



# ANTICIPATORY ACTION ACTIVATION:

BUILDING RESILIENCE OF  
VULNERABLE POPULATIONS  
IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

# ADRA INDIA'S ANTICIPATORY ACTION ACTIVATION: BUILDING RESILIENCE OF VULNERABLE POPULATIONS IN HIMACHAL PRADESH

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ADRA India (Adventist Development and Relief Agency), with its expertise in disaster risk management and resilience-building, is playing a crucial role in implementing anticipatory action protocols in India. Specific to the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR)<sup>1</sup>, the recent success in Himachal Pradesh reflects crucial lessons that linked with the humanitarian response in light of the 2023 floods and landslide to recovery and anticipatory action. The IHR are highly vulnerable to hazards like landslides, floods, flash floods and now heatwaves, often exacerbated by climate change. The lessons from the ground emphasise on imbibing the concept of anticipatory action which adds to the growing evidence to suggest that receiving assistance before a disaster strikes results in significant improvements of the wellbeing of the people that are exposed to the hazards. The support provided by ADRA India enhanced the preparedness capacity of vulnerable populations.

Anticipatory action constitutes proactive measures taken before a disaster strikes, aimed at reducing risks, saving lives, and ensuring faster recovery and are also linked stronger preparedness between climate and weather-related disasters. This paper outlines ADRA India's interventions focused on early and anticipatory action among vulnerable populations which are critical for building disaster resilience and climate change adaptation. These action aim to reduce risk before a disaster strikes, allowing individuals and communities to better cope with and recover from the impacts of climate-related hazards such as floods, extreme heat, droughts, and cyclones. However, a key challenge lies in the fact that vulnerable populations, often living in poverty and facing social inequalities, are rarely in a position to act after receiving formal early warning signals and or able to respond actively for anticipatory action. This gap between the early warning and the actual response on the ground can undermine the effectiveness of preparedness efforts. Therefore, it is essential to recognize that anticipatory action must begin long before official early warnings are issued. One of the most important elements of anticipatory action is building resilience at the individual and household-level. Vulnerable populations, particularly those with limited access to resources, face multiple challenges in disaster-prone areas. For these communities, waiting for official announcements or government interventions can be too late. Instead, anticipatory action needs to be integrated into everyday life, focusing on long-term strategies to reduce vulnerability.

One of the most effective ways to support vulnerable populations is by improving their livelihoods – farm and non-farm. Building diverse and sustainable income sources is crucial. Vulnerable households often rely on a single source of income, which makes them highly susceptible to economic shocks during disasters. By promoting diversified income opportunities, such as micro-enterprises, small-scale agriculture, or livelihood skills training, communities can better withstand the economic impacts of disasters. For example, a family that depends solely on farming may be more vulnerable to floods or water crisis, but if that same family can engage in alternative income-generating activities like crafting, tourism, or small-scale food processing, they are less likely to fall into poverty when their primary income source is disrupted. ADRA INDIA applied this strategy with the vulnerable populations. These actions are also aligned with the government of India's action in IHR. National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem (NMSHE); Indian Himalayas Climate Adaptation Programme (IHCAP) and State Urban and Rural Livelihood Mission are key initiatives of the government of India that aim to promote sustainable development including reducing disaster risk and livelihood security action with the communities and institutions.

<sup>1</sup> Indian Himalayan Region includes two Union Territories (UTs) and eleven States – Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, West Bengal, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Tripura, and Nagaland.



In addition to income diversification, planning is an essential element of preparedness. Communities that are better prepared for seasonal hazards—whether through disaster risk management planning, crop planning, understanding disaster risk and related preparedness measures or access to early warning systems—are in a stronger position to act swiftly and effectively when faced with an impending disaster. For example, agricultural communities in flood-prone areas can implement crop diversification strategies and early sowing of flood-resistant varieties of crops, even before the official warning is issued. These proactive measures ensure that, even in the face of disaster, people have an alternative livelihood to fall back on. ADRA INDIA with local institutions and disaster-affected populations implemented local action that support family farmers and also strengthen diversification of income through skill-based income generation activities – ornament making, pine needle, weaving, mushroom cultivation and more.

Moreover, strengthening health systems and improving public health at the community level is another critical component of anticipatory action. Healthier populations are more resilient to the impacts of disasters. ADRA INDIA initiated action with schools that are need to strengthen WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) component. Without these action, our response to emergency response cannot be effective. This is especially true in the context of climate change, where heatwaves, floods, landslides and other extreme weather events exacerbate pre-existing health vulnerabilities.

Below are some essential areas that needs to be consider that makes the anticipatory action stronger in vulnerable areas that highly exposed to weather related disasters.



## RISK ASSESSMENT AND CAPACITY BUILDING INPUTS

- Local level disaster risk management planning at village and ward level and creation of household data to support local government bodies.
- Community level participatory capacity building inputs that cover existing hazards (floods and landslides) as well as emerging risk (extreme heat).





## **FAMILY LEVEL INTERVENTION FOR SEASONAL PREPAREDNESS**

Livelihood diversification helped farmers and skill-based communities to diversify their livelihoods to make them more resilient to seasonal climate extreme events. For example, promoting climate-resilient agriculture, where farmers grow crops that are less vulnerable to extreme heat or floods. And these family farmers start add on income from off-farm sources with local context.



## **PRE-POSITIONING OF RELIEF SUPPLIES**

As part of anticipatory action, it should be ensured that emergency relief materials such as food, clean water, medical kits, and shelter supplies are pre-positioned in disaster-prone areas, so they can be quickly deployed when an emergency strikes. ADRA INDIA (at national level) did this at small scale to support local government in filling the gap during emergency response.



## **COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL LEADERS, GROUPS AND ORGANISATIONS**

ADRA INDIA initiated local engagement processes for long term solutions where local leaders and groups organise themselves and plan jointly with the local government institutions. Required facilitation, data processes and capacity building inputs were supported by the ADRA INDIA.



## **DATA-DRIVEN DECISION MAKING**

ADRA INDIA collect and analyze data on local hazards, vulnerabilities, livelihoods, vulnerable populations and the effectiveness of past interventions to shape and implement action. These datasets and planning documents plays crucial role to improve anticipatory action.

For ADRA INDIA to worked-out effective anticipatory action with vulnerable populations in Himachal Pradesh, it adopted a comprehensive and community-centric approach that incorporates understanding risk, community capacity building, livelihood support that covers both farm and non-farm, women members engagement and collaboration with local entities. In conclusion, anticipatory action cannot be limited to waiting for an official early warning system announcement, particularly for poor and highly vulnerable populations. While these systems play an important role in disaster response, true resilience on the ground involves proactive measures that address vulnerabilities before a climate and weather-related disaster is imminent. These measures—ranging from diversifying income sources and improving health, to empowering communities with the tools to prepare—are all part of anticipatory action that build a stronger, more resilient future for local communities. Thus, the focus must shift from reacting to disasters to proactively preparing communities to face challenges head-on, regardless of when formal warnings are issued.





## SUPPORTING DISASTER-AFFECTED COMMUNITIES THROUGH LIVELIHOOD TRAINING

Livelihood enhancement is a key component of building resilience. ADRA India worked to establish and reinvigorate women-led group enterprises by providing training to help them become economically stable and improve their income-generation capabilities. The following table provides a brief overview of the activities carried out:

TRAINING TYPE	LOCATION	PARTICIPANTS	DURATION	SKILLS LEARNED	FOCUS
Pine Needle Handicraft	Solan District	16 females (aged 17-67 years)	10 days	Coiling, Braiding, Crafting	Sustainable livelihood generation, environmental conservation, and skill development
Ornament Making	Rajhana & Krishnanagar, Shimla	40 females (20 per location, aged 15-60 years)	10 days per location	Crafting Techniques, Beading Methods, Wire Wrapping	Crafting basic to advanced ornaments, skill development in ornament making
Shawl & Pattu Weaving	Kullu District	23 females	10 days	Weaving Techniques, Hand & Foot Coordination, Khaddi Installation	Crafting basic to advanced ornaments, skill development in ornament making
Vermicompost Production	Kullu District	16 males & females	1 day	Vermicompost Production Process, Benefits in Farming	Promoting sustainable farming, improving soil fertility, and generating livelihood opportunities
Mushroom Cultivation	Solan District	8 males	2 days	Production (Button, Oyster, Shitake), Composting, Packaging, Harvesting	Promoting sustainable livelihoods, enhancing nutritional security, and boosting income generation



## COLLABORATION WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS FOR LIVELIHOOD SUPPORT

During this period, support and collaboration for livelihood interventions, training, and market linkages was received from various departments and institutions. These include KVK, NRLM, NULM, Panchayati Raj Institutions, and Dr. YS Parmar University of Horticulture & Forestry. Their valuable support helped in planning and implementing effective livelihood activities for the community.



## ENHANCING WASH INFRASTRUCTURE

Under the Himachal Pradesh Disaster Risk Reduction (HPDRR) Project, a focused initiative has been undertaken to strengthen Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) infrastructure in schools and public spaces. This initiative aims to ensure accessibility and improved hygiene, especially for students, women, and the wider community during disasters, as these locations often serve as emergency shelters. The upgraded WASH facilities will play a crucial role in promoting health, safety, and resilience in vulnerable areas. Through this program, the following number of children have been directly reached and benefited:

SL NO.	DISTRICT	NAME OF SCHOOL/ ANGANWADI	LOCATION	NO. OF CHILDREN		NO. OF STAFF INCLUDING SUPPORT STAFF	
				BOYS	GIRLS	MALE	FEMALE
1	Solan District	Govt Sen Sec School Dhol ka Jubbar	Bhuera	47	49	8	10
2	Solan District	Govt. High School	Dhangeel	35	35	3	5
3	Solan District	Govt. Primary School	Dhangeel	16	10	1	3
4	Solan District	Govt Primary School Dhol Ka Jubbar	Bhuera	18	34	0	4
5	Shimla	Govt. Primary School	Rajhana	69	64	1	4
6	Shimla	Govt. Middle School	Panjog	17	9	3	2
7	Shimla	Govt. Primary School	Shurala	10	9	1	1
8	Shimla	Govt. Middle School	Shurala	13	14	2	3
9	Shimla	Govt. Primary School	Nehra	8	11	0	2
10	Kullu	Govt. High School	Najan	87	9	6	5

Through the WASH renovation work, a total of 700 students and school staff from 10 schools were directly benefited by improved sanitation and hygiene facilities.

DISTRICT	ELDERLY (>70 YEARS)	DISABLED	PREGNANT LADY	WIDOW (>35 YEARS)	ILL (CHRONICALLY ILL)	MINORITIES (SC/ST/OBC)	WOMEN HEADED HH	INCOME (<1.32LAKH)	LANDLESS /LOW LAND HOLDING (<1 BIGHA)	LONG TERM MIGRANTS	BPL
Shimla	43	5	11	2	8	1492	13	98	193	582	108
Kullu	20	18	0		0	85	20	109	12	7	79
Solan	166	39	38	34	15	2206	34	189	124	892	189
	329	62	79	43	33	3783	67	396	329	1481	376

List of Vulnerabilities Based on Actual data



## REACH

Through all these livelihoods activities & WaSH infrastructure renovation, a total of **997** direct participants were reached, including 515 females and 482 males, and approximately 1,890 indirect participants benefitted. The following table provides a detailed outline of the intervention's reach:

ACTIVITY	MALE			FEMALE			TRANSGENDER			MALE	FEMALE	TRANSGENDER	TOTAL INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES
	0-17 Y	18-59 Y	>60 Y	0-17 Y	18-59 Y	>60 Y	0-17 Y	18-59 Y	>60 Y				
Skill-based Kits	0	56	1	0	17	0	0	0	0	57	17	0	300
Farm-based Kits	0	47	2	0	9	4	0	0	0	49	13	0	250
Seed Distribution	0	20	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	21	1	0	90
Group Enterprise Training	0	10	0	4	85	2	0	0	0	10	91	0	400
Post Training Support	0	0	0	3	37	0	0	0	0	0	40	0	150
WASH Structure Renovation	320	25	0	314	39	0	0	0	0	345	353	0	1500
										482	515	0	1890

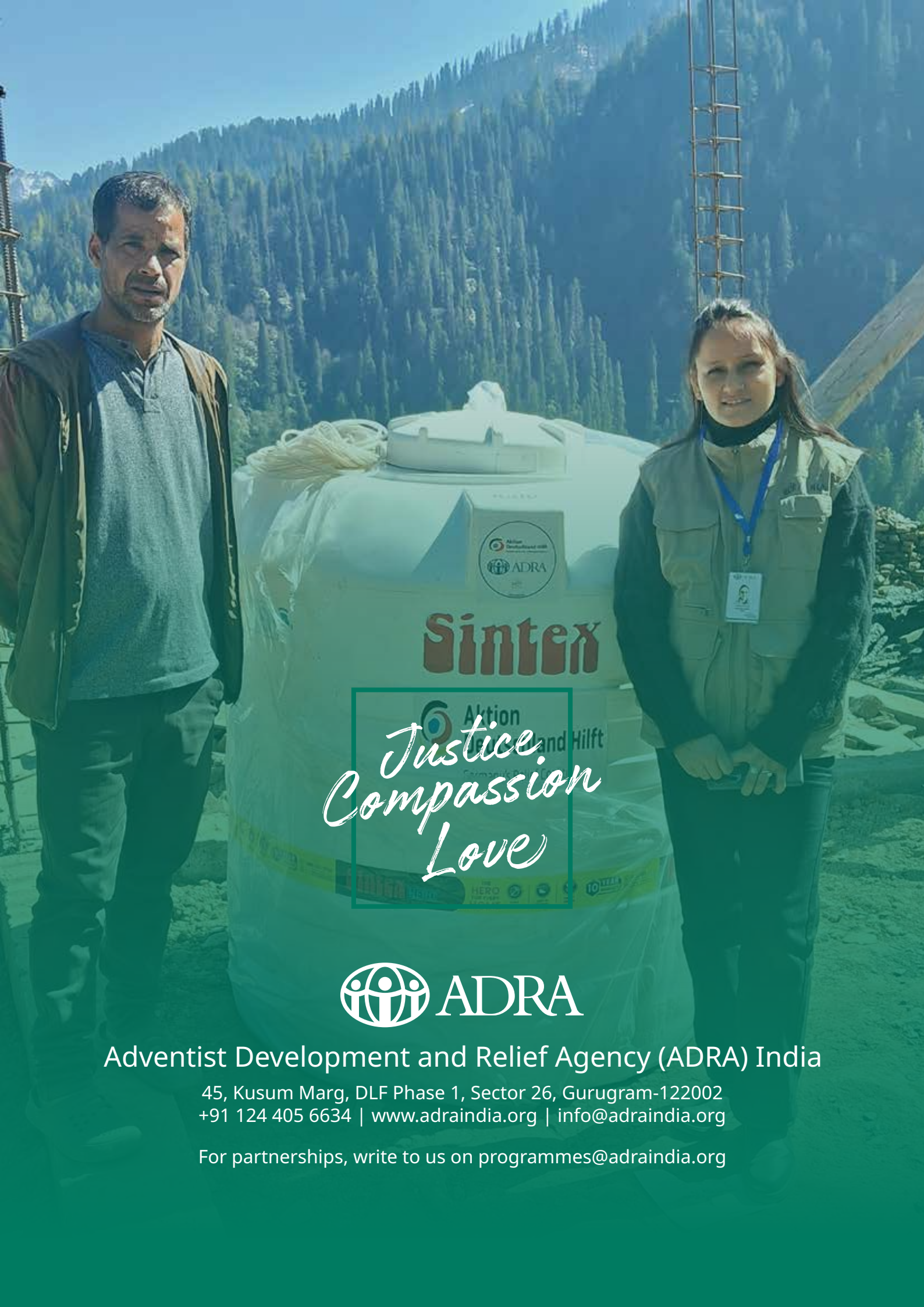
Anticipatory Action is gaining momentum around the world, as recent examples from some parts of the world showcase. To ensure access to early action for all, more needs to be done to scale up the approach, in particular by employing a multistakeholder approach. Building on our recent achievements on Anticipatory Action, we aim to continue taking huge strides in this sector. ADRA India will continue to work on developing its strengths and capabilities on Anticipatory Action in order to fulfil its mission of providing a dignified life to all.











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Compassion  
Love*



Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) India

45, Kusum Marg, DLF Phase 1, Sector 26, Gurugram-122002  
+91 124 405 6634 | [www.adraindia.org](http://www.adraindia.org) | [info@adraindia.org](mailto:info@adraindia.org)

For partnerships, write to us on [programmes@adraindia.org](mailto:programmes@adraindia.org)