



SEEDS' Project Ashraya India Flood Relief Rebuilds Lives and Brings Hope to Cachar, Assam

Cachar, (Assam) 29 February 2024: Following the devastating 2022 Assam floods, in consultation with the Cachar district administration SEEDS (Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society) reached out to the flood affected communities through its **Project Ashraya India Flood Relief**, to rebuild a resilient community in Cachar, Assam.

When torrential rains unleashed unprecedented devastation on the Barak Valley, SEEDS responded with compassion and purpose. The floodwaters breached the Bethukandi embankment, leaving most areas within the Cachar district submerged and the entire Barak valley isolated from the remaining part of the State. SEEDS stepped in to alleviate the suffering, restore a sense of normalcy, and help the community build back better.

Says the Director of SEEDS Dr Manu Gupta, “The North-Eastern part of India is an identified climate hot spot. The increased number of climate incidents and the intensity are clearly affecting lives and livelihoods. The SEEDS team has a decade long presence in the State and has strategically worked over the past two years to ensure that the building back of schools and primary health centres is powered to incorporate community resilience as well.”

Silchar District Disaster Management Authority’s District Program Officer Shamim Laskar recalls that roads were submerged thus posing a grave challenge to access those most affected which included Shefali’s village. Once the situation was assessed, “We were able to get food packets airdropped. However, we knew that people did not have drinking water and that was a major concern for us. We had managed to rescue people and get them food – but there was an outcry for drinking water, since all drinking water sources were submerged!”

To address this situation over the past two years SEEDS Project Ashraya India Flood Relief has also constructed 10 Terra filters designed and built in a manner that they remain above flood waters and provide clean and safe drinking water to 1500 families.

Additionally, 200 ASHA workers from Jalalpur and Kalain Primary Health Centres have undergone a specialised WASH training, embodying a community-centric approach. SEEDS conducted awareness campaigns emphasising the significance of safe drinking water, especially in areas with high iron content.

SEEDS also supported the recovery of education by repairing, restoring and upgrading infrastructure at four school buildings that were impacted by the flood. These schools have also been provided with solar lighting, they also serve as relief shelters for villagers in the future.

Building community and collective resilience in collaboration with local leaders, SEEDS formed Disaster Risk Reduction task forces, conducted mock drills in schools.



The head teacher Krishna Chandra lower primary school in Lakhipur village of Kalain block of Cachar Sajal Kant Dey recalls the destruction. “Flood waters quickly submerged the school compound, the walls, the roof and classroom floors and precious desks were completely damaged. Thankfully, the school has been restored and the children are now returning to a daily routine,” he says.

About SEEDS:

SEEDS (Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society) is a not-for-profit organisation that enables community resilience through practical solutions in the areas of disaster readiness, response and rehabilitation. Since 1994, the organisation has worked extensively on every major disaster in the Indian subcontinent – grafting innovative technology on to traditional wisdom. It has reached out to families affected by disasters and climate stresses; strengthened and rebuilt schools and homes; and has invariably put its faith in skill-building, planning and communications to foster long-term resilience.

SEEDS has been awarded the United Nations Sasakawa Award 2022 for Disaster Risk Reduction and the prestigious Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar 2021 by the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India

For more information, visit www.seedsindia.org

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