

CASA in Action

S P E C I A L C O V E R A G E



KERALA

after Deluge

coming back to life

Stories of
Loss
Relief
Recovery

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Two boatmen take CASA team into the interiors of Alappuzha district of Kerala, to show the marks of destruction just a few days after the floods.

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CASA in Action

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EDITORIAL

The story of Kerala has gone beyond the human toll, the heroic rescues, the material obliteration; it has become more about human's lost battle with the nature and her forces – once again a constant reminder of how we are threatening the very existence of our being. It has been four months after the great deluge; and the streets, the houses, the public properties, the agricultural fields and the debris, all speak of the daunting scars left by the August floods.

Residents are yet to come to terms with the loss, while some still wishing it to be an unfortunate dream witnessed with their open eyes. It was the worst calamity in nearly 100 years, and so, the floods took away the lives woven together bit by bit by the hardworking communities over the 100-year span. Each day clearing debris or the sheer volume of waste brings the realisation of the ferocity of the disaster.

CASA responded to the grievous situation by immediately stationing its team in seven worst hit regions varying from hilly districts of Wayanad and Idukki to low line regions of Thirussur, Ernakulam, Kottayam, Pathanamthitta and Alappuzha. CASA swung into immediate relief action after ground reports of rescue operations started circulating in the media. With a team of more than 30 members, CASA conducted assessment of the situation and reached out to the most affected people with dry ration, non-food items and purchasing capacity of the household material.

The newsletter also talks about a joint research by CASA and Kuman Seva Samiti, a local organisation in Uttarakhand, on child trafficking in the aftermath of 2013 Nepal Earthquake. The research lists some appalling facts on how children and women were lured for better economic prospects by traffickers after the disaster and duped into child labour and flesh trading.

The Super Cyclone of 1999 still haunts the memory of people in Odisha as it was one of the strongest in the history of tropical cyclonic storms. India metrological department registered a total of 9,887 casualties. CASA started a community based program for the villagers in Odisha to systematically combat such catastrophes in the future. And, it passed the test during Cyclone Phailin.

This month at the 3rd General Assembly of the Act Alliance in Uppsala, Sweden, Dr Sushant Agrawal passed the moderator baton to Birgitte Qvist-Sorensen from Dan Church Aid, Europe.

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coming back to life

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Lymphatic Filariasis Program in Odisha



Photo: (Above) Kalpana in blue scarf and Nilandri in red dress with a LF patient in her village in Odisha. (Left) Kalpana shows symptoms of the disease on a patient. CASA / Isha Banerjee

In a place where even a word “Hathipaon” is enough to provoke fear in ill-informed minds, the two courageous women CASA volunteers from Mahasai village in Odisha - Kalpana Swain and Nilandri Nayak came forward to open the shunned doors for the victims of lymphatic filariasis.



Divya Bisht
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Battling Superstition WITH CARE

After joining CASA's task force, Kalpana and Nilandri started volunteering in the remote Mahasai village where people had never thought of intervening in matters as “disgusting” as elephantiasis.

“They said nobody will marry me if I contract the disease” Kalpana uttered. Due to unfavourable beliefs her parents stopped her from participating for the cause but the power of knowledge which she gained from CASA's support group and awareness programmes made her understand that the disease of lymphatic filariasis is more like a slow poison for the patients and not contagious at all.

As a result of intense stigma surrounding the disease, it was difficult for the volunteers from village areas to step forward where they were continuously encouraged to resign from such work as the locals believed that it is highly infectious to go around the victim.

“This disease is caused only due to mosquito bites and nothing else” Kalpana lashes out. Disappointed with the sad reality that besides physical pain the victims are subjected to suffer a mark of disgrace by the society, Kalpana and Nilandri decided to provide free treatment and educate people about lymphatic filariasis with CASA.

Just like Kalpana, it was also a constant fight for Nilandri, whose right leg fell prey to polio when she was a child and had to leave her education after ninth standard.

Able to understand the pain of children with filaria dropping out of school - Nilandri aimed to turn her life around and help people suffering from lymphatic filariasis.

Despite continual threat, the determination and bravery of the two girls came across as an ignition to other women, as a result 68 women out of 90 members become part of CASA task force team.

“Whenever I see a person with lymphatic filariasis, I inquire about her health and whether they are taking medicines on time and other preventive measures to control the spread of the disease” Kalpana added. She dreamt to see every person of village to live a respectful and filariasis-immune life.

In a society where lymphatic filariasis is considered one of the most neglected disease, Kalpana and Nilandri proved to be foot soldiers of the campaign driven by CASA who struggled and succeeded to an extent in persuading sceptical locals of the necessity of taking medications. ■

Strengthening People-led Organisations in Himachal Pradesh

The success might appear small at the national level, but it is huge for Chetna Samiti Kullu because their efforts to strengthen communities' preparedness towards disasters was already coming into action and the recognition by the Government of Himachal further emboldens them to expand their work.



Suresh Satapathy

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The Rise and Rise of People-Led Organisations

A people-led organisation appeared on the front pages of local newspapers in northern Indian state of Himachal Pradesh when it won the prestigious Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Leadership award in October 2018 from the State Government.

A youth Community Based Organisation (CBO), an affiliated junior organisation under Chetna Samiti was also rewarded for best stories of 'Resilience.' The CBOs associated with Chetna Samiti have worked on Timber rights, Forest rights, Right to information, Right to food and other Government schemes.

In 1995, CASA floated a wing in Kullu, Himachal Pradesh to empower the marginalised section of society. The first strategic step in this long-run program was to set-up 'peoples organisation' also called as PAT unit. These organisations engaged

1995

CASA sets up Peoples Organisation also called as PAT unit in Kullu

2015

Chetna Samiti Kullu (CSK) starts work on Governance and Environment

CASA recognises extraordinary work done by Samiti and gives more power by providing assistance

2018

CSK becomes part of advisory council to Kullu District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA)

HP Government awards CSK with Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) leadership



Disaster profile of Kullu District

1

53%



area in **Kullu** is liable to the severest seismic intensity scale (use to measure earthquake) of **IX** or more

2

Landslide & Flood hazard vulnerabilities in Kullu District is **high**



Source: Himachal Pradesh State Disaster Management Authority website

Photo: President of Chetna Samiti Kullu Mr. Beli Ram receiving the DRR leadership award from Himachal Pradesh Government

the local people and groomed them to take-up the responsibilities (leadership building), speak-up for their rights and challenge authorities legally in case of injustice.

Chetna Samiti Kullu is one such federation of three peoples organisation – started in 1995; it worked with marginalised sections by understanding their issues and needs and finding possible solutions. The Samiti also gave significant emphasis on governance and environment.

The Samiti is now part of Multi-stakeholder Mountain Collective platform which gives opportunity to the local people to put up their grievances at state and national levels. Besides, it also works for

livelihood promotion, accessing entitlements, mountain water, climate change and rights of vulnerable mountain communities.

In 2015, CASA took note of the extraordinary work done by the Samiti and gave more power by rewarding them an entire set-up. Now Chetna Samiti Kullu is a registered organisation and is working in collaboration with National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and other state government organizations.

The Samiti through NABARD aid is helping women farmers in doing organic farming, linking them to markets and empowering them to become independent entrepreneurs.

With its immense contribution in various fields, Chetna Samiti Kullu has grown so much in stature and efficiency, spreading its reach as far as becoming the part of the advisory council to Kullu District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA).

The Samiti works with DDMA in charting out District disaster management plan and has also developed DRR micro plan for a model village in Himachal Pradesh. The State Government recognised their quality work and has further asked them to develop DRR micro plan for other villages of Kullu district. ■

Edited by Md. Mahfooz Alam

PASSING THE LEADERSHIP BATON IN UPPSALA

Gender justice and youth engagement gained more spotlight at the highest governance body of the Alliance where representatives/ leaders from all 145+ ACT members stood united for the cause.

Isha Banerjee | from Uppsala, Sweden

Moments after taking over the Moderator baton from Dr Sushant Agrawal, Birgitte QvistSørensen in her interview with **CASA India** revealed as to what "inspired" her to contest for the position.

"Gender campaign is why I actually wanted to be a moderator. I always wanted to work for the gender justice issue because I see so many countries and places including my own country Denmark where women are not equally represented, don't have equal voice or equal rights. The issue to work for equality and gender justice is very close to my heart. My role as a moderator would be to actually get the gender justice campaign moving," she said.

She further adds on that "the world is not going in a very positive direction; therefore it becomes very important for us to have a stronger alliance with a strong voice." Calling her predecessor a "visionary moderator", Sorensen said that "Dr Sushant Agrawal did an amazing job as a moderator and I hope I can fill in his shoes. I think the alliance has moved forward in the last four years under his leadership."

Congratulating the new moderator for her exceptional vision, Dr Sushant Agrawal, who served as the moderator from 2014-18, said that he is extremely happy to pass the leadership baton giving a strong guiding message to the new board.

"My best wishes are with the new board. They must keep in mind that the world is changing very fast and ACT Alliance also needs to be flexible. The socio-political challenges are emerging very rapidly. I think the bigger challenge for ACT is the financial sustainability - especially for the secretariat. We can raise funds from other networks, and I think it will be a challenge for the next Governing Board to develop a system where we should become a self financing structure," he says.

Dr Agrawal, Director of ACT member Churches' Auxiliary for Social Action, was associated with ACT network beyond his period of serving as moderator in 2014 wherein he largely contributed in giving local actors and partners more space to raise their voices. ■



Photo: (Above) Previous Moderator Dr. Sushant Agrawal with the newly elected ACT Moderator Birgitte QvistSørensen after the assembly elections outside Uppsala Koncert & Kongress in Uppsala, Sweden.

(center) L-R ACT General Secretary Rudelmar Bueno de Faria with CASA Director Sushant Agrawal, new moderator QvistSørensen and youth delegates. (below) Dr. Sushant Agrawal moderating a session at the General Assembly.

Photo credit/ACTAlliance

CASA India Director Sushant Agrawal meets United Nations Deputy Secretary-General Amina Jane Mohammed and talk about the role of local regional actors playing a crucial role in the agenda for sustainable development at the ongoing 3rd ACT Alliance General Assembly in Uppsala, Sweden. Photo credit/ACTAlliance



Faith based organisations have played critical role in addressing issues like social justice, human rights and sustainable development - which are very close to my heart.

Her Excellency Amina J. Mohammed
Deputy Secretary - General
United Nations



"I would appreciate the important role faith-based organisations played in the formulation of 2030 agenda. It was an extensive consultation which went beyond New York and many countries, penetrating our villages and homes. The continued activism of faith-based organisations should be essential in forging ahead our quest to achieve SDGs.

The developmental challenges are very complex – greater than any government, organisation or an individual. Our global village is strained by intolerance, discrimination and rise of populist-nationalist politics. Imagine the pain of a parent whose child is crying from hunger, hundreds and millions don't have access to potable

water, sanitation, adequate housing, health care and education for the employment opportunities. To reach this, we must live up for the people, stay true to our ambitious global goals and make collective pledge to leave no one behind.

Let's continue this partnership together. The challenges are vast but so are the opportunities that we want to talk about, especially when we work together on the common goals of allowing everyone to be the part SDGs. I know it's possible only when we recognise strength and diversities and together overcome the challenges and be the part of global family."

Her Excellency Amina J. Mohammed



Session on the role of Forum-Based Organisations in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was chaired by ACT Alliance Moderator Sushant Agrawal, who is also CASA India Director. The keynotes were addressed by the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations Her Excellency Amina Jane Mohammed, Deputy Prime Minister of Sweden Isabella Lovin and Director General of the Swedish International Development Agency Ms Carin Jamtin. The session for presentation and discussion was facilitated by Martin Jung, General Secretary of the The Lutheran World Federation.

During his address, Mr Agrawal said that "Her Excellency Ms Amina's presence on the 2nd day of the ACT Alliance General Assembly gives us an assurance that UN is listening to us, our perspectives and our work with the communities." Photo credit/ACTAlliance



Thursdays in Black: Resistance and Resilience

All the member participants at the week-long event of ACT Alliance General Assembly in Uppsala wore black on Thursday, November 1, as part of a campaign against sexual and gender-based violence. Through this simple gesture, participants were invited to be part of a global movement resisting attitudes and practices that permit rape and violence. The campaign is simple but profound. Thursdays in Black was started by the World Council of Churches (WCC) in the 1980s as a form of peaceful protest against rape and violence – especially taking place during wars and conflicts. The campaign focuses on ways through which individuals may challenge attitudes that cause rape and violence.



With expectations to ensure better future collaborations, Asia & the Pacific members meet for Regional Meetings at the Third General Assembly. While ACT Alliance member Anoop Sukumaran feels that this meeting will bring more voices from the Asia & the Pacific region on a bigger podium, CASA India representative Joycia Thorat believes the civil societies in Asia needs to be given more space to come forward.



CASA India team at the Third General Assembly of ACT Alliance pitching for better regional corporation and stronger partnerships. From Left to Right ACT Moderator & CASA Director: Dr Sushant Agrawal Chair at ACT Advocacy Advisory Group: Joycia Thorat Communications & Coverage: Isha Banerjee Cordinator of ACT India Forum: Joseph Sahayam



Photo: Periyar river, one of the longest and powerful rivers in Kerala, swells up in Idukki district in the wake of massive floods in August. CASA/Benny Joseph

Mending The Gaps

after the
WORST CALAMITY
IN NEARLY 100 YEARS

CASA India brings to you the coverage on The Great Kerala Deluge in two separate editions. Our staff and reporters reached the worst hit and interiors regions of all seven majorly flooded districts of Kerala. Witness the tragic stories of loss and fearless narratives of recovery and hope through our eyes.

COVERAGE & EDITS

Dr. Sushant Agrawal | Isha Banerjee | Md. Mahfooz Alam

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Isha Banerjee | Arushi Narchal | Sanjeev Singh

DESIGN & COMPILATION

Sanjeev Singh



GOD'S OWN  **COUNTRY**
in stress




**COVER
STORY**



Isha Banerjee
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This time it rained until the towns were submerged in several feet of muddy water. The initial footages of the August flooding in Kerala were a clear indication of the nature's rebellion against human greed. On some accounts, the residents recollected of being caught unaware of the flood water gushing overnight inside their house. Some woke up only to spot vipers and toads crawling in the waist deep mushy water within their bedrooms.

The rains in August was far from normalcy; instead a few millimetres above to achieving the mark of the worst disaster since 1924. Tourism, agriculture, small-scale businesses and other sectors - all were badly hit.

It gets far worse when one travels across the Kuttanad basin, popularly known as 'Kerala's Rice Bowl', and could hardly distinguish the paddy fields from water bodies. Eulogised for its beauty in Arundhati Roy's Booker-winning novel, *God of Small*

Things, situated below sea-level, the Kuttanad region, was one of the worst affected areas that even today bears the marks of devastation on its farmlands, houses and people.

She is a Land Blessed with Water Who fills the pockets of Kerala, She is Idukki – a popular Malayalam song beautifully pens down the description of the hilly district of Idukki which is worldwide famous for its spices, tea cultivation and wildlife sanctuary.

Idukki is also home to some of the major dams which, when their sluice gates were opened after their water level came to the choking points, caused unprecedented destruction all over the state.

In an interview with media, Kerala Power Minister MM Mani said "What our forefathers built in the past 100 years, to take Idukki to where it was, has been washed away. Idukki has gone back by 40 years."

KERALA THE LOSS FLOOD

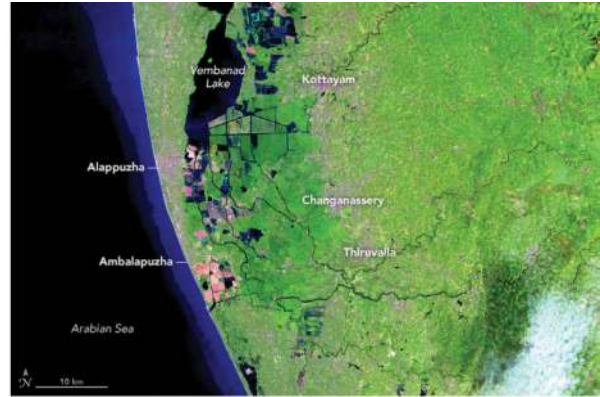
No one expects a disaster. Neither did the southern coastal state of Kerala.

The story of Kerala has gone beyond the human toll, the heroic rescues, the material obliteration; it has become more about human's lost battle with the nature and her forces – once again a constant reminder of how we are threatening the very existence of our being.

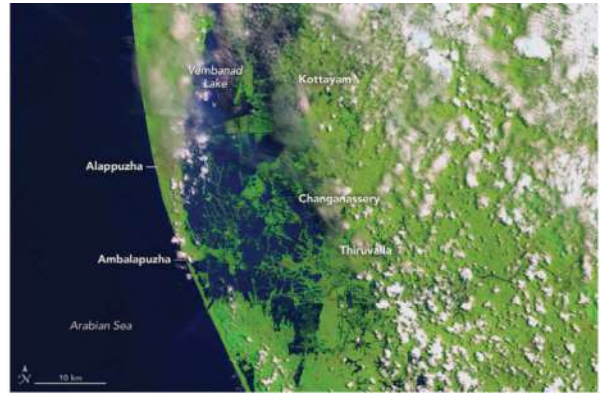
It has been four months after the great deluge; and the streets, the houses, the public properties, the agricultural fields and the debris, all speak of the daunting scars left behind.

Residents are yet to come to terms with the loss, while some still wish it to be an unfortunate dream witnessed with their open eyes.

It was the worst calamity in nearly 100 years, and so, the flood took away the lives woven together bit by bit by the hardworking communities over the 100-year span. Each day, clearing debris or the sheer volume of waste brings the realisation of the ferocity of the disaster. ■



February 6, 2018



August 22, 2018

While the 'before' image was taken by the Landsat 8 satellite's operational land imager on February 6, the 'after' one was clicked by the multispectral instrument on the European Space Agency's Sentinel-2 satellite on August 22, 2018. (Photos: Earth Observatory/Nasa)

Escape was not immediate for some

Saju Mohan waited with his wife, two kids and father for several hours even after the flood water reached up to his waist level, until some neighbours offered them help to move him along with his wheelchair to a safer place. "Living in relief camp was not feasible for me because of my condition. We moved back to our damaged home once we heard that the flood water had started receding. Many of our household material are still missing and some buried in our lawn along with the slush."

He feels gratified towards her wife for managing the situation at the time of the emergency. "From calling neighbours for help to arranging amenities at the camp, my wife handled everything single-handedly and saved our little family from a major mishap."



FLOOD TOLL



Disaster

Source: National Disaster Management Authority (India)

After
1924
Worst flood

More than **54**
lakh people
affected in all
14 districts

2.5
times more
rainfall in August

Over
400
Deaths



Damage

Source: IANS & Economics Times

Total loss pegged at
₹ 40,000
crore

₹ 1000
crore loss to
spice plantation

57,000
hectares of
crops damaged

₹ 2000
crore loss to
travel & tourism

Kerala Deluge brings back memories of 1924 Floods



The Malayalam year 1099 (ME), or what was 1924 in the Gregorian calendar, is often considered to be a landmark moment in Kerala's history. The deluge occurred when Periyar River overflowed in July 1924 because of heavy rainfall that lasted almost three weeks. In 1924, the flood waters had submerged Thrissur, Ernakulam, Idukki, Kottayam and Alappuzha. Though the rainfall recorded in 1924 was far lesser in comparison to what Kerala has received this year, the impact of the deluge was no less. Several records of the flood provide a glimpse of the gruesome conditions in which people of Malabar were caught.



ESCAPING LANDSLIDES

Sathish & Prasanna
Munnar (Idukki District)

They first shifted to a tent-house a few kilometers down their concrete house after information started doing round that Idukki Dam has reached its full capacity owing to incessant rains. "Beginning August, we shifted to this tent house which is closer to the main road. We even convinced our neighbours to shift with us. Unfortunately, the landslide in this part damaged our house and washed away our neighbour's house killing one of their children." Moved by the death due to the landslide, the couple will stay at the temporary shelter for more days until they make sure the situation is fully under control.

FALLEN HOUSE, LIFE IN MAKE-SHIFT HOMES

Prethi
Thrissur District

Of all the four walls of her brick-layered house, only two could withstand the force of flood stream on the night of August 14. "We only left with a bag containing our identity proof documents," she says adding that they had to rush out of their house as soon as the water started entering house. Right now, the house in which she used to live has ruins of a collapsed roof. Her family could only save a bicycle, some clothes and a steel cupboard. "Wells and bore wells are contaminated with the flood water and we are finding it difficult to get hygienic water for consumption. I don't want my kids to suffer again," says Prethi.





DESTROYED LIVELIHOOD, PEOPLE WAIT TO GO BACK TO WORK

Sojen & his Handloom Society Cooperative employees
Chendamangalam (Ernakulum District)

Secretary of a handloom cooperative, Sojen, and all his 127 employees lost their only source of income when the August floods destroyed the weaving machines, equipments, raw material and finished stock, estimating a total loss of Rs 29 lakhs for their cooperative. Now, two months after the floods, the workers are patiently waiting for aid to repair the damaged weaving machines soaked in mud. "We have been doing this weaving business since 1954 and many women employees are dependent on this income. Livelihood is emerging out to be a big problem for people here," says Sojen.

CHILDREN'S LOSS

Sundried books and notebooks lie on the corner of the streets with schoolbags half buried in mud. This is a casual scene to be witnessed in every district after the deluge. Many school-going children lost their uniforms and paraphernalia. Days after, the students have resumed their classes but without books, stationery, shoes and uniform. Months after, students have resumed their classes, taking whatever little stationery they have inside a plastic bag. "My parents told me that it will take time to arrange for my school material as they are more focused on repairing our house. The first thing that I will buy will be my school uniform and pair of school shoes," says Anandhini, from Idukki.



Transcription of interviews by Prerna Lall



More than **14** lakh
people shifted to
5600 relief camps

More than **2,80,000**
persons evacuated

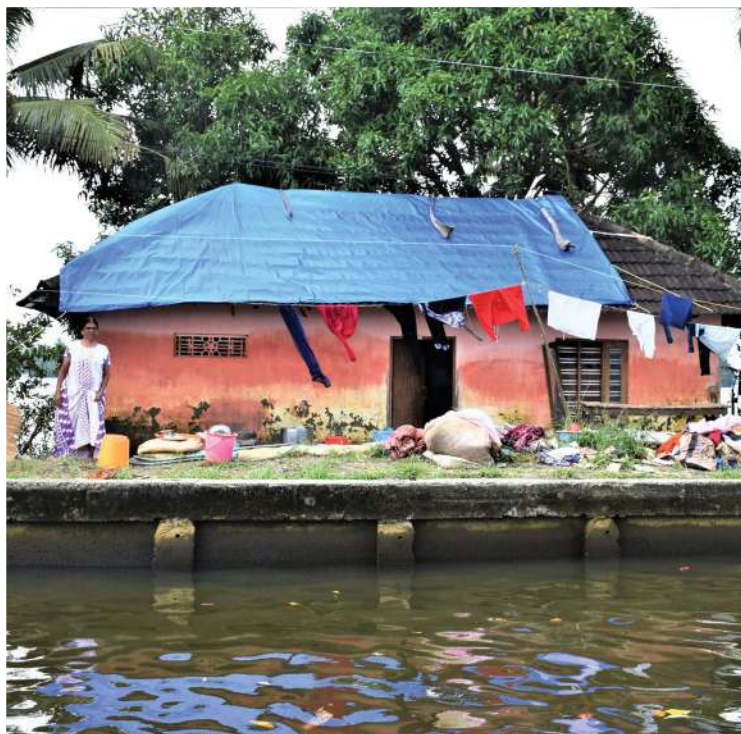
Army, Navy, Air Force & Coastal
Guard deployed with helicopters
airlifting

Clothes, Bed sheets, Blankets,
Medicine, Mosquito repellents
distributed

*Source: National Disaster
Management Authority (India)*

The woman in the photograph is a resident of Kottayam district whose house was washed away in the floods. Presently, she is staying at her mother's house which was also partly damaged in the August deluge. Upon asking why they were continuing living in a vulnerable house, her mother revealed, "We tried living in the relief shelters but other residents were not comfortable sharing the same roof with my daughter as her mental health condition is not stable. She gets recurrent flashbacks of her house being washed away in the floods, and that makes her emotionally unstable and restless. We had to come back to this house as we have no other place to live."

- The interviewees didn't wish to be named



(Left Below) A teddy bear belonging to a five-year-old girl, who was killed along with her parents and brother, lies in the debris after her entire house collapsed in a major landslide. The family members were sleeping when the incident happened in Munnar, Idukki district where most deaths were reported.

(Left Above) A woman shows her make-shift tent right outside her partially collapsed house in Thrissur district. Her family shifted all her household material in this tent house and have been living for more than 90 days.

(Right Above) Front boundary of an inundated house in a posh housing complex in Idukki district caves in, damaging a car. CASA/Benny Joseph

(Right Below) A woman on the shores of backwater Alappuzha district sundries all her household material which remained submerged in flood water for several days.



Since 1924 Kerala never witnessed such a mammoth flood, it ravaged everything; however, it remains to be seen how God's own country bounces back to normalcy.

'There was slush everywhere'

“On the midnight of 16th August, my dog started howling briskly; alarmed, I went to see him and heard some unusual commotion outside. Within ten minutes and before I could apprehend the situation, floods broke out, unstoppable water along with mud came smashing everything,” narrated Tiju Samson, a resident of Munnar, Idukki district to CASA reporters.

Tiju Samson on further enquiry, elaborated, “Water was up to our neck, and mud houses were washed off because of landslides. People were evacuated and sent to relief camps. I along with my brother and some other young people rescued many but sadly we couldn't rescue Satish, his wife and their two children. They died trapped in their house, although we did save his mother.”

The damage to infrastructure has been mammoth –local houses, schools, colleges are completely

Incessant rainfall is nothing new to Kerala, but the month of August this year received consistent heavy rainfall, with dams overflowing beyond its capacities. Left with no option, the authorities opened 35 dams which flooded all 14 districts of Kerala.



Md. Mahfooz Alam

Intern - Communications
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Photo (above) Tiju Samson explaining the damages caused by the landslides in Idukki district (below) Tiju Samson's Rotweiler who alerted him on the night of the disaster.





“ I along with my brother and some other young people rescued many but sadly we couldn't rescue Satish, his wife and their two children, they died trapped in their house, although we did save his mother. ”

submerged; roads are damaged; railways stuck and airports shut down. V G Suresh, a local resident recounts in pain, “I am living in my relative's house. My house and all the belongings were washed away in the flood and I can't reconstruct it without government aid.

He further adds, “I have two school-going daughters. Their study materials are completely destroyed – I am left with no resource to send them school again.”

Farmers, fisherman and the daily wage workers are in miserable state. Soman from Kuttanad said, “The basic necessities of livelihood – agriculture, livestock and boats are lost; the paddy and banana fields are submerged in water, fisherman are out of job.”

One of the Panchayat Presidents said, “There is no potable water because the supply is cut off and there is severe hygiene and sanitation problem. The water is still stagnant in the houses which may lead to water borne diseases.” ■

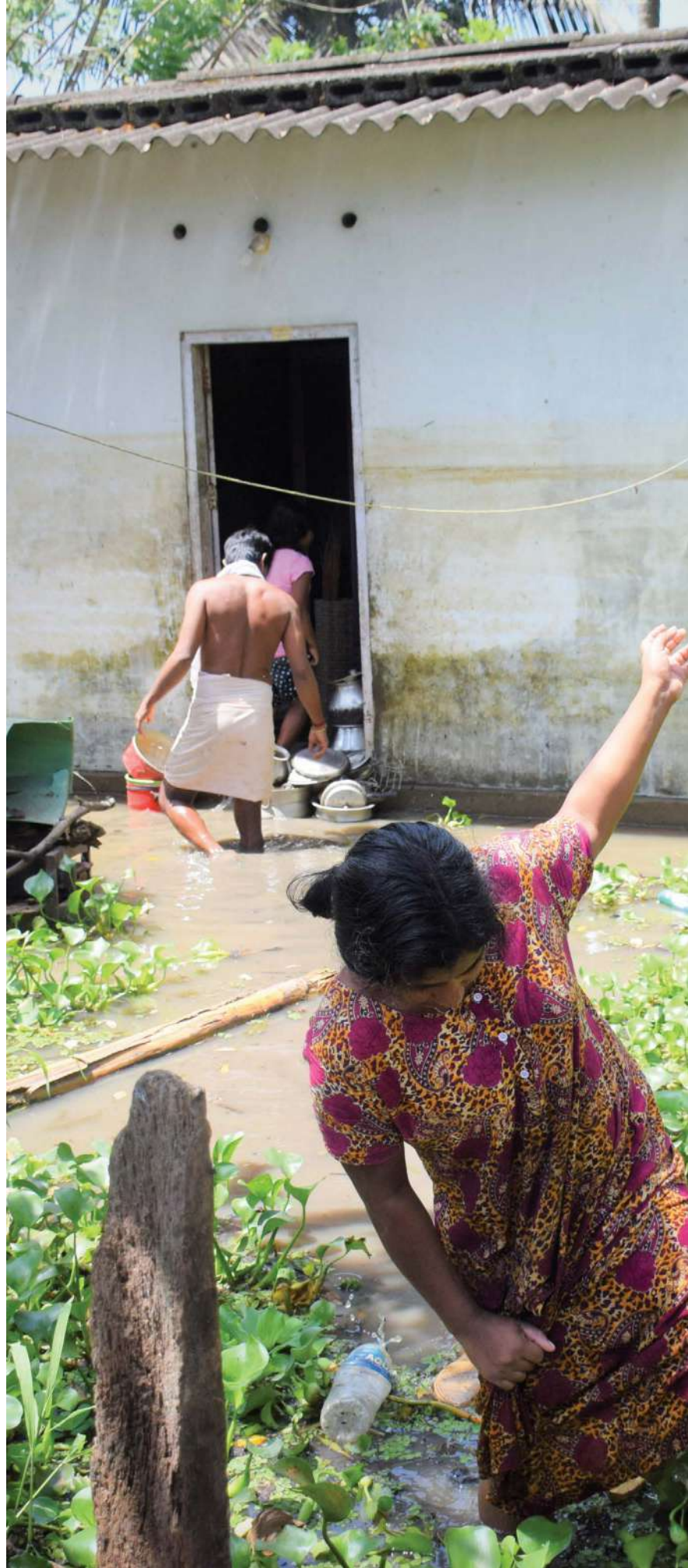


Photo: The woman and other inmates struggling to come out of the inundated locality in Alappuzha



CASA RESPONSE IN



CASA swung into immediate relief action after ground reports of rescue operations started circulating in the media. With a team of more than 30 members, CASA conducted assessment of the situation and reached out to the most affected people with dry ration and non-food items.

Our teams were stationed in the seven worst hit regions varying from hilly districts of Wayanad and Idukki where landslips were a major concern, to low-lying districts of Thrissur, Ernakulam, Kottayam, Pathanamthitta and Alappuzha which bore the brunt of inundation.

Day by day, the loss and need ratio was widening in the state as victims of vulnerable and collapsed houses shifted to relief camps that were managed by the state government. Looking at the crisis CASA came out with its second and the major phase of intervention. Kottayam was strategically selected as the location from where most of CASA's procurement activities were managed.

Our ground staffs were always on the move. Identification of beneficiaries in the most affected villages and liasoning with the Panchayat and ward offices was a crucial step before we proceeded for material distribution.

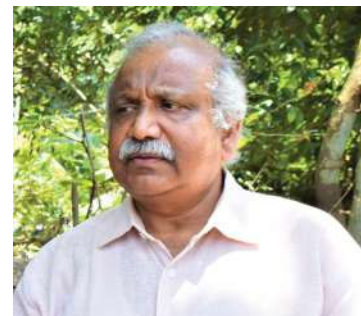
KERALA



(L-R) CASA Director distributing relief material to beneficiaries in Idukki district.
 A beneficiary in Idukki collects material.
 A Church member in Pathanamthitta district give relief material to a flood victim.
 CASA sets-up office in Kottayam district from where flood relief and recovery interventions are processed.



We have been doing the assessment for a month in Kerala. People have suffered huge losses and have lost everything. In the recovery process, CASA is constantly reaching out to the most vulnerable people, be it with relief material or housing repair needs. We have roped in volunteers and community support in every operational district to facilitate our programs successfully and we hope our relief reaches to the needy persons.



KV Thomas
Chief Zonal Officer

REACHING THE REMOTEST PARTS

CASA started visiting the affected areas of Kerala during the flood situation and interacted with the people who lost their houses, essential materials and were spending their days in relief camps. During their visits, CASA evaluation teams reached interior tribal settlements of Wayanad district and interior backwater areas of Kuttanad to develop a damage analysis based on which beneficiary mapping was done and relief distribution was processed in the days to be followed. Every single team was accompanied by at least one woman

CASA staff to understand and map the conditions of women and children on a better scale.

DISTRIBUTION DELIVERY

Taking cognizance of the media reports and evaluation factsheets from its own staff, CASA began its widespread distribution process for 4,346 selected families across the affected state from September onward. Starting with the procurement of huge loads of material to packaging, CASA Kottayam office was placed strategically for a smooth functioning of the entire process. ■



- Cotton Roll
- Soap Bar and Holder
- Antiseptic Liquid
- Sanitary Napkins
- Washing Powder
- Tooth Brush
- Toothpaste
- Hand Towel
- Under Garments

DIGNITY KIT for Women & Children

Months of flood water stagnation led to an alarming situation of disease outbreak. At a time when people had deserted their homes and sanitation and hygiene amenities were taking a toll, CASA put together a Hygiene Kit or Dignity kit within its relief kits, specifically keeping in mind women and children, who were more exposed and vulnerable to various infections and diseases. Items like sanitary napkins, undergarments, antiseptic soaps and liquids were given to the beneficiaries who were under stress of unhygienic circumstances amid this disaster.

Officers on Ground Say



**Karunagaran
Durai**

"The condition of Idukki district was unlike other districts of Kerala. It was mostly affected by landslides and dam water caused (50) deaths compared to any other districts of Kerala. As CASA Relief team in Idukki, we had to reach the interior villages where the damage incurred was huge"

"People in Kuttanad region had to spend their nights in relief shelters as their homes were fully inundated for several months. Providing them with household material and food items was emerging out as a basic need which CASA teams provided at that time. Housing problem still remains a major problem in the area."



Prem Kumar



CASA'S LOCAL YOUTHS IN ACTION



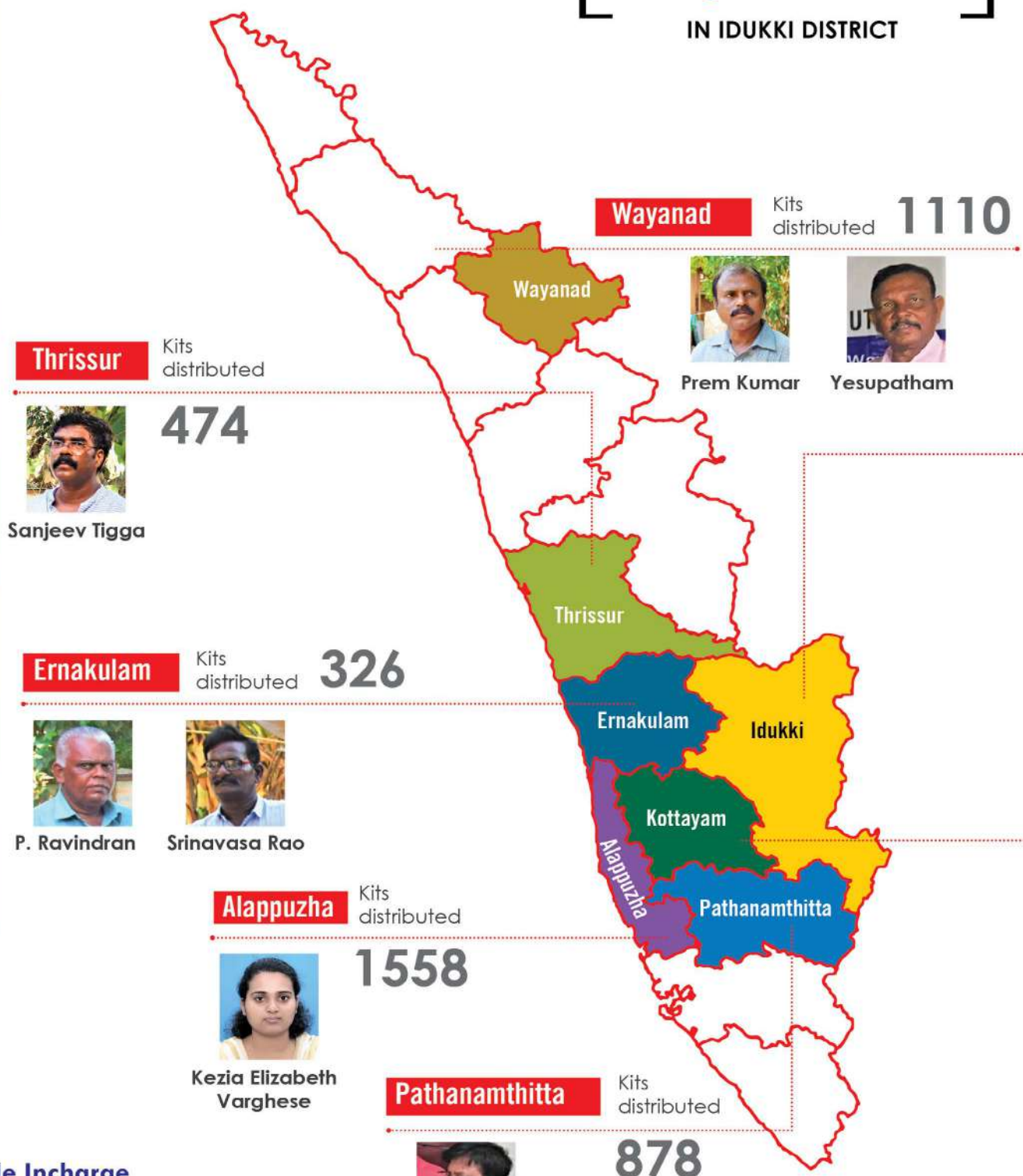
(From Left to Right) Priya Anna James (top left), Shradha Johny, Rubesh George, Thomaskutty K Mavellil, Dennis Joseph, Jins Jee Jacob, Soumya Vineeth, Kezia Elizabeth Varghese, Bincy George (top right).

CASA KERALA FLOOD RESPONSE PLAN

A BLUEPRINT

- Utensil sets
- Mug
- Torch light
- Plastic bucket
- Bedsheets
- Groundsheets

IN IDUKKI DISTRICT



Vehicle Incharge



Ashok Kumar Krishnamurthi Mathew Joseph R. Rajesh



Dillip Kumar Ram

PROGRAMME

CASA staff were stationed for more than 122 days in all the 7 worst affected Districts and were coordinating its operations from Kottayam office.

- | | |
|-------------------------|--------------|
| Hygiene Kit/Dignity Kit | Utensil Set |
| Plastic mat | Food items |
| Bedsheets | Blanket |
| Cotton Saree | Mosquito net |
| Cotton Dhoti | |

IN OTHER 6 DISTRICTS



EVERY HYGIENE KIT CONTAINS

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| packs of sanitary napkins | soaps |
| antiseptic liquid | pack of undergarments |
| toothpaste | toothbrush |
| cotton roll | hand towel comb |
| nail cutter | washing powder |



Sushant Agrawal

Overseeing entire response operation



K.V. Thomas

Relief operation head

Idukki

Kits distributed **2290**



Karunagaran Durai



Benny Joseph



Aloke Ghosh



Joseph Sahayam

Response Coordinators



Satyajit Das



Gaurav Masih



Vijay Lahore



K.A.Thomas

Material Procurement Team

Kottayam

Kits distributed **856**



Karunagaran Durai



Benny Joseph



Raichal Alexander



Priya Anna

Assessment Team



Raichal Alexander



Priya Anna



Isha Banerjee



Arushi Narchal

Ground situation & Response Coverage



This has been a learning experience for a local like me. Initially I along with many women volunteers got cold feet towards joining the relief efforts when CASA called out for support. But they helped us understand the importance of community participation and unity at this hour, and how it will help us strengthen our approach towards disaster preparedness for the future. Now, mostly all our volunteers involved with CASA are women who are keen to actively work with the humanitarian organisation.

Lolit J. Punnackal
CASA Volunteer in Idukki

” VOLUNTEERS & COMMUNITIES MAKE IT POSSIBLE

Vulnerability reduction is a step-by-step process through recognizing potential problem areas, and one of the important phases of the response is the coming together of the community – without which successful completion of the relief operations becomes almost impossible. CASA being the oldest and pioneer humanitarian organisation, has accomplished all its disaster relief work with full cooperation from the communities, and Kerala story was not different. The only initial challenge, however, was breaking the ice of hesitance and agitation. Using local contacts, our teams selected the most active members having a better understanding of their condition post floods.

LONG-TERM ENGAGEMENT

As communities and economies move from responding to a natural disaster to following the longer road of recovery, those involved have an opportunity to ensure that investments are designed for long-term sustainability and innovation.

Moving ahead with a good rapport developed with the community members over time, CASA's final and the ongoing phase of intervention 'Support Through Bank Transfer' program is being implemented, wherein families will be given monetary help - only through proper verification of documents and damage assessment - in the recovery process. ■

GIVING MORE POWER TO THE PEOPLE

This Recovery Program would give a choice to the flood affected communities in coping up with the humongous aftermath.

The 'Unconditional Cash Transfer Through Bank Accounts' program is in its final phase of implementation wherein the communities will be given monetary support through bank transfer after proper verification of documents and need assessment.

The program will not deal with any hand-to-hand cash transfer but will be strictly adhering to bank transfers only; giving people the utmost authority to utilise the resource as per their needs. Seen as a bold, progressive

and futuristic move within humanitarian circle, the program aims to give liberty to its people to make a variety of choices - from repairing of houses, to buying household essentials, to investing on new livelihood opportunities, to levelling of house, to preparing for the next season's flood - spreading to a wide diversity of needs of the hour.

"I will now rebuild a safer house with the monetary help"



This time 54-year-old Anandvili intended to raze her damaged house to the ground and shift into a much safer asbestos shed by levelling it to a few inches above the ground. She hopes that by doing so she will withstand inundation the next season as her house is just 10 steps away from a backwater canal. However, her only problem was that her family did not have the kind of resources needed to buy material or pay labour charges.

"CASA came to our Ramackery village in Alappuzha district and surveyed our needs, based on which I was selected as one of the beneficiaries for the monetary program. We had no purchasing capacity after the floods and the roof of my house had already started crumbling every single day. With the support into my bank account, CASA encouraged me to go ahead with my plans of buying asbestos sheets and levelling material so that we could shift into the new house before the next disaster strikes," says Anandvili.

This is just a preview on the Bank Transfer Program, and will be covered at lengths in the second edition of CASA In Action Special Coverage on Kerala Floods.



Trafficking and Vulnerability During Disasters

CASA India with Kumaun Seva Samiti published a research document in 2014 talking about the intensity of the flesh trade in the aftermath of 2013 disaster. The report gives an insight on the difficulties faced by children and women with no food, shelter and livelihoods, completely ruined in the earthquake



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Intern - Communications
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DISASTERS A Trafficking Trap for Victims

25 April, 2013. It was a usual morning until I flipped the newspaper and changed the channel to daily news, the day grew darker. Nepal was struck with another high magnitude earthquake. Headlines of the horrific calamity flooded the screen.

An account of an innocent child been trafficked flashed on the screen and I was numb, yet again. Quite often India comes across a report of an innocent child being coaxed in the corrupt dungeons of flesh trade.

Human trafficking during disasters is an extensive problem not much researched upon and demanding a solution. Considering the depth of the situation, CASA India conducted a research with Kumaun Seva Samiti, a local organization in Uttarakhand dealing with the atrocities of trafficking during the 2013 Nepal Earthquake.

The research is an eye-opener for the audience in terms of what the victims go through during the difficult phase of rehabilitation. With the help of baseline of 400 beneficiaries, the study attempts to understand the overall scenario of trafficking and its

victims who are wretched by poverty and economic instability. Discussions were held with communities to get a broader understanding of the causes and reasons and to aware the people about it.

During a survey conducted by the teams, many families reported that the children were lured by the traffickers, compelling them to indulge into forced labour and when they realized that they have been duped into flesh trading, it was already late. It has been widely reported that approximately 50,000 women and girls work in restaurants, dance bars and massage parlors in Kathmandu and about one third of them are exploited sexually on a daily basis.

When asked the victims about the situation, they said that after a disaster, people are more vulnerable and out of a livelihood. Seeking this to be an opportunity, the traffickers lured people by giving them fake assurance of better life and no sooner were they trapped in a vicious circle, hard to escape.

The report reveals the shocking fact that the worst affected are children and women, who after the

Photo: Missing Nepali citizen photographs at KIN Counsellor Centre in Kailali near Indo-Nepal Border. The number of missing persons increased manifold – a major factor in shaping the dynamics of human trafficking in the post-disaster context.

disaster remain defenseless as they lose their family and are easily trapped into heinous crimes. As a result, many survivors are made to suffer twice — first from the trauma of sexual violence and again from the ostracism of a conservative society that abandons them when their support is most needed. This reported condition is more prevalent on the Uttarakhand border of India and Nepal.

A comprehensive survey depicting the socio-economic status, literacy level, occupation and migration were carried in order to understand the issue.

NEPAL is known for its natural and scenic beauty, but this small, picturesque country also has a hidden dark side. Women and girls are being bought, sold and smuggled across the Nepal-India border. Nepal being economically weak suffered immensely during the disaster leading to illegal practices like human trafficking and child labour.

With the help of the research, the organizations appealed to the respective governments for a strategic plan of action to help reduce the vulnerabilities specifically targeting women and children. The emphasis was on building stronger SHG (self help group) networks in the trafficking prone areas. The research proposed that a geographical mapping of high and medium migration prone areas should be done in order to establish a mechanism for migrants to protect their rights.

Capacity building programs are put forth in the report helping the victims to start a new life. Looking at the lack of awareness and education as the principal cause of vulnerability the research appealed for community sensitisation frameworks and workshops.

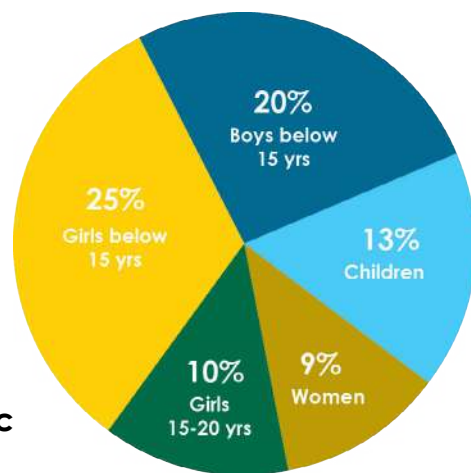
With the rapid increase in rate of trafficking during disasters, curbing this social evil is the time of the hour. ■

Much larger absolute numbers of cases have been recorded by the border control posts showing an increase in trafficking by around **200-300 trafficking cases** in the three months after the 2013 earthquake as compared to the three months before the disaster

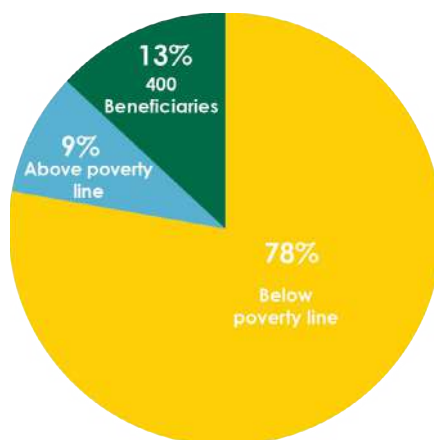


3 MAIN FACTORS

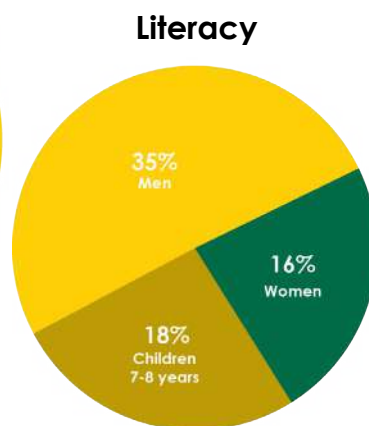
that put children at risk of being trafficked



Socio-Economic Status



Vulnerability



The above report is based on a 2014 research paper documented by Kumaun Seva Samiti with help from CASA India.

Photo: Kingdom Investments Nepal (KIN) Counseling center in GauriFanta, Indo-Nepal Border. KIN is a Nepali not-for-profit NGO formed with the aim to end human trafficking in Nepal.

International Day
for Disaster Reduction
13th October

The horrific memory
of October 1999
- Odisha - still
haunts people. In
the recorded history
of tropical cyclonic
storms, the strongest
cyclone ever, with
respect to intensity
and the scale
of destruction it
caused, hit the coast
of Odisha on
October 25, 1999.



‘Super Cyclone Changed Everything, Even Our Minds’

“Super cyclone changed everything –even our minds”, lament one of the survivor.

Indian meteorological department registered a total of 9,887 fatalities, 8119 alone in Jagatsinghpur district, but it seems grossly unreported. Some unofficial sources estimated it as much as 30,000.

Individual accounts of survivors are more heartbreaking. Dibakar, from Padanpara village recalls: “My village had all mud houses, all washed away in the

‘super cyclone’. Three acres of harvestable wheat was damaged.” Sadly for Dibakar, besides losing his house he also lost his son who was struck under the tree.

The reason for this catastrophic loss of life and property was partly due to lack of knowledge, preparedness and fraternity at community level.

In response, CASA started a community based intervention program to empower the villagers to systematically combat such accidents in the future.



Saurabh Kumar
Intern - Communications
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Photo (Left) The team members of DMTF formed by CASA Odisha wing (Right) Dibakar, member of DMTF, shows some of the rescue techniques using a rope at CASA Resource Center in Banamalipur, Odisha

Under this program, broadly, two approaches have been adopted keeping in mind the pre and post-accident preparedness. First among them is development of Disaster Mitigation Task Force (DMTF). It brought and organized the community members in groups irrespective of caste, creed and gender.

Nabul Chandra, a member of the DMTF says, "The dividing lines have been blurred. People are identified according to their capacity which strengthened as we got specific trainings on first-aid, networking and water conservation. We are always prepared to face any calamity."

DMTF training includes the early warning system readily available in the villages like ring-bell, red-flag and shanka. Moreover, regular meetings are organized to discuss contingency plans like identification of safety houses, assessment and mapping of

families having children, pregnant women, elderly and differently abled persons.

Dibakar, member of DMTF since 2001, went Bihar to train on 'how to save 100 people' at the time of crisis. He smiles, "I am one for every 100 persons".

He has been honored by CM Navin Patnaik after he topped a competition on 'search and rescue operation'.

Second approach is of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). It aims to increase the resiliency against disasters at community level through systematic reduction of vulnerability.

In the 1999 cyclone, the worst affected were the farmers. They took as long as 4-months to re-settle. Farmers, thus, have been accorded priority.

As many as 65 villages in Odisha were identified, 54 cyclone centers and government schools were spotted to conduct disaster management technique drillings. The strategic planning of these centres help in faster mobilisation of people in emergency situation.

One-storied multi-purpose cyclone centre was constructed in the

affected areas to provide safe shelters during natural calamities.

During disasters there is an increase in the number of crime against women. Considering this, community development has been gender sensitive. There are task forces consisting only women.

The impact of these efforts has been impactful. On one account, during 2013 cyclone Phailin, the most severe cyclone after 1999, our team evacuated more than 40,000 people without having any casualty. ■



Global NGO and Non-Profit Conference

Sep 24-25, 2018-11-20



EVENTS

Project Officer Anita Kukreti and Sr. Coordinator Tapan Chandra participated in a global conference for NGOs and non-profit organisations in New York, USA. The theme was Impact Economy and Role of NGOs, Non-Profits and the state. CASA made a presentation on adopting Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into national context, lessons learnt and best practices.



World Forum
on
Democracy
STRASBOURG - 2018

19 > 21
November 2018



CASA INDIA WILL PRESENT
ITS INITIATIVE ON
'WOMEN DEMOCRATIC LEADERS' IN
STRASBOURG, FRANCE | 19-21 NOVEMBER 2018

JOYCIA THORAT



Dr. Joycia Thorat is the project & Policy Officer in CASA India since 2001. Awarded Doctoral Degree in Criminology -Psychology on the topic "Gender differences, leadership style and contribution to social justice: A study of global ecumenical leaders". Worked, presented papers and published articles on gender, food security, climate change, and peace building with focus on women, tribal and dalit.



SUPPORT OUR RELIEF WORK IN KERALA

The need is not over in Kerala. CASA is helping the affected people with repairment of damaged house, purchasing of household material and other essential livelihood requirements. Your support will help us reach out to more people in the recovery.

SCAN TO
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6th Annual Edition
Woodpecker 2018
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Official Selection

Congratulations!

NEGLECT

*was screened during the 6th edition of
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co-edited by ISHA BANERJEE
visual effects by ARUSHI NARCHAL
translations by JONATHAN ROUT
design help by NIDHI JOSHI

film by ARUSHI NARCHAL
creative help by DR. SUSHANT AGRAWAL
poster design by SANJEEV SINGH
voice over by SHREYANSH SHRIVASTAV