



## 60 Minutes to Hope: How Rapid Support Reached Baliapal

In the small hamlet of Baliapal, Odisha, the flood had already washed away homes six times before our community facilitators arrived. Belonging to a socially marginalised group, this community lives on the edge, both geographically and socially, excluded from the centre of the village and often from mainstream humanitarian response.

When the flood came, no one reached them. Left to themselves, the people refused to give up. They came together in search of safety and found shelter in the local bus stand. One family brought a small stove, another shared utensils, and others had saved bits of food before fleeing their homes. Together, they created a makeshift community kitchen, a space that became more than just a place to cook. It became a symbol of unity, strength, and survival. But the challenges were many. The fuel ran out, and food was not enough for all **15 displaced families**. Yet, before despair could set in, support arrived, swiftly and directly. HAI and local Saarathis provided essential food items and fuel within just **60 minutes** to ensure the community kitchen continues feeding the affected families.

*“What struck me most was not just the food, but the spirit”* recalls one of our community facilitators. *“Sitting together in that bus stand, cooking and sharing meals, the community reminded each other that they were not alone.”*

The total support cost was just **Rs. 7,795**, but its impact was immeasurable. It ensured that 15 families ate that day, with dignity, togetherness, and hope. This is the power of rapid, low-cost support, and rooted in local solidarity, ensuring that no one, no matter how far or forgotten, is left behind.