

Whoi to Voice

journey from pain to power

igsss

Visual Representation of Indo-Global Social Service Society's Best Practices for Flood Resilient Communities in the Dhemaji District of Assam, India.



Supported by



Illustrations by
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NATIONAL HIGHWAY 15

CHANGMAI DOLONG

TENGAPUR- B

INTERVENTION AREA

KOUMOTIA RIVER

NEPALIKHUTI

BOHAIN GAON

RUPTOLI

ROAD

FUTUKABARI

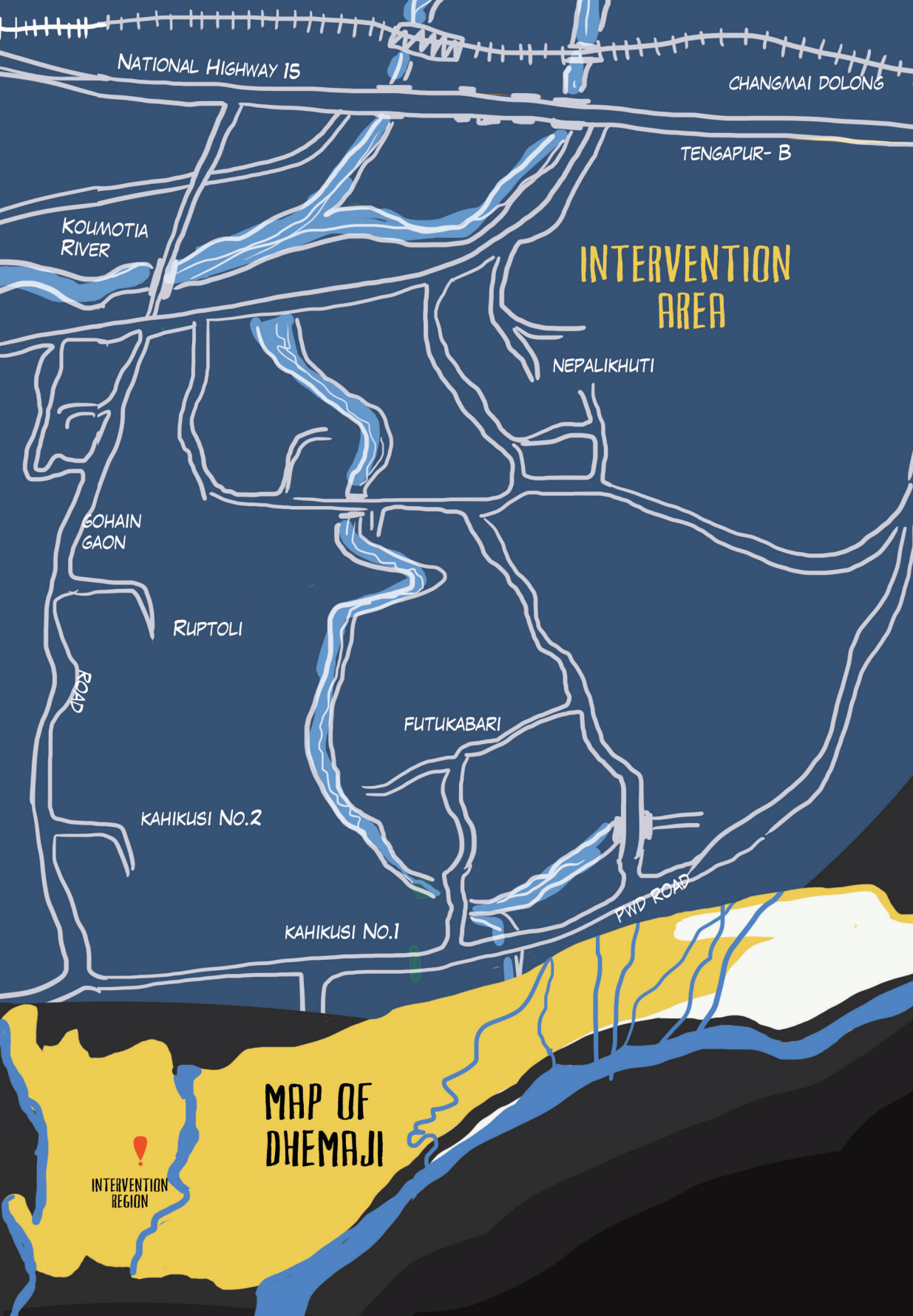
KAHIKUSI NO.2

KAHIKUSI NO.1

PWD ROAD

MAP OF DHEMAJI

!
INTERVENTION REGION



PROBLEMS

BEFORE IGSSS DRR PROJECT STARTED OUT IN DHEMAJI !



THE TWO PRIMARY ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES IN THE AREAS, FARMING AND DAILY WAGES WERE BEING DEVASTATED BY FLOODS

RESULTING IN MASSIVE LOSS OF ASSETS; THIS HAD IN TURN IMPACTED THE EARNING OPPORTUNITY OF THE COMMUNITY.

WE WERE NOT AWARE ABOUT GOVERNMENT'S WELFARE SCHEMES AND SUPPORT STRUCTURES

IT TOOK YEARS FOR EVEN PARTIAL COMPENSATION TO REACH US

IT WAS DIFFICULT TO ACCESS RELIEF MATERIALS, TRAVELLING FOR TWO OR MORE DAYS TRAVERSING CHOPPY FLOOD WATERS WAS QUITE COMMON

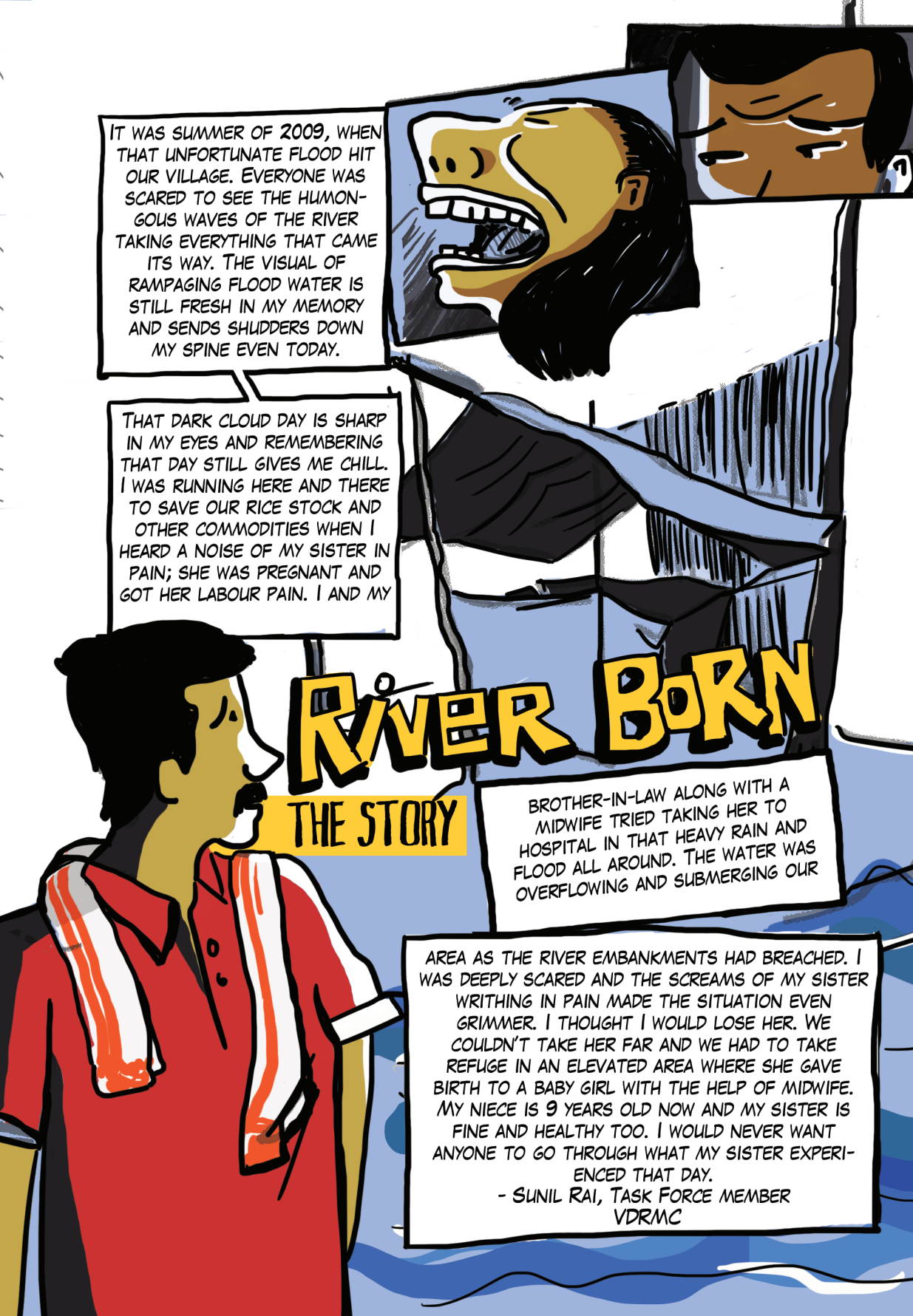


DIARRHEA, TYPHOID, PNEUMONIA WERE EVERYDAY DISEASES.

DURING MONSOON THE AREAS REMAINED CUT OFF FROM THE REST OF THE REGION.

TWO PEOPLE DIED SO FAR IN THE FLOOD; RIGHT IN FRONT OF OUR EYES AND WE COULD DO NOTHING MUCH, WE WERE EQUALLY SCARED

SPREAD OF INFECTIOUS AND WATER BORNE DISEASES LIKE TYPHOID, PNEUMONIA, CHOLERA AND LEPTOSPIROSIS WERE QUITE COMMON



IT WAS SUMMER OF 2009, WHEN THAT UNFORTUNATE FLOOD HIT OUR VILLAGE. EVERYONE WAS SCARED TO SEE THE HUMONGOUS WAVES OF THE RIVER TAKING EVERYTHING THAT CAME ITS WAY. THE VISUAL OF RAMPAGING FLOOD WATER IS STILL FRESH IN MY MEMORY AND SENDS SHUDDERS DOWN MY SPINE EVEN TODAY.

THAT DARK CLOUD DAY IS SHARP IN MY EYES AND REMEMBERING THAT DAY STILL GIVES ME CHILL. I WAS RUNNING HERE AND THERE TO SAVE OUR RICE STOCK AND OTHER COMMODITIES WHEN I HEARD A NOISE OF MY SISTER IN PAIN; SHE WAS PREGNANT AND GOT HER LABOUR PAIN. I AND MY

RIVER BORN

THE STORY

BROTHER-IN-LAW ALONG WITH A MIDWIFE TRIED TAKING HER TO HOSPITAL IN THAT HEAVY RAIN AND FLOOD ALL AROUND. THE WATER WAS OVERFLOWING AND SUBMERGING OUR

AREA AS THE RIVER EMBANKMENTS HAD BREACHED. I WAS DEEPLY SCARED AND THE SCREAMS OF MY SISTER WRITHING IN PAIN MADE THE SITUATION EVEN GRIMMER. I THOUGHT I WOULD LOSE HER. WE COULDN'T TAKE HER FAR AND WE HAD TO TAKE REFUGE IN AN ELEVATED AREA WHERE SHE GAVE BIRTH TO A BABY GIRL WITH THE HELP OF MIDWIFE. MY NIECE IS 9 YEARS OLD NOW AND MY SISTER IS FINE AND HEALTHY TOO. I WOULD NEVER WANT ANYONE TO GO THROUGH WHAT MY SISTER EXPERIENCED THAT DAY.

- SUNIL RAI, TASK FORCE MEMBER
VDRMC



IGSSS PERSPECTIVE

ON THE INTERVENTION

THE 22 VILLAGES IN DHEMAJI DISTRICT WERE CAREFULLY CHOSEN FOR OUR DISASTER RISK REDUCTION INTERVENTION.

THESE VILLAGES ARE SITUATED IN LOW LYING AREAS AND ARE MOST VULNERABLE TO RECURRING FLOODS.

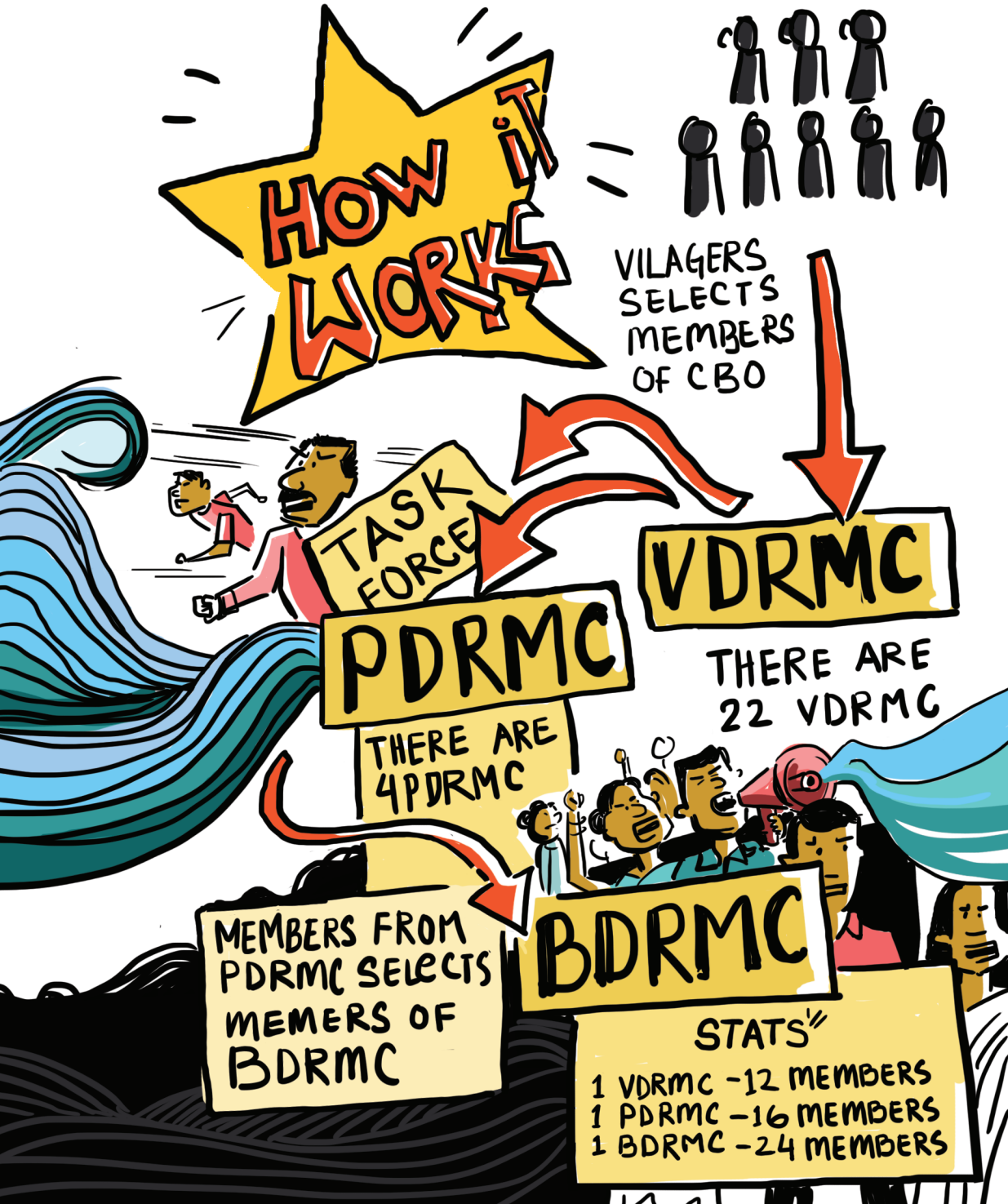
THE REGION IS CUT OFF FROM THE REST OF THE STATE DUE TO SUBMERGENCE OF APPROACH ROADS DURING MONSOONS



IN ORDER TO REDUCE THE VULNERABILITIES AND RISK, THE DISASTER RISK REDUCTION HAS BEEN TAKEN AS

A PROJECT COMPONENT AND ANOTHER COMPONENT IS THE FOOD SECURITY TO CAPACITATE, EQUIP AND HELP COMMUNITY BUILD SKILL, RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD.

VDRMC (VILLAGE DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE), PDRMC (PANCHAYAT DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE) AND BDRMC (L BLOCK DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE) FORMATION PROCESS IS FACILITATED BY THE PROJECT TEAM OF THE IGSSS's, DHEMAJI UNIT. PEOPLE WITH CERTAIN SKILLS SET E.G. UNDERSTANDING OF LOCAL MEDICINES, EX-ARMY PERSONNEL, MIDWIVES, ANGANWADI WORKERS, PANCHAYAT MEMBERS, HIGH NETWORK INDIVIDUALS FROM THE COMMUNITY WERE GIVEN PREFERENCE TO BE THE MEMBERS OF THE TASK FORCES.



JOINT PLANNING IN CO-ORDINATION OF CBO MEMBERS, VDRMC WITH ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF VILLAGERS AT EACH LEVEL IS UNDERTAKEN FOR CO-CREATING THE DISASTER RISK MITIGATION PLAN.

HOW DO WE DO IT



4 PDRMC
COMPILES
THE PLAN FOR

PDRMC

FOR ENGAGING
WITH

BDRMC

GOVT. DEPT



TASK FORCE WAS ESTABLISHED TO REDUCE CAUSALITIES AND RISKS DURING THE DISASTER BY TRAINING THE CBO MEMBERS WITH THE NECESSARY SKILLS-SET IN COLLABORATION WITH NDRF.

COMMUNITY AS FIRST RESPONDER

IT WAS EARLY MORNING ON 16TH AUGUST, 2017 THE WEATHER SEEMED A BIT CLOUDY AND I WAS FAST ASLEEP. AROUND 6.00 AM, I WAS STARTLED BY HUE AND CRY FROM THE NEIGHBOURS. ON STEPPING OUT OF MY HOUSE, I COULD SEE THREATENING CLOUDS COVERING THE SKY AND THE RIVER EMBANKMENTS SEEMED SHAKY.

REALISING THE IMMINENT DANGER, I IMMEDIATELY TOOK MY WIFE AND CATTLE ON AN ELEVATED AREA ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROAD.

I DIDN'T GET ENOUGH TIME TO MOVE MY BELONGINGS OUT OF THE HOUSE. AS I GOT READY TO LEAVE THE HOUSE WITH FEW NECESSARY COMMODITIES IN MY HANDS, I HEARD A BABY'S WAIL AND SAW THAT MY DAUGHTER ALONG WITH TWO OTHER KIDS FROM THE NEIGHBOURHOOD WERE LEFT BACK IN A ROOM. FLOOD WATER, GUSHING AT HIGH SPEED WAS HURTLING TOWARDS THEM. I IMMEDIATELY MADE A BAMBOO RAFT WITH THE RESOURCES THAT WERE AVAILABLE AND JUMPED INTO THE WATER TO SAVE THE CHILDREN. I PICKED UP MY NEIGHBOURS CHILDREN FIRST AND ON THE NEXT ROUND OF TRYING TO SAVE MY DAUGHTER, A LIFE-THREATENING HUGE WAVE HIT THE BAMBOO RAFT AND DESTROYED IT LEAVING ME AND MY DAUGHTER IN A VERY PRECARIOUS SITUATION. WITHOUT GIVING UP, I MUSTERED THE COURAGE TO KEEP A FEW BAMBOOS TOGETHER AND SAVED MY DAUGHTER FROM DROWNING. THE TRAINING ATTENDED AS PART OF DISASTER RISK MITIGATION TASK FORCE PROVED LIFE SAVING FOR US.

- PRAKASH, TASK FORCE MEMBER, VDRMC



DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

AROUND 1400 FAMILIES HAVE ACQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO SAFEGUARD THEMSELVES AND OTHERS FROM FLOODS. THEY UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF SAFE STORAGE OF ESSENTIAL DOCUMENTS AND DRY FOOD. ADOPTED ELEVATED/STILT GRANARY FOR FLOOD PREPAREDNESS, USING WATER FILTER AND TOILETS KUCCHA/PAKKA).

INCLUSIVE VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PLAN IS IN PLACE. VULNERABLE EMBANKMENTS ARE IDENTIFIED: I. BLOCK LEVEL DRR COMMITTEE SUBMITTED A MEMORANDUM TO LOCAL MLA TO REPAIR THE BREACHED EMBANKMENT. II. RS.25 CRORES WAS SANCTIONED UNDER THE 2016/2017 SDRF AND REPAIR OF EMBANKMENT FROM NHIS TO GURATALI COMPLETED ADOPTING FLOOD RISK REDUCTION MEASURES. III. ROAD CUM EMBANKMENT MEASURING 300 METERS FROM KUMATIA TO DIHRIEPONG AMOUNTING TO RS. 5 LACS WAS SANCTIONED UNDER MNREGA

ADVOCACY

THE VDMC AND BDMC MONITOR THE SELECTION PROCESS OF BENEFICIARIES, NEEDY PEOPLE GETTING BENEFIT: 121 FAMILIES FROM 22 TARGET VILLAGES RECEIVED HOUSING SCHEMES UNDER PMAY-G (PRADHAN MANTRI AWAS YOJANA-GRAMIN)

RS 85,000.00 WAS RECEIVED BY TENGAPUR- C VILLAGE FOR INSTALLATION OF WATER TANK FROM NATIONAL HYDRO ELECTRIC PROJECT UNDER CSR PROGRAM

VDRMC AND PDRMC PARTICIPATED IN SELECTION OF BENEFICIARIES FOR FREE LPG CYLINDER AND STOVE UNDER THE PRADHAN MANTRI UJALA YOJANA. TOTAL 285 BPL FAMILIES RECEIVED GAS CONNECTION.

413 FAMILIES FROM 17 VILLAGES HAVE RECEIVED COMPENSATION FROM THE GOVERNMENT UNDER THE SDRF (FIRST TIME IN DHEMAJI IN 2017 FLOOD)

IMPACT

SUSTAINED LIVELIHOOD

70% FAMILIES ARE ENGAGED IN PRE AND POST MONSOON CROPS INCLUDING CASH CROPS THAT REDUCE THE CHANCES OF LOST AND DAMAGE DUE TO FLOOD

1/3RD FAMILIES ARE INDULGED IN INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITIES (HANDLOOM, SILK AND NURSERY),

35 % FAMILIES ARE ENGAGED IN PIG AND GOAT FARM
168 DIGITAL FARMERS ARE RECEIVING WEATHER FORECAST AND AGROMAT ADVISORY BULLETIN DATA AND ARE BEING USED FOR CROP PLANNING AS WELL DAY AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES.

LIVESTOCK MANAGEMENT

560 FAMILIES HAVE ADOPTED PRE-MONSOON FODDER STORAGE AS PREPAREDNESS MEASURES.

IN 2017 FLOOD: REPORTED NO LOSS OF MAJOR LIVESTOCK LIKE COW, BULL, PIG AND GOAT.

8 TRAINED BAREFOOT VETERINARY PERSONS ARE ACTIVE ON GROUND TO SUPPORT COMMUNITIES ON LIVESTOCK CARE AND MANAGEMENT.
THE VDRMC AND BDRMC ARE ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN REDUCING HEALTH HAZARDS OF THE LIVESTOCK: 90% OF THE CATTLE OF 22 VILLAGES ARE VACCINATED FOR FMD & HSBQ SINCE 2017 IN THE MONTH OF APRIL & MAY AND NOVEMBER RESPECTIVELY



STOP UNSAFE MIGRATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADOLESCENTS TO OTHER PARTS OF INDIA.

WAY AHEAD

INCORPORATE DISASTER RISK REDUCTION COMPONENT IN VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT PLAN OF PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS (LOCAL LEVEL GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS).

SAFE AND SECURE PLACE TO LIVE ALL THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

FLOOD RESILIENT AGRICULTURE, RESCUE SHELTER FOR LIVESTOCK AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTED LIVELIHOODS PRACTICES.

"WE HAVE STRUGGLED A LOT OVER PAST COUPLE OF YEARS, WE TRULY KNOW THIS FLOOD WILL BE COMING AGAIN AND AGAIN. WE CANNOT FIGHT AGAINST MOTHER NATURE BUT WE CAN SURELY TACKLE BETTER WITH ANY KIND OF SITUATION IN FUTURE. EARLIER, WE HAD VHOI (MEANS FEAR IN ASSAMESE) OF VARIOUS KINDS BUT NOW WE HAVE VOICE OF ONE KIND!"

INDEED A JOURNEY FROM VHOI TO VOICE

IGSSS is a non-profit development organization, established in 1961 to support development programmes across India, especially to empower the vulnerable communities and grassroots community based organizations. IGSSS is presently working across 16 states and one Union Territory of India. Through the years, IGSSS has evolved as a major player in the development sector in India, working on the themes of Sustainable Livelihood, Disaster Risk Reduction, Urban Poverty Reduction, Gender Equity, Climate Change and Youth Development.

This document attempts to capture some of the disaster risk reduction initiatives of IGSSS that have impacted substantial positive changes in the lives of people living in flood plain of Brahmaputra basin. This document reflects activities and impact of Disaster risk reduction programme in Dhemaji district of Assam.

The information in this booklet are directly collected from the field and presented in graphic and comic visuals. IGSSS is highly obliged to the communities and frontline workers for their active participation in bringing out this booklet.