

Texans on Mission partner responds to Bangladesh floods

August 31, 2024

DHAKA, Bangladesh—When late-August flooding caused widespread damage, crop loss and displacement in southeast Bangladesh and in the neighboring Indian state of Tripura, Texans on Mission responded with funding for the Baptist aid organization in the area.

“We have an ongoing disaster relief training relationship with Baptist Aid,” a division of the Bangladesh Baptist convention, said Rupert Robbins, Texans on Mission associate director of disaster relief.

“We have the privilege of training Baptist leaders and volunteers in how to respond to disasters, and now they are putting that training to work and showing the love of Jesus to the people in need.

“Thanks to our wonderful donors, we also have been able to send funds to meet the tremendous needs being faced by churches in the region.”

Milton Munshi, director of Baptist Aid-Bangladesh Baptist Church Fellowship, said 12 districts are affected by the flood, and it probably will expand to others.

“A persistent monsoon low-pressure system over Bangladesh and the Bay of Bengal ... is causing increased rainfall in both India and Bangladesh,” Munshi said in a report. Also, upstream flood gates have been opened, worsening the situation in southeast Bangladesh.

More than 2 million children in eastern Bangladesh are “at risk as floods sweep through homes, schools and villages,” UNICEF reported Friday. “In all, these floods, the worst in eastern Bangladesh in 34 years, have affected

5.6 million people.”

Fifty-two deaths have been reported.

More than 50 churches affected

Munshi said churches are in communities still under or surrounded by flood water. Farmers have lost their crops, and there are no regular job opportunities in flooded areas. People also need safe drinking water.

In the eight affected districts, 51 of 68 churches have been affected, Munshi said.

Baptist Aid-Baptist Church Fellowship called an emergency executive board meeting Aug. 24 and decided to pursue a two-stage disaster response, he reported.

First, emergency food and cash support for survival needs will be provided to vulnerable church members and their neighbors.

Second, the post-flood response will seek to regenerate and restore the mainly agricultural livelihood destroyed by flooding.

Robbins said it’s important that Texans on Mission already has an established relationship with Christians in Bangladesh, a predominantly Muslim country.

“These are brothers and sisters in Christ, and our hearts go out to the church as they minister in the name of Jesus during this time of widespread suffering,” Robbins said.

“It’s also inspiring to see how they are planning and working to respond effectively to this disaster and to honor our Lord. The love of God and neighbor is at the core of Texans on Mission, which knows no bounds.”