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Compassion in Crisis

Food relief for flood affected communities



Deeksha – Centre for Learning and Action
HYDERABAD



Divi's Laboratories Ltd.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

**EMERGENCY FLOOD RELIEF RESPONSE IN ANDHRA
PRADESH**

A CSR INITIATIVE OF DIVI'S

2025

Report Prepared by
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COMPASSION IN CRISIS : FOOD RELIEF FOR FLOOD AFFECTED COMMUNITIES

PREFACE

Across the globe, people have lived with and suffered from the threats and impacts of hazards for centuries. Disasters have produced, shaped and broken civilisations and affected our cultures and behaviours. Disasters can be caused by many different kinds of hazards – natural, human-made and technological – and can have devastating impacts on people and communities. It can be defined as “a serious disruption to the functioning of a community or a society that exceed its capacity to cope using its own resources”. The frequency, complexity and severity of their impacts are likely to increase in the future due to factors such as climate change, displacement, conflict, rapid and unplanned urbanization, technological hazards and public health emergencies.

The COVID-19 pandemic has been the biggest disaster in living memory, on almost any measure. More than 6.5 million people are confirmed to have died in less than three years, and the pandemic’s indirect impacts have touched the lives of virtually every community on the planet.

CONTEXT

A disaster represents more than just a destructive incident. India is one of the countries that faces many disasters in the world. This is due to its varied geography, changing climate and high population density. The country faces a wide spectrum of disasters ranging from earthquakes and cyclones to floods, droughts and landslides. Over 85% of India’s landmass is exposed to one or more hazards with floods alone accounting for approximately 46% of the country’s disaster events.

The climate crisis is changing the behaviour of the monsoon. The recent floods in southern India have led to significant impacts. The intense rainfall in Andhra Pradesh has had a devastating impact leading to flash floods, crop damage and widespread disruption. The floods inundated low-lying residential areas in Vijayawada and several villages downstream, causing significant damage to infrastructure, homes and agricultural land. Thousands of residents had to be evacuated. Relief operations were mobilized with the help of national agencies to address the emergency and assist affected communities – evacuating people, rescuing those in danger, and quickly providing food, shelter and medical care to save lives and help people recover as quickly as possible.

In such conditions, it was highly challenging to the government to reach to everyone in need at every corner. At this juncture, Divi’s intervention through Hare Krishna Movement Charitable Foundation (HKM CF) has been a life-saver for thousands of people stuck in the inundated residential areas.

DIVI'S CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Divi's Laboratories, a leading manufacturer of Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API), is headquartered in Gachibowli, Hyderabad. The company is deeply committed to the Business-Society Ecosystem, which forms the foundation of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Its philanthropic activities began within a few years of establishing its business in 1990, in the communities around the manufacturing site and gradually expanded to the larger sections of the needy and underserved.

Corporate Social Responsibility at Divi's is a mixture of charitable programs and community service. Over the years, Divi's community building efforts have contributed to the social and economic well-being of the weaker sections of the society. Promoting education, safe drinking water, preventive health care, rural development, animal welfare, empowering women remain some of the key priority areas for Company's CSR activities. Responding to communities' emergency needs within a critical timeframe is one of the strengths of Divi's.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY

In compliance with the CSR rules and regulations under the Companies Act, Divi's intended to do an impact assessment of the disaster relief activities taken up under its CSR component, during the devastating floods in Andhra Pradesh in 2024. Deeksha – Centre for Learning and Action (a non-profit organization working in the areas of Child Rights, Adolescence issues, Health, Livelihoods and Gender equality) has been identified for taking up the impact assessment of the project implemented through CSR funds.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

In response to the crisis, Divi's extended emergency relief support through Hare Krishna Movement Charitable Trust to provide food to the people stuck in the inundated habitats. Thus, the study intends to understand the impact of the intervention and the role of HKMCF in the process of relief work.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

To assess the impact of the CSR funds expended towards emergency relief – food supply to the flood affected population.

METHODOLOGY

The study is designed in a participatory and interactive mode to gather perceptions of different stakeholders. It includes interaction with the people received relief, HKM-CF staff and volunteers involved in the food distribution and relief work.

SAMPLE

Random sampling method and snowball sampling method are used to identify the beneficiaries.
Specific

FINANCIAL OUTLAY

Divi's has contributed an amount of ₹.4,80,00,000.00 towards distribution of cooked food to the flood victim families.

KEY OBSERVATIONS

The study team visited a few sites where relief material is supplied and interacted with several people along with the Vice-President of HKM Charitable Foundation. The key observations from the interactions are presented below:

- ✓ International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKON), widely known as Hare Krishna Movement, was founded in 1966.
- ✓ Hare Krishna Movement Charitable Foundation (HKMCF) is part of the Group Trusts consisting of Hare Krishna Movement, ISKCON Bangalore, The Akshaya Patra Foundation, Vrindavan Chandrodaya Mandir, etc.
- ✓ HKMCF is a registered Trust dedicated to serving the people of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana through various charitable initiatives. Its primary focus is on alleviating hunger and providing nutritious meals to those in need.
- ✓ The Foundation's initiatives include the Anna Canteen program, which offers subsidized meals to the public, and the *Subhojanam* project that provides free, nutritious meals to underprivileged patient attendants in government hospitals.
- ✓ HKMCF plays a crucial role in emergency relief activities in Andhra Pradesh by providing essential support to those in need during crisis. Their centralized community kitchens prepare and distribute vast quantities of food efficiently and hygienically.
- ✓ Their centralized kitchen near Mangalagiri has the capacity of preparing enough rice for 65,000 people in just two hours.
- ✓ In the wake of the recent devastating floods in Vijayawada HKMCF provided food to over 14 lakh people, feeding around 2.5 lakh people daily.
- ✓ Divi's collaborated with HKMCF in this crucial relief effort to provide cooked food to thousands of stranded families and individuals.
- ✓ Witnessing the widespread disruption caused by the catastrophic floods in Vijayawada and the surrounding areas and recognizing the need for emergency relief, Divi's approached HKMCF and offered support to provide cooked food to those in need.

- ✓ The Vice-President of HKMCF said, “it was an extremely important and timely support in such an emergency situation. Divi’s contribution was the best part in the entire episode of serving the flood affected people though there were other donations received which did not reach a few lakhs of rupees. This made us feel important and recognized”.
- ✓ Generally, accessing CSR funds takes time but Divi’s support has reached HKMCF in no time and it was extraordinary, as narrated by the Vice-President of HKMCF.
- ✓ Mobilizing and accessing funds is only one aspect of disaster response; transforming those funds into the actual support required by the beneficiaries and ensuring that assistance reaches them is another major challenge. This process requires extensive coordination and strategic planning.
- ✓ Moreover, reaching people stranded in inundated areas was particularly difficult due to the inaccessibility of these locations through traditional means such as boats.
- ✓ Getting required material to prepare food in that chaotic condition was another uphill task where the road and rail transportation got totally disrupted.
- ✓ Since HKMCF had raw material procured for preparing food for mid-day-meals in schools and Anna Canteens, they could immediately use that for providing food relief to the flood affected people, and was later replaced.
- ✓ They could prepare about three lakh food packets every day for almost ten days till the water receded in the city and in the villages surrounding Gudivada.
- ✓ Government also banked on HKMCF for cooked food since they only have the capacity of preparing food in such huge quantity through their centralized kitchens located in Kolanukonda, near Mangalagiri.
- ✓ Hundreds of volunteers worked day and night in packing the cooked food, sending it area wise and distributing it to the people. Many government employees also participated in packing process while district and state officials were involved in sending it to the locations and distributing it in a systematic way.
- ✓ Another major challenge in this process was reaching people stranded in inundated areas due to inaccessibility of these locations through traditional means like boats. Government, for the first time in the history, used drones to supply food to the people stranded in those inundated colonies and *Lanka* (island) villages till the people there are rescued and shifted to relief camps.
- ✓ Cooked food was supplied almost for 10 days though the required quantity was gradually reduced due to return of families to their homes from relief camps.

- ✓ Later cooked food distribution became difficult with majority of the volunteering government employees were engaged in other than food relief activities, such as segregation of relief material, clearing the trash and debris that had been carried by the floodwaters and accumulated on the streets, assessing the losses, monitoring the other relief activities, etc.
- ✓ In those conditions, timely distribution of cooked food to the people in some remote villages, especially in the *Lanka* villages, had been tough.
- ✓ People also started cleaning their houses filled with mud and silt, and slowly settling down but they had nothing left to cook food as their grains, food material, and vessels were washed away in the flood or spoiled due to water logging.
- ✓ HKMCF received multiple requests from villagers, volunteers and sometimes officials also to provide dry rations. Based on the demand, HKMCF started distributing dry ration kits to those in need with support from other sources, while continuing to supply cooked food through Divi's support in areas where the situation had not yet returned to normal.
- ✓ By this time the cost of rice, vegetables and other essentials have shot-up due to lack of supply from outside due to transportation and connectivity problem. This is another crisis.
- ✓ At this juncture, we had to negotiate with our vendors to provide us material at cost-to-cost. Divi's support gave us privilege to buy material to meet the requirement even it is a little high cost and ensure the vulnerable people's dignity is upheld, as shared by the Vice-President of HKMCF.

Support in the *Lanka* Villages:

- ✓ HKMCF extended support of cooked food to the families living in *Lanka* villages where the government machinery also could not reach.
- ✓ The study team visited one of such village named *Raavi Chettu Dibba Lanka*, also known as *Thodelu Dibba Lanka* located in the middle of Krishna-river. This village has 125 households with about 500 population. Gist of the interactions with the families and the villagers is presented below.
- ✓ About 25 villagers assembled and interacted with the study team sharing their experiences of the flood. They shared that they are used to floods every year and there is a preparedness among the villagers to face the floods that comes generally during rainy season.
- ✓ However, this time the flood was worst and the elders mentioned that they have not seen such devastating flood in the past three decades.

- ✓ The study team also visited twelve households and had individual interactions with the family members. They all felt that it was like a second life to them while expressing gratitude to Hare Krishna Foundation for their selfless service.
- ✓ They all have recollected that the support was provided by Divi's and HKMCF has delivered it. This is one testament to the foundation for their incredible work.
- ✓ Satish, a B. Tech graduate doing farming in the village, explained how they could survive the devastating floods for more than 10 days, despite losing almost every edible material to the flood water.
- ✓ He shared that when the torrential rains started, a few families having small kids, shifted to their relatives houses in the main villages away from the river bank. Sensing some greater trouble village elders sent majority of young children and women to relatives' villages. However, about 70% of the people stayed back taking care of cattle and valuable domestic material.
- ✓ Villagers initially thought that floods are common and they experience it almost every year. But the flash floods and continuous heavy rains were far from their expectations and within a short time water levels increased submerging the houses.
- ✓ Though the village is located at a higher level from the water and during the floods villagers generally take shelter in the buildings located in the highest area of the village, release of excess water by opening all 70 gates of Prakasam Barrage and the water out flow inundated the entire village. On the top of it, heavy rains continued.
- ✓ Water entered into almost all the households except some 10 to 12 houses. The primary school building, located at the highest point in the village, has been the shelter for all the villagers and the cattle as well.
- ✓ They survived with the food that was available with them for two days. They were running short of any edible material and drinking water which drove them anxious as there were small children, it was still raining without gap and the water flow did not seem to be reduced. They shared that they had to manage with buffalo milk till they received any external support.
- ✓ There was no power supply, none of their phones had charging, moreover mobile network was also weak due to heavy rains. In that condition, Satish somehow managed to reach out to HKMCF associate and explained the situation.
- ✓ Responding immediately to this distressed call, HKMCF informed the officials and arranged for cooked food and drinking water to reach them. Initially, the food packets had to be provided using drones as there was heavy water currents and were unable to use boats.

Later rescue teams reached on boats and took ill people to the relief camp while providing cooked food to the remaining people.

- ✓ It took more than ten days for the water to recede completely. By then, many houses had been damaged and a few *kachcha* houses were washed away, leaving several families homeless.
- ✓ Despite the challenges and risks, HKMCF volunteers, with the support of the disaster relief team, braved strong currents to serve food twice a day to stranded people in the Lanka villages. However, at times, food prepared early in the morning would become stale by night, leaving people half-starved.
- ✓ The villagers mentioned, with folded hands, that they never knew about Hare Krishna Foundation before and came to know about it only because of the floods. They expressed heartfelt gratitude to the team for the service they provided with dignity and care.
- ✓ They also shared that the food was tasty, well sufficient, and appealing in appearance. It made them feel as if their own family members were providing food for them with respect and affection.
- ✓ The Vice-President humbly shared that they were able to provide ration kits sufficient for minimum of two weeks only because of the generous fund support they received from Divi's for emergency flood relief activities.
- ✓ Upon learning about this support, the entire village came together to applaud Divi's for their humanity and timely contribution that helped save their lives.
- ✓ Each and every villager who came to know about Divi's contribution during such a difficult time conveyed their gratitude to Divi's and HKMCF for reaching out to their village despite its remoteness.
- ✓ They all said that they would never forget Divi's and HKMCF in their life-time, adding that both organisations have now become "*atmabandhuvulu*" for the entire village.
- ✓ Several leading national and regional newspapers reported on Divi's contribution to providing food as part of the emergency flood relief effort implemented through HKMCF.
- ✓ The Trustee and President of Hare Krishna Foundation expressed their heartfelt appreciation to the authorities of Divi's for their generous support during the recent floods in Vijayawada. The following table is the excerpt from the letter written to the MD & CEO of Divi's.

<i>Your swift and substantial assistance in providing around 16 lakh meals to those affected by the disaster was not only timely but also deeply impactful. Your contribution played a crucial role in</i>

alleviating the suffering of many families and individuals during this challenging time. It is acts of compassion and solidarity like yours that make a profound difference in our community.

The dedication and responsibility with which Divi's Laboratories Ltd, approached this relief effort exemplify the highest standards of corporate social responsibility. Your support is a testament to the values of empathy and generosity that are so vial in times of crisis.

LIMITATION / CHALLENGE

The food relief intervention was carried out on a massive scale in the affected area using multiple sources of funding, which limited the ability to assess the impact of any specific funding source. Hence, it was challenging to obtain a clear firsthand understanding of the impact of the distribution of cooked food during the floods. However, HKMCF authorities were clear about the distribution of cooked food provided to the families in flood affected villages using the fund support from Divi's.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the intervention by Divi's to provide emergency flood relief to the stranded people in Vijayawada and the *Lanka* villages in Andhra Pradesh, through Hare Krishna Movement Charitable Foundation (HKMCF), received immense appreciation from the affected communities. The timely support ensured that families who were severely impacted by the floods had access to essential food supplies during a critical period.

The initiative not only addressed an immediate humanitarian need but also brought a sense of reassurance and dignity to the affected villagers during a time of great uncertainty. The collaborative efforts of Divi's and HKMCF enabled relief to reach remote and difficult to access areas, ensuring that vulnerable families were not left behind.

Such collaborations play a vital role in strengthening the collective ability to respond to and recover from such emergencies. This intervention stands as a reflection of Divi's compassion, social responsibility, and commitment to supporting communities in times of need.

PHOTO GALLERY



Pic 1 – Mechanised kitchen of Akshaya Patra Foundation, a unit of the Hare Krishna Movement



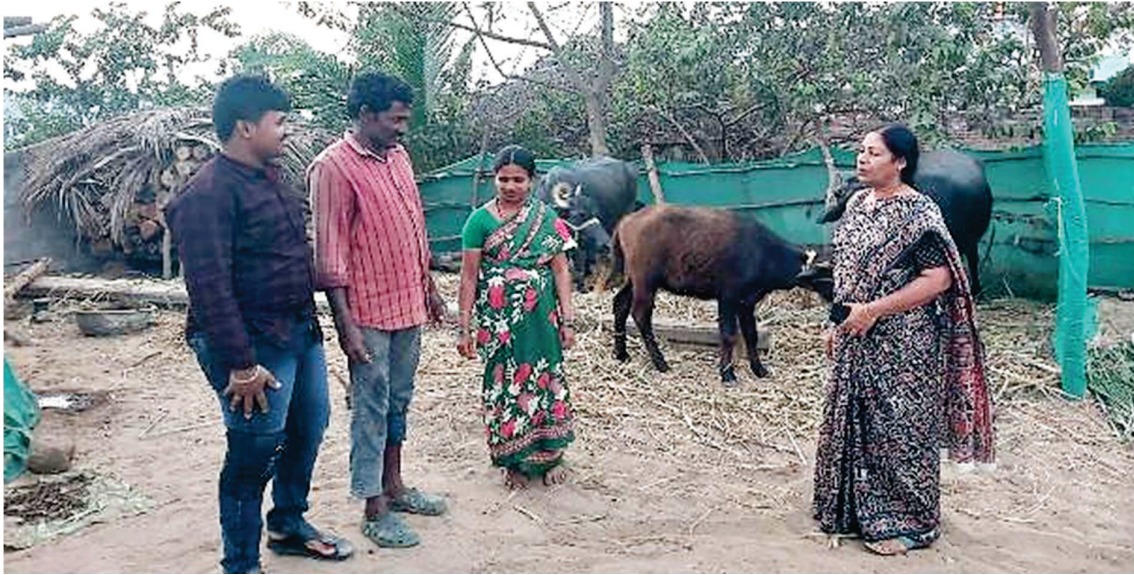
Pic 2 – Food being prepared for distribution to flood affected people in Vijayawada



Pic 3 – Volunteers packing cooked food before dispatching for distribution



Pic 4 – Hare Krishna Movement authorities transporting packed food to flood affected locations



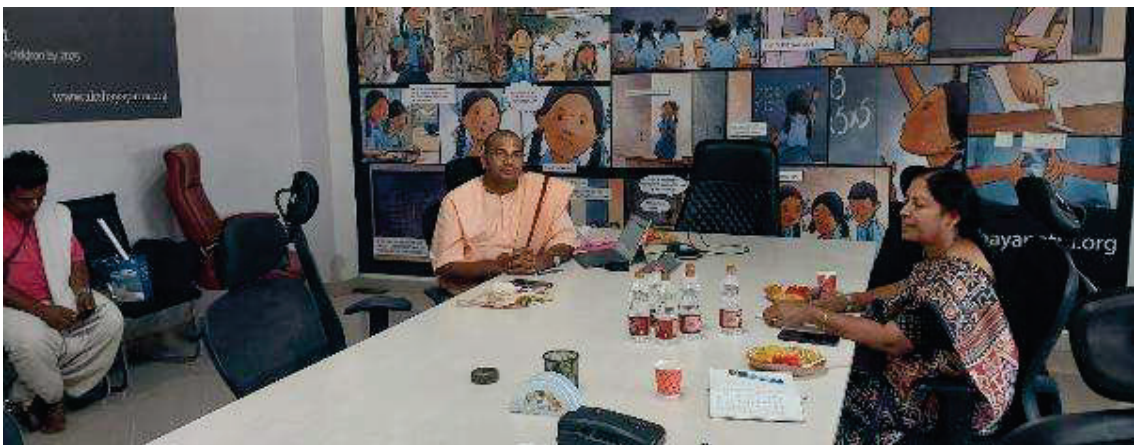
Pic 5, 6 & 7 – Interaction with flood affected families in Thodeludibba Lanka village



Pic 8 – Informal interaction with the community members in the village



Pic 9 – Meeting with community members in Thodeludibba Lanka village



Pic 10 – Interview with the Vice-President of the Hare Krishna Movement, Andhra Pradesh



Pic 11 – A house constructed with local materials after the family lost their home during the floods



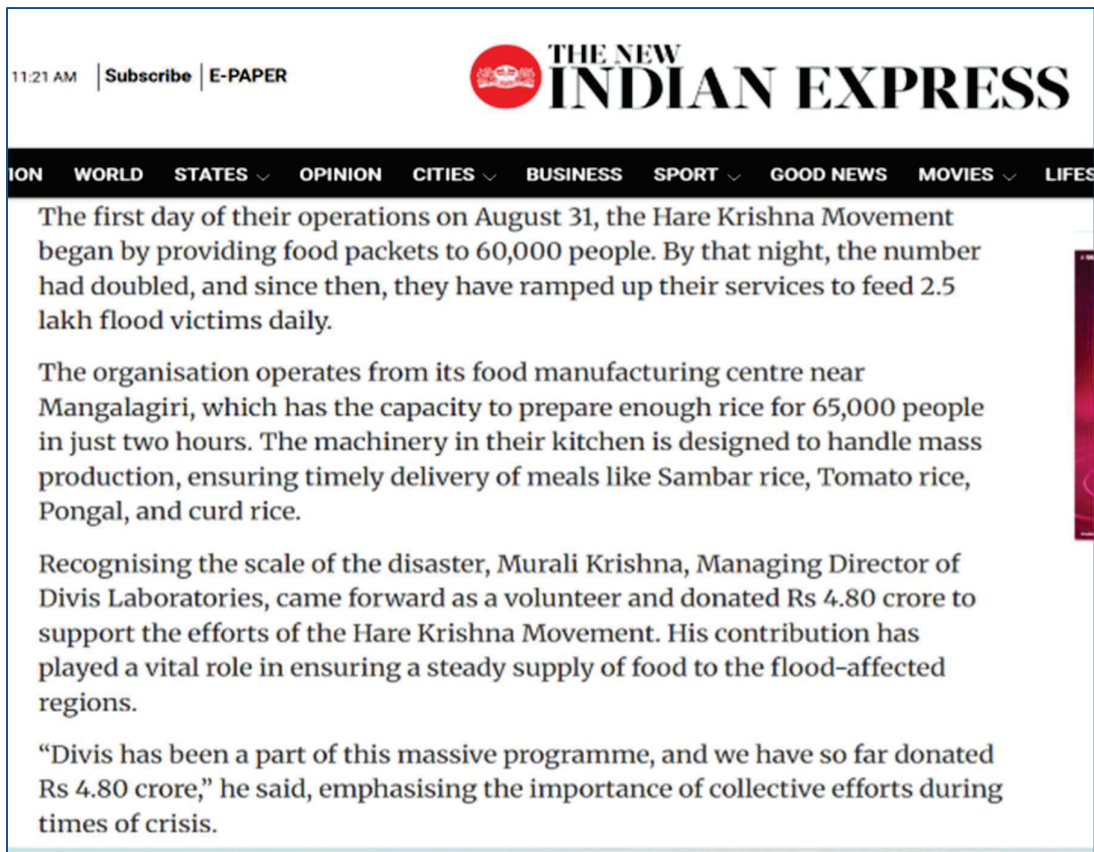
Pic 12 – Interaction with children at a tuition centre run by a volunteer who contacted HKM seeking support during the peak flood period



Pic 13 – The pathway leading to the village across the Krishna River



Pic 14 – The school that sheltered residents and cattle stranded during the floods



Pic 15 – A national newspaper reporting Divi’s contribution of to HKMCF’s flood relief efforts

Food is our common ground, a universal experience
that brings us all together

- James Beard

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