

Disaster Preparedness and Resilience

Context

Disasters affect millions of people every year around the world and have a huge effect on the world economy. In 2015 alone, disasters killed 26,000 people around the globe and led to economic loss of \$85 billion. The huge share of economic loss is due to natural disasters is around \$74 Billion and manmade disasters account for \$11 Billion. India is vulnerable to wide range of physiological and meteorological risks. During the last few years there has been a steep increase in number of disasters in India affecting millions of women, men, girls and boys. The plight of women and girls are aggravated by disasters as they continue to live in environmentally and economically fragile conditions besides making them more vulnerable to diverse risks.

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

To enhance CARE India's institutional preparedness to manage future disasters and build resilience in Dalit women and girls and their communities

Objectives

1. Emergency relief stocks are available in strategic locations to be able to reach the disaster affected population with relief assistance within 48 hours of development of a crisis.
2. Enhance disaster resilience of women, men, girls and boys in rural communities in Bahraich by implementing village disaster management plans.

Project Interventions

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

1. Saving lives in the immediate aftermath of disaster by pre-positioning of relief stocks

Procurement and prepositioning of relief kits comprising of emergency shelter, WASH and non-food items will be done for Andhra Pradesh for 200 families.

2. Prepared Villages: Disaster preparedness and mitigation in communities

CARE India has undertaken a detailed analysis of vulnerabilities and capacities (vulnerability and Capacity assessment- VCA) of communities, particularly of marginalized communities like Dalits, in Bahraich, Uttar Pradesh, and prepared village wise action plans. Under this project CARE India will implement the action plans and conduct disaster preparedness and mitigation activities in community focused on different needs of women, men, girls and boys to make the communities more resilient. Activities will be those identified together with the community during Vulnerability and Capacity Assessment (VCA) e.g. awareness generation on Water sanitation and hygiene, raising the level of tube-wells, raising platforms

and establishment of grain banks etc. It will also involve formation and strengthening of local governance structures comprising of women and men. Following activities will be undertaken:

- **Formation and strengthening of Social Monitoring Committee at the village level:** Social Monitoring Committees was formed in each intervention village as a model committee. The committee comprised of minimum 15 members' inclusion of 5 to 10 community members and 5 representatives from local administrative unit. The leadership positions were nominated based on common opinion, role clarity and responsibility, effort and time sharing. Every activity, decision and resolutions were systematically recorded and documented. Each committee comprise of 50% women members.
- **Implementing community disaster management plans-** Disaster management plans was finalized and implemented in coordination and consultation with the community to increase resilience in the intervened communities. The plan was also linked to village development plans.
- **Disaster mitigation activities to reduce the impact of disasters in future –** Mitigation activities was finalized in consultation with the communities. This included installation of raised handpumps (i.e. above high flood level)
- **Working closely with District administration to link the community plans with district Disaster mitigation plans**
- **Use IEC material for mass awareness -** The community members were provided with IEC materials (pamphlets, videos and songs) which were used during community events and festivals to spread mass awareness on disaster preparedness.

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.

Expected Outcomes

The following are the expected outcomes from the project -

- a) Organizationally, CARE India is better prepared to manage future disasters.
- b) Two villages in district Bahraich have reduced risk of future disasters (flood and earthquake) and local governance structures including women are strengthened, creating a model for the state.

Achievements

- **Increase in Transparency led to appreciation from the community:-** The project team shared the budget at the community level and got greater acceptance, won the appreciation and confidence of the community members especially the members of the newly formed Social Monitoring Committees (SMCs). The potential political interference was also handled through good cooperation and support from SMC members.
- **SMCs played a crucial role in flood response:** The members of the SMCs played a pro-active role in the recent flood response ensuring an effective and timely response i.e. finalizing beneficiary selection criteria, identification of beneficiaries, distribution of relief items, crowd management 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.