

Alert

India

Heavy Floods in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh

Geneva, 04 December 2015

1. Brief description of the emergency and impact

A low pressure system over coastal Tamil Nadu unleashed heavy showers in Tamil Nadu and South Andhra Pradesh, leading to massive floods in the regions. There were three consecutive spells of intensive rainfall, which have exacerbated the existing flood situation. The first intensive spell of rainfall was from the 8th to the 9th of November, followed by intensive rains again from the 15th to the 17th followed by the present spell which began on the 28th of November 2015. The intense flooding has affected the normal life of people in many districts in Tamil Nadu which include Chennai, Cuddalore, Kanchepuram, Tiruvallur, Tuticorin, Villupuram and the Union territory of Puducherry. In Andhra Pradesh the most affected districts are Chittoor, Nellore, and Cuddapa. Chennai and Cuddalore have been most severely affected. Chennai the fourth largest city in India has ground to a halt, crippling the city and adversely impacting the city's infrastructure. Trains have stopped running and the Chennai Airport has been closed due to inundation.

So far 188 people are estimated to have lost their lives. Schools, colleges and other educational institutions are closed. The situation is expected to worsen as heavy rains are predicted to continue for the next 3 days in Tamil Nadu and South Andhra Pradesh.

While the situation has affected people across all walks of life, the urban poor and vulnerable communities have been the most badly hit.

2. Why is an ACT response needed?

In flood-affected areas people have lost their livelihoods and homes and are in desperate need for relief and rehabilitation, particularly in rural villages. The government-led relief for the flood-affected populations is inadequate, hence the need for ACT to respond. ACT members UELCI & CASA have a presence in the affected areas and through an existing RRF. However, the magnitude of the crisis is immense and would require a significant up-scaling of efforts through an ACT appeal to save the lives of a large number of flood-affected people particularly those in the most vulnerable sections of society.

Alert 38/2015 - Heavy Floods in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh

3. National and international response

The Government of Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh have been involved in a rescue and relief program for the flood-affected people since the inception of the flood. Indian navy and armed forces are involved in the rescue operations. Eight Disaster Response Force (NDRF) teams are carrying out the rescue operations, involving 234 personnel with the support of 24 rubber boats. Twenty four (24) relief camps have been organized by Chennai corporation authorities catering for an estimated 62,000 people. International NGOs like World Vision, Caritas, Plan International and some national NGOs are responding to this crisis through emergency relief programs. The Indian Government has not asked for international support in tackling the crisis, therefore the UN agencies are on standby.

4. ACT members' response

ACT member UELCI is supporting 1,950 flood-affected families with food and non-food items as well as counselling. CASA is supporting 3000 flood-affected families with cooked food, 800 flood-affected families with blankets, utensil sets and clothes and 500 affected families are provided with temporary shelter from ACT RRF support. The magnitude of the disaster has been acknowledged by the ACT India forum and they have agreed that an appeal is necessary.

5. Planned activities

ACT India Forum members UELCI and CASA's planning is based on the assessment report to support the flood-affected people in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh with food, non-food items and shelter support.

6. Constraints

Stagnant flood water has both inundated people's homes and has marooned others; shelter, safe drinking water and sanitation is of grave concern; with roads and communication lines disrupted, organising relief is a challenge.

ACT India Forum Contact: Rev. Dr A.G. Augustine Jeyakumar, Executive Secretary, UELCI & Convenor,
ACT India Forum. Email: augustinejkumar@uelci.org. Mobile: +91 9840135851

Any funding indication or pledge should be communicated to the Head of Finance and Administration, Line Hempel (Line.Hempel@actalliance.org).

For further information please contact:

ACT Asia Regional Representative, Anoop Sukumaran (anoop.sukumaran@actalliance.org) and
ACT Programme Officer, James Munpa (James.Munpa@actalliance.org)

ACT Web Site address: <http://www.actalliance.org>