

Building Resilient Communities - Recovery of Flood Affected Communities in Uttar Pradesh

Context

Continuous monsoon rains in the second week of August' 2017 caused severe flooding in the states of Assam, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh leaving millions affected. In addition, rains in the catchment areas of adjoining districts in Nepal caused widespread damage across the North Bihar and four districts in Uttar Pradesh. Due to wide spread impact, the current flooding in India that affected 17 million people was termed as the worst flooding in last few decades. Huge amount of crop lands has been affected, houses damaged, lives and livestock have been lost. A key concern is the impact of floods on socially excluded and economically impoverished communities like scheduled castes/Dalits, and Muslims. Among them, women, children, and people with disabilities are even more vulnerable and need support for survival and recovery.

Shelter, water and sanitation (WASH) and livelihoods are the worst affected sectors due to the floods in North and North-eastern parts of India. In Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, the most vulnerable groups are Dalits, Mahadalits & Muslims who live in thatched mud houses which have been washed away or severely damaged.

Rationale

CARE India's humanitarian response programmes are implemented across the country in collaboration with partners and networks. Disasters result in huge loss of life and property. Thus, high quality and timely response during disaster and preparedness activities need to be strengthened to reduce life risks and economic losses. Community members can play a major role as champions of DRR activities in their respective communities. Increasing number of disaster situations and the impact of climate change calls for better preparedness to respond.

Goal

Flood affected communities have access to immediate life-saving needs in a dignified manner and there is an enhanced disaster resilience for marginalized communities especially women and girls affected by the floods in Uttar Pradesh, India

Objectives

Objective 1- Develop knowledge, skills and capacities of 30 local masons/community on disaster resilient shelter construction and repairs.

Objective 2- Support community level recovery interventions through vocational training/skill building of 50 women for livelihood along with tools support.

Objective 3- Improving access to safe drinking water by /installation of raised platform handpumps (installation of handpumps with accessibility features) and enhance knowledge and awareness on WASH and sexual and reproductive health for adolescent girls.

Objective 4- Develop knowledge, skills and capacities of SMC members on Disaster Resilience

Approach

Enhancing Resilience of communities: Resilience is an integral part CARE's humanitarian work. During all the different phases of humanitarian interventions (preparedness, mitigation, response, relief, recovery) CARE India works closely with the communities and strives to reduce disaster risks and enhance community resilience.

Building Back Safer: By insisting that humanitarian assistance in response to crisis should somehow do more than 'simply' saving lives and alleviating suffering in advance of the next terrible event, over and over again, build back safer is the latest iteration of a longstanding concern to link immediate relief with longer-term processes of recovery and development. CARE India will make all efforts to build safer and more resilient communities and structures. It means instead of building back what was existed pre-disaster, CARE India will promote and build structures and systems that are safer and resilient e.g. construction of new structures with DRR features to resist impact of future hazards and with considerations for needs of privacy.

Recovery and Rehabilitation interventions - CARE India emergency recovery and rehabilitation interventions prioritizes women and girls from Dalit and Adivasi communities in core programming states.

Project Interventions

The following were the key interventions proposed to fulfil the objectives of the project –

Formation and strengthening of Social Monitoring Committees at the village level: - Social Monitoring Committees (SMCs) will be formed in each intervention villages where such committees do not exist, as a model committee. If the village has some committees that exist, the same will be strengthened/modified if feasible. The committee will comprise about 15 members with representations from all segments of the community and from village administration with representation of vulnerable groups. The leadership positions will be facilitated based on common opinion, role clarity and responsibility, effort and time sharing. Every activity, decision and resolutions will be systematically recorded and documented. Each committee will ensure that 50% of the members are women including their representation at leadership positions. The SMCs will be promoted on the premise that they will exist permanently and keep evolving.

Training of 30 masons including women on disaster resilient shelter construction. There is a need for local knowledge and skills of constructing safe shelter that can withstand flood. Local masons including women construction labor would be provided training on masonry with a focus on incorporating DRR features, particularly through shelter repairs and maintenance. The project would identify existing masons and those showing potential to become one and impart this training. There will be specific emphasis on identifying potential women members to participate in this training. The existence of this knowledge and skills will gradually result in adoption and practice of incorporating DRR features in all future constructions, repairs and maintenance.

Supporting small business/micro enterprise by skill building/Vocational training: This is a well-known fact that development of society cannot be achieved without development of women. Many initiatives are taken by different agencies for women empowerment. Self-dependency in terms of finance is an important dimension and a tool to evaluate women's empowerment. CARE will plan of skill building/vocational training to train 50 women/girls, who will get the benefit from this training program. The aim to organize these training programs is not only to train these women in the skill they want to learn but also to motivate them for start a small business/Micro-Enterprise. Women/girls lack access to financial capital and have limited opportunities to gain education, knowledge, and skills that can lead to economic advancement. Besides developing skills and knowledge on income generation activities, adequate tools will be provided to selected women to help them initiate their small business/enterprise.

Installation of handpumps: Locations with inadequate supply of water or without access to potable drinking water will be identified for this intervention. Water testing will be done., Installation of 7 raised handpumps with ramp for each access by persons with disabilities, pregnant women and elderly people. Understanding the complexity of water issue proper assessment, technical supervision and guidance will be ensured while constructing tube well. CARE will engage a WASH expert who will support to identify the locations of hand pumps and help in hand pump designing.

Training of girls on prevention measure to protect their SRH rights: Access to the SRH services and entitlements is an important determinant for the wellbeing of women and girls in the disaster situation. The training will build the capacities of girls/women on their SRH rights, increasing awareness among women on prevention of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases and supporting local communities on managing sex and age wise disaggregated data and collecting information on lactating and pregnant women. For sustainability, CARE will form a Kishori Samooh (group of adolescent girls), who will continue discussing these issues within the groups.

Expected Outcomes

The following are the expected outcomes from the project -

- a) Affected households with enhanced disaster preparedness/ readiness to prevent or mitigate risks
- b) Masons/ community members have increased knowledge on technical specification and skills on disaster resilient shelter construction and repairs.
- c) Trained women utilize skills for economic advancement and increased resilience.
- d) Affected HHs have access to safe drinking water facilities during flood condition.

Achievements

- **SMCs played a crucial role in flood response:** The members of the SMCs played a pro-active role in the recent flood response i.e. finalizing beneficiary selection criteria, identification of beneficiaries, distribution of relief items (Shelter NFIs) etc.
- **Women take leadership positions in the SMCs-** The SMC membership comprises of 50% women members and women members also hold leadership positions (President, Secretary).
- **Acceptance of women in decision making process at the community level meeting-** Strengthening of SMC leaders especially women leaders have led to their voicing their opinions and influencing decisions in SMC meetings as well as community level meetings about disaster preparedness.