



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

**Scottish Government
Humanitarian Emergency Fund**

**South Asia Floods: August 2017
Case studies:**

- **Oxfam in Bangladesh**
- **Save the Children in India**
- **Tearfund in Nepal**



**Save the
Children**



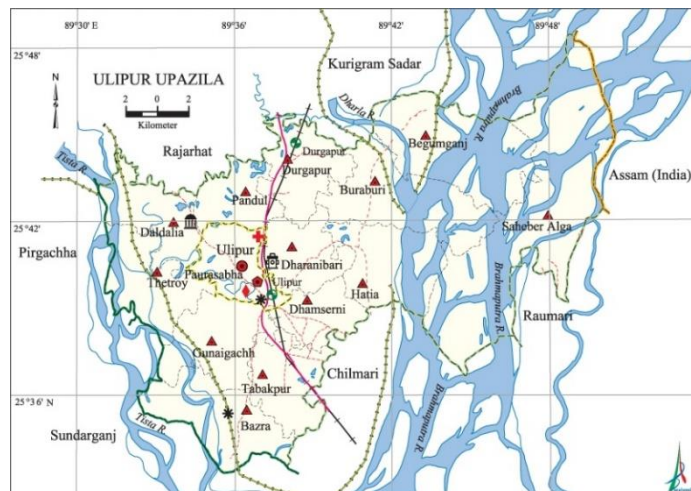
Oxfam's response in Bangladesh



The heavy monsoon rains that caused such severe flooding across more than one-third of Bangladesh affected more than eight million people, destroying their homes, their agricultural land and their means of earning a living. Water sources had been damaged and contaminated, sanitation facilities had been inundated or washed away, and water-borne diseases were already being reported. The poorest families had been experiencing severe food shortages even before the rise in prices in the aftermath of the floods. Women and girls were hardest hit, having little or no access to adequate sanitation, having to walk further from their villages in search of safe water.

The following two stories tell a little of the struggle that families faced and the difference that was made in Oxfam's emergency response funded by the Humanitarian Emergency Fund.

Surela Rani lives in the village of Hokodanga village, in the Thetrai Union, Ulipur Upazila in the Kurigram district of Bangladesh. She is seventy-five years old and, before she was widowed, she had lived with her husband, Thakurdas, her son, Chandkishor, his wife, Madhoby Rani, and other family members. Surela had considered herself to be happy, living with her family, even although they had lost their former home in 2014, washed away by river erosion.



1. Ulipur Upazila map © 2018 Microsoft Corporation

Having already been left vulnerable, the floods of 2017 brought further catastrophe. The family again lost all their belongings and assets, principally Surela's goats and poultry a major source of the family's income. Of the five family members, only Surela's son earned a living but not enough to replace their lost assets. Like many others living in the village, Surela's family felt hopeless.

As part of the HEF-funded flood response, staff from Oxfam's partner, Mahideb Jubo Somaj Kallyan Somity (MJSKS), visited Surela's village. With the cooperation of the community members to identify those families who were most vulnerable, MJSKS staff selected Surela as meeting the criteria for receiving assistance.

The Oxfam response provided families like Surela's with one-off cash grants of BDT 4,000 to meet their immediate food and other basic household needs.



2. Women receiving their hygiene kits in Dinajpur district Credit / Oxfam

Surela's family also received a hygiene kit comprising soaps for bathing and laundry, and oral rehydration salts, critical in preventing disease.

Within the wider community, demonstrations were conducted to make people more aware of personal hygiene issues and health risks. For women and girls, being given sanitary pads and undergarments better equipped them to manage menstrual hygiene while also maintaining and protecting their privacy and dignity.

To receive her grant and kit, Surela would have had to travel to the Union office, a distance of some miles. However, the scale of the floods and continuing heavy rainfall had made travel extremely difficult, especially for an elderly woman like Surela. Unable to make the journey, Chandkishor attended in her place.

When Chandkishor attended the Union office, MJSKS explained that the money he was being given was a multi-purpose cash grant and that Surela could decide how to use the money to meet the family's needs.

Giving cash grants as part of an emergency response is critical in helping people recover from the floods without resorting to negative coping mechanisms such as borrowing at high interest rates or selling whatever assets remained. Post-Distribution Monitoring showed that those who received the grants were using the money to buy food, medicines, and agricultural inputs, or to pay for repairs to their homes or to re-stock their animals.

Chandkishor took this advice to heart and, on returning home, shared his ideas with his mother and his wife. For Surela Rani, the priority was to purchase a goat, two ducks and two hens with the money. Madhoby Rani, Chandkishor's wife, was in full agreement and encouraged her husband to implement the plan. As she herself stated:

“we lost our goats, ducks and hens in the last flood, and we could not recover these.”



Surela, her family and the new goats, hens and ducks. Photo credits / Oxfam

Chandkishor has since gone to the market in Nagrakura and purchased a male goat, two ducks and two hens. Madhoby Rani is now taking care of the new livestock. She collects grass from the fields for the goat and gives the family's leftover food to the ducks and hens.

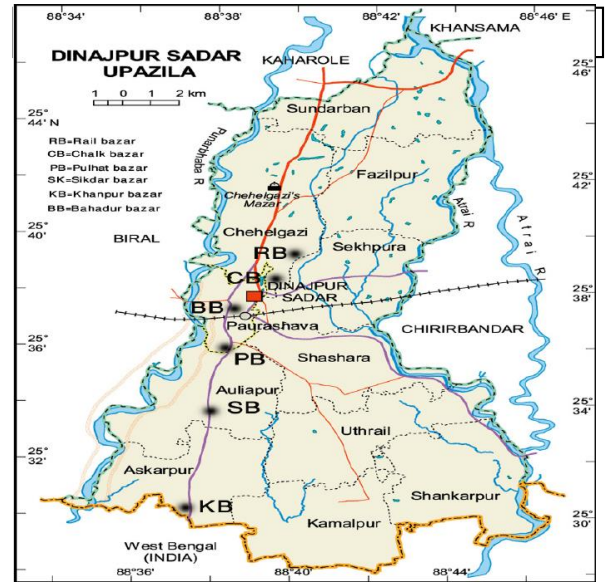
Two months on, and the goat has grown and increased in market value, one hen has already given ten chickens and the ducks are producing eggs daily. Surela Rani's family now have eggs to eat and sometimes they are also able to sell the extra eggs to earn a small income to cover their other needs.

In the village of Chit Sunfora, Kamdebpur, Askorpur Union, in the Dinajpur Sadar Upazila of Dinajpur district, Md. Liton, son of Taiyab Ali, had a small store from where he sold betel leaf. He used the income from his small shop to support himself, and his mother and father.

The floods of 2017 washed into his shop and destroyed all his stock of betel leaf. Moreover, he and his parents had to evacuate their home and move to an emergency shelter for safety. A challenge, not only for his parents, but for Md. Liton himself as he has polio. For three days they stayed in the shelter, before being able to return home.

When they returned, they were devastated to see the damage caused by the flood. Md. Liton and his family had lost everything and for several days they did not have enough to eat and the conditions in which they were living were severe. Worse, Md. Liton had neither the savings nor any capital to restart his business.

As in Kurigram, staff from Pollisree, Oxfam's partner's in Dinajpur, visited Md. Liton's village. Again, with the cooperation of the community members to identify those most vulnerable, Pollisree staff identified Md. Liton and his family as meeting the criteria for receiving assistance.



Like Surela, Md. Liton received a multi-purpose cash grant of BDT 4,000 as well as a hygiene kit to protect his family. With the money, he purchased new stock for his business and started selling betel leaf again. He also used some of the money to repair the family home.

Md. Liton, and his parents, are thankful for the support they received. In his own words:

“this amount was small but it encouraged me a lot to start my life again.”

The 2017 monsoon rains caused some of the worst flooding in India in more than forty years, affecting 42 million people across Assam, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. In Bihar alone, more than eight thousand villages were affected, putting 17 million people at risk. Families, many of whom were already living in difficult conditions, had to flee as homes were damaged or destroyed by the flood waters. Even once the rains stopped, it took several weeks for the water level to subside in the worst affected areas. Infrastructure was badly affected. Railways and roads were severely hit, causing delays in the transportation and distribution of relief materials. Flash floods had damaged health centres and clinics and, with staff shortages, these facilities took longer to reopen than anticipated. Most of the local people were dependent on agriculture, working for daily rates, and with fields left covered in sand and crops destroyed, the ability to earn a livelihood was minimal.

More than eighty per cent of schools across the affected districts were closed, either because of damage or they were being used as relief shelters. Many children were left out of education, with no safe spaces to play or to learn. Reports were being received of abuse, child labour, and child marriage.

As part of their floods response in India, Save the Children were reaching remote villages in Bihar, supporting some of the most marginalised families, helping them to rebuild their communities.

With funding from the Humanitarian Emergency Fund, Save the Children provided hygiene kits and temporary shelter materials to families, reducing the risk of water-borne diseases. Family shelters also afford security and protection, especially for women, adolescent girls and children. The funds also enabled the project to set up and run two Child-Friendly Spaces offering psychosocial support for three months.

Child-Friendly Spaces – Keeping Children Safe

Azharuddin, from Jharbari village, shared his experience of the flooding.

Azharuddin told staff that every family in his village was affected by the floods and that, of all these people, children were the worst affected.

'Most of the children had nothing to eat, no place to sleep or play.'

He described how school and pre-school centres were closed and that many children had lost all their books and school materials. Some children did not even have enough clothes to cover themselves.

Azharuddin said that he and other children in the village were often left alone, unhappy, ignored by the adults who were too busy making sure there was food and shelter for their families.

Their situation changed once a Child-Friendly Space was set up in their village. It gave the children a proper place where they could go to play, and where they could talk about what had happened in their village. As Azharuddin noted, it gave ray of hope, not only to the children but also to their parents.



Children attending the Child-Friendly Space in Jharbari village, Panchayat- Budhani (Post- Taiabpur, District- Kishanganj, Bihar)

Supporting Families to Rebuild - Life-saving Emergency Relief Kits



Farjuma Khatoon is from one of the most marginalised communities in Bihar. At thirty-eight years old, she is already a widow and, with four daughters and three sons, it is a struggle for her to provide a normal life for her children.

Life became even harder for Farjuma and her children when the floods came. She had been able to move her family to a place of safety nearby, but when they returned to their home, they found that it had been totally destroyed, washed away by the rains. They had lost their shelter, belongings and livelihood. Nothing, but empty ground, was left.

Every day, since the floods, despite the hardships, Farjuma strived to rebuild their lives.

Farjuma's situation was identified by Save the Children's partner Azad India Foundation, as meeting the criteria for emergency assistance and support.

Farjuma was given a hygiene kit, a shelter kit and a solar lamp as well as water purification tablets. She participated in the community demonstrations on their correct use and took part in the sessions on health, hygiene and sanitation.

For Farjuma, these interventions helped to make life safer and more secure, reducing the risk to her family of contracting waterborne disease.

As she told staff:

"All the items in the NFI kit was really helpful to come out of the ordeal of suffering causing by flood. Items like Tarpaulin, Solar lamp, Bedsheet, Bucket, Floor mat were help in bringing normalcy in life. I shall always grateful to Azad India Foundation and Save the Children. These items help in make life dignified."

Tearfund’s response in Nepal

In Nepal, the monsoon rains caused massive floods and landslides across thirty-seven districts. Tearfund used the funding from the Humanitarian Emergency Fund to implement an early recovery project in the Rural Municipality of Raptisonary, Banke District, in the Southern Terai region. Classified as a Priority One area by the World Food Programme due to the large-scale loss of food stocks and agricultural production, the project provided cash grants, shelter materials, agricultural inputs and technical training.

Hira Prashad Tharu, 38 years old, is a farmer and lives with his wife in LaLahi Village in Raptisonary Gaupalika in Banke District, with their 19-year-old daughter and their two sons, 15 and 11 years old.

Before the floods, Hira Prashad and his family lived happily in their village but their lives changed when the unusually heavy rains brought flooding to their village, destroying the family home. The house collapsed, their paddy crops were destroyed, and the waters washed away most of the family’s food stores, seeds, and clothes, as well as the children’s school uniforms and books. Hira Prashad said:

“I was emotionally broken and panicked as the flood had taken my house and everything my family needed to sustain our lives”.

In the days that followed the flood, Hira Prasha and his wife had very little food. They gave what they had to their children, but Hira Prashad became ill after eating food that had gone off. Their children were unable to attend school for an entire month whilst the family had to save up to be able to purchase school uniforms and books again to replace those lost in the flood. Previously, Hira Prashad used to supplement his farming income with seasonal migrant labour but is now too afraid to travel for work as he fears that he will not be able to help his family if the village were to flood again.

When the flood waters did eventually recede, the family’s land had been left covered with substantial amounts of silt, making it impossible to begin planting crops for the next harvest season. However, Hira Prashad remained optimistic, continuing to hope and believe that the situation would improve.

Hira Prashad and his family received support from Tearfund’s Early Recovery Project in Banke District. Tearfund and local partner, International Nepal Fellowship (INF), worked together to provide the family with the agricultural tools, seeds and shelter materials they needed to rebuild their home and livelihoods. Hira Prashad was also given training on how to construct a house incorporating flood and earthquake-resilient construction techniques. He has since used the knowledge to build a new home for his family. The family are now happily living in their newly constructed home and growing vegetables for their daily consumption.



Hira Prashad’s wife and son in front of their newly constructed home

Hira Prashad said:

“I was excited and hopeful after I realised someone had come to help me... Before I had a mud and thatch house, but now I have a stronger home which we feel safe and secure in”.

When asked how the family's life would have been different if Tearfund and INF had not been able to help, he said:

“We would have been in debt and I would have had to leave the village in search of daily wage labour to earn the money I needed to reconstruct our family home and rebuild our livelihood.”

Hira Prashad now says the biggest challenge he faces for the future is to ensure his children can continue to get a good education, so they can get good jobs after completing their higher education. Despite these concerns, he remains hopeful for the future and says that his family are happily living together and are not afraid.

In Samsargunj, in the Raptisonari Rural Municipality of Banke District, Roshan Nepali and his wife Sunita live with their two daughters and three sons. Roshan is a blacksmith and earns a living by making sickles. However, most people pay him with food, such as wheat or rice, rather than with money. While the food can meet his family's needs for half of the year, the money he earns in Nepal is not sufficient to support his family. Each year between June and October, Roshan must also go to kanoon in India for seasonal work where he can earn up to 20,000 Nepalese Rupees (about £135), enabling him to support his family financially. One of his elder sons has also become a migrant labourer and recently went to Saudi Arabia. At home, Sunita is sometimes sick and unable to take care of the household and agricultural work.

Roshan and Sunita's house was flooded during the August floods while Roshan Nepali was away working in India. He returned home to Nepal as soon as possible to support his family. Sunita and her sons and daughters remember water coming inside their house around 4 o'clock in the morning. They were awoken when they felt that their bed was wet. The water was coming from the small river irrigation canal nearby their house. The water level reached up to their knees. At first, they had tried to close the door, but it did not stop the water from entering the house. They then started trying to throw the water outside of their house using whatever they could find but it was impossible for them to clear the water. Eventually, they had to evacuate their home. The family spent the next few nights sheltering in their neighbour's house. Their family home ended up completely collapsing and all their bedding, food items and the children's school books were destroyed by the flood water. The flood water also washed away their wheat and rice reserves.

Once the flood waters receded, the family started to clear up their land and damaged home so that they could build some form of temporary shelter. The family were given some food items to last them a week by some non-government organisations working in the area. One of Roshani and Sunita's sons become very sick in the aftermath of the flood, after drinking contaminated water. He was taken to Nepalgunj hospital to receive medical treatment. Thankfully he made a quick and full recovery.

Roshan Nepali and his family also received help from the Early Recovery Project in Banke District which provided them with the agricultural tools, seeds and shelter materials they needed to rebuild their home and livelihoods. Roshan Nepali was also given training on how to construct a house using flood and earthquake resilient construction techniques. The family are now happily living in their newly constructed home and growing vegetables for their daily consumption.



Roshan Nepali with his wife standing in front of their newly constructed home (with the blue roof) and recently grown crops