014.

Figure 3: Graph shows that the increasing and receding of water level from the homestead of Kulkandi Community
Impact on live and Livelihoods

Facing the river bank erosion and flood are the part and parcel of the community which drastically impact on their daily life. Considering these, the people living in the bank of the River Jamuna, depending on its resources, belong to a vulnerability category. Livelihoods of people specially fishery, live stocks, off firm activities and even the locations of human settlement have been affected through the impact of climate change in terms of extreme flood and bank erosion during this period. Loss of livelihoods, decline of agricultural production, food and water insecurity, various health problems are among the most noticeable. In specific, seasonal vegetables, as a means of homestead gardening by the women of households, are predominantly damaged by the prolonged flood which eventually impact on their daily food intake and livelihood. People who have own pond cultivated the fish, all the effort has gone in vain as the flood water exceeded the pond levee. Moreover, Saplings supported by the CBDRR programme are not beyond the affected list. People are planning to migrate temporarily to district or sub-district for searching a source of income as daily worker/day labour.

Figure 4: Graph shows that the numbers of Household's who could not stay at their houses due to inundation

During this devastation period, about 63% houses were fully inundated and 36% were inundated partially. The extreme flood, during this period, forced the considerable number
of people of this area to leave their houses. Most of them (37%) took shelter on the embankment followed by neighbor house (13%), displaced in terms of leaving the area to stay their relatives in the nearby village (9%) and few number of people (4%) took shelter temporarily in local Madrasha (religious school). The Hindu and Muslim community of Majhipara are the most affected households of the community. About 70% family of Majhipara stayed on the embankment and rest of them left the community and staying in their relatives’ houses of neighbouring villages.

Community reported that 60 per cent household skipping lunch or dinner and also reducing number of items in their meal during disaster and post disaster period. These are the common strategies taken by community member to cope with disaster. Escaping of meal has a gender dimension as well female members are likely to takes less food during disaster comparing than male.

**Figure 5: The graph illustrates the percentage of households left their house and took the place as shelter**

![Status of sheltering during flood condition](image)

According to the community people, about 19% of the houses, including main and kitchen houses, made of jute stick were destroyed while 5 main houses of Majhipara were washed away to the Jamuna River. 63% corrugated houses fencing by aluminium tin were affected by having the pillar made of bamboo or tree branches damaged.
The disruption of educational services for the two more weeks was the prime concern for the authority of educational institutions as the schools were inundated. In terms of social cohesion within the area, their communities’ tie among villagers is strong. The area is remotely located in the bank of Jamuna River and the communities are relatively needed to build a give and take relationship within the villagers. The unity of social cohesion among villagers is strongly related to the different impacts of climate induced disaster.

**Figure 6: Status on the affected houses by the devastating flood**

![Pie chart showing the status of houses affected by flood]

- **House Destroyed**: 19%
- **Partial Damage**: 63%

**Impact on Health**

The situation in the flood-affected community was improving as the water level of the River Jamuna showed a diminishing trend (FFWC 05 September 2014). Even though floodwater receded in the areas, the sufferings have not been lessened, as both quantitative and qualitative changes in water resources increased people’s exposure to various waterborne diseases such as diarrhea, dysentery, viruses borne diseases. Existing sanitary facilities have
been disrupted due to flood and people are forced to move for open defecations which are considered as one of the reasons for breaking out the diseases. Children, the most affected group, have been suffering from the various water borne diseases. According to the community people, during this period, Medical Officer from the Union Health Center of Kulkandi regularly visited the area and provided the medical service but only doctor was not enough to treat all patients. **It was suggested that mobile health camp operated by the CBDRR programme to be placed immediately in the community to provide health services.**

**Figure 7: Status of the community people affected by various water borne diseases**

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**CBDRR Programme Initiative:**

*Using Community Disaster Response Emergency Fund (CDREF)*

CBDRR itself do not operate emergency relief operation in such condition but the community itself can develop a Community DREF under the guidance of CBDRR programme for emergency response. To strengthen the capacity of CDMC for small-scale emergency relief operations, before any donor organization reach, DREF has already been established in 2 communities of Jamalpur district and are continuing the collection of monthly contribution
It's a great initiative by the CBDRR programme of Bangladesh Red Crescent society to establish community DREF which enhance our strength to face any emergency and it brought the ownership of the programme.

- Beneficiaries

There is a provision of providing BDT 75,000.00 to the each DREF from the programme in two instalments. Considering the emergency situation in the Kulkandi community, an initiative has been taken by the CBDRR programme for supporting the affected people by using their contribution of BDT 70,000.00 with BDT 37,500.00 supported by the programme in order to providing basic immediate needs. Ceiling the amount, CDMC members were in a consensus that 360 households of the community would be provided the items as a package of flattened rice (2kg), molasses (600 gm), and antiseptic soap (1pcs). Community Disaster Management Committee (CDMC) organized a relief distribution ceremony on 08 September 2014 where emergency relief items were distributed successfully to the affected community.

Using Flood Free Tube well and Latrine

CBDRR programme, since the very beginning, installed a tube well and latrine as a pilot basis at Majhipara one of the most vulnerable areas of the community. As is the area is low lying, tube well and latrines were installed in the flood free level to have the community people access to safe drinking water and sanitation even in flood emergency. There are 13 tube wells in the community are in good condition for extracting water. However, during the flood period 1 tube well in Majhipara installed by CBDRR programme served 70 households and rest 12 were also in a condition to extract safe drinking water.
Role of CDMC and CDRT

This time, first the disaster volunteers and CDMC members raised awareness on flooding. Volunteers, who received the First Aid training, provided the services to the children by bringing them to the local union health complex. Households having tube-well and remains in good condition during this period helped the others by serving drinking water. Another noticeable effort taken by the committee was to protect the embankment where the people took shelter after their house inundated. The flood water pressure pounded the foundations of the village embankment. The community people, led by the CDMC, organized themselves to protect the embankment and started collecting bamboo, money, rope and bags and about 30 people started working immediately after they noticed the embankment was in danger. This effort saved at least 200 households of adjacent villages from extreme flooding.

CDMC Chairman said that it was a great achievement of their community, and the people proved that everything was possible when they were united. The approximate cost to repair this part of the embankment was about BDT 10000, but they have saved at least 10 times that due to their efforts.
Conclusion

The changes in climate in terms of the unusual weather and climatic sign such as the torrential rain in late monsoon pose significant risks to people’s livelihoods, especially in rural areas like kulkandi village where most of them depend on rather climate-sensitive resources. The community people of this area were not expected such event during this period as it was beyond their perception. Considering the situation, they are largely required to adjust their livelihoods to these climate factors and acquired knowledge on how the people can reduce their risk and build resilience along with the impact of climate change with possible adaptation measures. In this regard, Community Based Disaster Risk reduction programme can play a pivotal role to make them vigilant through effective awareness raising sessions as well as to provide livelihood support in a sustainable manner to the community people in a sense of building resilience.

Annex:

Photographs of Devastating flood in Kulkandi Community