

56 A Widow's Torment For Survival

BACKGROUND

In July 2003, the heavy rain in Sindh province caused floods that destroyed hundred of villages, displaced thousands of people and perished large number of livestock. Taulka Kaloie of Tharparkar district and Taulka Pangrio of district Badin were recorded the most affected areas. Due to this disaster, the local people migrated to the sand dunes of Taulka Kaloie, Tharparkar district and took shelter over there for two months.

Church World Service-Pakistan/Afghanistan (CWS-P/A), with the help of its partner organization Lower Sindh Rural Development Association (LSRDA), provided relief items including food items and temporary shelter (tents) within twenty-four hours of emergency to the most affected families in these districts. Though the assistance was not enough to compensate the loss but it helped in reducing their miseries. After two months of the disaster, the communities returned to their villages, but their mud houses were completely washed away and they had no resources to rebuild them. To realize this need, CWS-P/A implemented a "House Reconstruction Program in districts Badin and Tharparkar" to address the basic shelter needs of the IDPs, returnees and most affected people, who were living in open places and in tents. The implementation of this project was made possible through funding from Action by Churches Together (ACT), Geneva.

OBJECTIVES

The goal of this project is to rehabilitate 100 floods affected families whose houses were completely destroyed.

The objectives were:

- To assist resettlement of 100 most vulnerable families in Badin and Tharparkar districts of Sindh, with housing material in order to build their homes.
- Provide safe and secure shelters.
- Provide protection from the harsh environment to the most effected families
- Improve the economic situation of beneficiaries.

ACTIVITIES

After conducting a detailed assessment of the area CWS- P/A provided essential shelter materials to the 100 selected families to reconstruct their houses, and lavatories (one lavatory for two families). To complete this project CWS-P/A formed groups of local community members to monitor the construction process. Coordination and networking with other NGOs and local authority were maintained at all stages.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Under this project, 100 houses including foundation and pillar houses and 50 lavatories have been constructed for the most flood-affected families in Tharparkar and Badin districts of Sindh. These 50 lavatories were constructed for hundred families (one lavatory for two families). The boundary walls of these lavatories were made of wood can be easily movable a period of time when pit of lavatories required changes. For proper implementation project is divided into four phases

LESSONS

The project reveals that the time factor is very important in providing immediate relief services to the affected communities. If your assistance reaches the communities when someone else has already helped them, it will loose its value. Networking and coordination is also very important as you can avoid duplication of work and can divide the whole area for a better coverage to selected communities. The packages can also be made standardized so that the whole community receives the same type of assistance without any discrimination. During relief operations, assessing to the affected population is one of the biggest challenges an aid agency can face due to the damaged infrastructure and security issues in the area.

FUTURE

For future relief assistance, CWS-P/A has pre-positioned relief items, consequently in times of emergency relief assistance will be provided to the affected communities within the first twenty-four hours or even earlier. Disaster Preparedness is completely ignored and missing in disaster management programs, which intensify the impact of disaster. CWS-P/A has taken the initiative to train communities regarding Disaster Preparedness. In this regard, schoolteachers in Mansehra and Battagram Districts of NEFP, Pakistan are being trained in disaster preparedness to communicate this knowledge particularly to children and other members of their communities.



WIDOW'S TORMENT

"Rain and flood made us homeless", said 55 years old widow Raj Baie. Raj Baie's husband died 18 years ago and she lives with her son and daughter in Village Jumo Khaskheh. She took loan from landlord to cultivate their land but the rain and flood destroyed their crop as well. Her son works as a daily wages labor. They belong to the poor segment of their village and do not have enough resources to rehabilitate themselves. She expressed her thanks to CWS-P/A and LSRDA for their help in rebuilding her house.

"We have never seen that type of rain before. Only in two days our mud houses washed away and the whole area came under water. It was very difficult to reach at safer place; roads and streets were under water. Thanks God, Who helped us to reach to sand dunes, where some NGOs helped and provided us tents. After two months, when the water seeped down, we returned to our village, but there was nothing left. Flood has destroyed every thing. I was worried about paying back the loan which I have taken from the landlord of my village to cultivate the crop, but the flood has destroyed every thing including crop" she said.

Raj Bai was assisted through House Reconstruction Project implemented by CWS-P/A and got material for building a new house. Her son and fellow villagers helped her to complete the house. Raj Bai now lives in her own house where she feel secure and confident and pray for those who helped her through this most difficult time of her life.



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55 The Drought And The Sufferings Of Majnu

BACKGROUND

According to a survey report compiled by various agencies of Sindh government of Pakistan, during the first quarter of 2003 about 1.38 million people, belong to 2,863 villages and 256 Dehs of five districts of Sindh have been badly affected by the prolonged drought. In view of continuing drought and famine for the last four years in Sindh, particularly in the district of Tharparkar and Mirpurkhas, the economic conditions of the majority of the people are totally paralyzed.

Church World Service-Pakistan /Afghanistan implemented a drought assistance project in Mirpurkhas and Tharparkar districts in June 2003. The assistance provided included food for the affected families, fodder for the livestock, and seeds for the farmers.

OBJECTIVES

The main goal of the project was to assist 1,500 drought affected families with food packages and fodder for their livestock and 1,300 families with seed for the production of Guwar and Bajra.

The main objectives of the project included:

- Assist most vulnerable 1, 500 families with food and fodder for their animals.
- Provision of fodder for livestock.
- Assist 1,300 families with seeds.
- Prevent migration to other rural and urban areas.

ACTIVITIES

Primary assessment of the drought affected areas, selection of partners, selection of beneficiaries, identification of the distribution points, arrangements of supplies through quotations, transportation and distribution of relief items and coordination with relevant organization were the main activities during the project implementation.

ACHIEVEMENTS

The conditions of the people changed with the availability of food and fodder for their animals. Children and women benefited more because they were the major victims of the drought. Out of 1,300, 975 farmers produced good quality crops with the provided seeds. This saved them from taking loan. The crops of the remaining farmers were severely affected by the rainfall. The provision of seeds saved the farmers from taking loan.

LESSONS

People generally migrate from the worst drought hit areas to other areas in search of livelihood opportunities and to protect their animals. If food for their families and fodder for their animals are provided in their areas then they would not prefer migration. Migration may take days and months to reach to other places. After reaching their desired areas they try to find work, in many cases with low wages. Moreover as the work in the agricultural land stop due to drought the labour force faced difficulties in survival. In this case, the creation of some alternative job opportunities would reduce the problems of drought-affected communities.

FUTURE

Livestock are the major earning source of livelihood for the farmers in rural Tharparkar, which is an arid zone. During drought many animals die because of non-availability of fodder. An alternate arrangement for fodder to save animals is very important. Due to drought and no rainfall the crops are dried and the farmers have suffered terribly. Similarly all arid zones suffer from rapid depletion of ground water, so food, fodder and drinking water are the most essential items needed for vulnerable communities.

MAJNU'S LAND AND CROPS

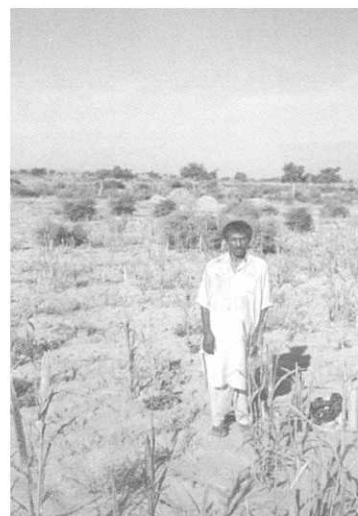
Majnu Panol, lives in a village called Sonalboh in Islamkot of Mithi district. Majnu was a beneficiary in the drought assistance project of Church World Service-Pakistan/ Afghanistan. The impact of drought was worst in Sonalboh and surrounding villages. CWS-P/A provided 20 kg seeds of Guwar and 20 kg seeds of Bajra in 46village in Islamkot and Sonalbohunder its drought assistance project. Majnu is from a Hindu community and belong to Maghwer cast. All of his children are married but live with their parents in the joint family system. Majnu says, "The drought over the years has made my life miserable." He continued grimly, "In the past, our condition was not like this, we lived a better life. The drought has destroyed our crops and perished livestock. At present we have only four goats and two cows."

According to him during drought food and fodder for animals were the great problems for the community and often people survive with little food and in some cases without food. He continued, "The relief materials containing food package for us and fodder for our animals were very helpful for us in these days of severe crisis. We were able to survive at least for 2 months because of that assistance."

The selection of beneficiary families was made by PVDP, LSRDA and the village organizations based on the criteria prepared by CWS-P/A in consultation with the implementing partners. The list was later checked and verified by the staff of DRP. It was reported that the overall selection was satisfactory. Later the list of beneficiaries who received relief goods was sent to CWS-P/A by PVDP and LSRDA with signature/thumb impression.

He added then "I went to Sonalboh center and received 20 kg seed of Bajra and 20 kg seed of Guwar. I sowed the seeds and after four months the crops were harvested." He has harvested about 10 mound of Guwar and 5 mound of Bajra. At that time the price of Bajra was Rs.280 per mound and price of Guwar is 380 per mound in the local market. Family members used Bajara as food and Gawar was used for animals' fodder. Majnu happily added that now he has enough seeds to be used for next year's production.

Majnu says, "Finding work is a great problem in Sonalboh as there is no rain, there is no work in the agricultural land. "We are suffering."



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Disaster Preparedness Trainings For School Teachers In Mansehra And Battagram Districts In Pakistan

BACKGROUND

The impacts of disasters in the NWFP (North West Frontier Province) are most severely felt in rural communities, where damage or loss due to natural or human made calamity may have long lasting negative impacts on people's livelihoods. Faced since centuries with re-occurring disasters such as Earthquake, Flash floods, Lightning etc. however, the rural population has developed mechanisms to cope with disasters. Many of these mechanisms are rooted in the local cultures and traditions and are well adapted to the local environment.

In this regard, CWS-P/A with financial help of World Vision International, have started a teachers' training program, which has a target to train 1,000 teachers from government and private schools in Mansehra and Battagram districts of NWFP, Pakistan. The participatory research on indigenous coping mechanism is also being conducted in these two districts.

OBJECTIVES

The goal of the project was to train 1,000 teachers on disaster preparedness and to conduct research on indigenous coping mechanism of the selected communities. The objectives were:

- To create awareness and preparedness among the schoolteachers of different schools in Mansehra and Battagram in NWFP of Pakistan
- Develop and test an approach to gather information on the local disaster risk situation in rural communities in the Mansehra and Battagram districts and to examine how the rural population copes with these disasters.

ACTIVITIES

These trainings are being conducted to create awareness and preparedness among school teachers about different disasters in this region and how they can prevent themselves by adopting different coping mechanism. These trainings have developed and enhanced knowledge on preventive measures for Earthquake, Heavy Rain, Land Sliding, Flash Floods and Fire. The trainings are also focused

on how these disaster preparedness measures can be included in schools' syllabus. In this regard, along with trainings at different locations, aid kits, booklet on disaster preventive measures, training manual, different gifts including health items and honorarium of 500 Pak rupees are being distributed among participants.

ACHIEVEMENTS

12 disaster preparedness trainings have been conducted so far now in Mansehra and Battagram districts of NWFP, Pakistan in which 552 schoolteachers are trained including 278 males and 274 females teachers. Beside this the following items have also been distributed among participants.

- 449 aid kits, included stretchers, blankets and first aid boxes and first aid booklets. Beside this the following items have also been distributed among participants
- 552 booklets of 'Disaster Preventive Measures' prepared and designed by CWS-P/A.
- 552 teachers training manuals (TOT) prepared and designed by CWS-P/A.
- Participants have also been given training certificates at the end of each training
- Some health items included comb, toothbrushes, nail filers etc were distributed as gifts.
- Honorarium of 500 Pak rupees to every participant.

The Research on 'Indigenous Coping Mechanism in Mansehra and Battagram Districts, NWFP', under this project is going on and field research has been completed in first three villages, according to the defined plan.

LESSONS

The project reveals that the Disaster Preparedness is completely ignored and missing in disaster management programs, which intensify the impact of disaster. CWS-P/A has taken the initiative to train communities regarding Disaster Preparedness. In this regard, schoolteachers in Mansehra and Battagram Districts of NWFP, Pakistan are being trained in disaster preparedness to communicate this

knowledge particularly to children and other members of their communities. During relief operations, assessing to the affected population is one of the biggest challenges an aid agency can face problems due to the damaged infrastructure and security issues in the area. CWS-P/A believes that if the communities have prior knowledge on disaster they can prevent themselves from maximum damaged

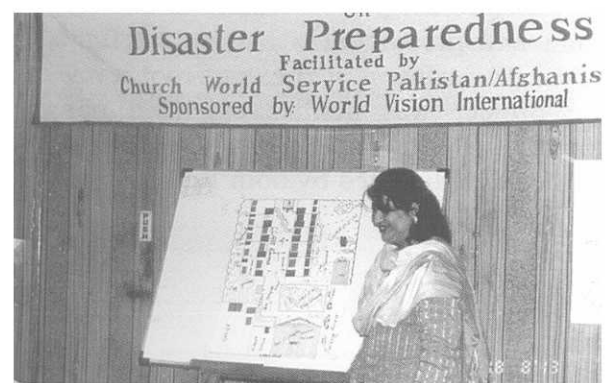
FUTURE

The project is indicative of the fact that if the communities of the disaster prone areas should trained in disaster preparedness, so the intensity and the damaged caused by these disaster can be reduced. The need is to develop and implement awareness raising and capacity building programs in the disaster affected and disaster prone communities to better combat with natural disasters. The teachers are also of the opinion that these trainings should also be conducted in different other disaster prone areas of Pakistan.

A TEACHER'S VIEW

Ms. Zubaida, a private school teacher, is of the opinion that these types of trainings should be continued especially in the remote and rural areas of disaster-affected areas.

"We were unaware of our problems and thought that these disaster are part of our life, but now our concepts are changed because of these trainings. Now we can reduce the disaster impact by adopting some small and easily manageable techniques in pre and post disaster situations. This information should also be added in the school text.



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