Displacement caused by seasonal floods and cyclone Hudhud in India

Northern and eastern India suffered a number of large-scale disasters caused by exceptionally heavy rains and riverine floods in 2014. In September, the worst floods to hit Jammu and Kashmir in 50 years displaced around 812,000 people in urban areas of the state. Across the contested line of control with Pakistan, hundreds of thousands more were displaced in Azad Kashmir.

India’s prime minister, Narendra Modi, declared the disaster a national level crisis, but the government refused humanitarian access to the UN and international organisations other than the International Committee of the Red Cross. When floods brought further widespread destruction to Jammu and Kashmir in March and April 2015, many people were still to receive the compensation promised by the government for losses they had incurred the previous September.

In Assam, the fourth poorest state in the country, floods in July were followed by worse flooding in September and October, which also affected the neighbouring state of Meghalaya. Some 367,000 people were displaced. Despite the regular occurrence of floods in this region, few long-term measures have been put in place to mitigate flooding in the Brahmaputra river basin. The Inter-Agency Group of humanitarian NGOs in Assam also noted a relative lack of media reporting on the situation in Assam and Meghalaya, describing it as “a disaster of the poor” and comparing it with Jammu and Kashmir’s “disaster of the middle-class”.

Further south in the state of Odisha, floodwaters engulfed vast areas of the Mahanadi river delta in July 2014 and displaced more than a million people. Mass evacuations from low-lying areas were undertaken. On 12 October, cyclone Hudhud made landfall near the eastern port city of Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh as a category four storm, bringing widespread floods and landslides. It triggered

Map 4.3: Largest displacements in India and neighbouring countries, 2014

- Assam & Meghalaya floods, Sept-October: 360,000 displaced
- Assam floods, July: > 160,000 displaced
- Odisha floods, July: 1.1 million displaced
- Brahmaputra basin floods/Downstream floods, September (Bangladesh): > 542,000 displaced
- Cyclone Hudhud, October (Cat. 4): 639,000 displaced
- Floods in the South, August (Nepal): 43,000 displaced
- Sindhupalchok district landslide, August (Nepal): 40,000 displaced
- Flood risk evacuations, August: 130,000 displaced
- Bihar floods, August: 116,000 displaced
- Jamu & Kashmir floods, September: 812,000 displaced
- River floods, September (Pakistan): 740,000 displaced

Agency Group of humanitarian NGOs in Assam also noted a relative lack of media reporting on the situation in Assam and Meghalaya, describing it as “a disaster of the poor” and comparing it with Jammu and Kashmir’s “disaster of the middle-class”.

Further south in the state of Odisha, floodwaters engulfed vast areas of the Mahanadi river delta in July 2014 and displaced more than a million people. Mass evacuations from low-lying areas were undertaken. On 12 October, cyclone Hudhud made landfall near the eastern port city of Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh as a category four storm, bringing widespread floods and landslides. It triggered...