



Cyclone REMAL

SITREP # 04

West Bengal, India

13:00 hrs IST, 07 June 2024



Highlights:

10 days after the cyclone Remal made a landfall, there has been random episodes of unseasonal rainfall in the affected area.

As per media reports 07 people have lost their lives and nearly 100 people have been injured as a consequence of the cyclone.

People continue to live in damaged and uninhabitable conditions with unusable toilet facility conditions. Some local donor agencies have supported with tarpaulin sheets which is providing temporary relief.

There were more than 1,400 relief camps functional during the cyclone, now they have been closed and people have returned to their homes, many of which have been partially or completely destroyed.

As per government reports from the district of South 24 Parganas, 23 blocks, 249 Gram Panchayats (village level government administration), 1,905,032 people are affected. Government has distributed 70,914 tarpaulins and 153,353 fresh cooked meals to the impacted people.

The Joint Rapid Need Assessment (JRNA) has been completed in 144 villages for the village level input and covered 205 households. The data from the JRNA may only be considered indicative and not representative of the affected areas.

The JRNA report highlights WASH, Health, Livelihood, Food supply, School infrastructure repair, Specialised support to disabled children as the priority areas which need focus and attention.

UNICEF has planned a WASH and Health response to the needs of approximately 1,952,395 people, including 644,290 children and 933,245 females across 10 most affected island blocks of the district of South 24 Parganas.

The IAGs unified response has been initiated and most of the IAG partners have catered to the needs including kitchen ware, tarpaulins, food, and some awareness activities on hygiene, infection control etc. have been initiated as of now.

Situation in numbers:

7 lives lost (Including one child, as per media reports)

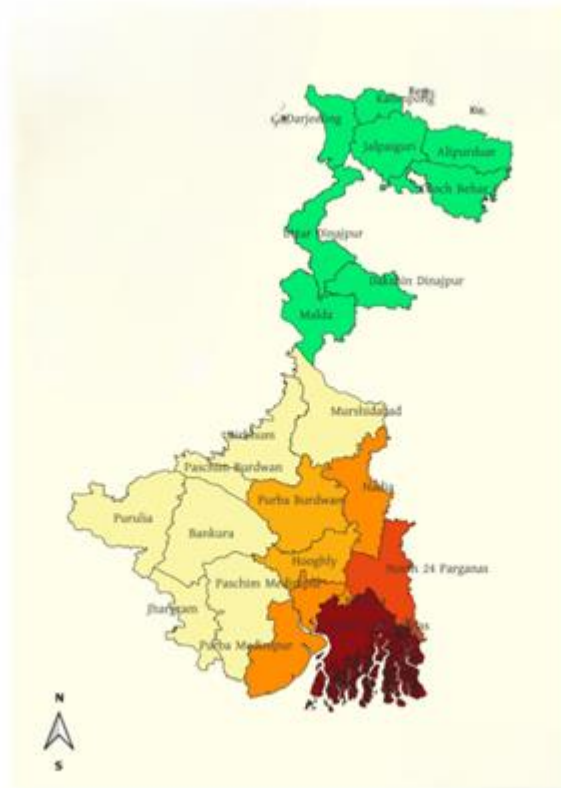
400 Integrated Child Development Services centres across three districts have been affected as essential supplies, food and equipment in the centres are completely lost.

23,267,617 people have faced the impact which includes **7,335,642** children.

Food, drinking water and safe sanitation are urgent and critical needs.

With dilapidated or fully damaged houses without electricity, protection and health are emerging needs.

Fig.1: Impacted districts in West Bengal



Critical Needs Based on the JRNA report and local administration / CSOs.

Short-term:

- Drinking water and hand washing facilities are highly compromised, increasing the risk of diarrhoeal and other communicable diseases outbreaks. This needs to be addressed most critically.
- Distribution of menstrual hygiene kits and providing education on menstrual health and hygiene practices to address challenges with menstrual hygiene.
- Urgent additional primary health care support, particularly on the remote and inaccessible islands.
- Conduct awareness campaigns on gender-based violence and establish safe spaces for survivors to seek support and assistance.

Mid-term:

- Collaborate with local authorities and community leaders to develop and implement protocols for addressing domestic violence.
- Establish community-based support groups and helplines to provide counselling and assistance to individuals experiencing family separations or privacy concerns.
- Conduct training workshops for healthcare workers and volunteers on identifying and addressing protection concerns, particularly those related to women and children.

Response

- Based on the warning received from the Indian Meteorological Department, UNICEF supported by Inter Agency coordination Group (IAG) convened daily coordination meetings including 30 plus agencies from Government, Civil Society Organisations, the district control rooms, the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), district and state level Ham (informal communication) clubs.
- UNICEF continues to coordinate with the Government and CSO partners on the ground to optimize the speed, efficiency and efficacy of response.
- The Joint Rapid Needs Assessment is completed.
- *UNICEF is responding to Health and WASH needs in 10 most affected blocks of the South 24 Parganas district: Canning-1, Basanti, Baripur-1, Joy nagar-1, Mathurapur-1, Gosaba (largest cluster of islands), Kakdwip, Namkhana, Sagar and Pathar-Pratima*

WASH:

Distribution of Emergency WASH hygiene and dignity kits which includes supplies for personal hygiene, culturally appropriate menstrual hygiene, household water filters, chlorine tablets, installation of community water tanks and portable water chlorinators. These will be distributed across 09 administrative blocks of South 24 Parganas district with the help of community volunteers and local inter agency group (IAG) partners to 3,500 most impacted families. Additionally, UNICEF will distribute 50 x 1,000 litre water tanks which will be installed in villages. Activities will focus on promotion of safe hygiene, sanitation and drinking water practices for over 1 million people across the district of South 24 Parganas.

Health:

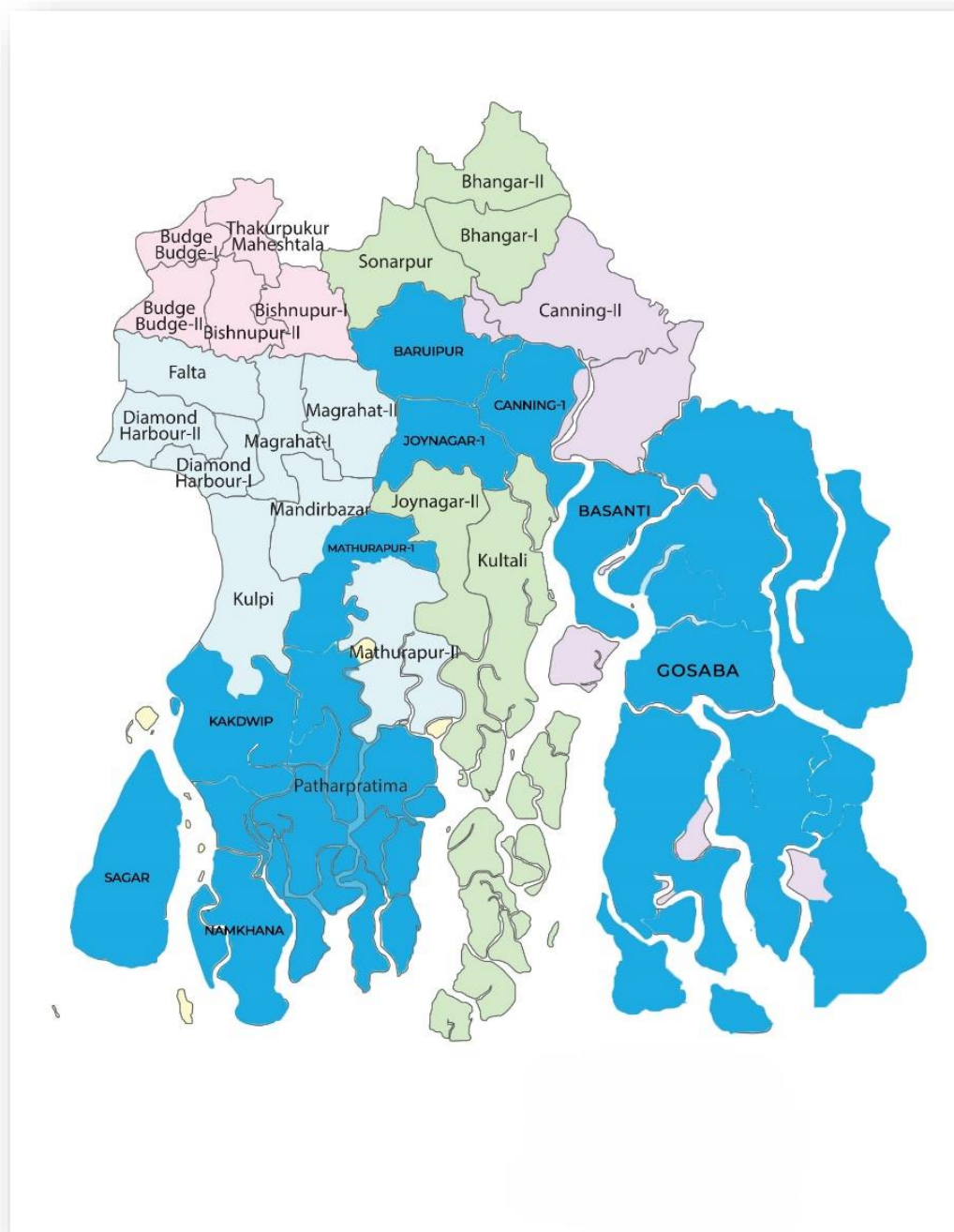
This intervention is jointly planned across three most vulnerable districts with respect to impact of the cyclone and status of health care system. This intervention will be jointly funded by the government and UNICEF, where the government will provide medical supplies, and UNICEF will support the professional fees of medical professionals and logistics of the boat clinics. UNICEF is partnering with West Bengal Doctor's Forum (WBDF), a medical professional led CSO, to organize Boat clinics and medical camps in the Cyclone-affected riverine blocks of Gosaba, Patharpratima and Namkhana of South 24 Parganas district. The following activities are planned for a period of six months:

1. Medical Team building and training activities: A pool of Medical and Nursing professionals from WBDF and district team will be selected and oriented on the following areas:
 - ANC-PNC: Conducting bedside clinics, measurement of vital, per abdominal examination, point of care investigation and need based referral.
 - Management of childhood illnesses: assessment of sick children, Setting up of ideal Zinc-ORS corner, indication and preparation of pre-referral dose of antibiotics and nebulization
 - Counselling: Home based Kangaroo Mother Care, Exclusive breast feeding, timely initiation of complementary feeding, monitoring of growth chart and timely referral of the defaulters. Other areas of Counselling will be Family planning and choice of contraceptives, vaccine hesitancy and fear of Adverse events following immunisation.
2. Operation of Boat clinic: Frequent boat clinics will reach the cyclone affected areas in the riverine Gram Panchayats of Gosaba and Pathar Pratima block which is expected to reach 4,237 pregnant women and 4,032 infants
3. Execution of Medical camp: At Bagdanga-Mousuni Public Health Centres, currently no medical Officer is posted, therefore, bi-weekly medical camps will be organized to reach 432 pregnant women and 314 infants in the island.

The WASH response is complemented by social mobilization activities at community level in 40 Gram Panchayats/village administrations to promote safe hygiene, sanitation, and drinking water practices through effective use of hygiene and dignity kits, menstrual hygiene, household water filters, chlorine tablets, installation of community water tanks and portable water chlorinators.

Social mobilization activities are also promoting good health seeking behaviour, including access to antenatal and postnatal care. It also includes information for demand uptake on availability, access and use of boat clinics and the demonstration sites for WASH and Health activities. Community level activities will also include rallies, street dramas, mobile hoardings and banners, wall writing along with poster, distribution of clear and concise messages through group and interpersonal communication.

Fig.2: District Map of South 24 Parganas – UNICEF is responding in the 10 districts coloured blue



Leadership and Coordination

- ✓ UNICEF is actively engaged with all Heads of the Departments of the state government concerned with UNICEF linked sectors to facilitate effective coordination and response to any needs coming from the communities. UNICEF's response plan will be shared with the government once there is clarity on funding and scope.
- ✓ UNICEF is leading the IAG coordination along with CASA, the secretariat of IAG coordination with 60 plus local CSOs, the CSOs become the voice of the most vulnerable in these communities and help them get relief / assistance from the world outside (both government and other agencies).
- ✓ With support from CASA and Sphere India, UNICEF initiated the JRNA and data from 98 villages with 57 volunteers have been monitored so far.

Government Response

The Government has set up command centres at state, district, and block levels.

Government has started food distribution to people from the lowest economic strata through the Public Distribution System

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