

It was on 18th Sep 2008, the day people of Orissa had a nightmare when the Cyclonic Storm even after traversing in land able to collect plenty of water Vapour at the fag end of the Monsoon so as to cause a flash flood in river Mahanadi and in it's tributaries. This took every body by surprise starting from the administration, management authorities of Hirakud Reservoir and people at large belying all Previous Calculation and Prediction. Flood water entered in thousands of the villages engulfing lakhs of people within its ambit, as the heavy down pour brought such a voluminous of water exerting enormous pressure on the embankments, which they could not withstand, simply gave its way to several breaches at various locations. It happened so quickly that nobody had got an ample period of time to take shelter at high lands with their precious belongings. Even in Places like Banki where People were sleeping at night on that dreadful day, the flood water entered in their houses. That was the day when everything went under water. People suffered a lot. Their houses, belongings are destroyed. One can't fathom the magnitude and intensity of the damage with out direct observation. Eyes were swollen, tears came automatically to their eyes when they narrated those horrendous incidents. We have come across with those people who had lost everything to water. With hearts broken, emotionally sublimed and shattered dreams, they are struggling hard for survival & existence. Justifying the saying "The Might is the Right" the River Mahanadi took away from them, their life long savings, earnings, their yearly livelihood, and their buffer food stocks etc. They were simply became the passive onlookers, mere spectators and silent viewers when their life long investments virtually went to water in front of their eyes. This is the most painful, dreadful, terrible and atrocious experience one can ever have, which is clearly visible in eyes of the flood affected people in different parts of Orissa. The impact of the flood was so severe that it created havoc and a general feeling of Panic in the minds of the people.

The immediate task before the administration was to expedite the Relief, Rescue & Resettlement operation in the flood ravaged areas. The intermittent rain fall was also posing problems for the Government authorities and also adding to the miseries of the people as well.

In this crucial hour of need our volunteers contributed immensely by providing suo motto help from their side to help in facilitating and distributing the relief materials.

Our efforts to mitigate the sufferings of the people were mainly concentrated on the following Issues.

- To distribute dry foods such as Chuda (pressed/flattened rice) to flood victims
- To assist and help the authorities of local government in providing Cooked foods & in some places where we felt it necessary to provide cooked food, we had provided the same from our side.
- To conduct medical camp in the flood ravaged areas.

- To spread the awareness among the people about various compensatory measures taken by the Govt. and to help those people who need our help and assistance in this regard.
- To act as a resource center to the administration in providing critical information regarding relief, rescue & resettlement programme in one hand and to act as a medium to ventilate or channelise the grievances, the need & aspiration of the people to the administration on the other hand.
- To help distributing through our volunteers Bleaching Powder, Halogen Tablets, ORS, Medicines as and when required by the local administrative authorities and in some places from our sides also.

While selecting the Places and the beneficiaries for the distribution of relief, we mainly took in to consideration the following points.

- The worst affected area
- Vulnerable sections of the societies.
- People with disabilities
- Displaced people, specially those who have taken shelters at embankments
- Women headed families
- Physically challenged people.

Situation of Flood affected areas:

- Over all 19- Districts are affected by flood, Out of which Cuttack, Puri, Jagatsinghpur, Khurda, Kendrapara are worst affected.
- The connecting roads were totally cut off from near by towns and from the districts headquarters.
- Boats were the only medium of transportation which was marred by limited availability.
- Local NGOs and civil bodies made all efforts to reach out to people for food distribution with the support of the individual donors as well as corporate bodies.
- Livelihoods of the daily workers are affectd.

Infrastructure

- Major Roads and attached roads to the affected areas are Submerged and destroyed.
- School Buildings are partially/fully damaged.
- Nearly all Panchayat Offices are marooned and submerged in water

- Primary Health Centers are submerged / closed.
- Electricity/Power Supply failure occurred in most places.
- Several Govt. Offices are submerged in water. All important files, documents are destroyed.

Shelter/Housing

- People had taken shelter on embankments, at higher place in the villages and along road sides.
- Nearly all the houses made up of mud had been destroyed and even in some places pucca houses made up of concrete and stone/brick are also destroyed.
- In some places school houses were used as shelter homes.

Water

- All the sources of drinking water have been polluted. Hand pumps were submerged but as water receded in a few areas people started using it. There are also many places where the hand pumps are still submerged in water and people are using the flood water without resorting to any purification treatment.
- Bleaching Powder is supplied by the local bodies, but no measures are taken to test the quality of water.
- Drains are currently blocked and may take even several days to clear up after water completely recedes

Livelihood

- Agricultural crops have been fully / partially damaged. Fodders are either washed out or got rottened for being submerged under water.
- Shops in and around villages are closed down as they are either submerged or fully damaged.
- People, most particularly the daily wage workers are finding it difficult to get adequate work after the flood.

Health

- Health camps are conducted in the flood ravaged areas with the help of Govt and other interested groups. Our volunteers provided all possible help starting from selecting the places where the camp is to be conducted, to the supply of logistics and distribution of the medicines.

- People are being warned for the possibility of disease out break such as diarrhea and other water borne diseases, fungal infections and skin diseases and other types of bacterial & viral infections.
- Cases of snake bites are frequently reported and we tried to impart the basic knowledge about the first aid treatment for snake bite.

Education

- Schools are closed, partially damaged and submerged.
- Students have lost their books, study materials as their homes are submerged under water.
- All important documents, library books of the school have also been destroyed.

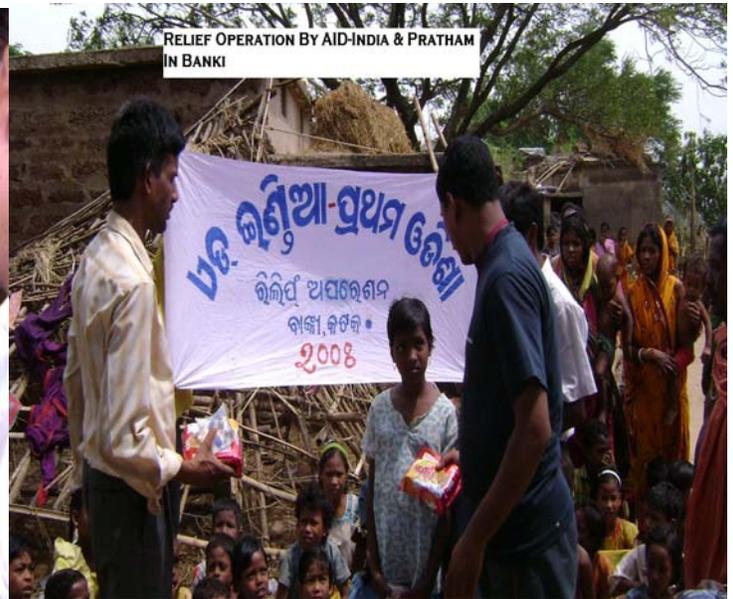
Food and Clothing

- Free cooked foods are being supplied by the Govt. with the help of the local bodies. We have in some places like as in Banki supplied the cooking gas as well as cooked food. Our volunteers personally associated themselves in this type of activities.
- We have distributed clothes to the people who are rescued and had taken shelter in other areas other than their homes.
- There is non-availability and shortage of cooking fuel.
- After providing immediate dry food relief in a flood affected area, we have also circulated Instruction/Information leaflets regarding the compensation to be given by the Govt. to the flood affected victims.

Mentioned below some of the commendable works done by our volunteers.



MR. JAGANNATH PANDA, VOLUNTEER AID-INDIA & PRATHAM DISCUSSES FLOOD RELATED PROBLEMS WITH B.D.O, BANKI



RELIEF OPERATION BY AID-INDIA & PRATHAM IN BANKI



INSPECTION OF RANA BRIDGE
BY DR. D.K.MISHRA



DISTRIBUTION OF DRY FOOD TO THE FLOOD VICTIMS
ON BEHALF OF AID INDIA & PRATHAM



DISTRIBUTION OF BISCUITS TO THE FLOOD VICTIMS
BY DR. D.K.MISHRA



RELIEF OPERATION BY AID-INDIA & PRATHAM



DR. MISHRA SUPERVISES THE DISTRIBUTION OF DRY
FOOD TO THE VICTIMS AT BANKI



DR. D.K. MISHRA WATCHES THE SITE OF COLLAPSED BRIDGE AT BANKI



DR.D.K.MISHRA WATCHING A FLOOD WRECKED HOUSE



FREE COOKED FOOD IS BEING SUPPLIED



PEOPLE ARE BEING TREATED AT THE HEALTH CAMP CONDUCTED BY AID-INDIA & PRATHAM WITH THE HELP OF PRAJNANA MISSION