

Beyond Chennai

EXPRESS

an expression of love

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This easy booklet highlights the salient features of Caritas network's response to Chennai Floods between the period of November 22, 2015 to January 2016, while briefly mentioning the key learnings, insights and findings from the field.

It underlines the spirit with which Caritas plunged into action beyond Chennai's easy access zones in harmony with the motto: The Joy of service.

And just like Mother Teresa said, "Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love", we humbly submit our services in this course.

-Editor

Published: January, 2016

Acknowledgements

CBCI President: Cardinal Cleemis

Management: Fr. Frederick D'Souza, Executive Director; Fr. Paul Moonjely-Deputy Director; Fr. Jolly - Administrator

Caritas Member Organisations: Caritas Internationalis, Germany, Italiana, Japan, Belgium, Sweden

Partners' network: Salem, Coimbatore, Dindigul, Kottar, Trivandrum, Ernakulam-Angamaly, Idukki, Mavelikkara, Palakkad, Kothamangalam,

Conceptualised, Compiled & Edited: Amrit Sangma; PR & Communications

Creative & Designed: Patrick Hansda; Documentation & Publications



What Santa Brought For People Of Chennai This Past Christmas?

An Introduction and Summary to Caritas' flood response in Chennai-TN

John Arockiaraj, State Officer



In Tamil Nadu Floods, as Swati and her family had hoped and waited for the rain to stop, the water had slowly entered their small thatched hut. Pretty soon they were standing in knee deep water.

As if it was not enough that she is a widow, that one of her daughter who came to stay with her after she was separated from her husband, that the husband of the second daughter was bed ridden and was totally depended, that her first daughter had a daughter of her own to feed and educate... *these were some of the random thoughts that passed Swati's mind as she prepared herself to face the floods caused by rains since late November.*

In the same neighborhood, what made Murgesan's life even more difficult, when compared to others is that he is physically challenged and has no source of income, not to mention his Dalit background.

Murgesan, his daughter and his wife Lachmi- who is mentally not well survives on a small monthly pension from the government.

The recent rain water had flooded their small house that they got from the government because of his PWD status as it was located in a low lying area.

Although Murgesan was never so lucky to have used his legs since age five- when he was diagnosed with Typhoid, he never felt so helpless like he did this time as he watched the flood waters invade his home inch by inch. He has now returned to his house with his family, which is still wet and muddy.

Responding to the floods in Tamil Nadu, Caritas India, a Delhi based national humanitarian agency have brought relief to 2300 people in the district of Kanchipuram alone, aimed to benefit the most affected people like Murgesan and Swati with basic nutritional needs and have access to sufficient food, clothing and hygiene.

Caritas Network's Flood Response In The State Can Be Seen In Three Parts, Namely The Zero Phase, Phase One And Phase Two

During the ZERO PHASE *Post November 21*

Rs.2.5 million

was disbursed to activate rapid assessment team along with immediate relief that mostly included running community kitchens that provided cooked meals to flood stranded families across the seven districts of Kanchipuram, Tiruvallur, Cuddalore, Thanjavur, Kumbakonam, Vellore and Salem.

During the PHASE ONE *December 3-15*

2500

Relief kits were distributed covering the districts of Kanchipuram, Tiruvallur, Cuddalore and Salem.

During the PHASE TWO *December 16-22*

The number of districts were brought down to three worst affected districts of Kanchipuram, Tiruvallur and Cuddalore distributing 5000 relief kits.

The relief kits included dry ration and drinking water, nonfood items like clothes, utensils and sanitary items like soap, napkins were distributed as per Sphere standard.

Simultaneously, medical camps were organized between December 13-17 across 22 different locations of Thiruvallur district reaching out to 5.7 thousand disaster hit people, mostly women and children.


The cost from phase zero to phase two is Rs.14 million. However, additional relief materials were mobilized by Caritas partners' network worth nearly Rs.30 million, raising the total figure to Rs.44 million so far.



A total of nearly 200,000 people from 168 villages benefitted during this period with support from over 600 flood response volunteers headed by a 15 member Caritas India flood response team.

Most affected families irrespective of caste and religion were identified. Caritas officers placed in strategic distribution points regularly verified the details of 4% of the beneficiary lists. Although we have been operating from various locations, presently we have our base camps set up in three strategic locations, namely Pondicherry, Chengalpattu and Chennai.

While major relief and response was concentrated in three most affected districts of Kanchipuram, Cuddalore and Tiruvallur, support was also extended to needy families in relatively low affected districts of Thanjavur, Kumbakonam, Vellore and Salem.

A photograph showing an elderly woman with white hair, wearing a red sari, engaged in a conversation with a man in a dark blue Caritas India polo shirt. The man is holding a notepad and a pen, appearing to be taking notes. They are standing in front of a makeshift shelter constructed from bamboo poles and sticks, with some colorful fabric hanging from it. The background is filled with lush green trees.

Ahead in phase three, which will also be the final phase of flood response, the plan include rebuilding and renovation of 738 flood damaged houses through (conditional) cash transfer scheme. Each identified family will receive Rs.15000* under this scheme to be completed by January 2016. The total cost by end this phase is estimated to cross Rs.50 million.

*including program cost

Generous donations to this cause is awaited. The long term intervention will depend on the fund generated hereafter. If you wish to support this cause, send in your donations to the bank account and email your PAN and contact details to directorcaritasindia@gmail.com. Read more about Caritas India at www.caritasindia.org or visit the Facebook Page.

All donations will be acknowledged with an 80G tax exemption certificate/receipt

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Diving Against Time And Supply, What Made Caritas A Friendlier Organization In Disaster Relief?

Anjan Bag, Manager- DRR and Emergency

According to the field staff who braved the nature's wrath in the recent Chennai/TN floods, this was one of the quickest response by Caritas India in any disaster situation.

Responding within five days of the disaster, Caritas's rapid assessment in parts of Cuddalore and Kanchipuram district revealed two broad sectors for support; Food and shelter.

The assessment helped in focusing on villages where no other humanitarian organisations were working. Villages with rampant damage to assets, villages with severely restricted livelihood options and villages with no coping mechanisms were given priority. The final set of 49 villages was verified against the list of the districts HQ.

The beneficiary selection process followed strict criteria. Two formats were developed for this purpose; Format 1 dealt with damage assessment and Format 2 focused on need identification for families. After the completion of the survey by trained animators over a period of 5 days, the beneficiary list was developed based on severity of damage and need, keeping in mind their economic background.

However this list was not final. A random 5% of these beneficiaries were put to verification, conducted by the project and the state coordinators. 3% of these were verified by Caritas India staff, which meant they had to go to the villages assisted by locally influential people with sound knowledge.

From beneficiary selection to the delivery of the support, ardent effort was made to negate possibilities of any foul play, even if unintentional at any level. This practice in itself is reflective of a good exercise.

In between the phase of beneficiary selection and support delivery what makes this process even more beneficiary-friendly is the extra effort we produced to ensure that the support reaches in good hand and utilised effectively.

The immediate support distribution though is nearly over, Caritas India along with partners is currently undertaking a sectoral need assessment long term support.

With No Shock-Absorbing Mechanism, The Poor Bared Their Chest To The Floods

Hardeep Kaur, Program Officer (HO)



The recent Floods have led to large scale destruction of shelters especially of the Dalit communities residing in the rural areas. Also livelihoods of these people has been seriously affected. The extent and quantum of shelter damage varied based on the type of houses. The ones with thatched roof and thatched walls were the most affected. However the ones with mud walls and thatched roof were partially damaged. Heavy rainfall played a major role in this destruction.

There were sanitation concerns in these villages too along with scarcity of safe drinking water. The agricultural land in the area was flooded for quite some time leading to increase in soil acidity. Even when the water recede, extensive soil treatment measures such as alkaline treatments would be required for at least a year in order to make the land cultivable again, which will further cause economic burden to the poor farmers.

The agricultural laborers also lost their livelihood because of this and the wage laborers working in salt pans, stone crushing, and menial laborers were affected as they could not go to work due to the floods causing more economic problems for them. Whatever meagre savings they had, got spent in order to cope with the situation.

Caritas India's intervention for this disaster situation has been for the poorest of the poor affected population. In this case, it is the Dalit inhabitants in the selected areas. Since Dalits are the poorest of the poor, any contingency/crisis hits them the hardest. There are manifold reasons which lead to the culmination of such situation. Lack of preparedness for the situation since Dalits are always excluded from any intervention related to community development. Also the economic condition of these people can be described simply as hand-to-mouth survival. This contributes to the fact that they have no shock-absorbing mechanism/financial resources for dealing with such situations.

Apart from the financial constraints, one of the alarming concerns is the information blockage towards this community. Due to the social stigma attached to their caste; any knowledge, information, awareness, know-how reaches them in the last or sometimes not reaches them at all. This leads to further worsening of their condition. The sufferings of the Dalit community escalated due to the above mentioned multiple factors such as poverty, unpreparedness, social exclusion and finally the advent of the disaster.

We can conclude that combating the disaster situation has to be coupled with long term initiatives towards the strengthening of livelihood patterns of the poor, knowledge/information empowerment of the community, infrastructure building and easy/smooth access to entitlements.

Aspirations Of The Young Minds In Disaster Response And Management

Ishita Pasricha, Artist At Work Production

Social media is not all about entertainment, but can be an active platform in engaging the public at large in social change-driven initiatives. One such journey has been Pukaar for Chennai (Call for Chennai), an initiative of the Artist At Work Productions' for helping the 2015 Chennai flood victims with Caritas India as the Charity Partner.



The idea that art exists always in relation and response to society was embodied in the Pukaar initiative. Organized previously for Uttarakhand flood victims in 2013 and Kashmir flood victims in 2014, both the times in Dilli Haat, INA, Delhi, Pukaar for Chennai was staged on a digital platform this time to engage a much larger number of prospective donors all over the world. The idea, however, remained the same- to take artwork out to the public and generate funds, all of which directly went to the flood victims in Chennai.

Around 140 artworks from various young artists using a digital platform to facilitate people across boundaries to support flood victims in Tamil Nadu.

Needless to say, creating awareness and appealing to the human conscience are the most important when it comes to making any social change possible. The slow stabilization of life in Chennai has been made possible largely due to all of these factors combined; factors which correspond directly to the youth's need to bring a desired change.

The Youth Have The Power To See Magic In The Mundane

Dr. Kriti Gangwar, Artist At Work Production



Disasters are very powerful, not only because they are destructive, but also in many good ways as we have witnessed- how a disaster blurs the borders whether physical, socio-cultural or geographical, uniting people from various walks of life.

Some may believe that the bubbling youth energy could be utilized only for providing services like arranging camps. However, with a little imagination, I believe that youth can also be very efficiently looped in for disaster management, namely, 'mitigation' and 'preparedness'.

Let us not only be driven into humanitarian actions like we have, let us also be driven into scientific approaches of being aware of the risks of various disasters, the vulnerabilities of our communities and imagine and brain storm together towards risk reduction and sustainable development so that disasters like this can be prevented.

I know the tasks seems uphill, but hasn't the youth always accepted the challenge?

Let us take upon ourselves to educate us and our people about disasters and how we can be better equipped to tackle them. Better still, let us teach ourselves and the coming generations about sustainable development so that such disasters can be prevented.

The world has always been here and always will be, but our perspective can make it look new, and this perspective is the true power of youth: the power to

What We Want For Chennai-TN?

Anthony Chettri- HoD Programs



After the tragic Tsunami, this time we are again with the people of Tamil Nadu. We aspire to be playing a key role in advocating for an inclusive disaster risk reduction strategy in the state, wherein even the most marginalized people also feel safe.

Caritas India is a frontline humanitarian agency that intervenes whenever there is any kind of disaster in any part of the country, restoring human dignity of the poor by extending support of food, non-food and temporarily shelter.

In the last one decade (2005-15), more than 1.5 billion people have been affected by disasters across the globe according to the UN. Caritas India has reached out to a significant one million people of that mammoth population affected by disasters within this period through its relief and recovery services across 14 major emergencies in India investing 5 billion Indian rupees.

We saw the Pandora's Box open up yet again in the recent Chennai/TN floods. We got a candid picture to how the Dalits and the marginalized were left to stay in most vulnerable condition where in their houses and livelihood were at stake.

Tamil Nadu has the second largest economy in India with a GSDP of ₹9767 billion (US\$150 billion) in 2014–15. It has the third highest per capita GDP in India. It is also the most industrialized and the urbanized, accounting for 9.6% of the urban population. It has been ranked first by the Economic Freedom Rankings for the States of India. Hence the question that pops up, “Development for whom?”

In our response to Chennai/TN floods, we realize that our humble support is a process to empower and sustain the growth and development of the local and the regional structures we engage with. We would like to encourage formation of people's organizations at grassroots for social justice, peace and total human development.

The (conditional) cash transfer program for constructing the temporary shelter for all the identified marginalized families shows Caritas's commitment to be with the most marginalized people at the time of calamities.

After the tragic Tsunami, this time we are again with the people of Tamil Nadu. We aspire to be playing a key role in advocating for an inclusive disaster risk reduction strategy in the state, wherein even the most marginalized people also feel safe.

Caritas India would like to link its relief and recovery phase with development efforts. This would mean mainstreaming resilience with developmental programs. It would advocate the same to the state government by involving different stakeholders and help the government effort to strengthen the nation building efforts.

During And Post Relief Distribution Analysis

Jasmine Joseph, Program Officer (HO)

While it was important for us to do our duty, we thought it was equally essential to cross check if our services were meeting the needs of the people, we intended to serve; hence this survey.

Although we worked in 7 districts, this analysis is based on the sample survey done with 50 respondents; 20 men, 20 women and 10 senior citizens from Cuddalore district.

Of the total estimated 90,000 households affected in the district, Caritas network had picked the 750 with conscious effort to include women headed families and PLWDs.

There were 635 children that were below 5 years of age, while there were 250 adolescents included in the relief phase. 100 percent of the beneficiaries are from economically backward communities.

We have reacted out to 4170 people in this district.

What we did well?

- 100% were happy with the distribution site as it was easily accessible.
- Except 16% all others received the relief kits well within an hour.
- 70% found rice as the most useful item, another 10% said it was the dal.
- Importantly 100% respondents were aware of the beneficiary selection criteria and the process.
- While 90% rated HAPPY, 10% rated VERY HAPPY with the conduct of the staff involved in the distribution.



What we can do better?

- Post distribution, 50% respondents (including men) thought sanitary napkins as “not useful”.
- 100% respondents wanted to add milk powder, detergent soap/powder and mat in the relief kit.

All You Need To Know About Our Cash Transfer Scheme

Dr. Haridas VR- Manager, South Zone

The houses made with mud blocks and thatched roof could not withstand the flash floods that lasted for over 20 days. The food and other materials kept in these houses were washed away, leaving the poor families poorer than ever.

In a most humble attempt to help, Caritas network have identified 569 most needy houses that are either permanently or partially damaged and cannot be rebuild or renovated without an external help – due to poor economic conditions of these families.

The mission will be accomplished within the month of January by way of conditional cash transfer scheme. Although cash transfer is not an entirely new concept during emergency responses, in Caritas India cash transfer is being made as a piloting.

The scheme will grant each qualifying family a sum of Rs.15000*. This amount is decided based on the field assessment and is understood to be minimum cost for any such restoration venture.

From the said amount, each family will contribute a sum of Rs.450 towards the services to be undertaken in collaboration with the local implementing partner.

The local implementing NGO partner will in turn will take the responsibility to accentuate this effort by leveraging available government resources such as grant/subsidies for the purpose.

For the purpose of closer accompaniment, one point person from Caritas India is placed in each local implementing organization, ensuring the scheme will reach its desired end.

The term 'conditional' can be understood and implied to an agreement between the family who get the support, the implementing local partner and Caritas India.

BENEFICIARY QUALIFICATION CRITERIA

1. Houses fully damaged by the flood water
2. Beneficiary should belong to either SC (Dalits) or ST,
3. He or She should have title deed of land/ patta or tax receipt,
4. Should be a member of the SHG promoted by the local organization,
5. Widows/single woman, People Living with Disabilities
6. Recommendation from the SHG
7. Beneficiary should be from rural area

SEVEN-STEP PROCESS TO COMPLETE THE SCHEME

1. Discussion/Interaction with beneficiary/family
2. An Agreement by the family on a Non-Judicial Paper worth Rs.10/-
3. A Sketch of the shelter from the family
4. Anticipatory budget from the family
5. Collection of Documents (ID proof with matching name in the bank pass book, copy of the Bank Pass Book/ Ration Card, photographs of the present status of the damaged house, copy of the land document/ tax receipt – if available)
6. Requisition form for second installment
7. Completion report from beneficiary

*including program cost

Why Laud The Indian Corporate Fraternity?

Scopes for strategic collaboration and networking

Debangshu Ganguly- Country Head for Strategic Partnership



As Chennai suffered ravaging spells of rains, here are highlights of companies from global giants to startups that have come forward to ensure that the locals remain connected, safe and are not short of food.

Corporate support must play a vital role in providing immediate relief and helping to rebuild Chennai,” Cognizant president Gordon Coburn said in a statement. IT major Cognizant announced it was committing around Rs.260 cr to help residents, employees and business partners in Chennai.

Google has launched a Crisis Response tool called "South India Flooding" to provide Chennai residents emergency helpline numbers; crowdsourced list of places and people offering shelter; crowdsourced maps of flooded streets and other such important information.

Corporates continued relief efforts in flood-hit Chennai and neighboring areas by offering services to affected people.

In a statement, the Indian Bank said it was operating its branches (328), ATMs (393) and also deployed banking

correspondents to reach out to flood victims.

Korean auto-major Hyundai Motor India Foundation, the CSR division of Hyundai Motor India Ltd (HMIL), delivered 11,000 food packets to the flood-relief team set up by the government over the last two days.

Srinivasan Services Trust, the CSR arm of Sundaram Clayton and TVS Motor Company distributed over 1 lakh food packets and 50 tons of food to people affected in low lying areas.

We at Caritas India felt motivated with this gesture of the Corporates and wish to express our gratitude for lending their helping hand for the needy. The new CSR policy has also influenced the corporate to extend their support as Disaster relief is listed in Schedule 7 of Company Act.

As we embark on a mission to give back the shelters to 738 poorest families, we invite more corporates to come forward and join the quest in rebuilding the HOPE and DIGNITY of Tamil Nadu.

How Are The Poor Of Tamil Nadu Most Hit By The Floods?

Analysis based on our medical camps in Thiruvallur district

Siby Kaitharan and Dr. Shanti Thomas, Camillian Task Force



Going by the medical camps organized between December 13-17 across 24 different locations of Thiruvallur district, women (46%) and children (33%) were the most vulnerable groups, followed by men (20%).

A small group of 13 pregnant women were also listed among the total of 5.7 thousand people that benefited from the medical camps organized by Caritas network in association with Camillian Task Force.

Analgesics (Diclofenac, Aceclofenac) were the medicines used to treat arthralgia and arthritis, the second most common symptoms, after common cold, cough and fever.

Though not flood related, due to the poor nutritional status, poor personal hygiene and poor environmental sanitation, worm infestations, vitamin deficiencies and anemia were the other illnesses that were rampant.

Other medical conditions like tonsillitis, pharyngitis, otitis and acute gastro enteritis were also seen among these groups. A limited number of anti-biotic also were used to treat these conditions.

OTHER FINDINGS

1

The diseases observed in our camps could have occurred due to contaminated drinking water, mixing of sewage water with the stagnant flood waters, poor personal hygiene, inadequate hand washing practices, consumption of unhygienic food and poor environmental sanitation.

2

Illiteracy was found to be playing a major role in the cause of these diseases, awareness of flood related diseases among those who are affected should be increased by means of health education.

3

Alcoholism and tobacco consumption was rampant among the affected areas with many men visiting the camp in drunken state. These issues should be addressed during rehabilitation. Substance abuse delays and hampers rehabilitation process. It affects the family members including children's health and education.

NOTE: The findings in this paper comes to conform Caritas India's stand to support poorest of the poor as addressed in Page 05

A Heap Of Waste Was All That Was Left

9 month pregnant woman describes her ordeal through the floods

As the waters started invading her little hut, Thankamani who was 9 months pregnant at that time put her strength together to climb on to her cot. She then placed a bench on it to stay safely above the water level. She stayed that way until it was dark. By then electricity had failed and with the water level climbing higher, she imagined the worst for herself.

Fortunately for her, she was rescued in time by her father and brother. They swam her to a school where they took shelter along with some others. As the school had no food supply they had to move. Weary and hungry after carrying Thankamani for over an hour, her father and brother reached a relief camp, where they survived for the next 4 days on dry bread and water.

When they finally returned home after the floods receded, they found that they had lost everything - ornaments, clothes, utensils and furniture. What was left was only just a heap of waste!

When she came to see the doctor at the Caritas medical camp at Rajiv Gandhi Nagar of Thiruvallur district dated Dec.14, she was still suffering from that horrific experience. She was still suffering from body pain and mental trauma. Tears dropped down her eyes as she spoke to us. Even though her loss of property was irretrievable, she said the flood brought her closer to her family and strengthened her relationships with fellow beings who faced the sufferings alongside her.

Cutting Duplicity And Raising Transparency

The role of Inter Agency Group

Manoj Kumar Dash, Senior Program Manager- Sphere India

During the third spill of rains on first December, the Inter Agency Coordination Committee (IAC) of Sphere India - the National Coalition of humanitarian agencies activated Unified Response Strategy (URS) at National level with active participation of State IAG (Inter Agency Group) Tamil Nadu.

Primary objective of such URS is to avoid the duplicity of efforts while bringing transparency to the entire process.

A series of emergency coordination and sectoral committee meetings with IAG members, UN agencies, Government officials, Corporates, Academic Institutions and NDRF has helped in operating as one window.

The joint need assessment report by various agencies categorically brought out the immediate sectoral recommendations for relief- keeping in mind both the short and the long term needs.

By the end of emergency relief phase after 20 days of the floods, a multi-sectoral Joint Detailed Need Assessment (JDNA) followed by State Level

Planning meeting of IAG members was instrumental finalizing the possible sectors for detailed assessment, selection of geographical areas and sampling of Hhs.



Keeping in mind the challenges in handling massive disasters such as this, we propose investing and strengthening the local networks @IAG. Among the other key recommendation are:

- Involve Government Organizations for having GO-NGO coordination platform at State, District & Urban/ City level.
- Multi Stakeholder DRR Advisory Committee to approve the rehabilitation process with long term inclusive DRR actions.
- Advocacy on SFDRR and Disaster Risk Reduction activities through IAG platform.
- Review of State & District Disaster Management Plans
- Trained pool of HR on Joint Rapid Needs Assessment
- Agreed guideline/TOR on Joint Detailed Needs Assessment with JDNA APPS.
- Dedicated Coordinators to coordinate and strengthen the GO-NGO platforms.
- Response Bulletin with details information's on all actions and expenditures.

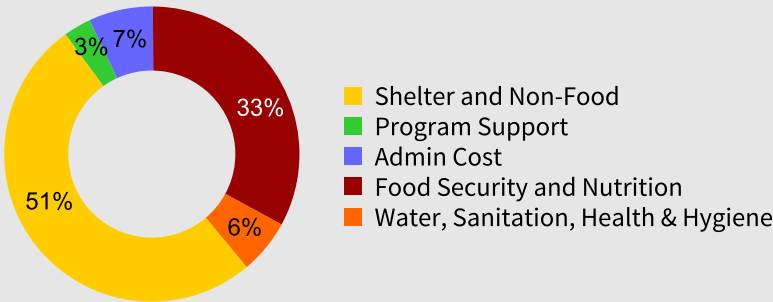
Fund Allocation & Management

KR Sebastine, Manager- Program finance

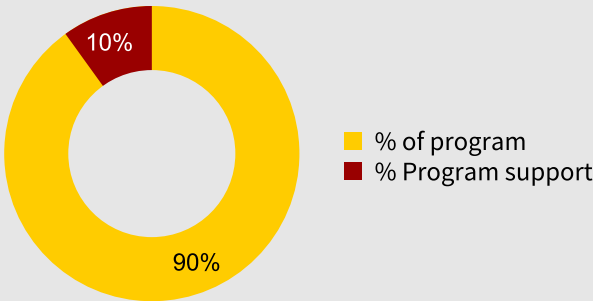
This gives me immense pleasure to bring to the knowledge of all stakeholders including both National and International Donors that we have sustained the administrative cost in Tamil Nadu Flood response to a bare minimum of 7%. This means that for every rupee that is donated to Caritas India, 93 paise is spent to benefit the people in need. The budget projected here will be spent by January 2016 under the said sectors

SECTORS REACHED	₹
Shelter and Non-Food	13,232,128
Program Support	830,000
Admin Cost	1,862,678
Food Security and Nutrition	8,481,086
Water, Sanitation, Health & Hygiene	1,459,344
% of program	23,172,558
% Program support	2,692,678
GRAND TOTAL	25,865,236

Sector-wise Support



Program expense



So far, ₹ 66 Lakhs raised from within India alone

Media Coverage





PROJECTION OF THE NEED GAP IN THE SECTOR OF SHELTER

₹ 85 Lakhs
For min. of 569 Houses

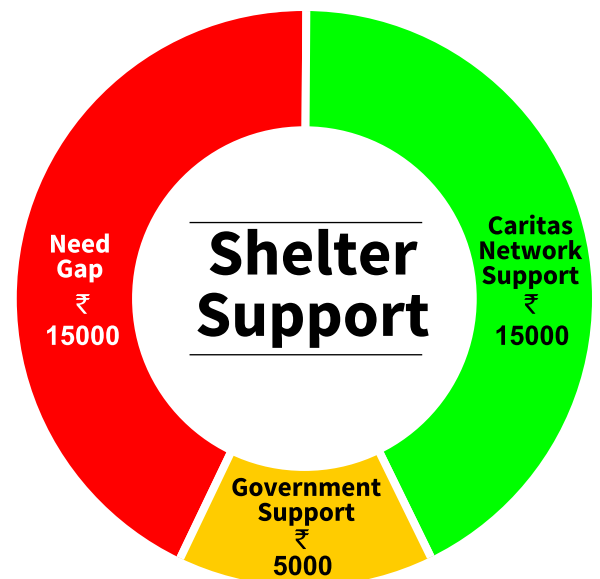
Estimated
Need Gap

Districts

Chennai, Cuddalore
and Kanchipuram

Target Group

80% @ widows/
single women,
MahaDalits, PLWDs





In responding to the Chennai/TN floods, I feel happy that we could consciously pick the elderly, widows, children, backward communities, minorities, fisher-folks and those physically and mentally challenged.

In doing so, our work was not free of challenges. But these challenges are worth as they take us closer to the people we want to serve.

I express my sincere gratitude to the Government machineries, media, the corporate houses, the volunteers and all supporters who supported us in meeting the needs in flood devastated state of Tamil Nadu.

While I thank people from across the globe who continue to donate generously for this cause, I am proud of my team who keep pace in reaching out to the poor- who have always been close to our heart.



Fr. Frederick D'Souza
Executive Director



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