

When Preparedness Works: Case of Cyclone Phailin

Photo: sincedutch.wordpress.com

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Odisha Braces for Cyclone Phailin, NDMA Sends Troops



Source: www.rediff.com

The Odisha government is preparing for Cyclone Phailin – which is expected to hit the east coast on Saturday evening (October 12, 2013) – on a war footing, Mihir Bhatt from the All India Disaster Mitigation Institute, who is part of the precautionary preparation, told Rediff.com.

"The Red Message, the highest alert from the Indian Meteorology Department in Delhi, is not only concise and to-the-point, but is also usable to a large extent by the local district officials. The alert also enlists where and what type of damage is expected to shelter and infrastructure," he said.

The Orissa State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) team and the ministry for disaster management are managing the largest-ever evacuation exercise in the state and planning large-scale relief preparations. Various departments have taken an initiative in preparedness. The panchayati raj

ministry had issued detailed guidelines for preparedness for the impending cyclonic storm as early as on October 9, 2013.

Control rooms have been set up in Ganjam and other nine districts, mobile phone numbers have been updated and verified, leaves have been cancelled to have almost all the staff on stand-by, and food and relief stocks are being kept in readiness. Block Development Officers have visited cyclone shelters to keep them ready for the likely influx of those fleeing from the cyclone.

The Odisha government has ensured that there is enough coordination among the various ministries, from panchayati raj to social welfare. A plan

The NDMA has deployed nearly 2,000 personnel of the National Disaster Response Force in Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal for preparedness for Cyclone Phailin.

of action – on which department will do what and when once the cyclone strikes – has been drawn up in detail.

The state government has held meetings with international NGOs to draw up a roadmap to tackle the aftermath of the cyclone.

The National Disaster Management Authority is facilitating local efforts in Odisha, mobilising rescue teams and sending equipment to possible hot spots.

The NDMA has deployed nearly 2,000 personnel of the National Disaster Response Force in Andhra Pradesh, Odisha and West Bengal.

Nearly 4.4 lakh people have been evacuated from danger zones so far in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha.

"This might be the second biggest evacuation exercise undertaken since 1990 when six lakh people were evacuated in Andhra Pradesh," said NDMA Vice-Chairman M Shashidhar Reddy.

Rescue and relief teams have been positioned in vulnerable coastal areas of the three states. Some additional teams have also been kept as reserve.

Twenty nine teams of the NDRF have been deployed along with rescue equipment in Odisha. In Andhra Pradesh, 15 teams have been deployed and four additional teams are also being rushed from Tamil Nadu, while seven teams have been deployed in West Bengal.

The teams have been equipped with satellite phones and wireless sets to maintain smooth communication. ■

UNISDR on Phailin Preparedness



Source: NDTV.com

Worldwide efforts are made to reduce losses due to disasters. Heat is one example where preparedness paid. India witnessed a major cyclone over the week end which could have killed hundreds of people if an effective early warning and response system would not have been put in place.

Cyclone Phailin hit the Bay of Bengal on the eastern coast provinces (states) of Andhra Pradesh and Odisha on Saturday with winds over 200 kmph and heavy rainfall. The cyclone killed fifteen people so far, an astonishingly low number considering the 12 million people who live in the storm's path.

Thanks to an efficient early warning system and rapid evacuation measures deployed by national and local governments, nearly 500,000 people were able to be evacuated in time and moved to higher grounds and safer cyclone shelters.

As the cyclone approached, many villagers tried to stay behind to safeguard their land and livestock during the worst of the storm but almost none were unaware of the coming danger said witnesses, which is a big change.

People knew about the coming storm and were able to take some measures to reduce their exposure. Early warning messages sent out through cell phones and TV channels helped saving lives even in the most remote rural areas. A boom in the construction of cement houses, schools and businesses is said to have provided also crucial shelter to villagers who had somewhere to go for safety.

"We have been able to keep the death toll to a bare minimum," said Shri Shashidhar Reddy of the national disaster management authority to reporters in Delhi. In 1999, a similar cyclone killed 10 000 people.

Lives have been spared but economic losses are already high—in rural agriculture, fisheries—this will have long term consequences on people in the region who are among the most poor. An estimated 5,000 sq km of mostly paddy crops have been destroyed by the cyclone causing an expected loss of some \$320m (£220m). Recovery in Delta will take time.

With some of the world's warmest waters, the Indian Ocean is considered a cyclone hot spot. The Bay of Bengal region is among the most vulnerable in the world to the effects of climate change, and experts have predicted that storms are likely to become more intense and frequent.

Citizens and authorities saved lives with determination. Same determination will help address the challenge of loss of livelihoods of the poor in coastal areas. ■

– **Madhavi Ariyabandu** and **Brigitte Leoni**, ISDR, Sri Lanka

National Disaster Management Authority's Role in Cyclone Phailin

This article tries to take an objective view of all the work done by the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) as preparedness to tackle the threat of Cyclone Phailin that hit coastal Odisha and Andhra Pradesh on October 12, 2013.

Cyclone Phailin struck with adequate warning. Hence the administration was able to take preventive measures to save precious lives and infrastructure. The India Meteorological Department (IMD) is the nodal agency that issues early warnings for cyclones. Since the Orissa Super Cyclone of 1999, a lot of modernisation has been undertaken for correct and timely early warning. The early warning starts from the time the System is formed (Depression). The first warning is "Cyclone Watch", given 72–96 hours before the land-fall. From then on a close watch is kept on the cyclone's movement, its speed, direction and likely areas of land-fall. The information is gathered through satellite imageries and Doppler radars deployed at vulnerable places, with over-lap, sensors in the sea and through the ships. The second warning called "Cyclone Alert" is given 36–48 hours before the Land-fall and the third warning called "Cyclone Warning" is 24 hours before the cyclone hits the land. This is when the evacuation is ordered by the District Collector. The last warning is the, "post land-fall alert", when the eye of the Cyclone hits the land, giving the direction it will follow, with speed of wind and rain fall prediction.

It should be noted that the evacuation of people from vulnerable places was the key to the successful preventive measures. As the number of cyclone shelters were less than the population which was to be evacuated, a number of other buildings, like schools, community halls, office complexes and other buildings away from the effect of expected storm surge were identified and people were shifted to these places 48 and 24 hrs before the very severe cyclone Phailin hit the Gopalpur area of Odisha. The safe places were also stocked with rations, water and medicines. A number of difficulties were experienced in evacuation of the people, especially elderly people who were not prepared to shift and wanted to stay back. Peer pressure from the family members, relatives, village head men was brought about through volunteers. At places the Police had to use limited force to evacuate the people to identified safe places.

NDMA also placed 56 teams of the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) at the vulnerable places as a proactive measure, with reserves for each of the two states and West Bengal, kept in interior places. The States were also advised on where to keep their State Disaster Response Force personnel to avoid duplicity of efforts. The NDRF personnel, the only force of its kind in the World, which is highly trained exclusively in disaster management and has the state of the art equipment, also helped the district administration in evacuation of population as also informing them on actions to be taken by them at different timings.

Army columns and helicopters and fixed winged aircrafts from Indian Air Force were moved nearer to the impact area at safe distances. The Indian Navy and the Coast Guard helped the fishermen and ships which were caught in the grip of Cyclone Phailin. Central Medical teams were kept ready to be moved at short notice. Although the States had catered for rations, water and medicines in each shelter for 36 hours, Centre also kept rations to be moved forward as and when the need arose. The Indian Railways were informed not to run trains in the impact area till the cyclone passed over the area. The Department of Communication and National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) kept their resources (men, material and machines) ready to be moved at a short notice to restore the communications and make the roads pliable for responders.

NDMA also kept the media informed on the movement of the cyclone as also the measures taken to minimise its effect.

Visible Effects of NDMA's Proactiveness

The preparedness measures taken by NDMA bore the required results. Due to the war footing measures taken by NDMA, India responded in a robust manner to Cyclone Phailin.

Due to the prevention, mitigation and preparedness measures undertaken by all the concerned stakeholders, viz. the States, Union Government, NGOs or the community at large, the loss of life was restricted to 33 casualties. It impressed the world and the UN so



Fishermen pull a boat from the waters of the Bay of Bengal to safer ground at Podampata village in Ganjam district in the eastern Indian state of Odisha October 11, 2013.

Credit: REUTERS/Stringer

much that the latter has requested the Govt. of India to permit it to be used as a model of response for other countries to emulate.

There are challenges yet at the ground level, as the people have to be fed in relief camps, as a large number of houses have been destroyed. It also

needs to be ensured that no epidemic is spread as a result of the stagnant waters of the storm surge. Rehabilitation and reconstruction work have simultaneously started to restore normalcy which is going to take some time. Odisha will recover in due course of time with financial support from the Union Government, other States and the corporate world and organisations/individuals, for a change! We in India should feel relieved and proud that we have been able to face a very severe cyclone, with minimal collateral damage. We should give a pat to the ones who deserve it – NDMA is one of them, besides the Govt of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh and the IMD. Come on Indian media, say a few words of praise for all who deserve! ■

– Brig. (Dr.) B.K. Khanna,

Senior Specialist in NDMA, Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India;

and

Nina Khanna, Ph.D.

Research Scholar in Disaster Management

MANUAL

What Every District Collector in Odisha Must Read?

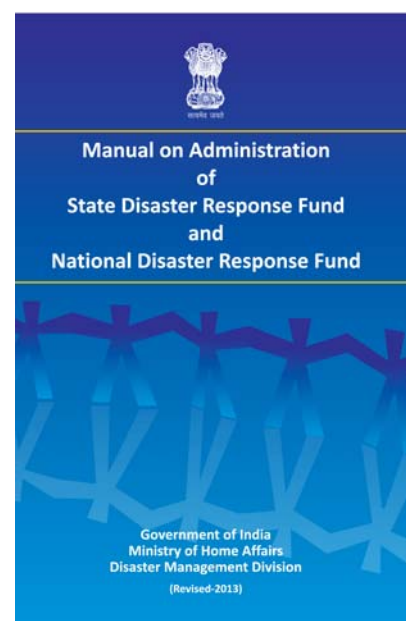
The Manual on Administration of State Disaster Response Fund and National Disaster Response Fund is one thing each district collector must read to start the relief and recovery work.

This is not only important for better governance but also generating a greater impact an accountability of toe relief and recovery work after cyclone Phailin.

Disaster Management Division, Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India has revised its Manual on Administration of State Disaster Response Fund and National Disaster Response Fund in 2013. In the event of a severe natural disaster this manual is a guide in preparation of Memoranda to the State

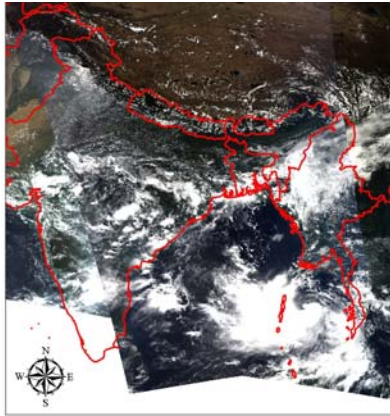
Governments/UTs seeking additional financial assistance. The revised items and norms of assistance, instructions and formats for submitting of monthly/annual reports relating to the response funds are highlighted in it. The overall objective of the revised manual is to further streamline the entire process of timely release of funds for disaster response and making the processing of financial assistance proposals smoother and quicker.

The district collector who will be addressing livelihood loss issues may need to find out more information from the Government of Odisha. But it is up to the District Collectors to make things more gender sensitive with the help of this manual. ■

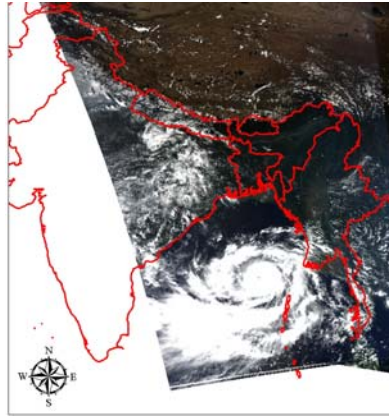


The manual can be viewed at <http://ndmindia.nic.in/OM-NDMC-170413.pdf>.

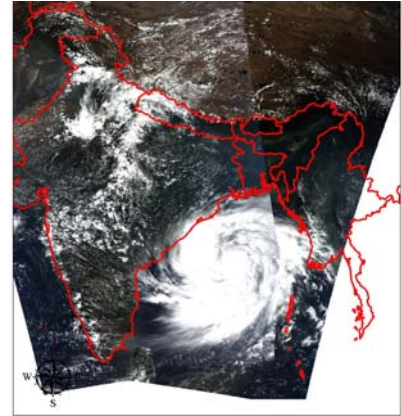
Movement of Phailin Over Indian Sub-Continent



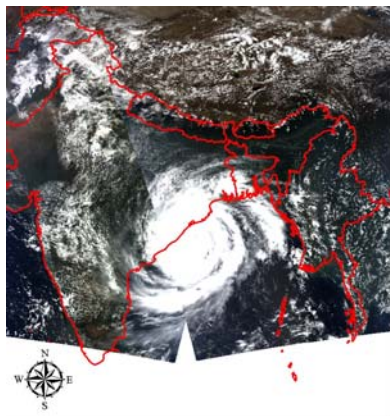
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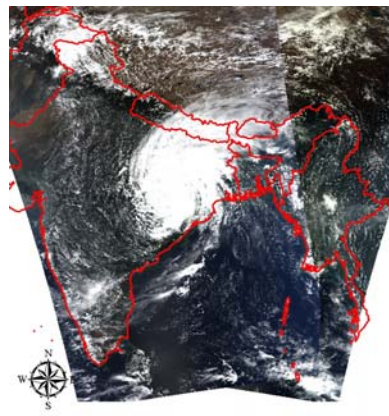
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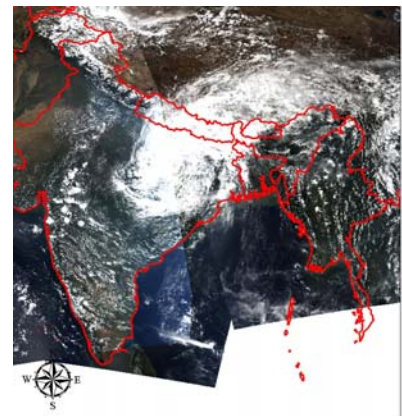
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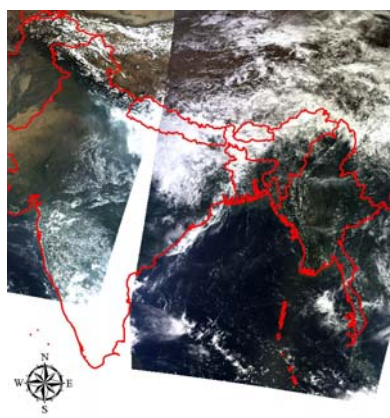
4 October 12, 2013



5 October 13, 2013



6 October 14, 2013



7 October 15, 2013

1. Low pressure zone over the Andaman and Nicobar Island group in Indian Ocean giving rise to cyclone formation.
2. The Depression taking shape of a massive cyclone 'Phailin' over the waters of bay of Bengal.
3. Phailin gathering strength and it became one of the strongest cyclone to hit Indian Ocean before making landfall.
4. The eye of Phailin approaching coastal belt of Odisha and Andhra Pradesh as they prepare for one of the worst cyclone impact.
5. The cyclone enters Indian landmass moving northwards and gradually losing strength.
6. Phailin, after landfall turns more into a depression zone bringing heavy rainfall over the states of Odisha, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, and eastern parts of Uttar Pradesh.
7. The cyclone can be seen as a low pressure zone and accompanied by heavy, torrential rains over the covered area.

Source: Images of Bay of Bengal picked up by ICIMOD MODIS.

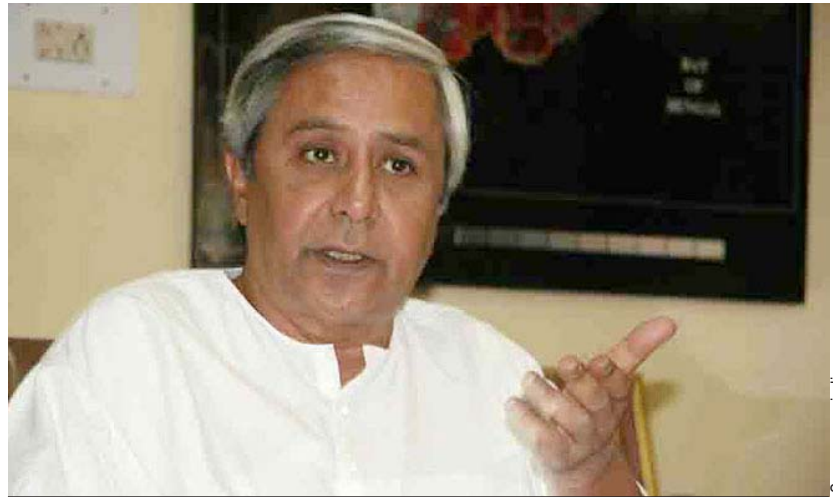
Leadership during Cyclone Phailin

The prompt response by the government apparatus of Odisha to cyclone Phailin is evident in the minimal loss of life witnessed in the aftermath of this disaster. It seems that the government of Odisha has redeemed itself from the infamy that it earned following the human tragedy that took place after the 1999 super cyclone in the state resulting in 9894 casualties¹.

While the government of Odisha has been praised for its preparedness level, the stewardship of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik to see his state through this dark hour deserves a special mention as well. Firmly believing that disguised opportunity is an inevitable concomitant of any crisis, the Chief Minister identified the opportunity of showcasing the preparedness levels of his administration to the country during this crisis.

The state administrative machinery went into full swing at the behest of the Chief Minister as soon as the warning of the cyclone started to disseminate. The effective response of the state government was evidenced in massive and forceful evacuation drives conducted in the state. For, as many as 10, 13,647 people had been evacuated from the coastal areas in the state². The state government was ably supported by the UNDP in its efforts to effect an evacuation on a scale unprecedented in the recent history of India.

The contributing factors which led to minimal loss of life from the cyclone are better weather monitoring, formalising of standard operating procedures, coordination among various agencies, mass evacuations, preparation of cyclone relief spaces and more³. The Chief Minister's effective leadership during this crisis was also



Source: www.indianexpress.com

noted and praised by Ms. Margareta Wahlström⁴ (special representative of United Nations Secretary General). Ms. Wahlström congratulated the Chief Minister over the phone.

Another remarkable feature of Mr. Patnaik's leadership during cyclone Phailin was the fact that he gave a *carte blanche* or a free hand to officials and people's representatives to achieve his vision of zero casualties in the cyclone. The Chief Minister's trust in his ministers and the bureaucrats working under them was fully vindicated by their competence and commitment. For instance, Mr. Surya Narayan Patro, a minister of the Odisha government reached out to listen to as many voices as possible during the cyclone. He took decisions by consulting people from various quarters, right from the head of the Indian Meteorological Department to the district collectors (of the affected districts) to the

various community members. The swiftness of the ongoing recovery and rehabilitation process which resulted from quick decision making at the top also bears testimony to the effective leadership of the Chief Minister of Odisha.

Perhaps the greatest achievement of Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik is that he has restored the faith of the common man in the ability of the state to take pre-emptive measures to avert large scale tragedies. It can only be hoped that this response by the state of Odisha under Naveen Patnaik serves as a benchmark for future disaster responses in a country still coming to grips with an epic tragedy that struck Uttarakhand just a few months back. A new standard of leadership has been set. Let us hope that the Chief Ministers of other states are able to live up to this new standard when the next disaster strikes. ■

1 Facing Disasters Saving Lives Preparing for cyclone PHAILIN 2013, <http://www.osdma.org/userfiles/file/Sashidhar%20Reddy-15%2010%202013.pdf>

2 Facing Disasters Saving Lives Preparing for cyclone PHAILIN 2013, <http://www.osdma.org/userfiles/file/Sashidhar%20Reddy-15%2010%202013.pdf>

3 Cyclone Phailin: We must all follow lessons Patnaik learned from 1999. Read more at: http://www.firstpost.com/india/cyclone-phailin-we-must-all-follow-lessons-patnaik-learned-from-1999-1170481.html?utm_source=ref_article

4 UN appreciated Odisha Government for effective handling of cyclone Phailin.

See more at: <http://www.orissadiary.com/CurrentNews.asp?id=44894#sthash.ZXssw9N4.dpuf>

Reducing Loss and Damage of Poor

A case of non-life insurance protection mechanism



Phailin cyclone at Puri on October 13, 2013. Photo: AIDMI.

The World Bank has praised India's evacuation of nearly 10 lakh people in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh, which ensured minimal loss of human lives, before the cyclone Phailin made landfall and attributed it to its years of disaster management preparedness.¹ The lessons learnt from 1999 super cyclone was very helpful to community and Odisha government. However the impact of cyclone is severe when we see the affected shelters, livelihoods, agriculture field. The economic loss is huge in coastal districts of Odisha, especially poor localities.

From Cyclone Phailin, we must learn to reduce the economic impact on community especially on poor community. One realistic option is –

microinsurance that covers life and non life both. The pilot is implemented through joint efforts. Concern Worldwide India facilitated the process in Odisha; AIDMI provided technical support; SWAD, Puri based organisation implementing the policy and covered 950 poor and vulnerable families living in Puri district of Odisha.²

The opportunities for development are extremely restricted by different conditions like political, economic, living in disaster prone areas like coastal areas prone to cyclone, floods as was seen in Cyclone Phailin. Through different micro finance and insurance policies, the poor could attain a better standard of life through

programmes prepared in the field of financial business services. Demand of microinsurance is very huge and constantly increasing. There are several factors contributing to this reality including frequency of disaster event due to high vulnerability, increasing population and awareness of insurance.

The poor and vulnerable families really required microinsurance that cover non-life component especially shelter and livelihood. Single party cannot do this effectively. A combination of insurance companies and non-government organisations with focus on effective facilitation and time-to-time follow up with poor communities can produce desired result. The above-mentioned case is one such initiative.

For microinsurance to be successful – for the insured and for the risk-bearers – many elements are important; such as simple and affordable insurance products reaching large numbers of people; stream-lined administration, including premium payment; a simplified claims procedures and verifications; and rapid delivery of benefits. If most of these elements are present, it can be possible for microinsurance schemes to become sustainable, to perform well and to provide "real value" to the poor. ■

– Prashanta Bahera,

United India Insurance Co. Ltd.,
Bhubaneswar

1 The Hindu (October 2013) <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/other-states/world-bank-praises-indias-phailin-evacuation-efforts/article5247063.ece?homepage=true>; Access on October 18, 2013

2 Process Documentation: Microinsurance for Disaster Risk Reduction (2012) AIDMI with Concern Worldwide India. https://www.concern.net/sites/www.concern.net/files/media/resource/process_documentation.pdf.

When Preparedness Works: The Case of Cyclone Phailin

The preparedness to mitigate the adverse impacts of cyclone Phailin has invited praises from all corners. With the death toll resulting from the cyclone being 25, the preparedness level in the face of this natural disaster has been exemplary¹.

The greatest contributing factor to the minimal loss of human life resulting from this cyclone is the mass evacuations that took place in Odisha and Andhra Pradesh. In Odisha alone 700,000 people have been evacuated from the coastal districts to various storm shelters. The evacuees were put up in some 20,000 cyclone shelters, schools, colleges and other safe places. In Andhra too close to 80,000 people have been evacuated which was responsible for minimal deaths².

This raises the question of what actually worked to lead to minimal loss of life. All evidence points to the indomitable will of the state government to effectively plan and coordinate the one of the largest evacuation exercises that in India in recent history. The state government in its efforts was also supported by an empathetic and alert centre government that was wise enough not to dictate decisions to the state government. The uniqueness of the preparedness efforts for this cyclone was that the centre facilitated the processes that were initiated by the state government.

The efforts of the Odisha State Disaster Management

Authority (OSDMA) merit a special mention. The OSDMA was instrumental in coordinating between various government departments to affect this mass evacuation. For instance, the Panchayati Raj Department, goaded by the OSDMA issued detailed guidelines for preparedness for an impending cyclonic storm as early as October 9, 2013. Similar preparedness activities included the setting up of control rooms in Ganjam and other nine coastal districts, updating and verification of the mobile numbers of all public officials, the cancellation of the holiday leaves of all back-bone staff on stand-by and stocking food and other relief material at the district level.

Another important reason for the successful preparedness during cyclone Phailin is that the Government of Odisha (GoO) sought counsel from the best in the field: United Nations Development

Programme (UNDP) for coordination and cluster preparedness as well as the visiting CDKN global chief for ways to integrate climate change and development concerns in preparedness from evacuation to rescue teams. This advice included ways to reduce mismatch between what citizens expect and what public institutions can deliver. Loss of livelihoods of women, especially during evacuation was discussed.

Thus, it can be inferred that it was the active and assertive coordination between various departments that helped in making preparedness drive by the government of Odisha for Cyclone Phailin successful. ■

- 1 After Cyclone Phailin, Odisha battles floods http://zeenews.india.com/news/nation/after-cyclone-phailin-odisha-battles-floods_883201.html
- 2 Phailin's trail, <http://www.downtoearth.org.in/content/phailins-trail>



Phailin cyclone at Puri on October 13, 2013. Photo: AIDMI.

Gender Balanced Recovery Post Cyclone Phailin

The minimal loss of life resulting from Cyclone Phailin has relegated this disaster to the periphery of our collective consciousness. For, as news of the minimal loss of life post Cyclone Phailin started to circulate, the quota of eyeballs, column inches and news channel specials to be expended on this disaster waned considerably. But before we heave a collective sigh of relief, certain important issues need to be addressed and certain uncomfortable questions need to be answered.

Among these issues and questions of importance, is the ongoing recovery process. The importance of the recovery process emanates from the devastating economic loss and the increased vulnerability of floods in Odisha following the cyclone. Thus, a renewed focus on recovery efforts in the post disaster situation has become imperative.

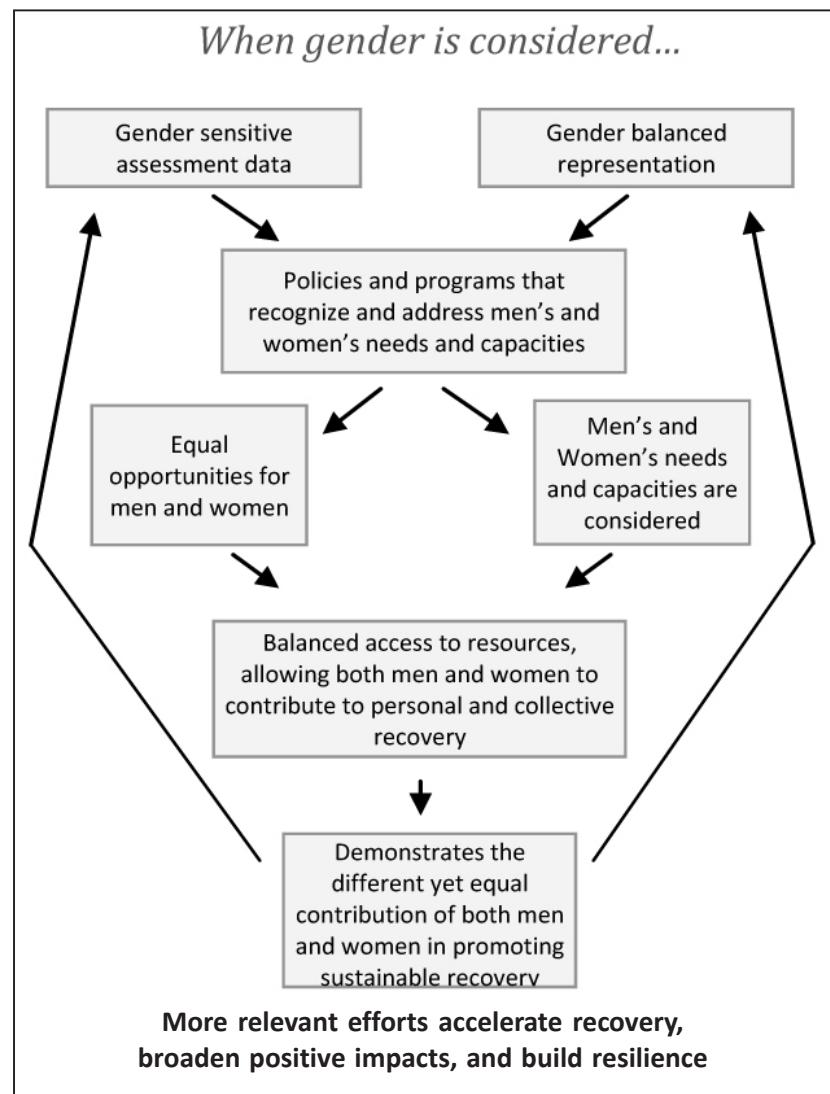
Within the broad area of a robust recovery, the issue of gender parity in the recovery process needs special attention. It is almost conventional wisdom that women bear a greater burden of disasters than men. The source of the greater vulnerability of women to disasters is the difference between the socially determined roles of men and women. This difference in turn, perpetuates a reduced access to resources and decision making powers to women. The most common manifestation of this difference in socially determined roles of men and women is the limited access of women to food

resources and life saving skills such as swimming and tree climbing¹.

The recovery of Cyclone Phailin presents an opportunity to carry out a gender sensitive recovery in India. At a time when gender is one of the weakest areas of humanitarian response, the moral and pragmatic

imperative to have a gender sensitive recovery post Cyclone Phailin seems indispensable².

Gender issues are inextricably linked with all aspects of disaster recovery cutting across several themes. Unless these issues are addressed clinically, all recovery efforts will fail when



1 A Practical Guide to Gender Sensitive Approaches to Disaster Management, <http://www.ifrc.org/PageFiles/96532/A%20Guide%20for%20Gender-sensitive%20approach%20to%20DM.pdf>

2 Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action, 2005, <http://www.humanitarianinnovation.org/about/alnap>



Phailin cyclone at Puri on October 13, 2013. Photo: AIDMI.

assessed on the parameters of gender parity. In order to have a gender sensitive recovery for Cyclone Phailin certain basic conditions need to be met. These conditions include mainstreaming gender in recovery institutions, identifying gender specific recovery needs, engaging women in recovery initiatives and facilitating a gender balanced economic recovery³.

Such a gender sensitive recovery plan will lead to certain indicative outcomes which include an equitable distribution of resources in recovery between men and women, increasing the visibility of women's issues in all areas of humanitarian action such as housing, human settlements, water,

sanitation, health, livelihood recovery, etc. The diagram aptly portrays the outcomes to be expected out of a gender sensitive recovery process⁴.

Thus, it is proposed that a gender parity review of the recovery effort in Odisha post Cyclone Phailin is taken up to address the following important questions:

1. Is there a decreasing impetus on gender themes in relief and recovery projects?
2. Is there an uneven distribution of loans and grants addressing gender concerns in relief and recovery?
3. Is there limited visibility of gender equality in certain

districts and certain sectors of Odisha?

4. Are there gender specialists in place to sustain increased gender equality in areas where it exists?
5. How can gender parity be increased in other sectors like emergency, transport, city development, rural infrastructure, etc. in Odisha after Cyclone Phailin?

The state government of Odisha has justifiably won many accolades for its stellar handling of the disaster situation resulting from Cyclone Phailin. It is sincerely hoped that just as the Odisha government has set a new benchmark in preparedness levels in response to Cyclone Phailin, similarly it sets a new standard of an increased gender sensitive recovery post the cyclone for others to emulate. ■

3 Guidance Note on Recovery, http://www.unisdr.org/files/16775_16775guidancenoteonrecoverygender1.pdf

4 Guidance Note on Recovery, http://www.unisdr.org/files/16775_16775guidancenoteonrecoverygender1.pdf

The Act and the Actions

The remarkable success of cyclone Phailin related preparedness in Odisha calls for a third party comparison of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 of Government of India and the actions taken to be prepared for cyclone Phailin by the Government of Odisha. How do the Act and the actions match up? What does one say about the other?

In fact there is a detailed Report of the Task Force of Government of India that conducted the review of the Disaster Management Act, 2005 for Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India in March 2013.

The resulting report is detailed and meticulous. The main person behind

the report is Shri P. K. Mishra who is famous for aiding the recovery of thousands of victims of the 2001 Gujarat Earthquake.

We do not know when the Task Force findings will be put to use to revise the Act but what we can do is compare the national act and the actions taken on the ground and find ways for other states to be as effective as Odisha in preparing for the next possible disaster.

Such a comparison warrants a special focus on the following four key questions:

- How would preparedness have been different if it were a slow onset disaster such as a severe drought?

- How was preparedness monitored and evaluated at the state and district levels?
- What worked in terms of preparedness from the decade long education, information, and communications inputs at the district level?
- How did the private sector and businesses respond to the preparedness call by the authorities?

The above list is only indicative and by no means exhaustive. It can be expanded and be used to develop a detailed Terms of Reference (ToR) to set up an Odisha Task Force to capture the lessons emerging out of the preparedness actions. ■

Human Resource and Capacity Development after Cyclone Phailin

So what are the human resources and capacity development needs of Odisha after cyclone Phailin? Who will estimate these needs? And how these needs will be addressed? In fact how do we start thinking about it? And needs will be different at different level and in different sectors.

Luckily National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) has published a detailed report on Human Resource and Capacity Development Plan for Disaster Management and Risk Reduction in India for the Government of India in 2013. In many ways it is a Human Resource Plan for Disaster Risk Reduction in India, with detailed need assessment as well as

institution analysis. It is a useful document to start work for Phailin.

Odisha must take this plan and evolve it further. Similar rapid need assessment as well as institutional analysis in coming weeks can be done by Government of Odisha by excellent local institutions such as Xavier Institute of Management Bhubaneswar (XIMB) or Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT) or other. There are many other able institutions. The main purpose of making such a plan is to come up with capacity gap as well as priorities of training needs. With these two details time frame and budget can be worked out to be included in recovery purposes.

But this is not enough. Such a plan must go beyond the NIDM work in the following areas:

- (a) Building capacity for innovations in shelter reconstruction;
- (b) Developing trainings for accelerating economic growth in agriculture field;
- (c) Develop tools to watch and catch new and original ideas on ways to revive micro enterprise; and
- (d) Use of social media for guiding and informing remaining recovery but also upcoming preparedness.

Human resource and capacity development are as important as rebuilding income and assets for sustainable recovery in Odisha. ■

A Day before Cyclone Phailin

A lot is known about what happens after a disaster strikes. However, little if any knowledge resources are available that describe what transpires before a disaster strikes. The war like footing preparedness measures of the Odisha government before the advent of Cyclone Phailin provide such a rare opportunity to peek into the important events taking place before disaster in the form of Cyclone Phailin struck Odisha. The following is a summary of the important events and activities taking place in Odisha to enhance its preparedness in the face of an imminent Cyclone Phailin.

The All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI), which is championing Odisha's unique and pioneering experience in reducing risk, established and facilitated a series of meetings for Dr. Sam Bickersteth, Global CEO, Climate and Knowledge Development Network (a global network in key 74 developing countries to mitigate and manage climate change) when he visited Odisha in October 2013 to learn from the UN Development Programme, civil society and the government about climate smart disaster and development initiatives in Odisha.

Shri Arvind Behera, a long standing national expert on disaster risk reduction explained the first ever initiative of Odisha post the super cyclone 1999; and how that has been useful for taking preparedness actions against cyclone Phailin.

Shri Surya Narayan Patro, Minister of Revenue and Disaster Management, Odisha shared his views about how the intensity and frequency of climate related extreme events have increased. He further added that defence and other agencies such as National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) and Odisha Disaster



October 10, 2013. Photo: AIDMI.

Preparation for cyclone Phailin: An emergency meeting called by Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) and Special Relief Commission (SRC) to allot responsibilities to humanitarian agencies.

Response Action Force (ODRAF) have been positioned in vulnerable areas; and that immediate relief food was being prepared for the people.

Humanitarian organisations were allotted responsibilities to reduce the duplication of relief efforts in an emergency pre-Cyclone Phailin meeting called by the Odisha State Disaster Management Authority (OSDMA) and the Special Relief Commission (SRC). This meeting was attended by several national NGO and international NGOs. Shri Ambika Prasad Nanda, State Programme Officer at UNDP, Odisha explained how humanitarian organisations can play an active role by mobilising thousands of volunteers across the cyclone-prone region that are trained in first aid and can support evacuations and aid distributions post disaster.

A visit to Balapur village (Puri district) by AIDMI and CDKN members along with discussions with the community members helped to understand if the early warnings had reached the communities and if the necessary preparedness actions were taken by the community. The community members said that they were cutting the tree branches (as a preventive measure to stop deaths by branches falling on people); stocking

essential goods such as kerosene, water, keeping important documents in plastic bags and moving to closest shelters or safer locations.

Mrs. Binapani Mishra, Secretary of a community based organisation called the Society for Women Action Development (SWAD) in Puri district related how the sarpanch and the panchayat ward members kept on receiving early warnings and alerts from state government to work towards achieving the goal of zero casualties by evacuating the villages in the most vulnerable and low lying areas to safer locations or cyclone shelters.

Odisha has set an example for the rest of India by using all the resources efficiently in the pre-disaster stage. This efficient planning of preparedness activities in the pre-disaster state is perhaps the greatest reason behind the minimal loss of life after the cyclone. Other reasons include the constant monitoring of weather patterns and warnings, clear instructions to district authorities, positioning of relief materials and teams well in advance, coordination with the central government for defence and other agencies' assistance, and most importantly, the evacuation of a large number of vulnerable citizens to safe locations. ■

Advice from Dr. Ian Davis to Students Seeking Work in Cyclone Phailin Relief and Recovery



Photo: AIDMI.

1. **Understand basic principles of disaster risk management climate change adaptation and recovery**
Note the many examples to be found in various sets of guidelines
2. **Read around these subjects**
Read as widely as possible, noting the old maxim "read when you write and write when you read..."
3. **Become involved with community dynamics**
Gain experience as a volunteer in community initiatives and social action wherever you live, in order to understand how communities operate, patterns of leadership, and their relationships with other groups and local government.
4. **Work with vulnerable people**
Within your locality, find ways to support and encourage communities in need: people with special needs, ethnic minorities, the elderly, those in prison etc
5. **Examine the way local hazards are managed**
What structural and non-structural measures are being used in your locality to manage floods, landslides, earthquakes, high winds etc.?
6. **Build your knowledge**
Keep in touch with the subjects of DRM, CCA and general Development Practice through the media, Google searches and local societies with an interest in social development.
7. **Become better qualified**
Become as highly qualified as you can through attending short courses and post graduate courses or modules
8. **Gain first-hand experience**
Visit disaster recovery sites without becoming a burden on busy assisting groups working in the areas. Observe the sheltering and recovery processes, seek ways to understand the varied interests and standpoints in recovery management:
 - Survivors role
 - Local Government
 - Local NGO's and local institutions
 - International NGO's
 - International Donors
 - Private Sector
 - Local leaders
9. **Develop your own disaster plan**
Put into practice what you have learned as protection for yourself and your family. ■

Field Updates: Cyclone Phailin

On October 12, 2013 at around 13:30 hours, Vishal Pathak and Khyati Halani, team members from the All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI) visited Jaipur village in the Puri district of Odisha to assess the preparedness of the community ahead of the advent of cyclone Phailin expected to make landfall between 18:00-20:00 hours at Gopalpur.

It was observed that the community members were moving to safer locations such as schools and pucca buildings with important documents and materials. In addition to this, several trees have been felled by community members as pre-emptive measures to prevent death caused by trees falling over people during or after the cyclone. All these actions provide incontrovertible evidence that not only has the community received the early warning messages but have taken them seriously as well.



Photo: AIDMI.

There has been continuous rain accompanied with strong winds since last night, i.e. October 11, 2013. This explains massive power outage. It is expected that as the cyclone gets closer to the coast the communication and transport facilities will be

severely affected. It has also been observed that the government has undertaken a massive evacuation drive. Considering the severity of the impending cyclone, it can be safely inferred that immediate relief will be needed post the cyclone.

- Vishal Pathak and Khyati Halani

ANNOUNCEMENT

International Conference on Humanitarian Logistics

Background
The International Conference on Humanitarian Logistics (ICHL) 2013 is the first conference organised in India to address this key issue of Humanitarian Logistics and will provide the platform to various stakeholders to deliberate on the same.

Objectives

The Conference aims to:

- Provide an essential update on natural and manmade disaster, future trends, disaster response, preparedness and governance issues.

- Identify strategic issues in humanitarian logistics including logistics planning, coordination and delivery systems, in good condition, in the quantities required, and at the places and time they are needed.
- Sensitise towards the humanitarian supply chain management processes due to the increasing complexity and magnitude of global emergency relief operations for their business
- Understand the responsibilities of all the stake holders including government, government organisations, NGOs,

international relief agencies, and academia and their role to equip the business leaders with the skills and knowledge to manage unpredictable environment.

- Highlight how efficient and effective logistics system can make significant contribution in managing disaster and humanity.
- Provide an opportunity for professionals to meet peers and colleagues in positive environment of learning and sharing. ■

For details:
<http://www.iimraipur.ac.in/ichl2013/>

KNOWLEDGE PRODUCT

Where Will My Help Come From?

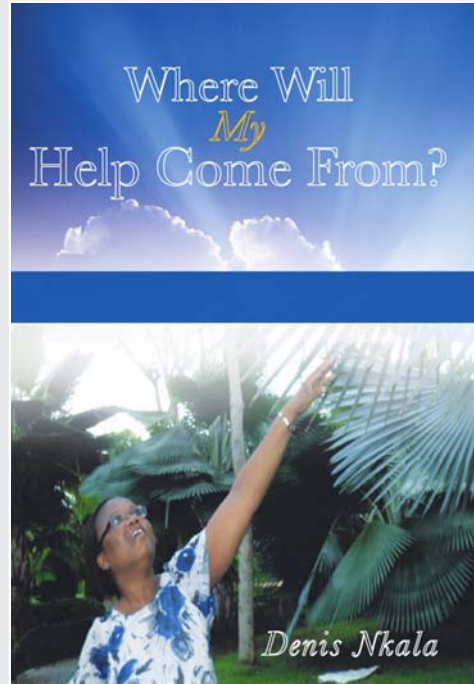
A Story of Courage and Positive Thinking in a Fight against Elusive and Transforming Drug-Resistant Cancer

Overview

Denis Nkala was a young management trainee, fresh out of graduate school and newly returned to his home country of Zimbabwe, when he met Fidelia aboard a staff bus on his way to the hospital to visit his mother. Her kindness and genuine concern for the plight of a stranger touched him, and their friendship blossomed quickly. Before long, her easy smile and air of dignity carved their way deep into his heart.

When they joined their lives together in marriage, they had no idea of the difficult trials they would be called upon to face. Fidelia, with her husband always by her side, battled various cancers in an effort to live long enough to see their children grow. Now Denis writes to communicate the courage, love, and faith that she held throughout her struggle.

This touching true story details the life of a wife and mother as she battles an aggressive, mutative cancer. Told from the perspective of her husband, who was her diligent caregiver throughout her twelve-year battle, this narrative encompasses the gravity and pain of a long fight with cancer as well as the suffering and dedication of those who supported the fight.



About the Author

Denis Nkala was born in Zimbabwe. He holds a PhD in applied management and decision science and works for an international organisation. He currently lives in New Rochelle, New York, with three of his children and fond memories of his wife, Fidelia. ■

For more information: <http://www.amazon.com/Where-Will-Help-Come-From/dp/1491705167>

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