

Heights of Compassion: Okhi Disaster Rehabilitation activities of Malappuram District Mission

How the compassionate gesture of a society reduced the depth of sorrow of a group of people! The heights of compassion that the Kudumbashree fraternity showered upon the Ockhi disaster affected people is really immeasurable. The humanitarian gesture that they had shown is a model that could be replicated while in such situations.

Background -Ockhi

Very Severe Cyclonic Storm ockhi was the most intense tropical cyclone in the Arabian sea. The third and the strongest storm of the 2017 North Indian Ocean cyclone season, the origins of Ockhi can be traced back to an area of low pressure that formed on the Gulf of Thailand on 21 November 2017. While traversing the southern part of the Bay of Bengal, favourable conditions enabled it to consolidate into a deep depression, which paved way for much damage to property and life of the people living in the coastal areas. Due to the moisture and warmer temperatures between Sri Lanka and Kanyakumari (Cape Comorin) in mainland India, it intensified into a Cyclonic Storm on 30 November 2017.

The fatalities that the disaster caused was 245 and 661 were found missing. It is estimated that the disaster had caused damage of worth \$5.07 billion (2018 USD) altogether.

A total fatalities caused in Kerala is 174 and 261 people were found missing in the state. Damage worth \$2.29 billion was caused in Kerala itself. Even though the not

much casualties weren't reported at Malappuram, the life of the people living in the coastal areas was severely affected. As most of the people living in the coastal areas found their living out of the sea, that most of them were fishermen.

Timely Action

The timely action that the district authorities performed is really appreciable. During the disaster struck time The District Collector called the officials of Kudumbashree Malappuram District Mission for an emergency meeting to check what Kudumbashree can contribute in such a situation. A similar meeting was called in District Mission office and discussed what can be done in that regard. During the discussion an idea was evolved that even smallest contributions whether it could be food kit or clothing from the NHG level could be collected.

Excellence in Execution

As it was decided to collect smallest contributions from the NHG level, the collected food kits and clothings were collected at the concerned CDSs. Hubs were set up at Ponnani, Thanoor and Parappanangadi. The kits collected from the sub hubs in Purathoor, Mangalam, Perumbadapp, Vettam, Veliyangode, Thanoor, Vallikkunnu and Niramaruthoor were taken to the main hub and then to the district mission. After sorting the things collected, the real need of the victims of the disaster were identified and food kits and clothing were distributed within them according to their needs.

Rice, cereals, bread sugar, tea powder, foot wears, buckets, clothes etc were the things collected from the NHGs. Help was also extended from the side of

Panchayath as well. Some NHGs even contributed few glasses of rice. A few had contributed an amount that they could give.

Online campaign for disaster Rehabilitation

An online campaign was also done in Facebook. So many people came forward to help the needy seeing this. Kudumbashree Malappuram District Mission performed a little forward in this case that the online campaign had got a huge reach which helped the people get more help from the kind hearted people from various places. 'The hashtag campaign by Malappuram District Mission was welcomed by the people that the district mission had got enquiry from Lakshadweep offering help. '#wipe_out_ockhi_tears, "#Oppam kudumbashreeyum" were the hashtag campaigns launched by Kudumbashree District Mission. More than one laksh twenty thousand rupees was received as cash. The online campaign through social media was such a timely and wiser action of Kudumbashree that, many people came to know about the same through this campaign. Kudumbashree Malappuram district Mission therefore proved that they are updated about the social trends of today.

Helping Hands all the way

Apart from this, help for the Ockhi survivors were offered from other units. Even those people who don't have connection with Kudumbashree had shown their willingness to help. District Mission built a bamboo thatched house for a Balasabha Member who had lost his house during the ockhi cyclone.

Sustainable Help

It was understood from the situation that the people from the coastal areas are depending too much on sea for their living. If they will fail to go to sea on day, it would lead to starvation. As the jobless days increase, it would lead to prolonged starvation and poverty. In this regard the district Mission is planning to launch an ME that could help them find a livelihood of their own. The plan is that the raw materials and necessary training would be provided to them, the end product will be collected, which would enable them to find a livelihood of their own. As a start, such a risk free enterprise could be of great help for them. It is also planned to make all the women in the coastal areas be the members of Kudumbashree that it would help them to overcome their issues to a great extend.

Kudumbashree Model of Disaster Management

Natural disasters, riots, wars etc lead to large scale impacts on life, property, infrastructure, social and cultural relationships. Kudumbashree made such a timely act in this regard. Kudumbashree District Mission put a model of disaster rehabilitation before the society. They proved what Kudumbashree can do during a crisis situation. Kudumbashree's three tier network system had helped very much in this regard. It is a matter of pride for Kudumbashree that we could help a group of needy people. The timely action of Kudumbashree had changed the lives of so many people.