

## **Leh Rehabilitation Project for Victims of Cloud Burst of 5 - 6 August 2010 by HUDCO as a Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative**

Ladakh was struck by a cloudburst on 5<sup>th</sup> /6<sup>th</sup> August 2010 that wiped out the lives of more than 150 people, left more than 500 missing and washed away houses across Ladakh region.

### **Situation analysis**

It was observed that the damage to houses was on account of their location in areas serving as channels facilitating flow of floodwaters. Since housing sites were washed away, the District Administration allotted them plots of 30 x 60 ft size in the Solar Colony near Leh. Traditionally houses have 2-3 rooms and were constructed either with mud blocks or dressed stone to withstand the extremely cold climatic conditions.

### **Challenges**

The victims were lodged in tents and other temporary shelters which are not suitable for stay in the harsh winter.

The 634 houses were located in over 62 villages spread across 86,000 sqkms of Ladakh and the connectivity to many of the villages is poor.

The crucial factor in this situation was that the winter was just two months away in which temperatures drop to as low as minus 25 degrees Celsius.

During this winter most of the mountain passes connecting Ladakh are closed down on account of snow and working with traditional items like mud blocks is not possible as temperatures do not allow setting process required for mud blocks and mortar to solidify.

### **The solution**

Keeping in view the challenges, it was decided that a starter unit consisting of one room with adequate thermal comfort should be provided as immediate relief. The beneficiaries could then expand the housing unit with the monetary assistance of Rs. 3 lakhs given to them by the Central and State Governments, after the winter season. The material chosen for housing was PUF (polyurethane fiber) Panels injected panels sandwiched between pre-painted galvanized iron sheets on either side. The design and technology was finalised only after a detailed dialogue and consultation with the community and the CSR team of HUDCO. The options and constraints

were discussed and before finalisation, community representatives were taken to the army camps in Leh where houses for army personnel have been constructed using this material.

## **Project Details**

HUDCO decided to make available Rs. 5 Crores from the Corporate Social Responsibility Fund for construction of 133 houses in Solar Colony, Leh. The material was transported in trucks to Leh in lots of 4 units. Plinths consisting of 9 nos. concrete stumps were commissioned at the site with the help of local contractors and labour in ahead of arrival of PUF panels. In a record time of 45 days all the houses have been commissioned.

On the advise of the local Lama, beneficiaries have moved into the houses on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2010. A rapid assessment survey to gauge the beneficiary satisfaction was conducted wherein it was reported that the PUF paneled rooms are warmer compared to traditional houses constructed with mud blocks.

