

World Vision Insider

November 11, 1999

World Vision Responds to Deadly Cyclone

For eight hours on October 29, a cyclone roared through the Indian state of Orissa, killing between 10,000 and 40,000 people and leveling 200,000 homes. Described as the "storm of the century," more than 10 million people are affected by loss and destruction.

In immediate response to the storm, World Vision launched a relief project to help 20,000 families over the next four weeks.

A firsthand account from a World Vision relief worker in Orissa describes the scale of this tragedy:

"On Saturday (November 6), en route to an area where World Vision is providing relief assistance, I saw fallen and broken trees, and hundreds of ani-

mal carcasses strewn all over the fields. I saw a half-dozen dead bodies near the roadside, not more than a few yards from a house. The salt water, which now covers the land, is preserving the bodies, giving a tragic appearance. Despite being 12 miles inland, this village was smashed by a 12-foot tidal wave.

Many children and women who could not escape climbed into trees or ran into one of the very few concrete shelters, only to be drowned in flood water or buried under collapsed mud walls. In some cases, people's homes became their permanent graves.

I saw women and children bathing and collecting water from ponds of

stagnant water in which there were also floating animal carcasses. Children and women are the most vulnerable to disease. Many have gone without food for several days and are exposed to the elements."

World Vision relief teams are working around the clock to provide aid. As of November 8, World Vision has provided survival kits to 360 needy families. The kits contain 44 pounds of rice, eating utensils, clothes, and bedding. Within ten days, World Vision will begin distributing temporary and permanent shelter materials.

Please remember the victims of this tragic storm in your prayers.

220,000 Timor Refugees Receive Help

Although it has been more than two months since the post-election fighting escalated in East Timor, 400,000 East Timorese are still in hiding. Another 200,000 await repatriation from West Timor. Nearly 75 percent of the population is homeless in East Timor, a country certain to soon be ranked as one of the absolute poorest countries in the world.

World Vision reestablished its operational presence in East Timor on September 22, 1999 and continues to provide food and health care for tens of thousands of refugees in both East and West Timor.

In East Timor, World Vision has distrib-

uted more than 1,500 tons of rice to 151,000 people. In addition to food commodities, World Vision has distributed blankets, tarpaulins, jerry cans, clothes, and emergency health kits.

In West Timor World Vision has provided relief interventions for 70,000 people, including 300 tons of rice for some 35,000 refugees in 14 camps and emergency kits and relief items to 30 camps.

World Vision health interventions in West Timor include treating up to 300 patients a day in three camps. Common ailments among the refugees include pneumonia, malaria, diarrhea, eye infection, and scabies (a skin disease).

More than 500 Die in Vietnam Flooding

Central Vietnam's worst flooding in 40 years has affected nearly 1 million people, driving hundreds of thousands from their homes and killing at least 522 people.

The flooding is a result of a week-long deluge of rain in early November that has left cities and villages under six feet of water. As much as 20,000 tons of food is desperately needed in the worst-hit province.

World Vision plans to immediately begin distribution of food and relief supplies and later launch a long-term rehabilitation program to restore sanitation, health facilities, and possibly homes.

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