



OUTCOMES OF MULTI-STAKEHOLDER MONSOON PREPAREDNESS WORKSHOP

Sphere India, a National Coalition of Humanitarian, Development and Resilience Actors in India, convened a 'Multi-Stakeholder Monsoon Preparedness Workshop' on May 24 2022 focusing on south and western coastal states in India. The workshop was instrumental in getting a better understanding of the status of preparedness of various stakeholders, particularly in the south and southwest India, identifying priority actions to be taken up by various stakeholders for better preparedness and strengthening multi-stakeholder coordination and key recommendations for forward actions. Shared below is the status of preparedness in Kerala and Maharashtra documented by the experts present and Key recommendations for improved preparedness:

Status of Preparedness

Maharashtra

- State government has made an expert committee for understanding landslides and enhancing preparedness and mitigation strategies. Besides, there is localized preparedness effort in landslide-prone deep pockets.
- Plan to have automatic rain gauges and automatic weather station to monitor the situations and evacuate people at the earliest if required, ie within 24 hours.
- There are specialized efforts for Mumbai. The solid waste management system was strengthened, plastics removed, rivers, canals, and sewers were desilted, repaired roads and bridges, which were in bad conditions, were repaired. Metro construction is being fortified.
- Across the state, desilting of rivers and other required areas have done, prepositioned resources with districts, and conducted monsoon preparedness training for volunteers.
- Of the total 18 NDRF teams in the state, five will be placed at the base in Pune and all other teams will be sent to districts in advance.
- Prepositioning of advance funds of 20 lakh to 1cr at districts to do emergency activities. A proposal for this has been sent to the CM
- Every district has GO -NGO coordination center.
- Regular IAG coordination.

Kerala

- Updated Orange Book of Disaster Management-2022, will be published by 25th May, featuring standard operating procedures and the action to be taken during natural disasters.
- Organized Kerala State Relief Commissioner's Monsoon Preparedness Conference under the guidance of CM.
- Incident Response System established at LSG levels. Mechanism to use service of volunteers under Sannadha Sena, Apada Mitra and Civil defense established.
- Continuous monitoring, dredging, cleaning, and clearance of branches, bushes, debris particles of water bodies is progressing.
- Pre-monsoon inspections of dams are over. All pre-monsoon actions as part of dam manual are getting completed.
- Based on past experiences of monsoon floods, implemented a vulnerability-linked relocation plan, strengthened local level actions, and prepared local level DM plans for the 1034 LSGs in Kerala.
- Emergency action plans prepared for all the major dams under KSEB and Irrigation in Kerala
- Prepared flood maps for different return interval periods with the support from UN agencies
- **Early warning mechanism:** Daily rainfall alert through different mediums in Malayalam. information dissemination through official WhatsApp groups of officials, departments, forces, NGOs, media, people representatives, and volunteers. Information dissemination through official websites, emails, Facebook, and Twitter. Every 3 hours, dissemination of IMD nowcast through various mediums in Malayalam and English. Circulation of IEC materials.
- Proper coordination and communication between the agencies and the government authorities at the district level.

Key Recommendations

Government

- Prepositioning of kits can be done through a combined effort of the government/district administration as well as prudent investments from the corporates.
- The disaster risk governance needs to be strengthened to manage the disasters effectively.
- For effective Joint Rapid Need Assessment, capacities of the State and District administration officials needs to be strengthened, enabling them to lead these JRNAs with evident support from the Civil society, CSR and media.
- A robust feedback mechanism needs to be developed to incorporate the needs and requirements of the affected population. It would be optimal to bring out these feedback mechanisms before the onset of monsoon.
- Needs assessments in urban and rural settings require different approaches. It is integral to initiate dialogues with the local self-government and help them identify the existing levels of preparedness along with the ideal levels of preparedness and response.

Civil Society

- Field experts from civil society shall give trainings to the first responders as well as the JRNA team to incorporate the learnings and experiences from the field.
- JRNAs shall be comprehensive enough to adjudge the qualitative impact on affected population due to strained social sectors, for example, closure of schools/anganwadis, delay in accessing social protection schemes, etc.
- Civil society organizations shall engage into dialogues with the government based on the disaster preparedness levels and the scope of collaborative effort that can be made.
- It is integral to maintain a two-way communication with the affected communities in order to have better insights regarding the needs, requirements, capacities and expectations.

Corporates/CSR Organizations

- CSR organizations can engage into planning, development as well as awareness campaign for the Monsoon Preparedness. The language of the awareness campaigns can be focused in order to maximize the outreach and impact.
- CSR Organizations can collaborate with field experts for strengthening the capacities of the state/district officials, JRNA team members as well as the first responders for basic emergency preparedness.
- CSR pool funding can work as a strategic investments in organizations that are working in the field of disaster management.
- Corporates shall include disaster preparedness and resilience in their CSR policies.

Media

- Media should be considered an important stakeholder in Disaster Resilience and Response activities. Disaster management agencies should maintain a pro-active communication with the media partners, since they are typically the focal-point for disseminating disaster response activities (post -disasters).
- All stakeholders, the government, civil society, corporates should provide quality and authentic information's to all media houses in order to limit the spread of mis-information.
- Media can play a crucial role in disseminating live-saving information in no-time. Also, through social media-dissemination, information are now accessible from every nook and corner. Yet, to strategize the information flow and to make an optimum utilization of 'Media' as a stakeholder, a disaster-management communication strategy needs to be developed at district levels to have a clarity on the linkages, roles and responsibilities and the flow of information.