

# Notes to Ourselves

Reflections from Kashmir  
Floods Response Project  
(2014-2016)





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# PREFACE

IGSSS implemented one of the biggest disaster response projects carried out in recent times in Kashmir following the massive floods in September 2014. We reached out to 17,000 families in three districts of Kashmir - Srinagar, Bandipora and Baramulla. The project started in September 2014 and culminated in May 2016.

During the course of the project, IGSSS undertook various activities and adopted various processes to address the needs of flood affected population. This report has been prepared to add to the institutional memory and knowledge about the work undertaken, impact achieved and the challenges faced during the project.

The report discusses preceding and post disaster events. The critical analysis of activities forms the cornerstone of this report and further discusses the lessons learned during the course of the project implementation. The report also gives IGSSS an idea about the way forward to help in the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the affected population.

The report has been prepared on the basis of data generated through project reports, field level observations recorded, personal experiences of staff, result tracking MIS, surveys and decadal impact evaluation study.

The scope and scale of work attempted in this project would not have been possible without the support from Misereor Germany, Islamic Relief India, Faizal and Shabana Foundation and other NGO partners in the State.

The report would also like to acknowledge the untiring work of staff members from Kashmir and other regions, who not only sacrificed their valuable personal time but also showed exemplary commitment and conviction in the values for which IGSSS stands.

It is hoped that this report will generate interest in readers to know more about the work being carried out in Kashmir by the IGSSS.

**Yasir Qureshi**  
Regional Manager  
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# KASHMIR FLOODS

The Kashmir valley lies in the Himalayan-Hindu-Kush (HKK) region, often referred to as the “Third Pole”, because it contains the largest remaining stores of frozen fresh water outside the Polar Regions. As glaciers are disappearing faster in Northern India, the threats of flood in Kashmir loom and dissipate frequently, but the vulnerability to floods lives on in this volatile strife torn region putting at risk the most marginalized families.

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On 2nd September 2016, rainfall started in the whole of J&K and

the meteorology department announced moderate rain with thunder showers at most of the places in J&K for next four days. On 3rd September, water levels in Chenab (Pir Panjal Valley), Jhelum, Tawi (Jammu) and Sind (Ganderbal) rivers rose to significant levels thus prompting the government to issue flood alerts on 4th September. Major streams - Lidder, Vaishav, Rambhara and Ferozepur flowed above danger mark, thus affecting hundreds of villages.

The Kashmir office sent first SitRep (Situation Report) to its Head

Office on 4th September apprising them about the precarious situation developing in J&K with every passing hour of relentless rain. The SitRep was forwarded to Sphere India to activate the Inter Agency Group (IAG). A second SitRep was sent to the Head Office on 5th September and Kashmir office and Sphere India began discussions on the evolving situation through teleconferences. The Executive Director called on 5th September to assure of every possible help if a response was required from IGSSS. The flash floods had already started in south Kashmir leaving a trail of destruction and casualty.



On 6th September, as the situation worsened, the Kashmir office sent a third SitRep and also attended a teleconference with Sphere India at around 3 pm. Most of the staff couldn't reach the office in Srinagar on that day due to water logging and absence of public transport. By 5 pm the situation was so precarious around the city centre that the people, who were on roads by that time, had no recourse but to pray to god. During the intervening night of 6th & 7th September the city got flooded on its western side.

On 7th September, the entire communication network snapped around afternoon. The situation was compounded by the paralytic flood attack on the state capital Srinagar, cutting off all communication and connectivity. The last update sent to the Head office was on 7th September. The Srinagar office at Barbarshah was also flooded in the intervening night of 7th & 8th September.

While the flood fury in Srinagar city remained the centre of attention for media and state responders, the areas of Baramulla and Bandipora, facing the devastation, remained on the fringes of any attention. These two districts, which are demarcated at most places by the river Jhelum, were hugely affected by the overflowing Jhelum, its tributaries and distributaries. The floods in Baramulla and Bandipora started on 7th September 2014.

The regional manager visited some areas of Sumbal Bandipora on Sunday 7th September to assess the situation on the ground. He got in touch with some of the staff members (Shafayat and Tawheeda) who were mobilizing communities



for initial response and setting up of community managed relief camps. The pre-emptive efforts to strengthen the embankments by people had commenced. The area was on the brink of the flood and finally was struck by floods in the evening of 7th September.

In terms of the impact, The Jammu and Kashmir Assessment Report Version II of Sphere India (released on 22nd Sept. 2014) cited a total of 19,49,790 directly affected while 81,86,273 indirectly affected. The multitude of affected families with massive damages proved to be beyond anybody's help as the State Government could not grapple with the situation and failed to respond.

According to the satellite data, Bandipora was the worst affected with 148 sq. km. area coming under water. It was followed by Pulwama,

where 102 sq. km. of area was flooded. The third and worst affected was Srinagar whose 100 sq. km area was inundated. Here the problem was acute as most of the inundated area comprised of high density residential areas. In Islamabad (Anantnag), 43 sq. km. were inundated. Out of the total affected area, agriculture comprised of 444 sq. km. and built-up (houses, commercial buildings etc.) area was 67 sq. km. 287 villages/wards with a population of 22 lakhs were affected in the Kashmir division due to these floods.

As the flood devastated the State, almost the entire project areas of IGSSS of Bandipora, Baramulla and Srinagar were among the worst hit which prompted a natural rapid response within IGSSS.

#### Households Affected from IGSSS Target Areas

District	No. of Villages	No. of House Holds
Bandipora	33	9,337
Baramulla	26	5,883
Srinagar	10	11,072
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>26,292</b>

# 2

## PREPARING FOR RESPONSE

On 8th September, a meeting of senior management team was held at the New Delhi Head Office to discuss the developing situation in Kashmir and the way ahead for IGSSS in responding to the disaster.

### Head Office Meetings

It was decided that IGSSS will respond in all the areas where it has projects and ongoing programmes. The basic premise for this principled decision was to help and be in solidarity with people in the dire circumstances with whom IGSSS had built relations over the years. The IGSSS board readily sanctioned 10 lakh rupees for emergency response in these areas. The communication between

the Regional Office in Kashmir and the Head Office was established only by 9th September.

### Developing a Response

A response framework was developed at the Head Office with inputs from the Regional Office. The proposal was aimed at providing relief and rehabilitation support to flood affected people in the Srinagar, Bandipora and Baramulla districts of Kashmir.

The main goal of the response was to ensure that at least 15,750 households in Srinagar, Baramulla and Bandipora districts in the State of Jammu and Kashmir resume life as it was prior to the flooding. The main focus was;

1. To provide humanitarian relief to the flood affected families in Srinagar, Baramulla and Bandipora, and



- To promote sustainable food security and alternative livelihoods through capacity building and field action.

The response framework was readily accepted by Misereor, Germany; Islamic Relief India, Shabana and Faizal Foundation and they supported it with financial resources. This was the first umbrella response that was envisaged to cater to the needs of the flood affected families.

### Inter-Agency Coordination

The first coordination meeting of NGOs was held on 14th September at Rawalpura, Srinagar. The meeting was called by Sphere India and IGSSS attended this meeting to chart out the response strategy.

The meeting was attended by many local, national and international NGOs and paved the way for increased coordination and sharing between all the formal responders.

### Regrouping of Kashmir Team

On 18th September, Mr. Mangneo, the then Deputy Director and Mr. Joel, Manager MIS, based at New Delhi reached Srinagar to assess the ground situation and start emergency response measures. A team meeting at the temporary office was called and a quick status update was presented by the team members including their personal reflections on the situation. Many of the staff members were affected by the floods and had to relocate to different places. Staff members from Srinagar bore the brunt of the floods. Houses of four staff members were damaged in the floods and had also lost their household items to the floods. Other staff members were confined to their homes. It was after a gap of

two weeks that the team was able to meet.

The team then went to visit the IGSSS intervention areas in Srinagar, Bandipora and Baramulla to have a firsthand look at the emerging situation.

Office Damage Assessment was made on 19th September 2014 at the office premises. The approach road was still one foot under water, though flood water had receded from the ground floor. The office and assets mostly kept on ground floor were damaged. The office was made functional in shortest possible time on 22nd September 2014.

### Rapid Assessment

The rapid needs assessment was initiated from 19th September and was completed by 25th September. Prior to the assessment, team members were orientated about the process of rapid assessment.

A Rapid Needs Assessment was carried out in 70 areas of Bandipora and Baramulla and Srinagar districts. This included 34 villages in Bandipora, 26 villages in Baramulla and 10 areas of Srinagar. The Rapid Needs Assessment was initiated and coordinated by Sphere India and IGSSS took over the assessment in 70 intervention and adjoining affected areas. It brought to light that 90 per cent people had been displaced as villages remained inundated with more than 3 feet of water. 50 per cent the people had damaged houses and were putting up at their relatives places. Those who had gone back and were trying to fix the damages lacked financial capacity to complete renovations; 70 per cent

of people had lost their utensils and other household items during the floods; 87 per cent of people said that they lacked adequate raw materials for cooking purposes.

Sources of safe drinking water had also been severely damaged in the floods. 69 per cent of the assessed villages had no access to safe drinking water. The assessment showed that around 60 per cent of the people were dependent on water transported from other places. Toilet facilities were also severely damaged with 96 per cent of the villages not having proper toilet facilities.

Based on the Rapid Need Assessment findings which also involved interviews and discussions with the affected community, the following specific recommendations for immediate phase were made;

### WASH Recommendation

- Distribute 20 litres water container with lid and one mug per household. Bucket was considered suitable as all hygiene kits can be packed inside it.
- Distribute hygiene and dignity kit. Items should contain a minimum of bathing and washing soaps, antiseptic liquid, sanitary napkins, bleaching powder, and phenyl.
- Distribute ORS packets, and water purifier (NADCC tablets to match the 20 Litre water usage per day).
- Mobilize and sensitize the community through existing IGSSS village volunteers

to carry sanitization of the villages, debris clearance, and orientation of safe water handling practices.

- Mobilize health providers and conduct health and medical camps.

### Non Food Items (NFI) Recommendations

- Reach out to all the affected with minimum of two winter blankets per household before the onset of adverse climate conditions.
- Distribute one set of solar lamps/lantern with solar panel per household for basic lighting
- Distribute basic kitchen sets to each household

### Food Security

- Transfer cash to affected households to help tide over hunger for a week in lieu of dry rations. This may be immediately processed before Eid.

### Response Strategy

The findings of the Rapid Needs Assessment survey shaped up the response strategy. The Multi-Pronged Support Strategy was employed to reach out to the families affected by floods during early response. The affected family was to be insulated with as many provisions possible, which could directly reduce its vulnerability and susceptibility to the after effects of a disaster.

A response plan was envisaged where all the supports planned had to go on simultaneously, though health and WaSh had to take

precedence. The food support (dry ration or cash) and utility support was to go in tandem.

To roll out the response programme, ground preparations started with;

### Identification and Orientation of Volunteers

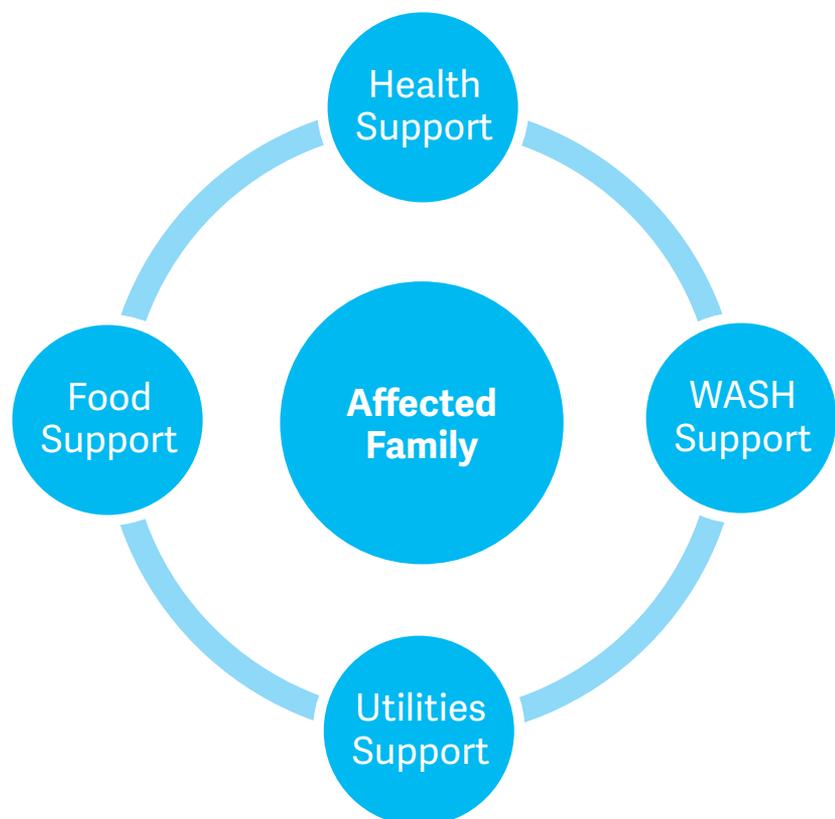
To reach out to the massive beneficiary population of 15,000 odd households, help from local youth volunteers was solicited to maximise the outreach in shortest possible time. From each of the target villages, volunteers were identified. Most of these volunteers were part of the existing youth groups, weaver's groups or had been associated with IGSSS interventions. Two to five volunteers were selected from each village, depending upon the number of households in the village and the area to be covered. A total of 251 volunteers were selected. The

volunteers were orientated about the relief distribution plan and process.

### Household Listing

The household listing was done by the volunteers in their respective villages. The criterion for the listing was to include families with one chula or hearth and not according to the number of ration cards allotted to the family by the Government. (It may be noted that one family may have more than one ration card at many places). These lists were signed by the Ward Member and the Sarpanch (Panchayat Raj Institution Head) of the village.

Through this criterion even small families had their due share; but some joint families experienced a disadvantage. Though some Sarpanches were not happy with this criterion, in the experience of the staff, this was an effective way





that helped them to resolve various issues that cropped up in terms of fair distribution.

### Allotment and Distribution of Family Cards

The family cards were developed having details about the family, relief items to be provided and other logistical information. The family cards also had a provision for having a photograph of the head of the family so that it could be used as a photo-identity card for the family for project purposes. These family cards were then distributed to each family, based on the approved household list of each village. The volunteers were provided orientation on the filling of family cards. An acknowledgement sheet was filled by the volunteers bearing the serial number of the cards distributed along with the name and signature of the family member who received the card. The purpose of family cards was to ensure that beneficiary family receives relief materials as per

the package as well as working as a supporting document for the distribution.

### Baseline Survey

A Baseline Survey was conducted in 66 areas of three districts of Srinagar, Bandipora and Baramulla covering 13,684 households simultaneously with the relief distribution. Respondents targeted were all the households of 66 villages and urban areas. The choice of enumeration/surveyed areas was made on the basis of the recommended villages by the Rapid Needs Assessment Study and ongoing IGSSS project intervention areas which served as the strata for the purposes of sampling. The household survey sample was based on *purposive sampling* from a universe consisting of all the households affected by floods in 66 areas of three districts. The survey instrument consisted of a questionnaire divided into four sections. The sections required that questions on various topics

be asked to the respondents. Demographic information, losses due to floods and inundation, health concerns and occupation interests formed part of the survey. The questionnaire was in English, however, enumerators were well versed with English and questions were verbally translated during their orientation for their better understanding.

For the purpose for carrying out survey of 13,684 households, 250 enumerators who belonged to these 66 areas were qualified local residents who understood the socio-cultural dynamics of the study areas. They were divided into 05 teams headed by a survey coordinator- IGSSS project staff member. All the enumerators participated in orientation training prior to the survey. The orientation included sessions on the purpose of the survey, the role and responsibilities of the enumerator, interviewing techniques and research. The bulk of training

was devoted to reading and familiarizing the enumerators with the questionnaire, both in English, Urdu and in the local language. First the purpose of the question was explained. Then the instructions on how to fill out the questionnaire were reviewed to familiarize the enumerators' questioning patterns.

During the actual survey enumerators visited households mostly in the day, however, wherever it was necessary, the interviews were also conducted in the evenings. Before commencement of interviews in the villages, while accompanied by the supervisors in most cases, they presented themselves to the PRI members or village elders. The enumerators explained the purpose and procedure of the survey and sought the consent of these leaders to conduct interviews.

To assure that the respondents understood the questions;

interviewers read the questionnaire in the local language.

Data collection was done on the basis of a household questionnaire. The survey was conducted from home to home, using the methodology described above. Enumerators were engaged based on their intellect, knowledge of fieldwork and previous experience. Upon completion of the interviews in the field, the questionnaires were numbered/coded and entered using Microsoft Excel. This data was cross checked for accuracy. The data was then exported to pivot tables for analysis. Frequency tables were then used to discern tendencies and cross tabulations were used to compare sub-groups. The baseline study spanned almost three months covering a vast number of households and areas. The major findings of the study are given below;

The baseline survey was focused on examining and investigating the

following aspects:

- General details of the affected family which includes the occupation as well as income of the family;
- Losses incurred by the family because of floods which includes human loss, asset loss and loss of basic facilities;
- Underlying health concerns and;
- Occupation related interest for rehabilitation.

The analysis of the data thus generated brought to light the widespread destruction and losses attributed to this disaster.

The survey included a total of 13,684 flood affected families, with a total population of 81,716 people, with males constituting 51% of the population and women 49%.

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## EARLY RESPONSE

The early response was based on many factors affecting the ground situation in Kashmir. Since IGSSS was responding to the needs of 15,000 odd families, the response had to be calibrated and well thought out.

The procurement of relief materials and its transportation to Kashmir was a time consuming process, so IGSSS prioritized and planned to provide immediate relief to the families through unconditional cash support for food, attending medical needs through health camps and installation of water filters in most affected villages. In the later stages of the response, other relief materials were provided to the affected families over a period of three months.

### UNCONDITIONAL CASH SUPPORT

Unconditional cash support of Rs. 1000 per family was provided to 12,461 families in 61 areas of Srinagar, Bandipora and Baramulla. The purpose of the cash support was to help families buy essential commodities. The support was the first activity of relief programme and was initiated on 3rd October 2014.

#### Process Adopted

As part of immediate relief, an amount of Rs. 1000 per family was

given to 12,461 families in cash. This distribution was made over twenty days. Before distributing the cash, IGSSS identified the beneficiaries and prepared family cards, with family details, and photographs of the head of the family. These family cards were given to the beneficiaries. Based on this information, IGSSS formed teams of two persons for distribution of the cash in each location.

Prior to the distribution, cash requisition from the respective



team for the respective areas was raised and handed over to the accounts person. The required cash arranged was arranged by the accounts/logistics team and handed over to the distribution team in the morning of the given date. The cash was withdrawn from the bank one day prior to the distribution and in many cases on the same day. At the time of distribution, beneficiaries produced the family card. During distribution, the family cards were used as a basis for establishing identity of the family. Additional photo-identity proof (Aadhar card, ration card or voter card) were seen to make sure that cash is received by the bonafide beneficiary.

The team would then note down the particulars of the beneficiary in the muster roll and in the family cards, hand over the cash and obtain their signatures/thumb impression on family cards and muster rolls. The distribution process was done in the presence of either formal village heads or respected citizens of the village/ area or members of the village committees. Their signatures were obtained on the muster rolls as a supporting proof. Back at the office, the muster rolls were checked again, cash reconciled and the unused cash, if any, returned to the office by the distribution team.

### Impact and Opportunities

Given that the floods caught everybody unawares, the lack of early warning and absence of pre-positioned food aid, cash transfers demonstrated a significant impact. As per the evaluation survey, 34.5 per cent of the respondents from all income categories stated that cash support of Rs. 1000 was useful

in meeting basic needs. About 43 per cent respondents of post distribution survey reported that the unconditional cash support was the most useful. The cash was utilized to buy food items; some used it to buy fodder for their cattle while others used it to buy winter garments and medicines. The cash assistance also brought a little joy and festivity for the grief stricken people as Eid was just round the corner. Mohd. Afzal one of the beneficiaries from Check-e-Jamal Mir village in Baramulla gave a part of the cash assistance received to the children in the village as *Eiddie* (a token amount paid by elders to kids on EID) as he wanted to bring smiles to the face of the children in his village.

Unconditional cash support proved to be a massive social protection measure at the beginning of the project. The unconditional nature of the support was a significant benefit in itself, allowing the beneficiaries the flexibility to respond to the changes in their circumstances. In times of a disaster and a calamity that affects such huge numbers of people as in the Kashmir valley, the importance of the availability of even a small amount of cash,

cannot be undermined. Not all people have the same needs. For some, purchasing food may have been the priority while for others; medicines might have a greater importance. The transfer of cash to the beneficiaries gave them an opportunity to choose what to purchase based on the urgency or necessity.

Attempting a large-scale cash support was therefore appropriate, based on the analysis available at the time. It enabled beneficiaries to adapt to the changing circumstances and needs. It ensured access to critical food and non-food items. As IGSSS went for blanket coverage, it largely mitigated the problems associated with community dynamics in relief distribution.

The opportunities in unconditional cash support lies in the flexibilities it allows for beneficiaries to adapt to changing contexts and priorities that might diverge from the initial assessment. Further it reduces the operational and logistical costs and can be a timely intervention.

As per the findings of the internal systems audit carried out by the AccountAid, the model of cash

**“Cash support of Rs.1000 made by IGSSS to the most vulnerable flood victims does not treat people as passive recipients of relief; it recognises and values their ability to decide their own priorities and what they want to buy. This trust is greatly appreciated by those assisted and promotes their confidence, respect and trust for IGSSS.”**

**– Muntazir Ahmad Rather**  
Sarpanch of village Archanderhama, Baramulla

transfers made during the relief project in Kashmir can be adapted by the IGSSS elsewhere if cash transfers to beneficiary accounts are not feasible.

### Limitations and Challenges

While cash transfers are already a common intervention in the development sector, it also has its disadvantages and limitations, offering a whole range of challenges particularly in disturbed or conflict prone areas. The team also encountered significant obstacles – security concerns, cash availability, cash transit and local accountability.

The biggest limitation of the unconditional cash support is regarding the control of access to the cash. Usually the head of the family collected the cash support and it was his or her prerogative how the cash is used. Though many beneficiaries in post distribution survey reported that they used cash in efficient ways, there was no guarantee that the cash was available for the needs of other family members particularly the women and children. The cash can exacerbate existing household tensions or negatively impact dynamics between household members if the control over choices of expenditure is limited to the one person.<sup>1</sup>

As the beneficiaries were required to queue visibly or present themselves to receive cash, it may or may not have affected their dignity. Little emphasis was laid on the monitoring of cash expenditure by the beneficiaries in this project.

This was mainly because the number of beneficiaries was too large to undertake any such exercise. So an important insight on how cash was spent and its impact on households, markets, and communities couldn't be gained.

As per the evaluation survey, 25.9 per cent of the respondents stated that cash support was less beneficial, and what they needed most was material support, since materials were scarce in the market. The corollary to this statement can give us an important insight on the availability of stocks in the market at that time. This can mean that even though the people got cash support and could buy anything of their choice, the absence of stocks in the market invalidated the appropriateness of the cash support for at least a percentage of the beneficiaries.

As IGSSS had no toolkits or policy instrument or implementation guide on cash transfers, monitoring and mechanism for complaints and feedback was lacking. People who had complaints had to make telephone calls to the Regional Office or Head Office to be heard.

Disbursing such large amount of cash was always fraught with dangers of looting during distribution, transit security and custody. The withdrawal of cash from the bank was also a major challenge; the bank officials would require a letter from the organization every time the amount was to be withdrawn. Further, the non-availability of required cash with the bank also affected the distribution

time and date. There was no mechanism of transit insurance of cash as insurance companies didn't provide this service despite many representations and it increased insecurities among the staff that were on duty to disburse the cash in the field.

### WaSH (WATER, SANITATION AND HYGIENE) CAMPAIGN

#### Providing Potable Drinking Water

Based on a Rapid Needs Assessment done immediately after the floods, it was found that most of the villages in Baramulla and Bandipora were devoid of any water source for drinking water. The inundation of villages posed a great danger to water sources and a potential disease bomb was waiting to explode. The IGSSS with technical support from Islamic Relief identified 17 villages that were in immediate need of safe drinking water.

During a short survey of 1211 households from four villages of Nowgam, Gund-e-Nowgam, Harinara and Trikolbal, it was found that 80% (969) of the households used tap water as the primary source and amongst the tap water users only 7.22% (70) households used water filters at home. The water from tube wells was used by 17.34% (210) households and only 7.14% (7) households amongst them used any filter. Due to floods only 1.65% (20) households used water from rivulets, though it is a common practice in rural areas to take water from streams and rivulets. The filter use at home was

<sup>1</sup>Danish Refugee Council (DRC) experiences of cash assistance to non-camp refugees in Turkey and Lebanon <https://data.unhcr.org/syrianrefugees/download.php?id=7586>

reported by 55% (11) households amongst rivulet water users.

To provide safe drinking water to affected families, two major interventions were planned - one, providing water filtration plants and the second, provision of gravity filters.

### Water Filtration Plants

This type of Water Filtration Plant is a compact plant that filters water to the best quality possible and can filter 1000 litres in an hour. Mostly used in relief camps, this mini plant was installed in communities at frequented community points that were accessible to the community members. 21 water filters were installed in 21 villages in Baramulla and Bandipora.

### Gravity Filters

These are Gravity Based Water Filters that filter 10 litres in an hour and are easy to clean and use. These were provided to schools with student roll up to 100 students and at places where an installation of water filtration plants was not possible.

## PROCESS ADOPTED

### Identification of Sites

The teams inspected the potential sites for installations and the technical teams conducted water tests and assessed the technical feasibility of installing a plant. After short listing of sites, the project team initiated the community mobilization process in those villages.

### Enlisting Community Participation

To make any people based initiative successful it is imperative that

the community participation be ensured. The team held various community meetings with the potential beneficiaries to solicit their support and stake. A written assurance was taken from the community members to enable other villagers to have access to water, provide space and additional components for the plant as a community contribution and take care of the assets. This was mainly done to ensure that people didn't take this measure as a freebee, smooth functioning of plants and avoid any restrictive use of plants. The community offered space and additional components for the installation. This usually consisted of water tanks and pumps to support the plant and was done in a collective manner by the community members.

### Installation of Water Filtration Plants

The installation of Water Filtration Plants was done by technical teams at selected sites in the presence of community members. The contact details of technical team were put near the plant so that in case of any malfunctioning of the plant, the community could contact the technical team of suppliers directly.

The information about the installation was relayed to each family of that area and wall paintings were made near the plant sites for promoting hygiene and sanitation.

### Training for Smooth Operationalizing of Plants

After the installation of the plant, the team trained a responsible member from the community or the school on handling the filtration plant to ensure its smooth

operation and also handed over the spare parts to the person for changing whenever required.

### Monitoring

After the installation, continuous visits by the team to monitor the water plants were carried out and problems in the plants if any were reported to the technical team who responded by sending service teams.

### Impact and Opportunities

The humanitarian intervention in the villages of Baramulla and Bandipora has resulted in considerable and evident change in people's lives given the appropriateness and relevance of the intervention. This has been mostly true in case of water filter installations that has provided people with safe drinking water that was absent in the community before the floods and only became worst after floods. The water installations have seen community participation and ownership with supplementary accessories to the plant being provided by the community.

Even though it will take time to assess the benefits of the Water Filtration Plants in the community, there have been positive indicators in the habits of community members who have been seen to use the water plant to carry drinking water back to their homes for further use. Apart from this, people passing the water points have access to safe drinking water. The installations have obviously obliterated the need to boil the water for drinking as drinking water in its purest form is available within the community.

The plants have mostly helped the women and the girls of the

community who used to walk kilometers in order to get water for drinking, though this factor has not been completely wiped out as people still need water for washing and bathing. However, a visible change in community habits regarding drinking water is visible near the water points. In the larger context, it is expected that the water points will have contributed towards reducing the incidences of water borne diseases in areas that the plant is catering to. The water plants at some points are exclusively used by the community and at some points is shared by both schools and communities, thereby, reaching out to a larger number of households. The smaller schools were targeted with gravity water buckets, so as to not leave the children without drinking water at schools either.

### Limitations and Challenges

Even though the water filter installations have been smooth, complete with the support and participation from community members as well as community based structures, there have been certain limitations and challenges faced during the process.

The villages were chosen on a priority basis. The water team from Islamic Relief tested water in intervention villages and installed 21 Water Filtration Plants in 21 villages. However, the size of the villages was often very huge and not everyone could use the plants. Also it meant inducing a behavioural change in people who had been drinking water from contaminated water source all their lives. Apart from the wall paintings and communication with groups, there was not much that could



be done to have the community accept this new addition to their habits. Due to technical issues such as unavailability of water source near plant or unavailability of electricity for the plant to function some areas that required water plants urgently could not be catered to.

In most of the cases, the response from community was overwhelming with the community helping to facilitate the installation of the filters. However, there were instances where the community did not make the requisite arrangements for the installation and in some cases even detached the plant completely. In such cases, the plants were shifted to places with better reception and sense of responsibility and ownership.

Whereas installation of water plants was definitely a relief for many, the sanitation conditions in the villages were a deterrent in achieving complete health based impact of the plants. The villages didn't have proper sanitation and drainage which challenged the efforts of providing drinking water when there was a good chance of diseases spreading from poor sanitation practices.

Erratic water and electricity supply posed a serious threat to the usability of the water filters. At some places, the community members personally arranged for generators for the plants to work but this were not possible everywhere.

Even though all points at which water filtration plants were

installed and gravity based filters distributed, written assurances for usage of water filters by any person were given as there were often reports that in some of the villages people were not using the plants as expected because of internal village politics. This could not be monitored by the team at the micro level.

As the project was of short duration and there were multiple components, even though water committees comprising of women, youth and village heads were made, there was not enough time to train and strengthen these committees.

### ENSURING SANITATION IN DISASTER SITUATION

As flood waters are usually contaminated and can adversely affect the community's health and hygiene, so cleaning and sanitizing households and vicinities after a flood is important to help prevent the spread of illness and disease. A sanitation drive was launched in all the villages of Bandipora and Baramulla districts and few selected areas of Srinagar city. Liquid Phenyl and Calcium Hypochlorite (Bleaching Powder) were provided to the village youth volunteers and Panchayats for sanitization of their areas. Around 14,000 liters of Phenyl and 5,000 kilograms of Calcium Hypochlorite were provided in 70 areas.

#### Process Adopted

The sanitation drive was a two pronged initiative. Households as well as common places were targeted. Each household was provided with liquid phenyl for usage in their households and each village Panchayat/Committee/ Youth Group was provided with

Calcium Hypochlorite and Phenyl for community sanitation. The volunteers were also provided with sprayers, sprinklers, brooms and gloves. The volunteers along with the community cleaned common places and sprinkled it with phenyl. Water bodies of stagnant flood water were sprinkled with Calcium Hypochlorite.

#### Impact and Opportunities

As the water started receding and the villagers started to return to their homes, there was another crisis to deal with. Carcasses of dead animals, muck and sludge and putrid plants had created extremely unsanitary conditions in the villages. Everything was reeking of destruction and decomposition. This unbearable stench and the contaminated atmosphere in the villages were causing great concern about impending health epidemic among the villagers. The sanitation drive launched in the areas with the help of Panchayat and Youth groups after the early days of floods did prevent the outbreak of any diseases usually associated with floods of this magnitude.

The sanitation drive provided the villagers with many opportunities' of collective action and most the villages reported of greater understanding about the proper sanitation. Even after the relief phase, many sanitation drives were launched by youth groups in Nowgam, Chek-e-Ganasthan, Nowgam Payeen, Gund-e-Nowgam villages to make them better. The people of these villages wholeheartedly participated in these campaigns. These campaigns were supported by villagers without any material support from the IGSSS.

#### Limitations and Challenges

The stocks of Phenyl and Calcium Hypochlorite reached Kashmir on 9th October and 16th October respectively. This proved to be little too late given that, except for few villages, waters had started receding by 16th September. The transportation of Phenyl and Calcium Hypochlorite to villages was also a challenge given that many link roads of the villages were damaged and vehicles had to take longer routes, hence more costs and time were consumed.

#### Promoting Hygiene

Hygiene is especially important in an emergency such as a flood of this magnitude. The target areas of our projects usually have hygiene and sanitation problems and this disaster could have proven more damaging if these needs were not attended to by the organization. The project tried to address the hygiene needs through many initiatives. Hygiene kits were provided to 12,624 families in Baramulla, Bandipora and Srinagar Districts. These kits included two packs of sanitary napkins for women, toilet and detergent soaps and antiseptic liquids.

#### Process Adopted

Hygiene kits were provided as part of the relief package to each targeted household distributed along with other relief materials.

Women recipients were oriented through a group approach at the time of the distribution about personal hygiene and need to use sanitary napkins.

Wall paintings were done by the volunteers and WaSH team at common places to generate

awareness particularly to illiterate members of the community and the children towards maintaining hygiene.

### Impact and Opportunities

Women health and hygiene are hushed topics not to be discussed openly, especially in front of the male members of the family. In fact, even the women folk feel shy and embarrassed to discuss 'dirty' details about their monthly cycles with one another. Such attitude makes it difficult to address issues related to women's sexual and reproductive health.

The only thing that the men of the house were concerned during floods was about shifting their families to safer places and to arrange for two meals a day. But who would have thought of making arrangements for women and their needs. That is thought to be purely the domain of women and men chose not to interfere with it. Menstrual hygiene was being greatly compromised because of unavailability of sanitary napkins and the poor hygiene conditions, especially in the rural areas.

"When I saw the water levels in the village rising, the first thing I did was to grab a bagful of strips of cloth. My girls have irregular cycles and I had to be prepared. My husband was busy grabbing all important documents. But I, as a mother had to think of saving my girls from shame. Only a woman can understand this", said Fatima, a mother of two teenage girls from village Najan.

While a pack or two of sanitary napkins may not be much, it definitely served to create

mindfulness of the needs of the women folk of the house. Zeenat from village Shilvat said that when her father saw the packs of sanitary pads provided by IGSSS, he realized that he had been ignoring the needs of the women in the family and perhaps he should have been more mindful. He then provided her with a small amount of money for her 'own' needs.

The awareness programmes on women's health and hygiene have served to create consciousness among the people. As per the evaluation study, 87% of the respondents were well aware of the usage of hygiene kits.

### Limitations and Challenges

Hygiene and sanitation related health problems are rampant in these villages. The project couldn't focus on inducing behavioural change as it would have entailed an entirely different project for the purpose. As very few women use sanitary napkins during menstruation, and the few who do (between 2-10% in some villages) tend to be young girls and the rest of women (generally married women) use cloth. Though hygiene kits were provided as one off support under the project, the chances of using sanitary napkins by women on regular basis was slim given its unavailability in the villages and traditional practices.

As per National Health Mission (NHM), the government's plan to promote menstrual hygiene among the adolescent girls in Kashmir has gone slack as subsidized sanitary napkins simply remain undistributed, only a meager portion of the supplied stock- 13

per cent has been sold, while as 87 per cent lies undistributed in the godowns.

### COMMUNITY HEALTH PROGRAMME

#### Health Camps through other NGOs

For addressing the immediate health care needs in the flood hit communities, IGSSS coordinated and cooperated with Help Age India and Doctors for You, which worked towards addressing health issues that arose post floods. Health camps were organized in Rainawari, Hawal, Habak, Dal Kalan, Dargah Hazratbal, Gow Kadal in Srinagar; Zalpora, Dangerpora, Shilwat, Gonchipora, Nowgam Payeen in Bandipora.

#### Mobile Medical Units (MMUs)

Age & Gender	Persons Treated
>2 Years Male	137
>2Years Female	152
2-5 Years Male	165
2-5 Years Female	176
5-12 Years Male	365
5-12 Years Female	445
12-18 Years Male	275
12-18 Years Female	479
18-60 Years Male	1173
18-60 Years Female	1684
>60 Years Male	432
>60 Years Female	473
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,956</b>

The project areas lacked basic health care services thus limiting

access to quality health and making affected families more vulnerable in disaster situations. It was seen as important and urgent measure to meet health needs in an efficient and effective manner in the aftermath of the floods in the project areas. It is in this context that Mobile Medical Units were engaged to conduct Health Camps in the project areas. Taking healthcare to the door steps of the affected families was the guiding principle of the MMUs. The main objective of this initiative was to provide on-site services like doctor consultations, basic diagnostics, medicines and home visits for bedridden patients. It also provided for linkages with local health facilities to ensure referrals to specialist doctors.

The MMUs also focused on preventive health care programme, through Information, Education and Communication and Behaviour Change Communication activities among the community.

### Process Adopted

The camps organized through other NGOs were primarily organized at places where other health facilities were absent and there was greater need for medical attention. These camps were organized before rollout of medical mobile units and relief operations. Identification of villages was done by the volunteers and project teams and the list was forwarded to the partnering NGOs (Help Age India and Doctors for You). The doctors along with their para medical staff and medical vans were escorted to the camp sites by the IGSSS staff and camps were organized. The beneficiaries were provided with the medicines, if needed by the partner NGOs.

IGSSS rolled out full community health programme in the target villages of Bandipora and Baramulla. It employed full time three nurses, three medical attendants and part time doctors for the purpose and also hired three vehicles. These Mobile Medical Units (MMUs) were encouraged to use at appropriate buildings or tented space at the site of camp in the villages. The camp sites were selected in advance and meetings with the other stakeholders like Panchayats, village volunteers and community elders were held to facilitate the smooth functioning of MMUs process. The dates of the health camps were notified to villagers in advance so that a maximum number of people could benefit from the camps.

Each MMU used to work for six-days every week, reaching the first site around 10.00 a.m. and work till 4 p.m. The MMUs were to target medical services to 100-150 patients per day. The nurses apart from assisting in the camps conducted health education sessions with adolescent girls and women.

### Impact and Opportunities

The major impact of the health programme was that no outbreak of epidemic usually associated with floods was reported and IGSSS played an important role of reaching out to people in dire need of medical attention when government agencies were struggling to provide any service. The health camps by other NGOs facilitated by IGSSS treated 3,015 persons with various ailments.

Ailments	Cases
Respiratory System	2690
Trauma	31
G.I Problem	1051
Diarrhoea	44
Chronic Disease	36
Genital Tract Issues	121
Urinary Tract Issues	168
Skin diseases	538
Pregnancy health issues	28
Nutritional deficiency	1229
ENT	55
Eye	201
Fever/Body ache	1329
Others	165

The project through Mobile Medical Units organized 79 health camps in 45 villages of Bandipora and Baramulla. These camps treated 5,956 persons suffering from various ailments. The follow up visits of 2,292 persons were also carried out through these camps. 1,730 persons reported multiple ailments.

In addition to running medical camps, the nurses also catered to the women of the community by talking about hygiene and reproductive health. These were very useful sessions, and some very important findings were documented that included alarming practices about sexual and reproductive health. The health education sessions were conducted with young. Health education was imparted to 2,140 women and adolescent girls.

A good partnership developed with other NGOs like Help Age and Doctors for You and it enabled to reach out to the people in less time.

**Limitations and Challenges**

The biggest limitation of the health programme was overdependence on other NGOs in the initial days of intervention. The project spent a considerable time in searching for local doctors. Due to entrance examination for PG course in medicine, most of the unemployed medical graduates were studying for the examinations and didn't made themselves available for services despite good monetary compensation offered. The doctors, who finally worked for the MMUs, were part time and the work of MMUs depended on their availability.

The health education was imparted to mainly adolescent girls and women and didn't cater to the needs of men and adolescent boys. Though the project observed many gaps in Sexual and Reproductive Health, it couldn't scale up its intervention at larger and specific levels.

Despite various meetings with district health officers, the support from government health institutions was lacking. Though their facilities equally suffered due to floods, their support in providing local doctors and other paramedical staff would have helped to provide prompt services including referrals to higher health centres.

**PSYCHOSOCIAL INTERVENTION**

The devastating floods not only destroyed the economy of Kashmir, its infrastructure and livelihood

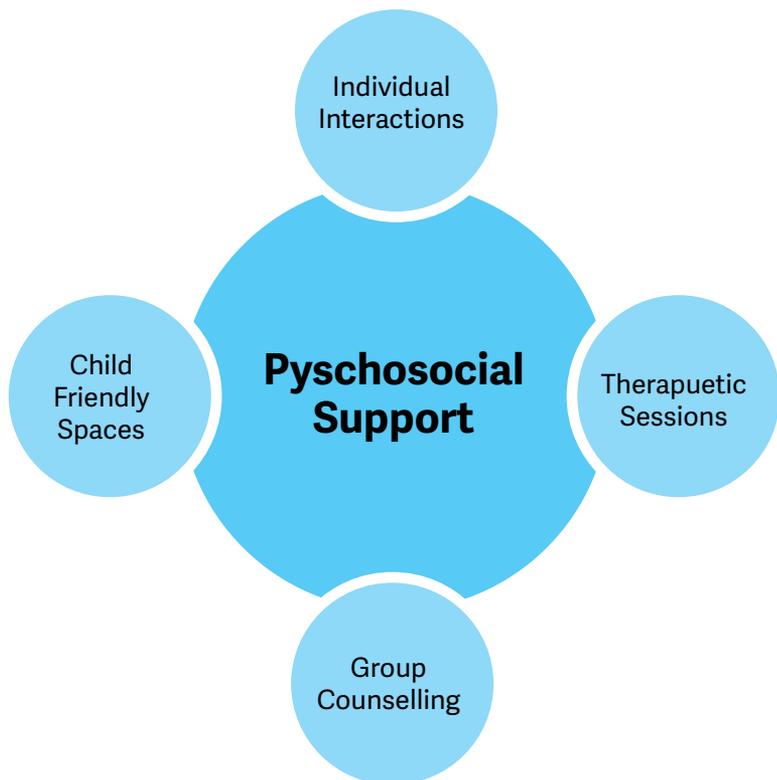
but also violently disturbed the routine of the whole population. The people who are naturally tuned to their daily activities, all of a sudden found themselves in the midst of a destruction that required massive efforts to rebuild their lives. Among many affected by the flood, losses were multiple; homes got washed away, crops were destroyed and livestock were killed. At various levels, adults and children were affected differently. The overwhelming sense of loss and disturbance was evident in the behavior and communication of the people. Among children it led to a diminishing attendance in schools and an increased inclination

towards young adolescents leaving studies to economically support the reconstruction of their lives.

The focus of the intervention was thus to target such people with professional help. Children, women and youth were the main target groups and the aim was to help them cope emotionally, restore the normal flow of development of children and protect youth and women from accumulation of distressful and harmful events.

**Process Adopted**

The intervention was multipronged focusing on various aspects of psychosocial wellbeing. The



Communities	Setting	Numbers
Boys and Girls of 6-14 years	Child Friendly Centres	500 children
Youth	Youth Group setting	200 youth
Women	Group Setting	240 women
Other members of the village	Case to case basis	



children were targeted through child friendly spaces created in target villages and the youth were targeted through existing youth groups while women were reached out to in group settings.

Usually those affected by a disaster need to be approached in a non-clinical way (unless or until clinical needs are identified and accepted by the affected person, which will only be the case for a minority of people). There are limitations in individual counselling approaches. Therefore the project focussed on larger community based approaches and appropriate counselling activities of largely homogenous groups.

IGSSS appointed three fulltime psychosocial care givers who had professional expertise in the area. Twenty flood affected villages in two districts of Baramulla and

Bandipora were selected for the intervention based on the magnitude of destruction. A team of 20 community volunteers were trained in providing care and referring at village level and manage child friendly spaces for children.

Psychosocial support was provided at various levels by the care givers.

### Community Level

At community level, the psychosocial care givers held meetings with self-help groups of women and youth groups in each of 20 villages and provided opportunities to vent out feelings under supervision of experts. Group counseling sessions were held with them with a reference to an assessment tool i.e. Trauma Checklist. The Group counseling process followed pre-defined stages (initiating the discussions, data gathering, mutual goal setting,

working and termination) of group counseling. De-stressing activities were conducted with women and youth to release their stress. Goal setting was done with the women and youth for overcoming the identified problems and strategies were formulated to achieve these set goals. The care givers then identified individual cases for provision of individual counseling and referrals to higher institutions of care in the districts or elsewhere.

On an average, each psychosocial care giver attended to one youth and women's group daily.

### Individual Level

The care givers provided psychosocial support to care seeking individuals who had been identified during group sessions. They were provided individual counselling in a professional

manner and if needed referred to higher institutions of care.

### Child Friendly Spaces (CFS)

Around 1,050 children were catered to through establishment of Child Friendly Spaces in 20 villages. The aim of these centres was to provide safe spaces where children can play and participate in structured supportive activities and can receive psychosocial support, if required

Each centre had provision for sports and organized social support for parents, especially mothers of very young children, support parents and community members to take better care of their children.

Children were selected for each CFS by the village volunteer on the basis of agreed criteria: severely flood affected families, economically poor families, and families with physically challenged members, families with large number of children and women headed households.

Children belonging to the age group of 6 to 14 years were enrolled and were further divided into two groups i.e. 6 to 9 years and 10 to 14 years. Each group of children attended at least three hours of sessions at the CFS on alternate days.

CFSs were either located in private houses within the village or in an Imambada (a structure within the village used for religious congregations) and managed by community volunteers trained for the purpose by the psychosocial experts.

CFSs were supplied with educational and recreational material which included drawing books, colours, clay moulds, ludos, chart papers. Besides, each child enrolled in a CFS was also given an education kit which included a school bag, note books, a geometry box, a pencil box and a wax colour box.

Each CFS was visited by a counsellor roughly once every week. Besides monitoring the activities of the CFS they also conducted activities like play therapy, role play with children.

Each counsellor administered a Child Behaviour Checklist to identify the post flood symptoms of trauma in children. Based on the findings of the checklist, the children were broadly divided in to subgroups and appropriate child friendly activities were devised for them to overcome the identified symptoms/problems. These activities are conducted over a period of time depending upon the response and capacity of each child. Children were then evaluated again and a decision for future course of action was taken by the counsellor in consultation with the CFS volunteer.

### Impact and Opportunities

A very important component of the relief project was the inclusion of the psychosocial component where a team of psychosocial care givers talked to people trying to address various psychosocial issues that cropped up during floods. It was found that Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), stress and depression were commonly found among people, especially among children.

According to the psychosocial care givers, a need was observed among the women and youth for psychosocial intervention, both at group and individual levels. During the group meetings, widespread trauma among the youth and women was observed. Even though psychosocial interventions take its time to show results, there were small positive indicators emerging out of the meetings conducted with SHGs and youth groups. The participants acknowledged the usefulness of coming together to share their grief, loss and apprehensions. This goes to compliment the traditional system in Kashmir that focuses on talking and sharing common feelings as elements of relief.

Child Friendly Spaces which were made operational for children to continue their education informally and to compensate for the loss of their play spaces during floods proved to be very popular among the children who found it motivating to visit a place that allows them to learn and play at the same time. During interviews with various teachers, it was observed that children in the age group of 6-14 years showed signs of disturbed behavior and stress. Since the traditional approach of counseling did not work with children, Child Friendly Spaces provided opportunities to children to rebuild their recreation routine and also to escape the trauma of living a disturbed life.

The psychosocial impact of floods is not just limited to the early stages. The experience of trauma can also undermine the long term psychosocial well-being of the affected population. So, long

term support is vital to protect and promote mental health and psychosocial well-being of affected population in target areas.

### Limitations and Challenges

Even though the psychosocial support programme was highly appreciated by the community and also labeled as effective, the programme did not go beyond six months due to donor constraints. Six months were too little to develop a community based psychosocial support system. As psychosocial issues need an extended intervention, the termination of the programme left many unfinished tasks.

There was no conceptual framework which could distinguish categories of psychosocial problems and link each of them to a verifiable indicators showing that psychosocial problems have been addressed.

The sustainability of Child Friendly Spaces (CFSs) was another limitation. There was no sustainability plan for CFSs and they were run on a very short term basis. These CFSs closed down shortly after the termination of the programme. The community participation in running the CFSs was missing and eventually had a telling effect on their sustainability. Given that these CFSs had provided a much need opportunity for children to express themselves and had molded them in a particular manner, the closure of CFSs put many children under stress as they missed the particular environment of fun and learning.

One of the pronounced facts of most psychosocial interventions

is the requirements of long term planning and resource bases. In the absence of both these aspects, the programme was more of a relief response and couldn't take shape of well-planned intervention for future.

### HOUSEHOLD UTILITIES SUPPORT

The household utilities like kitchen utensils, hygiene kits, blankets, solar lamps, dry ration kits were distributed to 15558 families in three districts of Srinagar, Bandipora and Baramulla. The relief distribution started on 15th October 2014 and was completed by 15th January 2015. The details of relief materials and household coverage are given in the table below:

Utilities	Family Outreach Nos.
Hygiene Kits	15,558
Kitchen Sets	15,558
Dry Ration Kits	3,830
Health Camps	5,956
Mink Blankets	17,330
Solar Lamps	3,830

### Process Adopted

Distribution of relief materials was done in two phases. In the first phase, materials (WaSH and NFI kits) were distributed among the families. In the second phase, blankets were distributed.

After the receipt of materials from suppliers, the materials were physically checked, counted and a proper stock inventory was maintained. The materials were stored at warehouses in

Srinagar. The ware houses were managed by dedicated teams of staff members and volunteers. The receipt of materials was relayed to distribution teams and distribution plans were made accordingly.

Transportation of relief materials from warehouse to field areas was done through small trucks hired for the purpose as per the distribution plan shared with the transporters. Proper challans having details of materials to be transported were maintained. These challans were signed by the distribution team after receipt of materials from the transporter. In case of any shortfall, the details were mentioned in the challans by the distribution team. They were then submitted to the warehouse team by the transporters and any shortfalls were accounted for.

At the field level, distribution sites were selected in consultation with the community and the volunteers. As per the plan, the villagers were informed about the date and place of the distribution. On the given day, village Panchayat members and other leaders were invited to oversee the distribution.

The distribution was started after proper verification of the families that received family cards. The family cards which were given to families prior to the distribution (usually 3-4 days prior to distribution) were checked by the team and verified with other documents like Aadhar cards, electoral cards and ration cards.

After proper verification, the distribution team members entered the details of materials to be provided on that particular day in

the family cards. The team then entered the details of family card and quantity of materials to be provided to the person in muster sheets, the muster sheets were signed by the person in presence of the monitoring team.

The person was then guided by the team to the distribution kiosk where he or she produced the family card again. The distribution team after rechecking the family card retained the card and handed over the materials in a packaged form to the person.

After each distribution and data reconciliation, the family cards were handed over to the volunteers for onward distribution to the families. These were then again used by the families to receive further materials in the next distribution. The same process was repeated for each distribution. The distribution was monitored by the Panchayat members and other leadership of the village besides the IGSSS staff. The monitoring team then counter signed all the muster sheets and family cards and distribution report was prepared.

All the data in the muster sheets and cards was entered into the organizational MIS for reconciliation and analysis.

In order to have more distribution in a single day, simultaneous distributions were organized by teams in a cluster approach based on the geographical proximity of areas.

### Impact and Opportunities

A sizeable population was catered to for their needs. The project while providing relief materials not

only responded to the needs but also provided a ray of hope to the people. As per the evaluation study, the impact level was measured by a simple Likert scale of 'yes', 'not sure' and 'no'. Many respondents felt that all the materials provided were of much use and no material was wasted, and the impact level was 92.5 per cent. While the impact was experienced concretely in multiple ways, two dimensions of concrete changes in life stood out: 36.4 per cent of the respondents said that their anxieties got resolved; 35.1 per cent said that they gained confidence through relief intervention; 18.5 per cent felt that they were able to move forward in life due to relief intervention; about 15.5 per cent said that they felt they were cared for. As all four dimensions were acknowledged by a reasonable number of respondents, it can be concluded that the impact of relief seemed to be much higher on the respondents one way or another, effecting lasting impacts.

The general feeling among the people was that whatever was given was beneficial. But when a specific question was asked to identify the most beneficial item among the various items provided, such as hygiene kit (also called as dignity kit), blanket, kitchen utensils and dry ration, the blanket was considered the most beneficial by 51.8 per cent respondents. It was of high quality, they said, and they were able to use it even in the severe cold. In all other income categories, more than 50 per cent appreciated the blanket support; dry rations were found to be beneficial by those whose income was below Rs 3,000 per month in comparison to other income groups.

As per the evaluation study, on a scale of 0-9, where 0 is nil, 1 is minimum and 9 is maximum, the respondents' mean level of satisfaction was 6.28. The satisfaction level was much higher in Srinagar (6.48) than in Bandipora (6.32) and in Baramulla (6.03). This extent of satisfaction in all the three districts was mainly attributed to the fact that the immediate needs were met. The quality of relief materials provided was stated as the second major contributory factor by the respondents of Baramulla and Bandipora; in Srinagar the second major factor was the voluntary service of the youth. 13.2 per cent of the respondents appreciated the way in which relief works were carried out by the IGSSS and the systems and mechanisms they put in place to ensure their smooth distribution.

Given the nature of the flood disaster, complexity of the terrain and difficulties in reaching out to the villages, it can be said that the quality of relief intervention was highly systematic. There were no instances of looting.

The growing spirit of voluntarism particularly among youth was a very positive development in the project given the politics and rhetoric of relief by the Government was infuriating and frustrating them and adding to the ever growing alienation in Kashmir towards the State. Around 500 youth volunteered during the project in supporting the organization to reach out to the affected villages. As per the evaluation study, voluntary service of youth was rated third on the list of contributory factors for satisfaction.

## Limitations and Challenges

The relief distribution materials were selected based on the universal needs in disaster situations. Though rapid assessment did suggest the nature of relief, about 59 per cent respondents in an evaluation study suggested making proper assessment and 37.6 per cent mentioned the need for identifying the real needs.

The project couldn't involve beneficiaries in planning of relief programme given that the time and vastness of the outreach was a big constraint.

The distribution could only start by 15th October - almost 28 days after the floods, and the distribution of relief materials took three months, which was a huge time gap since the floods. This meant that most immediate needs may have not been met and relevance of many materials may have diminished by then.

The supply of materials from outside States took a lot of time to reach Srinagar and it created problems in reaching the people in time and also other logistical and operational problems. The Srinagar- Jammu National Highway which was blocked due to rain and landslides on many days in October and November posed challenges in smooth transportation of materials. The trucks which were stranded in the highway would then all reach Srinagar at same time creating problems for storage of materials and disturbing the distribution planning.

The nature and quantity of relief materials was changed during

the course of the procurement, given various reasons, but the printed family cards, which had information on the nature and quantity of relief materials, were not changed. This created an impression of misappropriation in the minds of people when they got reduced quantity or no materials against the mentioned material. The project had earlier envisaged providing education kits and solar lamps to all the households but during the procurement and review of needs it was decided by the project management team that providing these materials will not yield much benefit as one education kit and solar lamp per household will be very minimal and will create more problems than solving them. The allocation for the same was diverted to purchase quality blankets which can be beneficial in extreme weather conditions of Kashmir. However, when the distribution team informed the people about the change, they took it as misappropriation by the distribution team. This created credibility crisis in some villages and took lot of explanation.

The work pressure on the staff was tremendous; they had to leave for villages early in the morning and come back late in the evening. Many female staff members faced challenges at homes. The shorter days in October and November added to the problem.

In many villages, the volunteers included their friends and other relations in the household lists and issued family cards to them. This created an impression that people with connections with volunteers were favored. However, such cards

were cancelled when brought to the notice of distribution teams.

As IGSSS carried out blanket coverage of the target areas - no family was left out but many political groups in the target areas tried to pressurize the distribution teams to include their workers, friends and families for support.

## POST RELIEF DISTRIBUTION SURVEY

In order to assess the level of satisfaction and take feedback from the people with regard to the feasibility, timing and items provided to the people as immediate relief, a post distribution survey was conducted in February in 52 villages of Baramulla and Bandipora and 14 urban pockets of Srinagar. To conduct the post distribution study, a sample size of 369 was finalized based on the statistical tools with confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 5.

A compiled list of the beneficiary families was taken and every 36th family was selected for the survey. This list was prepared by the head office team in Delhi.

As part of piloting the digitized data collection system through android supporting devices, the survey was conducted with the support of 10 surveyors who used mobile phones for data collection with the help of Comm Care Application. This application also helped to locate the GPS coordinates of the location of the beneficiaries who were surveyed.

The survey team was able to reach to 349 families out of the listed 369 families. 68 per cent of the respondents were in the age group

of 30 to 60 years while 22 per cent were above the age of 60. Only 13 per cent of the respondents were females while 87 per cent were males.

77 per cent of the respondents said that they were aware of the selection criteria of beneficiaries. 22 per cent of the respondents said that they were extremely happy with the criteria of selection while 45 per cent revealed that they were happy.

99 per cent of the respondents revealed that they were happy with the accessibility and appropriateness of the place of distribution as well as the timing of distribution but only 1 per cent of the respondents revealed that they were unhappy since the location was far from some homes in a village, causing problems for the elderly beneficiaries.

When questioned about the information provided to them about the distribution, 41 per cent of the respondents were able to recollect about the location, type of items and date and timing of distribution provided to them before the distribution, 44 per cent were able to recollect two of the information provided about the location and timing of the distribution only. 45 per cent of the people revealed that they had to wait for 30 minutes to 1 hour in the queue to receive the relief material while only 5 per cent revealed that they had to wait for more than 2 hours to receive the items. 49 per cent of the respondents revealed that they are happy about the time that they had to wait for while 3 per cent revealed dissatisfaction.

Only 36 per cent of the respondents said that they received everything that they expected while 64 per

cent reported that they did not receive items like solar lamps and school kits as mentioned in the family card. They also revealed that food kits were needed but not provided by IGSSS.

Out of the items received, 43 per cent answered that the unconditional cash support was the most useful for item. 40 per cent gave preference to the blanket in the wake of the winter season while 10 per cent and 7 per cent people found kitchen sets and hygiene kits most useful. 87 per cent of the respondents were well aware of the use of items in the hygiene kit while 13 per cent were not aware of the use of items like NADCC tablets and antiseptic liquid.

The study revealed that 78 per cent of the beneficiaries were either extremely happy or happy with the way IGSSS staff behaved with them.

# RESURRECTING LIVELIHOODS

The importance of taking into account the livelihoods of disaster affected populations and, wherever possible, protecting and developing them, has been recognized and addressed by all key actors in disaster recovery processes over past few decades.

IGSSS, while recognizing the role of livelihoods-based responses following natural disasters to help the flood affected people in their livelihood recovery, launched the second phase of the flood response programme in April 2015 targeting 3,581 families from 27 villages in Baramulla and Bandipora.

The target areas for this phase included areas which were covered during first phase of Emergency Response. Keeping in mind the limited resources available, it was important, to provide the support to most needy and deserved families in the villages. Around 3,600 households were identified for the support based on the baseline data and secondary data available after considering following criteria for selection of support:

- Families affected by floods in terms of livelihood, shelter and allied aspects
- High vulnerability in absence of an external recovery support
- Socially and economically excluded or marginalized
- Belonging to economically unorganized sectors

- No tangible and significant financial support systems
- Less accessibility to government services and entitlements

A total of 3,581 families were selected in 27 villages of Bandipora and Baramulla districts for various livelihood supports;

- 2,532 families for agricultural support
- 290 families for artisan support
- 759 families for alternate/ additional livelihood support

## Livelihood Approaches

The project while trying to support families in the livelihood recovery, worked through two main approaches, opportunities based approach and the diversified portfolio of subsistence activities (DPSA) approach.

In the opportunities based approach, as there was a certain pre-existing degree of awareness and practice within the farmers and artisans, availability and access of resources, the aim was to primarily improve their economic returns by helping them leverage existing

forms of capital (natural, social, human, skill etc.) and enhancing these through productivity enhancement and market linkages.

In the Diversified Portfolio of Subsistence Activities (DPSA) approach, the focus was to support families in diversifying their livelihood options to have alternative income opportunities to reduce their vulnerabilities while increasing their resilience to the impacts of future hazards, shocks and stresses. The marginal farmers, agricultural laborers and daily wage earners were targeted and provided with livestock, bee keeping units and vermi-composting units.

## Implementation Strategy

The increasing recognition of the intricate composition of livelihoods has thrown many new models and more comprehensive and innovative programmes that not only address the immediate needs of affected population but also takes into account the restoration of crucial social networks, the provision of financial services, and the development of local economy.

While aiming at the long term sustainability and the resilience of livelihoods to future disasters, the

project used some of the below mentioned key strategies to, help in restoration and augmentation of livelihoods.

### **Promotion of Livelihood Collectives/Groups**

To build collaborative approach among the diverse groups and to ensure meaningful community representation in the change efforts, it was a strategically thought out plan to mobilize the affected families through groups to help them recover their livelihoods. Each family based on the nature of the support from the project was mobilized into their respective groups. The groups included farmer groups, artisan groups, livestock farmer groups and bee farmer groups. The conscious decision to create groups provided an opportunity

to engage with affected families in meaningful association and build the social capital of the disaster affected areas.

### **Capacity Enhancement**

To enable farmers, artisans, apiculturists, sheep farmers and their groups to strengthen their capabilities to develop and resurrect their livelihoods, capacity enhancement initiatives were undertaken regularly. The initiatives included training on improved farming practices in agriculture, better livestock management, collective production of handicrafts and group management and development.

### **Input Support**

To enable farmers and artisans resume their livelihood activities,

input support in terms of seeds, fertilizers, farming tools, raw materials and equipment were procured and distributed to them from time to time during the project duration. Input support was also provided to families opting for additional or alternate livelihood options like bee keeping units including paraphernalia to bee keepers.

### **Conditional Cash Transfers**

To support families in purchasing livestock and building vermin-composting pits, conditional cash transfers were introduced. The transfers were made through National Electronic Funds Transfer (NEFT) and cheques to all such families. Rigorous follow up with the families was undertaken to ensure that the conditionality of the transfers was achieved.



### Enhance Yield and Marketability

The project specifically focused on helping farmers enhance yield of agricultural produce through demonstrations and capacity building training. It provided high yielding inputs to the farmers so that they can minimize their losses due to floods. The focus was also laid on marketability of handicrafts. The artisans were encouraged to produce their handicrafts in a manner which could enhance their marketability. Latest designs were provided to artisans with an orientation on present market trends.

### SUPPORTING AGRICULTURAL FARMERS FOR EFFECTIVE RECOVERY OF LIVELIHOODS

#### Seed Support

Seed being the basic input in agriculture upon which other inputs are applied, the farmers of the flood affected areas that had lost almost all the seeds, identified seed support as a critical and basic input for resuming their agricultural activities and enhancing production. The project provided high yielding seed support to farmer groups twice during the project duration. The seeds included cereals like rice and maize, vegetables like, brinjal, cauliflower, cabbage, spinach, potatoes, carrot, beans, radish, arkle peas, potatoes, bottle gourd, tomato, cucumber, chili, capsicum, and other green leafy local vegetable (saag) etc. The project also provided seeds for the cattle fodder. The quantity of seeds was distributed as per the landholdings and optimum seed germination rates.

#### Fertilizer Support

The floods in Kashmir caused inundation and water logging for

a considerable amount of time damaging the land's fertility and productivity. There are innumerable negative effects of wet soils and flooding that are not so visible. The loss of Nitrogen, Phosphorous and Potassium offered many challenges for nutrient management on soils damaged by flooding and erosion. The project provisioned fertilizer support to the farmers to help them manage the nutrient equilibrium of their farms and help bolster the food grain production. Fertilizers like DAP – Diammonium phosphate, MOP – Muriate of Potash and Neem coated Urea were provided to farmer groups.

#### Organic Manure/Vermi Composting Production Support

The project while providing for chemical nutrient support for the flood affected farms, supported 40 women groups comprising of 221 women to start organic manure/vermin composting units in their villages for building a culture of an eco-friendly agriculture. The groups were supported for construction of the vermin pits and red wigglers (*Eisenia fetida*)/worms were provided besides training and exposure to other such government facilities. Each group was provided conditional cash transfer of Rs. 20,000/- for construction of the composting structures/pits.

#### Agricultural Tool/Equipment Support

As per the Baseline Survey Study the loss to agriculture equipment which includes mostly traditional equipments has been significant. 36.5% households reported complete loss of their agriculture equipment in Baramulla and 31.5% in Bandipora respectively. The

project thus provided a set/kit of agricultural tools/equipments to 670 families and progressive farmers. The kit consisted of;

- (a) Sickle
- (b) Hand hoe
- (c) Hand saw
- (d) Shovel
- (e) Spade with wooden handle
- (f) Roll cut
- (g) Water can
- (h) Hedge shear/pick axe/leaf rake
- (i) Khurpa with wooden handle
- (j) Garden tools
- (k) Garden rake
- (l) Gundasa

The cono-weeders which are used for de-weeding of paddy were provided to 100 farmers who either adopted SRI or showed willingness to adopt the same in the coming season. The tool kits were also provided to women groups who were into production of vermi-compost.

#### Capacity Building of Farmers

The project team organized 5 capacity building training programmes in which 223 farmers were trained on various aspects of sustainable agriculture. These programmes focused on organic farming, System Rice Intensification (SRI), poly house cultivation, vegetable cultivation and mixed cropping. The training programmes

were organized with a premise that the flooding and wet weather had caused considerable loss to crop cycle and crop harvest and farmers needed quality technical inputs to regain their agriculture. Participants were also made aware about agricultural land drainage, and the necessity of farming land having the optimum amount of saturation to yield crops successfully. During the community mobilization phase, the farmers showed keen interest to adopt new or improved farming practices to maximize the production and productivity of their crops in a sustainable manner. The training was provided by the domain experts and field follow up visits were also undertaken by the team and the experts to provide inputs. Exposure visits for 70 farmers were also organized to Advance Center for Horticulture Development, Shopian district and Mountain Livestock Rearing Institute, Manasbal in Bandipora district which is a station of SKUAST-K.

### Introduction of Improved Agricultural Practices- Demonstration Plots

One of the most important activities of the project was the establishment of various demonstration plots to introduce improved farming practices in the intervention plots. The farmers in the intervention areas had initially been reluctant in adopting advanced techniques and have been faithful to the traditional knowledge passed on to them. Convincing farmers on use of advanced practices through successful demonstrations has been one of the biggest achievements of the project. The establishment of 22 demonstration plots was as follows:

- (a) 01 Demonstration plots on System Rice Intensification (SRI)
- (b) 04 Demonstration plots on System Wheat Intensification (SWI)
- (c) 05 Demonstration units of Poly House Cultivation
- (d) 05 Demonstration plots on Improved Practices of Vegetable Cultivation
- (e) 05 Demonstration plots on Mixed Cropping Practices
- (f) 02 Demonstration Plots of High Density Apples

These demonstration plots were managed by farmer groups and plot management committees in a collaborative approach. The project provided the inputs while as the farmers maintained the plots with proactive capacity building support from the domain experts. 312 farmers are benefiting from the poly houses directly.

### PROCESS ADOPTED

#### Mobilization of Farmers into Groups

After the final identification of the affected families, the farmers from these families were mobilized through formation and promotion of groups. Group approach has been very successful given it brings out collective action from individuals and also plays a pivotal role in providing a package of initiatives for improving agricultural practices, improving efficiency of input use and creating a favorable and enabling learning and sharing environment. The team during the initial community mobilization phase mobilized 2,532

farmers into 94 farmer groups from 27 target villages. Various orientation meetings were held to strengthen the groups and apprise the members about the project provisions and feasible inputs. The team spent considerable time with the farmer members to get their inputs on the nature and specifications of seeds and inputs needed by them.

The interface meetings were also organized between farmer groups and various government agencies like National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) and the agricultural department. The purpose of these meetings was to acquaint farmers with various government schemes with the aim to increase their production and productivity.

#### Distribution of Inputs

Each pre-identified farmer was provided with a farmer card with details about the family, group, registration number, information on inputs to be provided and other operational particulars. The photograph of the farmer was pasted on the card to make it as a photo-identity of the family for the project purposes. The farmer cards contained dual coupons for the purpose of the distribution.

Seeds/fertilizers/tools were locally procured by the IGSSS as per the local and seasonal context in consultations with farmer groups. The timing between procurement and distribution were always well thought out so that each farmer received the inputs in time and doesn't miss out on the agricultural season. Most of the inputs received from the vendor were distributed



same day to avoid storage, losses, pilferage and other operational costs. Therefore, the timing and coordination between farmers, project team and vendors played an important role in achieving this.

During distribution, the farmer groups were informed well in advance by the team about the distribution date and place. At the distribution site, the farmers produced their cards and the team after verifying the cards entered the details of inputs to be provided

on that particular day in the cards. The coupons in the farmer card were also filled with details and handed over to the farmer. The team retained the farmer card for data verification and reconciliation and then entered the details of farmer card and quantity of inputs to be provided to the farmer into muster sheets, the muster sheets were signed by the farmers in their respective columns.

The farmer was then guided by the team to the distribution

kiosk where they produced the coupon for the particular input. After receiving the coupon, the distribution team handed over the input in packaged form to the farmer. The coupons were then tallied with the muster sheets for data reconciliation.

After each distribution and data reconciliation, the farmer cards were handed over to the farmer groups for onward distribution to the farmer members. The farmer cards were then again used by farmers to receive further inputs from the project. The same process was repeated for each distribution. The distribution was monitored by the farmer groups and other leadership of the village besides IGSSS staff.

All the data in the muster sheets and cards was entered into organizational MIS for reconciliation and analysis.

### Impact and Opportunities

With this kind of support, 2,532 farmers have been able to recover their livelihood and have resurrected their agriculture with support from the project. They have been able to do farming in both the *Rabi* and *Kharif* seasons. 2,532 Farmers cultivated their land again, 590 Hectares of land was cultivated for cereals and vegetables which amount to 83.33 per cent of total land holding. There was a major impact of support visible in rice production. The rice production from the Kharif seasons (year 2015 and 2016) touched 1,856 metric tons worth Rs 48.25 million. The yield of paddy reported by the farmers from the target areas was

<sup>2</sup>Source: Economic Survey 2014-15 Volume-I, Directorate of Economics & Statistics, J&K

5,240 Kgs/hectare. This is very impressive against the J&K's overall rate of 2,085 Kgs/hectare<sup>1</sup>.

The production of rice through SRI adopted by 61 farmers on 3.18 hectares in 2016 saw a phenomenal increase in yield/productivity of rice by 55.97 per cent. The total rice production for 3.18 hectares was reported to be 21,540 Kgs in 2016 as against 13,810 Kgs through traditional farming practices in 2015. The yield per hectare is 6,773.58 Kgs which is quite staggering as compared to Kashmir's rice yield per hectare i.e. 2,085 Kgs. The increase in straw yield was reported to be 31.31 per cent.

One of the major contributing factors for this impressive productivity rate was the selection of high yielding varieties of rice promoted during the course of the project. Rice plays an important role in the livelihood of the people in the State, although the area under the crop is very small as compared to other states of the India, but at the same time plays an important role in the state's economy. It is worthwhile to mention that the standing crop of rice was hugely devastated by the 2014 floods and as a result almost no production of rice could be achieved in the target areas.

The other major impact of agricultural support to farmers was observed in vegetable production. The farmers cultivated 102.48 hectares for production of seasonal vegetables and the production 1148.65 metric tons worth Rs. 21.04 million during the project support.

Capacity building trainings coupled with establishment of

demonstration plots on various concepts like System Rice Intensification (SRI), vegetable cultivation, mixed cropping and poly house demonstrations in project villages, for dissemination of information and on field introduction and implementation of innovative technical practices at field level proved as worthy steps to motivate farmers for adoption of improved practices to enhance productivity that ensured food security and increase in household income.

System of Rice Intensification (SRI) was adopted by 61 farmers. Twelve low cost poly houses have been constructed by farmers, using locally available wooden material for developing the frame and UV stabilized film for covering the roof. These poly houses are being used for raising vegetable seedlings. The farmers established such structures after seeing existing poly house demonstrations in project selected villages.

Around 103 farmers linked with demonstration plots transplanted quality vegetable seedlings of Onion, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Tomato, Brinjal, Cucumber and Bottle Gourd under poly houses, thus advancing their cropping season. 105 farmers adopted modern techniques like seed sowing on raised beds, proper spacing and line sowing at their farms.

221 women of 22 women self-groups promoted by IGSSS in various projects were engaged in vermi-composting and have produced 15,216 kilograms of vermin compost. The groups have sold 5,700 kilograms of compost

and have earned Rs. 72800. They are also using compost in their farmlands. It is for the first time that such an initiative has been taken by these women on such a large scale. The women also used 1000 Kgs of vermin compost in their own farmlands. This will significantly reduce the inorganic fertilizer use.

There were perceptible changes in the values, attitudes and social relationships of the people. The biggest effect seemed to be increased willingness to work in groups with common objectives and readiness to explore new opportunities. Though the project did not expect to gain such leverage in the given time frame but the working approach and strategies adopted in the project did change the levers in the positive direction. As per evaluation study, 628 respondents (74.8 per cent) stated that farmers groups were functioning well in their villages. Though only 406 respondents (48.3 per cent) were direct beneficiaries of agricultural intervention, it is to be noted that 222 more respondents who were not direct beneficiaries had observed that farmers clubs were doing well. This indicates that agricultural intervention has had effect in the community, beyond individual beneficiaries. It was also witnessed that a high level of participatory process was adopted in agricultural interventions.

Valuable breakthroughs were made in some areas under the support. The openness of farmers to explore and adapt new technologies, readiness to learn modern agricultural practices, participation in capacity-building programmes, working together as a

group, realization of the usefulness of SRI and increased interest to join farmers groups offered a range of opportunities to be tapped in future. If further capacity building is under taken, farmers can enhance their production phenomenally as was seen in SRI adoption.

The adoption of low cost poly houses can literally advance the agriculture season for vegetables and farmers can benefit from the market if vegetables are supplied before the import from other States.

The farmer groups can transform themselves into producer groups and also aggregate into clusters to jointly face market challenges and strengthen the bargaining power in relation to production and marketing.

### Limitations and Challenges

The project while celebrating the impact of the support also has had to admit to facing some crucial limitations in its endeavour. The biggest limitation was that women were largely left out with all focus being on male farmers. Even though women were quite active farmers in these target areas, there was no conscious effort to cater to their capacity building needs. All the capacity building programmes were focused on men farmers except for the vermin-composting training for women groups. This will have severe impact on adoption of improved agricultural practices in the target areas and may also impact the overall gender development.

Though project did focus on capacity enhancement of farmers but given the duration of the

project and overall workload on staff, only 8 per cent of the farmers were provided with capacity building training thus leaving other farmers devoid of learning opportunities.

As farmer groups are still in infancy, they largely depended on IGSSS staff for any initiative and except for a few, most of the groups were still in relief receiving mode. If this persists, it will be a huge challenge to the concept of producer groups of farmers. As per the evaluation study, there are some of the major hurdles being faced by Farmer groups. Among them individualism ranked high (48.3 per cent), which was closely related to lack of cooperation among farmers' groups (13.2 per cent) and lack of appropriate market linkages (14.4 per cent) followed by lack of modern skills and knowledge (9.2 per cent).

The Vermi composting production has seen a positive trend; however, if women are not able to sell the produce in the market, it may discourage them from taking up vermi-composting in the future. The market linkage of vermi-compost is very essential to the sustainability of the initiative.

While it was visible and documented that the rural mass in the affected areas lack appropriate knowledge, better capacities and resources to fill critical gaps in their livelihoods, the shortened seasonality for agriculture due to climate of the region is another critical gap in the livelihood framework of the people. The people generally have only two seasons for cultivation and are dependent on other sources of

livelihood which is generally daily wage labour. The target areas are generally low lying areas and prone to inundation, the spring rains largely affect the start of the agriculture season and further de-motivate farmers from taking innovative practices.

### PROMOTING LIVESTOCK FARMING TO SUPPORT VULNERABLE FAMILIES

#### Livestock Support

Livestock support in the form conditional cash transfers for purchase of sheep (ewes) was provided to 673 families in 25 villages, additional conditional cash transfer was provided to 302 families to purchase rams to have breeding cover for their livestock. After consultations with the experts from the Sheep and Animal Husbandry Departments, support for purchase of two sheep (ewes) to each family was decided.

#### Capacity Building- Livestock Management and Treatment Support

##### – Barefoot Veterinarian Training

In order to provide easy animal health care at the village level, the project identified 15 youth from various intervention villages who were willing to undergo training and act as first responders to the health needs of the animals in their respective villages and vicinity. The project developed a good relationship with the animal husbandry department and they were roped in to provide theoretical as well as practical training to youth. A 15 day training course was developed by the domain experts and 15 youth were the imparted the training. As on date, 12 youth are

providing veterinarian support in the respective areas. The project involved these youth in the livestock distribution and provided them practical training also during vet camps

### - Veterinary Camps

During the September 2014 floods, huge losses in terms of livestock were witnessed. In the absence of adequate animal health care, breeders and small livestock farmers had to suffer losses. The stations of the Animal and Sheep Husbandry Departments in the rural areas are mostly defunct or nonfunctional. The project organized 15 vet camps in 13 villages and treatment was provided to 4,478 animals. The camps were organized in collaboration with Animal & Sheep Husbandry Departments. Medicines were also provided. Through these camps 1,044 families benefited.

## PROCESS ADOPTED

### Mobilization of Sheep Farmers into Groups

After the final identification of families, the potential sheep farmers were mobilized through formation and promotion of groups. As already discussed, the team formed 32 groups of sheep farmers in 25 villages. There were various orientation meetings held to strengthen the groups and build their capacities on livestock management, nutrition and insurance.

### Conditional Cash Transfers

As per the project mandate, IGSSS provided conditional cash transfer of Rs 14,325 families for purchasing

livestock sheep (ewes), cover their insurance, health checkup, transportation and processed feed packets for 10 days. The conditional cash transfers to the selected beneficiaries were made through online bank transfers (NEFT) and cheques. The break-up of conditional cash transfer of Rs. 14,325/- is given below:

- Animal charges: Rs.13,500 for two animals
- Health Certificate Charge: Rs 50
- Insurance: 5% of the total cost of animals per beneficiary approximately Rs.675
- Transportation charge: Rs 100

### Facilitation in Purchase of Livestock

The project team approached the Department of Sheep Husbandry and district officers of Baramulla and Bandipora for support in purchase of livestock by the selected families. The district officials provided a list of government approved breeders/sheep suppliers for their respective districts. The project team approached the suppliers for supply of livestock to the families. The negotiations on rates and other modalities were held with all the breeders/sheep suppliers. The rates were decided on competitive basis and as per the current government rate framework.

The project team also approached the insurance company for insuring the livestock and confirmed their participation in the programme. It also mobilized the local government veterinarians

for health checkup of the livestock to ensure that proper livestock is supplied by the breeders/suppliers.

All the families were informed by the local organizers about the livestock purchase date and place. They were also informed to carry their cash to purchase the livestock and insurance policy. On a designated place and date, the suppliers brought livestock for sale. The selected beneficiary selected their own livestock and had them checked up by the veterinarian. After the health checkup, the veterinarian approved the sheep for purchase; the sheep were then weighed by the facilitators/volunteers in presence of the supplier and the beneficiary to ascertain the price. After weighing and pricing, the family purchased the sheep and gave on spot payment to the supplier. The insurance agent present there insured the animals and provided tags with numbers inscribed. The copy of policy document was provided to the family later.

All the transactions involving name and registration of the beneficiary family, weight of the animals, details of payment, health vitals of animals, insurance tag numbers were entered in the register signed by the project officer, counter signed by the veterinarian. The same details were also entered into the family card of the beneficiary signed by the project staff.

### Impact and Opportunities

Many families supported under the project are viewing sheep farming as viable livelihood. As on 30th September 2016, 380 new animals were added to the flocks of the beneficiaries due to natural process

of multiplication, taking the total number of sheep to 2,050 as against the 1,670 animals procured by the beneficiaries. The total current weight of the livestock is 45,369 kilograms valued at Rs 10.20 million.

The sale of 2,046 kilograms of livestock by 35 families has earned them Rs 36,9400, on an average Rs 10554 per family. The wool production through traditional shearing has also touched 2808 kilograms and families have earned Rs 2,24,640.

The veterinary camps and other support of feed and health check-ups have impacted positively as there are reports of deaths of only 350 (17.07 per cent) animals from the target areas. The death percentage is within the expected range. The beneficiaries (around 90 per cent) have sent their sheep to high altitude pastures for better fodder. During summers sheep are usually taken to high altitude pastures by shepherds. The free foraging of small ruminants on alpine pastures, sub-alpines and waste lands for 7-8 months on semi-migratory mode of rearing and round the year on migratory mode optimizes the input costs.

The sheep farmers have shown willingness to donate one of their lambs to the other deserving family which has not got the support. This can provide an opportunity to help other families which may require support.

With little more support, active sheep farmer groups can transform into producer groups which can

manage large scale farms in a business oriented manner.

Sheep farming is a profitable venture as it is capital intensive and not labour. The consumption of mutton (Sheep meat) in the valley is very high as compared to rest of the country due to socio-cultural and climatic conditions. With readily available sheep and goat population of 65,90,000<sup>3</sup>, J&K at present is importing 2/3rd of its mutton requirements from the rest of the country and it leads to flight of capital. Currently 14,00,000 sheep are imported from other parts of the country. There is a yawning gap between supply and demand position of mutton, which can be tapped given that J&K has 12,6,000 hectares under permanent pastures and grazing area, which provides ample opportunities for sheep development in the State.

The sheep farmers can be trained in shearing of wool through modern equipment and wool processing units can be established which can further maximize the income of the farmers. The increase in the local mutton production will prevent flight of capital on this account, besides providing ample opportunities for generating employment in this sector.

### Limitations and Challenges

Livestock support through conditional cash transfers was provided to 673 families but only 659 families actually purchased the livestock. Though there was an impressive 97.46 per cent adherence to the conditionality of the cash transfers, it was extremely tedious to ensure that families

actually purchased the livestock. The team had to work hard during follow up meetings with the families to convince them to purchase the livestock for which conditional cash transfers were made by a particular date.

While during identification of families for the support, the families were very eager to get the support and showed all the signs of motivation to take up sheep farming as an additional or alternate livelihood but when cash was transferred to their bank accounts, many families seemed to be more interested in having the cash than the livestock.

Around 152 bank accounts of families were not able to get conditional cash transfers through NEFT despite having valid accounts due to the technical glitches in the rural areas. The same numbers of families were later given cheques causing inordinate delay in realization in their banks, given that all the accounts were in rural areas. Due to this delay, livestock could not be purchased on the given dates and the sheep suppliers had to be mobilized accordingly. This also created extra workload for the team as follow up of each family had to be undertaken and realization of cheques happened on different dates.

Around 27 families have sold off all their livestock provided under the project. There are reports of death of 350 sheep through infections, unseasonal cold snaps and other extreme weather events unfolding in Kashmir. Most of these deaths

<sup>3</sup> Data as per Directorate of Sheep Husbandry, Govt of J&K



have been reported in the period of April- September when livestock migrates to the greener pastures on mountains for fodder.

Despite orientation on livestock insurance and claims, the families were dependent on IGSSS staff for claiming insurance in the event of the death of the sheep. The insurance claims also took inexplicable long in clearance from the respective companies.

The biggest challenge for sheep farmers is that unless they have proper facilities, they cannot raise sheep on a large scale. This would mean that most of the farmers would be left with fewer opportunities to take up sheep farming as a gainful means of livelihood. The sheep farmers need to properly manage their livestock, to provide nutritious food and vaccinate them timely, however in the given situation, the families may not have been able to afford

the same, thus leaving livestock vulnerable to mortalities.

### SUPPORTING ARTISANS FOR BETTER BUILD BACK

#### Material Support to Carpet Weavers

Material support was provided to 30 groups of weavers comprising of 138 carpet weavers and 42 individual carpet weavers in 16 target villages. The raw material included silk and cotton, thread and fabric. Moreover, 40 modern steel looms were also provided to these groups with joint ownership title.

#### Raw Material Support to Sozni (Shawl) Makers

Raw material support in the form of fabrics and threads were provided to 10 groups of Sozni (Shawl) workers comprising of 110 Sozni (Shawl) workers in 12 target villages. Each worker was provided with 6 fabric lengths and thread rolls.

### Process Adopted

#### Promotion of Artisan Groups/ Artisan Production and Development Centres (APDC)

IGSSS has done considerable work with artisans particularly with carpet weavers since 2011 in Kashmir. It has promoted 10 weaver groups in 10 villages of Bandipora and Baramulla. Under the flood response project, 20 sub-groups within these groups were promoted and supported to work as groups with joint liability towards a debt free production of carpets. A further 10 groups were promoted with the same mandate in other 5 villages. All these groups formed the basic structure of Artisan Development and Production Centres (APDC) promoted by IGSSS after floods. The purpose of APDC is to create direct business opportunities for artisans/weavers to sell their products directly in the market without having to rely on

middlemen. It is expected to help in reducing their debt and improve their daily/monthly wages/income by 30-40 per cent. The APDC also provides a platform for weaver community to share their issues, develop further skills and practice fair trade and act as a vehicle of socioeconomic change.

Similarly 10 groups of women who were supported for shawl making were also promoted in 12 villages.

### **Distribution of Capital Assets**

The project focused on providing enabling working conditions to the weavers. It was during many deliberations with the carpet weavers that idea of providing them with modern steel handloom came up. These looms designed by the Indian Institute of Carpet Technology (IICT), Srinagar were seen as a viable alternative to traditional wooden loom. As looms could have not been provided to a single family given its cost and effectiveness, the team decided to provide these looms to the sub-groups on joint ownership to work in a group approach (as discussed above). The team held various meetings with the carpet weavers to orient them about working on modern looms in a group. When the team got a satisfactory response from the carpet weavers, the members of sub-groups were asked to identify common places where looms can be installed, after which, the group members entered into an agreement amongst themselves for maintenance and ownership of these steel looms.

When the team was satisfied that the sub-groups will work in a group approach and will bear

recurring costs, if any, it identified the loom suppliers approved by the government. The suppliers were asked to provide detailed specifications and rate quotations. These specifications were matched with IICT specifications for the modern looms.

The looms were then installed at their respective places and sub-groups gave clearance for the payments to be made to the suppliers by the organization. After the installation of looms, the project team verified its components and accessories and entered the details of the loom and sub-groups in their MIS and other relevant documents with signatures from carpet weavers.

### **Distribution of Raw Materials**

Each artisan (carpet weavers and *Sozni* workers) identified for the support under the project was consulted for before procurement of raw materials. The artisans gave their views about the colour, texture and quality of the raw materials required. It was also decided during these meetings that the raw materials was to be provided in phases based on the progress of work by groups and individuals. It ensured that raw material would not be misused or mismanaged. The project team then approached the suppliers and asked for samples of the raw materials. After approval of the samples by the artisans, clearance was obtained for procurement. Subsequent to the procurement of raw materials, artisans were informed about its distribution.

Each artisan was provided with an artisan card with details about

the family, group, registration number, information on inputs to be provided and other operational particulars. The photograph of the artisan was pasted on the card to make it as a photo-identity card of the family for the project purposes. The artisan cards contained dual coupons for the purpose of the distribution.

During distribution, the artisans produced their cards and the team after verifying the cards entered in the cards the details of inputs to be provided on that particular day. The coupons in the artisan card were also filled with details and handed over to the artisan. The team retained the artisan card for data verification and reconciliation and entered the details of the artisan card and quantity of raw material to be provided to the artisans into muster sheets, the muster sheets were signed by the artisans in their respective columns.

The artisan was then guided by the team to the distribution kiosk where they produced the coupon for the particular raw material. The distribution team handed over the raw materials in packaged form to the artisan. The coupons were then tallied with the muster sheets for data reconciliation.

After each distribution and data reconciliation, the artisan cards were handed over to the artisan groups for onward distribution to the members. The cards were then again used by the artisans to receive further raw materials from the project. The same process was repeated for each distribution. The distribution was monitored by the groups and other leadership of the village besides IGSSS staff.

All the data in the muster sheets and cards was entered into organizational MIS for reconciliation and analysis.

### Impact and Opportunities

The artisans (carpet weavers and *Sozni* workers) from target areas usually work for a contractor (*wasta*) who provides them with raw materials for weaving and embroidery. In such case, the artisans have to sell their products to the same contractor, thus getting inadequate wages for their work. The worker is caught in a debt trap owing to advance payment of wages. Most artisans lack the financial capacity to purchase raw materials to work independently. Also due to the artisan's lack of knowledge of the market situation, marketing of products is a huge hurdle affecting decent wage earning. The devastating floods aggravated the conditions of artisans, who lost their livelihood for many months besides the loss of prefinished/semi-completed products and raw materials. Prior to floods, the carpet weavers usually got Rs. 800/square foot as wages from the contractor. However, after the support of raw materials and looms, many weavers have been able to work independently and were successful in enhancing their incomes. As per the trends available, the direct sale of 11,98 sq. feet by carpet weavers has enhanced their wage earning by staggering 32.25%. The weaver groups have been able to sell 53 carpets and earn Rs. 15.31 million benefitting 91 carpet weavers so far.

The highest earning per square foot fetched by the carpet weaver has been Rs. 1,680, while the lowest

earning per square foot has been Rs. 900. The wage enhancement is quite significant and it has further motivated weavers to go for direct business. There are further 567 square feet of carpets nearing completion.

As far as *Sozni* workers are concerned, 170 shawls have been completed and 137 shawls have been sold earning Rs. 1,74,800 so far.

The major social impact has been the coming together of artisans in groups to break the individualistic approach. The artisans feel more confident about their livelihood and have improved their understanding of the trade. The bargaining power of artisans has improved and artisans feel empowered to sell their product now. They are choosing their buyers with more confidence and have not resorted to distress sale of their products.

For carpet weavers, it is a paradigm shift in their livelihood approach. As they start exploring to work in a changed scenario where they can break free of vicious cycle of indebtedness, they have to be steadfast in their approach and show exemplary cohesiveness in their group enterprises besides quality improvement in their products. During evaluation, about 38.9 per cent respondents of Baramulla and 46.4 per cent respondents of Bandipora felt that carpet weaver groups are increasingly becoming a collective entity and this collective consciousness would help them to sustain the efforts made.

The groups of artisans can now aggregate to form an economically viable, democratic, and self-

governing producer's organization. Their ability to change the status quo and break free from the traditional trade relations without incurring any new debt has given them hope of resurrecting the trade in all its fairness. NABARD has shown interest in promoting the artisan's producer organization and to provide technical support for further capacity building.

### Limitations and Challenges

While the project has been able to set a new path for the artisans to work independently, it has not been able to build essential market (forward/backward) linkages. Except for a few instances, artisans are still dependent on middlemen or contractors to sell their products.

The project could not help artisans in training them to process their products from production to finishing stage. Though the project provided setting up of a design bank, the designs available in the market are very costly and would require a big investment.

The artisans are still in state of indebtedness to their earlier contractors who used to provide them work and advances, therefore it is unlikely that they can invest more in their independent work. The lack of working capital thus can negate any positive gains.

### PROMOTING APICULTURE AS SUBSIDIARY OCCUPATION FOR LIVELIHOOD ENHANCEMENT OF MARGINALIZED FAMILIES

#### Apiary Support

In order to promote apiculture as subsidiary occupation for

providing supplementary income to marginalized families, the project provided 330 apiary units to 66 families in 6 villages. Each family was provided with five units, which also included gloves, extractors, net and a uniform.

## Process Adopted

### Identification and Selection of Potential Bee Farmers

The identification of potential bee farmers entailed many aspects – first, the villages where bee farming was feasible were selected, secondly the families which had traditional knowledge about bee farming and required support under project were shortlisted and thirdly other families which showed willingness to adopt bee farming as a subsidiary occupation providing supplementary income were shortlisted for the support. The project finally selected 66 families in 6 villages for promoting apiculture for livelihood enhancement.

### Promotion of Bee Farmer Groups

The project like in other livelihood components, also promoted groups of potential bee farmers. After the final selection of families, the potential bee farmers from those families were mobilized through formation and promotion of groups. The team formed 10 groups of 66 bee farmers in 6 villages. The project organized various orientation meetings to strengthen the groups and build their perspectives on bee farming. Each member was then registered in the organizational MIS and a farmer card was issued. The farmer cards contained details of the family, group, registration

number, information on inputs to be provided and other operational particulars. The photograph of the farmer was pasted on the card to make it as a photo-identity card of the family for the project purposes.

### Training on Bee Farming

After formation of bee farmer groups' two training programmes were organized for 66 bee farmers. The trainings were conducted by experts from the Pollination Centre of the Agriculture University and commercial bee farmers. The trainings focused on preparation, maintenance, and re-use of hives and harmonizing agricultural and beekeeping activities (division, capture and transport of bee colonies) extraction and filtration of honey. On field trials knowledge on opening and examining bee colonies, use of extractor and other equipment were also imparted.

### Distribution of Apiary Units

The apiary units were provided to the bee farmers in two phases. In the first phase, two units each were provided to the farmers and in the second phase, three units each were provided, thus taking the number of units to five per family. The apiary units provided to bee farmers included honey bee colonies with bee hive, supers, foundation sheets, hive tool, swarm net, bee veil, smoker, honey extractor, storage drum, bee feed and etcetera.

The apiary units were procured from government departments and commercial suppliers. Each farmer was informed about the date and place of distribution of apiary units.

During distribution, the bee farmers produced their cards and the team after verifying the cards entered the details of inputs to be provided on that particular day in the cards. The team retained the card for data verification and reconciliation and entered the details of card and number of units and quantity of bee feed to be provided to the bee farmers into muster sheets, which were signed by the bee farmers in their respective columns.

The bee farmer then collected the apiary units from distribution kiosk after producing coupons provided by the distribution team. The coupons were then tallied with the muster sheets for data reconciliation.

After each distribution and data reconciliation, the bee farmer cards were handed over to the groups for onward distribution to the members. The cards were again used by the bee farmers to receive more units in the second phase. The same process was repeated for each distribution. The distribution was monitored by the groups and other leadership of the village besides IGSSS staff.

All the data in the muster sheets and cards was entered into organizational MIS for reconciliation and analysis.

### Impact and Opportunities

The official figures reveal that Kashmir has only 40,000 bee colonies which experts say is less than half of the potential of the valley that has such a diversity of flora. There are only 2,500 bee keepers registered with J&K's Apiculture department.

While the Valley has potential of producing 15,00,000 kilograms of honey, in 2015, the valley has produced only 380000 kilograms of honey which is 20,000 kilograms less than the last year as per official figures and the reasons being almost zero production from Bandipora and Baramulla districts due to floods.<sup>4</sup> Due to this project, the biggest impact on overall apiculture scenario has been very positive. While as 2.64 per cent new bee farmers were added to the overall tally of bee farmers in the J&K, the overall production of honey also got a boost of 0.23 per cent through this project when 904 Kgs of honey was produced. The bee farmers reported earnings of Rs. 3,32,150 so far. The farmers have sold their honey at an average of Rs. 300/kilogram which is quite high as compared to the wholesale rate of honey. It is a decent beginning for developing a subsidiary occupation of these families. Many bee farmers have taken up bee farming as a primary source of income and have expanded their apiary units. In village Najan, two farmers have expanded their bee farming and have currently 56 bee colonies.

One beehive typically produces 10-14kg of honey per year with a few

inputs required after establishment. If the bee farmers supported under the project manage their bee hives properly, there is a potential of producing at least 4,950 kilograms of honey worth Rs 14,85,000. Given its quality, the local honey has a huge demand in Kashmir especially during extreme cold weather conditions. People usually prefer local honey over the processed honey sold through big multinational brands.

The bee farmer groups can also transform themselves into producer groups and collectively meet the growing demand for honey for domestic consumption and export by different customers and organizations.

### Limitations and Challenges

The project could not provide enough training to the bee farmers and as a result, the farmers still lack skills to exploit the potential of honey production from their apiary units. Most farmers lack adequate skills on managing bees and handling hive products.

Due to the extreme winters, the apiary units have to be migrated to regions outside Kashmir. The bee farmers usually shift their

units through contractors or large scale bee farmers and have to incur migration charges which is approximately half of the honey produced during the period. This has discouraged many bee farmers to migrate the units leading to death of many bee colonies. The farmer groups have not been able to come together to sort out this problem. The farmer groups could have mitigated this problem had they shifted their units collectively to regions outside Kashmir in winters in a mutual help mode. This would have reduced the input costs and ensured better management of bee colonies. The frequent pesticide use in the nearby orchards has also increased the vulnerability of bees.

Most of the farmers cannot afford to invest in expansion, processing, packaging, and transport their products to market to maximize profits.

Despite the huge potential of honey production in Kashmir, the sector still remains low on government's priority. There are almost no extension services available to the farmers and support in credit availability, cooperative formation, input supply and market facilitation are missing.

# PILOTING COMMUNITY BASED DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

The Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) component of the project was initially envisaged to cover all the target villages, however after consultations with the domain experts which IGSSS engaged with for the project, it was decided to focus on fewer villages to develop models of Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction and later move on to other target villages.

The DRR activities were undertaken in 10 villages to mobilize the communities in a systematic manner. The activities included:

## Formation of Disaster Risk Committees

6 Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Committees have been formed. The total membership of the DRR Committees is 77 persons which includes 12 women members. The members include Mosque Committee members, members of Panchayat, women SHG groups and other socially active persons from villages. The purpose of these committees is to:

- Mainstream DRR planning into local government plans through dialogue and advocacy with local government institutions
- Risk assessment of villages
- Disaster response planning
- Resource mobilization during disaster time

- Launch rescue and relief operations through task forces

## Formation of Task Forces

To strengthen the DRR concept, the project formed taskforces in 10 villages. These taskforces consists of 95 young people (70 boys and 25 girls). The primary job of these task forces is to:

- Launch, search and rescue,
- Provide First Aid,
- Arrange relief camps and shelter,
- Address women health issues during disasters

The task forces underwent regular trainings to keep abreast with the knowledge and practices relevant and essential to disaster response.

## Capacity Building Trainings

Three orientation programmes on community managed disaster risk reduction were organized for

10 villages in which 163 persons participated (101 male, 62 female), including Panchayat members of the respective villages. The experts from the Department of Disaster Management, Institute of Management and Public Administration (IMPA) conducted the programmes wherein the basic concepts of DRR were explained to the youth. One training programme on community managed Disaster Risk Reduction was organized for 26 persons (male 24, female 2) from different intervention villages. The programmes were conducted by experts from Sphere India and RedR.

Two trainings on First Aid were organized for 88 youth group members (male 39, female 49) from 9 villages. The relevance and importance of first aid trainings in a disaster situation and the ways in which it can help in reducing loss of life was discussed. Audio visual information dissemination, group activities and mock drills were used in the trainings.

A four day training on search and rescue was organized in which 28 boys were trained by experts from government agency of State Disaster Response Force in initial response to disaster particularly search and rescue.

### Impact and Opportunities

The State of Jammu and Kashmir is vulnerable to almost all kinds of natural and human induced disasters. In the recent floods, the state machinery was caught napping with no preparedness and contingency plans in place, which created a lot of hindrances in timely and effective response causing huge damage to life, livelihood, and property of the people.

There are no proper disaster risk reduction and mitigation plans placed at the State level. The situation in the intervention areas

is no different from the target villages as they are vulnerable to regular flooding and earthquakes. In absence of proper mechanism of DRR, these villages become more vulnerable to the risks of disaster. The community has no idea of DRR and emergency responses making it further vulnerable to the risks associated with the disasters.

When the project introduced DRR related work, it was a new concept for the community and difficult to understand. In the initial months of this reporting period, the focus was on orientation and sensitization meetings at the community level to make people understand the concept of Disaster and DRR. After many orientations, deliberations and meetings, a positive change in the perception of the community started as they began to understand the different concepts

of DRR. A considerable change in the perception of community regarding disaster and DRR has taken place. Now communities are acknowledging the importance of DRR and are actively involved at community levels with the project.

When talking about the community level plans and mechanisms for DRR and emergency responses, these were totally absent in the intervention areas. The community did not have any idea of such community based plans and never had thought of developing such mechanisms at the community level.

The community based groups and institutions for responding, mitigating and for disaster preparedness were non-existent. There was no concept of forming committees at community level



particularly for DRR. However, with the project intervention, risk assessment was carried out in the 8 villages of Ghat, Check Jamal, Mandyari, Moulaabad, Zadi Mohalla, Najan, Gamdoo, and Zalpora by the villagers themselves in a participatory mode. A large number of the community members, both male and female participated in these activities which were an indicator of changing perceptions and active participation of the community.

DRR plans were developed in 6 villages of Ghat, Check Jamal, Mandyari, Moulaabad, Zadi Mohalla, and Zalpora. These plans were again formed with the community. Participation of women, youth and Panchayat members in the formulation of these plans was encouraging and every aspect of DRR was covered. The community identified different tasks and distributed the responsibilities within the members, which they are supposed to be responsible for, before, during and post disaster situation for emergency responses.

Two DRR committees have started implementing their plans and collecting cash and kind in their village for contingency purposes. The DRR committee from village Moulaabad did "Halsheeri" (voluntary contribution of labour) and cleaned the long pending irrigation channel which had gathered silt post 2014 flood. This channel also dewateres the additional water from their fields. The DRR committee from Zalpora also organised a "Halsheeri" for cleaning and repairing the irrigation channel which was damaged in the 2014 floods. This helped in

seeking the attention of concerned department and they ensured to include repairing and cleaning work of this channel in their annual plan.

Increased interface with other agencies has been observed. The DRR committee members from five villages met the Chief Engineer Flood and Irrigation Department regarding the various issues they were facing. In these meetings, issues of irrigation and dewatering pumps not starting on time was raised and the Chief Engineer ordered the concerned Assistant Executive Engineer (AEE) to take stock of all the pumps and start them on time. Most of these pumps have started on time this year which is in turn expected to help farmers start their agricultural activities on time.

The DRR committees also met their concerned Block Development Officers (BDOs) regarding the developmental and MGNREGA work in their villages. The DRR committee raised different issues that they were facing in their villages and insisted on prioritizing DRR related work in the villages i.e. strengthening of dams, channels, drainage etc. The DRR committees from villages Ghat, Chack Jamal Mir, Moulaabad, Zadi Mohalla, Mandyari, and Zalpora submitted their DRR related work plans under MGNREGA to their respective BDOs.

### Limitations and Challenges

The project started the DRR component only in October 2015, almost a year after floods and was still in a pilot phase. The distribution of prepositioning kits was left incomplete right till the very end. However, the biggest

challenge for this component remained the lack of support from the administration towards DRR planning by the community members. DRR committees from villages Ghat, Chack Jamal Mir, Moulaabad, Zadi Mohalla, Mandyari, and Zalpora submitted their DRR related work plans under MGNREGA to their respective BDOs in 2015 but these plans were not integrated with annual plans despite the assurances by the BDOs. The participation of Government officials in DRR related events is very low and thus challenges the integration of DRR with existing Government schemes and programs for addressing needs of people.

Few key recommendations also emerged from the visits and technical support rendered by 2 consultants, Mr. Munish Kaushik and Mr. Saiju, who were given the task of institutionalizing CMDRR (Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction) processes within the project. To this end, they conducted technical trainings and orientations with the staff, introduced the concept of CMDRR and planning within communities and strengthening interfaces with significant stakeholders for convergence and advocacy. Their recommendations are listed below:

#### - Strengthening of the DRR

**committees:** There needs to be set of capacity building initiatives for the DRR committees and also accompaniment support in the coming 6-8 months to be able to stabilise and start operating independently. Simultaneously, the participation of women has to be gradually increased considering the cultural sensitivity.

**- Model approach:** Since the program requires a lot of efforts towards influencing the administration on making disaster resilient infrastructure as most of the infrastructure is inaccessible or unusable during an emergency situation. The administration though is ready to listen but it will be good to see action as well. Thus, it would be beneficial if the program in future could have specific resource allotment for creation of models (like IAY HH, toilets) which could be used as evidences to lobby and convince the administration.

**- Strengthening of the Local Governance System:** As per the risk analysis, most of the prevention and mitigation measures would require the use of government programs like the MGNREGA and others which generally gets implemented through the Panchayats. But currently, the PRI system is quite weak (as has been the observation). It will be good if IGSSS could also think about strategies for strengthening of the

PRI system either as a part of the CMDRR program or as a separate intervention.

**- Sectoral Technical Assistance:** It will be good to also get some technical knowhow on sectoral issues like disaster resilient infrastructure, livelihood/ agriculture and such interventions.

**- Compendium of Schemes in Relation to DRR:** There has been very poor awareness and utilization of schemes like MGNREGA even in general terms which is a great opportunity for DRR. It would be good to have a compendium of schemes which could be utilized for DRR which could be referred and used by the DRR committees and the community, the PRI members as well as the officials.

**- Linking DRR Committees with District Disaster Management Committees:** There is a need to engage with the system to link up the DRR committees with DDMCs so that they get some recognition and visibility which could also be

used for further strengthening of DRR efforts. Furthermore, efforts could be made to implement the DDMPs which has been formulated/under formulation (as per the DC Baramulla)

**- Consortium of DRR Committees:** Since in most of the areas, there has been common need of lobbying efforts, a consortium of the DRR committees could also be useful way for giving strength to the advocacy efforts.

**- Advocacy Based Programming:** As most of the risk reduction measures require intervention of the Government, it would be important to include a people centered advocacy strategy in the **programming**.

**- Evidence Based Advocacy:** Since most of the infrastructure has been disaster affected, it will be good to influence the duty bearers. Documentation and dissemination of such evidences could provide leverage as well to future efforts.

# GENERAL LESSONS LEARNED

Rapid Needs Assessments should incorporate existing knowledge and be flexible. The Rapid Needs Assessments was hugely constrained by access difficulties in most of the villages of Bandipora and Baramulla and in Dal Lake area of Srinagar; hence assessment was largely based on the existing knowledge of village level or area specific needs.

## Needs Assessment

In many villages, the staff collected data from secondary sources like youth groups, women SHGs and PRIs than on spot assessment of the affected area or village.

## Coverage of Relief Response

The coverage of this relief response programme was massive in terms of numbers of households targeted. This meant that a lot of resources had to be mobilized in the shortest possible time, a challenge for any voluntary organization having limited resources in terms of funds, human and logistics. Floods are not short-term events so needs also change over time. It took almost three months for relief to be distributed to households thus putting the relevance and appropriateness to many critical questions. Ambitions of reaching out to large targets should be avoided and focus should be on manageable numbers so that relief is provided in the most appropriate time frame. This will enhance the impact of the response and also provide more time for recovery interventions.

## Prepositioning of Relief Materials

In order to undertake massive relief operations, it is essential to have prepositioned relief material. This not only saves time in procurement, but also reduces costs and can be dispatched within initial days of disaster. In absence of prepositioned stocks, local markets should be preferred for procurement. Valuable time was lost during procurement and transportation of relief materials besides incurring more costs.

## Documentation Processes

The documentation of relief distribution is a critical aspect of the programme. The project documented every detail about the distribution through various formats and had all the relevant information available on the computers. The use of family and other cards provided much need support in avoiding duplication and also gave a sense of entitlement to the family. However, the use of technology in documenting the distribution of relief and other processes will greatly reduce the tasks of distribution teams and unnecessary paper load. It will bring more transparency thus leading

to the credibility building of the organization.

The daily reporting of progress during the relief operations proved to be a good practice. It not only helped in monitoring the progress of the work but also provided an opportunity for others to provide timely feedback. IGSSS regional office sent a project update to the head office every second day and daily distribution matrix on each day. This helped in better coordination between the two offices.

## Partnership with other NGOs

The partnership with other NGOs in disaster situations is very essential. It helps in avoiding duplication of efforts, builds more coordination and develops convergence. IGSSS developed partnerships with other NGOs responding to the disaster, which included HelpAge India, Doctors for You, RedR, Centre for Law and Development Policy, Sphere India and the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation. IGSSS mobilized the resources of these organizations to the most deserving target areas and helped people receive much needed support in the early days of disaster.

## Engagement with Local Authorities and Panchayats

Engagement with local authorities and Panchayats is critical; it facilitates the relief operations, helps in convergence of resources and also builds credibility. IGSSS engaged with local authorities at various levels during the relief operations. The authorities were regularly updated on the progress of the work and their support was sought where ever required. The Panchayats were invited to facilitate the household listing, distribution of relief materials and monitoring of whole process. It helped IGSSS to build its image in the eyes of the authorities and Panchayats. However, to tap the potential of relationship with authorities there should be dedicated team for representing and networking with them.

## Engagement with the Affected Population

Engagement with the affected population is critical; it not only gives you regular feedback about the project course, but also provides insights to the problems which may not be apparent. The project team after promoting groups of farmers, artisans and other occupational farmers were able to engage with the affected population in much more focused manner than in the relief phase. The growing engagement showed its results when people participated in the recovery phase much more effectively. Their inputs on seed selection and raw material quality turned out to be very vital for the success of initiatives.

## Duration of Recovery Phase

The duration of recovery phase needs to more at least three



years to provide quality inputs and assess the impacts. A lesser duration means rushing things thus compromising on developing people led processes.

## Disaster Risk Reduction

Disasters create opportunities for disaster risk reduction. IGSSS was able to pilot DRR programmes in many villages and the communities were eager to participate in this programme given that they had seen the destructions by the floods not long ago and realized the importance of DRR.

## Preventing Diseases

The risk of disease outbreak is real but lower than usually thought. This was evident from the fact

that no outbreak was reported even after massive floods and inundation from the target areas. The project was able to prevent the interruption of access to safe water and sanitation in at least 21 villages of Bandipora and Baramulla thus preventing disease outbreak.

In a study report titled 'Voices of the Silenced in a State of Exception: Beneficiaries' Assessment of the Impact and Sustainability of IGSSS's Decadal Engagement in Kashmir', the researcher Fr. Joseph Xavier SJ, recommends similar interventions for moving ahead with the initial gains made from the work in the valley.

# WAY FORWARD

It is generally accepted among environmental geographers that there is no such thing as a natural disaster.

In every phase and aspect of a disaster – causes, vulnerability, preparedness, results and response, and reconstruction – the contours of disaster and the difference between who lives and who dies is to a greater or lesser extent a social calculus.<sup>5</sup> If the project would have only responded to early emergency needs, it may have perpetuated or even increased existing inequities so it was incumbent to also try to address the issues of poverty and the risk of future disasters. The project has navigated this exasperating path very well and has taken up both these aspects. The project in its second phase, worked largely with economically vulnerable families who are most at risk of getting shackled into the vicious cycle of poverty. The project focused mainly on increasing incomes, productivity and yield, building and enhancing capacities and introduction of tested model technologies' or methodologies to maximize the resource bases of these families.

The commitment to the sustainability of investments made by the IGSSS through its relief and short term recovery phases has to go beyond the provision of input support. It

has to lead the institutionalization of the structures (farmer, producer and artisan groups), enhancement of income in the main activity and promote diversified portfolios of subsistence livelihood activities, ensure access to the government services by the affected families. IGSSS, along with the community members, together are in a better position to leverage the gains made so far, towards a disaster resistant sustainable livelihood and to set the path for sustainable and inclusive development in the affected areas of Bandipora and Baramulla districts through a long term recovery initiative.

The long term efforts lie in developing the crucial asset base of the community that includes its financial resources, livelihood infrastructure, social networks, natural resources and governance structures to lift the communities out of poverty and the heightened disaster risk. IGSSS envisages promoting greater consideration of environmental, social and economic aspects in the sustainability of recovery efforts.

Recovery and reconstruction always presents an opportunity

to fix pre-existing problems and avoid, or mitigate the impact of, recurrences. Many experts believe that disasters can turn into opportunities for sustainable development. In this perspective, recovery and rehabilitation have to work on the factors that contribute to the vulnerability and risk. While IGSSS has, to a large extent, responded to the most urgent needs of the affected population through relief work and recovery efforts, it is however, given the short duration available, yet to take advantage of all the opportunities available for change, to achieve the sustainability of the recovery and rehabilitation efforts.

The aim therefore should be to strengthen the efforts made during relief and short-term recovery phase and help people insulate the gains from imminent threats of disaster, build further capacities to realize the potential of inputs and maximize the productivity and production in sustainable layout. Therefore the binary to this would be to work with the most at-risk and other stakeholders to address issues of poverty, gender, inequity, governance and other social conflicts along the way.

<sup>5</sup> 'There's No Such Thing as a Natural Disaster' By Neil Smith <http://understandingkatrina.ssrc.org/Smith/>



IGSSS should therefore focus on three key areas of Livelihood, DRR and Governance in the long term to promote activities and approaches that will ensure dovetailing between early recovery and longer-term Government programmes. The main focus therefore would be on:

- 1) Strengthening existing community based institutions like farmer groups, artisan groups and self-help groups to encourage building upon the social capital and collective action
- 2) Filling critical gaps in livelihoods, both in

agricultural and non-agricultural and promote sustainable business opportunities for enhanced income of the affected families

- 3) Developing a Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) and response mechanism in the disaster prone areas
- 4) Promoting local accountability and participation of communities for effective service delivery and convergence
- 5) Strengthening disaster risk governance and maintenance

of an institutional continuum between preparedness, response, recovery, mitigation and sustainable development measures

- 6) Building Multi-Stakeholder Approach to draw attention of the government towards needs of these households and position the households at the center of Government's welfare services and schemes and,
- 7) Inclusion of strategic gender perspectives into programming, by design, in order to promote access and control of resources and information by women





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