



EU provides emergency assistance to flooded villages in Odisha

New Delhi, September 3rd, 2014 - Following the successive waves of flooding that have struck the Eastern State of Odisha since late July, the European Commission is providing €249,000 to help some of the worst affected communities meet their emergency needs. The humanitarian assistance will benefit over 25000 people living in the two districts of the State that have been hardest hit, Jajpur and Bhadhark.

“These people have lost their houses, their belongings, and in many cases their sources of livelihood since the fields they work in are under water”, said Joao Cravinho, the Ambassador of the European Union in India. “This emergency aid will therefore specifically focus on cash transfers that will enable them to meet their immediate needs until the situation reverts to normality, as well as on emergency shelters and hygiene promotion for the most vulnerable”.

The EU emergency assistance will benefit inhabitants of 20 villages located in the worst affected pockets of Jajpur and Bhadhark districts - mostly poor dalit families who were caught unaware by the floods as they had never experienced them before. The aid will be delivered primarily through direct cash grants or through cash-for-work programmes, a mechanism through which funds are channeled to beneficiaries in exchange for participating in community infrastructure projects or repair of shelters. The money will help families meet their most critical needs, particularly food, whilst speeding up the reconstruction efforts. Emergency shelter material and hygiene kits will also be provided to the most vulnerable families, and hygiene awareness campaigns organized in the communities.

The project is being funded by the Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection department of the European Commission (ECHO) through its Small Scale Response mechanism and will be implemented by Christian Aid, and international NGO which has a long established presence in Odisha.

Background

The State of Odisha has experienced three successive waves of flooding over the last month and a half, affecting over 3.6 million people across 13 districts. More than 60000 people have been displaced and vast areas of agricultural land have been inundated, disrupting livelihoods and affecting the food security situation. The flooding has also caused widespread damage to shelters and safe water points, making local communities vulnerable to water-borne or vector-borne diseases. Access to safe drinking water is a major challenge.

ECHO's Small Scale Response fund is a global mechanism which allows ECHO to provide rapid funding of up to €300,000 for humanitarian aid in countries affected by natural and man-made disasters.

For more Information:

The European Commission's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Department (ECHO):
<http://ec.europa.eu/echo>

The European Union's Delegation to India:
http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/india/index_en.htm

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