

## Theme

**Leave No One Behind - Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction**

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## Project

**Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction**

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## Implemented by

**Kerala State Disaster Management Authority**

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## Funded by

**Government of Kerala**

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## Introduction

According to the World Disability report 2011, about 15% of the population in the world are living with disabilities and among them 2 – 4 % is suffering from severe disabilities. In India, as per National Census of 2011, 2.1% of people live with disabilities, which is 26810557 of the total population. According to Social Justice Department census of 2015, 7,93,937 are living with disabilities in Kerala.

In 2016, Parliament passed Right of Persons with Disability Act, under section 8(2), the Act directs the integration of persons with disabilities in Disaster Management and disaster risk reduction.

Persons with disabilities face a lot of challenges in their day to day life and during an emergency or disasters they are



the worst affected. Those who are physically impaired may not be able to move from an accident location to a safer zone without assistance. Those who are intellectually impaired may not comprehend the early warning/emergency situation. But, if appropriate trainings are provided, there is hope. With this objective, Kerala State Disaster Management Authority initiated a unique project christened ‘strengthening of emergency response capabilities of differently abled people’ in the year 2016. The State wide launch and the consultation was inaugurated by Additional Chief Secretary (Revenue & Disaster Management) at Thiruvananthapuram on 11<sup>th</sup> May of 2016.

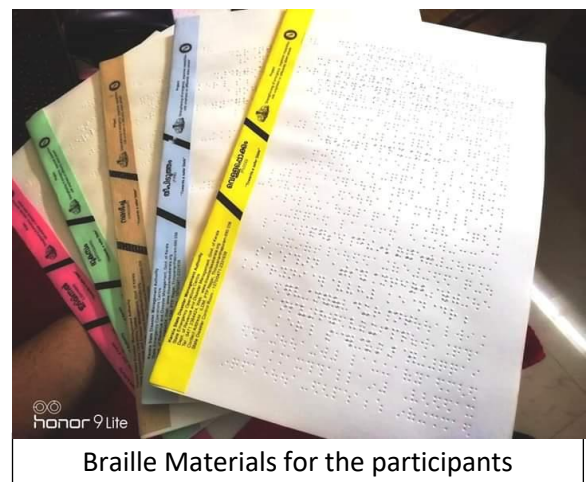
## About the project

This project envisions to prepare a safer state for persons with disabilities by trying to mitigate the risk, prepare for disasters and build the capacity of them to become resilient towards disasters. One of the deliverables in the project was to train the persons with disabilities on disaster risk reduction and first aid skills in all the 14 districts of the State. A state level training of trainers was also conducted by KSDMA for the government officials and NGOs working in this sector.

A handbook on ‘Disability & Disaster Risk Reduction’ was published by KSDMA, which serves as a tool-kit for the trainers. This handbook was released by Hon’ble Minister for Revenue and Disaster Management at the inaugural function of the training programme for trainers at IMG, Thiruvananthapuram on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2016. This handbook is also prepared in Braille which was released on the occasion of the training at Thiruvananthapuram.

## Training Materials

Development of appropriate training materials which are friendly to the persons with disabilities is very critical in training persons with disabilities. Hence, KSDMA produced materials in Braille, Sign Language videos, audio messages in DAISY format in association with National Institute of Speech & Hearing (NISH), Kerala Federation of the Blind and IMPACT project of Social Justice Department,



Braille Materials for the participants

Govt. of Kerala. These materials are produced in mass quantities and are distributed at the district level.

## Training of Trainers

As a precursor for the training of persons with disabilities at the district level, two ToT trainings were also held in partnership with Inter University Centre for Disability Studies (IUCDS), Mahatma Gandhi University, Kottayam in the year 2017. IUCDS facilitated the district level training.



Visually Impaired being trained in CPR, Kottayam

## State Wide Training

District Disaster Management Authority and District Social Justice office jointly organize the district level trainings. The trainings started on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2018 at Kottayam. The training is arranged for 4 days for four different types of disabilities viz. Visually impaired, Hearing impaired, Physically impaired and Intellectually impaired. Training has been completed in nine districts as on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2018.

Hazard profile of the State, Disaster risk reduction, disaster survival skills, First Aid skills etc, are the sessions facilitated during the trainings and hands-on sessions are included for better learning. Authority intends to train about 3000 persons with disabilities through these trainings. Certificates are also distributed to the participants.



Sign language messages by interpreters from NISH

To facilitate continued learning, KSDMA has initiated a YouTube channel also. The website of Kerala State Disaster Management Authority has also been made friendly to persons with disabilities.

## Disability Friendly Early Warning

Early Warning is very important to prepare for disasters. Under this project, the State Disaster Management Authority provides warning messages in sign language for the people with hearing impairment. These sign language videos are made available to the people through KSDMA's website and facebook page at



Early Warning Messages in sign language

the same time. This allows the people with hearing impairment to understand the warnings and to take informed decisions in a timely manner, thereby mitigating the risk. The sign language content is facilitated by National Institute for Speech and Hearing (NISH) which operates under the department of Social Justice, Govt. of Kerala.

## Special care for people with disabilities in Covid response

During the Covid period, State Disaster Management Authority in association with National Institute of Speech and Hearing Launched 24-hour online helpline system for the persons with disabilities. About 400 plus calls were received through the helpline which has sign language interpreters.

State Disaster Management Authority in association with National Institute of Speech and Hearing helped the people using hearing aids by replacing the damaged instruments/by replenishing the batteries. Arrangements were also made to deliver food from the community kitchen to the persons with disabilities during lockdown.

## Recognition at National Level

Hon'ble Member Secretary (i/c), National Disaster Management Authority, Mr. Kamal Kishore, specially commended the project and conveyed to all the Chief Secretaries (Letter No. 05/239/2021/NDMA; dated 19.08.2021) requested other states to replicate similar initiatives in their states.

## Case Study | Mahesh Kumar

Mahesh Kumar, a visually impaired person from Thiruvananthapuram district, shares his experience after participating in the training organized by the Kerala State Disaster Management Authority.



*"This is the first time I've received this kind of a training. It was very beneficial for me. I got trained on survival skills during disasters, how to provide first aid and many subjects including the need to prepare and arrange the emergency kit"*

*"I was in Pookode in Wayanad district at the time of the floods in 2018. I knew exactly what to do during the situation as I was already trained in this regard, so I called the emergency number and told the authorities what my needs are, and whether the place I reside is safe. I received the exact information that I wanted and I was safe during the floods".*

*(Mahesh Kumar currently works in Kannur University,  
His photograph is used after obtaining his consent)*