

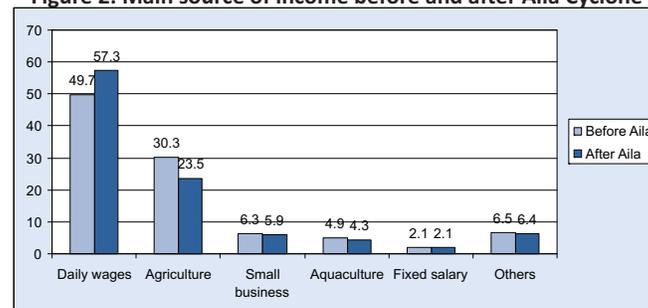
Survey Site: Gosaba Block, West Bengal, India**Focus of the Study: The impact of Cyclone Aila on the livelihood of the people in Sundarbans, West Bengal**

The present study was conducted in Gosaba Block of the District South 24 Parganas of West Bengal state in India which was affected by cyclone Aila on May 25, 2009. Gosaba is located at the latitude of 22° 9' 47 N and longitude 88° 48' 10 E. It covers a total area of 285. 85 Sq. Km. It has 14 Gram Panchayats (GPs) spread over 10 delta islands, out of which one is uninhabited. According to the 2001 census, Gosaba Block had a total population of 222,822 in 50 different villages. A total of 46,962 families reside in this block. A sample of 780 households was selected for the present study using cluster sampling method. This study was conducted in May-June, 2010. It attempted to trace the course of change in livelihood in the post-disaster, including change in occupation of the people with a view to understand the effect of resultant economic constraints on school attendance, gender relations, migration, trafficking of women and children, psychosocial health and dependency on local organizations.

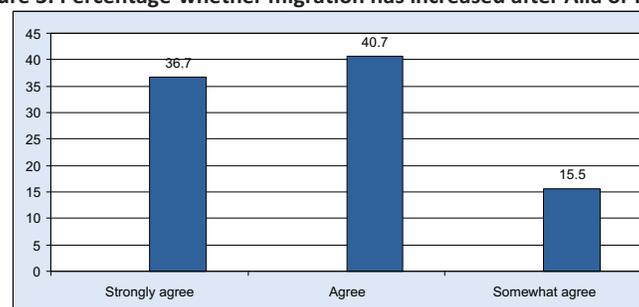
Table 1: Impact of cyclone Aila on the livelihood of Gosaba Block, West Bengal

Variables	n(%)
Gender	
Male	481(62)
Female	295 (38)
Religion	
Muslim	53(6.8)
Christian	13(1.7)
Hindu	710(91.5)
Caste	
General	198(25.5)
Scheduled Caste (SC)	451(58.1)
Scheduled Tribes (ST)	99(12.8)
Other Backward Classes (OBC)	28(3.6)
Migration due to Aila	
Yes	216(27.8)
No	560(72.2)
Injury	
Yes	74(5.4)
No	1294(94.6)
Disability	
Yes	6(.4)
No	1362(99.6)
Illness	
Yes	585(42.8)
No	783(57.2)

Many people have migrated due to cyclone Aila from Gosaba Block to different parts of West Bengal as well as in other major cities and states of India in search of a better livelihood. Majority of the people in Gosaba were not injured during cyclone Aila. However, prevalence of different types of illness like diarrhea, fever, cough and cold, malaria, Japanese encephalitis, etc. during and after Aila was high among the people exposed to Aila. Six people got disabled due to cyclone Aila.

Figure 1: Location of Gosaba Block**Figure 2: Main source of income before and after Aila Cyclone**

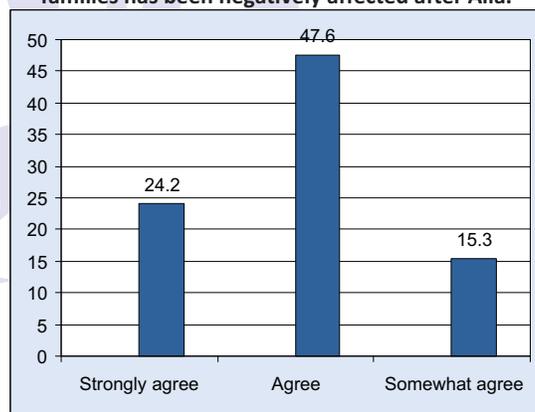
The pattern of main source of income before and after Aila cyclone shows significant differences. The major differences were evident in the area of agriculture and daily wage labour. While agriculture as main source of income decreased there was increase in daily wage labour percentage. It clearly indicates that due to the land salinity caused by Aila cyclone in the agricultural fields, people were forced to earn livelihood through daily wage work. Even the negative impact of Aila cyclone is also evident on the aquaculture.

Figure 3: Percentage-whether migration has increased after Aila or not?

For the statement whether migration has increased after Aila or not, 40.7% respondents agreed to it, closely followed by 36.7% respondents who have strongly agreed to it. The high percentage of respondents agreeing to the above statement indicates that Aila cyclone has severely affected the different dimensions of people's lives. To cope with the adversities, people have migrated to different places. Only 15.5% of the respondents somewhat agreed to the above statement.

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Figure 4: Percentage-whether financial status of families has been negatively affected after Aila.



It is interesting to find out that for the statement whether financial status of families has been negatively affected due to cyclone Aila, one fourth of the respondents strongly agreed, while nearly half of them agreed.

How to administer the questionnaire: training of the enumerators



Photo: UoD MICRODIS Team

Administration of the questionnaire in the real field situation



Photo: UoD MICRODIS Team

Kumirmarry: one of the sampled villages

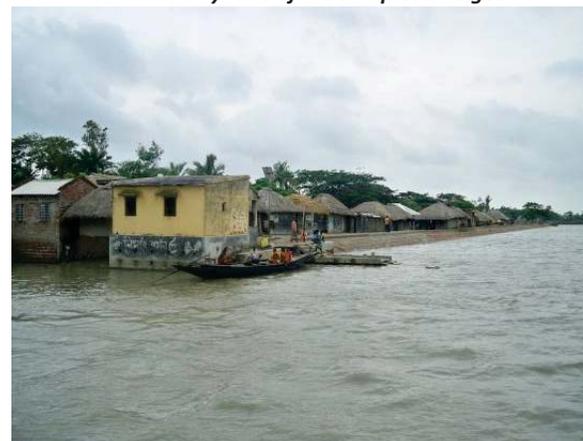


Photo: UoD MICRODIS Team