

Message from CEO

## Dear Readers

The month of February has been remarkable with significant milestones. Reflecting on the two decades of Sphere India's dedicated work in impactful humanitarian action and disaster management, we celebrated the 21st Sphere India Day on February 21st, 2024. This virtual celebration was graced by sector stalwarts including Shri. Prof. Vinod Sharma, Shri. N M Prusty, Shri Anil Kumar Sinha, IAS (retd.), alongside other experts and participating member organizations. Together, we delved into insightful discussions and reflections on the origin and evolution of Sphere India, drawing from our achievements, experiences, and challenges. From the recommendations emerging from this insightful platform, Sphere India is set to release a 21 Point Visioning Document, shaping the trajectory of humanitarian action for the next decade.

In addition to this milestone, we are proud to announce the launch of "Stronger Together: A Compendium of Stories of Courage and Resilience During Disasters," developed in collaboration with Reliance Foundation. This compendium highlights inspiring stories of individuals and communities at the grassroots who have been pivotal in disaster mitigation and response efforts. The launch took place at the prestigious Raisina Dialogue on February 22, 2024, in Delhi. Furthermore, we are planning a campaign to amplify these stories, including a dissemination event during our Annual Lessons Learnt Workshop scheduled in the next month.

As we step into March, we acknowledge the pressing need for climate adaptation and disaster management, particularly in light of the heatwave predictions across the country. Our commitment to enhancing resilience in vulnerable regions remains steadfast, and we continue to advocate for improved preparedness and community initiatives to mitigate the impacts of such extreme weather events.

I take this opportunity to extend heartfelt greetings and best wishes to all our members and partners for their support, unwavering dedication, and commitment to humanitarian action and resilience building in India in the last two decades. We are committed to enhancing synergies among diverse stakeholders and welcome any feedback to improve our programs and monthly bulletin. Our aim is to ensure that our monthly bulletins serve as valuable sources of information. Your feedback and suggestions are invaluable as we strive to enhance the quality and relevance of our communications.

Warm Regards,

Vikrant Mahajan CEO, Sphere India

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21st Sphere India Day: Reflecting on the Achievements and Navigating the Way Ahead



Reflecting on the two decades of Sphere India's work on impactful humanitarian action and disaster management, we celebrated 21st Sphere India Day on February 21st, 2024. This virtual celebration featured insightful discussions and reflections on the origin and genesis of Sphere India and the future of humanitarian and resilience-building efforts. drawing from Sphere India's achievements, experiences, and challenges.

We were honored to host distinguished speakers including Shri. Prof. Vinod Sharma, Shri. N M Prusty, Shri Anil Kumar Sinha, IAS (retd.), Mr. Subir Kumar, Dr. Aniruddha Dey, Mr. Tushar Kanti Das, Ms. Meghana Vaidya, and Ms. Debadrita Sengupta, alongside participating member organizations. Together, we explored lessons learned, strategies for forging stronger partnerships and collaborations, and our commitment to humanitarian principles. The event sparked meaningful dialogue and collaboration, shaping the trajectory of humanitarian action in India. From the recommendations emerging from this insightful platform, as an Action Point Sphere India would be coming out with 21 Point Visioning Document based on all our learnings so far in the humanitarian and development sector, forging the way forward for the next decade.

## Program Update

#### **Knowledge & Capacity Sharing**

**Regional Training on Psychosocial Support in Emergencies - West Region** 







The Regional Training on Psychosocial Support in Emergencies - West Region, held in Mumbai was organized by NIDM, Sphere India, Americares India Foundation NIDM and convened 25 participants from diverse organizations across Gujarat, Goa, Maharashtra, & Rajasthan. Over three days, sessions covered vulnerability assessment, disaster management basics, psychosocial care for women & children, stages of reaction to disasters, basic techniques of psychosocial care, follow-up & referral mechanisms, care for vulnerable groups, and self-care for caregivers. Trainers included experts from NIDM, NIMHANS, AIIMS Gorakhpur, and Sphere India, offering practical insights and techniques to enhance psychosocial support effectiveness.

Session on Navigating Civil Society Landscape in India



As part of the Sphere India Day celebrations, a session was organised on Navigating Civil Society Landscape in India. The session emphasized the critical role of CSOs in driving positive change and addressing societal challenges. Several key themes were discussed, including challenges and opportunities for civil society engagement, transparency and accountability, and effective advocacy and policy influence.

Mr. Tushar Kanti Das from Plan India, Ms. Meghana Vaidya from RedR Indian and Debdrita Sengupta from Bal Rakhsa Bharat shared their perspectives in this insighful discussion.

Launch of the Compendium of Stories of Courage & Resilience During Disasters



Sphere India jointly developed a publication titled 'Stronger Together: A compendium of stories of courage & resilience during disasters' with Reliance Foundation, which was launched during a panel at Raisina 2024 on 22nd February 2024. The stories presented in this compendium are based on the experiences and perspectives of individuals at the grassroots level who have actively contributed to disaster management and resilience efforts in their communities

'Stronger Together' is a tribute to the ten individuals who have shared their stories of courage and resilience during times of disasters, along with millions of other individuals whose efforts often go unnoticed, yet continue to inspire the community with their relentless work, every day, contributing towards humanity by helping each other during times of emergency and crisis.

#### Inter-Agency Coordination

#### **Emergency Preparedness and Response Coordination**

Sphere India has been monitoring various types of hazards throughout the entire month, including overseeing the trends of cold wave and increasing risks of heatwave. There were also regular alerts and updates issues including 01 situation update on temperature rise in southern India. Regular coordination efforts in disseminating alerts, including a recent one addressing heavy snowfall, ensuring that communities and relevant stakeholders remain informed and prepared in the face of environmental challenges. This steadfast effort has been to look at undertaking activities to safeguarding against the impacts of natural phenomena across the region.



## Consultation of National NGOs in India: A precursor to Lessons Learnt Workshop



In preparation for the upcoming Annual Lessons Learned Workshop scheduled for April 2024, Sphere India organized a virtual consultation with National NGOs on February 02<sup>nd</sup>, 2024. The meeting emphasized the crucial role of national NGOs in national development and the humanitarian sector. Participants discussed the challenges faced, such as resource limitations and data collection difficulties.

The consultation highlighted the importance of collaboration, coordination, and incentives. The need for interagency coordination, inclusivity, transparency, and trust was also emphasized. The issue of accelerating risk and the need to strengthen the humanitarian system was also discussed. Mr. Aniruddha Dey, Chairperson, PRISM and NNGO Rep, Sphere India Board moderated the consultation.

#### **Collaborative Advocacy**

Roundtable Consultation on Strengthening Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in Emergency Preparedness Response and Resilience Building



The Multistakeholder Consultation on WASH in emergencies convened by Sphere India aimed to enhance coordination and collaboration in addressing India's water, sanitation, and hygiene challenges. Stakeholders reviewed the Scope of Revision for the Handbook on Multistakeholder Coordination, ensuring alignment with current practices and recommendations. Discussions highlighted national standards and guidelines, including insights from the Disaster Management Plan (DMP) by MoJS. Participants shared experiences on multistakeholder coordination and identified gaps in emergency response frameworks. The event fostered knowledge exchange and emphasized actionable strategies for resilience building. Sessions included presentations on WASH sector activities, round-table discussions on rural and urban WASH facilities, and sectoral priorities. The outcome comprised recommendations for improving WASH sector coordination during emergencies.

### **News from IAGs and State Networks**

#### Inter Agency Group, Gujarat convenes to formalise CBRA Activities





IAG Gujarat and UNNATI, with the support of UNICEF Gandhinagar, organized a 3-day residential training on Community-Based Rapid Needs Assessment (RNA) from January 31st to February 2nd, 2024. The workshop brought together 30 participants from 19 organizations across Gujarat. The training aimed to build a resource pool for disaster response, with focus on qualitative damage assessments to enhance community resilience.

## Strengthening Inter-Agency Planning and Coordination in Madhya Pradesh

On February 28th, 2024, the Inter-Agency Group (IAG) MP convened at the Disaster Management Institute in Bhopal to address the looming threat of heatwaves in Madhya Pradesh. The meeting focused on fostering collaboration among members, analyzing challenges from the Harda Fire Incident, and enhancing preparedness for heatwave emergencies. Discussions centered on improving coordination, communication, and resource allocation based on lessons learned.

Action items included developing a comprehensive preparedness plan, conducting training programs, and engaging with communities to raise awareness. The meeting concluded with a commitment to proactive measures aimed at minimizing the impact of heatwaves on public health and safety.

# Engaging Inter-Agency Members to Plan effective Coordination in Jharkhand



A field visit to the office of LGSS at Lohardaga was organized according to the plan, with Mr. Ajay Kumar Sinha, GS of BPYP, invited to participate from Palamu for sensitization and information dissemination purposes. The meeting commenced with a brief introduction. Attendees exchanged insights and perspectives, fostering a collaborative atmosphere conducive to achieving the visit's objectives. This initiative aimed to enhance communication, understanding, and coordination among stakeholders, facilitating effective engagement in future endeavors.

# **News from Members**

Stronger Together: A Compendium of Stories of Courage and Resilience During Disasters

Reliance Foundation in association with Sphere India launched a publication - 'Stronger Together': A compendium of stories of courage & resilience during disasters at Raisina 2024. The publication features individuals at the grassroots who have been a vital part of the support system for mitigation and response efforts during disasters in India. These individuals are developing the capacities and leading efforts to drive disaster management and resilience in their communities. the publication highlights stories of courage and resilience from grassroots communities in India facing disasters like floods and pandemics. It emphasizes the importance of local leadership, multi-stakeholder partnerships, and raising awareness through demonstrations to build resilience. Lessons include empowering grassroots through training, fostering local leadership, and demonstrating awareness programs. The compendium offers replicable strategies for disaster-prone regions, showcasing the potential of community-led initiatives in disaster resilience. Through collective action and empowerment, communities can mitigate the impact of disasters and foster sustainable progress.



# Climate Resilient Hospitals and Concept of Green Hospital Building: RAWS India Training

Mr. Amit Kumar Dadich, Executive Director of RAWS India based in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh facilitated a session on Climate Resilient Hospitals and the Concept of Green Hospital Building. The session has been part of Water, Sanitation and Hygiene This session is part of the WASH-CCES training program for healthcare facilities organized by National Health Mission, Madhya Pradesh, UNICEF and Institute of Livelihood Research and Training (ILRT).



# Caritas India's: She Leads Study in Collaboration with Change Alliance & Start Network

"SheLeads" a study on Women's Leadership in DRR by Caritas India was launched on on Feb 28, during a pivotal event which focused on strengthening women's leadership and participation in humanitarian action and DRR governance. Eminent figures like Ms. Kanta Singh from UN Women and Ms. Joana Villaflor from Start Network graced the occasion. Fr. Dr. Jolly emphasized prioritizing women's involvement in decision-making for effective disaster risk reduction. The event gathered 40+ gender and DRR experts from NGOs, CSOs, and government stakeholders. Discussions revolved around crafting robust action plans and gender-responsive DRR strategies. Measures like gender audits, funding source mapping, and mentorship programs for women in leadership were explored. The collaborative effort promises meaningful change, inclusivity, and effectiveness in disaster risk reduction approaches.



## Updates from the Government

## **Schemes for Restoration of Mangrove Forests**

The Government promotes mangrove forest conservation through the 'Conservation and Management of Mangroves and Coral Reefs' scheme. Regulatory measures are enforced via various acts including the Coastal Regulation Zone Notification (2019). The Union Budget 2023-24 introduced the 'Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes (MISHTI)' to enhance mangrove ecosystems' ecological and economic significance. Launched on World Environment Day 2023, MISHTI aims to restore/reforest 540 km2 of mangroves across 9 States and 3 Union Territories over five years. The initiative encourages state convergence with existing programs. From 2015 to 2021, India's mangrove cover increased by 252 km2. Union Minister Ashwini Kumar Choubey provided this information in the Lok Sabha. Read More>>

Shri Bhupender Yadav emphasises inclusive development of entire landscape connecting Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan making it a world class eco-tourism centre



A national exhibition at India Gate, Delhi, focused on LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) themes, was inaugurated by Ms Leena Nandan, Secretary, MoEF&CC, with other dignitaries present. Emphasizing youth involvement, Ms. Nandan highlighted the importance of environmentally conscious behavior for India's economic development and ecological balance. The event featured a bicycle rally, cultural shows, and an eco-fashion show promoting eco-conscious clothing.

Environment Secretary Emphasizes sensitizing Youth on a Environmentally Conscious Behaviour



In the inaugural address, Ms Leela Nandan, Secretary, MoEF&CC, emphasized that the youth have a lot of energy, sensitizing them on environmentally conscious behaviour will promote the focus India has placed on economic development and ecological balance

## **Raisina Dialogue 2024**

The 9th edition of the Raisina Dialogue took place from February 21-23, 2024. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated the Dialogue, with H.E. Mr. Kyriakos Mitsotakis, Prime Minister of Greece, as the Chief Guest. Representatives from over 100 countries, including Ministers, former Heads of State, Military Commanders, and Industry Leaders, participated. The theme, "Chaturanga: Conflict, Contest, Cooperate, Create," guided discussions across six pillars. Over 2500 attendees from 115 countries engaged in-person, while millions watched digitally. Themes included tech regulations, environmental innovation, defense dynamics, multilateralism, post-2030 agendas, and democracy's defense.

A national exhibition at India Gate, Delhi, focused on LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) themes, was inaugurated by Ms Leena Nandan, Secretary, MoEF&CC, with other dignitaries present. Emphasizing youth involvement, Ms Nandan highlighted the importance of environmentally conscious behavior for India's economic development and ecological balance. The event featured a bicycle rally, cultural shows, and an eco-fashion show promoting eco-conscious clothing. Activities included LiFE-related guizzes, ecofriendly product displays, and workshops on waste segregation. LiFE, an India-led global movement, encourages sustainable lifestyles through actions like conserving energy, reducing waste, and saying no to single-use plastic. The event continues on 10th February with additional competitions and workshops.



the Inauguration for the 9th edition of the Raisina Dialogue held by the Ministry of External Affairs and Observer Research Foundation

## Updates from International Humanitarian Community: Climate Action

## Global Summit for DRR held by Global Network of Civil Society Organisations for Disaster



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**Reduction (GNDR) in Nairobi** 

The 2024 Global Summit for Disaster Risk Reduction concluded after three days from 20th-22nd February 2024 with a set of insightful sessions, with over 25 discussions covering data sharing, funding, and capacity building. With representatives from 60 countries, the summit underscored progress and challenges in disaster risk reduction worldwide. The event reinforced our commitment to climate adaptation and risk-informed development, shaping future initiatives aligned with the Sendai Framework targets.

Trilateral Best Practices Report, UNDRR: In August 2023, the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat, along with disaster management institutes from China, Japan, and Korea,



organized an online workshop on earthquake risk management. Aimed at sharing expertise from Northeast Asia, the workshop facilitated knowledge exchange among 550 participants from 83 countries. Experts highlighted earthquake risk assessment, early warning systems, and community resilience measures. Mongolia's National Emergency Management Agency contributed insights and needs. The workshop informed discussions at the International Disaster Resilience Leaders Forum 2023. This report compiles best practices and recommendations for enhancing earthquake risk management globally. Online resources, including materials and recordings, supplement the report's findings. Read More>>

State Disaster Mitigation Plan (2024-2026): NSW's diverse landscape exposes it to natural hazards like bushfires, floods, storms, and coastal erosion. Recent events, including floods and bushfires, have incurred significant social, environmental, and economic costs. Disasters have been part of NSW's history, impacting communities for thousands of years.





The State Disaster Mitigation Plan aims to address these risks through a multi-hazard approach, considering factors like population growth and climate change. Secondary impacts, such as air and water pollution, and the interplay between population growth and climate change, exacerbate disaster risks. The plan focuses on reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience across NSW's varied regions. Read More>> Global Waste Management Outlook (2024) The jointly published report with ISWA updates global waste generation and management costs since 2018, using life cycle assessments. It

explores scenarios of continuing business-as-usual, adopting halfway measures, or committing to zero waste and circular economy societies. Predictions indicate municipal solid waste will rise from 2.3 to 3.8 billion tonnes by 2050, with global waste management costs projected to soar to USD 640.3 billion annually without action. Implementing waste prevention and management measures could limit costs to USD 270.2 billion, while a circular economy model could yield a net gain of USD 108.5 billion yearly. The report outlines actions for various stakeholders to avert the worst scenario Read More>>

Promoting Circularity in the Value Chain of Plastics in India: The plastics industry in India faces significant social costs, estimated at US\$62-96 billion in 2023, with continuing business-as-usual projecting US\$541 billion for 2025-2030. Adopting a 100% circular plastic value chain by 2030 could save US\$170 billion. Mismanaged plastic waste exacerbates environmental pollution, with India among the top global polluters. Despite growing plastic consumption, recycling rates remain low. Regulatory efforts aim to curb single-use plastics. Circular practices present economic opportunities but require systemic changes and investment. This report assesses the industry's structure, costs, and policy recommendations, urging a shift towards circularity to mitigate environmental Read More>>



Digital Progress and Trends Report, World Bank: The Digital Progress and Trends Report adopts a comprehensive approach to digitalization, examining both production and adoption aspects of digital technologies and their interactions. It highlights the complexity of digitalization, where benefits such as innovation and growth can coexist with risks like market concentration and inequality. While digitalization can create jobs and enhance inclusion, it also introduces power imbalances and surveillance capabilities. Moreover, it offers opportunities for climate change mitigation but increases the carbon footprint of the ICT sector. Read More>>



Greening Public Administration with GovTech, World Bank: Governments are increasingly seeking opportunities to leverage digital technologies to build a greener future. This guidance note provides useful advice to policy makers underlining adequate leadership and commitment are crucial to implement coordinated GovTech and Green policies focus on "greening Public Administration through GovTech" defined through policies, initiatives, and/or solutions that embrace environmental considerations by design, maximizing the green benefits and considering the potential negative impacts. Read More>>



Women, Business and the Law, 2024, World Bank: Women, Business and the Law 2024 offers updated metrics to assess global advancements in legal gender equality across 190 economies. It comprises two datasets: Women, Business and the Law 1.0 and the expanded Women, Business and the Law 2.0. The former updates data on eight indicators based on recent reforms, while the latter introduces a new framework assessing the enabling environment for women's economic opportunities. Women, Business and the Law 2.0 evaluates legal rights, supportive frameworks, and expert opinions on law implementation, advancing beyond mere legal measurement to assess outcomes for women. Read More>>

**UNESCO World Heritage Convention** 

Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with

today, and what we pass on to future generations. Our

cultural and natural heritage are both irreplaceable

sources of life and inspiration. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

(UNESCO) seeks to encourage the identification,

protection and preservation of cultural and natural

Grant Amount: 10 Million - 107.5 Million Euros

Organization: EU - India and MoES

## **Grants and Opportunities**

## **Breakthrough Research Grants Program**

The JHG- Klinsky India Institute mission aims to improve society through research, education, policy, & practice to work with partners in India. Its two-fold strategic priorities include enhancing opportunities by networking in priority core areas including Infectious diseases, Maternal, child & adolescent health, Health strengthening, Climate change & svstems environmental security, NCDs.

Sphere India Academy Calendar

Grant Amount: \$60,000 (2 proposals) Organization: John Hopkins University Deadline: 9th April 2024

# Read More>>

# Deadline: 31 Oct 2024

Read More >>

heritage around the world.

# Sphere India

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|--|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|----------------------------------|--|--|
| MARCH 2024   |     |     |     |     |     |     | UPCOMING SESSIONS FOR MARCH 2024 |  |  |
| SUN  | MON | TUE | WED | тни | FRI | SAT |                                  | Inaugural Session: handholding training program on   |  |
|  |     |     |     |     | 1   | 2   | 12<br>Mar                        | Localization in Empowering Communities towards<br>Resilience<br>Link: http://tiny.cc/Localisation  |  |
| 3  | 4   | 5   | 6   | 7   | 8   | 9   |                                  |  |  |
| 10   | 11  | 12  | 13  | 14  | 15  | 16  | 15<br>Mar                        | Role of NGOs in Post-Disaster Resilience- IAG<br>Rajasthan<br>Link: http://tiny.cc/PostDisasterResilience  |  |
| 17   | 18  | 19  | 20  | 21  | 22  | 23  |                                  |  |  |
| 24   | 25  | 26  | 27  | 28  | 29  | 30  | 18<br>Mar                        | Clobal Recycling Day - #RecyclingHeroes - Interview<br>Series<br>Link: http://tiny.cc/ResilientTourism   |  |
| <b>31</b><br>Sphere India Academy was launched on April 10th, 2020 (as COVID-19<br>Academy) as a collaborative initiative of WHO, UNICEF, WFP, HCLF, Sphere<br>India, and other organizations. The academy serves as a capacity-building<br>program, aiming to provide training for humanitarian aid and<br>humanitarian and frontline workers across India. Its primary objective is to<br>equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to fulfill various roles<br>in emergency preparedness and response, as well as to support local |     |     |     |     |     |     | 22<br>Mar<br>25<br>Mar           | Heatwaves, Floods, and Vector-borne Diseases:<br>Understanding Climate-related Health Risks<br>Link: <u>http://tiny.cc/SphereIndia_YTChannel</u><br>Education in Emergencies and Cash Assistance:<br>Practical Strategies for Crisis Response<br>Link: <u>http://tiny.cc/SIA-EiE</u> |  |
| government, administration, and communities. Over the past three years,<br>the Academy has conducted more than 270 sessions, with approximately<br>150,000 participants and 684 unique resource persons delivering these<br>sessions.  |     |     |     |     |     |     | 28<br>Mar                        | Panel Discussion: Indigenous Wisdom and<br>Approaches to Disaster Preparedness- Bihar<br>LINK: <u>http://tiny.cc/SIA-IndigenousDRR</u>   |  |

**Upcoming Events and Plans Ahead** 

For more details, contact Ms. Hannah Kezia Jose at hannah@sphereindia.org.in More details about the Annual Lessons Learnt Workshop (scheduled in April 2024) to follow.



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