


# Lessons Learned from Disasters in Kerala



# Agenda

- 
- KERALA'S UNIQUE LANDSCAPE
  - KERALA'S RECENT DISASTERS
  - WHAT MAKES KERALA STANDOUT
  - LESSONS FROM THE KERALA STORY

FIGHTING CORONAVIRUS

# What the world can learn from Kerala about how to fight covid-19

The inside story of how one Indian state is flattening the curve through epic levels of contact tracing and social assistance.



# Kerala's unique risk and demographic landscape



POPULATION DENSITY



HIGH LITERACY



FRAGILE ECOSYSTEM



FLOOD



LANDSLIDES



EPIDEMICS



RAINS



All these factors play a role why Kerala finds itself in the midst of major disasters, yet finds a way to come out of the disasters quickly



# A brief lookback at some of the disasters Kerala has faced...



2018 Floods



2020 COVID



2024 Wayanad



...and the 2004 Tsunami two decades before



# 2018 Floods



# 2020 Covid





# 2024 Wayanad







# WHAT HAS MADE KERALA STANDOUT

Few 'Golden Nuggets'



# What worked well

- Response of the Three Cs – Communities, Citizens, and Corporates
- Local Level Leadership
- Rapid Healthcare Team Deployment
- Use Of Real-time Dashboards (Rebuild Kerala, War Rooms)
- Fishermen As First Responders In Floods
- The work done by Kudumbashree & ASHAs





# What does this mean – few ‘Golden Nuggets’

- Local Leadership > Central Command
- Trust In Institutions Drives Compliance
- Citizen Tech (WhatsApp, GIs, Helplines) Enables Scale
- Response ≠ Recovery — Long-term Effort Needed
- Volunteers Are Not Backup — They’re The Front Line



Is everything perfect? Gaps still persist, but, no system is perfect, and the key is to keep improving

# What other states can learn from Kerala

- Ground level innovations matter
  - ResQ App, Ward Level COVID war rooms, Pre-monsoon drills and mock rescue operations, flood monitoring layers integrated into KSDMA
  - Institutions are important
  - KSDMA, LSGs, Inclusion of disaster management in schools, trained local volunteers, district level micro plans with ward inputs
  - Decentralization + Literacy + Public Trust
  - Preparedness is everyday governance
  - Success of community kitchens, mobile clinics, transparent briefings
  - Institutionalize local response units
  - Invest in public trust and communication
  - Invest in the latest technologies – AI, IoT
  - Integrate climate vulnerability into infrastructure planning



Every disaster leaves behind not just a lot of tragedies and unfinished stories, but also a glimpse into the resilience of humans and at least a lesson. Let us not forget to learn from it and build on it.



Thank you

