HEAL WITH HOPE

Theme: **Design for Crisis**

Rebuild and heal the world with design

July 2022

Team

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Problem Identified

PROBLEM DESCRIPTION

- **Crisis:** The state of **Assam** is victim to r**ecurring natural disasters such as flood** & erosion, landslide, earthquake, etc, destroying homes and making entire communities **homeless**.

- **Psychological distress** is common in populations affected by emergency situations like natural disasters. **Children** are one of the **most vulnerable** groups in these emergencies.

- During an emergency, children's sense of well-being is jeopardized. They may be exposed to a **sudden loss**, **disruption in their routines, frightening experiences** and much more. These circumstances require a significant amount of **time and care** for children to recover and for psychological wounds to heal.

- Although these situations are tragic, and have adverse effects, they present an **opportunity to build sustainable mental health systems for all people in need**.

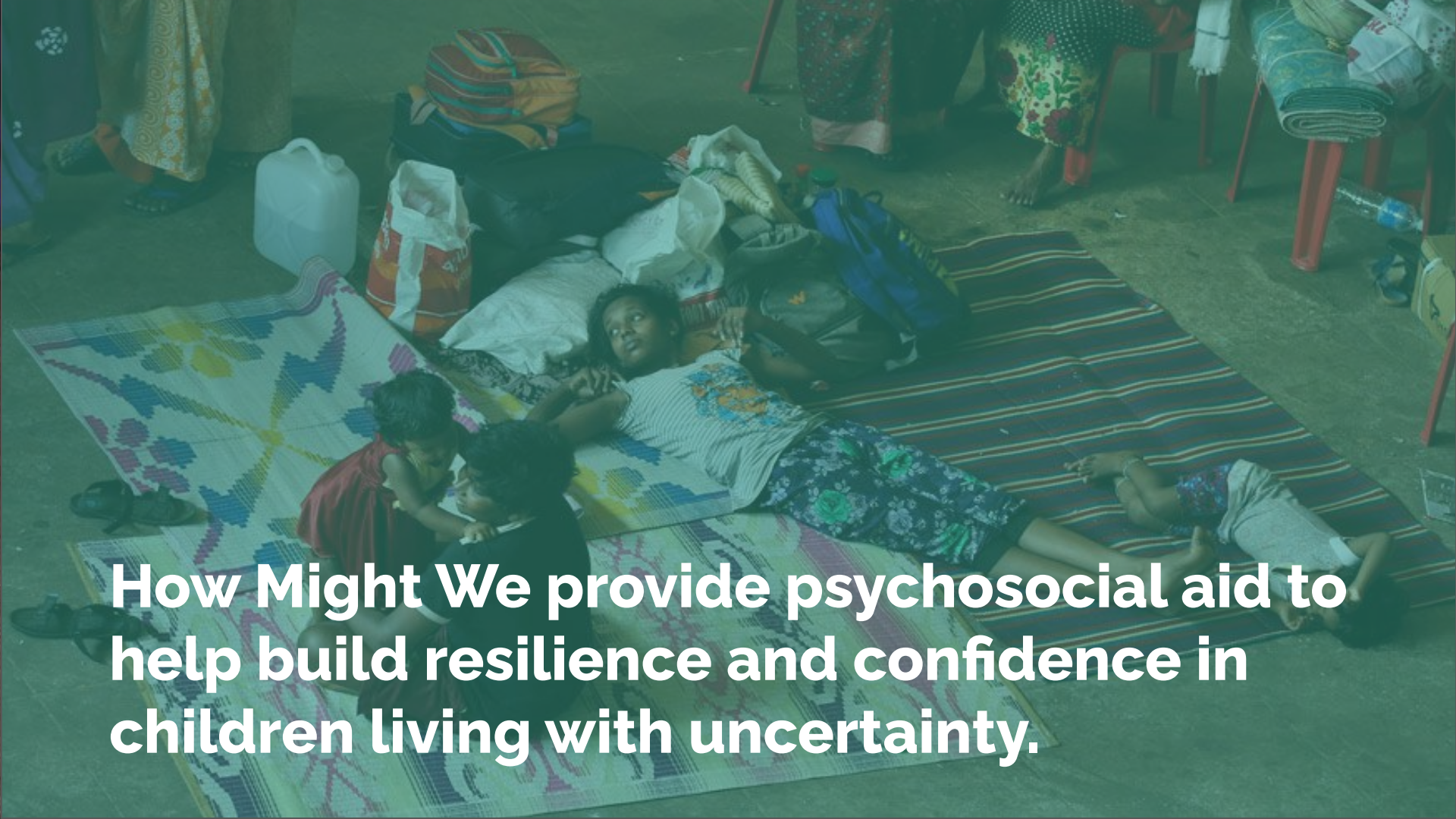
20-40%
of a population affected by natural disaster suffers from mild psychological distress
5,27,296
children are affected by flooding in Assam
61,878
children in 564 relief camps in 17 districts.

Urgency & Importance

Floods in Assam result in **massive loss of lives and property.** Families rendered homeless, seeking refuge in shelters, only to go back and find themselves with nothing and have to rebuild their lives from the scratch. In this scenario, children are the most vulnerable and worst-affected.

The adults, no doubt are struggling for their lives and the lives of their families. But the **children**, who are facing the crisis for the **first time**, or those who in their **precious years of growth and development**, are left in an **unfamiliar and cruel situation** of losing their homes, lives and even loved ones, **have no one to help them cope up** with the events and its aftermath. For the past two years, they have constantly been at the receiving end of intense psychological trauma due to Covid-19 pandemic and resulting lockdowns.

During disasters, **mental health usually takes a backseat.** However, if we don't provide them the very needed psychological aid and space to process their emotions, it will only result in a **never ending cycle** of **young population** growing up with **serious psychological scars** and trauma**.** Furthermore, having access to psycho-social aid will not only lead to **emotionally strong individuals** but also, in the longer run, will **build a strong community** which **values mental well being** and **emotional security.**



How Might We provide psychosocial aid to help build resilience and confidence in children living with uncertainty.

Munmi Mech
Age: 7

"I spend most of my time in helping my mother take care of my younger sibling. I miss my joyous walk to school and playing with my friends"

STORY

Munmi, a resident of Barpeta, belonging to a farmer family, lives with her parents and 2 younger siblings. After the flood destroyed her home, she is living in a relief camp. Although she does not understand the situation completely, and likes meeting new kids, She does miss her school.
Influences: Family & Friends

GOALS & MOTIVATIONS

- Go to school & play with friends.
- Visit the annual Anandamela at her village.
- Socialize, Have fun
- Wants to fly in an aeroplane.

FEELINGS & FRUSTRATIONS

- Worried about not being able to meet school friends.
- Not getting the toys she wants.
- Fear of again losing home, not returning to normalcy
- Lack of sleep, nightmare

CHALLENGES

- Access to resources like books, toys
- Continuity of education
- Expressing their emotions
- Look after younger siblings

Jyotirmoy Das
Age: 11

"I am unable to concentrate on my studies. Due to covid, I lost two full years, and I don't want to lose any more. All work and no play makes me dull."

STORY

Jyotirmoy lived in a small kutcha house in Kamrup. Seeing his beloved mother work and struggle everyday as a daily wage worker, he is determined to grow up and get a job. He wants to join the CRPF after completing his 12th.
Influences: Mother

GOALS & MOTIVATIONS

- Go to school & share experiences with family
- Help his mother in daily tasks.
- Wants to become athletic

FEELINGS & FRUSTRATIONS

- Loss of learning time: Due to flood, schools are closed, which sometimes become months, depending on the degree of the flood
- Lack of playground: Reduced living space in the flood relief camps
- Feels lonely, anxious and angry most of the time

CHALLENGES

- It takes months to enjoy the comfort of home
- Not being able to continue his daily routine

Explorations

SOLUTIONS & IDEAS

01

Making psycho social aid kit available for children in relief camps

An online donation platform where people can donate funds for procuring resources required for curating the kit. The kits can be made available to the children via NGOs or local bodies.

Why this solution was not chosen?

Despite the fact that this solution would enable the caregivers to provide the required help to children, we felt that this solution is not enough as providing a kit would only help to an extent and it would become difficult to track if and how much the children are actually getting benefitted from the solution.

02

Training Sessions for parents, grandparents

Inviting mental health officials like doctors, professors and other experts to conduct training sessions for parents, guardians, caregivers etc., on the importance of mental well being of children. This was to be done by collaborating with local officials and NGOs. This would help the caregivers in not only understanding the importance of psycho-social health but also in knowing how to help kids in times of disaster.

Why this solution was not chosen?

Although we understood that the long term impact would be beneficial, it was not feasible keeping in mind the urgency of the situation.

03

Connecting relief camps to counsellors, mental health officials etc.

A digital platform which helps to support parents and caregivers of young children. The platform shall help in connecting with experts for advice on all aspects of children's health and well-being. Information, caregivers can trust to help child heal and recover fast!

HEAL WITH HOPE

FINAL SOLUTION & INNOVATION

A **mobile app** aiming to provide **systematic support** to caregivers of the most vulnerable children, particularly between the age group of 4 to 14 years, in the most remote areas in times of urgency and otherwise.

The platform shall **help caregivers in connecting with experts for counselling sessions** of children as well as for advice on aspects of children's health and well-being. All information related to psychosocial aid, that caregivers can trust to help children heal and recover fast!

HOW DOES OUR SOLUTION ADDRESS THE PROBLEM IDENTIFIED

We now know the importance of **psycho-social aid for children in times of disaster.** However, considering different factors like remoteness of the location, lack of awareness of mental well being etc, this much needed help is often overlooked. It is not possible for children to access the help by themselves, and in most of these situations the **symptoms go unnoticed** by parents and caregivers.

On a **personal level** our solution will help the **children receive the aid** they need, enabling them to not only cope up with the situation in a healthy manner, but also to become more **emotionally resilient**. This will be done **directly through counselling sessions, or via caregivers**.

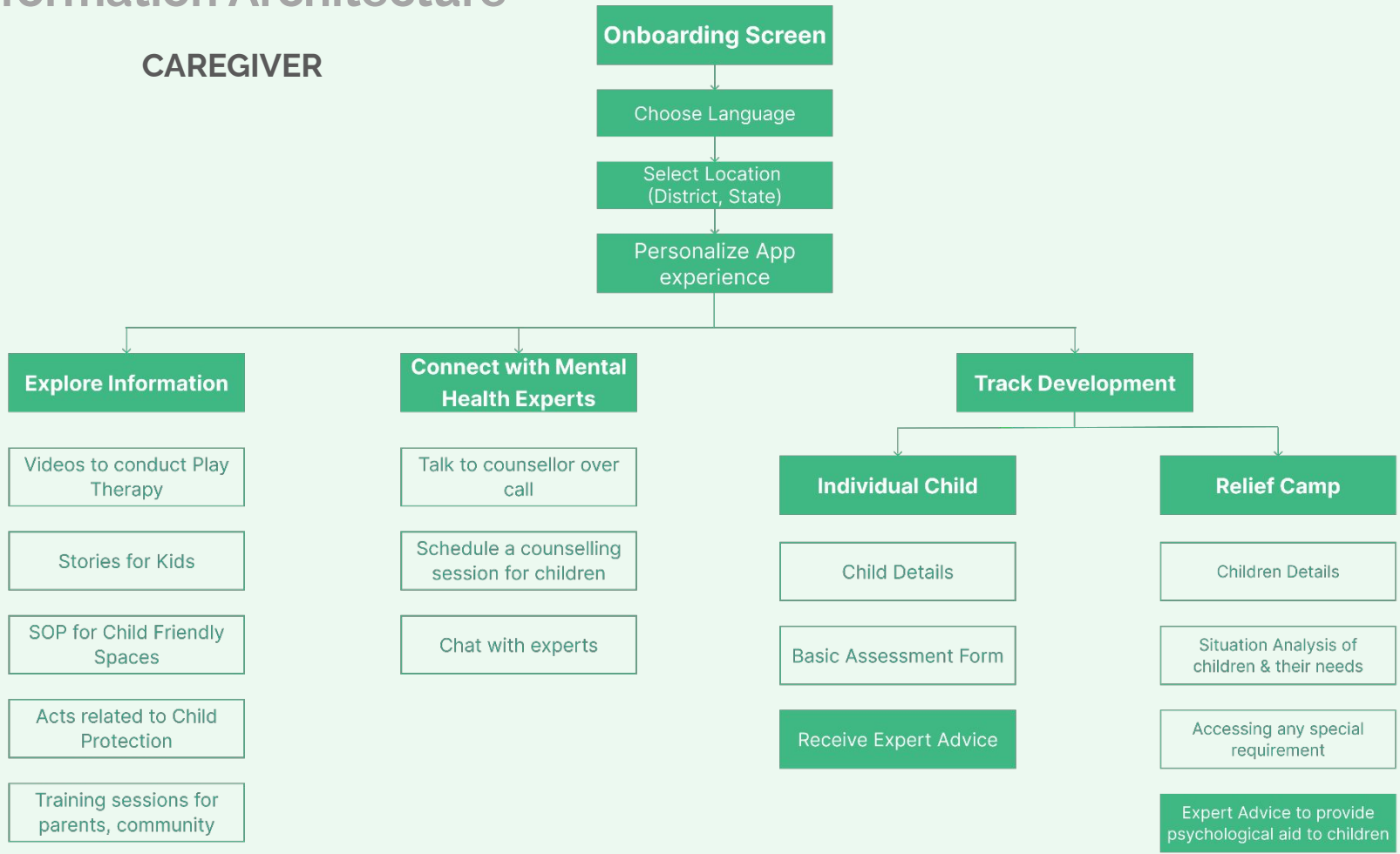
HOW IS IT UNIQUE & INNOVATIVE?

The solution **pro actively focuses on psycho social aid**, an aspect which is often neglected in times of disaster and often comes in notice when it is a little too late.

Accessibility - Available in **regional languages.** Furthermore, there is more than one way to connect with experts like **chat, voice or video call**

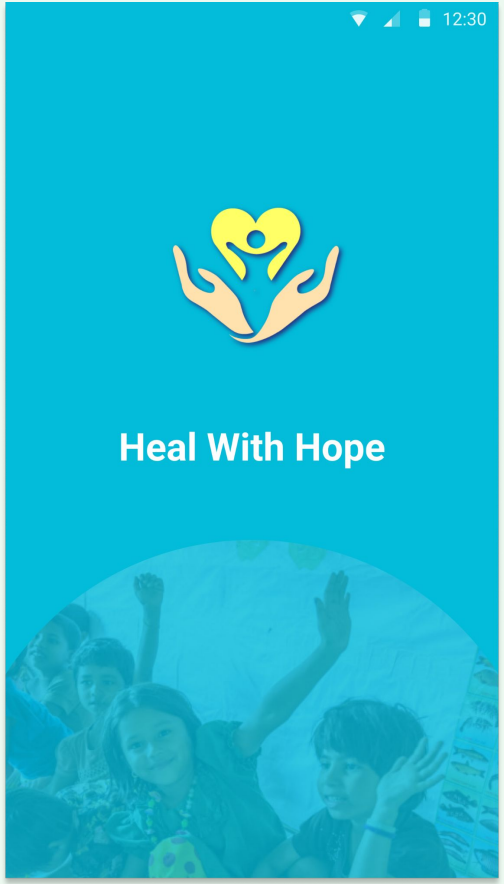
Information Architecture

CAREGIVER



Information Architecture

MENTAL HEALTH EXPERTS

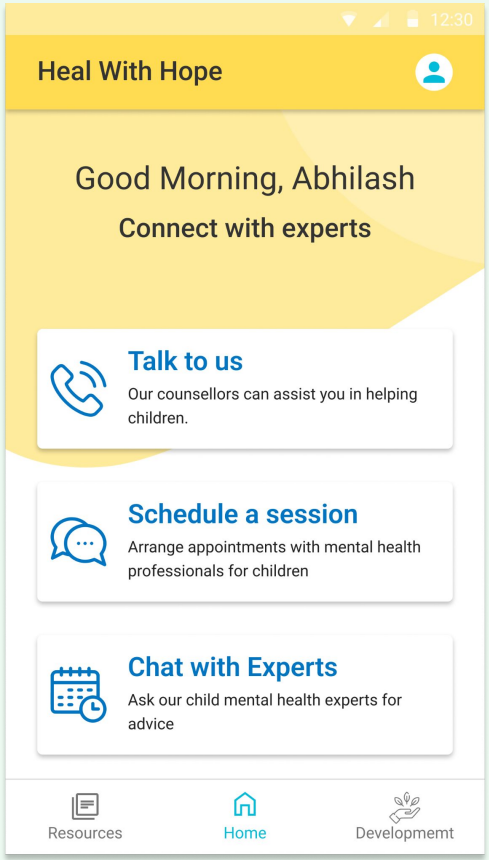


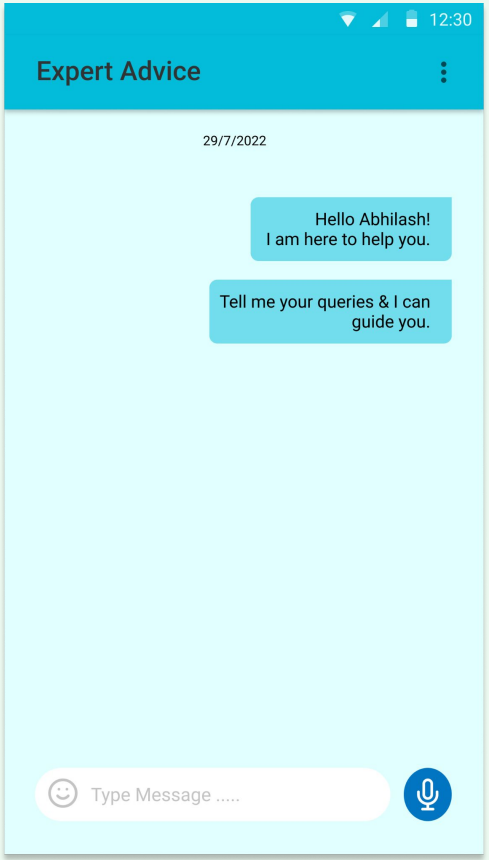
Here is the link to App Prototype Video https://youtu.be/3OkWtexJz9M

Feature 1

Connecting with mental health experts & counsellors

Caregivers will have the option to reach out to mental health experts via Chat and Call to seek expert advice on how to help children cope in such difficult times. They can also schedule a counselling session for the children via video call.



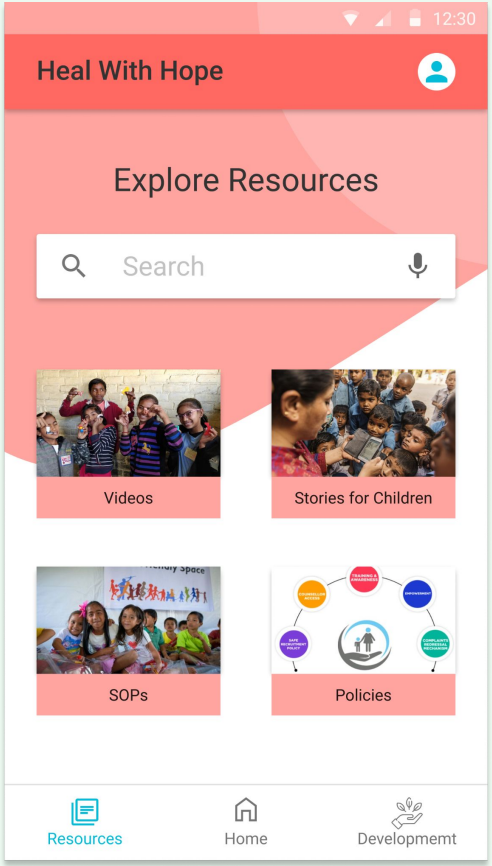


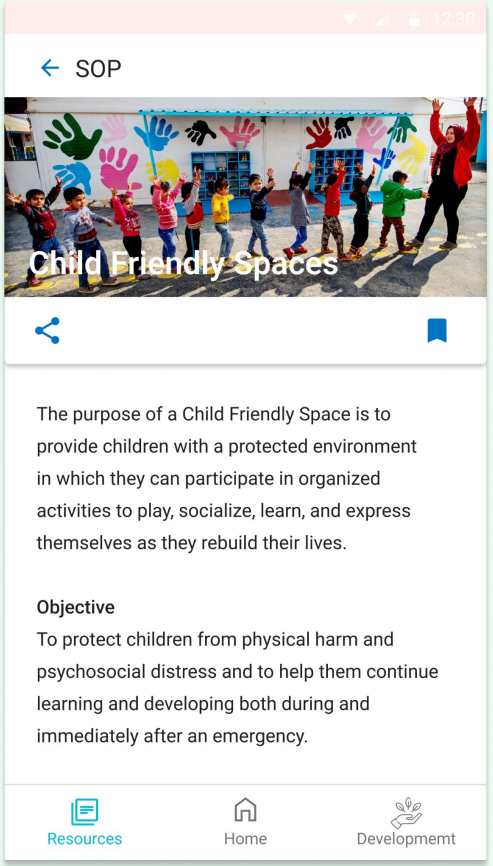
Feature 2

Access to Resources

The platform offers online, on demand information like articles written by experts, covering a large range of topics such as importance of mental health, standard operating procedures of child friendly spaces, protection and safety of children etc.

It also offers plenty of ideas on how to engage in playful interaction with children through activities that will act as therapy, helping them in their recovery process. Easy to digest videos are also available that will guide the caregivers in the whole journey.

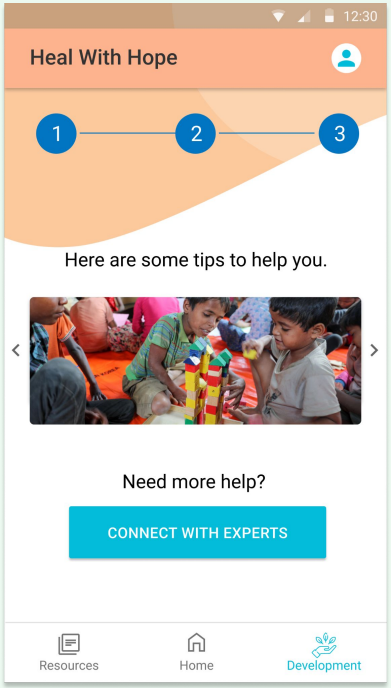




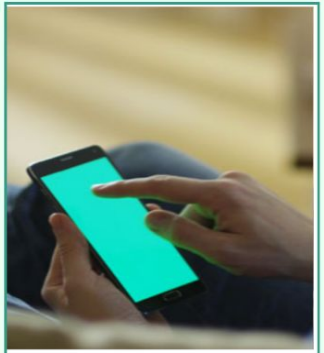
Feature 3

Child Development Tracker

To help the children, it is also important that the experts understand the context of the child's surroundings, any symptoms that the child is facing etc. To convey this, Heal with Hope provides effective and easy ways. The caregiver can enter details of child, upload pictures of surroundings, and describe the situation at hand. On the basis of the information provided, caregivers will receive curated information and advice on what actions could be taken. Caregivers will also have an option to connect with experts, in which case this information will also be available to them.

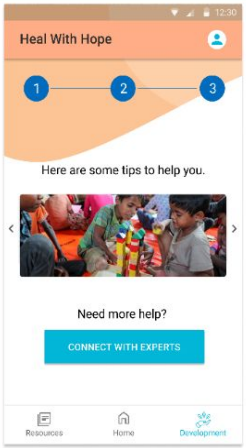


Abhilash is working in an NGO for the past 5 years. Currently he is actively volunteering in Kamrup district of Assam and helping children in relief camps affected by floods.



To effectively help the children he decides to take advice from mental health experts. He opens the #Heal With Hope App.

He logs into the app. In the Child Development section, he quickly fills the details, captures the relief camp situation and proceeds.

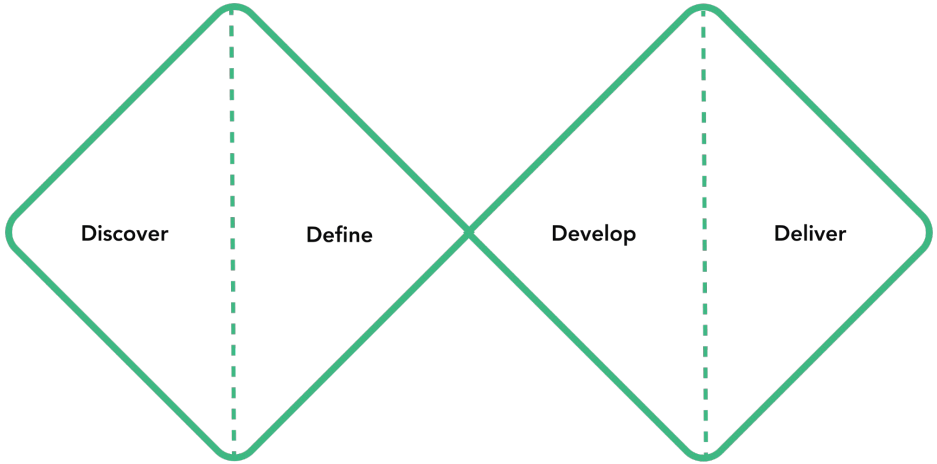


After adding the details, he receives a list of curated resources to address the situation. Also he has an option to consult the mental health experts

As suggested, he starts conducting play therapy for the children along with the help of other volunteers. Children started engaging in the activity and seems to enjoy themselves.

Made with BDNF application, developped by the BnF

The Design Process



Discover

- Five Ws (Who, What, Where, When, Why)
- Desk Research
- User Research

Define

- Problem Statement
- Personas
- Stakeholder Mapping
- Priority Matrix

Develop

- Paper Sketch, Wireframe
- Prototype

Deliver

- Slide Deck & Video Presentation
- *For this design challenge we omitted the testing aspect of design process in the interest of time.*

Who
IS AFFECTED?

- WHO is having the problem?
- WHO will benefit from our solution?
- What do we know/assume about them?

A kid (age 4 or5), who is witnessing flood devastation for the first time.

Girls facing issues about which they cannot talk to anyone. (Harassment, concerns related to menstruation, pressure of marriage etc)

Teenagers: Going through a lot of developmental changes, faced the pandemic, and now facing floods, is uncertain about their future.

From being locked up in their homes, losing out on education, being unable to play and grow to witnessing serious financial crisis in their families

Sitution in Numbers

527,296
Children affected by flooding
(Source: Daily SitRep, FRIMS, ASDMA dated 26 June 2022)

61,878
Children in 564 relief camps in 17 districts
(Source: Daily SitRep, FRIMS, ASDMA dated 26 June 2022)

Living in relief camps.

Struggling for basic necessities like medicines.

Needs of children overlooked during crisis

Facing discrimination on the basis of religion, caste, gender.

They have lost their source of livelihood, house, cattle etc..

Schools shutdown due to water logging

Facing harassment by authorities.

Lost their documents.

They have lost their family members.

What
IS IT ABOUT?

- Is it easy to explain?
- Is it an actual/real problem?
- Have we got any evidence?

Stress, Anxiety

Unable to process emotions

Hinder their perspective about life

Uable to comprehend what is happening around and how to combat the same.

Nobody to talk to.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

Humanatarian Crisis

WHO's epidemiological projections show that 20-40% of a population affected by natural disaster suffers from mild psychological distress

Prevalence of common mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, and tends to be higher among migrants exposed to adversity and refugees than among host populations.

Where & When

DOES IT OCCUR?

- What is ths context where the Persona is experiencing the problem?
- Can we easily explain the context?
- Have we got proof to the problem happening in a certain context or space?

Assam, a state prone to flooding and erosion,

Annual reoccurrence of crisis for a duration of approx 3 months in highly prone areas

Assam - One third of the population living below the poverty line.

CLIMATE CHANGE: is set to lead to more frequent and severe floods in Assam,

Flood relief camps/ shelter

After returning to their village/homes when flood situation improves.

Continuing their ‘normal lives’ after coming back from relief camps.

Why
CARE ABOUT IT?

- What is the most important value for the user?
- What pain points would a solution help get rid of?

Heal Emotional & Mental Trauma

Normalising asking for help related to mental health.

Community Building by encouraging people to help the children

Give them a ray of hope to restart (Returning to normalcy

Mobilizing Community

To make a difference

Serves as a springboard to **recovery**.

#InvestInHumanity Inculcate trust in Humanity

Get rid of lack of communication

Creating Child friendly spaces

Long term planning is the key

Discover

WHO?	Sitution in Numbers 527,296 Children affected by flooding (Source: Daily SitRep, FRIMS, ASDMA dated 26 June 2022)	After losing their homes due to flood, they are taking shelter in relief camps.	From being locked up in their homes, losing out on education, being unable to play and grow to witnessing serious financial crisis in their families
WHAT?	WHO's epidemiological projections show that 20-40% of a population affected by natural disaster suffers from mild psychological distress	Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)	Unable to process the sudden change in their surroundings, and express emotions
WHERE/ WHEN?	Assam, a state prone to flooding and erosion resulting in loss of source of livelihood, house, cattle etc..	Flood relief camps/shelter	Continuing their 'normal lives' after coming back from relief camps.
WHY?	Be in space where he/she can express and seek help.	Serves as a springboard to **recovery**.	Heal Emotional & Mental Trauma

Define

Stakeholder Mapping

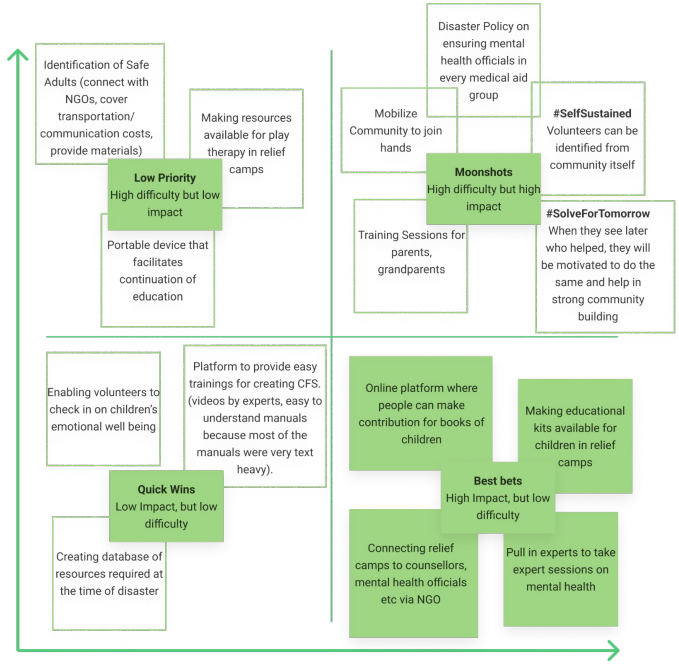
In these times of crisis, parents have many competing priorities like securing basic needs for their family, etc..
They are also in stress due to the ongoing conditions and often find themselves in helpless situation.

Mental health experts are willing to help in such situation.

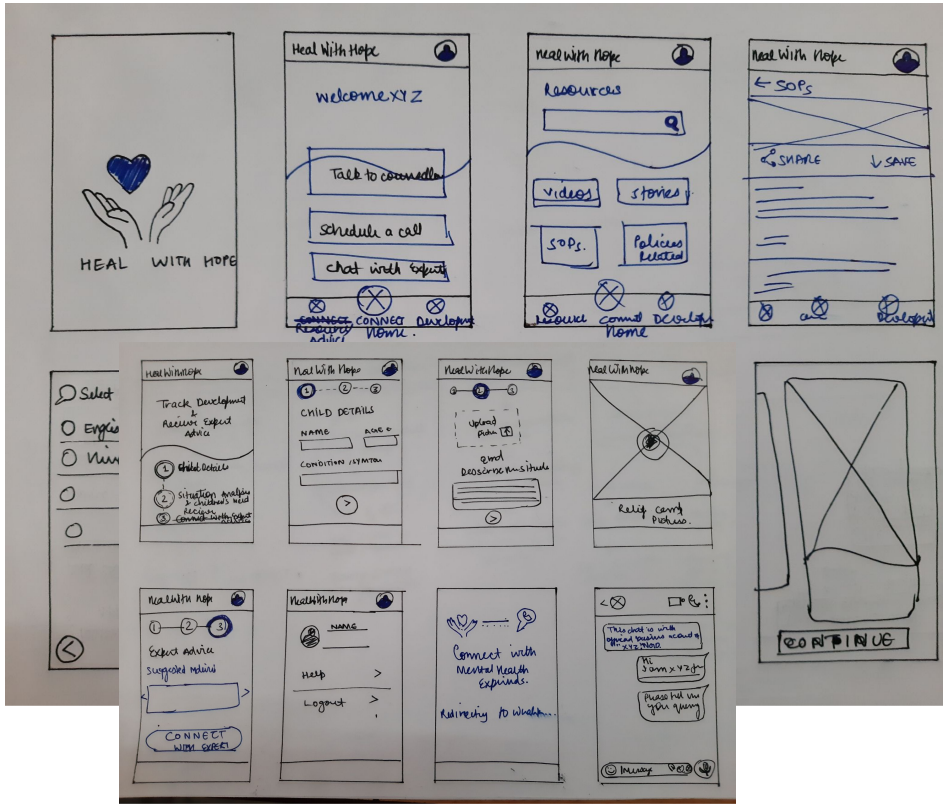
NGOs and volunteers can be the potential flag bearers to help the children in such dark times and pull them out from the psychological distress

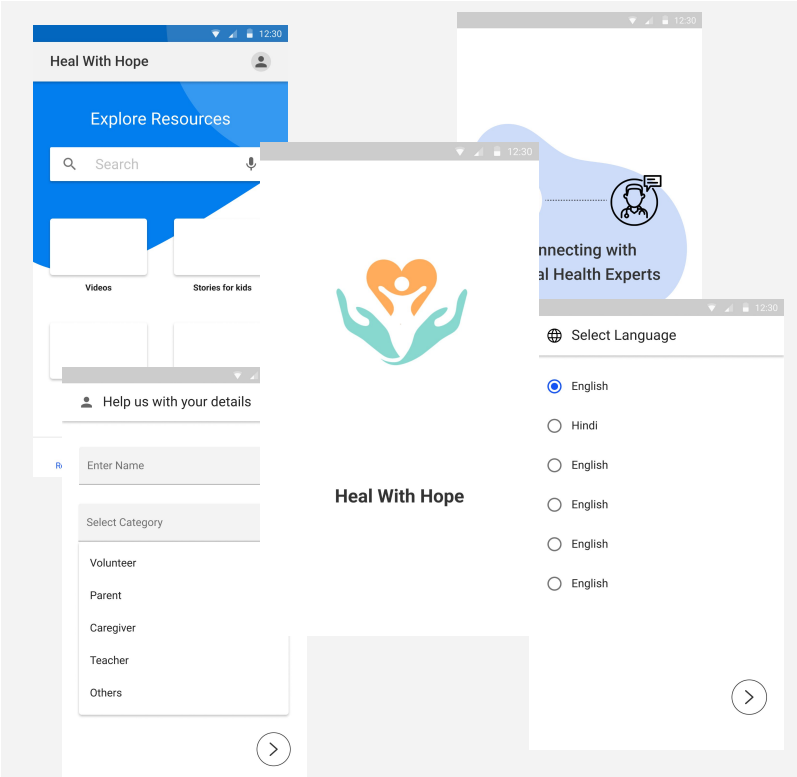
During crisis like floods it might be difficult for the counsellors and mental health experts to work from ground zero and reaching directly to the affected children can be a challenge.

2 x 2 Priority Matrix



Develop


HEAL WITH HOPE
Heal With Hope
welcome XYZ
Talk to counsellor
schedule a call
chat with Expert
Resources
Videos
Stories
SOPs.
Policies Related
SOPs
SHARE
SAVE
Select
Track Development & Receive Expert Advice
CHILD DETAILS
NAME
AGE
CONDITION / SYMTOM
Upload Photo
Relief Carry Photos.
Expert Advice
Suggested Medicine
CONNECT WITH EXPERT
NAME
Help
Logout
Connect with Mental Health Experinds.
CONTINUE


12:30
Heal With Hope
Explore Resources
Search
Videos
Stories for kids
Help us with your details
Enter Name
Select Category
Volunteer
Parent
Caregiver
Teacher
Others
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al Health Experts
Select Language
English
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IMPACT OF OUR SOLUTION

- Assam floods are an annual occurrence, and with time the aftermath is getting more and more difficult to cope with. The children in disaster prone areas, along with facing the immediate risks that come with the calamity, also face the risk of long term psychological distress because they lack the care and guidance to help them understand the situation and cope with it in a healthy manner.

- On a **personal level** our solution will help the children receive the aid they need, enabling them to not only cope up with the situation in a healthy manner, but also to become more **emotionally resilient**.

- On a **community level** our solution will empower the caregivers of children by guiding them about how to help the kids deal with the situation at hand. Furthermore, our solution will **inculcate the importance of mental health and well being**. And the children will grow up with similar **values of community, compassion and well being.**

Sustainability

Long Term Recovery Response

The platform will help children access psychosocial support by offering services and information, digitally, without stigma and by doing so, in the long run, it will **strengthen mental health,** and **child protection systems** to **ensure continuity in the provision of core services** for vulnerable children and their families in the immediate and the longer-term recovery response.

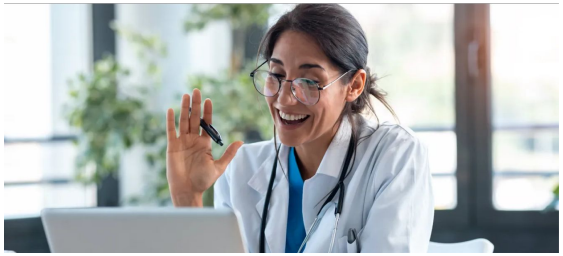
#SolveForTomorrow

When children grow-up in an environment where they see volunteers around them helping people, eventually they will also be **motivated to help and bring change** which will help in **strong community building.**

Pave way towards a #SelfSustainedCommunity

Different members from community can take initiative to use the solution to help children. Hence the solution will contribute towards **empowerment of the community**, by encouraging and **mobilizing** the community to join hands.

Practicality & Business Viability



Onboarding of Mental Health Experts & Counsellors

To start with we can **reach out to the medical universities** in flood prone states. **Medical students and professionals** can be encouraged to join our initiative. This platform will be a good way for freshers to contribute to the community. Also, the university can help in procuring data of **retired mental health professionals** and connecting with them. Their experience can help in the sensitive situations our solution aims to deal with.

We can also connect to **mental health officials** working in rural areas as part of **government's National Mental Health Programme**, who already know about the context, for easy accessibility to the population in need in times of disaster and otherwise.

Connecting with NGOs and local community (Asha Workers, Teachers)

We can reach out to **NGOs** who are **actively working towards relief & recovery of flood affected areas.** The platform can assist their demanding journey of helping children by providing psychosocial aid.

Additionally, we can **learn from the first hand experiences of NGOs and volunteers** dealing with such situation in disaster and the features of the solution can be enhanced accordingly.

We can also connect with **Asha workers** and **teachers** as they closely work with children in different aspects of their growth.

Curation of resources

National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) can provide valuable resources on how to provide child care, conduct therapy sessions and can also **utilize their cutting edge research** to improve these methods so they stay relevant over time.

In future, the platform can also include **specific guidance for parents and caregivers** on how to care for **their own well-being.**

“Our human compassion binds us the one to the other – not in pity or patronizingly, but as human beings who have learnt how to turn our common suffering into hope for the future.”

– Nelson Mandela

Thank you!

We, Team Design Thinkers would like to thank UMO Foundation for providing us this opportunity to provide us with a platform to showcase our talent & contribute to Rebuild and Heal the world with Design.
We would also like to take this opportunity to thank our mentor Neha Jattu for providing us her invaluable guidance & support throughout this challenge.