



Rescued people in Shelter at East Medinipur District

India

Odisha, West Bengal

Cyclone "YAAS" 2021

Situation Report # 1
28 May 2021



Highlights:

- The very Severe Cyclonic Storm "YAAS" made landfall on 26 May at around 0900 hrs near south of Balasore, Odisha. The period of landfall coincided with the full moon and lunar eclipse high spring tides created a strong storm surge that inundated the coastal districts of East Midnapore, South 24 Parganas and adjoining districts of West Bengal.
- Storm surge and high-intensity rainfall were the two major damaging factors in four districts each of Odisha and West Bengal while one district of the state of Jharkhand also experienced heavy rainfall. Extremely heavy rainfall over the Simlipal region in Mayurbhanj district of Odisha has triggered flash flooding in at least three rivers.
- According to Government of West Bengal, hundreds of villages inundated by storm surge are going to remain in this situation for next couple of days. UNICEF along with Government and partners are taking multi-dimensional actions to address the environmental health in these villages and reduce risk of acute diarrheal diseases and along with intensified COVID response.
- UNICEF has supported the Governments of Odisha and West Bengal in the preparation of key messages on COVID appropriate behaviors before, during and after cyclones, evidence generation on reach of child specific services through Anganwadi Centers and Child Care Institutions and monitoring the current situations.

Situation in numbers:

West Bengal:

- 2** Human lives lost
- 1.5 Million** people evacuated
- 10 Million** people affected
- 3.3 Million** children affected (estimated)
- 4** Districts affected
- 18** Blocks affected
- 4,619** Villages affected
- 300,000** Houses damaged (preliminary estimation of Govt.)
- 14,000** Relief Camps opened
- 230,000** People in Relief Camps including **90,000** children

Odisha:

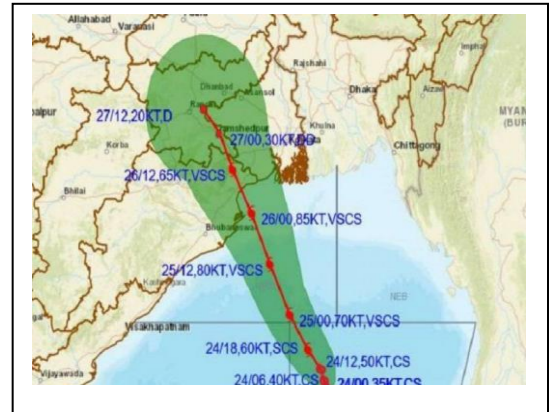
- 2** Human lives lost
- 0.65 million** people evacuated including **0.26m** children
- 128 Villages** severely impacted in **10** districts

Jharkhand:

- 12,000** People Evacuated

Situation Overview and Humanitarian Needs

- Cyclone “YAAS” inflicted widespread damages in the coastal districts of West Bengal including East Medinipur, South 24 Parganas, North 24 Parganas and adjacent districts such as Jhargram, Howrah and Hooghly.
- The wind damage caused by the Cyclone was relatively small in West Bengal compared to Odisha, however the storm surge due to Cyclone was significant in the coastal belts of all three coastal districts.
- The State Government of West Bengal reports a significant number of breaches (around 143) in the embankments of all these coastal districts causing devastation to more than 4,500 villages in general, specifically to rural habitations, agricultural lands and basic amenities like drinking water, health, sanitation, food availability etc.
- In West Bengal, cyclone-displaced people have sought refuge in overcrowded shelters, creating a high risk of vaccine preventable disease outbreaks as well as a possible spike in COVID-19 transmission in the immediate aftermath of the cyclone when evacuees return to their respective communities.
- Due to the limited availability of WASH facilities in the shelter camps and inundated WASH facilities in the communities, critical demands are emerging from the affected areas through the IAG network for primary health and WASH services and provisions to immediately be made available.
- COVID screening and CAB should be the priority in the Cyclone affected areas given the ongoing second wave across India, including West Bengal.
- Children, women, elderly and people with different abilities, being the most vulnerable groups should be supported with basic needs of food, safe drinking water, hygiene and Covid home isolation kits, Halogen / Chlorine tablet, primary health care including mitigation measures for vector borne diseases etc.
- Children will require psychosocial support and recreational activities through child friendly spaces, maintaining all CAB measures.



Leadership and coordination

- Chief Minister, in an emergency cabinet meeting on the 26th May reviewed the disaster management preparedness for Cyclone YAAS with all senior officers of relevant central and state agencies along with DMs & SPs.
- A State level task force has been constituted with Hon’ble CM as its chair to review Department wise Response Plan and their implementation.
- **Duayre Tran** (Relief at doorstep) scheme will be launched as an extension of Duyare Sarkar (Government at Doorstep). Camps will be organized in village, gram panchayat and block level, with all line departments involved. Applications from the affected people will be taken from 3rd June to 18th June. Primarily it will focus on the people from lower economic groups. Application will be scrutinised between 19-30th June. Direct Bank Transfers will be made to the eligible people between 1st -8th July so that the actual victims get the relief in time without any pilferage.

- UNICEF is supporting Interagency Groups (IAG) in Odisha and West Bengal, ensuring effective coordination of civil society capacity for assessments and effective response. Needs and vulnerability assessment in both states has started while Sphere India along with UNICEF is supporting IAG in Jharkhand to do a rapid needs assessment.

State Government Response

- State Emergency Operation Centre (EOC) of **West Bengal** (WB) at Disaster Management & Civil Defence Department, Nabanna (with toll free no. 1070) is functional and monitoring the situation with all likely to be affected districts.
- PWD, PHED, Health & Family Welfare, Irrigation, Power, Fisheries department of WB are directed to open their control rooms (24 hours).
- **Search and Rescue:** Total 17 flood relief Columns deployed in West Bengal and three flood relief Column and One ETF are deployed in Balasore, Odisha. 46 NDRF teams are deployed in Cyclone affected areas of East Medinipur, North 24 Parganas and South 24 Parganas districts. Five ICG ships and one Aircraft deployed off Andhra Pradesh/ Odisha/ West Bengal coast for responding to SAR requirement. 37 ICG Disaster response teams (DRTs) with Gemini (lifeboat) and lifesaving equipment / response gears are kept standby
- Regular preparedness review meetings are conducted with most risk prone districts through video conference from State Emergency Operation Centers (EOC).
- Essential items have been stockpiled in vulnerable areas and is in the process of evacuating people from low-lying coastal areas to the shelters. Quick Response Teams have also been activated in the coastal districts.
- During the Amphan cyclone (2020) in **West Bengal**, electricity was worst affected and it took more than 10 days to restore normalcy. Taking lessons from the past, the state electricity department is making all possible arrangements to avoid interruptions to power supply particularly in the hospitals and safe homes that house a huge number of COVID-19 patients. Special teams are being deployed in the six districts that have been identified to be at high risk of devastation for undertaking immediate electricity restoration work.
- Embankments are being repaired on a war footing.
- Response coordinated across various levels in **Odisha** included evacuation of at-risk people. Government followed precautions to mitigate risk of COVID-19. Masks were also distributed in the shelters. Considering the possible lapses, the Chief Minister of Odisha has suggested that the health of all evacuated persons to be monitored in next few days. Rapid response teams, Accredited Social Health Activists and Anganwadi workers will check the health status through door-to-door survey.
- The Odisha Government has resumed vaccination and door-to-door survey in Cuttack & Bhubaneswar. District Medical Officers from the affected districts had supplied a list of COVID-19 patients who were in home isolation. They were shifted to either temporary medical centres or dedicated buildings which are to be sanitized.
- 80% electricity in urban areas of **Odisha** have been restored in the affected districts, the state government is assuring to restore all essential services by 30th May. Flight operations from Bhubaneswar has been resumed. No major damage to railways property has been reported and the East Coast Railway is undertaking restoration work in full swing.
- The **Odisha** State Government has deputed additional doctors to district headquarters hospital of Balasore, Bhadrak to support cyclone related issues and management the COVID-19 response.

State & District IAG Response:

- IAG **West Bengal** convened an emergency meeting of member organizations to plan the humanitarian response to cyclone Yaas, based on preliminary information from volunteers on the ground.
- IAG member organizations have been delegated responsibilities to manage area-wise coordination, promoting safety awareness and assisting government in rescue and other key elements of response.
- Organizations have run intensive awareness campaigns in at-risk and affected communities through 'miking', door to door visits and group meetings and using IEC materials.
- Coordination of civil society in West Bengal is led by State IAG which has formed District Level IAGs in all districts. District level agencies deputed their volunteers and they are in close touch with the DDMOs, SDDMOs and BDMOs of the concerned areas. Other than volunteers and task forces we have 78 skilled volunteers in six districts (Jhargram, Purba Medinipur, Paschim Medinipur, North 24 Parganas, South 24 Parganas and Kolkata - volunteers of other districts are not counted at this moment) with KOBO Collect operation, enabling contactless, real time data collection. Moreover, we have shared the list with the NDRF, HAM Radio Team and the respective administrative authorities for effective communication at the ground level.
- Regarding Need for Post Disaster Need Assessment and our expertise - formats are shared with the district level agencies and their volunteers. Orientation programs organised on how to use the formats. Volunteers were trained to use the KOBO Collect Tool (Courtesy -**UNICEF**). Already a Core team is in place and in constant touch among themselves.
- UNICEF has developed seven audio files on miking contents for Cyclone preparedness on Health and sanitation, Preparation of safe drinking water, breast feeding, snake bite precautions etc.



Sector Specific situation & Response in West Bengal

UNICEF in West Bengal is in touch with key government departments to get updates on the measures taken by each of the social sector Departments as follows:

Health:

- State Government is requesting Indian Medical Association (IMA) to support with Doctors for Medical teams to be deployed in affected areas for primary health care services.
- As per of the preparedness process, Health & Family Welfare Department has ensured the stockpile of essential medicines which will be distributed among the affected population during the medical camps are organized soon after the water recedes from the coastal villages.
- As of now no diarrhea cases reported in the Cyclone affected districts.
- State Govt had ensured the availability of liquid medical oxygen (LMO) tanks full by 25th May night, stocked up more jumbo-sized oxygen cylinders to keep their backup generators ready and working in case of power snaps, hospitals across the city were gearing up to counter the disruption that cyclone Yaas would have caused. All Covid hospitals that had made back-up generators ready with reserve fuel for deployment in case of power supply disruption. At other mid-scale units that did not

have back-up, CESC (Central Electricity Supplies Corporation) positioned gensets to tide over the exigency.

- Gramin Swasthya Parisevok to be engaged, health department to provide information through their existing channels

WASH:

- Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) has issued circular to its district functionaries on 22nd May for deployment of Mobile Treatment Units (MTUs) in strategic locations, functioning control room on 24x7 basis, all bottling plants to increase and secure water bottle production for distribution of safe drinking water for affected people in case of emergencies.
- A 24x7 control room also functioning at the State level at PHED with 12 Personnel headed by a Senior Asst. Chief Executive Engineer with Mobile contact number of all and Email ID.
- Following are the information on impact of Cyclone on Pipe Water Supply system:

Sl. No.	District	No. of PWSS affected by power supply	No. of PWSS where power supply is restored	No. of pouches distributed	No. of tanks deployed	Quantity of water supplied through tanks (litres)
1	Purba Medinipur	89	15	4,56,000	30	20,000
2	Paschim Medinipur	22	3	1,45,000	0	0
3	Jhargram	7	0	66,000	0	0
5	South 24 Parganas	193	23	19,56,000	1,767	11,06,000
6	North 24 Parganas	104	45	4,75,700	0	0
7	Howrah	67	43	3,08,500	8	1,30,000
Total		482	129	3407200	1805	1256000

Education

- Commissioner, School Education Department issued an order on 21st May 2021 to all the District Inspectors of 17 most Cyclone prone districts to ensure to keep ready all the School Building and those are now being used for the evacuees to take shelter in all the three Coastal and cyclone affected districts.
- Strengthening of ECCE and parenting package which will include messages around PSS as well to help children and parents cope during these times.

Nutrition

- Following information obtained from DWCD on impact of Cyclone “YAAS” on Anganwadi Services:

District	No. of AWC Damaged		Nature of damage	
	Partially	Fully	Building	Food
1. East Medinipur	0	213	Yes	No
2. North 24 Parganas	99	14	Yes	Yes
3. South 24 Parganas	102	8	Yes	No
4. Jhargram	20	0	Yes	No
5. Kolkata	0	0	No	Yes
6. Howrah	4	1	Yes	No
7. West Medinipur	51	0	Yes	No
Grand Total	276	236	6	2

Child Protection

- Director, Directorate of Child Rights and Trafficking (DCRT) under Department of WCD, Govt. of West Bengal conducted the virtual Cyclone Preparedness meeting with all Superintendents of CCIs in the state to share with them a checklist for necessary action for safety and security of the children/inmates.
- All the essential food items, medicines, drinking water and power backup systems were made available to all the Govt. run CCIs and informed all other NGOs run CCIs to make simi
- No casualties or infrastructure damage or falling of trees reported by any CCI in South 24 Parganas and Purba Medinipur as confirmed by DCRT.

UNICEF Humanitarian Strategy

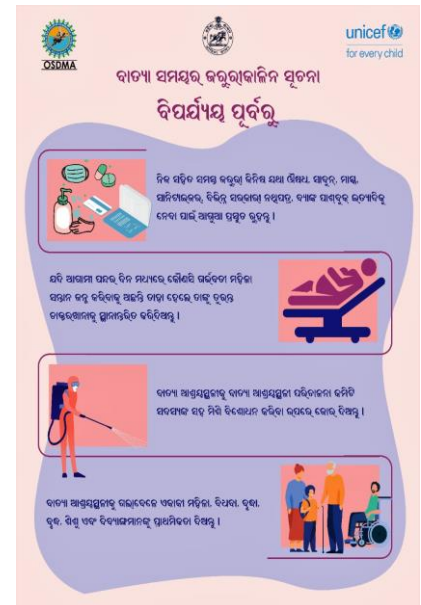
UNICEF aims to support the provision of life-saving interventions for cyclone affected women and children through support to delivery of essential services by line-departments (mainstream service delivery mechanisms). UNICEF partners will provide on-ground implementation support to mobilize the most vulnerable to utilize the Government-UNICEF services, seek feedback from women, men, girls and boys, and monitor results. The response strategy aims to reduce the burden on the already over-stressed system that is responding to the COVID-19 crisis and reduce exposure of cyclone affected women and children to the risk of COVID-19.

UNICEF in Actions in West Bengal

- UNICEF has developed a multi sectoral response plan before the Cyclone to strike by 24th May 2021 and is being now further updated on the changed scenario of the actual impact of the Cyclone “YAAS” in three coastal districts like East Medinipur, South 24 Parganas, North 24 Parganas. Following are the main activities planned by sectors:
 - Health sector planned to have mobile medical teams in South 24 Parganas districts and also support most affected Block PHCs in setting up ORT corners.
 - WASH sector is planned to distribute WASH supplies like Hygiene & Home Isolation kit, Water Tanks, hand washing stations, WASH awareness in most affected blocks of South 24 Parganas, North 24 Parganas, East Medinipur.
 - Child Protection Sector planned to set up child friendly spaces in worst affected blocks of South 24 Parganas through its existing partner Action Aid Association-West Bengal.
 - DRR through existing partnership with CASA-State IAG lead NGO support in IAG in coordination, JRNA, Volunteers support for setting up ORT corners in collaboration with Health and mass awareness drive on Cyclone and CAB in collaboration with C4D.
 - Nutrition sector in collaboration with DRR has planned a campaign to promote breast-feeding messages in the affected areas through IAG volunteers whereas necessary technical support and advocacy with DWCD for supplementary nutrition services to the affected mothers and newborn children.
 - Education has planned to extend PSS in the ongoing online ECD training.
 - Social protection sector has planned advocacy with the State Task Force on relaxing the norms of the key social protection schemes to enhance coverage and improve accessibility for the affected population, and support in developing a community-based monitoring system.
 - CAP in collaboration with DRR supporting State IAG for preparing stories and collecting photographs for use of the resource mobilization team.

UNICEF in Action in Odisha

- UNICEF is working with the office of the Odisha State Disaster management Agency (OSDMA), Special Relief Commissioner, GoO, IAG and other UN agencies on preparedness and immediate response
- A joint UN team meeting was organized to take stock of the situation and further develop a response strategy.
- UNICEF is supporting and coordinating with IAG team for undertaking the rapid needs assessment. A Joint rapid needs assessment is planned by IAG in Balasore, Bhardak, Kendrapada, Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar districts. The data collection will be done through KOBO collect platform. For this, a half day orientation will be organized for volunteers who will do assessment in field.
- UNICEF is coordinating with Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD) officials and reviewing the changing scenarios with District Social Welfare Officers from the six affected districts, with focus on pregnant women, lactating mothers, SAM children and have ensured their admission and receipt of food rations in health and cyclone shelters.
- UNICEF has also supported the DWCD in developing human interest stories of services rendered by FLWs and availed by beneficiaries during the cyclone
- UNICEF partners, including ActionAid, NYKS, Aid-et-Action, BGVS and other CSOs are supporting District administrations in monitoring the situation, particularly focusing on women and children, monitoring Take Home Ration distribution and food distribution in cyclone shelters.



Sources of Information:

- State Government sitreps
- Media Report
- State and Respective Districts IAG WhatsApp group.
- Media report

For more information, please contact:

Dr Yasmin Ali Haque
Country Representative
UNICEF India
Tel: +91 11 2469 0401
Email: yhaque@unicef.org

Tom White
Chief, Emergency
(DRR)
UNICEF India
Email: twhite@unicef.org

Richard Beighton
Chief, Resource
Mobilization
and Partnerships
UNICEF India
Tel: +91 11 2469 0401
Email:
rbeighton@unicef.org

Zafrin Chowdhury
Chief, Communication,
Advocacy and Partnerships
UNICEF India
Tel: +91 98181 05922
Email:
zchowdhury@unicef.org

Annex-I-Images of the Cyclone "YAAS" and Response Work



Inundated Village of Basirhat Block of North 24 Parganas- Courtesy-State IAG West Bengal



Inundated Village of Raidigi in South 24 Parganas District - Courtesy-State IAG West Bengal



Rescue operation by NDRF in East Medinipur District – By State IAG West Bengal



Rescue Camp in Naryagram Block, Jhargram District -by State IAG West Bengal.