

Cyclone Fengal Disaster Response Report



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Way Forward

As we conclude this report on our collective response to Cyclone Fengal, I want to take a moment to reflect on the power of collaboration and the promise it holds for the future.

On behalf of Sewa International, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited for their unwavering support during this disaster. It is their deep-rooted commitment to serving communities in times of crisis that enabled us to respond swiftly and effectively when Cyclone Fengal struck. From providing immediate relief to facilitating long-term rehabilitation, Kotak's partnership played a crucial role in restoring hope and dignity to the affected families.

Since 2023, Sewa and Kotak have joined hands as partners with a shared mission- to stand by communities across India in the face of disasters. This collaboration is not just about crisis response, but about building resilience, enabling recovery, and reaffirming our shared belief in human dignity.

As we move forward, our focus will remain on strengthening disaster preparedness, expanding community outreach, and enhancing our capacity to deliver timely, need-based interventions. With Kotak's continued partnership and support, we are confident in our ability to scale our efforts and build more resilient communities across the nation.

Together, we remain committed to serving those who need us most—today, tomorrow, and in every moment of crisis.

Jineshlal R.V.
Executive Director
Sewa International



Executive Summary

This report details our urgent relief and rehabilitation efforts in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry following the devastating impact of Cyclone Fenegal, which struck Tamil Nadu after intensifying from a low-pressure system on November 23rd, 2024. Cyclone Fengal brought torrential rains and strong winds, causing widespread destruction across 14 districts in Tamil Nadu and the Union Territory of Puducherry. The storm, which made landfall on December 1, unleashed torrential rains and winds reaching speeds of 90 kmph, severely impacting both coastal and interior regions of the state. We witnessed immense human suffering, including loss of life, destruction of thousands of homes, widespread crop damage, and severe impact on livelihoods, particularly for small farmers and fishermen. The crisis displaced thousands and severely affected basic services and infrastructure. As Sewa International, our basic instinct is always to respond to such calamities, and we immediately launched an intervention to support flood-affected families. Our work was made possible through the crucial partnership and generous funding from Kotak Mahindra Bank.

Our intervention, which lasted one month, was driven by clear objectives: to restore safety, dignity, and livelihood for disaster-affected families. We focused on providing immediate support for basic health, ensuring food security, offering shelter solutions, and enabling income regeneration. Our strategy involved thorough needs assessments, efficient procurement and direct logistics, strong community coordination with local Panchayats and volunteers, and consistent monitoring to ensure our aid was effective.

Through our hands-on approach, we were able to make a tangible difference. As part of our immediate relief action, we provided construction materials to help 671+ households rebuild their damaged homes, and we supported 35+ families with livestock to help them restart their livelihoods. Beyond these direct numbers, our efforts led to 2500+ families with ration kits, and 1000+ children with the school kit to keep them continue their education.

While our work was impactful, we faced significant challenges, including blocked roads, persistent bad weather, and the immense scale of need compared to available resources. These experiences reinforced our belief that strong local partnerships and dedicated community volunteers are vital for effective relief work.

Looking ahead, we are committed to expanding our support to more families still awaiting help, continuing to monitor the long-term impact of our livelihood interventions, and exploring a Phase 2 campaign focused on sustainable agriculture and microenterprise development. We believe our efforts contribute significantly to several United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, including No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Good Health and Well-being, Gender Equality, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Climate Action, and Partnerships for the Goals. Our collaboration with Kotak Mahindra Bank exemplifies this spirit of partnership, and we are proud to have worked together to bring hope and recovery to these resilient communities.

About Sewa International



Sewa International is a movement born from a deep-seated belief in "Service before Self." Our journey officially began with our registration in 1997, but our roots stretch back further, forged in the crucible of real human need. We started as a response to a natural disaster, the devastating Latur earthquake in 1993. That pivotal moment underscored for us the critical need for organized and compassionate humanitarian action. So, it is our basic instinct to respond whenever there is a disaster or natural calamity. This foundational experience shaped our understanding of the profound impact of catastrophes and ignited a long-standing commitment to providing timely and effective relief to those affected by calamities.

Over the years, we have grown, but our core mission has remained steadfast: to serve humanity holistically. We have actively contributed to more than 60 disaster rescue, relief, and rehabilitation efforts across India and globally. While disaster management is a foundational pillar of our work, our dedication to empowering individuals and communities extends far beyond emergency response. We are dedicated to working for a progressive society, aligning all our future efforts towards promoting and fulfilling the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) defined by the United Nations.

Our key focus areas reflect this broad commitment:



**Disaster
Management**



**Livelihood &
Skill
Development**



**Health and
Sanitation**



Education



Environment



**Leadership
Development**

Our work spans a multitude of developmental sectors, but our unwavering commitment to building resilient communities, particularly in the face of disasters, remains a foundational pillar of our mission. We are Sewa International, dedicated to selfless service across India and beyond.

About **Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited & Our Partnership**

We are deeply grateful for the impactful and enduring partnership we share with Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited, whose unwavering support has significantly strengthened our ability to serve communities in times of crisis. Their commitment to social responsibility, particularly through their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, continues to inspire us and amplify our reach.

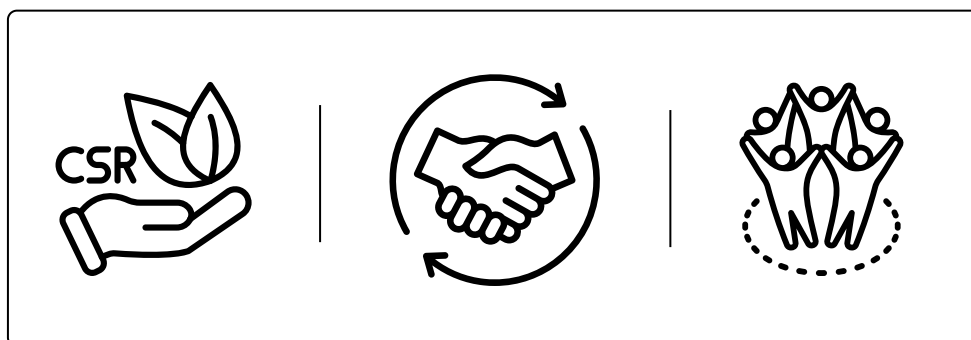
Since 2023, Kotak Mahindra Bank has supported Sewa International as part of its CSR mandate. Their generous contributions have enabled us to reach over 40,000 individuals affected by devastating natural disasters, including floods, landslides, and cloudbursts. Notably, their support for the Cyclone Michaung relief and rehabilitation initiative was also instrumental in helping us respond swiftly and effectively to those in urgent need. This partnership has truly been a beacon of hope during some of the most challenging times.

Kotak Mahindra Bank understands the transformative potential of CSR, not just as a statutory obligation, but as a vehicle for meaningful and inclusive change. Their vision is aligned with both India's national development agenda and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With a focus on improving the quality of life across economic, social, and environmental dimensions, they strive to create long-term impact in underserved communities.

Their CSR policy emphasizes sustainable, scalable, and impactful interventions across priority sectors such as Education, Livelihood, Healthcare, Environmental Conservation & Sustainable Development, Sports, and Relief & Rehabilitation. Their approach is rooted in understanding the real needs of communities and working collaboratively to meet those needs effectively.

What we value most is Kotak Mahindra Bank's inclusive and strategic approach to community engagement. By partnering with grassroots organizations like ours, they not only empower us with resources but also trust us to deliver results that matter. Their willingness to collaborate and leverage sectoral expertise ensures that relief efforts are both effective and compassionate.

Through their support, Kotak Mahindra Bank is making a tangible contribution towards reducing inequalities and fostering inclusive growth for socially and economically marginalized groups. We are proud to call them a partner in our mission and sincerely appreciate their belief in our shared goal to uplift and empower those most affected by disaster.



Context and Background

On December 1st, after forming and gathering strength as a low-pressure system over the Bay of Bengal since November 23rd, this powerful cyclone tore through Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. The sheer force of it was staggering. We saw torrential rains, with some areas getting over 50 cm in a single day, which is like a whole season's worth of rain all at once. Winds howled at up to 90 km/hr, leaving devastation in their wake across 14 districts.

The impact was truly heartbreaking and spread far and wide. Our teams witnessed firsthand the widespread suffering in places like Villupuram, Kallakurichi, Cuddalore, and Tiruvannamalai, as well as inland areas such as Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Ranipet, Vellore, and Tirupattur. Even the Union Territory of Puducherry, especially its Puducherry, Yanam, and Karaikal regions, wasn't spared.

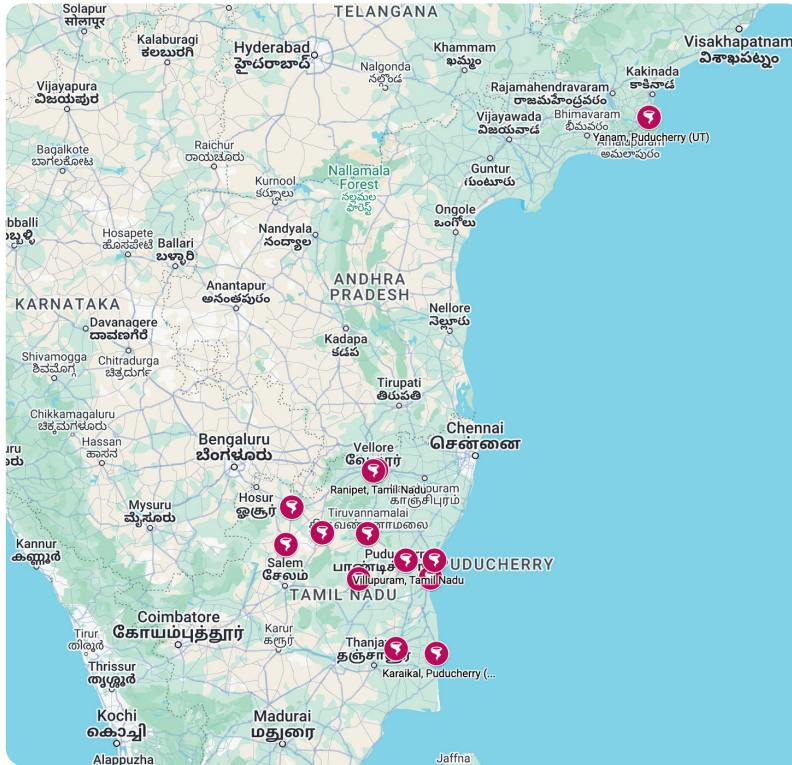


The human cost and the damage to homes and infrastructure were immense, leaving countless lives shattered. Tragically, we learned that 12 people lost their lives. Over 1.5 crore individuals and 69 lakh families were directly affected, and thousands were forced to leave their homes and seek safety in temporary relief camps. We saw with our own eyes 2,416 temporary huts and 721 more permanent houses destroyed. The loss of 963 cattle was particularly tough, as these animals are often the main source of income for many families. Vast stretches of agricultural land, a staggering 2.11 lakh hectares, were swallowed by floodwaters, wiping out crops and pushing farmers into terrible hardship. Beyond individual homes and farms, vital public services suffered greatly. This included 1,650 local government buildings (Panchayat buildings), 4,269 anganwadi centers that are so important for children's early development, 205 primary health centers, and a shocking 5,936 school buildings that were either damaged or completely unusable. Even basic community spaces like 381 halls and 623 water supply systems were affected, throwing daily life into chaos. We heard estimates that the total economic loss climbed to over ₹2000 crores.

In Puducherry, the situation was equally grim. We saw approximately 1.5 lakh houses submerged, with 4,637 homes seriously damaged. Public buildings, including 52 schools and colleges, were also destroyed. Over 10,000 hectares of crops were ruined, and families lost livestock, 6 milch animals, 10 sheep/goats, 30 calves, and a devastating 5,000 poultry. The livelihoods of 14,315 fishermen were shattered, as 976 fishing boats were damaged and their coastal villages were left in ruins.

This crisis hit the most vulnerable in the region. Small farmers suddenly had no crops or livestock, cutting off their income entirely. Elderly people and children faced huge risks, displaced from their homes and struggling to get necessities, healthcare, and an education. Fishermen, whose lives depend entirely on the sea and their boats, found their ability to earn a living completely wiped out. Daily routines for everyone were turned upside down, affecting everything from getting food and water to transportation and healthcare. Many schools remained closed, putting children's education on hold. The images of flooded fields and broken boats solidified our belief that we needed to step in immediately, not just to help with the crisis at hand, but to help these communities start on the long road to recovery and rebuilding their lives. Our team felt an immense urgency to respond to this widespread suffering.

Affected Districts and Locations



- 📍 Villupuram, Tamil Nadu
- 📍 Kallakurichi, Tamil Nadu
- 📍 Cuddalore, Tamil Nadu
- 📍 Tiruvannamalai, Tamil Nadu
- 📍 Dharmapuri, Tamil Nadu
- 📍 Krishnagiri, Tamil Nadu
- 📍 Ranipet, Tamil Nadu
- 📍 Vellore, Tamil Nadu
- 📍 Tirupattur, Tamil Nadu
- 📍 Puducherry (UT)
- 📍 Karaikal, Puducherry (UT)
- 📍 Yanam, Puducherry (UT)
- 📍 Kumbakonam, Tamil Nadu



Objectives of the Intervention

In the immediate aftermath of Cyclone Fengal's devastation, our priority was clear, to offer rapid, effective support that would help affected families begin the difficult journey of putting their lives back together. We knew that simply providing aid was not enough; our intervention needed to go deeper, aiming to restore a sense of normalcy and hope. Our objectives focused not only on meeting urgent survival needs but also restoring dignity, rebuilding livelihoods, and laying the foundation for long-term resilience. With this in mind, we focused on several key objectives that guided every decision our team made on the ground:

Restoring Safety, Dignity, and Livelihood:

Above all, our fundamental objective was to bring back safety and dignity to those who had lost so much, and to help them restart their livelihoods. When homes are destroyed and income sources vanish, dignity often suffers too. Our goal was to help families rebuild their physical shelters through necessary repairs and provide essential livestock to reignite their income-generating capacity, offering a solid foundation for recovery. We believed that by addressing these core needs, we could empower families to stand on their own feet once more.

Supporting Basic Needs and Income

Generation: The cyclone had stripped away basic necessities for many. We committed to providing immediate support for basic health needs through medical camps, ensuring food security with ration kits, offering temporary shelter and enabling income regeneration, particularly through livestock support and veterinary camp. Our focus was on ensuring families had access to clean water, sanitation, and essential supplies for self-care, as well as the means to restart their lives, knowing that these fundamental provisions are critical to survival and recovery.

Promoting Resilience and Future

Preparedness: Beyond the immediate relief, we also looked towards the future. Our intervention aimed to help communities not just recover but also become more resilient against future shocks. By supporting the reconstruction of homes with more robust materials and re-establishing livelihoods, we hoped to strengthen their ability to withstand future disasters. Though this was a rapid response, we envisioned it as a crucial first step in a longer journey of building community resilience and laying the groundwork for better preparedness, ensuring that families could face future challenges with greater strength and stability.

Ensuring Educational Continuity and Social

Cohesion: We recognized that the cyclone's impact went beyond physical damage; it disrupted children's education and shattered their daily routines. With many schools heavily damaged or completely closed due to the destruction, it became essential to find alternative ways to support continued learning. To address this, we supported temporary learning centers that served as safe spaces for children to resume their education and rebuild a sense of normalcy. Our objective was to provide essential educational materials, including a bag, notebook, stationery, and other learning resources, to keep their education uninterrupted. Beyond academics, these centers also became places of emotional healing, fostering social integration, rebuilding peer connections, and nurturing a supportive environment where children could feel safe, connected, and hopeful once again.

Implementation Strategy

To effectively respond to the urgent needs created by Cyclone Fengal, we knew we needed a clear and compassionate strategy. Our main goal was to ensure that the aid reached those who needed it most, quickly and efficiently. Our deep local roots and understanding of the communities were essential for successful delivery a multi-pronged approach into action:

Understanding the Needs on the Ground

(Needs Assessment): Before distributing anything, our first step was always to truly understand what had happened to each family. Our teams, working closely with local partners, carried out thorough needs assessments. This involved extensive field visits to the affected villages and direct, compassionate interviews with the beneficiaries themselves. We wanted to hear their stories, see their damaged homes, and understand their most pressing needs, whether it was for shelter, food, or a way to restart their livelihoods. This direct engagement ensured that our support was not just handed out, but was truly tailored to the realities of each household.

Getting Supplies Where They Were Needed

(Procurement and Logistics): Once we knew what was needed, the challenge was getting it there. We handled the procurement of house-repairing materials (like GI sheets, pipes, cement, and hollow blocks), school kits, and livestock fodder in bulk, ensuring we got the best quality and value for our beneficiaries. Our logistics team then worked tirelessly to transport these materials directly into the affected villages. This direct delivery model helped us bypass potential bottlenecks and ensured that the aid reached the hands of the families efficiently, even in areas where infrastructure was damaged.

Working Hand-in-Hand with the

Community (Community Coordination): We firmly believe that genuine relief work can only happen when it is a partnership with the community itself. To ensure fairness and transparency in distribution, we actively engaged local volunteers and Panchayat (local governing body) members. These local leaders and community members were crucial, they knew their neighbours best, understood the local dynamics, and helped us identify the most vulnerable families. Their involvement ensured that the distribution process was not only smooth but also transparent and truly community-driven, building trust and ensuring the aid reached those intended.

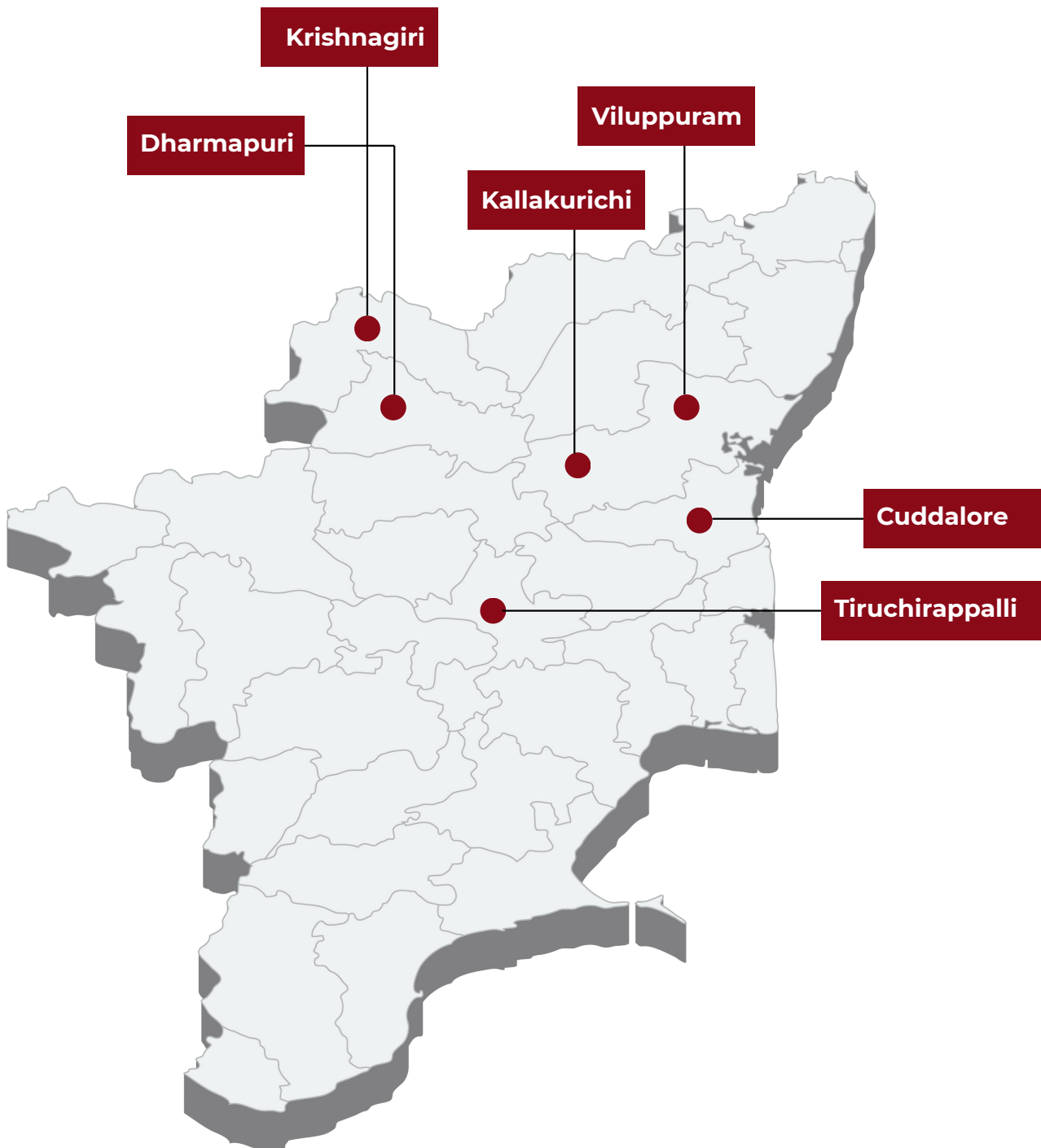
Ensuring Our Support Made a Difference

(Monitoring and Feedback): Our responsibility didn't end with delivery. We implemented a robust monitoring system, conducting weekly follow-ups with beneficiaries. These check-ins weren't just about ticking boxes, they were opportunities for us to see how the materials were being utilized, to ensure that the livestock provided was thriving, and most importantly, to gather direct feedback from the families themselves. This continuous monitoring allowed us to adjust our approach if needed and ensured that our support was indeed making a tangible, positive difference in their lives.

Throughout this entire process, we maintained a strong commitment to ethical practices and transparent beneficiary selection. Our aim was never just to distribute aid, but to rebuild lives with dignity and ensure that every family who received our support truly deserved it, based on genuine need and in consultation with local community structures.

Activities Undertaken

In the immediate aftermath of Cyclone Fengal, our team, working closely with our incredible implementation partners, sprang into action. We understood that time was of the essence, and our efforts needed to be swift, targeted, and deeply empathetic to the overwhelming needs of the affected families. Our work primarily focused on two critical areas, helping families rebuild their homes and assisting them in restarting their livelihoods.



Rebuilding Lives

The sheer number of damaged homes was staggering, thousands of huts and houses across Tamil Nadu and Puducherry had been destroyed or severely damaged. We knew that for families to feel safe and begin recovering, they needed a secure roof over their heads. This was not just about providing materials, it was about restoring dignity and a sense of normalcy.



Our approach involved:

Understanding Specific Needs:

Before distributing materials, we conducted thorough field visits and beneficiary interviews. We walked through the damaged areas, listening to families describe what they had lost and what they needed most to make their homes habitable again. This was not a one-size-fits-all solution, we learned that some needed entire roofs, others needed walls, and some just basic repair materials.

Providing Essential Repairing Materials:

Based on these assessments, we sourced and delivered crucial rebuilding materials directly to the villages. Our goal was to provide what was truly needed to help families repair or reconstruct their damaged shelters. This often included items like GI sheets, MS pipes, square tubes, screws, nuts, cement, hollow blocks.

We specifically helped 671 households with these housing materials, providing them with the means to rebuild their homes. We heard powerful testimonials, like that of Chinnappa from Kunnarampattu Village, who shared how he could finally build a proper tin roof and sleep peacefully, no longer relying on a tarpaulin. Selvi, a widow from Ariyalur, told us how our support helped her fix her back wall and replace her roof, making her and her son feel safe again. Veeramani, a farm laborer, spoke of rebuilding his own space with the cement blocks and pipes we provided, after living at a neighbor's home. These stories truly affirmed the impact of our efforts.



Restoring Hope

Beyond the immediate need for shelter, we knew that many families had lost their primary sources of income. The impact on farmers, in particular, was devastating, with cattle lost and agricultural land inundated. For those who still had their livestock, finding adequate feed in the cyclone's aftermath became a huge struggle. To help these families regain their financial footing and ensure their remaining animals could survive and continue to provide, we focused our livelihood support specifically on providing essential fodder.

Our need assessment highlighted that for many rural households, especially small farm households, their milch animals and other livestock were critical for income and sustenance. We understood that keeping these animals healthy was paramount to the families' recovery. Our intervention, therefore, centred on ensuring these vital animals had access to nutritious feed.

Providing Essential Fodder and Nutritional Support:

We meticulously sourced a variety of high-quality fodder and nutritional supplements, understanding that a balanced diet was crucial for the health and productivity of the livestock that had survived the cyclone. This was about more than just filling stomachs, it was about preserving valuable assets for these families. We procured these items from Shanthi Stores, ensuring we got the best quality for our beneficiaries.

Here is a detailed list of fodder items we provided:

Livestock Fodder Support - Items Purchased



50KG
Pearl Millet
15 QTY



50KG
White Sorghum
Millet 15 QTY



50KG
Sesame Bread
30 QTY



50KG
Groundnut
Cake 30 QTY



50KG
Black Chana Bran
30 QTY



50KG
Red Toordhal
Bran 15 QTY



50KG
Rice Bran
15 QTY



50KG
Rice Bran
15 QTY



50KG
Orid Dhal Powder
16 QTY



50KG
Coconut Oil
Cake 15 QTY

This fodder support was vital in ensuring that families could maintain their existing livestock, which are often their most immediate and valuable assets for recovery. It was a direct way we helped them preserve their livelihoods and ensure a path to self-sufficiency.

Broader Interventions and Support

While housing, livelihood, education, and medical camps were our primary focus, our proposal outlined a broader, multi-pronged intervention designed to address the immediate human crisis and support the population towards early recovery. Although the detailed achievements for all these proposed activities are not available in the current field report, our commitment was to:

- **Disaster Relief Kits:** The distribution of essential provisions like food, drinking water, and sanitation items was carried out to ensure immediate safety and well-being for families. Our proposed kits included:




1500 Ration kit

Villupuram, Kallakurichi,
Thiruvannamalai

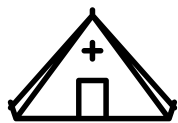


1000 Ration kit

Cuddalore, Dharmapuri
& Krishnagiri

 Toor Dhall 1 Kg	 Turmeric powder 100g	 Chilli powder 100g	 Pepper 50g	 Jeera 50g
 Mustard 100g	 Gram Dhall 500g	 Moong Dhall 500g	 sunflower oil 1 unit	 Semiya 3 unit
 Margo 2 unit	 Powder 3 unit	 Atta 1Kg	 Maida 1Kg	 Neetu Milagai 100g
 Fenugreek 50 g	 Fried gram Dhall 1 kg	 Sugar 1Kg	 Marie Gold 1 kg	 Ponni Rice 5 Kg

- **Medical Camps & Medical Support:** Recognizing the heightened health risks after a disaster, medical camps were organized as per local requirements for address the immediate health needs of the affected population.

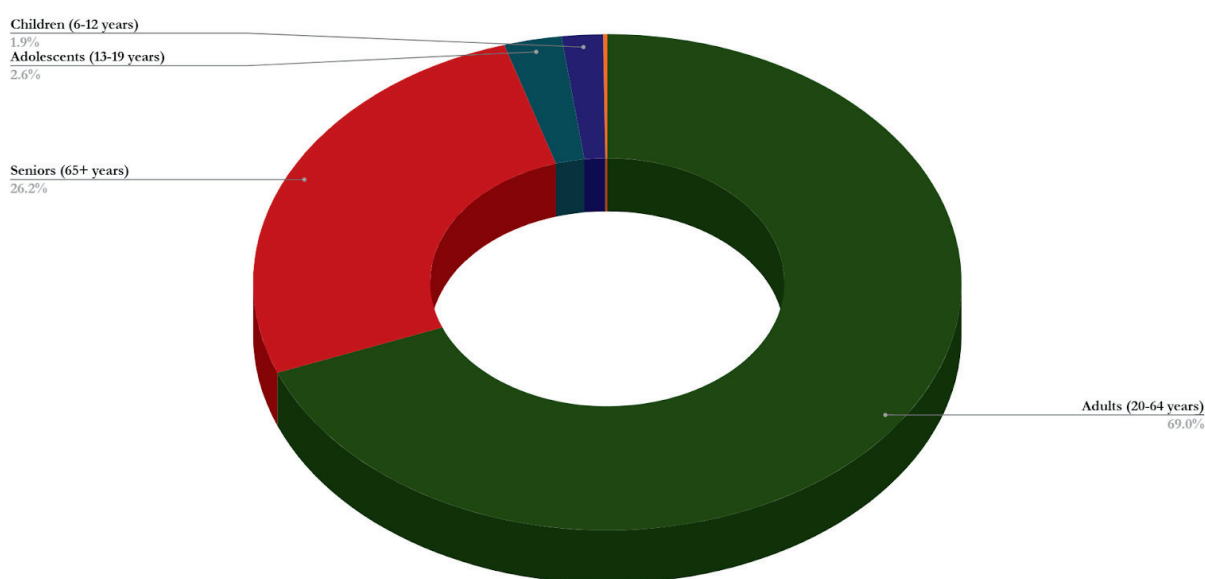


Total Camps: 10



Direct Patients: 1063

Chart 1: Age Distribution of Patients Attending Medical Camp



This pie chart provides a clear overview of the age groups among the patients who attended our medical camps. As part of our broader intervention, we aimed to address the immediate health needs of the affected population. The chart illustrates that the vast majority of our patients were adults, with the 20-64 years age group accounting for a significant 69.05% of attendees. Seniors (65+ years) also formed a substantial portion, representing 26.25% of those seeking assistance. Younger demographics, specifically adolescents (13-19 years) and children (6-12 years), constituted smaller but still important segments at 2.63% and 1.88%, respectively. It's worth noting that the 'Early Childhood' group (0-5 years), representing a very small 0.19% of the total, does not appear as a distinct label on the chart due to its low proportional value, but their needs were nonetheless addressed.



Medical Camps Detail:

Sl. No.	Medical Camp Date	Venue
1	8.1.2025	B.Thurichipatti, Harur
2	9.1.2025	B.Pallipatti, Harur
3	10.1.2025	Gopinathampatti, Harur
4	11.1.2025	Annasagaram, Dharmapuri
5	21.1.2025	Pallapatti, Dharmapuri
6	21.1.2025	Nagalapuram, Dharmapuri
7	22.1.2025	Mariyampatti, Dharmapuri
8	22.1.2025	Dalavaihalli, Dharmapuri
9	23.1.2025	Krishnapuram, Dharmapuri
10	23.1.2025	Thippampatti, Dharmapuri



- **Educational Support for Children:** With numerous schools damaged, we provided educational kits to the 11 learning centres in Cuddalore, which are being distributed among the children coming to the centres. The complete distribution will be done once the summer vacation is over to ensure that children's learning can continue despite the disruption. Our proposed school kit items included:



1000
School kit



1000
Students



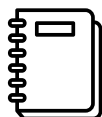
School
bag



Water
bottle



Acrylic Clip
Board



6 pieces
Notebook



Geometry
Box

Our overall strategy was to be flexible and responsive, guided by the most urgent needs on the ground. Every action we took was aimed at containing the human crisis and assisting the population towards early recovery and rebuilding their lives with dignity.

S.No.	Name of the Learning Centres, Cuddalore
1	Bharat Mata Kalvidhana Maiyam
2	Veerakuyilli Kalvidhana Maiyam
3	Nivedhitha Kalvidhana Maiyam
4	Jansirani Kalvidhana Maiyam
5	Kamarajar Kalvidhana Maiyam
6	Jansirani Kalvidhana Maiyam
7	Subash Chandrabose Kalvidhana Maiyam
8	Gandhiji Kalvidhana Maiyam
9	Kamarajar Kalvidhana Maiyam
10	Swami Vivekananda Kalvidhana Maiyam
11	Netaji Kalvidhana Maiyam



Beneficiary Voices - Real Stories, Real Impact

When we set out to help after Cyclone Fengal, we knew the numbers and the lists of aid were important. But for us, the true measure of our work always comes down to the individual lives changed and the families who find a sliver of hope. These aren't just statistics, they're mothers, fathers, grandmothers, and children. We want to share a few of their voices directly, to give you a true sense of what their lives were like after the storm, and how a helping hand made all the difference.



Chinnappa from Kunnarampattu Village

Chinnappa's story stuck with us. Like so many others, his family was left exposed after the cyclone damaged their home. Imagine having to use a flimsy tarpaulin to try and protect your loved ones from the elements every single night. We knew that for him, a proper roof wasn't just about shelter, it was about dignity and the simple comfort of knowing his family was safe. We were so glad we could provide the materials he needed to finally rebuild.

He told us, "I used to cover my family with a tarpaulin at night. Now, I have built a proper tin roof and sleep peacefully. My heartfelt thanks to Sewa and Kotak."

Hearing that simple phrase, "sleep peacefully", really brought home to us just how much a stable home means to a family.

Jayanthi, a Single Mother from Manigandam

Jayanthi's situation was particularly poignant. As a single mother, the floods had stripped her of everything. When we met her, we understood that for families like hers, livelihood support isn't just about replacing what was lost; it's about igniting a new spark of hope and a path to independence. Our team felt strongly that empowering her with a new source of income was crucial, so we provided her with a goat.

Her words touched us deeply: "After the floods, we had nothing. The fodder helped our goat to survive and now gives milk, and we're saving to buy another. This changed our life."

That spirit of planning for the future, of saving to buy another goat, showed us the powerful, rippling effect a small act of kindness can have.



Selvi, a Widow from Ariyalur



Selvi, a widow raising her son, faced the daunting task of repairing a home badly damaged by the cyclone. For her, getting her home fixed was about more than just structural integrity; it was about recreating a secure haven for her small family. Our team felt it was vital to ensure her home was safe again. We provided the necessary construction support that allowed her to repair the back wall and get a new roof.

Selvi shared with us, "I am a widow and live with my son. The construction support helped us repair the back wall and replace the roof. We feel safe again."

Knowing that Selvi and her son can now truly feel safe in their own home reminds us why every bit of our housing support matters, especially for those most vulnerable.

Subapalli, an Elderly Woman from Rural Vellore

Subapalli, an elderly woman, was living in a very precarious situation; her home was little more than a damaged shed that felt like it could collapse at any moment. Her vulnerability resonated deeply with our team, and we knew getting her into a safe and dignified living space was an immediate priority.

She expressed her relief simply: "We were under a damaged shed that could fall anytime. Now, we have got a safe new shelter. I pray for those who helped us."

Her quiet prayer for us underscored the profound sense of relief and gratitude that comes from just regaining basic safety and comfort in one's own home.



Parameswari, a Grandmother from the Kumbakonam Region



Parameswari was bearing the heavy load of raising three grandchildren, and the cyclone had hit them hard, damaging their already fragile livelihood. We always make it a point to support women-led households, knowing the immense strength and responsibility they carry. By providing her a goat fodder, we aimed to give them a sustainable source of food and a small but steady income.

Parameswari told us, "I am a grandmother raising three kids. The goat is our source of food and a small income. This support brought us hope."

Her story is a testament to how even the smallest act of support can spark hope, restore stability, and empower resilient women to uplift their families and communities.



Outputs and Impact Summary

After all the hard work, the careful planning, and the tireless efforts on the ground, we are incredibly proud to share the tangible results of our intervention. This section is where we look at the numbers and the real-world changes that our support brought to the families affected by Cyclone Fengal. We believe these figures, combined with the stories you've just read, paint a clear picture of the impact we were able to make.

Our immediate goal was to address the most pressing needs: shelter, food, and a way for families to start earning again. Here's a summary of the direct support we provided:



4269 +
Households



17,076+
Lives served



2500+ Households
Ration Kit



671+ households
House Repair
Materials



1063+ households
Medical Camps &
Medical Support



35+ households
Livestock Care
Supported



1,000 students
Educational Support-
School Kit

Beyond these direct numbers, our efforts led to a much broader impact on the communities we served. We saw significant progress in several key areas:

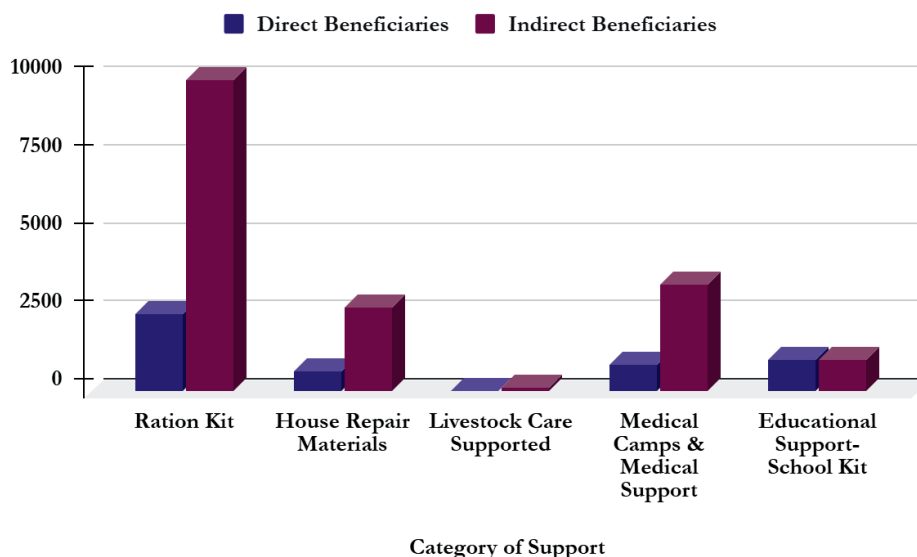
- **Shelter Safety Restored:** We are so glad to report that 2,684 families now have safe and secure roofs over their heads. This was a huge step in bringing back a sense of stability and dignity.

- **Livelihood Regained:** Over 35 farmers received essential fodder support for livestock care following the disaster. With each farmer managing between 250 to 300 animals (goats and cows), this intervention is crucial in sustaining their herds, preventing further economic loss, and helping them rebuild their agricultural livelihoods.

- **Community Rebuilding:** We also saw a ripple effect, with over 50 indirect beneficiaries, including local laborers who helped with repairs and neighbors who supported each other. This showed us the strength of community spirit in recovery.

- **Women-led Households Empowered:** We made a special effort to provide targeted support to 35-40 female-headed households. We know these women often carry immense burdens, and empowering them was a key part of our mission.

Chart 2: Reach of Our Disaster Response Interventions



This column chart visually presents the significant reach of our disaster response efforts, categorizing the support provided and highlighting the number of direct and indirect beneficiaries. It clearly illustrates how we extended our help across various critical areas following Cyclone Fengal. Our distribution of Ration Kits reached the largest number of households directly, providing essential food and immediate relief. Our house repair materials also supported a substantial number of families in rebuilding their homes. Furthermore, the chart shows our vital contribution through medical camps, livestock care, and educational support, which extended to many students receiving school kits. We are particularly proud that beyond the direct individuals and households we assisted, our interventions created a ripple effect, benefiting many more indirectly within the affected communities. This overview helps us to understand the breadth and depth of our commitment to those impacted by the disaster.

Our Contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals

At Sewa International, we believe that our work on the ground is not just about immediate relief; it is also about contributing to a larger global vision for a better world. The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide a universal framework for addressing the world's most pressing challenges. Our Cyclone Fengal relief and rehabilitation program, though a focused disaster response, inherently touched upon and advanced several of these crucial goals. We are proud to see how our efforts align with this global agenda for sustainable development.

Here are the key SDGs that our intervention directly addressed:

1 NO POVERTY



How We Contributed:

The cyclone pushed many families deeper into poverty by destroying their homes and livelihoods. Our project directly aimed to bring them out of this crisis. By providing vital construction materials for housing repairs and offering support for income-generating livestock, we gave families the means to rebuild their assets and restart their economic activities. This was about restoring dignity and providing a pathway out of immediate destitution.

2 ZERO HUNGER



How We Contributed:

Food security became an immediate concern for thousands displaced by the floods and those who lost their crops and animals. Our distribution of essential ration kits directly addressed the hunger crisis. Furthermore, by providing fodder support for livestock, we enabled families to by strengthening their long-term food security.

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



How We Contributed:

Disasters often lead to health crises due to a lack of sanitation, injury, and disease. Our proposal included plans for basic health care services and medical camps. Ensuring access to clean drinking water and sanitation during the camp also played a crucial role in preventing illness and promoting overall well-being in the affected communities.

5 GENDER EQUALITY



How We Contributed:

We made a specific effort to support female-headed households, recognizing that women often bear a disproportionate burden during and after disasters. By providing targeted support to 35-40 such households, whether through housing repairs or livelihood assistance, we aimed to empower these women and ensure they had the resources to protect and provide for their families. This directly contributes to reducing gender disparities in times of crisis.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



How We Contributed:

The cyclone decimated livelihoods, particularly for farmers and fishermen. Our efforts to restore income-generating activities, primarily through livestock support and proposed future livelihood training, are directly aimed at providing avenues for decent work and contributing to local economic recovery. We believe that by helping people restart their businesses and agricultural activities, we foster inclusive economic growth.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES



How We Contributed:

Making communities resilient to disasters is at the heart of this SDG. By helping families repair and rebuild safe and secure homes, we directly contributed to strengthening the physical infrastructure of communities. Our focus on community coordination and engaging local leaders also helped reinforce the social fabric, making these communities more robust and sustainable in the face of future challenges.

13 CLIMATE ACTION



How We Contributed:

Cyclone Fengal itself was a severe weather event, potentially exacerbated by changing climate patterns. While our intervention was a response effort, by helping communities recover and build back better, we are contributing to their adaptive capacity and resilience to climate-related hazards. Our proposed Phase 2 focus on sustainable agriculture also aligns with building resilience against climate impacts.

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



How We Contributed:

This entire initiative is evidence of the power of collaboration. Our partnership with Kotak Mahindra Bank for funding and our critical implementation partnership with local partners on the ground exemplifies SDG 17. We believe that working together, leveraging each other's strengths and resources, is the most effective way to achieve significant, lasting impact in complex humanitarian situations.

Through our collective efforts in Tamil Nadu and Puducherry, we are not just providing relief, we are actively contributing to a global blueprint for peace and prosperity, ensuring that these communities are better prepared and more resilient for the future.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Responding to a disaster as widespread and intense as Cyclone Fengal is never a simple task. While we are proud of what we achieved, we also want to be transparent about the significant hurdles we faced. These challenges tested our adaptability and taught us invaluable lessons that will undoubtedly shape our future relief efforts. It's truly in these moments of difficulty that you learn the most about effective humanitarian work.

- **Battling the Elements and Logistical Hurdles:**

Our biggest challenge often came directly from the very disaster we were responding to. The cyclone left a trail of destruction, which meant roads were blocked, bridges were damaged, and severe weather persisted even after landfall. Getting relief materials to the most affected villages wasn't just about driving; it was about navigating impassable routes, dealing with ongoing rainfall, and ensuring the safety of our teams and the vehicles carrying precious aid. Every delivery became an exercise in careful planning and improvisation, often requiring longer routes or different modes of transport than anticipated. This taught us just how critical detailed, real-time ground assessments are.

- **The Nuances of Local Coordination:**

Working hand-in-hand with local Panchayats and community leaders was essential for fair and effective distribution, as we mentioned in our strategy. However, coordinating efforts across numerous villages, each with its unique local dynamics and immediate priorities, sometimes presented its complexities. Ensuring everyone was on the same page and that processes were streamlined, while respecting local customs and hierarchies, required constant communication and a flexible approach from our teams and our local partners. It is a delicate balance, but one we have learned is vital for building trust and ensuring aid reaches the right hands.

- **When Need Outweighs Resources:**

Perhaps the most heart-wrenching challenge was the sheer scale of the devastation compared to the resources we had available. Every family we met had a story of loss, and the need for shelter, livelihood support, and necessities was immense. While we stretched every rupee and every resource as far as it could go, we constantly faced the reality that we couldn't help everyone to the extent they desperately needed. This forced us to make difficult prioritization decisions, always guided by the principle of reaching the most vulnerable first. It's a stark reminder that even with significant support, the recovery journey for affected communities is long and demands continuous commitment.



Our Biggest Takeaway

Through all these challenges, one lesson stood out above all else, the absolute necessity and irreplaceable value of strong local partnerships and dedicated community volunteers. Our collaboration with local partners was our backbone. Their deep understanding of the local culture, their existing networks, and their on-the-ground teams were what allowed us to navigate blocked roads, gain community trust, and ensure aid reached remote areas. Similarly, the selfless efforts of local volunteers, who stepped up despite their losses, were phenomenal. They were the ones who truly knew their neighbors, helped identify needs, and assisted in distribution. We learned that while external support is crucial, it is the strength and commitment of the local community that ultimately drives effective and sustainable relief efforts. This is a lesson we will carry forward into every future intervention.



Conclusion

The days and weeks following Cyclone Fengal were a stark reminder of nature's power and the immediate, profound human need that arises from such events. For us at Sewa International, responding to this crisis was not just a duty; it was a deeply ingrained instinct, born from our very origins in disaster relief. We stepped into the widespread devastation across Tamil Nadu and Puducherry with a clear purpose: to restore safety, dignity, and a path to livelihood for the families whose lives had been turned upside down.

Our collaborative approach, made possible by the invaluable support of Kotak Mahindra Bank Limited and the tireless efforts of our implementation partners, proved incredibly effective. Despite significant logistical challenges posed by damaged infrastructure and ongoing adverse weather, our teams worked relentlessly on the ground. We focused on the most critical needs, from providing materials to rebuild shattered homes to offering livestock support that rekindled hope and income for struggling families. The stories of Chinnappa, Jayanthi, Selvi, Subapalli, and Parameswari are powerful testaments to the tangible difference our collective efforts made in individual lives.

This intervention has not only provided immediate relief but has also reinforced our core belief in the strength of local communities and the indispensable value of true partnerships. We are proud of our contributions to the Sustainable Development Goals, helping to advance global objectives for poverty reduction, health, gender equality, and resilient communities.

While the immediate crisis has passed, we know that the journey to full recovery is long. Our commitment to these resilient communities remains unwavering.. We believe that by working together, continuously learning, and focusing on sustainable solutions, we can empower these communities to not just recover but to thrive in the face of future challenges.



Picture Gallery



Picture Gallery



Together, we've sketched stories of change, etching hope into hearts. We want to express our sincere gratitude for your continued support and readership.



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Published by:

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