

**Oxfam India plans celebration of IDDR, 2018 with the poor, the most vulnerable and the excluded**

India is a country of opportunities. Though the development deficiencies are high and poverty is still rampant, the fight to reduce poverty has also been duly acknowledged. The challenges with development dynamics offer enormous opportunities. Between 2005-06 to 2015-16 a massive number of Indians (271 million) have risen above poverty. However, still with 364 million people living in multi-dimensional poverty which is the largest in the world<sup>1</sup>, the challenge before the country is huge. Oxfam’s analysis shows that 73 percent of the wealth generated last year went to the richest one percent, while 67 crore Indians who comprise the poorest half of the population saw one percent increase in their wealth<sup>2</sup>. The rising differences between the rich and the poor is a global concern and for India it is creating serious consequences for the poor.

Further to the inequality, evidences show that the burden of disaster impact fall heavily upon the poor and affects their fight against poverty. Evidence show that while human impact due to disasters have declined (e.g., in 2017 the global human impact of disasters particularly casualty and population affected was much lower than the last 10 year’s average), India was the lead recipient of human impacts of disasters caused by natural hazards in 2017 with around 2,300 deaths and 22.5 million people affected in particular by floods and storms<sup>3</sup>. Though India was not in the list of top 10 countries in terms of economic impact of disasters in 2017, the burden of economic fell heavily upon the poor because of the existing vulnerabilities most significantly the rampant multi-dimensional poverty.

The Internal Day for Disaster Reduction, 2018 which is focusing upon ‘Target C’ of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk reduction i.e., “Reduce direct disaster economic loss in relation to global gross domestic product (GDP) by 2030” has great significance for Oxfam India as it believes that poverty and sufferings are not inevitable and that poverty induced vulnerability represents an unacceptable level of injustice and inequality. Oxfam India



Oxfam’s DRR program Presence in India

<sup>1</sup> OPHI (2018), Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2018: The Most Detailed Picture To Date of the World’s Poorest People, published by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative(OPHI) available at [https://ophi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Preliminary\\_global\\_MPI\\_Report-2018.pdf](https://ophi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Preliminary_global_MPI_Report-2018.pdf) accessed dated October 8, 2018

<sup>2</sup> Oxfam India Press Release on inequality available at <https://www.oxfamindia.org/pressrelease/2093> accessed dated October 8, 2018

<sup>3</sup> Wallemacq P (2018), Natural disasters in 2017: Lower mortality, higher cost, published by Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED) Research Institute Health & Society (IRSS), Université catholique de Louvain available at <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/CredCrunch50.pdf> accessed dated October 8, 2018

practices an integrated approach to development, humanitarian and advocacy with an improved understanding of disaster risks thereby enhancing people's resilience to disasters, raising their voices and enabling them to protect their lives and livelihoods. It is understood with Oxfam India that reduced economic losses to disasters will increase the pace of the poor fighting poverty and inequality to rise above poverty and lead a life with dignity and respect. Oxfam India joins hand with global community in celebrating IDDR, 2018 with this very belief and has adopted a robust plan with partners to celebrate this International Day for Disaster Reduction. Oxfam India along with partners is working with local communities, local government and civil society networks in four highly vulnerable states of India namely; Assam, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Odisha. Each of these states share a dynamic picture of vulnerability which are unique from one another. Recognizing the diversity in exposure and vulnerabilities and the focus of programming, a state wise plan for IDDR celebration has been prepared:

## Strategic Focus

While Oxfam India has a central focus on the global theme, the events planned will strategically focus on issues and concerns of excluded communities to ensure that their voices are shared and acknowledged within the larger vulnerable communities. The idea of **social inclusion** will be practiced and promoted in an integrated manner with the designated theme of IDDR, 2018 through ensuring participation and leadership of excluded communities in the planned events. The events will ensure that communities from all **castes and tribes (particularly SC and ST), persons having differential abilities and gender** are given opportunity to learn and share their learning of economic resilience. The state wise plans are as follows:

### Assam

- Oxfam India with partner North East Affected Area Development Society (NEADS) in Jorhat district of Upper Assam is organizing a daylong event at sagunpara village with 200 participants including government front line workers, community members particularly women and people from most vulnerable communities. The event will include a mix of the lecture, awareness rally, thematic discussion and extempore speech on significance as well as ways and means of reducing disasters induced economic damages particularly with reference to the recurrent floods experienced by the community. The emphasis would be on ensuring the voices of the excluded communities
- In Darrang district Oxfam India with local partner Social Action for Appropriate Transformation and Advancement in Rural Areas (SATRA), is organizing two separate events in two villages targeting 500 participants. The events will include street-play by school children on traditional as well as scientific ways of reducing flood induced economic damage at No3 Bangalpota LP School playground which has an estimated coverage for 200 children and 30 adults from 13 villages. In Mowamari village 250 community members including women and children from 7 villages will organize a rally to spread awareness on reducing disaster induced economic damages

- In Morigaon district, Oxfam India with local partner Morigaon Mehila Mehfil (MMM) is organizing an awareness rally which will involve 150 participants including 50 Children and 100 adults at 1no Sukutiputa village. The rally will carry relevant play-cards with messages related to reducing flood induced economic damages.

## Bihar

Events will be organized involving representative from 20 panchayats will share their view on the losses that had occurred due to disaster or climate change in past ten years like reduce in crop production, water shortage, life lost, infrastructure loss, Gender issues in emergencies, WASH etc. and the measures they had taken in last 2-3 yrs. of the DRR intervention in the respective villages by Oxfam and partners including what is their preparedness level to reduce economic impact of impending disasters. The events will be facilitated by IDF, Adithi and Nav Jagriti, three of Oxfam India partners with technical support of Oxfam India's Regional Office for Bihar

## Odisha

Oxfam India with three of its local partners namely; Unnayan, SOLAR and Pallishree already facilitated mock drills in intervention villages in this month as a preparedness action to effectively respond to 'Very Severe Cyclone Titli'. Further, though plans were in place to have day long events on 13<sup>th</sup> October, these are being postponed for the time being considering the prevailing impact of 'Very Severe Cyclone Titli' and the post cyclone flooding. Oxfam India's Humanitarian team will be conducting Rapid Needs Assessment starting from 13<sup>th</sup> October to plan for initiating appropriate response

## Uttar Pradesh

Oxfam India with local partner Shohratgarh Environmental Society (SES) is organizing an Interface meeting with government line departments and vulnerable communities for popularization of resilient agriculture and crop insurance as ex-ante measure to reduce impact on agriculture which is the major source of livelihood for the most vulnerable communities. The meeting is expected to involve 90 Persons including WASH, VDMC and Citizen Forum members and other Community representatives, NGO's, 10 Persons from various government line departments including ADO - agriculture, BTM - Agriculture, Seed In charge, Counsellor - Horticulture, DD agriculture, ADO - Panchyat, Master trainers from revenue and disaster management and rural development departments.

The above events will be documented by Oxfam India and partners and will lead be shared using the IDDR platform. It is expected that such events will recognize the vital impact played by economic losses in intensifying poverty and increasing inequalities. Oxfam also plans to join state level celebrations organized by respective state disaster management authorities with a view to share the poverty and inequality perspective related to the theme.