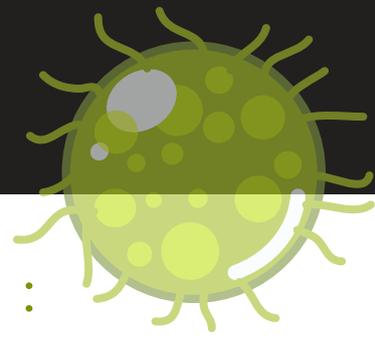




Combating
COVID - 19
PANDEMIC

RESPONSE MECHANISM &
SUPPORT TO THE VULNERABLE

Setting the context : Background



About COVID - 19 & its impact on India :

Over the past few weeks the headline around the world has been dominated by the widespread outbreak of the corona virus. The number of confirmed coronavirus cases in India has been growing at a rate seen at the early stages in other countries where there was subsequently an exponential rise in infections in a matter of weeks. Worries are beginning to mount with the India's poor health infrastructure combined with high population density (and the associated difficulty in practising social distancing), cramped housing, no access to water, overburdened public health infrastructure and the prospect of transmission from younger people to elderly in joint families all stack the odds against effective containment. India also has a large floating population of migrant workers who have moved from villages to cities and across states for work, estimated to be about 120 million[1]. As on 20th April, 2020, according to the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW), a total of 18477 COVID-19 cases have been reported in 31 states / union territories. These include 2841 who have been cured, discharged or migrated and 480 deaths[2]. The tough measures taken by the government to limit the spread of the disease has unsettled the lives of millions of people of the country but millions of these daily wage labourers and migrants have been adversely affected. Today, they reel from one of the harshest upheavals of their lives : the lockdown impact. They face hunger, disease, discrimination, poverty and complete uncertainty.

Government of India's response at a glance :

The government announced support measure worth USD 23 billion (Rs 1.7 lakh crore) relief package under PM Garib Kalyan Yojana aimed at providing a safety net for those hit the hardest by the Covid-19 lockdown.

A host of steps under 'PM GARIB KALYAN YOJANA are :

- **For those on the Front line**

RS.50 lakh medical insurance to cover doctors, paramedics and other medical staff.

- **For Food Security**

Additional 5kg Wheat or rice per person for 3 months, 1 kg free dal per household for 3 months, Free LPG for Ujjwala beneficiaries for 3 months

- **For Cash in Hand**

Rs. 2000 to 87 million farmers under PM Kisan in 10 days, Increase in MGNREGS wages to Rs. 202 from Rs. 187, Rs. 500/month to 200 million women under Jan Dhan Yojana account holder for next 3 months, Ex-gratia of Rs. 1000 to poor senior citizens, widow and disabled, Rs. 20 lakh collateral-free loans to SHG women

- **For organised sector**

Govt to contribute EPFs to cos with less than 100 workers- Contribution to both employee and employer, Non-refundable advance of 75%, or 3 month wages from PF account.

- **For Construction workers**

States to use Rs.31k crore construction worker's welfare fund, States to use District Mineral Fund for medical activities.

[1] <https://www.trtworld.com/magazine/india-s-lockdown-is-proving-disastrous-for-millions-of-daily-wagers-34879>

[2] <https://www.mohfw.gov.in/> retrieved on 20th April, 2020

About the Organisation



Janvikas^[3] has been working since 1987 with marginalized and poor communities to build a just, democratic and secular society, by facilitating and creating change agents and leaders in these communities. Janvikas works in 11 districts of Gujarat and so far, has incubated 18 community based organizations, developed 1425 community leaders to reach out to the most vulnerable families.

Centre for Social Justice^[4] (referred as CSJ herein thereafter) focuses on providing legal aid and services to the most vulnerable through its 14 law centres responding to 3000 cases/claims annually in the states of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh.

Institute for Studies and Transformation^[5] (referred as IST herein thereafter) has been working with a vision to bring sustainable changes in lives of marginalized communities by way of policy advocacy and range of community empowerment programmes. IST works in 8 blocks located within 4 districts of Gujarat and 4 areas in Ahmedabad city.

^[3] www.janvikas.in

^[4] <https://www.centreforsocialjustice.net/>

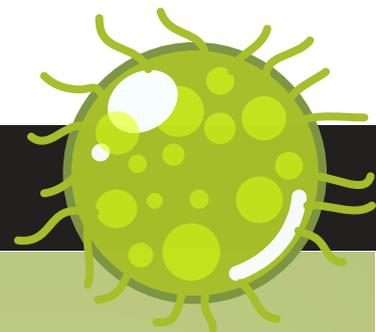
^[5] <https://www.istahmedabad.org/>

Janvikas along with its associates started relief response work immediately after the lockdown was affected, primarily in states of Gujarat, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Delhi



Figure 1
Map of India showing the spread/reach of the organization's Covid relief work

Impact of COVID in the states



Of the four states, our organization is working in, amidst Covid crisis, Delhi is the worst affected with over 2000 cases, following the state of Gujarat having over 1900 cases (as on 20th April 2020), which accounts to 10% of the total cases in the country, both in Delhi and Gujarat. The confirmed cases in Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh are 46 and 36 respectively, which are relatively less.

Gujarat and Delhi both has a large migrant population from other states, almost counting of 50%^[6] of the workforce in cities, that are affected the most with livelihood and food insecurity. The migrants working here in the cities are largely a part of informal economy, which is an unorganized sector.

In Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand, owing to large migrating population, the most affected are the migrants who are adversely affected by two issues, one is food security / shelter and another related to transportation of these migrants family to reach their villages.

[6] <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/ahmedabad/migrants-make-up-70-of-workforce-in-surat-50-in-ahmedabad-study/articleshow/66170754.cms>

RESPONSE MECHANISM

While livelihood and life security is the larger arena for policy advocacy; food security, claiming the entitled labour legal rights and linking the entitlements from the government (centre or state) is something which our organization is working on ground, to address the vulnerabilities.

Below is our response mechanism at a glance:

Kind of Responses	Activity Details	Impact
<p>Relief (Food Supply : Dry Ration & Hygiene Kits)</p> 	<p>A kit with wheat flour, rice, pulses, sugar, tea, spices, soaps, sanitary pads which could last during the lockdown period was prepared. These supplies were arranged with coordination of various like-minded CBOs and NGOs like Aatapi, Sahaj, Muslim Women Forum. The food supply was procured in bulk for Ahmedabad city whereas in other location it was procured locally and the kits prepared.</p>	<p>3060 kits distributed supported 15300 individuals in districts of Gujarat which includes Ahmedabad, Petlad, Khambhat, Himatnagar, Panchmahal, Kheda, Nakhatrana in Kutch, Jambusar, Vadodara as well as in Delhi.</p>
<p>Relief (Hot meals / Food Packets)</p> 	<p>Food Packets prepared and distributed with the help of local donors and community engagement. Police as well as local community/ youth groups voluntarily contributed for the food packets to the needy.</p>	<p>5749 daily wagers reached out in Ahmedabad and surrounding areas of Ahmedabad.</p>
<p>Relief (Personal Protective Equipment -Safety gears for our waste warriors 'SafaiKaramcharis')</p> 	<p>'SafaiKaramcharis' provided with safety gears like masks, sanitizers etc along with ration kits to minimize containment of covid-19.</p>	<p>500 safai karamcharis equipped with Protective Equipment in Ahmedabad</p>
<p>Translation and reach of Entitlements -Awareness</p>	<p>An exhaustive list of entitlements /circular that was announced by government of India for combating covid-19 is compiled in Hindi, Gujarati and English to serve as a ready reckoner by paralegal/volunteers. A toolkit for monitoring these entitlements has been prepared in Hindi, English and Gujarati.</p>	<p>This has helped the volunteers / para legals to be equipped with information and processes to support affected people, which has reduced the panic and increased solidarity</p>

Technological Intervention - Awareness	Voice messages disseminated to community regarding various entitlements through technological collaboration with Awaz-De.	10000 individuals reached through 20 voice messages.
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Community Radio	Supported local police for using sound recording facility from our community radio 'Nazaria' for broadcasting educational messages.	5 educational messages broadcasted in Ahmedabad city.
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Training & Capacity Building	An online training of the paralegal /volunteers of IDEAL - CSJ as well as other organisations have been organised to build their capacities to support the community on accessing the schemes / entitlements.	300 paralegals / volunteers trained.
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Legal Services Support	Disaster victim legal services scheme activated for rather creating evidence for future advocacy for its future functionality. Efforts have also been undertaken to identify people eligible for various entitlements and removing systemic blocks in implementation.	1342 victims supported through DLSA. More than 5490 victims supported on issues related to immediate relief of food supply, shelter and compensation.
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Government Engagement	Activated the Public Distribution System-PDS, Mid-day Meal and ICDS system through state, city and local government engagement. Advocacy avenues were explored at top level with Secretariats, Civil Supply, police for curfew passes for movement etc.	Activation of these essential services has helped people to avail essential commodities.
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Support to Migrants	Tracking migrants through our volunteer teams based in our area of operation.	1966 migrants supported.
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Collaboration with organizations and funders	Partnership explored with other like-minded organisation to meet food supply needs of around 10,000 families with ration kits who have lost livelihoods. Donors like Omidyar, Oxfam, APPI, HCL Foundation, Give India, individual donors and US foundation explored.	This has helped increased our network and reach, thereby widening our response work to more people in crisis. Generous contributions received from Omidyar, Oxfam, APPI, Give India and individuals.
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PRINCIPLES : Accountability and transparency

Transparency and Modesty is one of our guiding principle. Janvikas along its associates - CSJ and IST have pursued accountability and transparency with great rigour during the relief efforts to combat covid crisis. Glimpses of it can be viewed as stated below :

Activity	Procedure / Means of Verification
Random need assessment was conducted through situational analysis in Ahmedabad city by dividing into four zones based on vulnerability criteria[7] focusing on daily wage earners with no livelihood and urban poor. These were conducted with the help of programme and community leaders. A list prepared which consists of slum dwellers / households according to the vulnerability criteria . Similar analysis was conducted in areas of Khambhat, Petlad, Kheda, Panchmahal, Kutch, Vadodara, Jambusar and Delhi.	List prepared of households identified in state of Gujarat in areas like Ahmedabad, Khambhat, Petlad, Kheda, Panchmahal, Vadodara, Jambusar, Kutch and in Delhi. The data stored in google forms for easy access and reference. List submitted and maintained by responsible person of Janvikas / IST.
Listing for Ration kit / Hygiene distribution	Mobile number as well as signature of receiver of the ration kit captured during distribution of relief kits. Random verification of 10% of beneficiaries through phone calls.
Procurement of Ration and Hygiene kits	Procurement procedure duly approved by meta governance.
Payment to vendors for procuring relief kits	Authorisation of payment to vendors through proper approval channel and made by finance team.
Reports of relief measures undertaken	Available on website http://janvikas.in/resources/

Summary of impact / number of beneficiaries

Relief Activity	No. of individuals benifitted	State/City/District
Immediate relief work (food, ration kits and safety kits)	23549	Gujarat and Delhi
DLSA support	1342	Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Gujarat
Information dissemination	5 messages broadcasted through community radio. Zone - 5 area of Ahmedabad covered through auto rickshaw / car campaign in collaboration with police.	Ahmedabad city

[7] Vulnerability criteria: This criterion takes into consideration the poor and migrant worker. It also includes the daily wage earners, self-employed vendors, domestic workers, construction workers, farm labourers and all other workers of unorganised sector who are struggling to survive.

Facilitating migrants in crisis	1966	Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Gujarat
Technological intervention	10000	Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Gujarat
Capacity Building	300	Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Gujarat
Government advocacy	139 cases/claims appeals (Related to Food Security, Migrants, Safety Gears, Labour compensation, Fisher folks)	Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Gujarat

CASE STUDY

Case study 1 : Activating District Legal Service Authority(DLSA) to implement Disaster Management Scheme.

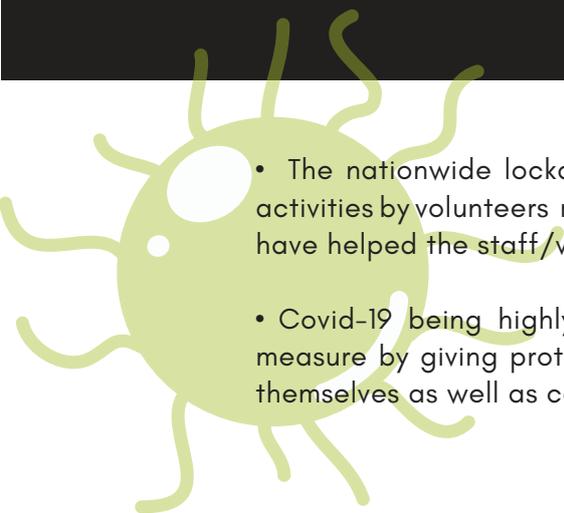
The national lockdown has affected the migrant workers adversely. One such case is of 40 migrant workers from Kabirdham, Chattisgarh who were stranded and identified in Vadodara by CSJ through a facebook post. CSJ contacted the local organisation who got in touch with the corporator to provide them with food. Nodal Officer in Chattisgarh was contacted by CSJ and ensured that he follows it up with the State Legal Services Authority Member Secretary for action. CSJ also followed up with the Secretary in this case. Subsequently, he issues instruction to all DLSAs to implement the Disaster Management Schemes thus activating the DLSA.



Case study 2 : Workers get their salaries through appeal

Syntex company has its operation in its coastal taluka of Rajula in Amreli district, Gujarat. Almost 3000 workers who worked were not paid their wages. These workers contacted the CSJ's Amreli office for intervention. A representation was made to the collector. This issue also received media attention. The HR Manager of Syntex informed CSJ representatives that they did not have money to pay for the wages of these workers. Since this news being widely circulated by media reached an official at British High Commission office who influenced local officials to take up issue of industrial labour. Now, 40% of their salaries released. Efforts continue to release the remaining amount.

Challenges faced by our ground leaders during relief operations



- The nationwide lockdown has imposed restrictions on movement to undertake relief activities by volunteers restricting their mobility. Our advocacy efforts with the government have helped the staff/volunteers to avail passes to continue relief activity.
- Covid-19 being highly contagious, all the volunteers were sensitized on preventive measure by giving protective gears as well as maintaining social distancing to protect themselves as well as community from local transmission

What more needs to be done - Lockdown 2.0

The poor and marginal people i.e. daily wage earners, labourers, homebased self employed or small scale businesses, are the most vulnerable as well as impacted in any policy shifts and crisis. The impact primarily consist of financial, livelihood and life security. Covid is definitely one such crisis and has the same effect, which will be extended even post lockdown in lot of people's lives. Our organization being inclined to the sustainable approach for larger good of the vulnerable communities, have envisioned the activities and programs which will help manoeuvre their lives through the Covid crisis. The envisioned actions and measures are as stated below:

Activities envisaged

Self managed Dignity Community Kitchen started operations in zone -5 of Ahmedabad city covering areas like Gomtipur and Saraspur which has high influx of migrant population. This kitchen aims to feed migrant workers with hygienic meals two times a day. The uniqueness of this kitchen is that it will be managed by local committee and the meals will be prepared by beneficiary themselves and will be available for a token amount of Rupee 1 as contribution to local committee. This will safeguard their dignity and hunger.

Strengthening and facilitating entitlements:

Online capacity building of Paralegal and other community leaders to be built to continue in their efforts to facilitate entitlements to government support schemes: Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and Community Leaders will facilitate access to the schemes announced under PM Garib Kalyan Yojna.

Desired Impact

4500 migrant workers served two meals a day till 3rd May to survive the lockdown.

800 paralegal and community volunteer of other organisations/CBOs capacities enhanced on facilitating access to entitlement.

Online training of community leaders across Gujarat will be conducted to develop an understanding on the preventive measures, hygiene, social distancing, combating stigma in communities and psycho-social care required for COVID-19 by collaborating with Indian Institute of Public Health (IIPH) Gandhinagar.

Capacity of 1600 community leaders across Gujarat enhanced by collaborating with Indian Institute of Public Health (IIPH) Gandhinagar.

Adoption of sustainable approaches that includes Disaster Mitigation strategy and threat preparedness to become integral part of all programmes for larger good of vulnerable communities to mitigate risks and manoeuvre their lives during such crisis.

We deeply appreciate the love, trust and support we have received in the communities we work with. It is in these times of adversity, the true test of support and authenticity is assured. We respect and celebrate our frontline workers and leaders, who inculcate, assure and confirm this trust and our relationship with vulnerable communities.

20th
April,
2020

