

Information Note of IR-EMOP Project Document

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IMMEDIATE RESPONSE EMERGENCY OPERATION Cambodia IR EMOP 200368 Relief Food Assistance for Vulnerable People Affected by Floods PROJECT DOCUMENT

PART 1: INFORMATION NOTE

NATURE OF EMERGENCY:

1. Severe floods have affected South-East Asia in recent weeks. In Cambodia, flooding of the Mekong and Tonle Sap river basins and flash floods have affected vast areas of the country in what are reported to be the worst floods in 10 years. The floods have caused loss of lives and population displacement, damaged infrastructure, disrupted livelihoods, and are leading to negative coping mechanisms particularly among the poorest and most vulnerable households.

Location

2. 17 out of 24 provinces across Cambodia have been directly affected by the floods: Banteay Meanchey, Otdar Meanchey, Battambang, Siem Reap, Preah Vihear, Kampot, Pursat, Strung Teng, Kampong Thom, Kratie, Kampong Cham, Kampong Chhnang, Phnom Penh, Prey Veng, Svay Rieng, Kandal and Takeo.

Cause

3. Greater than average precipitation in the Mekong and Tonle Sap river basins since August, compounded with heavy rains caused by tropical storms Nesat and Nalgae resulted in extensive floods in late September. The high level of water flow into the Mekong basin will prolong the flooding and slow the drainage process. Meteorological reports state that heavy flooding will continue throughout the affected areas and the water levels are likely to rise in coming days as heavy rains are expected to continue for several more weeks.

Effects

4. The most severely hit areas are those directly bordering the Mekong river and Tonle Sap lake. The National Committee for Disaster Management (NCDM) of the Royal Government of Cambodia estimates that more than 272,000 households (1.3 million people) have been affected by the floods and of these, nearly 32,000 are displaced (150,000 people). Many families have lost their food stocks, livestock and much of their household goods. NCDM reports also that floods have:
 - Killed at least 206 people;
 - Affected 357,000 hectares of rice paddies, out of which 158,000 hectares are damaged (14.6 percent and 6.5 percent of rice-planted land, respectively);
 - Affected more than 175 km of national roads and up to 2,300 km of gravel road,

and 162 bridges;

- Affected more than 200,000 residential houses, 400 pagodas, 1,100 schools, and more than 130 health centres.

These figures are being regularly updated with information from the affected provinces and might still increase.

6. Evacuated households have found refuge in safe havens on higher grounds (such as pagodas) or are living along national roads in crowded conditions. They are considered to be among the most vulnerable to food insecurity as they have lost their food stocks as well as income opportunities.
7. Mobility (e.g. to access health centres) and accessibility of affected areas are reduced due to the flooded roads network, with several locations currently only reachable by boat.
8. Rapid field reports indicate that markets continue to function in most areas but rice prices show increases of up to 15 to 20 percent. The situation has exacerbated engagement in negative coping mechanisms, particularly of the poorest and most vulnerable households. Households without food stocks are borrowing rice at high interest rates. Engagement in harmful coping mechanisms, loss of crops and other productive assets may lead to increased food insecurity of the poor in the medium term.

Total numbers of households affected and in need of emergency food assistance

9. According to the latest report from NCDM, the total population affected stands at 1.3 million persons (or 272,000 households) in 17 provinces. NCDM does not provide information on population in need of food assistance. However, it is estimated that 30 percent of the affected population is made up of poor and very poor households, with limited means to cope with the immediate impact of floods.
10. The number of affected people requiring food assistance is estimated to be approximately 82,000 households. The response of government authorities, NGOs and other organizations is still limited in volume and focus. So far partial assistance has reached about 45,000 families with an emergency kit consisting of some food and non food items. Major NGOs stated they are facing stock and cash shortages to continue assisting the affected population.
11. Acknowledging on-going response from Government authorities and institutions (including Cambodian Red Cross, provincial governors, etc) and NGOs, the contribution for this operation is expected to partially cover the immediate food needs of 12,000 households among the most vulnerable (based on estimated needs, response gaps and incoming requests for WFP food assistance).
12. The NCDM has welcomed WFP emergency food assistance for immediate support to flood victims and communities and to prevent them from resorting to negative and damageable coping mechanisms. NCDM has requested that WFP's food assistance be provided as soon as possible.

WFP IR EMOP: Justification for an immediate response, expected impact

13. Given the severe consequences of the floods on the affected and displaced

households, the damage to assets and livelihoods, and further exacerbating resort to negative coping activities, it is recommended that emergency food assistance be immediately made available to the affected population. The food assistance will help to mitigate short term food insecurity.

Duration of assistance

14. The total IR-EMOP is expected to last until the end of the year, starting from 12 October. The operation plans to assist 12,000 households with a single distribution of a one-month ration. The project duration will allow for the procurement and repayment of loaned commodities. A more comprehensive emergency operation is expected to be submitted following further assessment in the coming weeks.

Number of beneficiaries and location

15. WFP assistance is expected to reach 60,000 individuals (12,000 households) located in the provinces most affected by the floods.

Food basket composition and ration levels

16. For the immediate response, the food basket will consist of 50 kg of rice per household, covering 1 month for a standard family of 5 members. Other food items are expected to be distributed in some of the most affected areas by NGOs and government counterparts to complement the rice allocation. Facilities to cook rice and other foods are reported to be available.

Total food aid requirements (mt)

17. Rice: 600 mt

Mode of implementation

18. The commodity (rice) will be made available immediately on a loan basis, following donor conditionalities from WFP's Cambodia stocks. WFP will partner with international NGOs for the distribution of the commodity to the beneficiaries, and coordinate closely with the NCDM. WFP staff is partnering with NCDM and UNDMT in rapid assessments in the affected areas, and will monitor the targeting and distribution of the assistance.

PART 2: EMOP BUDGET (attached)

Total EMOP budget (US\$ 500,000) is attached as Annex 1.

PART 3: EMOP APPROVAL

- 1) IRA funding is available to cover EMOP budget

Chief, RMBB: [Name & Signature], Date: --/--/----

- 2) EMOP is approved

Country Director, WFP Cambodia: [Name & Signature], Date: --/--/----