Greetings from Sphere India

It was our immerse pleasure to release the Second Edition of Sphere India newsletter. Broadly, this issue covers the information of the later part of October and first half of November, 2014. It includes the key note message, updates from Member organizations, and stories from Inter-Agency Groups, Sphere India programme updates, case studies-innovations and voice from community on recent flood in Jammu and Kashmir, 2014. We want to obtain feedbacks from our partners, organizations and individuals for overall improvement of the Newsletter and dissemination of key highlights on timely manner with your proactive involvement.

Key Note Message

Dear Friends and colleagues,

It gives me immense pleasure and joy to welcome to the second edition of the Sphere India Newsletter – December 2014. As a humanitarian professional, to me the Sphere standards are the very tenet of our ways of working. The Sphere India coalition in India has moved continuously ahead in shaping a reform agenda which is inclusive and equity oriented with all stakeholders getting a fair share in voicing their needs as well as responding with focused actions to ensure the emergence of a collective and responsive action schema.

The work in the past one year has reinforced the intent of the Sphere India coalition participants in working together through coordinated action across the length and breadth of the country, be it Assam, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and Uttar Pradesh. As sphere India moves into the New Year 2015, I am hopeful that the coordinated actions will continue and the work with the Inter Agency Groups (IAG) will help in the growth of the humanitarian collective.

As the year draws to a close and the winters set in across the majority of north India; the plight of the rural poor and the urban homeless needs to be kept in mind while deciding on response actions to extreme weather conditions. This is a new area where not many of us are operational and this needs to change with the active engagement of coalitions like Sphere India who have a mandate to inform and educate the wider civil society about these disasters.

In the New Year, am sure that the sphere India platform will works towards a relook at the monsoon season of 2014 to assess on the challenges and build on the learning for an effective, accountable and robust humanitarian coordination platform for India.

I wish all the readers, stakeholders, friends and agencies an advance wish for the new year and hope that the new year will ensure the reaffirmation of our faith in the need to work towards solutions for new and emerging problems which transcend social and cultural barriers.

All the best

Dipankar Patnaik

Access to Safe Drinking Water

Patpur is one of the village of Dasarathpur block in the coastal district of Jajpur, Odisha. The people of Patpur were bearing the brunt of floods, which devastated the village for the second time within two weeks as the turbulent waters of Baitarani and its tributaries breached the banks and marooned the area which was never before considered as a flood prone village by the community. "After the floodwaters subsided the first time, people went back to their homes to assess the damage. But fresh floods have forced them to return to the shelters," said Dilip Kumar Sahoo, Sarpanch of Dasarathpur gram panchayat. Such is the case of a 70-80 years old community well which is located near the village. 35 members of 7 households primarily depend upon this well as their water source for consumption and personal hygiene needs. The well water was biologically contaminated by the flood and could not be used for drinking or any other purposes.

To improve living conditions, CASA conducted WASH awareness campaign in the village, and tested the nearest water sources for any possible access to clean water. As a possible short-term solution, CASA installed water purification kit in this well. Suchitra Jena, a water user of this well said "We are happy that CASA intervened in our village and installed this water purification kit in our well. Because of CASA we are getting safe drinking water and our personal hygiene has also been improved." However the villagers are still looking for the permanent solution to this issue. CASA team is in talks with the district administration and RWSS for a permanent solution to the situation.

Awareness campaign carried out for households

Helping hands from the Heaven

House has been damaged, crops destroyed and livestock have been killed by a flood. He is facing crippling debts and need urgent medical help. This is the situation faced by Ajay Das who lives in Iswarpur village of Dasarathpur block (Jajpur district) following the devastating Odisha floods during August 2014.

He contracted polio at the tender age of 26 months and lost his walking abilities since then. His father expired while he was of 12 years leaving a small patch of agricultural land and one thatched house for his wife and physically challenged son. At the age of 33 years, he has to support his ailing mother with the meagre cash assistance of Rs. 300 as pension from State Government.

It was never possible for him to cultivate his small patch of land and harvest it on his own. Whatever arrangement he did to get some crops out of the land

This section is contributed by IAG state and each Issue of Sphere India newsletter shall include stories from IAG on basis of first come first served.

was destroyed by the flood water.

ChristianAid-CASA with support from ECHO identified Ajay as a beneficiary and provided him *One of beneficiaries from an affected house*

Unconditional Cash Assistance (UCT) of Rs. 8,200 in September 2014. With this money Ajay cleaned his damaged house and started a betel shop at his home which is his only means of livelihood for the time being. Padmini, the mother of Ajay said "This is a godly help for my family. My son's life was changed with this cash assistance. Now he has something to do and earn for himself."

Disaster Relief: Faster, More Accurate

CRS disaster teams initiated the information and communication technology for emergencies (ICT4E) in three recent relief operations, saving time in reaching communities with needed emergency relief materials. The system improves efficiency and transparency, and enables data for quick compilation to inform operations. Cyclone Hudhud hit coastal and inland areas of India's Andhra Pradesh and Odisha states on October 12, 2014, and within two days, CRS began distributing items to families in Gajapati district of Odisha, and within five days, distribution support was provided in Andhra Pradesh. ICT has been used in Uttar Pradesh flood response, flood relief in Kashmir, and Hudhud response in Odisha. ICT4E was used

for registration of beneficiaries, provision of bar code cards in place of hand written coupons, distribution of relief materials, exit interviews, and post-distribution monitoring.

ICT4E in use in one of the intervention site

The team enters data in the application and scanned cards are given to beneficiary families, which assigns a unique ID to each participant. Based on the information in registration form of the application, a custom report is generated to prepare the signoff sheets. On the distribution day, participants bring their cards, which are scanned using to pull out the program participant information. The type and number of materials received by the program participant are also recorded. Based on this information, a custom export is generated giving details of the items received by program participants, which are then enclosed in the sign off sheet.

Use of ICT tools helped in relief operation much easier and more efficient:

• The relief distribution process saved precious time in providing relief to affected populations, in some cases reducing the need for additional field visits to distribute coupons.

• The data collected through mobile devices are used for analysis and for making any quick programmatic & logistic decisions. The data can be uploaded within a second and responses from beneficiary can be quickly compiled.

• The process enabled easier tracking of progress of relief efforts.

• Beneficiaries appreciate the transparency and clarity of with each beneficiary's household information and materials they are due to receive available on mobile devices after scanning their cards.

The CRS's efforts was appreciated by the beneficiaries, panchayat and district government officials.ICT4E helped in efficient management of relief operation.

IGSSS Mobilized Youth for Relief Distribution in Kashmir Valley

In the aftermath of floods, Indo - Global Social Service Society (IGSSS) mobilized the youth in the valley as volunteers for relief distribution. IGSSS reached out to worst affected areas of valley that witnessed devastation and destruction due to flood.

The youths acted as relief volunteers in their respective areas and distributed relief materials to the flood hit communities, after proper survey and assessment of damages in the respective villages was conducted. Beside other parts of intervening 70 villages, IGSSS utilized significantly utilized the services of youth in Palhalan,which is known to be one of the volatile pockets of north Kashmir's Baramulla district. IGSSS has been able to tap energies of the youth by engaging them during the floods and it was appreciated well by the community. The involvement of youth has also helped to build their trust relation with the adults in the communities.

One of the volunteers, KifayatQadir (22) an undergraduate student is working with IGSSS for relief distribution and feels proud to be a part of the organization. "I feel good to work as a volunteer with the organisation. IGSSS provided us an opportunity to be engaged in social services. This is the time when we should help each other selflessly," shared Kifayat. He is pursuing bachelors in Science and remained with IGSSS in conducting the surveys and damage assessments besides also participated in the relief distribution process. "Being part of this relief distribution we gained social respect and inner satisfaction for doing something good for our own people," concluded Kifayat. Like him scores of youth have remained engaged with IGSSS during survey, damage assessment and relief distribution process in the flood hit areas.

 A business person by profession Lateef Ahmad (26) also volunteered during the relief distribution initiative in Ghat village in Palhallan. "I really feel satisfied with this type of work which is aimed for upliftment of people who have been the sufferers by one or the other way," said Lateef Ahmad. Another volunteer named Naseer (27), the leader of Palhalan Youth Information Centre (YIC) shared,"The way youth responded in the flood affected villages and helped people is unbelievable for me, I never imagined that YIC would play such a big role in this situation but together we are putting tireless efforts to reach every affected person".Naseer further added, "These actions will help us to do better in the future so that we make our communities stronger and we are committed to it now". He thanked IGSSS for putting their trust in the youth of Palhalan.

Inter-Agency Group – Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

• The current IAG which has been functional for the past 3 years has representation from Government agencies (such as APARD, Government and NGO co-ordination committee), Academic institutions (such as PHFI , Nagarjuna University) and networks of local organizations and national and international NGOs.

• Though the IAG AP/Telangana, inspite of the absence of a "formal structure" and committed resources to function, has continued to remain actively engaged in coordination activities during all major disasters such as Lehar, Pahilin etc that happened in 2013 and in HUDHUD in 2014. IAG was involved and coordinated the Rapid Joint assessments and co-ordinated responses. One major initiative of IAG was the Drought assessment Report for united AP, support financially and technically by multiple agencies.

• The ad -hoc committee had a plan to work on a detailed plan for district IAGs and Annual work plan supported by multiple agencies. One of the key highlights is the Rapid Joint Assessment exercise for cyclone HUDHUD led by IAG. With the logistics and financial support of multiple agencies and local network organizations, response co-ordination and communication was done for the immediate relief phase.

• One of the major challenges is the functioning of the IAG in the context of state bifurcation which led to separation of the various government departments and number of organizations that operate now, due to the separate state Headquarter.

## Inter-Agency Group- West Bengal

Mock Exercise on Earthquake by National Disaster Management Authority in Darjeeling Hills

National Disaster Management Authority, IAG West Bengal Darjeeling District members, Department of Disaster Management, Government of West Bengal along with Darjeeling District Administration have conducted a three days "Mock Exercise on Earthquake Disaster in Darjeeling District". The aim and objective of the event was to review Disaster Management Plans of the State, to review the emergency response plan and standard Operating Procedures of the District for Mock Exercise. IAG Associates have participated in this important event and has taken note on the present situation of the District along with future courses of operation identified.

Government

Cleanliness Drive

National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) organized a cleanliness drive on 2nd October 2014 as a part of "Swachh Bharat Abhiyan" All employees participated in the drive and cleaned their workplace and NIDM campus. A brief talk was also organized on this. All employees took a pledge of cleanliness and discussed various issues related to cleanliness and sanitation. Employees whose workplaces adjudged to be cleanest were also awarded.
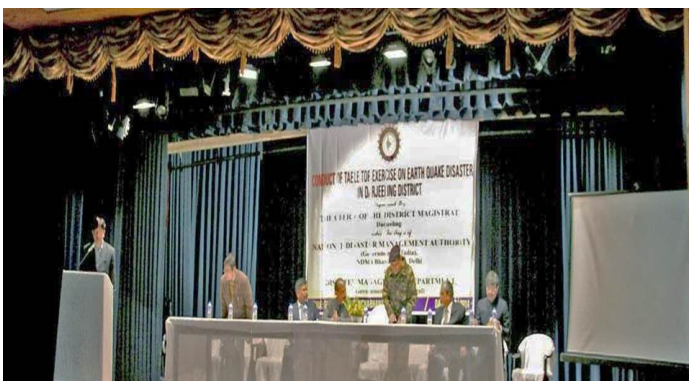

NIDM Employees during the cleanliness drive

Observance of "Disaster Reduction Day"

NIDM observed the "Disaster Reduction Day" at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi on 8th October 2014. This was an opportunity to focus national attention on important issue of "Home Safety and Local Preparedness for Disaster Risk Reduction". The occasion was graced by Ms. SnehLata Kumar, Secretary (Border Management) MHA; Shri O.P.Singh, Director General, NDRF; Shri Anil Sinha, Vice Chairman, Bihar-SDMA; Prof. V. K. Sharma, Vice Chairman, Sikkim-SDMA and many other dignitaries, officials and children.

Formulation of Disaster Management (DM) Plan

NIDM under the leadership of Dr. Satendra, Executive Direcior had visited the National Zoological Park (NZP), New Delhi on 18th October, 2014 to develop a comprehensive disaster management plan for the park as per their request.
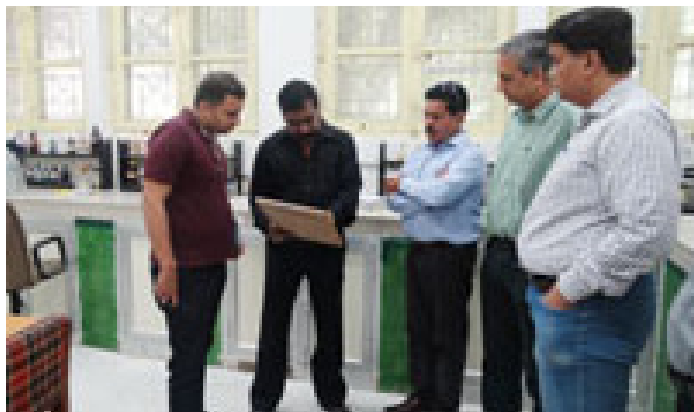
ED, NIDM, along with NIDM team during the visit to National Zoological Park, New Delhi

Key Training Programmes

1. NIDM in collaboration with Forest Research Institute (FRI) conducted a 5 day training program on "Forest Fire Mitigation and Management" from 13th to 17th October, 2014 at FRI, Dehradun.

2. State Level training on "India Disaster Resource Network" has been organized at Uttar Pradesh Academy for Administration and Management (UPAAM), Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh on 27-28 October 2014.

Sphere India Programme

Training & Capacity Building Programme:

• Sphere ToT planning for Child Fund India.

• Preliminary planning for trainings in Reproductive Health and Gender based violence.

• Planning for Training of Master Masons in Kulgam, Pulwama and Baramulla.

• IEC material for Public Health and Food Safety.

Collaborative Advocacy:

• Initiated dialogue with BCC Media Action to work in collaboration for organizing Media consultation on "**Role of Media in Community Based Disaster Management**"

• Advocacy subcommittee has been activated to take up advocacy issues for Odisha, U.P and J& K Floods and Assam Conflicts

• IEC material for Food Safety has been created for J&K Floods, printing for wider dissemination is in process

• Right in Crises analysis for Manipur and Chhattisgarh conflicts has been done with the support from DCA

Quality and Accountability Initiative:

The Sphere Project was formed in 1997 led by the Executive Board consists of representatives of the institution's humanity network. Sphere India has been on the board of the Sphere Project since 2009 and hosted a meeting of Sphere Project Board in New Delhi on November 12 to 13, 2014. It provides an excellent opportunity for a wider consultation with stakeholders in the region to strengthen humanitarian network and synchronize them with Sphere Project Strategy 2020.

The **Humanitarian Networks for Quality and Accountability was organized on 11th Nov, 2014 at Hotel the Park, New Delhi** with the following objectives:

• To have shared view of good practices and experiences by different humanitarian networks in Asia/South Asia region

• To comprise an informed view of recent developments in humanitarian quality and accountability and the role of different stakeholders and local networks in achieving new goals

• To strengthen networking with similar humanitarian networks in the region

During the event, networks representatives from different Asian/South Asian countries have shared their experiences, mainly ACBAR from Afghanistan, CHA from Srilanka, Nirapad from Bangladesh, DPNet from Nepal, MPBI from Indonesia and CHF from Cambodia.

The Humanitarian Networking Workshop was held on 12-13 November 2014 at YWCA, New Delhi as a continuation of the "The Humanitarian Networks for Quality and Accountability" organized on 11th November 2014 with the following objectives:

• To have an informed view on the key developments in humanitarian landscape globally.

• To have options on developing a common humanitarian vision for Asia and initiating the process of networking of humanitarian networks in Asia.

• To have shared possible actions to carry forward the process in respective networks.

Humanitarian Networking Workshop in New Delhi

Workshop sessions comprised of:

• Experience sharing by thematic/sector networks to develop and strengthen community of practitioners at different levels i.e. state, national and regional. Clear recommendations have come as one of the key outcome of the session in order to develop and strengthen community of practitioners at various levels.

• Inter-Agency Groups (IAGs) representative from states of Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, Gujarat, Jharkhand &Uttarakhand and district Madhubani have shared their experiences and contribute towards this larger goal

• Framework of Action for developing and strengthening South Asian networks was developed in consensus with the participants present

Knowledge Management:

1.Re-launch of Sphere India Newsletter

The Sphere India Newsletter for November Edition was re-launched on 5th November 2014 after a gap of nearly three years. It carries various programme updates and events that was undertaken in the previous quarter i.e. July to September 2014 of Sphere India, state IAGs, member agencies, government agencies, voices from community, case studies and information on upcoming events or training programmes.

2.Multi-stakeholder Consultation on Majuli Sub-Divisional Disaster Management Plan (SDDMP)

The final Multi Stakeholder Consultation on Majuli Sub-Divisional Disaster Management Plan was held on 15th November, 2014 at SDO Conference Hall, Majuli (Assam) under the initiative of Jorhat District Disaster Management Authority (DDMA), Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), in partnership with of SDO Majuli, Sphere India, IAG-Assam, ACTED, WAP and NEICORD. The objective of the Consultation workshop is to draft a comprehensive and holistic Sub -Divisional Disaster Management Plan through participatory approach and to gain insight of various stakeholders in Disaster Management and incorporate their feedbacks on the 1st draft SDDMP for finalization of the plan. The final SDDMP was submitted to SDO, Majuli and DDMA, Jorhat.


Welcome speech from Shri Manvendra Pratap Singh IAS, SDO Majuli and He also advised all the concern department and advisory committee to give their best inputs so as to come out with final plan.

Getting input from the participants during the Consultation workshop (R)

3. Development of Google Maps

In the conflict affected states of Manipur and Chhattisgarh a no. of GIS Maps of worst affected districts were developed for the Joint Need Assessment, carried out by Caritas India and DCA.
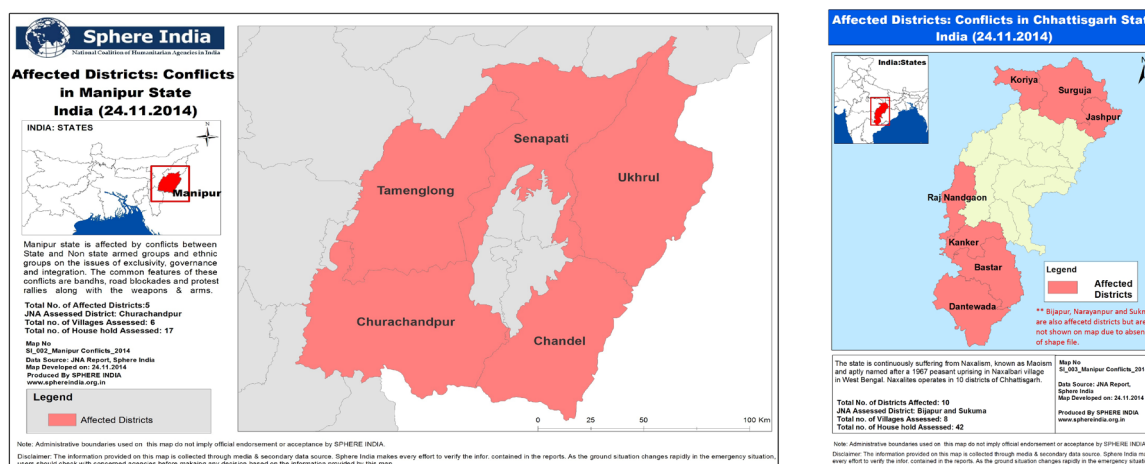
Inter-Agency Coordination:

• Unified Strategy Response (URS) was activated for Cyclone HUDHUD.

• The detail Joint Rapid Needs Assessment Report of Odisha, Uttar Pradesh Floods and Cyclone HUDHUD, can be downloaded from Sphere India Blog http://sphereindiablog.wordpress.com/

Initial Coordination for Cyclone Nilofar was initiated to ensure preparedness and mapping of resources.

• Joint Assessment in the conflict affected areas of Manipur and Chhattisgarh was done in collaboration with Sphere India membersincluding DCA, IGSSS and Caritas India.

• J&K Floods Coordination update:

J& K Flood Response:

◊ Preliminary consultations with District Commisioners at Srinagar, Kulgam and Bandipore and Pulwama

◊ GO NGO Coordination meetings organised at District HQs Srinagar, Kulgam, Bandipore, Pulwama and Anantnag.Minutes of Meeting released on Google group and shared with district administration and NGOs.

◊ Information on Shelter Interventions by agencies responding in districts shared with Deputy Commisioners.

◊ GO-Corporate-NGO Meeting organised at DC Office Srinagar for effective response and rehabilitation activities.

◊ Request for Technical Support for DDMP and training of Master Masons from Pulwama, Baramulla, Kulgam, Bandipore and Shopian.

◊ Household information collected by district coordinators and shared with agencies, in 8 affected districts of Kashmir Region.

◊ 8 District Google groups and Watsapp groups created for information sharing and effective coordination between Agencies working in respective districts.

◊ URS Response and Planning Matrix updated and released on Google group on a regular basis.

◊ Village URS Matrix modified and shared with district administration.

◊ Seeking inputs from GO, NGOs and planning for the Response Bulletin on J&K Flood response for wider information sharing.

◊ Psychosocial watsapp group created and Meeting with the psychosocial sub-sector group to discuss the psychosocial intervention plan of Action Aid, MSF, Aman Trust, EHA, IRF, IGSSS and Medical Service Centre, post floods

◊ Across 8 districts, total 26,53,96 households (HH) are affected, of which 13505 households lists are prepared. The details of HH were shared with various agencies responding in J&K. All the sources of information gathered are form Government departments/ Tehsil and Social Welfare Department.

District	Total Affected HHs	Total HH's list prepared	Total HH details shared with agencies	Source of information
Anantnag	11000	1500	Eficor, EHA	Govt./Tehsil
Bandipore	74400	2500	Eficor, IGSSS, HfH	Govt./Tehsil
Baramulla		500		Govt./Tehsil
Budgam	26000	1600	JI, YF.	Govt./Tehsil
Kulgam		1700	SC, HWF,Popular front, CASA,HfH	Govt./Tehsil
Pulwama	80,000	3000	Seeds, Eficor, HfH, Pragya, CASA, TATA	Govt./Tehsil
Shopian	1705	1705	Eficor, Sakhawat	Govt./Tehsil
Srinagar	72291	1000	Eficor,CASA,HfH,TATA, United Way of Mumbai	Govt./Tehsil/Social welfare
Total	265396	13505		

Studies – Innovation

Case Study of Beneficiary of Cash for Work:

Ms. MushatiAashi – Age 65+ (District Pulwama – Village Reshipora); Number of members in her family – Six

On the devastation of the floods to her life, MushatiAashi had this to share-

"My house was destroyed on 8th September due to the flooding in her region, we had to leave the house because of the fear of loss of our lives, the boat in their vicinity had saved me and my family members from the floods, however despite being saved we have lost our house, belongings, blankets, food and cash of INR 10,000 due to the floods"

On the immediate aftermath of the floods she shared-

"On being rescued from the boat, we stayed in a temporary tent in the

Mushati Aashi (Reshipora Village-Pulwama district) standing where her house was before the flooding hit the region

Railway station near Pandgama, however we as a family decided that we need to have a temporary shelter hence we decided to come back to our homes and we have been working together to clear the debris and built a temporary shelter where we can stay for the immediate moment. She added we have received 50 kilograms of rice from the government to date".

On the impact of Cash for Work scheme for transitional shelters by Save the Children

"The Cash will help me build another temporary shelter at least with another room such that all members have adequate space and privacy as a family of six. Our current shelter just has a small kitchen and a small room is not adequate for my family. The relief received in the form of cash will help in meeting household requirements and even in making arrangements for heaters to face the approaching winters".

Mushati Aashi with her family of six standing in her transitional shelter that houses all members at present

Caritas India: A Ray of Hope in times of Anguish:

Mushtaq Ahmad Kuchay son of Mohammad AkramKuchay lives with his family at Hajibal village in Pulwama district. He works as a labor and only bread earner of the family. He explained that, "I will never forget 6th of Sep 2014 when flood entered in our village. We all in the village felt that we will die now because the water level was more than 10 feet at once. It was looking like flash water. There was no chance to escape from the village. No rescue team from Government or private organization was able to reach our village. The entire villagers were trapped in

the village due to height of water. After two days local villages boat man came in pur village and rescued us through boats and dropped us near relief camp organized by local's near BarsoLatipora".

After few days when we returned to the village, I found my 2 storied houses damaged and everything was washed away in the flood. We cried a lot but nothing was in our hands even roads were still inaccessible at that time. Locals helped each other with limited sources. Everyone was waiting for Government support but nothing was going good in our favor. Then we saw few people who were strangers who came in front of us and asked us about the damage of village. They introduced themselves as Caritas India Team. We felt happy that private agency reached first time in our village this time and supported us in this tragic moment".

After few days Caritas team came in the village made an assessment of damage and based on the requirement distributed cards and invited us to reach Army camp Kakpora for receiving kits. When we reached there we saw many unexpected things in the box. We checked the box and found standard utensils, washing kit, Blankets, Buckets etc.

We feel pleasure to share our information with them. After days of no help or rescue when we saw Caritas Team in our village; a ray of hope for living raised in our village. These items were really helpful for us to survive our life in these hard days. I am thankful to Caritas India team that they reached us on time our village and provide us needful items.

This sub-section on Innovation carries new innovations from field. Each Issue of Sphere India newsletter shall include any new innovations shared by Member /IAG on basis of first come first served.

Case Studies: Voices from the Community

Nazir Ahmad, Panchayat member, Rishipora

Our village was not reached by anyone until Caritas India identified and came to our rescue. This village was fully under water (18 -20 feet) and was disconnected completely for 10 days. National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams were not able to trace the village due to increase in level of water. Caritas India team managed to reach our village on the 12th day and provided us blankets, wash kits and utensils.

Through these materials, we were able to use them in needy time. Also this material is good quality which can be used on regular basis. We are grateful to Caritas India to provide timely support when there was none.

We haven't seen this way of relief distribution by other organizations, through proper survey method; relief was distributed in a systematic and planned manner."

- SHO, HassanporaBagh (Anantnag)

This sub-section on Voice from Community carries stories directly from community. Each Issue of Sphere India newsletter shall include any new innovations shared by Member /IAG on basis of first come first served.