

DISASTER RELIEF

MINUTES OF VOLUNTARY AGENCIES MEETING HELD ON 1ST OCTOBER, 1993
AT 4.00 P.M. AT ASHIRVAD, NO. 30, ST. MARK'S ROAD, BANGALORE -
560 001.

AGENDA : EARTHQUAKE RELIEF FOR MARATHWADA

MEMBERS PRESENT : (See Appendix)

Background :

The Voluntary agencies at Bangalore have met in the past to evolve combined efforts to provide relief during disasters in and around our country. Many of these agencies have been working with their partners in disaster affected areas and have been able to bring their collective resources to work together, from Bangalore.

This effort started with receiving information through the media and from personal contacts about the earthquake which affected the Marathwada region of Maharashtra and adjoining districts of Karnataka. The earthquake tremors had also been felt at Bangalore. Voluntary agencies who had met and worked in the past agreed to meet once again along with other agencies who have shown interest in strengthening the efforts from Bangalore.

The Meeting : The meeting started with a review of the available information from media and other sources on the disaster and a glimpse at the background cited above.

The consensus was on :

- 1) Evolving a combined response to provide needed relief for the disaster affected in Marathwada.
- 2) To sensitize and seek cooperation of the citizens of Bangalore in this combined effort.
- 3) To evolve a long term strategy for the Bangalore based voluntary agencies.

The immediate action evolved by the group was

- 1) To give out advertizements in the newspapers and broadcast the appeal for help on Doordarshan and AIR, as a combined effort of Bangalore based voluntary organizations.
- 2) These advertizements were to seek help from citizens of Bangalore in contributions of money (cash/cheque), material (clothes/utensils) and other necessities like water containers, bulk drugs, milk powder etc.

- 3) Eight collection centres for the above were identified all over Bangalore, and phone numbers for contact were identified. These were to be put into the newspaper advertisement.
- 4) Pamphlets advertizing these efforts were to be made and distributed.
- 5) Sponsors for the advertizements and pamphlets were to be identified, and the needed format of appeal was drafted by a smaller group. The appeals were to be in various language newspapers (English and vernacular), staggered over the next two weeks such that repeated appeals will be effective in mobilizing resources.

The next meeting was fixed for 5th October, 1993 at the above mentioned venue before which, a group of agencies with contacts at the disaster site were to collect more information, while others started off on the local collection and mobilization drive.

#####

MINUTES OF THE VOLUNTARY AGENCIES MEETING HELD ON 5TH OCTOBER, 1993 AT 4.00 P.M. AT ASHIRVAD, NO. 30, ST. MARK'S ROAD, BANGALORE - 560 001.

AGENDA

- 1) Review of activities since last meeting
- 2) Feedback, suggestions and discussion
- 3) Future plan of action

Members Present : (See Appendix)

REVIEW

- 1) Since many more voluntary agencies were represented in this meeting a review of what occurred on 1st October, 1993 was done.
- 2) Feedback from the disaster area - media reports and reports from the partner agencies of the representatives in this meeting. This showed that there are enough materials and volunteers for the relief work at present. Money is in great need and planning for medium and long term rehabilitation is required.
- 3) Voluntary agencies at the disaster site have formed coordination groups which will discuss with the government about their role and areas of relief work.
- 4) The urgently required materials requested by Service Civil International group- Bombay was bleaching powder, bandages and plasters.

FEEDBACK

An advertizement in Deccan Herald and announcements from AIR started the day after the last meeting. This has brought in cash, cheques, clothes and utensils collected at various centres established earlier. Other local voluntary groups doing similar work are also utilizing these centres. Appeal pamphlets have been printed and are ready for distribution.

Volunteers from agencies represented in this meeting were already at the disaster site and could provide more information. Faxes and other messages were available about the disaster situation.

SUGGESTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

- 1) There was need for focussed action by this group. The suggestions were
 - a) To identify a few villages and help them in all needs
 - b) To identify categories of people who needed help like destitutes, orphans, disabled, women and children etc.
 - c) To coordinate all future efforts with voluntary agencies working specifically in the disaster affected area to meet the actual needs of the people.
- 2) For accountability to the donors of money, ensuring that all this was utilized for the disaster affected was essential. Hence all local effort could be sponsored by the local groups while the donations will go to meet the requirements of the disaster affected. A sub-committee will be formed for this.
- 3) Since large quantities of clothes and utensils were collected, a godown for storage, volunteers for sorting out and packing as well as dispatching and proper utilization were needed. Association for Physically Handicapped (A.P.H.) had offered storage facilities. Offers of volunteers to help in sorting out were welcomed from ESI Staff Nurses Association and Service Civil International Volunteers.
- 4) The need for first hand reports from volunteers who had worked there was felt.
- 5) The advertizements and pamphlets appealing for help should be a continued activity. This in addition to identifying and integrating other such efforts into a combined response from Bangalore.

DECISIONS

- 1) Funds are at present being deposited with Service Civil International and OXFAM. This would ensure the facility of 80G exemption under Income-Tax for donors. A framework for fund utilization would be presented at the next meeting, for approval of the group.
- 2) All the collected material would be deposited at Association for Physically Handicapped, as a central godown. The first dispatch of sorted out material was planned by 11th October, 1993. Materials inappropriate for the needs of the disaster affected was to be converted to money and be utilized appropriately.

- 3) A sub-committee for volunteers was formed. The organizations - Service Civil International, Sewa-In Action, Child Relief and You, Vimochana, HEKS and Community Health Cell agreed to take up this responsibility. Volunteers were to be identified not only for sorting out material but also to work in disaster area. The Service Civil International agreed to extend their expertise in formulating lists of volunteers and orienting them.
- 4) A sub-committee for providing information was constituted consisting of OXFAM, ACTION-AID, SEWA-IN ACTION (Rastreeya Santrastha Parihara Nidhi) and HEKS.
- 5) Press releases about the Bangalore group's efforts were to be coordinated by Action-Aid, Concern for Working Children, Society for Afforestation and Verdant Earth and Mr. Ravi Prasad.
- 6) Other offers for help were welcomed from
 - a) Mallya Hospital for two doctors for a duration of 1 week
 - b) Principal of Bangalore International School to help children in the disaster affected area
 - c) ESI Staff Nurses Association, Rajajinagar for volunteering to sort out relief material.

This group agreed to meet again on 8th October, 1993 at 4.00 p.m. at the above mentioned venue. During the meeting, volunteers who have been to the disaster area would be invited to share their impressions and update us on the prevailing situation.

IN THIS MEETING THE PARTICIPANTS APPRECIATED THE UTILITY OF COLLECTIVE EFFORT IN BEING ABLE TO EXTEND HELP IN A COORDINATED AND APPROPRIATE MANNER, TO REACH THOSE WHO REALLY ARE IN NEED.

#####