



SHADES OF LIFE

Disaster disrupts the lives of the people.
It affects people in many different ways.
It affects the poor people the most
because they are vulnerable on many
counts. Caritas India brings dignity to
the poor by providing relief and
rehabilitation.

Caritas India reaches the unreached.
Your help will go a long way to reach the
excluded communities.

Fr. Frederick D'Souza
Executive Director
Caritas India



ASSAM: INTRODUCTION

Known for its wildlife, archeological sites and tea plantations, Assam is biggest among the seven northeastern States of India with an area of 78,440 sq. kilometers. As per the latest official records, this Himalayan State has a population of 31169272 people in 34 districts and a literacy rate of 73.18 Per Cent.

The Brahmaputra, a trans-boundary river and one among the mightiest rivers in Asia, is braided and unstable in its entire reach in Assam except for a few places. The region is also extremely vulnerable to breaches of embankments.

According to data released by the Assam State Disaster Management Authority (ASDMA), 2017 has been the worst of the last four years in terms of floods.

Background: Lakimpore, Assam Floods

While natural topography and excessive rainfall are obvious causes, floods are also caused by human intervention—like encroachment of river banks and wetlands, lack of drainage, unplanned urban growth, hill cutting and deforestation. And the severe floods in district Lakhimpur are believed due to one of the dams-Ranganadi or Red River in the upper catchment area in Arunachal Pradesh.

After Brahmaputra- the largest water carrying river of India and the second-largest silt carrying river in the world, topography of Assam and meteorological factor (high rainfall) are the obvious reasons behind Assam floods every year.

This year, about 2,450 villages have been already affected by floods and more than 1.7 million people across the districts of Lakhimpur, Biswanath, Karimganj, Kokrajhar, among others, displaced. The monsoon season is still ongoing.

It displaces thousands and damages property worth billions in both Assam and its adjoining north-eastern States with the recurring floods.

In 2014, due to floods, 1,846 villages were affected and about 1.6 million people were displaced. In 2015, the number of affected villages was 1,031 and about 1.5 million people were displaced. The numbers saw a huge jump in 2016 with 2,893 villages affected and about 1.7 million people being displaced.

As of 17 July, 2017, at least 87 people are dead as a result of the flooding and 500,000 people have been homeless. Nearly 60 animals, mostly deer, wild boars and endangered rhinos were perished in the floods. Assam is worst hit with alone 60 deaths and counting.

More than 17 lakh people in 23 districts of the State have been affected. The districts of Lakhimpur, Karimganj and Biswanath have been severely affected by the flood.

It has also inundated large tracts of a UNESCO world heritage site, Kaziranga National Park, Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary and Nameri National Park.

Heavy rainfall in the upper catchment areas of Arunachal Pradesh and Lakhimpur tend to raise the water levels of all the 14 rivers and their tributaries in the district. As per the Government and Media reports, the Ranganadi, Dikting and Singra rivers swelled up after NEEPCO opened its dams to release surplus water in Yazuli. This is not a rare phenomenon and the fact that no solution has been found to contain this man-made disaster shows a lack of concern for human lives.



Lakhimpur Women Hardly Ends Meet with Government Supplies

July 2nd turned a fateful night for many in Lakhimpur district of north-eastern State of Assam. Budeswari Narah aged fifty five and a mother of 5 young children was among one, who narrowly survived the July, 2017 floods across the state.

“As floods engulfed our village at the stroke of mid-night, the only thing that struck my mind was to run for life,” Budeswari Narah recalls.

Rangapathar, a lower catchment area village located along the embankments of river Ranga-Nadi or Red river is home to 1365 people.

Among them are 60 per cent male and 40 per cent female, including 30 per cent of children below the age of 12 years, who are first time

witness to the worst calamity of their life.

Nevertheless, as per the Budeswari the village is inhabited by around 200 lactating mothers and 15 pregnant ladies, who had to suffer the worst trauma by spending nights on the open embankments without care.

“On the approaching night of July 2nd the current of water was so frightening and sudden that the only thing we could afford was to escape on locally made banana-rafts. And only to watch helplessly our paddy-saplings, livestock and homes washed away in the dark,” narrates Budeswari Narah.

Narah family and the hundreds of other people, who reached to the safe embankments spent more than 4 days in open under the sky with no food, shelter and basic amenities.

Seeing the conditions of children getting worse with hunger, I borrowed some rice until the Government stepped in for the first time after 4 days”, She says.

Narah adds that, “Government provided a mere 8 kilograms of rice, ½ kilogram of cereals and 1 kilogram of salt. Most of it went to pay back the previous borrowings.”

Testimonial:

“Caritas India is the first NGO which arrived here and interacted with us. I am very grateful to the entire team of Caritas India that they provided us timely support in terms of water, sanitation and hygiene kits, including the cash support of Rs. 2000 INR, in these difficult times. However, at the same time there are other urgent needs like safe drinking water, boats, solar lights, toilets and cash assistance. As you could see that all villagers drink water from the river which is highly contaminated.”

Appeal:

Join hands with Caritas India to reach out to these ill-fated flood affected people, especially women who are still going through starvation and mental trauma!





In the Midst of Floods, Basanta Norah, 8, Misses his School

Basanta Norah an eight year old orphan while recalling the 'unforgettable' night of July 2nd 2017; “When the floods hit my village Rangapathara, located on the embankment of river Ranga-Nadi, all I was thinking who will save me from dying.”

A village with population of around 1365 people and 273 households with around 60 per cent male and 40 per cent female, including 30 per cent children.

Basanta and other children, who witnessed first time such devastation, hardly cope up with mental trauma they have gone through.

“The current of water was so strong that I along with my two sisters could hardly move and were yelling for help,” says Basanta.

“After much effort we were rescued to the safe embankments where we stayed for 5 days and waited for help and food. As our livestock, granaries and belongs flushed away in flood. The worst thing I suffered was that my books too were lost away in floods,” Basanta narrates.

A 4th grade student, Basanta Norah admits that the worst loss children like him is they cannot go to school, as the building is also inundated.

Without access to clean water, food and shelter, flood survivors are particularly vulnerable at this time. Schools are already shut and the fear that other water-borne diseases such as jaundice and cholera could affect the children and others.

“Our books were also washed away in the floods, but I really want to go back to school. But seeing my house damaged and water everywhere I have a big fear of falling ill,” Basanta adds.

Testimonial:

“Caritas India is the first NGO to have arrived here and interacted with us. We are very grateful to the entire team of Caritas India that they provided us timely support in terms of water, sanitation and hygiene kits and a cash support of Rs. 2000 INR. This indeed is a great support in these difficult times, but I want to go back to school and not fall ill. We are currently drinking the water from the same water which is affected by the floods and since we have lost our livestock, seeds and house is damaged too I am afraid to ask my sisters and father to buy me books and clothes so that I can go back to the school.”

Appeal:

Join hands with us to reach out to these ill-fated flood affected children who are still going through starvation and mental trauma!





Sister Widows Survive Floods, Call for Support

Three years have passed since, Gunukanti Gogoi (45) and Promita Gogoi (40) were widowed there was no male left in the family to rescue the sister-widows on the fateful night of July 9, 2017.

“When the floods hit Panchnoi village in the dead of night, even the Government officials from National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) could not come across the river forcing us to spend the whole night in-between the devil and deep blue sea,” recall the sister widows, Gunukanti Gogoi and Promita Gogoi.

The widow family is located on the embankment of Ranganadi-a tributary of Brahmaputra, in No.1 Panchnoi village of Lakhimpur, Assam.

Survived with 3 daughters and a son, the family helplessly watched

their house, livestock, crops and other belongings washed away to floods that swept the north-eastern States of Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur in the Mid-July, 2017.

“We are farmers and our livestock and crops are everything for us, but the flood snatched both from us. We are doomed,” the Gogoi family mourns.

More than 156 families including the Gogoi family, as per the villagers and officials, were rescued in No.1 Panchnoi village the morning, but the fear of death still lingers on the faces of survivors.

“Next day early morning we were rescued by the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and taken to a safer place where we spent 4 days,” the sister widows said.

Government gave us one time relief of 5 kilograms of rice and 1 kilogram pulses to live under open sky for these days, but we have lost everything including clothes and utensils. We don't know how we are going to survive,” Gogoi's add.

As electricity and safe drinking water is mirage in to

the survivors in these emergency situations, the people face many challenges although they have returned to their inundated homes.

“We desperately need safe drinking water, solar lights, utensils, clothes and livelihood support to restart our lives which could somehow ease the sufferings we have gone through in the recent floods,” the duo said.

Testimonial:

“Caritas India is the first NGO to have arrived and interacted with us. We are very grateful to the entire team of Caritas India that they provided us timely support in terms of water, sanitation and hygiene kits including a cash support of Rs. 2000 INR, which indeed is a great support in these difficult times. In fact coming here and connecting with us is like relieving our pain. We feel like somebody is out their listening to us!”

Appeal:

Join hands with us to reach out to these ill-fated flood affected widows, who are going through times of their lives.





Flood that Swept Away Bulumai Gogoi's Husband in Bed

As the night enveloped the No.1 Panchnoi village of district Lakhimpur in Assam on July, 09, Bulumai Gogoi (40) had never imagined that it will be her last Good-bye to her husband, before going to bed.

The death of Bulumoi Gogoi's husband shocked the entire Gogoi family after the mid-night floods ravaged the Lakhimpur district on July 09, 2017.

The flood water of Ranganadi-a tributary of mighty Brahmaputra had submerged the whole No.1 Panchnoi village the moment Gogoi family realized that their only man in the family is missing.

It was the dead of night and the Bamboo House in which Gogoi family, including 2 girls and 3 minor boys, live was seen wrecked by

the water currents.

“The situation was so frightening that despite the Government officials from National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) knew about our calamity they could not come across the river to rescue us,” says Bulumoi Gogoi.

Suffering through the whole of night watching the death of their only man and destruction of their livestock, crops and belongings washed away, the woman and her five children might have never witnessed life as cruel as that night.

“It was the most tragic moment of our lives that my husband who was sleeping besides me was also swept away by the floods and we remained helpless to save him,” cries Bulumai, while tears trickle down her eyes.

Although, the family was rescued by National Disaster Response (NDRF) the very next day, but it took NDRF team two days to fish out the dead body from the ravaging waters.

“We were rescued to safer places next day, where Government provided us one time relief of 5 kilograms rice and 1 kilogram pulses to survive under

the open sky,” the Gogoi survivor said.

Although we direly need safe drinking water, solar lights, utensils, clothes and livelihood support, but the trauma we suffered during the floods haunts us in the dark. We may restart our lives again and ease the sufferings we have gone through in the recent floods but NO SUPPORT CAN BRING MY HUSBAND BACK!

Testimonial:

“Caritas India is the first NGO to have arrived and interacted with us. We are very grateful to the entire team of Caritas India that they provided us timely support in terms of water, sanitation and hygiene kits including a cash support of Rs. 2000 INR, which indeed is a great support in these difficult times. It was only their support that enabled us to perform last rituals of my husband. I can't give them anything other than the prayers and blessing!

Appeal:

Join hands with us to reach out to these ill-fated flood affected Widows who lost their life partners and are still suffering and need your urgent support.





After Havoc, Elderly Akon Borah embarks on new Beginning

AKON BORAH, in his sixties and a father of 4 young children among 3 daughters with one disabled recalls the haunting day of July 7, when the floods hit his village Tokouguri, Lakhimpur and wreaked havoc in the area.

As per the locals, Tokouguri, a village located on the embankment of river Ranganadi, consists of 33 households with around 55 per cent male and 45 per cent female, among 30 per cent children. There are more than 10 pregnant women and many other lactating mothers.

As the water stormed into the village on July 07, 2017 the helpless villagers managed to escape on a locally made banana rafts to nearby embankment area to take refuge, which was on an upper location.

"We helplessly watched as strong currents washed away everything that we had — from utensils to our livelihood," says Akon. "Our

lives will never be the same again.”

On the day the area got flooded, the government's rescue teams did arrive, the villagers concede. The elders were given a helping hand and many people in the area spent the night either on National Highway 15 or on the Ziro road.

"I did not get even 10 minutes to take out all my belongings. And even if I could, where could I have kept those?" Akon said.

“While we were shattered with the floods, watching our house being washed away added more to this misery and suffering. We stayed on the embankment area for 2 days with no food and we were drinking from the same flood affected water,” says Akon.

“Due to the contaminated drinking water and food crisis two of my daughters are already sick. I am a farmer and want to restart my life and help my daughters to come out of the trauma

we are going through. Since we lost all our seed saplings and this is the time to sow the seeds, I request you to help us restart our lives and fight this difficult time of our lives,” Akon requests.

Testimonial:

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Appeal:

Join hands with us to reach out to these ill-fated flood affected ELDERLY people, who are still going through tough times and mental trauma!





As floods recede, Pregnant Worry about Inborn

Parul Gogoi Nath, a newly married lady in her thirties, still can't fathom what had happened to them on July 7, 2017. In just 20 minutes, as they kept watching, their home in Tokoguri, Lakhimpur, got inundated by flood water of the Ranganadi, a tributary of the Brahmaputra.

"We did not have time even to save our valuables. The current of water was so strong that I helplessly saw all our rice seeds, seed saplings and livestock being washed away by the floods and luckily rescued my mother-in-law with the help of my neighbors," Parul recalls.

The night floods hit Parul family had no male member in the family to help them. Her husband is a laborer working in the neighboring State of Arunachal Pradesh. Being a pregnant lady, Parul is much

worried about her baby inside her womb.

There is hardly any toilet in the village that can be used and open defecation is the order of the day. Women and adolescent girls have to do it before sunrise.

“The un-hygienic and less food in-take might badly affect my baby. Now that we are back here in our village we don't have clean drinking water, toilets, light and food. We have a small land holding which we cultivate but we have lost our seeds too,” Parul says.

“While collecting water I already fell thrice and doctors have put me on medication. I would need water filter inside my home so that I don't have to go out again and again in this stagnant muddy water with snakes in it,” she adds.

People have lost their homes, as well as their agricultural produce, personal valuables and livestock, all of which they depended on for their livelihood. Without access to clean water, food and shelter, flood survivors are particularly vulnerable at this time. Hand pumps are contaminated with flood water; open defecation and debris have become matters of concern. Stagnant water too poses the risk of water-borne diseases like diarrhea, malaria and dengue.

Testimonial:

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Appeal:

Join hands with us to reach out to these ill-fated flood affected Pregnant women, who are still going through tough times, mental trauma and need proper diet to take care of themselves and their babies in the womb!

OD RESPONSE,
OF 10 HYGIENE
condition of flood affected
chim Assam



NORTHEAST FLOOD

MIZORAM Aizawal & Lungle Districts

WaSH Intervention - 1000 Families

Cash Transfer - 300 Families

Health Camps - 580 Patients

SUPPORT

FROM THE

GROUND



ZERO

ASSAM Nowboicha Block in Lakhimpur

WaSH Intervention - 1000 Families

Mosquito Nets - 2000 Families

Health Camps - 800 Patients

Cash Transfer - 876 Families

Education Kit & Disaster Preparedness - 1000 Children



The incessant rainfall, landslide and floods has created havoc to normal life of people living in north east States of India like Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Mizoram. The damage caused by rainfall is unprecedented and a total of 58 districts have been affected due to floods/landslides in Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Manipur. Around 80 lives have been lost, above 17 lakhs people affected and nearly 150 relief camps are currently as of now. The weather forecast shows no respite and more waves of floods are expected in already affected communities and other unaffected areas.

Caritas India Intervention plan to support 93,920 population in Assam



WaSH Support **5000** Households



Cash Support **1600** Households



Medical Support **3500** Individuals



Shelter Support **5000** Households



Livelihood Support **2500** Households



Psychosocial Support **3000** Individuals



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