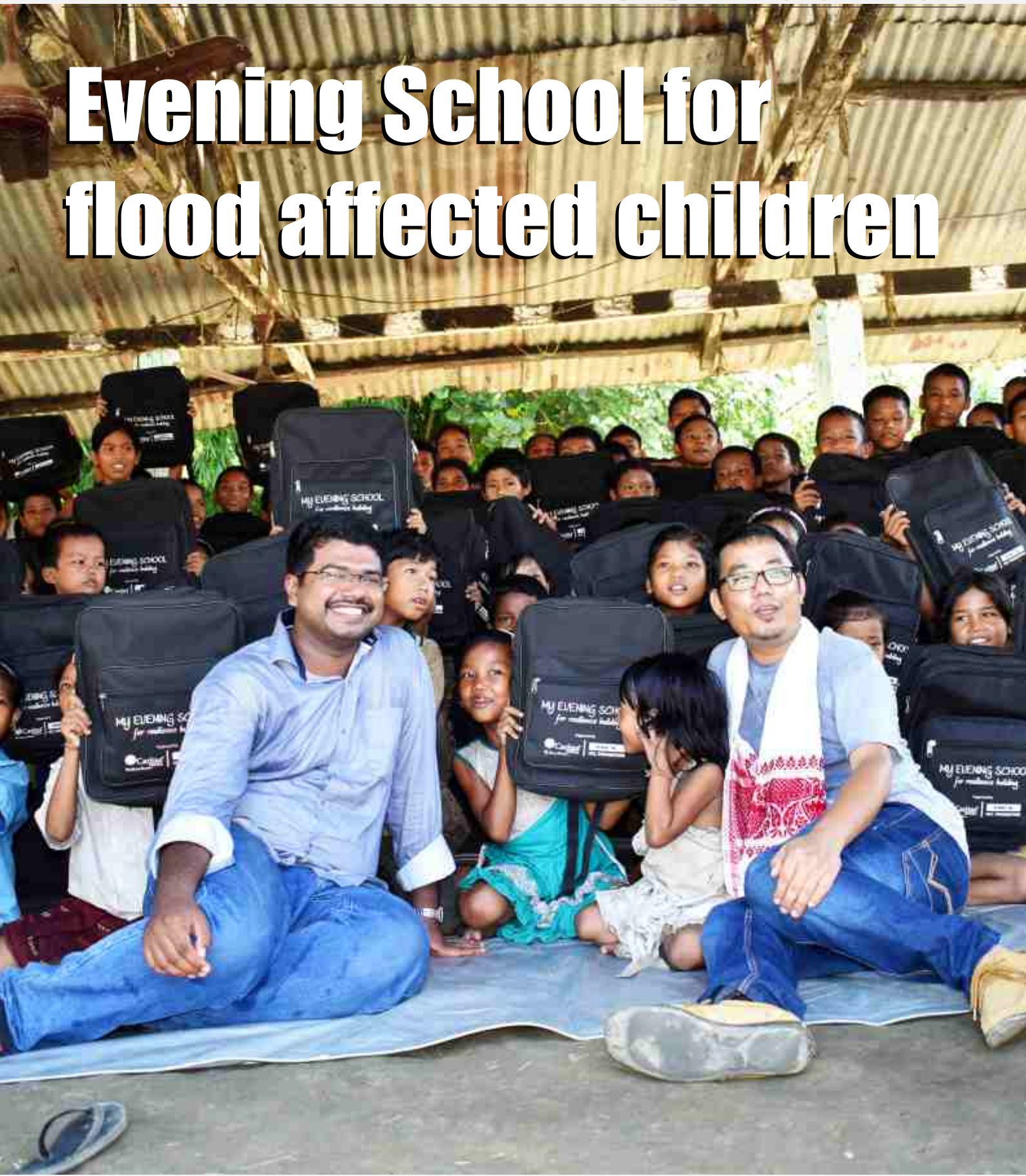


Evening School for flood affected children





Floods brings annual disaster for the people of Assam by destroying lives and property of the common people. Government machinery and NGOs get busy with the relief and recovery to restore the basic needs of food, clothing and shelter for the people but very less importance is given to the restoration of the education.

The displaced families take shelter in the relief camps or nearby safer places where education facilities for children are not available. Schools are closed for weeks or even months depending on the magnitude of the flood and children stop studying either because the schools are closed or their education materials are destroyed.

Disaster preparedness is not a part of school curriculum and every year children suffer due to its absence and education suffer.

Caritas India with the financial support from HCL Foundation intervened to address this issue to provide child friendly space and schools where dignity of the child is respected and education related rights are put on the public platform.

Under the banner 'My Evening School for Resilience Building', 12 affected villages were identified with 1000 children in Lakhimpur district to provide continued study culture during floods and prepare them to save themselves and their study materials.

"Selected teachers were oriented by Caritas India about their roles, responsibilities and conducting classes for the children to cover their school syllabus and Disaster Risk Reduction aspects," informed Jonas Lakra, Zonal Manager, Caritas India

Senior Program Manager, Prijoe Tharuk, from HCL Foundation was accompanied by Caritas India state officer Thangsha Sebastian to visit Assam for the review of the My Evening School and restoration of health condition in flood affected areas of Lakhimpur and karimganj districts.

Prijoe had visited Ahumoni Miri and Kolaguri villages in north Lakhimpur to meet the community and the children from my evening schools.

"School bags were very useful as 80% of the students does not have and even the government did not provide school bags for the children", shared Prijoe after interacting with the beneficiaries.

Community was very responsive and shared that, "Children started telling story about the flood in the village and how to protect educational materials" said one of the parent. Similarly, another parent shared that, "My children never speak about the preparedness during the flood but now he is talking about the raised houses and making Ma Chang". The concept of My Evening School is unique in terms of teaching children on preparedness during flood along with academic.

One of the grade education insisted that only educating children on DRR is not enough but we also need to educate their parents especially in terms of capacity building on resilience.

Caritas India through capacity building, awareness building for disaster preparedness, social mobilization, formation of children club & school committees aims to reduce the damages and loss of lives and property by fifty percent.



Caritas India Chairman reiterates Caritas India's commitment to strengthen tribal identity

Report by Dr. Saju M.K, Zonal Manager - West

Caritas India Chairman, Bishop Lumen Monteiro interacted with the backward communities in Gujarat and Maharashtra which have been empowered by Caritas India interventions. Bishop Lumen expressed satisfaction over the intensity and result achievement of the empowerment initiatives of Caritas India partners in these two states. During the 10-day visit, Bishop interacted with Dalit and Adivasi communities of Ahmedabad and Sabarkantha districts of Gujarat and Panvel, Nagpur and Chandrapur districts of Maharashtra.

Addressing the tribal community of Sabarkantha district, Bishop Lumen underscored the critical importance of community cohesion for the holistic development of the village. "The solution to poverty is in the collective action of communities for developing livelihood and gaining access to the benefits of government schemes and programmes. Communities also need to start sustainable agriculture practices for growing healthy food that will give them physical vigor and prevent diseases", Bishop Lumen said. He exhorted communities to work intensively and collectively for identifying local solutions to their problems. Fr. Paul Moonjely, Assistant Executive Director of Caritas India, who had accompanied Bishop Lumen during the visit also interacted with communities.

Bishop Lumen and Fr. Paul Moonjely also held meetings with community vigilance committees, task forces and children's parliaments which were formed by Kaira Social Service Society, Ahmedabad. Both Bishop Lumen and Fr. Paul appreciated KSSS for initiating children into local governance system. Fr. Paul Moonjely while speaking to communities said, "self-help and community mobilization assume great importance in rural development. Development will not be possible if communities remain fragmented and passive". During the interaction, villagers narrated how they gathered

around issues and mobilized their own resources for addressing local issues.

Caritas India chairman also visited Jeevan People-Led Empowerment (PLE) intervention areas where backward tribal communities in Maharashtra like Kathkaris and Thakurs have mobilized themselves to protect their tribal identity and win more space in local governance systems. In a meeting held in Panvel, Kathkari tribal community demonstrated how they successfully waged persistent and spirited campaigns to win land rights and community assets with the help of schemes and programmes. "Government has the responsibility for the development communities. The development function of government will become real only when communities participate in Gram Sabha meetings on a regular basis and ensure transparency and accountability in the implementation of schemes and programmes of government", Bishop Lumen said.

Gond and Kolam tribal communities of Jivati block in Chandrapur narrated their successes in conserving and strengthening tribal culture and strengthening local governance systems. They listed several results which they achieved with their collective efforts. These included creation of community assets like roads, bridges, overhead water tanks etc, claiming land rights, functionalizing public systems and collective farming. Tribal communities showcased the richness of their culture and the diversity of tribal food systems including forest based food systems.

Bishop Lumen Monteiro, during his visit to Maharashtra and Gujarat held meetings with Cardinal Oswald Gracias of Bombay Archdiocese, Archbishop Abraham Viruthakulangara of Nagpur, Archbishop Thomas Macwan of Gandhinagar and Bishop Elavanal of Kalyan. Dr. Saju MK, Zone Manager – West, accompanied the bishop during his visit.

Trained Peach volunteers are asset during humanitarian response

Report by Sujata Rosy , Finance Officer & Catherine Kune, Programme Officer
Edited by Patrick Hansda, Documentation & Publications



“European Union Aid Volunteer trained under Peach project are very helpful during disaster response,” shared Caritas Nepal team with the Indian counter parts of Caritas India. The professional profile of the volunteers helps the response team to act immediately to conduct assessment and beneficiary selection in the ground zero.

Fifteen-member finance and programme team from Caritas India visited Caritas Nepal for a two days' exchange visit on Peach from August 24-25, 2017 to learn about the involvements of peach volunteers in humanitarian response. The exchange visit emphasized more on the engagement plan of Humanitarian aid workers during disaster and emergency.

Mr. Indra B. Nepali, Finance Manager and Mr. Naresh Maharjan, Finance Officer from Caritas Nepal interacted with the team and shared their experience of handling the Nepal earthquake relief and rehab and Peach programme. They also shared about other disasters such as Floods and Forest Fires, which is a manmade calamity in Nepal.

Emergency response during Nepal Earthquake 2015 was one of the biggest response from Caritas Nepal. The models and practices done during the response are still very practical which can be replicated. After disaster, Caritas Nepal supported people with unconditional cash transfer but with a difference. The amount was directly transferred to all the beneficiaries to bring transparency and accountability. Not a single targeted beneficiary was left behind in getting the support from Caritas Nepal.

“In the recent flood and landslides, we never experienced any difficulty in getting volunteers because of Peach programme”, said by Caritas Nepal team. These volunteers came forward to extend their services and contributed to raise the impact of the humanitarian

response by professionally handling the situations without any difficulty.

Caritas Nepal had conducted Peach training at the partner level and formed more than 25 volunteers with each partner, who can support the partners during the times of emergency. Peach program helped them to improve their Financial system and procurement process. Under the programme, a toolkit is developed regarding expenditure, reimbursement and relevant documents to conduct the programme, the same has been oriented to the volunteers before entering the emergency.

Humanitarian Aid Peach workers are trained on Core Humanitarian Standard (CHS) , Volunteer management and Cash transfer to engage in the field during the Rapid Needs Assessment and response. India team has also visited Nepal Earthquake 2015 Recovery project area in Balthali village where four sectoral (WaSH, Livelihood, Protection and Shelter) support were provided to the affected community. Community participation during the recovery phase plays a major role in the rehabilitation phase. Through the community participation, the first demo house was constructed for an Elderly Widow who lives alone, relying on Widow Pension scheme for her survival.

Sharing her insight about the peach programme in Nepal, Programme Officer of Caritas India, Catherine Kune shared that it is great to see that Caritas Nepal provides Peach TOT training to not only the Peach Volunteer but also to the staffs of Caritas Nepal.