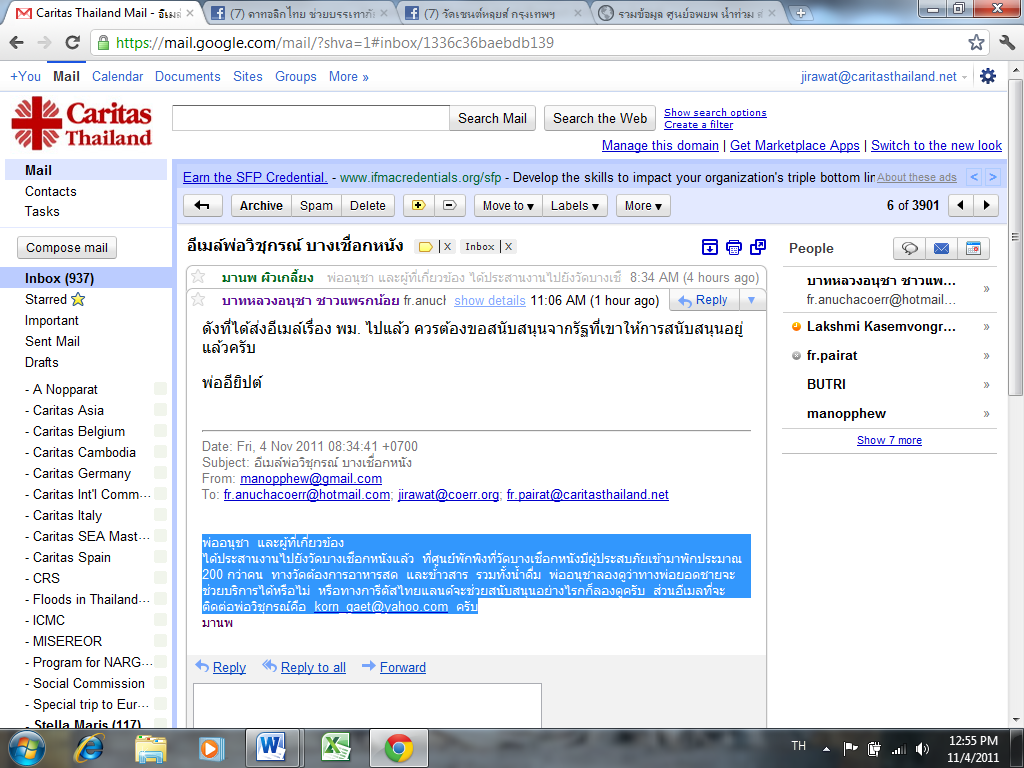
**Situation Report No.5**



**Flooding in Thailand - Emergency Response & Early Recovery**

**Date of Report: 18 November 2011**

**CONTEXT**

**Updates:**

The death toll from the flooding has now reached 594 people with a further two people missing. The floods still prevail in 19 provinces, affecting 5,146,819 people.The provinces are NakhonSawan, Chainat, Angthong,Ayutthaya, Lopburi, Saraburi, Suphanburi, NakhonPathom, PathumThani, Nonthaburi, SamutSakhon, SamutPrakan, UbonRatchathani, Si Sa Ket, Roi Et, Kalasin, Chechoengsao, NakhonNayok, and Bangkok.

Flooding is receding in parts of Bangkok but remains high on the west bank of the Chao Phraya River, swollen by high tides in the Gulf of Thailand, and to the east of the capital, where authorities have diverted run-off floodwater from the north to try to protect the heart of densely populated and business centre of Bangkok. Many areas remain flooded, especially those to the west and east of Bangkok, and it is still expected to take weeks for all that water to reach the Gulf of Thailand. Runoff spread to some sections of Rama II, a major road in Bangkok, but vehicles were still able to drive through, officials said. It is hoped no dyke will That would cause another strong flow of water towards Bangkok.

But the government appears to have averted a worst-case scenario in which the densely populated and economically critical center of Bangkok may have succumbed. The centre of Bangkok, looks like it will escape the flooding that has hit some suburbs and provinces to its north, but evacuation orders are still issued each day in outer districts and many residents face weeks of hardship.

The Bangkok Metropolitan Authority reported on its website that the overall flood situation in the capital is improving fast, especially in Don Muang, where the smaller of Bangkok's two airports was forced to close, and Lad Phrao, a district studded with office towers, condominiums and a popular shopping mall. Large swaths of Bangkok neighborhoods have been under knee-deep, and even waist-high, water for weeks. Scuffles have often broken out between authorities and residents trying to pull down makeshift dikes holding back the water from entering central Bangkok.But the government's efforts to pump out the water into the Chao Phraya River seem to be paying off, according to the latest reports

Right now, the most important issue is public health, specifically the problems of preventing disease outbreaks and transporting BMA-supervised doctors to homes of those refusing to evacuate. Bangkok Metropolitan Authorities Medical Service Department, said mobile medical teams had been stationed around Bangkok to serve at shelters and provide check-ups.

In particular, there are warnings of outbreaks of diarrhea and leptospirosis - both of which can be fatal if not treated properly - and other diseases, as well as cold and flu, and infections of wounds, which are common in the event of floods.The department has already planned numerous public health activities in advance - some were prepared even before Bangkok was flooded. Homes with elderly occupants are marked with white flags, while green flags designate those housing occupants with chronic diseases requiring delivery of medications.

Evacuations of such people are carried out as soon as their homes begin to be hit with flood water, and occupants are provided with continuous medical services. In addition to routine services, surveillance for possible disease outbreaks is underway and will continue for up to another month. Symptoms such as red eyes and respiratory problems are being closely monitored. Residents are advised not to expose their eyes to floodwater, to be strict about hygiene in food preparation, to keep their hands clean and their bodies warm, while doing what they can to reduce stress and watch out for poisonous reptiles and insects including snakes and crocodiles.

The Department of Drainage and Sewerage is mobilizing workers to collect water weeds and garbage around the clock in more than 1,600 canals in Bangkok to ensure that drainage rates are maintained.

To serve flood evacuees in Bangkok-based shelters, kitchens supervised by the Bureau of Social Development are making ready-to-eat meals and providing accommodation on a daily basis, while small-time fruit planters will be eligible for a limited amount of funding. Those who suffer from stress are being given counseling. The Pollution Control Department (PCD) is offering free eggs and rice to people who turn over used foam food boxes and empty plastic bottles - in a bid to ease the amount of garbage."Get one egg if you hand over 20 foam boxes. Get 2 kilos of uncooked rice if you come with 20 plastic bottles" The scheme has attracted an enthusiastic response. A big crowd was seen waiting to turn garbage into food at a PCD booth in Don Muang. The exchange service will be available until November 30. Flooding has hit the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA’s)garbagecollection operations hard. As a result, flood victims have had to live with mountains of garbage in some areas.

Economic Impact: GDP growth for this year estimated by the central bank at below 2.6 percent against a July prediction at 4.1 percent. The flood damage to GDP is now estimated at about 150 billion baht (4.9 billion U.S. dollars)

The government has announced the following three phases of Rehabilitation:

1. **Rescue** led by the Flood Relief Operation Centre
2. **Restore** led by the Minister of the Interior with 9 committees
3. **Rebuild** comprising of two Strategic Committees for Reconstruction & Future development and Water Resources Management

**HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN THAILAND**

* The Disaster Prevention & Mitigation Department reported Friday 18 November that flooding was still affecting 19 of 77 provinces affecting 5,146,819. Since July floods have affected 3.3 million households and approx 11.3 million people in 64 of the 77 provinces.
* 594 people have died primarily due to drowning and electrocution. This is an increase of 61 in the last week, however less than the previous week.
* **The Flood Recovery and Restoration Committee has approved the Bt1.1 billion flood compensation for Bangkok residents and another Bt10 billion for flood-hit villagers.**
* Deputy Prime Minister and committee chair Yongyuth Wichaidit said some 640,000 Bangkok residents would be entitled for Bt5,000 compensation per family. Next week the city authorities would start distributing leaflets advising the flood-hit residents on how to apply for the compensation which will be paid out by the Government Savings Bank. In regard to houses destroyed partially or totally by the flooding, the government has yet to map out the compensation guidelines. For Bangkok residents who live in condominiums surrounded by floodwater and could not travel to work, compensation would not apply. However it has been announced that due to the revision of the criteria some claimants will be able to access the compensation easier.
* Save the Children warns that children are falling ill from diseases such as severe diarrhoea, with thousands more at risk as exposure from filthy floodwaters is on the rise. Assessment teams from the charity have found that running water has been completely cut off from some areas. Even in some evacuation centres where some families have fled to there is no access to clean water. Families with young children staying at makeshift evacuation centres are facing serious health concerns with little access to clean water.
* The Royal Irrigation Department has been using as many as 660 pumps, installed along both banks of the Chao Phraya River, to direct run-offs towards the sea. These pumps can handle 123 million cubic meters of water every day. On the western side, there are 336 pumps that have the capacity to handle 80 million cubic meters. In the eastern zone, there are 324 pumps that have a total capacity to handle 43 million cubic meters of water each day. Pumps will also be used to drain floods out of NakhonSawan and Ayutthaya.
* Authorities last month released more than 9 billion cubic meters of water to run its course from the north to the sea. Rainfall this year has exceeded the average by about 40 percent, according to government data.
* While water levels in lower northern and central areas show signs of receding flooding continues to threaten parts of central Bangkok & nearby provinces of NakhonPathom, SamutSakorn.
* Some Industrial Areas that have been flooded are making plans to reopen, some by the beginning of December.
* Bangkok supermarkets are beginning to stock up their shelves while some food items are still not available. Potable water remains a problem and Thailand continues to import eggs and bottled water.
* Suvarnabhumi Airport Bangkok’s main international airport continues to operate normally however the domestic airport at Don Mueang which was shut on Oct. 25 as floodwaters covered the runway and began seeping into the terminal buildings continues to be closed.
* It has been reported that 2,075 schools have been damaged, the opening of the current semester has been postponed until later in November and some in December.
* Evacuation centers are still being opened by the Government to shelter those who are forced to leave their homes, in addition some church buildings are being used, such as St. Anna Church and its school at Mahachai of Samutsakhon Province where there is large migrant communities.
* Situation of Migrants - please see below.

**CARITAS THAILAND RESPONSE**

* The ‘Emergency Response Committee (ERC) set up by Caritas Thailand continues to meet for planning and reporting purposes.
* Catholic Relief Services (CRS) continues to facilitate the ERC.
* ERC continues to coordinate with the Diocesan Social Action Centers (DISACs) at Nakhonsawan and Bangkok as well as other DISACs in northeast of the country and the responsible Desks of Caritas Thailand.
* The appointed personnel for Emergency Relief and Early Recovery including Distribution, WASH, Livelihood, and Healthcontinue to meet, plan and execute planned interventions.
* For sustainability purposes particularly in livelihood and health interventions communities and volunteers are being trained.
* Good base Line surveys are being promoted by the active involvement of communities and volunteers in the process.
* In the present phase, many people including victims, young adults from high school to university level, volunteer to help in the activities towards the flood victims.
* Flood Response Appeal launched to the Caritas Confederation has received support up to 98 percent.
* Appeals and acceptance of support from within Thailand continues.
* Media coverage continues such as the use of local church newspaper, TV and radio channels as well as **www.facebook.com/THAIcatholics.Floods** for people participation, all of these have been operated with the close coordination and collaboration with Catholic Social Communications of Thailand and Social Commissions in all dioceses.
* The issue of Trauma Counseling not only for the victims but also for Caritas Thailand staff some of whom are also victims needs consideration.
* Schools are still closed in some areas. Where good schools exist, they give homework on their website for students to do and keep busy.
* Foreigners coming to Thailand has increased generally.

**Support/Assistance Provided by Caritas Thailand** (from 12th to 18thNovember 2011)**:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Support/Assistance** | **Achievements** |
| **Food and non-food items/supplies;**  Food item; rice, Instant noodles, canned fish, other food items, medicines, drinking water, etc.  Non-food; flashlights, sanitary napkins, tissues, soaps, shampoo, mosquito repellent, etc. | * **Distribution:** food and non-food packs to over 1,500families in 3 provinces through collaboration with Diocesan Social Action Centers (DISACs), National Catholic Commission on Migration (NCCM) and volunteers. |
| **Water and Sanitation & Hygiene**  **(WASH)** | * Drinking water resource mapping with religious congregations and schools for current and future disasters in both Bangkok Archdiocese and Nakhonsawan Diocese. * Leaflet for water treatment finalized; both Thai and Burmese * Leaflet for solid waste management finalized; both Thai and Burmese * Training of 1 NCCM Volunteer to be trainer for WASH. * Preparation of distribution with training of 300 WASH kits to Nakhonsawan Diocese (19 Nov) |
| **Health Services** | * Through coordination with Desk for Health Pastoral Care of Caritas Thailand with Catholic Health Care Provider Association of Thailand; St. Louis Hospital and its Foundation organized a Mobile medical servicesto migrant community at Bang Bua Thong of Nontaburi province. |
| **Livelihood** | * Visits made by the livelihood team to NakhonsawanProvince to conduct baseline survey and organize community gathering. * Training for volunteersin order to assess the situation and needs and plan for the possible activities. * Baseline survey forms were designed and sent to dioceses * Communication with other dioceses where affected by the floods; such as Chiang Mai and Chantaburi. |
| **Other supports** | * 20 Lifejackets and 3 boats to be given for affected people in Ayutthaya as the area is being reflooded. |

**Donation Update/Pledges received:**

| **Caritas Member Organizations** | **Amount– EUR** | **Remarks** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Caritas Thailand | 73,000 | Contribution from local fundraising |
| Caritas Germany | 40,000 |  |
| CRS | 143,000 |  |
| Trocaire (Caritas Ireland) | 10,000 |  |
| Caritas Korea | 35,750 |  |
| Caritas Austria | 30,000 |  |
| Caritas Italiana | 30,000 |  |
| Development & Peace (Canada) | 35,750 |  |
| Caritas Australia | 22,500 |  |
| Caritas Spain | 30,000 |  |
| Caritas Singapore | 50,000 |  |
| OBOS (Caritas Seoul) | 17,875 |  |
| CAFOD (Caritas England and Wales) | 17,875 |  |
| Caritas Japan | 30,000 |  |
| Total | 565,750 | 98% of CI Appeal of 576,000 Euros |

Note:

1. Apart from the above pledges, Caritas Thailand is in communication withCaritas Hong Kong andCaritas Belgium.
2. The flood response by the Catholic Church in Thailand is being further supported by MISEREOR (Germany) and Manos Unidas (Spain).
3. Donations in-kind have been received from the Thai and non-Thai people such as drinking water, canned fishes, plastic sheets, blankets, rice, dried food,
4. Through coordination with FROC, Caritas Thailand has received and distributed 12,667 food packs (since mid-October 2011). No supplies from the FROC this week.
5. Caritas Taiwan has sent its donation to CI.

**Coordination:**

Caritas Thailand continues to be in coordination with organizations on the response as follows;

**Church groups**

* + Catholic Relief Services (CRS); Specific expertices; emergency response management, WASH and Livelihood
  + Caritas Asia; Communication
  + COERR Volunteers; Food making, transportation & distribution
  + Camillian Task Force; Mobile medical services & expertise
  + St. Louis Foundation (St. Louis Hospital); Mobile medical services & expertise
  + Catholic Health Care Provider Association of Thailand; Providing doctors and nurses
  + Catholic Business Executive Group (CBEG); Emergency response and coordination
  + Catholic young Executive Society (C-Yes); Emergency response and coordination
  + Jesuit Refugee Services (JRS); Emergency response and coordination (in Migrant community)
  + Religious Congregations; Sisters of Sacred Heart of Jesus, Sisters of St. Paul De Chartre, Sisters of St. Josep of Apparition, Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI), Redemptorist fathers, Sallesians of Don Bosco, Brothers of St.Gabriel, Sisters of Holy Infant of Jesus, Daughters of the Queenship of Mary, Brothers of La Salle, Camillian, etc.
  + Various Catholic Schools; Emergency response and coordination

**Non-Church groups**

* + Save the Children; Emergency response and coordination
  + Doctors without Borders; Mobile medical services
  + Embassy of Myanmar; support towards Burmese migrants
  + Mirror Foundation; Emergency response and coordination

**Government ministries/agencies**

* + Flood Relief Operations Center (FROC); donations of flood relief supplies
  + Thai Red Cross: donations of non-food relief supplies
  + Ministry of Public Health; water and sanitation
  + Ministry of Labours; transportation
  + Royal Thai Army; transportation & delivery

**Stories:**

1. **Contribution of Migrants to Thai Economy & their situation in Thailand**

Some 80% of migrant workers are Burmese, with others coming from Cambodia and Laos. In 20 flood hit provinces 874,936 migrants are registered according to the Ministry of Labour, estimates by NGO’s of the number of illegal migrants range between double and triple that of registered workers, pointing to up to three million migrant workers in Thailand accounting for a crucial part of the country’s 10 trillion baht economy – and an estimated 5% of the total workforce and 7% of GDP.

Migrants have contributed enormously to the Thai economy in recent years and they will be the force that ensures a speedy recovery on Thailand after the crisis. A flexible and effective migration policy will definitely support the government in its race to reconstruction once the water recedes. Under current law, most migrant workers with work permits must work in designated employers in designated zones. If they leave their jobs or zones they can be deported. So to flee the floods they have been at the mercy of unscrupulous officials. For those working illegally their situation has been even more precarious. Many are so mistrustful of Thai officials they stay in flooded areas in rooms without power, with dwindling food & water supplies. Many decided to return home probably without knowing that would pose an even higher risk of being arrested and deported after leaving their zone of registration. Several news agencies have reported that around 1,000 people a day were leaving SamutSakhon in immigration trucks after paying 2,500 baht each for the trip to Mae sot but along the way they have been extorted further at checkpoints for not having the correct documents. There needs to be amnesties for unregistered migrant flood victims, allowing registration and not deportation or arrest. Registered workers should be allowed to travel outside their provinces of registration to return home or to seek shelter.

In the current situation little has changed at Mae sot. The Myanmar government has opened the bridge but still many migrants are being pushed through informal extortion channels. Among those who stayed in flood hit areas, many cases of diarrhoea, injuries have been reported with migrants preferring to avoid hospitals because of language difficulties and perceived discrimination, lack of language skills doesn’t help and puts them further at risk by indirectly excluding them from mainstream support.

1. **Photos**

Photos of Caritas’ flood relief work in Thailand: <http://flickr.com/gp/27673812@N05/Yf971j/>

**Contact information:**

Caritas Thailand Office: +662 681 3900 (Direct) Ext 1501, 1710 (Fax) Ext 1502

Bishop Pibul Visitnondachai: +6681 646 7184 Email: [fr.pibul@coerr.org](mailto:fr.pibul@coerr.org)

Rev. Fr. Pairat Sriprasert: +6681 869 4514 Email: [fr.pairat@caritasthailand.net](mailto:fr.pairat@caritasthailand.net)

Mr. Jirawat Chenpasuk: +6689 148 4549 Email: [jirawat@caritasthailand.net](mailto:jirawat@caritasthailand.ne#t)

