

Uttarakhand Cloudburst and flash flood response

A race against time ! Rudraprayag | Uttarkashi 2013

INDIA HUMANITARIAN HUB

**Developed by Bipul – supported by
Uttarakhand and Hub team**

**Photo credits: Oxfam - Bipul Borah, Ambalavanan,
Shambhu, Rajkiran and JVS and HPSS staff**

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Case-lets from the field



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Bina Devi, from Khumera village (Bhiyung garh) lost her only son in Kedarnath on that fateful day. She is still in a shock, as she could not even have a glance of her 18 year old son's body for the last time and perform his last rites. It was a miraculous escape on the part of her husband. Unfortunately her husband had to abandon their son's body on the spot as all accessible road from Kedarnath and Gourikund were washed away. Both her son and husband, Doyal Singh Rana used to transport pilgrims from Gaurikund to Kedarnath on their two mules. The family has lost both the mules, their sole source of income.

Photo on the right: Bina Devi's house





Binod Lal and his family from Maikhanda village in Ukhimoth block of Rudraprayag district feels lucky to get back their 15 year old son, who went missing for 8 days after the disaster. He desperately searched for his son in all possible places and did not leave a single stone unturned to find him. Binod works as daily wage labour (mainly masonry works) in and around his village. His son was out at work as a helper with the Mule owners in Kedarnath and Gourikund areas to earn some extra money for the family as it was his summer holidays.

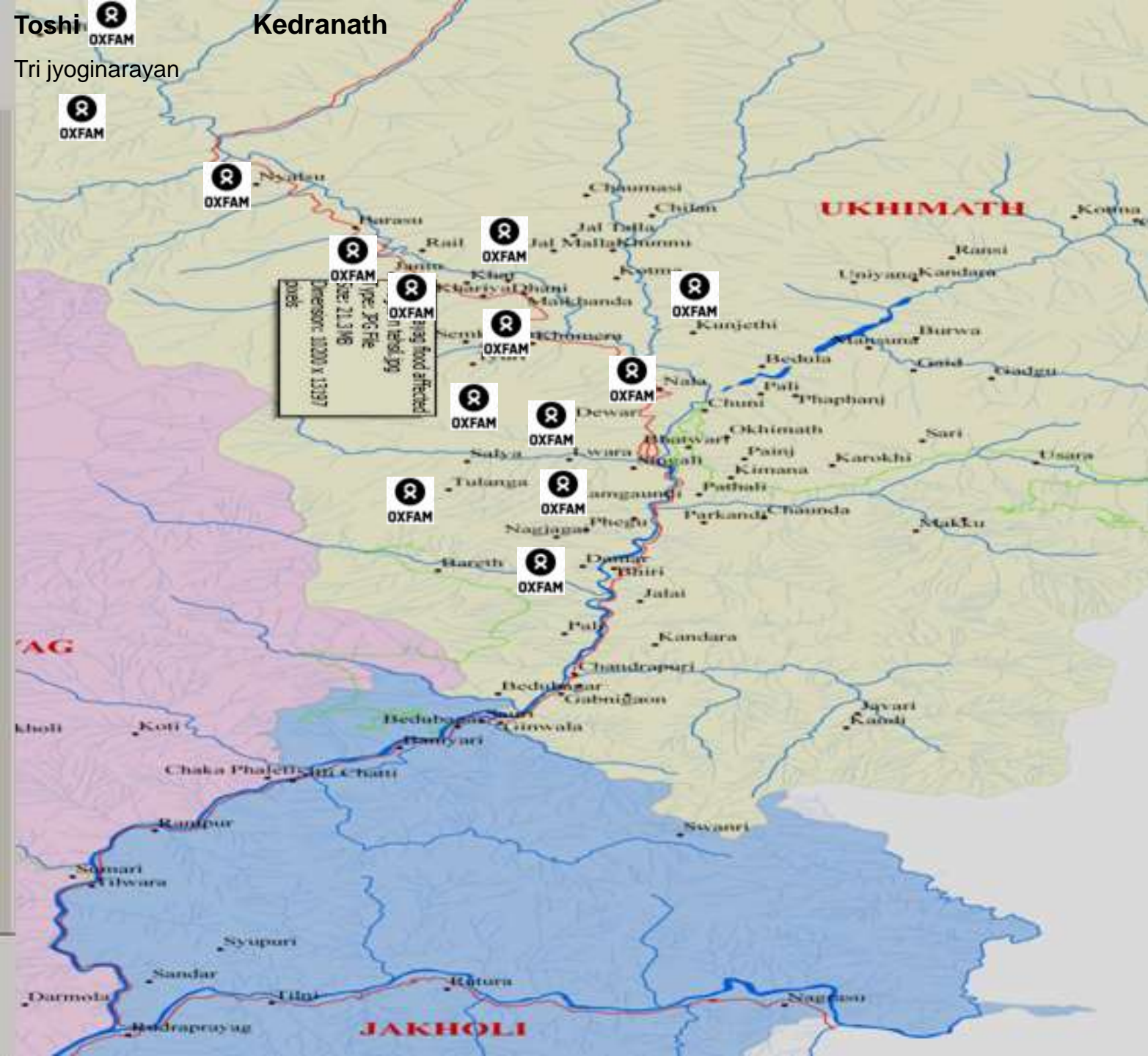


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Programme activities in Uttarakhand

- **Dry food ration** packets to **1,376** households (target 1,500): Packets consist of Rice, wheat flour, pulses, mustard oil, and Spices (14 August 2013)
- **NFI and Hygiene kit** to **1,721** households (Bucket and mug, blankets, candle and match box, tarpaulin and ground sheets, solar lamps, bathing and washing soap, sanitary cloth and Biscuits).
- **Transitional shelter** along with latrines for 225 households – procurement of shelter kit has begun; identified 119 targeted households through community process.
- **Sanitation facilities**: Construction of 50 household latrines against targeted 150 is ongoing (total target along with shelter support is 375) .
- **Emergency food security and livelihood** – 1,170 households (Unconditional cash transfer and cash for work). Cash transfer work starting from 15th August in 3 villages.
- **Public health promotion** in collaboration with government health department and ICDS centre and schools.
- Support to **20 affected ICDS** centres targeting children in affected areas: transitional shelter support, safe water and sanitation and biscuits support in collaboration with Ministry of Women and Child Development, GoUK, District Administration and United Nations Disaster Management Team (UNDMT)






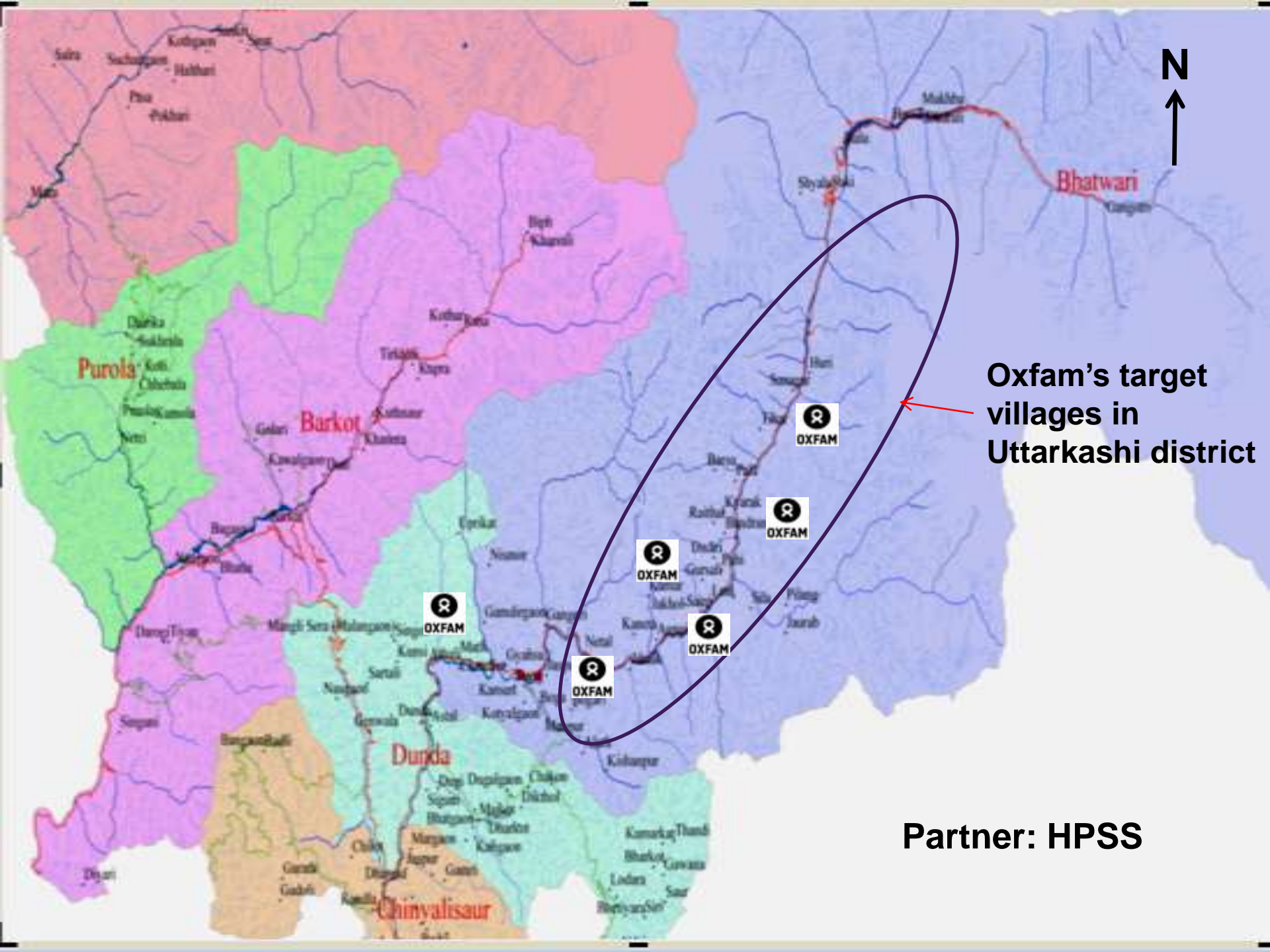
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Oxfam's targeted village in Rudraprayag District

Partner: JVS



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Oxfam's target villages in Uttarkashi district

Partner: HPSS

Programme Management

- Team composition – Multi skilled and logistics heavy given the programme needs
- Expertise – on WASH, Cash for Work and Cash Transfer and Transitional Shelter
- Problem solving approach of the team
- Decentralised decision making but strong backup systems
- Field visits by coordination team
- Transparency
- Gender sensitivity
- Safety First
- quality rather than quantity



Challenges

- Reaching the most vulnerable beneficiaries in isolated villages
- Maintaining quality and speed. Approaching winter.
- Operating in highly risk terrain while remaining safe, neutral and objective
- ensuring priority relief to vulnerable groups
- Coordinating with minimal communication
- Harsh weather conditions and Inaccessibility and hazardous location
- Poor communication
- Limited staff movement at times
- Stressful working environment. Demanding community
- Transporters not willing to carry goods to certain locations because of bad roads and continuous landslides.







Emergency shelter materials (in photo- grey, blue and orange in color) received by the affected communities are in use in different villages – for making temporary shelters for night stay; also to give an extra strength to weak shelters of the poor households in order to protect the families from the elements of weather.





Making access to Safe Water in the villages:

Photo on left: Siemens water treatment system set up for school children and villagers in Ukhimoth block, Rudraprayag

Photo below: Water Testing and water quality monitoring by Oxfam for bacteriological contamination.

In general water quality found to be safe





Safe Sanitation

Interventions: To address the gap sanitation facilities, latrines construction in villages is ongoing. This is to reduce open defecation and thereby reduce contamination of water sources. Also to use the humanitarian opportunity to create demand conditions for sanitation in the villages.



Planning meetings with the villagers



Public Health Promotion in targeted villages: Messaging around hand washing during critical times, hand washing steps, water treatment, safe water handling, preparation of ORS in case of diarrhea, safe defecation practice etc. PHP for behavior and practice change







**Disease Surveillance at Health Sub Centers – photo from Trijoginarayan and Toshi areas - the last villages in Kedarnath area.
Oxfam has been monitoring for water borne diseases (if any) in the targeted villages**



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Next Step: Community meetings in progress for beneficiary identification - cash transfer and transitional shelter support interventions



Challenges: Reaching out to some of the remote villages is still a difficult task for the field staff. There are recurrent land slides, road damage due to the continuous rains in both the operational districts



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**A regular day at “Office” for the humanitarian team based in Uttarakhand:
Staff need to go prepared for night halts in villages - as in some cases it is
impossible to come back to the base office during the same day**



Road to Gupta Kashi and project areas in Uttarkashi are unsafe and in bad shape. Continuous rains have made travelling to the field extremely risky. Communication to the response areas and transportation of relief materials continue to remain a challenge until the rains stop and roads are repaired.



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Thank You!!



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