

EFICOR's Response to Kerala Floods

Summary of Devastation:

Kerala has faced the worst floods in over a century after experiencing unusually high monsoon rainfall in July and August. On August 25, 2018 The Chief Minister of Kerala said, "1435 relief camps are still operating, housing about 462,456 people down from 605,000 in 1822 camps". In an appeal on national television he asked for everyone to help Kerala¹ to support the people affected by the floods and rebuild Kerala. When EFICOR needs assessment team visited the villages they found many homes and communities are still submerged under water. As the water levels recede, families are making their way back to their homes to start the long process of restoring and rebuilding their homes. In some areas the flood waters are no longer visible, but they have left their tell tale signs; severe damage and destruction. Every single home is

covered in mud, electrical appliances have been destroyed, furniture and belongings have been water-damaged, and the area is littered with rubbish and plant debris. The flood waters have caused some houses to crack, walls to collapse, destroyed vegetation and ruined plant crops. While some locations have had electricity restored, other areas have been without electricity since August 14th. Many have started to return home from relief camps to salvage what they can, drying their mattresses, books and clothes in the sun, attempting to clean their clothes and scooping mud out of their homes. Many of them return back to the relief camps to sleep, partly because there is no available drinking water and also because the water is stagnating outside their homes. The relief campsites are often about 10-20 kms from their communities and they use the local bus service or private taxis, that charge Rs. 500 per trip to their houses.

Loss & Damages :

Sl. No.	Details	Loss & Damages
1	Loss of Human lives	372
2	Infrastructures –report bby Govt.	4441 Crores
3	No. of Houses fully destroyed	7000
4	No of houses partially damaged.	50000
5	Loss of standing crops	56439.19 ha
6	Paddy crops	25935 ha
7	Tapioca	10189 ha

Need Assessment

EFICOR team members led by Rev. Kennedy Dhanabalan and Dr. Saibhaskar Reddy were able to visit flood affected areas where the water had receded in Chengannur Taluk of Alapuzha (Alleppy) district, Kalluparambu village in Mazhukeer Village of Thiruvananthapuram Panchayat and Kavumbagam in Tiruvalla Taluk. These districts have been badly affected, with almost all houses under water at the peak of the flooding. The Team is rapidly involved in finding the needs and collecting the details of the number of families affected in each village in the Taluks of Thiruvalla, Pandalam in Pathanamthitta district and in Kuttanad and Chengannur Taluks in Alappuzha district. These are places initially EFICOR will be working in.

The final Need Assessment report will be made available on Wednesday 29.08.2018.

¹ <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/kerala/stand-by-us-in-these-testing-times-says-kerala-chief-minister-pinarayi-vijayan/article24772633.ece1>

Stories of Escape from the Flood

When EFICOR team visited these villages we heard stories of families that were initially unaware of the gravity of the flood and often had to evacuate quickly as their homes became submerged under water.

When the floodwaters came on 15 August all Joey CM's neighbours took shelter in his home, located on higher ground than his neighbours. But by 3.30am even his house was inundated. They made rafts with the trunks of the banana tree and they all managed to escape to a neighbour's two-storey house. They all eat and cook together in the home of their neighbour. One person said, "we feel bad now staying with them for so long and taking advantage of their goodness".

In Erimalickara village we met Mrs. Ammu Kuttayamma, a frail, 76 year old widow who lives with her 44 year old son (who has mental health issues and is on medication). As she shared her story she said, "In all my life I have never seen such a big flood. This is the first time. I was de-husking a coconut when the water came and before I realised the water came into my house and covered everything." In the evening local rescue workers came and took her and her son on a boat. Along with five other people, they have been staying at her brother's house, as she and her son could not survive living in a relief camp. Ammu told Kuki "I am so happy that someone came to my place to enquire about us and our need".



Inside Ammu Kuttayum's house



Food and Water

We discovered in all our community visits that relief trucks come to the main roads and give out food rations, but they come by erratically. In the areas visited the people who lived away from the main road said that they are not always aware of when these trucks would come and when they did find out it was often too late. Many families are concerned about where they will source food from, as they do not have reserves or the opportunity to earn money to buy groceries. Another major problem for these communities is that their drinking water wells have been flooded and contaminated. Many live at the mercy of their neighbours and relatives who did not lose all their food supplies, but there is concern for how they will survive long-term.

Mrs. Anandavelli is a 52 year old who lives with her husband, daughter, son-in-law and her 5 year old grand-daughter. They have been staying at a nearby school since their home was flooded. Anandavelli told our team members, "We left everything, everything is destroyed. We are still at the camp and we came here [to our house] to check things. We have no water here. We have also received some clothes and that is it." When asked how they would manage when they return she said, "I have no idea what we will do. I have no clue what we will eat or how we will cook. We have no money and we need to get everything from scratch". Her 29 year old son is the sole earning member of the family, but he has not worked since the flood and is unlikely to find a paying job soon.



Loss of Livelihood

Our team members found that in these communities there were many concerns regarding how they would provide for and feed their families since their agricultural land has been destroyed, livestock has been lost, tools wrecked and in a climate where there a very limited opportunities for employment. As some have returned to their homes and workplaces they have said that 'there is nothing to come back to'. Some hope to find work in a local business, but there are no guarantees. Others do not expect to find employment for at least two months. Many have appreciated the assistance of their neighbours, but wonder how long they can continue to rely on their goodwill. Uncertainties prevail for many families as they strive to start from scratch. Tragically, the newspapers report that the destruction has been too unbearable for one man who committed suicide after returning to his property when the waters receded.



Black, murky, contaminated well water

Mrs. Usha Sanal lives with her husband Sanil, her daughter and her son in a small house. On 15 August water started coming into their house at about 10pm and by 1am they had to make a raft using bamboo to escape. Sanil is a carpenter who hasn't had any work since the flood and is struggling with an infection in his foot which happened due to the flood. He said that he has no idea when he will work again. "We don't even know how long it will take to lead a normal life again".



Usha (in pink) in front of her house, next to the well

Our first visit to these communities has made it clear that the flood has not spared anyone and the future is as uncertain for all. These communities are facing disaster for the first time and do not even have the capacity to think long term or assess their needs. For now, the main preoccupation for many is how to make their houses liveable, especially for those who have to leave their relief camps by the 30th August. It is also clear that a more systematic approach is needed to ensure that those who do not live on the main roads receive the supplies they need and are enabled to rebuild their lives again.

It also struck the team that despite losing all that they had, the people in these regions want to preserve their dignity and for this reason do not demand assistance. Only when the team probed them about their needs did the people respond. We have seen evidence of generous neighbours who have warmly provided a place to stay, who have given food from their limited supplies and provided each other assistance in cleaning each other's muddy homes.

EFICOR Team: EFICOR staff Rev. Kennedy Dhanabalan the Executive Director, Ms. Kuki Rokhum Director (Training & Mobilization), Mr. Harshan K.Y. Manager (ER & DRR), Dr. Sai Bhaskar Reddy (an International Consultant specialized in Environment & Climate Change issues) and Mr. William Daniel EFICOR trained volunteer did the need assessment in the villages. The team is assisted by staff volunteers from Tiruvalla Medical Mission, Tiruvalla. Mr. Albo Jason W. Director (Finance) and Mr. Prem Livingstone Manager (OE & ER) has reached the location on 27.08.2018. TMM will be raising volunteers from colleges to help us in relief operations. EFICOR would train them before the relief operations.

Partnership with Tiruvalla Medical Mission (TMM): We are thankful to TMM who has established infrastructure, opened their doors to provide logistical support to EFICOR including four wheelers. They have provided accommodation in the Hospital campus for our staff to work. They have also agreed to provide storage space which can ease our job to do packaging of family kits. EFICOR will directly implement the relief operations in close coordination with TMM and district administrations.

Air Vistara: We extend our thankfulness and gratitude to Air Vistara for providing free air tickets for EFICOR staff under their humanitarian response.

Relief distribution to most vulnerable families

On August 27, 2018, EFICOR and TMM team distributed Food and Non-food Items worth of 2000/- per family to most vulnerable 22 families in Kavumbhagom in Tiruvalla Municipal area. The Food items will ensure food security for a period of 45 days for a 5 member family. The items of Hygiene and Sanitary kits (WASH kit) provided will enable the affected families to maintain hygiene and also clean their house and disinfect the living area.

The families expressed their gratefulness to EFICOR & TMM team for the timely support.

The team is also planning to distribute Food and Non-food items for about 100 families in Thirumoolapuram Colony, Tiruvalla Municipality on August 29, 2018.



CHS Compliance explained to the families



Relief materials distributed by Mr. Albo Jason W, Director (Fin & Admin)

Proposed Plan of Intervention

Sl. No.	Districts	No. of Families	Donor Partner	Remarks
1	Pathanamthitta	10,500	World Renew and WRC/CFGB Local Contributions	Cash Transfer to be provided for selected families in addition to food basket.
2	Alappuzha	9,500	Cedar Fund/HKDRF, World Renew, Local Contributions	550 families will be provided cash transfers in additions to food basket
Total No. of Families		20,000		

Fund position:

Sl. No.	Name of Donor Partner	Grant Assured	Grant in INR	Remarks
1	World Renew	USD 33,000	2,300,000	
2	CFGB	CAD 375,000	20,200,000	
3	Cedar Fund/HKDRF	USD 450,915	31,113,135	Yet to be Confirmed
4	Indian Contributions		669,500	
		Total	53,613,135	
		Total Budget	84,280,050	
		To be raised	30,666,915	

Praise Points

- For the good support received from Tiruvalla Medical Mission.
- For good support and coordination from the district administration.
- For the support extended from churches, institutions, organizations and individuals who are giving generously. We thank God for their trust in us.
- For Julie Bellingham who had volunteered to prepare regular Updates.
- The flood waters have started to recede allowing people to return to their houses during the day and enabling the start of the clean-up process.

Prayer Points

- Pray for the needed funds required for the relief operations.
- Pray that the foreign media will pick up the newsbyte given by the Chief Minister of Kerala appealing for all to support the people of Kerala and pray that organizations in UK, Australia and US will raise support.
- Pray for the families, as they will be leaving the camps by this end of this month to return to their villages.
- In some locations houses are still flooded. Pray for the water to recede.
- There are incidences of snakes taking shelter inside the houses. Pray for the protection of the people.
- Pray for the immediate needs of the affected families.
- Pray for our staff safety and security as they travel around, wading through the waters (4 feet high) to do need assessment.
- Pray that the relief operations will go smoothly impacting the lives of the people.
- Pray for the family survey to be completed in a week or so. This will enable smooth distribution systems.

