

Joint Flood Assessment Report

West Bengal

Assessment Dates: 23 and 24 June 2011.

Districts: Bankura and PurbaMedinipur.

Conducted By: IAG, World Vision, UNICEF, CARE India and Local NGOs.

Districts	Blocks Visited	Villages Visited
Bankura	Hirbandh	Tilabani
		Bhojda
		Boshtomdihi
	Joypur	Hetiya
		Gelia
		Parachia
	Bankura II	Chandrahati
PurbaMedinipur	Panskura-I	PurvaChilka
		PaschimChilka
		Srirampur
	Moyna	None.

Government officials met

District: A.P. Mohanty, Officer-in-charge, Bankura DDMO.

Joypur Block: Chitradip Sen, BDO, Abhishek Das, Jt. BDO, Patal Banerjee, President (Sabhapati) Joypur Panchayat Samiittee.

Hirbandh block: Anupam Chkaraborty, BDO, Hirbandh, Sanjay Kumar Guchhait, Jt. BDO, Subroto Kundu, BDMO, Amiya Sarkar, Relief Assistant, Community members.

Bankura-II block: BDO.

Panskura-I Block

Mr. Nilanjan Paul, BDO of Panskura-I, Mr. Lakshmikanta Dey, BDMO of Panskura-I and Mr. Madhusudan, Karmadhyaksha, Agricultural officer

GP: Pradhan & Sabhapati of Purushottampur GP, PurbaMedinipur.

Moyna Block

The BDO of this block was out office. A block member Mr. Swapan Panja (Lower Division Assistant) & Mr. Sudhir Kr. Mondal (7797435113) Panchayat Member informed that the district administration is supporting the affected population.

NGOs met:

BIKASH, Kajla Jana Kalyan Samity (KJKS), Samajh, Sri Ramkrishna Guchha Samity and All India Minority Association (AIMA).

Assessment Team: M J Raja, Shantanu Sengupta, Mr. Joachim A. Campoo, Puthumai A. Nazarene, Sarbajita Banerjee, Paramita Neogi, Mintu Maity, Moushumi Das, Shantanu Bhattacharjee, Barun Tiwari, Biswajit Mandal, Sandeep De, Mr. Tapas Jana, Mr. Bandan Das.

Information from government sources:

- **Bankura District :** Due to intermittent heavy downpour from 16 June to 20 June 2011 causing flood situation has affected 22 blocks, 3 municipalities and all the GPs of the districts.

- 4.06 lac people are said to be affected with 4,564 fully damaged houses and 22,217 partly damaged houses. 6 deaths have also been reported in the district. (Due to religio-cultural reasons one death was not reported in Hirbandh block. Tentative damage to crops is placed at Rs. 7.6 million.
- The district administration had opened 12 relief camps and 1 gruel kitchen in Bankura district benefitting 895 and 400 persons respectively.
- As per reports of 23 June 2011, 12,151 tarpaulins and 12.63 MT of special GR by way of dry food (mostly rice) have been distributed.
- In Hirbandh block 8500 people are affected with damage to 2300 houses of which 200 are fully damaged.
- In Joypur block 16,805 people are affected with 4827 houses fully damaged and 2387 are partially damaged. The total value of damage to houses in Joypur block is approximately placed at Rs. 9.55 million. House Building (HB) Grant (Rs. 10,000 for fully damaged houses and Rs. 2500 for partially damaged houses) may be available for house repairs after the water recedes.
- 4 culverts are damaged and road is also

People carrying their belongings to safer places in Sitarampur village, E Medinipur.

damaged in few locations. The block administration has placed the total damage at Rs. 18.3 million.

- 670 tarpaulins have been distributed in Joypur and 470 were distributed in Hirbandh.
- The block level teams of medical officers are taking care of health hygiene needs.
- BDO Joypur informed that the last floods occurred in 1977, and Joypur block is not a flood prone district. Due to heavy rains on 16 and 17 June, there was water stagnation which caused house damages in the block.
- BDOs of Joypur and Hirbandh informed that grants are given to families whose houses are partially and completely damaged, but due to procedural reasons compensation might reach after an unspecified long time.
- In Hirbandhpanchayat, 500 claims for housing grants were processed by the 4 men committee and 305 claims have been selected and forwarded to block administration.
- In Hirbandh, the block administration utilised the undistributed GR for relief after a hailstorm struck the block on 10 March 2011 for distribution. In general, the block is also said to have done better in implementing MGNREGS and PDS.
- Due to last year's drought situation no cultivation had taken place which led to lack of straw for re-laying of roof in the villages. This has aggravated damage to the houses.
- DDMO and BDO suggested NGO support for house repairs in the affected villages in Bankura district.



- **PurbaMedinipur District:** 2 GPs Radhaballavchak and Purushottampur under Panskura-I are worst affected.
- 5 mouzas under Radhaballavchak and 6 mouzas under Purushottampur are affected in Panskura-I block.
- 2 embankments have been washed away in Radhaballavchak. As the water from river Kangshabati is entering through this GP, water level is rising in Purushottampur as well and chances are that there will be more flooding in this GP if the embankment is not repaired immediately (though government is taking steps to repair them).

- Of the affected 1509 families in Panskura-I, 1050 are in Radhaballavchak and 500 in Purushottampur.
- Relief materials sent by Block as per requisition placed by GPs. It includes:
 - Rice (3 kgs/family),
 - Chira and Gur (200-250gms)
 - Drinking water pouch
 - Amul baby food
 - Tarpaulin
 - Water tank (1000l/500l)
 - Boats 4
 - Clothes
- All schools are closed for the past one week in the villages visited in Panskura-I block. The details are as follows:

a) In Purushottam GP 6 Primary schools, 1 SarvaSiksha Kendra, 1 High School and 12 ICDS centres are closed.

b) In Radhaballavchak GP 6 Primary schools, 2 SarvaSikshaKendras, 1 High School, and all ICDS centres are closed. Contracts for repair of washed out embankments have been issued.

Key Observations

Child Protection & Education:

- Children were going to school and the Mid Day meal is regular in Hirbandh and Joypur block.
- Primary children were found not attending schools while high schools were closed in Bankura II.
- None of the visited primary schools/ICDS was damaged in Hirbandh and Joypur. (The block administration of Hirbandh mentioned that they have utilised funds from PUP and BRGF funds for making schools and ICDS centres concrete). While in Bankura II the ICDS centre was totally destroyed by the rains and remained closed. Since then the Anganwadi Worker has not come to the centre.
- All families have moved out safely from their homes with children in Panskura-I.
- No information of missing or separated children.
- Children living with families (parents & grandparents) in separate spaces made with tarpaulin supplied by Block administration.
- Children are not attending schools as schools are either waterlogged or used for relief camps in Panskura-I.
- Children are happy that the schools are closed as they reported that teachers thrash them with sticks.
- Discussions with women revealed that all children go to English medium schools in Panskura-I.
- The only High School in the Radhaballavchak GP will reopen from Monday 27 June 2011.

Water & Sanitation

- Access to water was limited to water from tubewells, which were mostly with platforms, with no proper system of drainage. The treated water supply system was not found.

- Sanitation is absolutely minimal. Although the reports might place it at around 40%, as the Jt. BDO of Hirbandh put it, the actual figures are much lower because people do not want to use water in a dry place like Bankura, where even access to drinking water after January till the end of first round of monsoon becomes a challenge.
- People have access to clean drinking and bathing water sources (hand pumps and ponds) in the unaffected areas.
- No toilets are there for the affected population living on the embankments, open defecation is rampant; whereas people living in school buildings have access to toilets in visited areas of Panskura-I.
- All tube wells in the affected areas are submerged whereas tube wells on the other side of embankments not affected by the flood water in Panskura-I.
- Open defecation is the practice in places where families are living on the embankments. Separate toilets for men and women are provided in the school campus in Panskura-I.

Livelihood

- Most of the agricultural fields in Bankura II were submerged under water and since they practice winter cropping, they had no crop loss due to the water.
- No major loss to agricultural product except paddy seedlings and ground nuts in Panskura-I.

Health and Hygiene

- No child was observed to be suffering from any serious malnutrition.
- Although the Primary Health Centre is functional it becomes difficult to access during emergencies as it 4-5 Kms away from the villages.
- The general hygiene conditions (badly maintained village mud roads with animal dropping, animal houses maintained along with human dwellings in dirty conditions, washing of plates in dirty water) were observed to be bad.
- No major health problem could be observed.
- Local NGO are providing medicine in Radhaballavchak GP.

Food

- Local NGOs provide cooked food (*Kichri*) twice a day and Panchayats have given 3 kgs rice per family, 200-250 gm beaten rice and jaggery
- Many families are cooking their own food that included rice, dal, fish curry. Fish is available in abundance in Panskura-I.

Shelter and Settlement

- The team observed around 25 partially damaged and 3 fully damaged houses in the visited villages in Bankura.
- It was observed that few families were repairing houses in Hirbandh with minimum resources.
- Families reported of no major loss of property and household items (almirah, fan, bed) clothes and utensils as they were prepared with all their belongings to move out.

General observations:

- Water has dried up in all the affected villages visited by the team in Bankura district.
- The affected population were in normal situation in Joypur villages while in Hirbandh the people were in distress condition especially elderly women.
- In Hirbandh, the NREGA job cards checked showed that people had worked nearly 100 days in the 2009-2010 financial year and works had been done till the end of 2010 calendar year. PDS records are not updated. However, people said that they took food regularly.
- Affected areas are totally inundated and water is entering through broken embankments to other areas in Panskura-I.
- People had prior information that water might wash off the area and helped the families to save their belongings and move to safer places in Panskura-I.

Key Findings

- Poverty and loss of last year's crop, leading to non-availability of housing materials (straw, wood etc.) has left all kutchha (mud walled with roof made of straw from paddy plants) houses extremely vulnerable, specially for the remaining rainy season.
- The district of Bankura is not prone to floods. The last major flood was in 1977, and the area is drought prone.
- Water availability in late winter and early summer are key issues, as most tube wells, the only source of water in most cases, run dry.
- The educational and health systems showed strong resilience, and closure of schools was limited to the number of days of extreme rainfall.
- In Hirbandh, on an average, 1 out of every 20 houses was found to be damaged, and there is a need for support towards shelter.
- Sanitation and hygiene practices are poor, and these require improvement.
- Overall humanitarian impact is minimal, with some impact on shelter. Increased vulnerability is due to livelihood issues (failed agriculture) and poor sanitation and hygiene practices.
- Affected population are showing general resilience towards the situation.
- The situation is under control as mentioned by the Panchayat and block administrations.
- Block administration is trying to monitor distribution of relief through Sthayeesamity members, NGOs and is open to any feedback and report on lack of proper supplies/distribution to the affected families in Panskura-I.
- Real situation (damage to livestock and property) could be assessed once water recedes in Panskura-I.

Tarpaulin Sheets supported by Government at Kalagachiya Village, Purushuttampure GP Panskura I Block Purba Miidnapore.



Recommendations

- There is no requirement for a large scale humanitarian response.
- Organizations may support temporary shelters (by way of tarpaulins) that would be used to cast over the existing damaged roof to give a cover through the monsoon season. The size of tarpaulins in such case need to be of larger size (not less than 15 ft x 18 ft) to

cover the roofs. The overall tarpaulin requirements across the districts could be around 50,000 in both the districts. A separate assessment is proposed in this regards, before taking up such action. Support for repair of houses also may be undertaken.

- Humanitarian agencies may take up sanitation and hygiene promotion activities through communication and WASH promotion strategies under regular development programs.
- There is a possibility of water borne diseases in Bankura II in Bankura district and Panskura I in PurbaMedinipur district, and in other affected blocks where there is stagnant water. Hence the situation has to be monitored closely in affected villages.
- Advocate with local NGOs and administration for reopening of Schools and ICDS centres as early as possible.
- A detailed multi-sectoral assessment is recommended in the waterlogged blocks of PurbaMedinipur district.