

## Our Interventions

In March 2010, we visited the affected relief camps along with a team of the Jana Unnayan Samiti (JUST) Tripura in the immediate aftermath of a fresh outbreak of violence leading to displacement of 500 families. The perilous situation of the displaced community needed immediate attention, and it prompted us to start an intervention. Accordingly, an emergency WatSan (Water and Sanitation) relief response was carried out by us for two months, which successfully prevented further outbreak of waterborne diseases and provided immediate relief to those in distress.

It was in January 2011 that in partnership with the European Union, we started the intervention for protecting the basic rights (shelter, education, food, health and livelihood) of the IDP families in camps. The intervention supports measures to establish conditions as well as provide the means to enable IDPs to return voluntarily, in safety and dignity to resettle voluntarily and (re)integrate in the society.



## Our Work in Camps

- ❖ Protecting families from water and vector-borne diseases by providing direct services and advocating with government for timely assistance
- ❖ Protecting children and youth from trafficking, ensuring their right to education, healthcare and food security
- ❖ Capacitating women to raise their voice against gender-based violence and participating in the decision making for their return and resettlement
- ❖ Providing livelihood support and entrepreneurship building for women
- ❖ Mediating with Human Rights Commissions for timely support in protection and promotion of the rights of IDPs.



## Our Work in Mizoram

- ❖ Creating opportunities for members of Community Based Organisations (CBOs), village councils and their leaders to come together on a single platform to discuss what is best for them
- ❖ Involving the youth for rebuilding their communities through an active citizenship and governance programme
- ❖ Advocacy with the state government and other local government institutions including panchayats for safe return of IDPs, land issues and resettlement
- ❖ Work with Church leaders for peace building and reconciliation between different groups.

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European Union



# RIDe-B Initiative

## Repatriation of Internally Displaced Persons (RIDe-B) in Partnership with the EU in Northeast India



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### Introduction

The Northeast region of India has seen many episodes of armed conflict and generalised violence since India's independence. Ethnic identity and aspiration for some level of autonomy, even demanding a separate homeland in the backdrop of increasing scarcity of collective land availability, have led to inter-ethnic violence, breakdown of law and order and large-scale internal displacement in the region. One such case in the context of the community aspiration for autonomy leading to displacement is that of the Brus in Mizoram. In the year 1997, the demand for Bru Autonomous District Council in the western belt of Mizoram and the opposition by Mizo civil society resulted in massive displacement. According to the Government of Tripura, 30,000 Bru families fled and took shelter in six relief camps in North Tripura District.



After several efforts from all concerned, the State Government of Mizoram came up with the 'Road Map for Repatriation in 2009 for Bru repatriation (This is believed to be the first road map in the country for IDP repatriation). Like the Brus, there are several Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the country whose rights are violated and they need protection. This roadmap is intended as a frame of reference for the national and regional organisations and the human rights institutions coming forward to advocate for a comprehensive policy on IDPs in the country.



The Repatriation process began in May 2009 with the preparation of the Road Map. Since then, the process of repatriation has stalled several times for many reasons. Till May 2011, approximately 650 families (as per the Govt. of Mizoram) returned to their homes in Mizoram. But the demand for rehabilitation of 83 Mizo families that fled Tripura during the same period is understood to be the major reason for the halt in repatriation process. On 18 February 2012, the Union Home Minister P. Chidambaram on his visit to the relief camps in Tripura urged the IDPs to return and assured them of their security and development on return. A public announcement was made regarding release of Rs 33 crores to the Ministry of Development of



North Eastern Region (DoNER) for the Bru return as well as a repatriation package for Sakhon Mizos displaced families. With this commitment of the Minister, it is hoped that the Bru repatriation will resume soon, though the demand of the Mizoram Bru Displaced People Forum (MBDPF) for signing the tripartite agreement for the return remains unsigned. It is the primary duty and responsibility of the state to protect and provide humanitarian assistance to IDPs commensurate with the assistance provided to all citizens of the country. In absence of a policy document or legislation covering the situations of IDPs, their rights are violated in most cases. There is no single Government and/or Non-Government agency in the country today which monitors the situation of the displaced and their return or resettlement. The national and state-level non-government organisations (NGOs) can be called upon to support the states and national authorities to fulfil this obligation.

