

Flood victims: Women and children deserve priority attention

PARVEZ BABUL

WOMEN suffer more than men during flood. In fact women and children are the worst sufferers during any natural calamity. A flood-affected housewife Bulbuli (32) of Baniajuri in Manikganj described her sorrows and bitter experience: "Poor women like me have to wait all through the day and night for some food to feed our children. Usually we do not have any money to buy rice and no way to cook food..." Bulbuli also added that sufferings increase day by day for

the helpless women like her do not get enough succour.

The bitter truth is that in such distressing situation some of the poor girls/women are enticed by pimps. For those types of important reasons relief and rehabilitation facilities should be prioritised for women and children, specially those so helpless and distressed.

Women, who are virtually household based workers have to take responsibilities for protecting their houses, children, other members of the family, livestock and belongings. Traditional gender specific work

such as carrying water, cooking, caring for children and animals naturally become too difficult for them during flood. For lack of resources poor women face more problems than women belonging to middle class and rich households.

Bangladesh is one of the most disaster prone countries in the world. Only an efficient disaster prevention and management system can reduce human sufferings here. The disabled, elderly people, women and children should get special attention during flood. But the provision of relief and rehabilita-



tion services for them remains poor.

Floods, droughts, cyclones, tidal waves and other disasters routinely afflict Bangladesh. Poverty and malnutrition are related to them. Increasing malnutrition for flood or other disaster has enormous economic and social costs for households causing stagnation in the long-term development. Experiences of past years suggest that 'mainstream' gender-sensitive projects are the best way to meet women's needs and improve their socio-economic status.

Investing in maternal and childhood nutrition will have both short and long-term benefits of economic and social significance. It would reduce health care costs throughout the life cycle, increase intellectual capacity and adult productivity. Many children do not recover even after 15 months of flood, 40 percent of children who live in flood-exposed households cannot regain their pre-flood nutritional status.

Causes of distress

Failure to adopt proper flood management policy can be considered as one of the major causes of flood distress in Bangladesh. Flood management programmes will be effective only if the main causes of flood

distress are considered.

At the World Food Summit, 1996 in Italy, countries became agreed that "Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life style". So, to ensure food security and nutrition of women and children we have to work to meet the needs and flood or disaster should be faced with holistic measures.

And at the moment it is urgent to help the flood victims especially the women and children with necessary food, shelter, health services etc.

For the need assessment we can follow the Vulnerability Analysis and Mapping (VAM) system: "Overall damage to dwellings, percentage of households evacuated, percentage of staple food (rice) and cash crop damage, overall damage of farmland, livestock losses, main food staple and cash crops in terms of sown areas and values, family dependence on main staple and cash crop cultivation, rural per capita income and rural per capita level of agricultural production".

Some recommendations

All poor households should be

given food, other relief.

Post-flood disaster rehabilitation programmes should be targeted to the needs identified by households.

Rehabilitation of homestead food production activities, such as vegetables gardening poultry farm, animal husbandry are helpful to increase household food availability and consumption to meet the nutritional needs of the women and children, and other members of the family.

Access to low interest or interest-free credit in the severely flood affected areas should be expanded.

October-November is well-recognised period of household

food insecurity in Bangladesh. If non-cereal food production activities cannot be mobilised quickly, vitamin and mineral supplementation for children and women of reproductive age should be considered as a short-term alternative in the flood-affected areas.

Monitoring relief and rehabilitation efforts should be critical in importance during the next few days of the flood.

Government and NGOs can build helpaid, disaster shelters in the flood affected areas as preparation for operating relief work and giving shelter to the homeless, specially women and children.

Scouts, girl Guides and trained

volunteers can also help the flood

affected people, in need of succour. Union Council Chairmen and Members can help build bridges of bamboo or wood and to make available boats for each ward to use for emergency purpose such as to help pregnant women, snake-bite and diarrhoea patients and other diseases to reach the health centre as well as to distribute relief to the remotest areas affected by flood.

Emphasis should be given on improving the sanitation facilities as much as possible so that water borne diseases can be controlled to an extent.

Parvez Babul is an NGO activist



ATTENTION

INTERESTED INVESTORS/ SPONSORS IN LIGHT ENGINEERING SECTOR (LES)

The Consortium for Industrial & Engineering Services (CIES) now invites potential and interested sponsors to explore possibilities of investing in the projects briefed below. CIES, with the assistance from South Asia Enterprise Development Facility (SEDF) has recently conducted feasibility studies and sees potential for viable business opportunities in these projects. CIES has the expertise to offer technical/ managerial support to implement such projects:

1. Hard Coke Plant for producing hard coke (to be mainly used in foundries) from imported coal

Present Market: 50,000 tons per annum-TPA (being met totally from imports, but Export also possible)
Proposed plant capacity: 30,000 TPA; Project Cost BDT 10 crore (approx.).

2. Sponge Iron Plant (Midrex formula) for producing sponge iron made with imported iron ore

Annual requirement for foundries & re-rolling mills: 8 lac TPA (being met from ship breaking which is diminishing)
Proposed plant capacity: 100 TPD; Project Cost BDT 16 crore (approx.).

3. Modernization of Re-rolling Mills

Market for re-enforcing rods: 20 lac TPA (being met from ship breaking, local scrap and imports)
Proposed steel melting furnaces to replace imported billets by locally made sponge iron.
Capacity: 20,000 TPA; Project Cost BDT 21 crore (approx.).

3. Pistons/ Liners/ Rings Manufacturing

Market: 150 lac sets per annum (large quantity being imported); Project viable for local manufacturers with Capacity: 5 lac sets per annum; Project Cost BDT 3 crore (approx.).

Interested Applicants should express their interest in writing within 10 days of publication of this advertisement to: CIES, 7th Floor, Suvasu Tower, Panthapath, Dhaka. Phone: 0189 222899 & 862 9458

Your application should state how much capital you can raise from your side to invest and why you are interested.

Only the shortlisted applicants will be invited for a discussion. CIES is an SEDF-promoted consortium.

Radisson

RADISSON WATER GARDEN HOTEL DHAKA

SENA HOTEL DEVELOPMENTS LTD.

TENDER FOR INTERNAL WORKS OF BACK OF HOUSE AREAS OF RADISSON WATER GARDEN HOTEL, DHAKA.

Sena Hotel Developments Ltd., the owners of Radisson Water Garden Hotel (RWGH) invites tenders from bonafide and reputed contractors / firms / suppliers for "Internal Work of Back of House Areas of Radisson Water Garden Hotel, Dhaka."

The bidders are required to demonstrate proof of their experience, technical expertise and financial solvency at the time of collecting tender documents. Tender papers will be available to eligible bidders from the office of the undersigned during office hours on payment of Tk. 5000.00 (Taka Five Thousand) only (non-refundable).

Tender Security @ 2 1/2% of Quoted Amount (refundable) shall be submitted alongwith the offer in the form of Bank Draft/Pay Order from a Scheduled Bank duly executed in favour of "Managing Director, Sena Hotel Developments Ltd." without which the tender shall be rejected.

Tenders will be dropped in the box kept in the office of the undersigned by 1200 hours BST on 14th August '04 and shall be opened at 1230 hours on the same day and place in presence of the tenderers who like to attend the tender opening.

The Authority reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders without assigning any reason whatsoever.

Sd/ (Lt. Col. Md. Nurun Nabi)
Project Director
Sena Hotel Developments Ltd.
Water Garden Hotel Site
Airport Road, Dhaka Cantonment
Dhaka-1206.

Job Opportunity

An international NGO, engaged in child centered community development, invites application from deserving candidates for the position of **Communications Specialist**.

The Communications Specialist will be responsible for developing and implementing overall communications, public relations and advocacy strategy for positioning the organization as a recognized voice of the children.

The major responsibilities are:

- Designing innovative programs for communication on children issues; managing ongoing media projects; coordinating in-house and corporate requirements of communications materials and promoting organizational learning;
- Developing communications, public relations and advocacy strategy through media;
- Implementing and coordinating public relations, media relations and general communications activities of the organization;
- Providing technical, coordinating and managerial support to media project and production house;
- Providing communication support for various stakeholders attending campaign and other events;
- Monitoring media coverage of various campaigns, maintains clipping files, makes recommendations on ways to improve media coverage.
- Coordinating event logistics and interviews (i.e. TV program, videography, still photography, news release, etc.)
- Represent Plan to different media forums and organizations.

Person profile:

We are looking for a person who has: demonstrated experience in using print and electronic media for communicating children issues; conducted advocacy for promoting and establishing child rights; developing communication tools and materials, demonstrated ability to facilitate media dialogues on children issues; communication event management, and has excellent presentation skills. Applicants having excellent network with child centered organizations and with media will be given preference.

With the above person profile applicants should have at least 5 years' experience in similar job and have Masters preferably in Journalism/Mass Communications/Public Relations/English. Excellent communication skills both in Bangla and English and high level of computer literacy are essential.

Employment conditions:

This position is based at Country Office, Dhaka. The employment initially will be contractual for one year and with a consolidated amount of TK. 40,000/- per month. A higher salary may be considered for outstanding applicant. Based on the organizational need and the performance of the incumbent, after one year the position may be regularized within the regular salary structure of the organization.

Interested applicants fulfilling the required qualifications and expected profile may send their application with recent CV, contact number, a passport size photograph, and names of two referees (one should be present employer, if any) to PO Box No. 10039, Mohammadpur, Dhaka by 10 August 2004.

Only short listed applicants will be contacted.

WOMEN APPLICANTS ARE ESPECIALLY ENCOURAGED TO APPLY

Flood control measures steeped in neglect?

ERSHAD KHANDKER

THAT flood is a seasonal occurrence in Bangladesh is a fact. But we need to repeat this in black and white because who knows whether this fact of flood, made worse by monsoon rain, gets noticed. The capital city of the country is now at the mercy of floodwaters and not for the first time. Clogged, unplanned and inadequate sewerage system has made human waste and flood water enmeshed in the same cesspool from which people are expected to get their grain of life, water being the other name for life itself.

Lack of observational capacity, neutered imagination and castrated action sense, are the symptoms for a more serious disease - apathy. We should not simply bunch the intelligentsia, political leadership, technocratic establishment and the educated citizens and accuse them of lack of vision. There has to be a more explainable reason for the situation that we are in now.

We have some idea about the various difficulties that lie on the path of a well-planned and workable solution that would save Dhaka from regular inundation. This riverine country is poor and flood protection is an expensive and difficult project to undertake when feeding the teeming millions can be the urgent necessity. However, the rest of the country depends on Dhaka city being safe, as long as possible, because all relief effort backed by administrative muscle has to be conducted from here.

It is a sorry thing that flood pro-

tection strategies are mired in controversy and much debate. The embankment is considered unsafe because the rash of water may burst the bank. Any large scale work should be done in a manner that does not lead to even more disaster. Planning should be done with an eye for solving further problem. However lower and less intrusive embankments are very much subscribed to by all schools of thought.

Such embankments could be strategically placed along with other measures. In the meantime, we should start with urgency on the other more practical and safer measures. More space needs to be given for the water to spread, making it a necessity to allow more space between human habitation. We need to start dredging on a scale not seen before, so that the riverbeds are deeper and capable of holding more water. There are hosts of other practical solutions that may just work to keep Dhaka safe from any deluge that could threaten the already chaotic operational capacity of city. We know of Holland as a nation that has survived and prospered by successfully taking care of crippling inundation that ravaged with regularity. It is easy to ask help, on an urgent basis from Holland and there would be good response. Funding can be organised within the country.

Life has to go on. The teeming millions need comfort and help right now. We should continue with our daily habits, and try to keep our spirit up.

Ershad Khandker is a free lance writer

Career Opportunity

A Group of Industries is looking for the following personnels in its **SWEATER DIVISION** situated at Tongi / Board Bazar. Candidates specially highly experienced for handling Merchandising ONLY SWEATER are encouraged to apply.

Merchandising Manager: Male-01Post

He must be a Master Degree holder with good command in oral & written English & Computer Literacy. At least 6-8 years experience in the related field (**Specially in Sweater**) Capable to lead a team of 8-10 merchandisers and handle buyers independently. Age: maximum 30-35 years
The incumbent drawing present Salary less than 40,000/- per month need not to apply.

Merchandise: Male-04 Posts

He must be a Master Degree holder with good command in oral & written English & Computer Literacy. At least 5 years experience in the related field (**Specially in Sweater**) Capable to lead a team of Q.C's and handle buyers independently. Age: maximum 30 years
The incumbent drawing present Salary less than 20,000/- per month need not to apply.

Salary & other benefits are negotiable. Attractive Salary / Benefits will be offered depending on the Qualification & Experience. Applicants must be well presented, Dynamic, Self motivated and be able to work independently. Deserving candidates are requested to send their Application along with a C.V & two copies of recent passport size photographs by 10th August 2004 to
The Advertiser, Box # A-153

C/o: The Daily Star, 19, Karwan Bazar, Dhaka 1215

N.B. Transport & Lunch facilities will be provided to the selected candidates

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For further information please contact
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CAREER OPPORTUNITY

An established leading Industrial Group of Bangladesh requires the following posts to be filled by experienced personnel for its Plastics Injection Moulding section for immediate appointment. Interested candidates are requested to send their resume and 2 copies of recent photograph along with application mentioning expected salary within 7 (seven) days to: Box no. A-152, The Daily Star, 19 Karwan Bazar, Dhaka-1215. Please indicate name of the post on envelope.

SL #	Post	Age limit	No. of Post	Qualification
01	Asstt. Production Manager	40 years	1	Graduate, 7 years experience in organizing production activities of Plastic Industries.
02	Asstt. Production Officer	30 years	1	Graduate, knowledge of computer operation.
03	Delivery In-charge	30 years	1	Graduate, knowledge of computer operation and VAT challan.
04	Shift In-charge	40 years	3	Graduate/Diploma in Engineering, 5 years experience in Plastic Injection Machine & Mould, colour mixing of material & quality product checking.
05	Technician	40 years	6	T.T.C., 5 years experience in mould and machine maintenance. Mould setting in the machine for production, supervision on counting & packing of product.
06	Operator	30 years	24	S.S.C., 3 years experience in P.L.C. Injection Moulding Machine operation.
07	Helper	25 years	28	S.S.C., Healthy and hard working people.

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