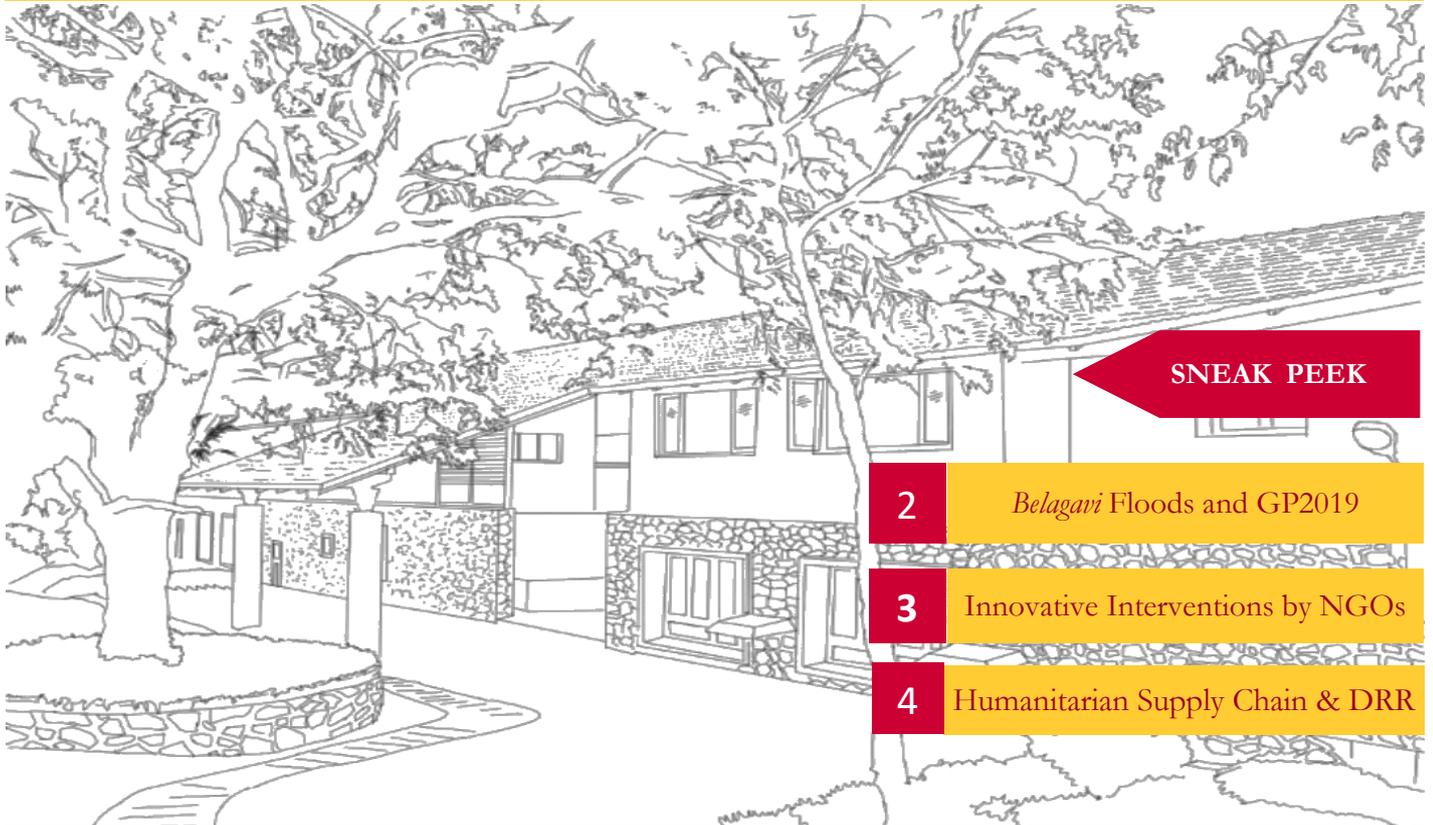




# THE AXIS OF DISRUPTION

Official newsletter of the IFRC TISS Programme in Disaster Management



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## FIELD REPORT : KOLHAPUR FLOODS



Image : Junior year students of JTSDS with the faculty members and District Collector, Kolhapur (centre)

Ceaseless downpours across the state of Maharashtra is a common sight during the monsoons. However, the devastating consequences of this year's rainfall saw several districts in Western Maharashtra suffer severe damages and losses to property, farmlands and livelihoods. Kolhapur, situated on the banks of Panchganga river and surrounded by Sahyadri mountain ranges, was one of the districts that was severely affected as a result of the endless deluge. Three groups of students from the *Jamsetji Tata School of Disaster Studies*, carried out a study around the three worst affected villages in the *Shirol* taluka of Kolhapur, viz. *Hasur*, *Kutvad* and *Shirati*, guided by professors *Niti Mishra*, *Ramesh Veerappan* and *Peebu Pardeshi*. The

purpose of the study was to conduct a post disaster assesment to diagnose the severity of damages caused by the floods in these villages. It was found that out of 52 villages in *Shirol* Taluka, nearly 44 villages were gravely affected by floods with the extent of damages being severe for villages situated along the river banks.

The preliminary study conducted revealed some critical findings. Flood waters reached staggering heights, and receded completely after a couple of weeks. Crops faced extensive damages, and agricultural damages accounted for large exapnses of land spread across the three villages. Roads, *Primary Health Centre* (PHCs) and panchayat offices bore witness to substantial wreckage, whilst cattles were shifted to higher grounds. The community was the first responders to the disaster, and the local youth groups were a pivotal resource during the rescue operations. The government extended support via both national and state-level channels to supplement the ongoing relief and rescue operations. Food and water supplies were provided using helicopters, which also dropped relief kits to different parts. Provisions for financial support were made, with compesation provided to each household in two installments via in-hand cash, and a subsequent direct bank transfer respectively.

It is well documented that marginal groups, owing to their existing vulnerabilities, often see their tribulations aggravated post disasters. Women, petty shop owners and landless/small scale farmers across these villages suffered greatly as a result of the flooding. The study, submitted to the *District Collector* (Kolhapur), infered some crucial recommendations by the students of *Jamsetji Tata School of Disaster Studies* with special focus emphasizing on the needs of extending immediate institutional support to the existing marginal groups across these villages.

## Belagavi Floods: A Post Disaster Study

Input from Asst. Professors Lavanya Shanbhogue Arvind & Peehu Pardeshi

Earlier this year in August 2019, weeks of incessant rainfall and a subsequent heavy water discharge from the Maharashtra reservoir oversaw Belagavi, one amongst many districts in northern Karnataka, suffer catastrophic consequences of flooding.

Two faculty members from the *Jamsbedji Tata School of Disaster Studies* (JTSDS), Ms. Lavanya Shanbhogue Arvind and Dr. Peehu Pardeshi, who spent ten days in 9 villages across 4 talukas of Belagavi namely, Gokak, Chikkodi, Saundatti and Ramdurg, engaging with the local communities, civil societies, volunteers and various functionaries of the local self-government to get a well-informed idea of the post flood situation in Belagavi.

Field observations were made on the housing, livelihoods, WASH and social vulnerabilities as observed in the villages across the district. The observations on housing revealed that it remained a matter of prime urgency and immediate concern in the region. The state had classified houses across the region into three categories based on quantum of damages to effectively disburse the much required compensations. The two-member team noted discrepancies in the disbursement of funds in majorities of the village settlements visited.



The team also found that in many places people did not clear the debris as they feared that they will not be considered for compensation for a new house. Commercial properties in the areas received no form of compensation, and tenants suffered heavily in rental properties as they could not prove ownership. Majority of villagers reported loss of

essential documentation of their residential, agricultural and commercial properties.



The demography of the observed village communities comprised mainly of *Schedule Caste/Schedule Tribe* (SC/ST) families engaged primarily as landless laborers and marginal farmers.

During floods, many sought shelter in relief camps but were forced to migrate to nearby villages or rental housing post it. Livestock related damages were extensive, impoverishing those whose livelihoods depended on it.

Croplands were severely water logged, and no support was extended to compensate the loss. Floods had also severely affected the water sources in the district. Filter stations were damaged and no fumigation or chlorination of water sources was undertaken to prevent water-borne diseases from spreading. People staying in relief camps were provided packaged RO drinking water by NGOs and few had access to bulk-water tanks. *Anganwadi centres* (AWC) were partially or fully submerged. Open defecation was still practiced in Ramdurg taluka despite 9 government installed toilets, further exacerbating health related afflictions of the community. Poor infrastructural facilities across multiple *Primary Health Centres* (PHCs) simply added to the burden.

The post flood situation in Belagavi had also amplified existing social vulnerabilities prevalent amongst the most marginal groups. The team noted that SC/STs, newborn children, pregnant women and elderly people were the groups most susceptible to flood related health complications and risks. The TISS team after a thorough study recommended adop-

tion of a framework for loss and damage assessment to the *District Collector* (Belagavi). It also recommended volunteer support for the AWCs, surveillance of PHCs, recovery planning, vulnerability assessment and a rigorous DRR planning as per global standards to tackle to post flood situation in Belagavi. In doing so, JTSDS continues to work with the State in different capacities.

### ALUMNI SPEAKS

“

*For me the content of the programme was exceptional and enriching. I got the practice but I needed the theory.*

”

**Aliusha Benoit**

Canadian Red Cross

**Cohort XI**

“

*The programme provided me with a more thorough theoretical understanding of disaster management. It was insightful and fulfilling and it's distinctness from other programs makes it very recommendable.*

”

**Don Cummings**

National Energy Corporation of Trinidad and Tobago

**Cohort XI**

## Central Africa strongly represented at the 6th Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction

By Maurice Henri Tadjuidje, Cohort XI

The Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is an essential element of the monitoring and implementation process of the *Sendai Framework for DRR (2015-2030)*, and is a crucial platform of the international community for broad and holistic discussions to understand the problems of risk and disaster management.

The *World Conference on Reconstruction* is a global forum that provides a platform to collect, assess and share post-disaster

reconstruction and recovery experiences and advance the political dialogue for an effective international recovery and reconstruction framework after a disaster.

The fourth edition of the *World Conference on Reconstruction* took place in Geneva on May 13th and 14th, 2019, on the central theme: "Inclusion for resilient recovery". It was held jointly with the sixth *Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction*. I was able to engage with leaders, experts, policymakers and practitioners from States, international organizations, NGOs, academia and the private sector from developing & developed countries while attending the conference.



Image : Maurice Henri Tadjujije, from Cohort XI of the IFRC-TIIS programme at GP2019

The results of the global platform inform deliberations of the high-level political forum on sustainable development from the perspective of disaster risk reduction, thus contributing to the implementation and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Agenda on the horizon 2030.

The sixth session of the *Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction* (GP2019), held in Geneva, Switzerland, from 13th to 17th of May 2019, was an important opportunity for the international community to strengthen the implementation of the Sendai Framework 2030 program targets, and explore the range of commitments of the Paris Climate Agreement. The GP2019 was the last global gathering of stakeholders before the target date for the implementation of Target E of the Sendai Framework, which is, to significantly increase the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020. It builds on the momen-

tum created in Cancún, amplified by the integration of disaster risk elements into the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, to bring the implementation of the Sendai Framework and the 2030 Agenda to a higher level. Among the issues that have received special attention from member States and stakeholders are: (a) monitoring the implementation of the Sendai Framework, (b) the achievement of Target E, (c) coherence with sustainable development and climate change agendas, d) gender sensitive and inclusive reduction of disaster risks and e) international cooperation initiatives.

The department in charge of Disaster Risk Management and Adaptation to Climate Change of ECCAS (*Economic Community of Central African States*) took part in these events, from the preparation phase through information missions and sensitization of stakeholders to the activities of the disaster risk reduction project in ECCAS member countries, including the sessions of these two conferences in Geneva, Switzerland.

## Innovative Interventions by NGOs in Response Phase or DRR Interventions



Image Courtesy : Google Images

By Nelly Saiti , Cohort XII

Application of drone technology in humanitarian work is the most recent *Unmanned Aerial Vehicle* (UAV) adopted to address humanitarian needs. Several humanitarian organizations including United Nation agencies are actively exploring the use of UAVs for disaster response. The reason for this being that drones are comparatively cheap and can easily provide images faster compared to satellites. The images provided are of a much higher resolution than satellite images, which means that those on the

ground can get a clearer picture of what is going on, and therefore are able to launch an immediate response especially to damaged infrastructure and humanitarian needs. What is interesting to note is that a common man can purchase UAVs , allowing access to better technology to communities. Therefore UAVs provide avenues for strengthening community resilience as members are enabled to address their own disaster related needs without dependency on external assistance.

Use of individuals to gather or dispatch information around a disaster situation takes time, as the data needs to be gathered, converted into information and shared. Use of drones to get a picture in real time is a much faster decision making tool that has not only provided life-saving interventions to an individual, but also to thousands others.

The most common and urgent humanitarian needs in disaster response are in the sectors of health, WASH and safety. These needs require timely response as they are critical in alleviation of human suffering. Drones have been used to transport critical medical aid within the first 72 hours of a crisis, to transport microbiological samples from field clinics to testing laboratories, rapid delivery of health commodities such as antivenom, supporting vaccination campaigns by delivering vaccines in areas with unreliable cold chain, firefighting surveillance and security surveillance.

Disaster response operations are generally costly and require great funding investment from aid organizations. With recently reported donor fatigue and adoption of cheaper and more accurate response strategies to disasters, application of drone interventions come in handy as they are faster, cost-effective, provide access to remote areas, can fly under the clouds and therefore are able to respond in hurricane stricken areas

Disaster responders use drones for multiple purposes - provide rapid situational awareness with mapping technology and imagery, help fire fighters identify hot spots and assess damage to property, capture image for communication and news coverage, search for survivors, assess utility and infrastructural damage, and to create the before and after images of the disaster affected areas. A recent example is that of Kenya

which has used drone technology in social events, and if adopted in flood stricken inaccessible areas, they will be enabled to address the needs of the affected population.

## How can the Humanitarian Supply Chain work within the Localization agenda ?

By *Carla Mendizabal*, Cohort XII

*Humanitarian Supply Chain* (HSC) is considered a central factor in the implementation and success of any emergency response. It helps as a bridge between disaster preparedness and response, between procurement and distribution of relief stocks, and thus it is always one of the most expensive parts of the overall operation, deserving special attention.

With efforts being placed in implementing a large percentage of the Grand Bargain strategy by 2020, the expectation to accomplish ‘as local as possible, and as international as necessary’, the impact on the *Humanitarian Supply Chain* should be carefully analyzed.

Most definitions of localization in both the literature and in practice refer to the need to recognize, respect, strengthen, rebalance, recalibrate, reinforce or return some type of ownership or place to local and national actors.

Thus keeping these definitions in mind, how does this new “localization” agenda impact the way the humanitarian supply chain functions during and after emergency responses while strengthening the local responders?

The standard way of providing support through international pipelines during emergency response is slowly evolving into altering its procedures and policies to allow for a more “localized response including as main part of it, *local procurement*” of goods and services. The rationale of boosting affected economies through local procurement of goods, has been one of the key bases for opening the discussion of changing the traditional way the HSC has been providing its support.

The expected shift in the way things are being currently done within the supply chain, has aided the development of new

modalities of responses, for example, with cash interventions not only are the local markets utilized and empowered, but the affected populations also have a say in the way funds are being directed towards relief efforts thereby empowering the affected population. The idea of empowering local responders as well as affected populations is imperative, to not only develop the capacities of the local responders to rely on their own resources, but also to local communities to have the space in the response . This situation brings us to critical questions around the discourse – to what . extent can the shift from traditional supply chain response be replaced by other modalities of intervention, and still be effective.

Is it possible for local and international actors to agree and comply with procurement and reconciliation procedures, and at the same time acquire goods under the principle of value for money in the expected time frames to respond to an emergency?

In relation to anti-corruption regulations, how can International organizations assure 100% compliance when local staff might not be available or might not have the right skills?

Is localization attainable with the current international policies when required capacity in country is not always available?

All these reflections are critical in determining how HSC can be implemented in certain responses and if it is even possible for a “localization” agenda to be implemented in certain environments, with the expected results.

Based on previous and current emergency responses, certain important challenges have been identified for consideration for both international and local responders whilst dealing with the HSC:

- Lessened trust on local partners to implement in accordance to strict Procurement and logistics policies of multinational humanitarian agencies.
- Incapacity to find skilled staff in country of operation ;
- International responders lacking knowledge of local markets, as well as legal national, and provincial regulations for contracting

services and procuring goods;

- Finding highly trained international staff that can perform the tasks in supply chain while providing relevant capacity building to local staff.

In view of the potential challenges identified for local and international responders, it is important to mention that even though the localization agenda is the way forward in the humanitarian space, with important expected positive results in the long term, its implementation requires a massive modification in agency trainings and policies while also ensuring that the affected communities are encouraged to participate.

In order to make an informed decision prior implementation of the localization agenda in HSC, it would be important to define a set of principles to determine the feasibility of implementing localization, based on internal (international organizations) and external (local responders of the recipient country) readiness of the supply chain. A proper analysis of the internal and external aspects at the preparedness stage could allow for an informed decision-making process .

No standard formula will be able to fit all different countries and individual internal challenges, as well as no off-the-shelf solution could be able to support all potential types of disasters / crisis.

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