

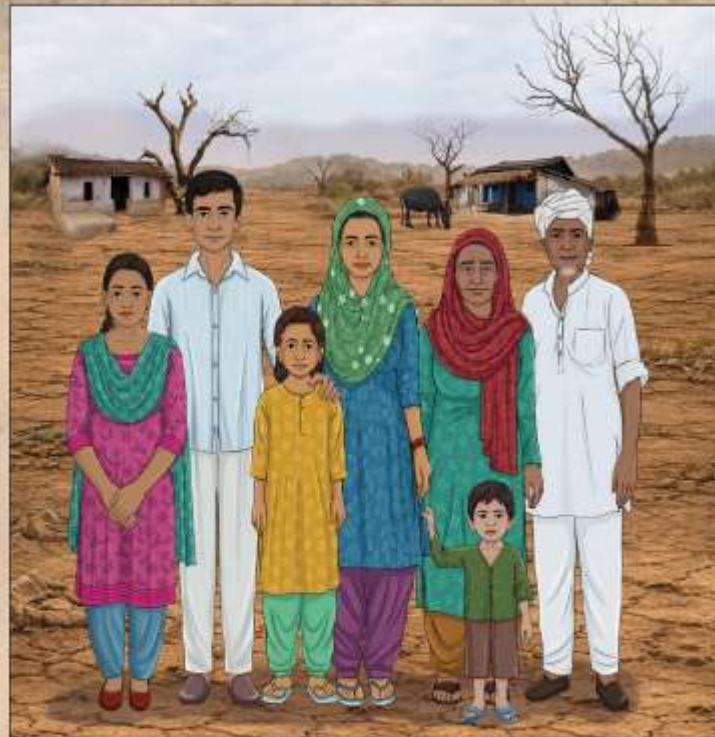


Living
on the
Climate Edge

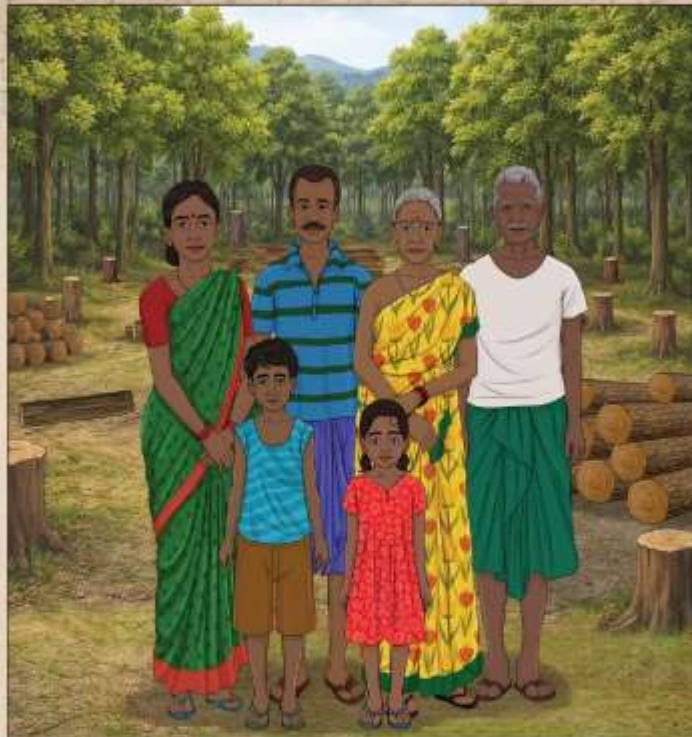


Living on the Climate Edge

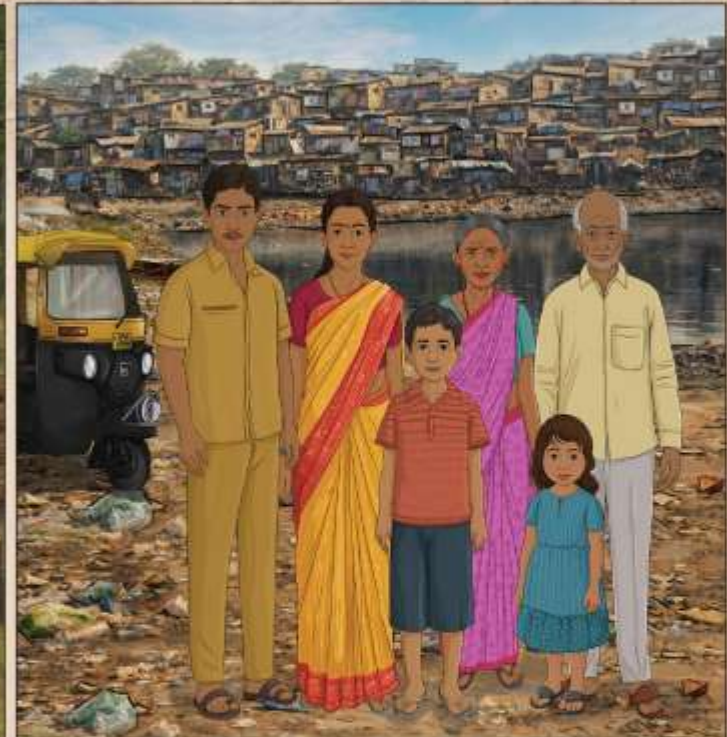
Resilience of Women as Climate Responders in Vulnerable Regions of India



Mewat
(Rural)



Mayurbhanj
(Tribal)



Mumbra
(Urban slum)

A series of animated films on climate change explores its impacts on health, livelihoods and gender inequality in vulnerable communities. Based on real-life challenges in Mewat (rural), Mayurbhanj (tribal) and Mumbra (urban slum), the films highlight diverse socio-economic contexts, local solutions and community resilience while showcasing the leadership of women as climate responders.



Lived Realities | Local Solutions | Empowered Women

9 Animated Stories | 3 Geographies | 1 Powerful Truth



Rational:

Climate change is no longer a distant environmental concern; it is a lived reality shaping health, livelihoods, gender equality, and survival especially for marginalized communities. Rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, floods, droughts and ecosystem degradation are intensifying health risks such as malnutrition, waterborne diseases, heat stress while also contributing to loss of income and deepening gender inequalities.

These risks heighten vulnerabilities, felt most acutely by women and children across geographies - from rural Mewat (Nuh) in Haryana to the tribal belts of Mayurbhanj in Odisha and urban slums of Mumbra in Thane, Maharashtra. Yet these challenges also reveal strong resilience among women.

Research:

Research was conducted across three demographic settings in India - rural areas, tribal communities and urban slums to assess the impact of climate change on health, examine its effects on livelihoods and understand its gendered impacts. The three areas of research are:

- **Rural:** Mewat (Nuh), Haryana — agrarian economy, water scarcity and limited services.
- **Tribal:** Mayurbhanj, Odisha — forest-dependent communities, deforestation, remoteness and indigenous food systems.
- **Urban Slum:** Mumbra (Thane), Maharashtra — high density, informal livelihoods, floods, poor water and sanitation.

Project:

'**Living on the Climate Edge**' is an evidence-based community-focused climate-action initiative that uses research and storytelling to highlight how climate change is affecting vulnerable communities in India while showcasing local resilience and adaptation particularly through women's leadership. It highlights:

- Climate impacts on health, livelihoods and gender
- Community resilience and adaptation
- Women as climate leaders and champions

Research Findings:

- **Rural:** Mewat (Nuh), Haryana
 - **Health:** Rising heat is increasing heatstroke, dehydration and other illnesses especially among children and the elderly.
 - **Livelihoods:** Drought, crop failure, water scarcity and livestock losses are reducing rural incomes and increasing migration and poverty.
 - **Gender:** Women and girls face greater burdens of water collection, caregiving and household work while food insecurity and migration affect their wellbeing and education.
- **Tribal:** Mayurbhanj, Odisha
 - **Health:** Heat exposure, water scarcity and limited healthcare access are increasing climate-related health risks for vulnerable communities.
 - **Livelihoods:** Deforestation, irregular rainfall and climate stress are weakening forest-based livelihoods and subsistence farming.
 - **Gender:** Tribal women face higher resource collection burdens and reduced livelihood opportunities due to declining forest resources.

- **Urban Slum:** Mumbra (Thane), Maharashtra
 - **Health:** Extreme heat, flooding, poor sanitation and overcrowding are increasing diseases like cholera, malaria and dengue.
 - **Livelihoods:** Climate shocks and heat stress are affecting daily wage workers and increasing economic insecurity in informal settlements.
 - **Gender:** Women and girls face greater health, safety, hygiene and livelihood challenges due to poor housing and inadequate basic services.

Extreme Heat - A Growing Public Health Emergency:

Heat-related illnesses such as heat exhaustion, heat stroke, dehydration and respiratory stress are increasing in both frequency and intensity, placing greater pressure on vulnerable communities. Extreme heat is also emerging as a major threat to community healthcare delivery, risking the reversal of India's progress in maternal health, immunization, nutrition and disease care. Community Health Workers including ASHAs and frontline workers are especially vulnerable as rising temperatures increase physical exhaustion, health risks and disrupt field-based healthcare services. If left unaddressed, extreme heat will weaken public health systems, deepen inequalities and hamper social and economic growth.

Project Presentation:

The project has presented findings which are published in 2 ways:

- A technical research report
- A festival of 9 animated short films based on real community stories

Research findings were translated into a storytelling framework across each geography: the problem, the climax and the response. This structure transformed complex climate and health data into narratives reflecting lived community experiences. Each film shows the following:

- **The Problem:** Disruption of health and livelihoods due to climate change
- **The Climax:** Crisis faced by families and communities
- **The Response:** Locally rooted solutions led by women emerging as climate champions

Using this narrative framework, the research insights were developed into a series of nine short animated films, each set in a different vulnerable geography. Together, the films form the ***Living on the Climate Edge*** festival presenting powerful stories of resilience, adaptation and community-led solutions where local women emerge as protagonists of hope and action.

Result:

Women and girls are often the first to experience the impacts of climate shocks, yet they continue to emerge as first responders, innovators and leaders in climate action. They identify risks, mobilize communities and drive solutions that protect livelihoods, public health and local ecosystems. Their leadership strengthens community resilience and shows that true climate resilience is only possible when women are included in decision-making. Integrating women into climate decision-making is therefore not only a matter of equality and justice, but a critical pathway toward building resilient, inclusive, and sustainable communities.

Project Flow:

Core Objectives

- Highlight the interconnected impacts of climate change on health, livelihoods, and gender inequality.
- Showcase and promote community-led climate adaptation and local solutions.
- Strengthen the resilience of women and girls in vulnerable communities.
- Develop and amplify local climate champions and community leadership.
- Create dialogue among communities, practitioners, donors, and policymakers.

Unique Value

- Grounded in real stories and lived experiences from vulnerable rural, tribal, and urban communities.
- Moves beyond victimhood narratives to highlight resilience, agency, and leadership.
- Combines evidence-based research with creative storytelling and animation.
- Accessible and scalable for community screenings, schools, policy forums, and global platforms.

Target Audience

- Community members and grassroots organizations
- Women's groups and local leaders
- Youth and students
- Development practitioners and policymakers
- Donors, foundations and climate-health stakeholders
- National and international film and social impact festivals
- Media, educators, and advocacy networks

Expected Outcomes

- Increased understanding of the links between climate change, health, livelihoods, and gender inequality.
- Greater recognition of women as key drivers of climate resilience and community leadership.
- Stronger advocacy for locally led climate adaptation and public health solutions.
- Promotion of community role models who inspire climate action and social change.
- Improved resilience and preparedness of women, girls and vulnerable communities.
- Placing women at the centre of climate action
- Expanded dialogue and engagement among policymakers, practitioners and communities on climate justice and health equity.



YouTube link: <https://www.youtube.com/@voicesfromtheground-ZMQ>



Living on the Climate Edge

Resilience of Women as Climate Responders in Vulnerable Regions of India

Parched Fields When the Wells Run Dry

“ Adopt rainwater harvesting, water saved today is food for us tomorrow. ”



Zoya
(A Climate Champion from Mewat)



Watch stories on the impact of climate change on rural communities in Haryana.



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Part I: *Changing Weather*
Part II: *Together with Hope*
Part III: *A New Way of Thinking*



Rural Area

Village: Jamalgarh, Mewat(Nuh), Haryana, India

Parched Fields

सूखते खेत

Part - 1

Changing Weather

बदलता मौसम



Climate change is not a distant threat it's a daily struggle. Dry wells, falling crops, rising debt and children growing up in uncertainty. This is not just one family's story, but a reflection of countless rural communities facing the harsh realities.

Parched Fields

सूखते खेत

Part - 2

Together with Hope

उम्मीद के संग



The impact of climate change deepens water scarcity intensifies, health risks rise, and livelihoods hang by a thread. Families are pushed to the brink. But this is where awareness must turn into action. It's time to listen, acknowledge and act.

Parched Fields

सूखते खेत

Part - 3

A New Way of Thinking

नवी सोच



In the face of climate adversity, the people of Mewat are not just surviving—they are finding ways to adapt and rebuild. Through local knowledge, collective effort and resilience, solutions are taking root.



Living on the Climate Edge

Resilience of Women as Climate Responders in Vulnerable Regions of India

Shrinking Forests

When the Trees Fall Silent

“ Our knowledge of forests is our strength, let's protect it, adapt it and transform it into change. ”



Manju
(A Climate Champion from Mayurbhanj)



Watch stories on the impact of climate change on tribal communities in Odisha.



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Part I: *Uncertain Future*

Part II: *A New Path of Hope*

Part III: *Flight Towards Self-Reliance*



Tribal Area

Village: Bangriposi, Mayurbhanj, Odisha, India

Shrinking Forests

शिकुड़ने जंगल

Part - 1
Uncertain Future

अनिश्चित भविष्य



From the forests of Mayurbhanj comes a story of quiet loss. For Santhal community, life was once deeply connected to the forest food, medicine and livelihood all came from nature. But now forest resources are disappearing, rains are unpredictable and traditional ways of life are slowly fading.

Shrinking Forests

शिकुड़ने जंगल

Part - 2
A New Path of Hope

उम्मीद की नई राह



When nature changes, entire ways of life are pushed to the edge. Shrinking forests and changing climate patterns are forcing families to leave behind their traditions. Livelihoods are becoming unstable and this is more than an environmental shift.

Shrinking Forests

शिकुड़ने जंगल

Part - 3
Flight Towards Self-Reliance

आत्मनिर्भरता की उड़ान



Even in the face of change, roots find a way to hold strong. Efforts are emerging to revive traditional knowledge, restore local ecosystems and rebuild sustainable livelihoods. Because the wisdom to fight often lies within the communities most affected by it.



Living on the Climate Edge

Resilience of Women as Climate Responders in Vulnerable Regions of India

Flooded Lanes When the Drains Overflow

“ Let's keep our drains clean to prevent floods, stop infections and protect our children from diseases. ”



Mariam
(A Climate Champion from Mumbra)



Watch stories on the impact of climate change on urban slum communities in Maharashtra.



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Part I: *Growing Troubles*
Part II: *One Community One Voice*
Part III: *Unity for Cleanliness*



Urban Slum

Banjara Basti, Mumbra, Thane, Maharashtra, India

Flooded Lanes

डूबती गलिये

Part - 1

Growing Troubles

बढ़ती चुम्बीबते



From the crowded lanes of Mumbra comes a story of survival. Migration was a hope for a better future but the reality turned out to be far more harsh. Overcrowding, poor sanitation, rising heat and unpredictable rains have turned daily life into a constant struggle.

Flooded Lanes

डूबती गलिये

Part - 2

One Community, One Voice

एक मोहल्ल्या, एक अवधान



In the dense settlements climate impacts intensify flooded streets, spreading diseases and loss of livelihoods. Families find themselves trapped between hope and hardship. As conditions worsen, the need for urgent action becomes impossible to ignore.

Flooded Lanes

डूबती गलिये

Part - 3

Unity for Cleanliness

एकत्रा से स्वच्छता तक



Even in the toughest conditions, resilience finds a way. People have come together to create change improving sanitation, raising awareness and building local solutions. Because real change begins at the community level where people turn adversity into action.

Part-1

Changing Weather

“In the drought-prone district of Mewat, Haryana, the Khan family battles extreme heat, dry wells, and failed crops season after season. As women carry double burdens at home and in the fields, children and livestock suffer. Can a struggling rural community survive the relentless advance of climate change?”



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Part-2

Together with Hope

“As Mewat's scorching summers grow harsher, the Khan family sinks deeper into hardship. But young Zoya begins to understand the bigger picture. Guided by her teacher, she discovers that awareness and small collective actions — neighbours sharing knowledge, families conserving water — can kindle hope even in the driest of times.”



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Part-3

A New Way of Thinking

“Inspired by new knowledge, Zoya partners with an NGO to bring climate awareness, water conservation, and sustainable farming to her Mewat village. Community meetings ignite collective action. The Khan family and their neighbours begin adopting practical solutions, proving that young women's leadership can transform an entire community's future.”



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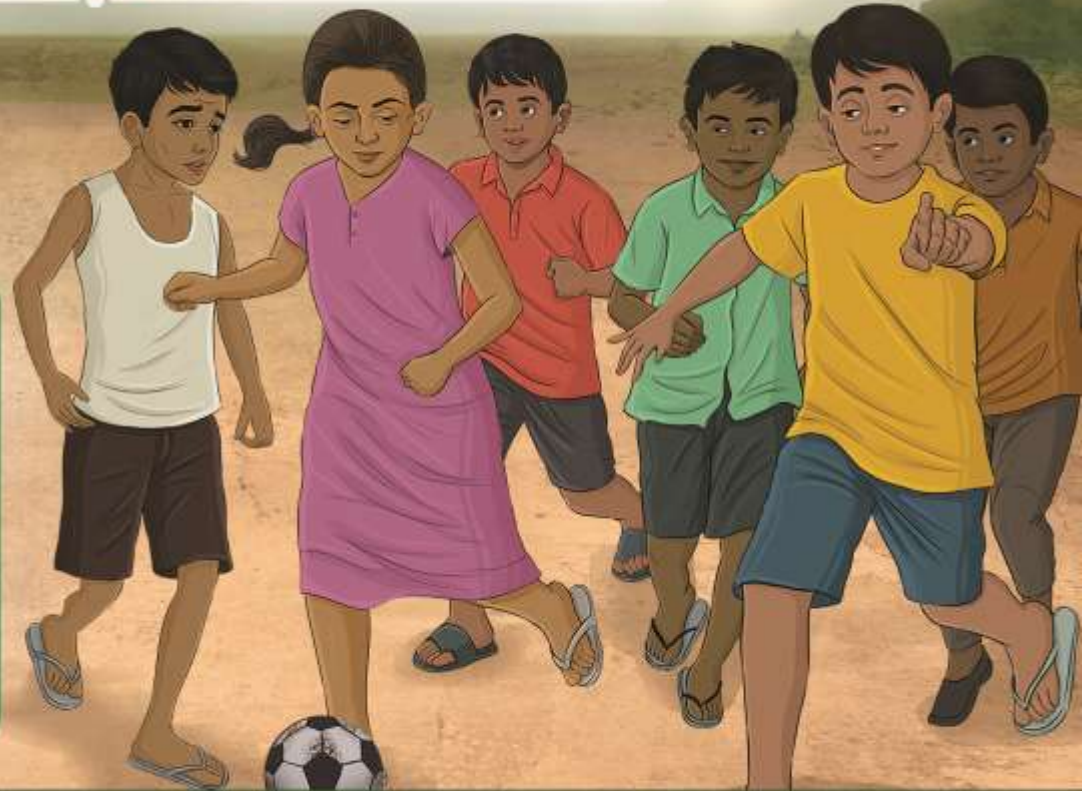
Shrinking Forests



Part-1

Uncertain Future

“Deep in Mayurbhanj, Odisha, the Santhal tribal community has long depended on forests for food, medicine, and income. But shrinking forests, unpredictable rains, and climate disasters are eroding everything. Manju's family faces malnutrition, lost livelihoods, and fading traditions. Their uncertain future raises an urgent question: what remains when the forest falls silent?”



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Part-2

A New Path of Hope

“As Mayurbhanj's forests shrink further, Manju's family finds forest-based livelihoods disappearing. Forced migration looms as a desperate option. Yet within the community, women begin discovering strength — through self-help groups, peer support, and new income opportunities. Amid loss and displacement, small seeds of solidarity offer a fragile but real path forward.”



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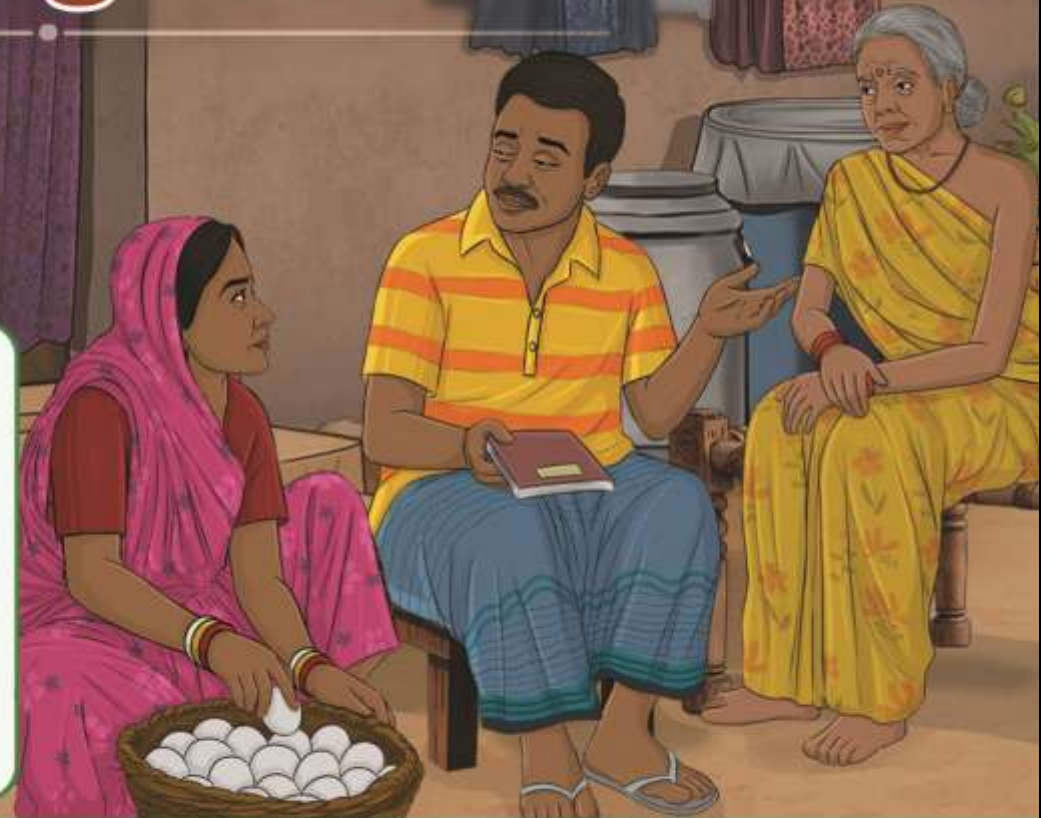


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Part-3

Flight Towards Self-Reliance

“Manju's journey through hardship leads her toward empowerment. In Mayurbhanj, women come together to revive traditional forest knowledge, build sustainable livelihoods, and restore local ecosystems. Through collective action and community-led initiatives, Manju's village begins moving from dependence to self-reliance — showing that resilience often grows strongest in those most affected by change.”



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Part-1

Growing Troubles

“In Mumbra’s crowded settlement, Ramesh and Sunita struggle with flooded lanes, contaminated water, and recurring illness as climate change intensifies monsoon rains. Their daughter falls sick amid worsening sanitation and damaged homes. Mariam, a caring neighbour and emerging climate advocate, urges the family to seek help and warns the community about rising climate risks.”



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Flooded Lanes



Part-2

One Community One Voice

“As heavier monsoons bring water logging, disease, and hardship to Mumbra, Ramesh and Sunita’s family faces growing despair. Realising the crisis affects everyone, Mariam brings neighbours together through meetings and awareness efforts. Supported by local youth and residents, the community begins demanding better sanitation, drainage, and collective solutions for a safer future.”



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Part-3

Unity for Cleanliness

“Determined to protect her neighbourhood, Mariam partners with an NGO to promote climate awareness, sanitation, and waste management in Mumbra. Through community action and shared responsibility, residents learn practical ways to reduce flooding and disease. Mariam emerges as a climate champion, inspiring women and families to build a cleaner, healthier, and climate-resilient community.”



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