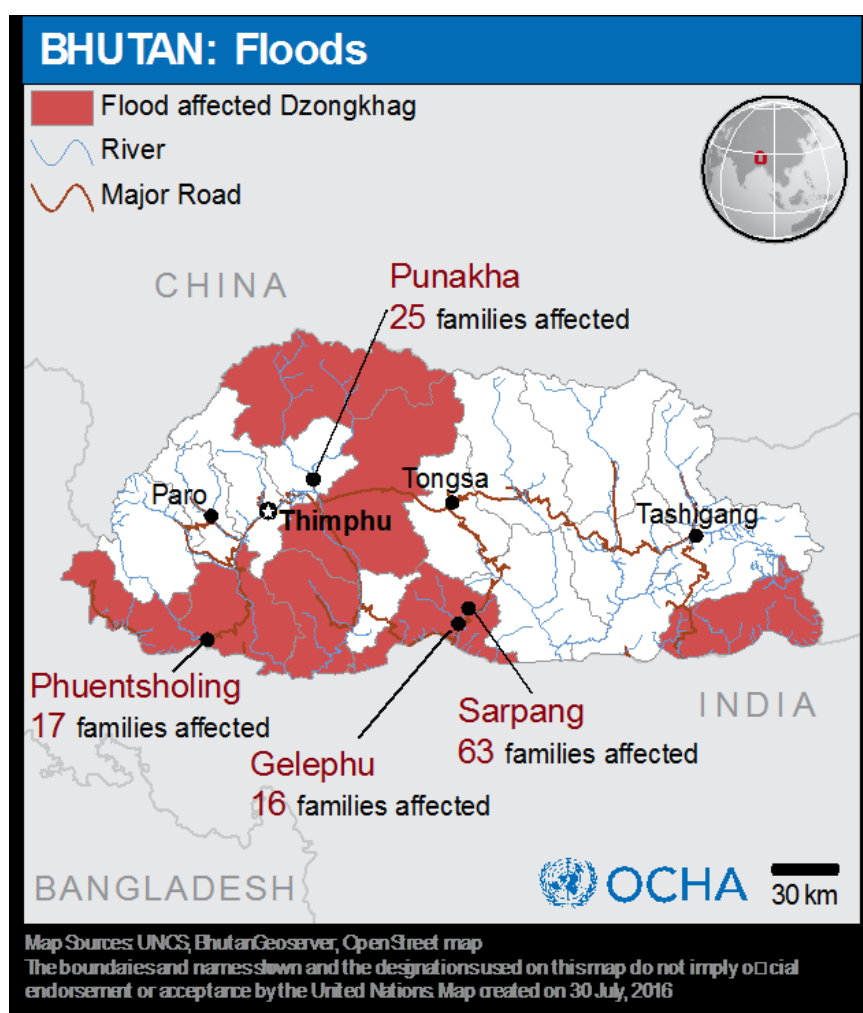


Situation Report 2: 1 August 2016

Flash Floods and Landslides in Southern Region of Bhutan

Highlights:

The torrential rains in the catchment areas of the main rivers in the country due to onset of the monsoons in the region has led to flash floods and landslides impacting and cutting off many parts of the south Bhutan from the rest. Four districts of Samtse, Chhukha, Tsirang and Sarpang in the southern part of Bhutan are worst affected by floods. The main subdivisions in these districts affected are Phuentsholing, Lhamoiyzyngkha and Gelephu. The first report of flash floods was on 22nd July and since then has impacted a larger area and is a matter of national concern. Many landslides resulting in major roadblocks on the national highways, farm roads and damages to bridges were reported all over the country.



Affected area and Incident site mapping:

(MAP Courtesy: Bhutan: Flash Floods, Office of the resident coordinator Situation Report No.4 dated 29th July, 2016)

Situation Analysis:

The situation in the south west and south central Bhutan was grim with many areas flooded and evacuated by the local population. As per the official reports **about 125 families as shown in the map above were affected** in the floods. The large number of roads and bridges has been reported to have been damaged. Many areas were cut off from the mainstream because of roadblocks due to landslides and flooding.

The situation has improved over the last few days as the weather has cleared. The water level in the main affected rivers has receded. The roadblocks are being cleared in many areas of the affected districts. Many highways and farm roads are back to normal and landslides have been cleared.

Casualties and damages:

Four people including a child and a foreign national (Indian road construction worker) are reported to have died due to floods. The total damage to the infrastructure is still being assessed.

Response:

a) National Government:

The King and the Government headed by the Prime Minister is carrying out the relief measures to the affected population by relocating the affected people to the safer places and arranging for the temporary camps with proper provisions of food, water and sanitation facilities. The MOH is worried and working to mitigate the impact of compromised sanitation and hygiene in the flood affected areas. The special focus of MOH has been to ensure clean and safe drinking water, access to health care facilities and treating the injured and controlling the outbreak of any epidemics. The above challenges require additional resources and financial assistance at the disposal of MOH.

b) WHO:

Dr. Ugen Dophu, Secretary, MOH, Royal Government of Bhutan requested from WHO SEARO on 29 July for **financial support of USD 174,500** to carry out relief measures in the affected areas particularly for the health services to the affected population and provision of safe and hygienic conditions in the relief camps.

Dr. Poonam Khetrpal Singh, Regional Director who had been alerted about the situation by WR Dr Ornella Lincetto on 25 July, immediately approved the request.

Ministry of Health, Royal Government of Bhutan intends to use the assistance for ensuring the health care by deploying mobile health teams to the affected population by floods and inaccessible areas. It will be used to procure medical supplies, logistics and to ensure provision of safe drinking water and sanitation in the relief camps. Measures to prevent the outbreak of water, food and vector borne

disease are to be executed with the additional support from SEARHEF along with psychosocial support for the population affected.

The country office is in **constant touch with the MOH** and is monitoring the situation closely and regularly. **Coordination** with various development and donor agencies in the region has been established through the country office and all the support related to restoration of health services in the affected districts has been promised as per the demand and requirement of the MS.

Important Contacts:

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