

Phase III Report On  
Post Kosi Floods Rehabilitative Intervention In  
Kumarkhand and Murliganj Blocks Of Madhepura District In North Bihar  
Duration October - November 2009



Initiated & Supported by

Subodh Gupta

Bharti Kher

Nature Morte

Trident Hotel

Saffron Art

With specific contributions for the reporting period from

Subodh Gupta, G R Iranna, Bose Krishnamachari and Saffron Art

Implemented by

Samajik Shaikshaniik Vikas Kendra (SSVK)

## **Background and Context**

In the aftermath of Kosi Floods of August 2008, a group of renowned painters came together under the banner of Saffron art, a renowned auctioneering house for paintings, and pledged to donate the proceeds of the auction of one of their paintings to the cause of the Kosi flood victims. Eminent & Contemporary artists Subodh Gupta and Bharati Kher brought together their 31 celebrity friends as well as India's leading artists and raised Rs 3.93 crore in an auction to support those affected by the Kosi floods in Bihar. The on line auction was facilitated by Saffronart and with the auction proceeds, including buyers' premium, it was decided to reach out to the flood victims through grassroots NGOs with a credible presence in the affected area and with experience of having run relief programmes in the past. Samajik Shaikshank Vikas Kendra (SSVK) was one of the two NGOs approached for reaching out to the Kosi flood victims in recognition of its credibility and capability of carrying out relief operations on a significant scale. Prior to being approached by Saffronart, SSVK had already carried out significant relief work with the Kosi flood victims in Saharsa and Madhepura Districts with financial assistance from agencies like N.M. Budhrani Trust, UnitedWay Mumbai, All India Disaster Mitigation Institute (AIDMI) and Swiss Red Cross for periods ranging from 2 weeks to 2 months. Assistance in kind came from UNICEF, Prayas and Tech Mahindra. Following the support from artists, HSBC Bank also extended financial support for running livelihoods restoration programme and child care centres for the Kosi flood victims.

SSVK initiated work amidst Kosi flood victims in early 2009 with support from Subodh Gupta, Bharti Kher, Nature Morte, Trident Gurgaon & Saffron Art. The intervention was targeted at 4000 families spread over Kumarkhand and Murliganj blocks of Madhepura district counting amongst the worst affected blocks. The overall goal and specific objectives of the intervention were as follows:

### **Project Goal**

The overall goal was to enable the poor and marginal families to break out of the current crisis resulting from the floods

### **Specific Objectives**

1. Relief support during the crucial period of non availability of food and water by ensuring availability of both
2. Making accessible a package of health care, and medicinal services for one month that seeks to protect children, mothers, the aged and the infirm
3. Responding to the basic utilities required by the flood victims like clothes, kitchen utensils, bedding, storage and cover against the elements of weather
4. Addressing the educational needs of children
5. Enable the flood victims to undertake livelihood activities for rebuilding their lives

**Key Interventions** that were postulated to be undertaken under the broad formulation of the goal and objectives were as follows:

1. Provision of dry ration support (flat rice and jaggery) and one wholesome cooked meal a day to 4000 families for 30 days and consisting of rice, dal and a vegetable of potatoes and nutri nugget through setting up of a community kitchen in each of the 12 targeted villages

2. Installation of 2 hand pumps each in 75 flood affected hamlets
3. Extension of Medical Assistance for flood induced diseases like diarrhoea, fever, gastroenteritis, abdominal pain, deworming, acidity, cold and cough, pneumonia, skin and eye infection and malaria.
4. Provision of Family Packs to 4'000 families comprising blanket, durrie, warm clothes for children, kitchen utensil, saree, dhoti, mosquito net, shawl, towel and plastic mat and aluminium box
5. Setting up of 1 NFE centre each in the 12 intervention villages
6. Provision of working capital support to 500 families to initiate income generating activities

### **Summary of Phase I and II of the Post Kosi Floods Rehabilitative Intervention:**

As the financial assistance came in installments, the intervention had to be structured in phases. Moreover, the actual funds that could be raised fell short of what was anticipated. This led to reprioritisation and changes in scheduling of coverage, however without significantly compromising the planned interventions. Cumulatively what could be achieved as part of the intervention in the first two phases is indicated below:

1. **Nutrition Support to 4,000 families:** Against a targeted coverage of 4000 families for 30 days, nutrition support comprising dry ration (flat rice and jaggery) and one cooked meal a day comprising rice, dal and a vegetable of potatoes and nutri nugget was extended to 4267 families for a period of 30 days. Of the expenses incurred on these 267 extra families, expenses for 140 were charged to the project budget and that for the remaining 127 were met out of SSVK's own resources. The intervention came as a critical input to enable the beneficiaries to tide over a period when floods had left them bereft of any livelihood opportunities to sustain themselves and they were on the threshold of starvation. Moreover it prevented them from getting deeper into the debt trap by not having to borrow from moneylenders for their nutritional needs. The intervention could provide them a measure of food security and was appropriately timed as it came when almost all sources of external support had been phased out.
2. **Installation of 150 hand pumps in flood affected hamlets:** Against a stipulated installation of 150 hand pumps, 150 were actually installed in the two intervention blocks of Murliganj and Kumarkhand of Madhepura District. The installation of new hand pumps could ensure access of the target group, numbering around 75,000 (1 hand pump for 500 persons) to clean and safe drinking water. The availability of safe drinking water reduced the vulnerability of the target group by acting as a check on incidence of morbidity. For the entire period of relief operations, no significant outbreak of any water borne epidemic was reported from the field.
3. **Extension of Medical Assistance for flood induced diseases:** Medical Assistance was extended for diseases like diarrhoea, fever, gastroenteritis, abdominal pain, deworming, acidity, cold and cough, pneumonia, skin and eye infection and malaria to a total of 11351 persons. SSVK's trained cadre of community health workers adept in symptomatically diagnosing the commonly occurring health problems during floods and in their aftermath addressed the health needs of the affected families. This intervention provided much needed medical succour to the flood victims.

4. **Setting up of 1 child care centre each in 12 villages:** 1 child care centre was established in 12 targeted villages which together covered a total of 1952 children of which 1079 were boys and 873 were girls. These NFE (Child Care) centres subserved a wide variety of purposes including games, tuition classes and peer activities. SSVK recognised the need to have a focus on children who despite counting amongst the most vulnerable in the event of disasters are seldom the focus of relief organisations. Relief interventions normally restrict themselves to addressing the immediate physical survival needs of children which is no doubt important but not enough. Hence, in order to ensure that the disaster does not impair children's mental, social and emotional development, SSVK ran the NFE (Child Care) centres to address these concerns. Each centre had two educators cum counsellors and was used for a wide variety of purposes, including games, tuition classes, peer activities and pre schools. Teaching and learning materials in the form of books, copies, blackboards, slates, pencils, chalk, duster, eraser, pencil cutters, school bags and recreational material in the form of toys and games were made available at all the centres. The centres operated from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m and activities comprised a mix of educational and recreational activities. Children at each centre were organised into sub groups in accordance with their learning levels and educational inputs to the sub groups were provided on the basis of their learning levels. This not only helped in keeping the children enthused but also kept the teaching learning objectives of the centre more focussed.
5. **Provision of working capital support to 500 families to initiate income generating activities:** Against a stipulated coverage of 500 families, 500 families were actually covered. The activities and the numbers covered against each remained the same as proposed. Livelihood restoration initiatives ensured regular cash incomes to the targeted 500 families. The intervention came as a critical input to enable the beneficiaries to tide over a period when floods had left them bereft of any livelihood opportunities to sustain themselves and they were on the threshold of starvation. More, importantly this support came in at a time when the Bihar government, despite the best of its intentions and efforts, was being able to reach out with its relief interventions to less than 10% of the flood victims and the non governmental actors, who had registered a tumultuous presence in the immediate aftermath of the floods, had either started getting scarce from the area or else were being driven by their sectoral agendas (hardly any of it with livelihood restoration as its focus) irrespective of the real needs of the people. The intervention helped provide these flood victims a measure of food security through assured cash income.
6. **Provision of Family Packs to 4'000 families comprising blanket, durries, warm clothes for children, kitchen utensil, saree, dhoti, mosquito net, shawl, towel and plastic mat and aluminium box:** This intervention was kept in abeyance in Phase I and II of relief operations as this budget head entailed a sizeable resource engagement and given the volume of two installments that were transferred for Phase I and II, SSVK felt that the expenses on other interventions enjoyed greater priority than provision of family packs. With the balance accruing to SSVK after phase II and the residual amount subsequently transferred to SSVK, the available resources were not adequate to carry out this intervention (family packs) in its entirety. Moreover, the time lag between when this intervention was planned and when SSVK actually could operationalise it also did not leave this intervention relevant to be operationalised in its entirety. Hence, this intervention, in consultation with the Kosi Flood Victims, was suitably modified and restricted to extend blanket

coverage to 7,000 families spread over Kumarkhand and Murliganj Blocks of Madhepura District in phase III of the intervention.

**Phase III of the Post Kosi Floods Rehabilitative Intervention:**

**Specific Objective:**

- To enable the targeted families to survive the cold winter months by providing blankets to them

**Key Intervention:**

Purchase and distribution of 7,000 blankets amongst 7000 families spread over Kumarkhand and Murliganj Blocks of Madhepura District



**Intervention actually undertaken and achieved results in phase III:**

Against a stipulated of 7000 families with 1 blanket each, 7000 blankets were actually distributed amongst 7,000 families. Details of coverage are incorporated in the tables below:

Blanket Distribution in Kumarkhand Block of Madhepura District						
S.No.	Name of Panchayat	S.No	Name of village/tola	Ward No.	No.of beneficiary families	No. of Blankets Distributed
1	Rahta	1	Rahta	1, 2, 9	218	218
		2	Kohwara	1, 9	208	208
2	Ranipatti Sukhasan	1	Kurnama	1	56	56
		2	Sukhasan Yadav Tol	3	14	14
		3	Sukhasan Mushari+ Ramtol	2	118	118
		4	Rajak Tol	5	106	106
		5	Sukhasan Nadi Se Purab	7	149	149
		6	Ranipatti Mushari	9	74	74
		7	Kamalpur Mushari	11, 13	112	112
		8	Ranipatti Muslim Tol	8, 9, 13	112	112
		9	Amha	8, 9, 11	316	316
		10	Kusha Purvi	10	104	104
		11	Ranipatt	10	220	220
3	Vikorlahi	1	Shivnagar Jamuaha	8	84	84
		2	Jamuaha	4, 5, 6, 7, 8	237	237
		3	Jagir Chakla	3	97	97
		4	Gidrahi	2	93	93
		5	Vikorlahi	7	135	135
4	Lakshmipur Chandi Sthan	1	Lakshmipur Chandi Sthan	6, 7	152	152
		2	Kewat Gama	11	157	157
		3	Chhadapatti	8	152	152
5	Belahi	1	Belahi	10	119	119
<b>Total</b>					<b>3033</b>	<b>3033</b>

Blanket Distribution in Murliganj Block of Madhepura District						
S.No.	Name of Panchayat	S.No	Name of village/tola	Ward No.	No.of beneficiary families	No. of Blankets Distributed
1	Rampur	1	Rampur Nadi Se Paschim	5	119	119
		2	Rampur Mallah tol	8	70	70
		3	Baluaghat (Rampur)	1	59	59
		4	Rampur Yadav Tol	2, 4, 5	91	91
		5	Beldari Tol	4	50	50
		6	Rampur Mushari	5	134	134
		7	Rampur Verma Tol	4, 6	45	45
		8	Rampur Yadav Tol	10	37	37
		9	Rampur Brahman Tol	6	54	54
		10	Phagu Tol Mushari	2	97	97
		11	Tirasi goth Jhangar Tol	3	108	108
		12	Tirasi Mallah Tol	2	44	44
		13	Tirasi Nai Tol	2	18	18
		14	Tirasi Mislim +Yadav Tol	3, 4	47	47
		15	Ram+Paswan+Mushari+Tapra	2, 3	98	98

		16	Tapra	1	214	214
		17	Rampur Nadi Se Purab	7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13	416	416
2	Dinapatti Sakhba	1	Dinapatti Mushari	2	61	61
		2	Jwalahi Santhali	3	71	71
		3	Baghiniyan Santhali	2, 3	97	97
		4	Kadam Toli Santhal Tola	4	124	124
3	Jorgama	1	Jorgama Master Kamat Tol	1, 2	79	79
		2	Mirganj	10, 11	81	81
		3	Jorgama Yadav Tol	11	14	14
		4	Jorgama Muslim + Mushari	3	115	115
		5	Jorgama Goth	3	112	112
		6	Jorgama Yadav Tol	4	113	113
		7	Jorgama Mushari	8	70	70
		8	Jorgama Kamat Tol	9	138	138
		9	Jorgama Muslim Tol	10	83	83
		10	Jorgama Santhal Tol (Paschim)	2	119	119
		11	Santhali Nadi Se Purab	2	60	60
		12	Kamrahi Tol	7, 8	33	33
		13	Jivlal Das Tol	1	118	118
		14	Bhitta Tol	2	80	80
4	Murliganj	1	Goshala Mushari	2	118	118
5	Parba	1	Parba	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	217	217
6	Pokhram	1	Morkahi Santhali	5, 6	71	71
7	Gangapur	1	Khusrupatti	1, 2	150	150
8	Raghunathpur	1	Ratanpatti	2, 3, 4, 5	142	142
	<b>Total</b>				<b>3967</b>	<b>3967</b>

Summary of Blanket Distribution Coverage					
Name of the District	Name of the blocks	Total No. of Panchayats	Total No. of Villages/Tolas	Total No. of beneficiary families	Total No. of blankets distributed
Madhepura	Kumarkhand	5	22	3033	3033
	Murliganj	8	40	3967	3967
<b>Total</b>		<b>13</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>7000</b>	<b>7000</b>

With the distribution of blankets having been carried out in November 2009, the intervention did address a pressing humanitarian need for surviving a winter that is already there.



### **Monitoring by SSVK:**

The SSVK field workers organised themselves into 5 teams to carry out a survey of the families that were to be given blankets. Priority was accorded to the disabled, the elderly and the widows. The survey teams carried out random cross checks of each other's survey area to ensure the authenticity of the identified beneficiaries. Details pertaining to the beneficiary were entered in a register and a token was issued to the concerned beneficiary which carried the details as entered in the register. Details as entered in the register were transferred on to a receiving format. Blankets were given to beneficiaries against production of the tokens and once they got the blanket their thumb impression or signature was taken on the receiving format. The distribution was made from the field office of SSVK in Madhepura. Since there were large numbers of families to be covered, the distribution was spread over several days with each day designated for beneficiaries from a particular cluster. The beneficiaries were informed in advance about the designated day on which they were to turn up for collecting their blankets. At the distribution point a display board was set up the nature of intervention and the name of the donor indicated on it.

A purchasing committee made all purchase related decisions. Procurement of goods followed these guidelines:

- goods were to be of satisfactory quality



- the goods had to be delivered in good order and condition and in accordance with the Project timetable
- the price paid for goods represented value for money
- there was open and effective competition in the purchasing process

A sample of the blanket quality identified for the purchase was retained by SSVK with the supplier's signature on the quality specifics of it in terms of length, breadth and weight of the blanket. Once the supplies reached the SSVK warehouse, the bales of blanket on being offloaded were weighed to ascertain whether they subscribed to the quality standards as set by the sample. The entire payment was deferred to the post delivery stage to preclude the possibility of the supplier tampering with the quality of blankets.

The relevant government officials were given a copy of the proposal and the approved budget and the support of the panchayat representatives in the effective implementation of the intervention was successfully leveraged. A copy of this report would also be submitted to the government and also uploaded on the SSVK website.

Apart from all this the organisation has also done an extensive photo documentation of the activities associated with the intervention.





## Challenges

The organisation experienced a lot of pressure for rehabilitative support from those affected families who were not covered. However, through maintaining high standards of transparency in distribution operations, taking the local administration and the panchayat representatives into confidence, engaging local cadre of volunteers and involving the target group they could ward off such pressures. Systems like having a pre-designated beneficiary identification system in place helped the organization in managing the risk of being overwhelmed by the demand. Moreover, its wealth of experience in running relief and rehabilitative interventions over a period of more than 2 decades also came in handy.

